



Washington Association of
**SHERIFFS &
POLICE CHIEFS**

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Greetings from your Executive Director:

As all of us continue to work through the challenges facing our profession, here are some resources for you and a few updates:

First, we sent out our [WASPC policy statements](#) earlier this week, after it had been approved by the Legislative Committee and our Board. Our Policy Director, James McMahan, has been providing information to policy makers as well. We are not doing follow up press releases or interviews; communicate with your community regarding the statement if you choose.

In discussions surrounding **improved social and behavioral services**, [here](#) is a good story on the "Cahoots" program in Eugene, Oregon, which is an expanded example of what many agencies in Washington State have been doing with mental health field response and other programs. WASPC has consistently supported and assisted with administering grants for these services.

For the first time in WASPC's history, our **Spring General Business meeting** was held virtually. We conducted an Executive Board election, reviewed committee reports and heard from stakeholders at CJTC, WTSC and DARE. Reports and presentations were emailed to the membership and will also be available on our [website](#).

Our election had excellent participation by our Active and Life members, all conducted via online voting. Below are the election results presented at the meeting:

Automatic succession:

- Spokane Chief Craig Meidl is the 2020-2021 WASPC President
- Grays Harbor County Sheriff Rick Scott is our President Elect
- Thurston County Sheriff John Snaza is now the Past President

Voting results:

- Vice President, Chief Steve Crown -Wenatchee Police Department
- Treasurer, Chief Brett Vance -Montesano Police Department
- Sheriff at Large, Sheriff Tom Jones -Grant County
- Chief at Large, Chief Gary Jenkins -Pullman Police Department

With the election of Wenatchee Chief Steve Crown to be Vice President of WASPC, that has left his **Chief-at-Large position vacant**, which runs through May 2021. New WASPC President

Chief Craig Meidl has appointed Redmond Chief Darrell Lowe to this board position, effective today. Welcome Chief Lowe!

Finally this week, as agencies conduct Independent Investigations as required by I-940 (and the resulting LETCSA Bill), I asked CJTC Director Rahr to provide current information and an overview of the rules and the current status, and a **specific point of contact for agencies who may have questions** or need clarification of any kind. Among our policy recommendations moving forward is "establish a monitoring and review mechanism to ensure existing requirements for independent investigations regarding the use of deadly force are followed." One possible option is the Phase 4 Accountability slide from CJTC, indicating how this addition could fit into the LETCSA process. The information below is provided purely to provide support and information. Below is the information provided from CJTC:

From CJTC Executive Director Sue Rahr:

Here is a link to our website that answers the most frequently asked questions about the Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act (LETCSA) formerly known as I-940. That page contains links to the actual WACs that spell out every single rule in detail.

I also attached a PPT that I used when I presented the LETCSA overview at the WASPC Fall Conference in 2019. (Attached WASPC GTWO June 26) It goes through the entire set of rules for deadly force investigations with red and purple highlights for points that are critical.

Editorial Comments- Sue Rahr

This set of rules for independent investigations was created through the negotiated rulemaking process. That means it was a highly cumbersome, bureaucratic process whereby a group of 25+ statutorily designated stakeholders, and 50+ additional participants with widely divergent ideas, developed the language over the course of many months during public meetings. Nearly every word is the result of a compromise. (so this is a camel, not a horse) I tried my very best to keep it as simple and straightforward as possible. It is not as convoluted as some statutory language, but it won't win any literary awards, either.

Bottom line - *If you are a Chief or Sheriff, and someone in your agency might be involved in a deadly use of force someday, you and your command staff just need to read it. There are no short-cuts. The language should be taken at face value. You should be planning how you will manage a deadly force incident LONG before it happens. For example, you should have an agreement in place with whatever agency/team you hope will do the investigation. You should have a list of potential community representatives who you can call on to join an independent investigative team if/when an incident happens.*

*A common question/complaint I've heard is that there isn't a detailed, prescribed process for selecting the community representatives to be members of the Independent Investigation Team. (IIT) **That is intentional.** The rule was written to give each Chief or Sheriff maximum flexibility in selecting community representatives. This is an area where a "one size fits all" rule won't work. The method for selecting these members in a small, rural community will be vastly different from a highly populated urban area.*

These community representatives are critically important to maintaining public trust, as is the family liaison. The community reps will be most valuable if they are trusted by members of the community that your agency serves and in which the incident occurred. They will become the trusted voice to the community on behalf of the independent investigation. Again, there is WIDE latitude about how many representatives you select and how you select them. You all know your communities best and I'm sure you know dozens of people to recruit for these duties. You need to decide how you want to select these representatives and then answer to the community if they're not happy with your selection. I strongly suggest you rely heavily on community members to assist you in making this selection.

Pending Documents (attached) - Conflict of Interest, Best Practices, and First Aid Guidelines

There are three draft documents currently in circulation as we are soliciting feedback from stakeholders. These documents include: Investigation Guidelines, Conflict of Interest Form, and First Aid Rules. These documents were to be presented to the Commission in March and adopted at the Annual Summit in June. Both were cancelled due to the pandemic. We will present them at the September Commission Meeting and Summit. I have attached the draft of these documents. THEY ARE NOT FINAL AND HAVE NOT BEEN ADOPTED. But you are welcome to use them as guidance.

**They are created to assist you in complying with the rules. You can still be in compliance with the rules without using the documents before they are final. For example, you can take good faith steps, based on the language in the rule, to ensure that investigators on the independent team don't have an obvious conflict of interest related to the officer being investigated.*

If you have questions or want to better understand the law, please feel free to contact either dbgates@cjtc.wa.gov, malexander@cjtc.wa.gov, or srahr@cjtc.wa.gov.

*(*Many of you have spoken to Dan Christman about this law in the past. He is now working in the newly created Critical Incident Stress Management program. DB Gates is the new program manager that has taken over the LETCSA responsibilities.)*

Steven D. Strachan, Executive Director
Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs