

**WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
ITEM SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**TO:** Members of the Board of Trustees

**FROM:** President Sabah Randhawa by Vice President Richard Van Den Hul

**DATE:** February 9, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Annual University Police Report

**PURPOSE:** Information Item

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**Purpose of Submittal:**

Below is the annual update of the University Police Department.

**Supporting Information:**

The University Police Department is under the direction of Darin Rasmussen, Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police, currently supported by Ron Carpenter, Acting Assistant Director of Public Safety/Acting Assistant Chief of Police.

The Strategic Plan pursues three primary goals:

- 1) Reduce crime, disturbances, and incidents that pose potential threats of violence or create a fear of crime in the community;
- 2) Strengthen community awareness, involvement and interaction with the Public Safety Department; and,
- 3) Develop the organization's internal capacity and ability to promote and nurture the Community Oriented Policing philosophy among departmental personnel.

**State Level Participation**

Chief Rasmussen participates on the University Policing Committee of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC). WASPC is the state's recognized professional organization for law enforcement related issues, and has significant influence in Olympia. The University Policing Committee meets quarterly. This committee has a mutual aid agreement among the six university police agencies for responding to major disasters or events, and a "best practice" policy for dealing with threats of violence and response to violent situations on campus.

**Community Participation**

Staff actively participate in professional associations and task force programs, including community committees, professional law enforcement associations, community-based crime suppression and safety task forces, and campus committees.

The Campus-Community Coalition continues to combat high risk drinking through education, prevention, and enforcement. This organization addresses the many diverse issues that affect the relationships between the campus and surrounding communities. The University continues

funding of the Coalition, which includes Whatcom Community College, Bellingham Technical College, and Northwest Indian College as active partners. Western's Chief of Police is a member of the Coalition's Steering Committee, and he and other department police officers regularly attended Coalition meetings, neighborhood association meetings, and Hospitality Resource Alliance group meetings. Officers also participate in the *Advice on Tap* program in downtown establishments with the State Liquor Control Board and Bellingham Police Department officers. Through the Coalition, Western actively participates to address neighborhood issues that draw citizen complaints over noise, traffic, littering, and other behavioral issues. It is part of Western's commitment to keep our students safe and be a "good neighbor" to the communities around Western's campus.

The University Police Department continues its strong working relationship with the Bellingham Police Department, and Chief of Police David Doll, as well as with the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office and Sheriff Bill Elfo. This collaboration includes participation in the "Field Force", crowd management training with the Sheriff's Office in April 2017.

Western's officers continue to serve as members of the Bellingham Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT), and participate actively in joint training operations in the neighborhoods surrounding the campus.

University Police officers participated with other agencies throughout Whatcom County in emphasis of traffic enforcement activities. These activities included DUI emphasis patrols and general traffic enforcement.

### **WWU Programs**

The Community Services Officer program utilizes uniformed police officers who present programs to the community dealing with Crime Prevention, Personal Safety, Property Protection, Substance Abuse, and other topics.

The Bicycle and Skateboard Patrol program coordinates bicycle and skateboard safety efforts to heighten awareness to the central campus core of the campus regulations, and to allow more personalized contact with students, faculty, and staff. Officers engage in an educational program to make bicyclists and skateboarders aware of the rules affecting them, and a strong enforcement effort to hold violators who continue to ignore the rules in place for the "walk zones" accountable.

As part of its annual participation in the Compass 2 Campus program, in addition to being an active part of the annual on-campus event, the department successfully completes hundreds of criminal history checks for program student volunteers annually, and works with several campus partners to improve the safety practices for programs involving children at Western.

The Public Safety Department conducts regular "*Behaviors of Concern - Violence Prevention*" training sessions for students, faculty and staff. These sessions include two video presentations, "*Options for Consideration*" and "*Flashpoint*". The videos link from the department's homepage, as does Western's "*Emergency Preparedness*" video, so that all students, faculty, and staff may have easy access to this important safety information.

