



OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

TODD SPITZER

June 1, 2021

The Honorable Joyce Dudley, Chair
Commission on Police Officers Standards and Training
860 Stillwater Road, Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95605

RE: Changes to minimum training requirements for District Attorney Investigators

Dear Chair Dudley:

As District Attorney of Orange County, I am writing to lodge my objection to changing the minimum training requirements for District Attorney Investigators and ask for a delay in moving forward with this item which is scheduled for a consent vote on tomorrow's POST Commission meeting.

The Orange County District Attorney's Office, Bureau of Investigation is comprised of 150 sworn investigators (830.1 P.C.), each with a wealth of knowledge and diverse experience. With law enforcement experiencing public scrutiny at an all-time high, lowering the standards for no apparent reason is concerning.

The staff report for this agenda item merely reflects the differences between the Specialized Investigators' Basic Course (SIBC) and the Regular Basic Course (RBC) in an analysis of learning domains and scenario tests. What is not factored into the analysis is the additional field experience an 830.1 P.C. officer must complete in order to qualify for their Basic Certificate.

The knowledge these officers learn handling service calls from cold reports to in-progress crimes - often times under extreme stress - must not be discounted.

Having extensive experience in investigating a wide variety of crimes as well as dealing with a diverse population is what makes our investigators so critical to the success of our prosecutors and our shared mission of pursuing justice.

Let me be clear. This stated opposition is not intended in any way to diminish the fine work of graduates of the SIBC or to demean them, but the experience difference between the two groups is immense and must not be ignored.

In reviewing the agenda item report, POST staff proposes four different options and requests guidance from the Commission. I would like to know what follow up has been conducted by POST



and I would like to opportunity to review their findings as I have concerns that there may have been a lack of follow-up on several recommendations.

Specifically, I have concerns regarding the following:

The first recommendation consists of surveying Law Enforcement Department heads to determine if there is an interest and a need to hire individuals with the training and experience in the Specialized Investigator classification. I am not aware of my office being surveyed or having the ability to make recommendations.

The second recommendation is to eliminate the SIBC and require specialized investigators to complete the RBC. Golden West College was the only presenter of the SIBC and we have been notified recently that they may be eliminating the course.

I am not confident all the necessary research has been conducted in making this decision and I would appreciate the ability to review the POST findings. I would also like the opportunity for my office to have a voice in these discussions as it directly impacts my organization.

I understand this item is listed on the consent calendar for tomorrow's POST Commission meeting and I would recommend that this decision be delayed until it can fully be vetted. In February 2012, this same item was presented to the POST Commission and the concept was determined to be unworkable. I would like to know what has changed.

If you have questions or would like to discuss my concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Todd Spitzer
District Attorney