



**SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION**  
**CHIEF OF POLICE**  
**CRAIG N. MEIDL**

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**Office of Professional Accountability**  
**March 2017 Report**

**Public Safety Committee Briefing**  
**March 20, 2017**





# SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

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#### Selected Excerpts of Officer Commendation Letters

I wish to give a big thank you to the Spokane Police officers who responded to the incident in Liberty Park this morning. I believe they handled the situation very professionally and without any harm coming to the officers, their K9, local residents and the apprehended suspects. I have said this before and I will gladly say it again: You officers are way underpaid and often unrecognized for the stellar work they do in keeping Spokane a safe place to live.

*-Bryan Nelsen*

You have an exceptional police officer, **Detective Janice Oliver**, in your detective division. Her calm, patient manner was a great help to our entire family when our frustration was at an all-time high. We wish to commend Detective Oliver for the way she handled the investigation for my 92-year-old mother after having several of her rings taken from her senior living apartment. She was courteous and professional as well as adding a personal empathy that words just can't explain. Our family had the opportunity to watch her with the public and other business employees and she demonstrated equal courteous and professional qualities with everyone. Such commitment to the citizens of Spokane is to be commended. We have to say Detective Oliver is an asset to the SPD and our community.

*-Myrtle Brown and Family*

I'm glad to be taking a moment to say, "Thank you." Last night our teenage daughter left work around midnight, in her low to the ground Honda Civic. She got stuck on Perry, called her Dad and they did what they could. Her Dad shoveled out a space so they could push her car to place that would be safe for her car and other drivers. However, that is not such an easy feat. Out of the blue, four of Spokane's finest (clearly) arrived to attend to an unrelated matter. They first, however, assisted my family and got the car safely and properly out of traffic. Thankfully, my daughter (17) has not had cause to interact with law enforcement, and given the temperament of the country and the news stories, this could not have come at a better time. Children are so impressionable. So, I would like to thank the officers who came to our rescue, literally. Our daughter was joyful upon arriving at the house. She smiled and her voice got just a bit higher as she told me the story. And, I, in turn, am quite happy to be sharing this story with our very brave men and women of our city's police department.

*-R.J. Olson and family*

Last November I was taking a run and ran across **Officer [Sergeant Isamu] Yamada**. I shared how I had recently graduated from Gonzaga and moved from Spokane to Seattle. He shared his history in Seattle and why he came to Spokane. I have missed Spokane dearly since college and our conversation reiterated many reasons why. It was so wonderful to talk to him about the good and bad of our city, which he probably knows better than most residents, and hear his love for the area. The entire conversation was honest, relatable, and like two friends talking. In our world where police officers face extreme scrutiny I share this story of positivity to my peers. These are the type of people we should strive to hire, elect, and befriend. I developed trust in Officer Yamada and I hope the entire department realizes how lucky they are to have him on their team.

*-John Thorpe, Gonzaga Class of 2016*





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#### Internal Affairs Unit Update

#### Yearly Total of Complaints, 2013-2016

- 2013: 204 Complaints (87 were inquiries)
- 2014: 169 Complaints (101 were inquiries)
- 2015: 109 Complaints (72 were inquiries)
- 2016: 78 Complaints (20 inquiries as of February 6, 2017)

#### January 1 through February 28, 2017 Complaints

#### Complaints Received:

**Total: 13**

**Closed Out as Inquiries: 1** (As of February 28, 2017)

*An inquiry is an initial complaint about employee conduct which, even if true, would not qualify as a personnel complaint and may be handled informally by a department supervisor and shall not be considered complaints.*

#### Source of 2017 Complaints\*

\*Note: Sometimes a citizen will report a complaint in multiple places; in those cases, the place where the complaint was first reported is noted.