### **Emergency Response and Notifications**

Through close working relationships with the Office of Communications and Marketing and the Environmental Health and Safety Office, a multi-faceted alert system makes it possible to notify

students, faculty, and staff via text messaging and email within minutes of an event that may pose an immediate threat to the campus. This system also uses our current fire alarm system to facilitate voice messages to be transmitted throughout campus buildings and incorporates Desktop Notification, which sends a similar notification through all networked computers on campus.

The department is in full compliance with FBI and Washington State Patrol requirements for security standards for all Western staff who may meet or work in those areas that contain confidential criminal justice information.

The department leads a Safety Assessment Team (Threat Assessment), consisting of representatives from Enrollment and Student Services, Judicial Affairs, University Police Department, Counseling Services, Residential Life, and the Student Health Center. The team is in full compliance with the guidelines recommended by the National Behavioral Intervention Team Association (NaBITA) with regard to its approach to potential issues of concern on campus. This team meets on a routine basis, as well as when necessary to deal with potentially threatening situations, to strengthen the collective ability to resolve or mitigate issues of concern. The collaborative team of professionals has functioned well to respond to several serious incidents affecting the University.

#### **Professional Standards and Training**

Professional standards and training form a cornerstone in the development of competent police officers and civilian personnel, and a requirement of the accreditation standards. Officers are expected to demonstrate mental and physical skills that include strong written and verbal communication abilities, knowledge of relevant laws, officer safety techniques, and proficiency at skills that support proper patrol procedures.

In 2017 officers received over 899 hours of scheduled training in areas specifically related to their jobs. These included training in firearms, defensive tactics, active shooter joint-training, crisis intervention, lethal force, and RAVE emergency messaging training. A priority this year was sending six officers to “*Field Force*” training, a three-day training in crowd management. The training was held locally in Whatcom County. Chief Rasmussen and Sergeant Carpenter attended the basic 40-hour Clery Act Compliance course. Additionally, all officers are now in compliance with the state mandated Crisis Intervention training.

The department saw the retirement of 27-year veteran, Sergeant David Garcia and the resignation of Assistant Chief Donnell Tanksley. Tanksley left in December to take a position with Portland State University as its new Chief of Police. The department is currently conducting a search to replace Assistant Chief Tanksley, and to hire a new police officer to fill the vacancy created by Sergeant Garcia’s departure and subsequent promotion of a new sergeant.

#### **State and Federal Reporting**

The Jeanne Clery Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act, passed by Congress in 1990, and constantly modified, is in response to concerns about crime and security at post-secondary education institutions. This Act requires institutions to disclose information about campus safety policies and procedures, and to provide statistics concerning whether certain crimes took place on campus. The program is a mandatory nationwide reporting effort that tracks statistical information of the seven most serious criminal offenses within geographical areas and reporting districts.

The University Police Department and Enrollment and Student Services compile the on-going annual crime statistics for publication and ensure compliance with Federal Register guidelines. Updated information is provided annually for new and returning students, staff, and faculty. Police agencies also report monthly activity through the National Incident Based Reporting (NIBRS) segment of the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. UCR information is included in Clery Act (Student Right-to-Know) reporting, along with information about alcohol and drug law violations, weapons possession, and incidents of student misconduct.

### **2017 Activity**

NIBRS is the current standard for law enforcement agencies to report summary data to state and federal authorities. It is used for comparison purposes, and for local and national trend analysis. Agencies report data on major crimes.

NIBRS Group A offenses are serious in nature and include crimes against people and property. These incidents represent a very small portion of the overall activity of the University Police Department. In 2017 the University Police Department provided 9,402 calls for service. Of these, 331 were categorized as NIBRS level offenses. Officers made 90 total arrests in 2017 for various criminal offenses. These arrests equate to less than 1% of total calls for service.

In comparison, the University Police Department recorded 251 NIBRS offenses for 2016 and 291 offenses for 2015.