

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMO

11-15
November 12, 1971

TO: Mr. P. G. Tannian
FROM: Commissioner John F. Nichols

Attached is a complete over-view of the STRESS operation, including some but not all, of the modifications that have been added to the program todate. It covers the acquisition of personnel, the training of personnel, briefing and debriefing, composition, use of fatal force together with some modifications which are proposed.

In order that you may rapidly be apprized of some changes that will be taking place, I "stress" the following:

1. An Administrative review of all potential personnel by Co-District Inspector Commanders.
2. An increase to 80 hours combination of formal, and "on the job training," for all new STRESS officers.
3. An attempt to increase the black, white ratio initially to atleast 25 percent.
4. Rotation of personnel within the STRESS operation, to insure that officers will not be consistently used as "target officers" but will be given other STRESS assignments.
5. With the augmentation of additional black officers, commitment of better racial balanced teams, particularly, in predominately black neighborhoods.
6. It should be pointed out that this has always been the practice. Administrative review of all shots fired, whether fatal, wounding, or misses is made, and has been followed with counseling of officers involved.
7. Consideration of this standard procedure to be adopted in all cases of fatal shotings: A complete review by the Medical Division of the officer firing the fatal shot, or any other officer involved,

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to determine any lasting trauma to the officer. This should particularly be directed to ascertain, if possible, whether, or not, he would be able to adequately perform his duties to protect himself, his fellow officers, or a citizen.

I feel that these procedures are more than adequate to insure that proper officers are properly controlled, and instructed are committed to this most successful STRESS operation.

I am forwarding this report for the Mayor's information prior to the proposed meeting. I do not believe that it should be made as a public report, but certainly, the information contained therein might be utilized, except as noted below.

BEAR IN MIND THAT THE MEDICAL REVIEW HAS NOT YET BEEN
BROACHED, OTHER THAN AT STAFF MEETINGS, AND I WOULD
PREFER THAT THE DEPARTMENT HEAR IT FROM US, BEFORE
THEY HEAR IT FROM THE PUBLIC, SO IT SHOULD BE TREATED
AS A PROJECT UNDER DISCUSSION AND NOT AS A REALITY,
THEREFORE, IT SHOULD NOT BE PUBLICIZED AT THIS TIME.


JOHN F. NICHOLS
Commissioner

JFN:lp

STAFFING THE STRESS OPERATION

- I. Initial investigation of applicants is assigned to a Lieutenant, Sergeant team who visit his command to evaluate the following:
 - A. Work performance.
 1. Does his work record indicate he is a highly motivated individual?
 - a. Is his arrest record a result of answering radio runs or through self-initiated action?
 - b. What percentage of his arrests result in prosecution?
 - c. What is his commendation and citation record?
 - B. Dependability.
 1. Does he possess good work habits?
 - a. Little or no tardiness.
 - b. Little or no sick time.
 - c. Prompt appearance on court cases.
 - C. Attitude.
 1. Does the applicant's past record indicate he possesses sound judgment?
 2. How well does he accept supervision, especially from a senior or more experienced officer of his own rank, i.e., crew chief?
 3. Does he work well in a team or does he display too many individualistic traits?
 4. What do his present supervisors think of his ability?
 - a. Personal interview.
 - b. Review Service Ratings.
 5. What do his fellow officers think of him?
 - D. Letters from Citizens.
 1. Commendatory.
 - a. Good service.

- b. Appearance.
- c. Knowledge of work.
- 2. Complaint.
 - a. Physical abuse.
 - b. Verbal abuse.
 - c. Racial connotations.
- E. Interview of applicant by Stress Supervisors.
 - 1. After having successfully completed the initial investigation, an oral interview is conducted that includes either District Inspector Co-Commander.
 - a. Results of the investigation and work record are discussed to clear up any questionable items.
 - b. Mythical cases and situations are presented to observe applicant's reactions.
 - c. A review of criminal law is held to evaluate what he has retained.
 - d. Home situation is reviewed.
 - d-1. Wives willingness to have her husband in the program.
 - d-2. Officers realization that he may become involved in more court appearances than he is accustomed to.
 - e. Explanation that assignment is not permanent. Applicant may be returned to prior assignment if work is not up to standard or if any other problems develop that would interfere with his work.

II. Training of Stress Personnel.

- A. A thorough explanation of the logistics is given to new personnel.
 - 1. Gives them more faith in our statistical analysis.
 - 2. Explanations of tactical maneuvers that have proven successful in the past are given.
- B. Criminal Law is thoroughly reviewed with new officers as well as reviewed at roll calls and in service training programs.

1. Elements of crime are discussed to ensure officer is aware of what he must endure to obtain a legal case.
2. Entrapment is thoroughly discussed.
 - a. We do not wish to lose a case nor falsely charge a citizen.

C. Use of fatal force discussed.

1. The right to use the revolver both under State Law and Department Rules and Regulations is thoroughly explored with each new member and constantly discussed with all personnel as a part of an ongoing training program.

D. Briefing and debriefing of personnel.

1. Shift before going on and off duty has a session.
 - a. During the early part of the program this was scheduled for the first and last hours of a shift.
 - b. With the experience we have gained that amount of time is no longer necessary except with new personnel or if special problems arise.

E. Strict operations of new personnel.

1. An officer will be initially assigned to a team as an observer.
 - a. This gives him an insight into the actual target and backup activities.
 - b. Gives him the opportunity to lose the uniformed look and action as well as develop the street attitude.

III. Composition of Stress Personnel.

A. This is a highly fluid figure as personnel are constantly changing.

1. Promotions.

- a. Approximately 30% of the original experienced personnel have been promoted.
- b. Approximately 42% turnover since inception.

B. The racial balance is at the present time 90% white and 10% black.

1. The black ratio has in the past been higher and will in the near future again increase.
 - a. We will not take any borderline personnel regardless of race merely to fill the approved quota.
2. One of our problems with recruiting good black officers is the fact there are so many opportunities for them in specialized fields.
 - a. This necessitates in some instances training recruits who sometimes later find they are more desirous of a uniform assignment.
 - b. It does not indicate they are not good officers but merely reflects the fact that some officers do not care for plainclothes assignments.
3. The first plateau we are seeking will be a 22/78% black/white ratio.

IV. Police officer involved in shootings.

- A. Presently when any Detroit Police Officer is involved in a fatal shooting he/they are assigned to a Board of Inquiry.
 1. Under the Command of a District Inspector.
 - a. Assisted by two (2) Inspectors.
 2. Make a complete Departmental investigation.
 - a. Get all Homicide Section reports.
 - b. Interview all witnesses.
 - c. Evaluate all information and make a recommendation as to exoneration, attitude, officer's reactions and Departmental action, if any, including the return to regular duty.
- B. Contemplated action now under study.
 1. While the same investigatory actions will be continued, an officer will be referred to the Medical Division by the Board of Inquiry before recommending return to duty.
 - a. They shall determine how this fatal shooting has affected the officer, keeping in mind his emotional state, physical state, assignment and ability to safely and successfully carry out his duties in this

assignment. Of paramount importance is the ability of the officer to protect himself, his fellow officer and any citizen in trouble. We likewise must be certain the officer does not overlook the seriousness of a fatal shooting action.

C. Non Fatal or shots fired.

1. A complete investigation is made in each case with the investigator recommending what action he deems appropriate.
2. His decision is subject to approval through channels to the Commissioner.

Gordon Smith

Gordon Smith
District Inspector
Special Operations