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman **Total: 6**

Received by the Spokane Police Department **Total: 7**

Internally Generated by the SPD **Total: 0**





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#### Categories of Complaints\*\*

Allegations associated with **Citizen Complaints** received between January 1 and February 28, 2017.  
\*\*Note: Some investigations involve multiple allegations. Allegations may be for commissioned or civilian employees.

<b>Allegation</b>	<b>Number</b>
Abuse of Authority	1
Conduct Unbecoming	1
Conflict of Interest	1
Demeanor	3
Excessive Force	3
Harassment	2
Inadequate Response	3
Misuse of Department Property	1
Reckless Driving	2
Sexual Assault	1
Unauthorized Use of Database	1
Unlawful/Improper Arrest	1

The most common complaints tend to be allegations of Demeanor and Inadequate Response. In 2016, demeanor complaints made up 30% of allegations and Inadequate Response made up 22% of allegations.

#### Disposition of Allegations

Note: As of February 28, 2017, one case was closed out as an Inquiry.

Summary of Inquiry: The complainant alleged that the officer's Facebook profile contained a photo of him with a rifle on his back and as such the photo was inappropriate. The investigation showed that the allegation by the complainant occurred outside of the one year window to report a complaint. Additionally, if the complaint had occurred within the one year time frame, there would not have been a policy violation. Ombudsman Logue certified the complaint on February 17, 2017.





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#### Use of Force Update

##### 2017 Non-Deadly Use of Force Incidents

From January 1-February 28, 2017, there were 16 non-deadly use of force incidents. During that same time frame in 2016, there were 19 non-deadly force incidents.

##### Non-Deadly Use of Force Annual Total Incidents 2013-2016

- 2013: 147 incidents
- 2014: 114 incidents
- 2015: 117 incidents
- 2016: 105 incidents

Note: In 2016, SPD policies were revised to include new categories of reportable force. Yet, incidents did not increase. Non-deadly Use of Force incidents have decreased by 29% between 2013 and 2016.

##### 2017 Deadly Use of Force Incidents

From January 1-February 28, 2017, there was 1 deadly force incident. During that same time frame in 2016, there were no deadly force incidents.

##### Deadly Force Annual Totals, 2013-2016

- 2013: 3 incidents
- 2014: 4 incidents
- 2015: 5 incidents
- 2016: 3 incidents

Deadly force rates have stayed fairly constant; deadly force was used an average of 3.75 each year.





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#### Officer-Involved Shooting Incidents Update (through February 28, 2017)

##### 2016 Case Status

##### **F16-039 (With Administrative Review Panel)**

Incident 16-151075 took place April 28, 2016 at the intersection of Pacific and State. The Spokane County Sheriff's Office completed their investigation. SPD's administrative investigation is complete and the Administrative Review Panel (ARP) is reviewing the investigation currently.

##### **F16-040 (Pending Prosecutor Ruling)**

Incident 16-154017 took place May 1, 2016 at the intersection of Division and Main. The case is with the Prosecutor.

##### 2017 Case Status

##### **F17-004 (Under SIRR Investigation)**

Incident 2017-20008511 took place January 16, 2017 in the area of 5<sup>th</sup> and Maple. The incident is currently under investigation.





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#### Upcoming Items of Interest

##### Staffing Study

Preliminary information about current staffing numbers is slated to be provided to SPD in early March. Tim Freesmeyer of Etico Solutions will provide information about staffing and call volume first, and then will be focused on looking at shifts and then beat design. We will be working closely with him over the next several months.

##### Culture Audit

Professor Barbour from Gonzaga University will deliver the Culture Audit Report by the end of March. SPD will be working with the Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Diagnostic Center to develop an agency action plan, based on the information in the audit.

