Arming URI Police: Implementation

Status Report – May to December 2014

The following is a summary of the steps taken to date to arm the University of Rhode Island Police Department.

Human Resource Management, Investigations

- Personnel: All job descriptions have been revised to include the requirements for an armed police force. One job description remains to be formerly approved by the Department of Administration.
- Collective Bargaining Considerations: Some aspects still need to be negotiated with the current police union, but most have been completed.
- Classification and Compensation: The patrol officers and the Captain voted to remain in the classified union. Their compensation has been set by the Department of Administration. Compensation for the Lieutenants and Sergeant is being negotiated with their non-classified union.

Background Investigations

- Conducted by the State Police Department, these time-consuming investigations were completed in mid-October versus the original planned completion of late August.
- Psychological tests could not be scheduled until the background checks and new job descriptions were complete.
- The psychological tests of all police officers attending the RI Municipal Police Training Academy (RIMPA) are conducted by URI Psychological Services based at the Providence campus. The Rhode Island Police Officers Commission on Standards and Training (POST) requires that a complete background investigation be provided to Psychological Services prior to the psychological test.

Trainings & Certifications

A large component of this plan involves training that started almost immediately after the announcement of the plan in May 2014.

- All but two officers have received re-certification in non-lethal weapons such as pepper spray and collapsible batons.
Fair and Impartial Policing Training: A number of our supervisors have received this training and the entire department will attend this training in January.

Mental Health Recognition and Response Training: All URI Police Officers received a four-hour training in June. The training was conducted by NRI Community Services and included interactive scenarios. Two officers previously attended a five-day course for mental health intervention and one is certified as a Crisis Responder.

University Community Based Policing: All officers will attend a four-hour training in January taught by Colonel Mark Porter of the Brown University Police Department.

Firearms Training
- State Police determined that 40 hours of firearms training on the range is sufficient for the initial qualification with the handgun. After reaching the initial qualifications, every officer will also receive 24 hours of handgun safety and scenario training.
- This training can only take place after the psychological tests are complete.
- Because firearms training must be done outdoors, it is now scheduled for mid-March to early April 2015. Original plans were to have completed this training in the fall of 2014.

Oversight Committee & Community Safety
- **Oversight Committee:** Appointed by President Dooley in October the committee is chaired by Naomi Thompson, Chief Diversity Officer. The committee has met twice and is currently reviewing the proposed Use of Force Policy.
- **Student Group Meetings:** In September, with the assistance of Director Gerald Williams of Talent Development, members of the URI Police Department started meetings with multicultural and other student groups. As of this report, URI Police attended seven such meetings in an effort to discuss the arming process and national and international events of mutual interest. This is part of an ongoing effort to maintain a continuing dialogue with our students.
- **Community Safety Training:** Emergency Protective Actions training has been offered to various segments of the URI community. This is an ongoing process offered by our Office of Emergency Management.
- **Complaint Process and Procedures:** The citizen complaint and commendation process will be made more transparent and accessible for all members of the community.
- **Video:** To help all community members be prepared in the event of an emergency, the Office of Public Safety, Division of Administration and Finance worked with the Marketing and Communications Department to produce a new safety video based on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security standards of "run, hide, fight." URI’s video was distributed via email, made available online and is used in community training workshops.
Facilities & Property

- **Secure Firearms Storage**: A secure firearms storage area is under construction at the Police Station and is scheduled to be complete in late January /early February.

- **Firearms**: Based on significant research and recommendations, it was decided that the URI police would carry the same make and model handgun as the RI State Police and the South Kingstown Police. Purchase of firearms, holsters and magazine pouches is complete.

The monthly reports and related information are available at [http://www.uri.edu/emergency/police.html](http://www.uri.edu/emergency/police.html).