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News Release

For Immediate Release

Racial Profiling Traffic Stop Data Review Completed

Chief Paul Williams and the SPD Command Staff have completed their review of the department's 2010 racial profiling traffic stop data. This review is done yearly and is a normal part of SPD operations.

The initial review listed 28 officers whose traffic stops indicated a greater than mathematically expected number of minority drivers stopped and prompted further review to look behind those numbers. Each officer was interviewed by his/her supervisor; their traffic stop data, assignment, beat location(s), hours of operation, and job duties were among the items discussed.

All information collected has been discussed in detail with Springfield NAACP President Francine Pratt and MSU Sociology Professor Dr. Michael Stout, who provided an independent 3rd party review of all the statistical data collected.

The data itself raises disparity issues, however, the data gathered is based on the citywide population as opposed to more specific breakdowns in population density, and is focused on the driving public, without analyzing commuters or travelers, each of which creates more questions than answers. Dr. Stout has agreed to work with the SPD to utilize 2010 census data, when available, to further analyze the traffic stop data for a potentially more accurate comparison and analysis. The review of census data will continue on a regular basis and command staff will meet with Dr. Stout and the NAACP periodically to address his findings.

Outcomes of this effort include the installation of "Arbitrator" cameras in all gang unit vehicles and beat cars to further document traffic stops. An annual update of search and seizure policy/procedures along with all applicable state and case laws will be included as part of in service training. The new records management system will allow supervisors and commanders to use the "real time" reporting ability of the program to provide ongoing reviews for anything outside the norm to compliment the annual department wide review of traffic stop data. Finally, education, communication, and interaction with the public on this issue will be enhanced and SPD will consider training options, such as "Effective Police Interaction with Youth", for the future.

The Springfield Police Department, and its officers, continues to be compliant with Missouri State Statutes and remains within our own policy prohibiting bias based policing.

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