

SC Commission on the Advancement of Public Safety

The Hon. Nikki R. Haley - Governor



Chief Mark Keel
Co-Chair



Director Leroy Smith
Co-Chair

April 12, 2016

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley
Governor of South Carolina
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Governor Haley:

The purpose of this communication is to provide you with a brief synopsis of the work of the SC Commission on the Advancement of Public Safety, hereafter, "the Commission." Since its formation per your Executive Order No. 2015-17 filed on July 13, 2015, the Commission has been extremely busy in addressing the five objective areas outlined within the Executive Order – (1) Community Relations; (2) Hiring Practices; (3) Officer Training; (4) Wellness Issues; and (5) Studies and Research.

The Commission has met formally on two occasions. The first meeting occurred at the SC Law Enforcement Division (SLED) headquarters on September 29, 2015, from 2-4 PM. The second meeting was held on February 8, 2016, from 2-4:30 PM at the headquarters of the SC Department of Public Safety. During the first and second meetings, sub-committees of the Commission were established to address the five objective areas and a productive discussion took place about these key areas. The Commission's sub-committees have been at work focusing on their respective assignments. This focus has included individual sub-committee meetings, contacts, conversations, surveys, and research relative to 21st century policing models as they impact and interact with the five objective areas. Sub-committees are currently developing recommendations within their respective assignment areas to present to the full Commission for approval prior to presenting to your office for final review and approval.

In addition, the Commission has availed itself of presentations, both formal and informal, by law enforcement experts from within and outside of the Commission membership. The Commission received an important presentation from Dr. Eric Skidmore of the SC Law Enforcement Assistance Program (SCLEAP) and Dr. Greg Dwyer of the Medical University of South Carolina, who also serves as a medical officer with SLED and SCLEAP, on law enforcement officer wellness issues. Director Hubert Harrell and Deputy Director Mike Lanier of the SC Criminal Justice Academy have conducted a presentation on law enforcement officer training in South Carolina. Most of the Commission members attended an Executive Level

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Training on April 8, 2016, conducted by the Law Enforcement Coordinating Council of the US Attorney's Office in SC and sponsored by the SC Law Enforcement Officers' Association and the USC Division of Law Enforcement and Safety. The training was entitled, "21st Century Policing and You/Lessons Learned." The training featured presentations from Chief Rick Braziel (Retired, Sacramento Police Department), currently Inspector General for Sacramento County, CA; Dr. Cedric Alexander, Deputy Chief Operating Officer DeKalb County (Georgia) Office of Public Safety; Chief Eddie Driggers of the North Charleston Police Department; and Chief Gregory Mullen of the Charleston Police Department, as well as a panel discussion featuring several Commission members, including Chief Mark Keel, former SLED Chief Robert Stewart, Chief Terrence Green and Chief Gregory Mullen.

Following the above training, Commission members met informally for an extended discussion with Chief Rick Braziel of Sacramento, CA, to discuss a variety of issues associated with the Commission's five objective areas. Predominant in the discussion were the areas of training, hiring practices, and wellness issues. Chief Braziel presented the training model currently utilized in California and stressed the flexibility and creativity associated with the State of California's decentralized training model. Though the training components in California are regulated by the state (Peace Officer Standards and Training, or POST), the actual delivery of training is handled at the local level. Individuals are also allowed to pay their own way through the academy training in the State, in the hopes of securing law enforcement employment after the training is completed with possible reimbursement for the investment made. As Chief Braziel discussed this model, the similarities between this system and that of other states, notably the State of Florida, became evident. As has become clear in research and analysis conducted by the Commission, the State of South Carolina lags behind other states in the amount of training time dedicated to basic law enforcement certification and some items required for certification, such as psychological testing of candidates. Chief Braziel also indicated that the State of California has legislatively mandated pay scales for "state law enforcement" officers.

As the Commission has conducted its work, it has become evident that much more research and analysis must be done to effectively identify best practices and develop recommendations to improve policing practices at all levels of government in the State, while maintaining effective crime reduction and community trust. The Commission expresses its thanks to you for allowing us additional time to complete this important assignment which has far-reaching implications for the advancement of public safety in South Carolina. The Commission also would like to thank you for allowing us to serve in this capacity.

Sincerely,



Mark Keel



Leroy Smith

cc: Members of the SC Commission on the Advancement of Public Safety