#### Training Updates

##### Detective School

The Detective School is taking place at the Investigations Division on March 13-16, 2017. As most of the newer detectives attended the last school, the target audience is employees that are on the promotional list who expect to promote to detective soon, as well as officers in specialty assignments (e.g., Neighborhood Resource Officers) who would benefit from the courses. Some of the major training topics include Investigation, Search Warrants, Information Management, Crime Scene Management, and Testifying in Court. Additional resources outside the department (e.g., Prosecutor's Office) will also be brought in to train officers. The first Detective School was held in December 2015 and was a result of a recommendation to improve the promotional training program from the Department of Justice COPS Office Collaborative Reform Initiative.

##### Sergeant Academy and Civilian Supervisor Training

The Sergeant Academy will begin March 20, 2017. The Sergeant Academy offers several days of in-house training from local subject matter experts and is offered to newly-promoted officers and officers who are likely to promote. The first day will include civilian supervisors as it covers personnel issues. The first Sergeant Academy was held in January 2016 and was a result of a recommendation to improve the promotional training program from the Department of Justice COPS Office Collaborative Reform Initiative.





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#### Civilian In-Service

SPD is working on an in-service training for civilians. The training would include Verbal Defense and Influence (communication and de-escalation skills training) as well as personal safety and situational awareness training. The date has not been finalized at this time but will likely take place April 17-21, 2017. Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) would follow in the fall for radio dispatchers and any other interested civilian employees.

#### Outreach Update

##### SPD Commitment to Outreach

All new hires in the Phase III of the hiring process will attend SPD youth outreach programs Youth & Police Initiative (YPI) or Police Activities League (PAL) to complete their probation.

The Community Outreach Team continues to build and strengthen partnerships. A few highlights from the previous month follow:

- Lt. Cowles joined the Inland Northwest Business Alliance (INBA) networking luncheon to discuss SPD involvement with outreach programs PAL and YPI (with Spokane C.O.P.S.)
- Lt. Cowles is working on a partnership with United Way (Spokane Gives Project)
- He also met with Martin Luther King Family Outreach Center about their resources available to the community. Officer DeRuwe regularly reads to children at the Center.
- He participated in Spokane Public Schools Superintendents Reform Committee
- The team continued ongoing discussions with groups such as OutSpokane / NAACP / ISAAC Foundation regarding current events and concerns.
- Community Outreach Officers will join Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery's open drop in time --will be visiting weekly)

##### Outreach to Refugee Communities

The team joined World Refugee Foundation at two community forums (Gonzaga at Hemmingson Center and City Hall) facilitating discussions surrounding new federal guidelines and local law enforcement response.

##### Native Community & Police Forum at the NATIVE Project

The Community Outreach Unit is working with Toni Lodge, CEO of the NATIVE Project to organize a forum there to focus on establishing and improving partnerships with Native American/Alaskan Native communities in the urban Spokane area. The forum takes place March 16, 2017 from 6-9 pm, 1803 W.







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Maxwell, Spokane, WA 99201. All members of the community are invited and encouraged to participate in open dialogue.

#### Youth & Police Initiative (YPI)

SPD recently completed another successful YPI session at the Salvation Army.



#### Noteworthy News

KXLY highlighted "Your city. Your safety," a new collaboration between City of Spokane solid waste collectors and law enforcement aimed at helping our community fight crime. Solid waste collectors have been trained by SPD to report crimes in progress and suspicious activity, and request welfare checks at homes where they no longer see activity.

<http://www.kxly.com/news/local-news/solid-waste-collectors-and-police-collaborate-to-fight-crime/359612362>

KREM featured the grant from the state budget for property crime prevention in Spokane.





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<http://www.krem.com/news/local/spokane-county/law-enforcement-to-fight-property-crime-with-state-grant-money/408193030>

KREM also highlighted Detective Janice Oliver's efforts to return property to Myrtle Brown, a Spokane citizen. Some of the items that were stolen had incredible value. The rings that were stolen were all gifts from Myrtle's husband of 67 years. He passed away 8 years ago.

<http://www.krem.com/news/local/spokane-county/spokane-police-go-above-and-beyond-to-help-91-year-old-get-jewelry-back/404768577>

