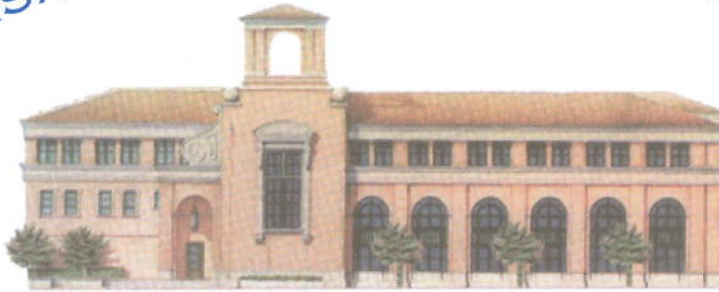




BERNARD K. MELEKIAN
CHIEF OF POLICE

PASADENA POLICE DEPARTMENT



207 N. GARFIELD AVENUE
PASADENA, CA 91101

October 27, 2009

Dear

On February 19th of this year, two Pasadena police officers made a traffic stop in the area of Washington & Mentone in Pasadena. This quickly became a violent encounter that resulted in the death of Mr. LeRoy Barnes and aroused significant community concern as to exactly what occurred on that afternoon.

In response to that concern, the Pasadena Police Department requested that the Los Angeles County Office of Independent Review to conduct a thorough assessment of the department's actions both during and subsequent to the incident. The OIR provides independent review for all deadly force incidents for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. It must be emphasized that they are not county employees. OIR was not under contract at the time of this incident and therefore did not respond to the scene as they normally do.

Their official report has now been released and is attached to this document. The report is a very thorough analysis of what occurred on that afternoon and of the department's response to the incident. The report commends the department in a number of areas and also expresses concern in others. What it clearly does not do is identify any additional facts or corrections from the department's report of March 31st.

The OIR made fourteen specific recommendations. Many of these are administrative or procedural in nature. The Pasadena Police Department accepts the recommendations as presented. The Department will review this report in detail and bring forward a report to the city council, through the Public Safety Committee at the December meeting. The department's report will include specific action steps that will be taken to remediate the issues raised in the report.

However, there are two issues of specific concern to the community that I feel obliged to comment on today. First, the issue of the tactics employed by the officers at the time of the stop was discussed. As is often the case, there were several tactical options available to the officers. The choice they made is problematic because of the outcome and not because it was an

October 27, 2009
page 2

inherently poor option. Nevertheless, more intensive training that addresses different tactical options will be implemented.

Secondly and the most challenging to address is the number of shots fired by the officers. Although the number of rounds fired exceeds the department's training standards, current training also stresses the reduction of the threat. It is also noted by OIR and the Coroner's report that the first round fired was fatal, although not immediately. This incident lasted less than seven seconds from the firing of the first shot to the last.

The department found this shooting within policy because of the direct threat to the officers initially and because of the compressed time frame of the incident. We will do an analysis of our range training and bring forward some specific recommendations to increase our scenario-based training with an increased emphasis on threat assessment and shoot-don't shoot decision making.

As the report from the OIR notes; "...whether the shooting was in or out of policy is secondary to how the Department learns, reacts and responds to the shooting." The Pasadena Way demands that the department hold itself to the highest possible standards. In keeping with that philosophy, we are committed to learn from this event.

As mentioned earlier, the department will make a full report on the recommendations and our response to them to the Public Safety Committee. Within that report will be a recommendation by the department and the City Manager that an analysis by the Office of Independent Review should be conducted in all officer-involved shootings that result in injury or death.

This has been a very difficult situation for both the community and the police department. It has been a tragic situation for the Barnes' family and for the officers involved. Please allow me to express my gratitude for the patience that everyone has shown.

Sincerely

BERNARD K. MELEKIAN
Chief of Police

BKM:bb