



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

CRAIG N. MEIDL
CHIEF OF POLICE

Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number: C17-037 OPO Number: 17-18

Date of Complaint: 6/9/2017

Allegation: Biased Policing

Chain of Command Finding: Unfounded

Final Discipline: Not Applicable

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS

In 2016, an officer responded to the complainant's residence in regards to a neighbor dispute. The complainant alleged Demeanor, Unlawful Recording, Filing a False Report, Inadequate Response, and Destruction of Property. Internal Affairs had investigated his complaint in 2016 and the complaint was determined to be an inquiry. However, the complainant sent a new complaint to the Ombudsman in 2017 about the same incident and included a racial bias allegation (the complainant's race is Asian/Pacific Islander). Due to the investigation the year before, the only allegation that the chain of command reviewed in C17-037 was Biased Policing.

COMPLAINT

The 2017 Biased Policing complaint stemmed from the complainants' review of the bodyworn camera video from the 2016 incident, where the officer's comments to a third party caused concern. In conversation with the person who had initiated the call for service, the officer had referred to the complainant as a "different duck." The complainant viewed that comment as racist. The body worn camera footage also showed that the officer had commented to a third party that the parents of the complainant were old and feeble and that the complainant is in charge of the household. The complainant and his parents found that offensive.

INVESTIGATION

The Internal Affairs investigation contained an interview of the complainant, officers, reports, and body worn camera footage. During his interview, the officer explained that the "different duck" comment was in no way a reference to the complainant's race but was instead due to his odd behavior during their contact. The officer said he himself comes from a mixed race family and he would be the last person to treat someone differently due to one's race. After the "old and feeble" comment, the officer said that the adult son was in charge of making decisions in the household, such as giving permission to enter the home, rather than his aging parents. The comments did not amount to a policy violation.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

During the review, the chain of command found no indication of racial bias in the interaction. The Biased Policing allegation was determined to be Unfounded.