



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

CRAIG N. MEIDL CHIEF OF POLICE

Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number: C16-021 OPO Number: N/A

Date of Complaint: 03/07/2016

Allegation: Abuse of Authority

Chain of Command Finding: Training Failure

Final Discipline: Counseling and Training

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS

The citizen complained that he was threatened to be arrested for obstructing if he did not provide his phone number.

COMPLAINT

The complainant called to report that he had been threatened by officers during a hit and run investigation. The complainant stated that an officer threatened to arrest him for obstructing if he did not provide his phone number. He also claimed that officers had lied to him about a witness to the collision. The complainant told the investigator that he thought the officers were making it up and just wanted to arrest someone.

INVESTIGATION

The contact between the officer and complainant was captured on body camera. Internal Affairs reviewed the footage and interviewed the officer. Shift supervisors interviewed the complainant.

Officers were investigating a hit and run collision. The complainant had been identified as a possible suspect by witnesses. The suspect fled the scene and got on an STA bus. Officers responded to the location across town where the suspect got off the bus and detained the complainant. However the witness was not available to complete an identification of the suspect.

The officer attempted to get the complainant's current address and phone number before releasing him as the suspect had Idaho ID. The complainant refused and the officer threatened him with arrest if he did not comply.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

Citizens are not obligated to identify themselves unless they are the driver of a vehicle. At the time of this incident there was no probable cause that the complainant was the driver. The involved officer was a lateral hire from another state. The chain of command review deemed this incident to be a training failure.