

SUBJECT TO DEBATE

A NEWSLETTER OF THE POLICE EXECUTIVE RESEARCH FORUM



PERF's Town Hall Meeting in Chicago, October 27

See 9-minute video summary of the Town Hall Meeting at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0u9ZjWUciY>

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PERF Welcomes New Board Members

THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL changes on PERF's Board of Directors recently. PERF is grateful to all of our new Board members, and to those whose terms have ended.

New York City Police Commissioner James O'Neill, who was elected President of PERF earlier this year, announced his retirement from the NYPD on November 4. Because PERF Board members must be chief executives of law enforcement agencies, Commissioner O'Neill's term as PERF President concluded with his resignation from the NYPD.

Commissioner O'Neill joined the NYPD in 1983 and served for three years in the top job as Commissioner. One of his most significant accomplishments was achieving record-low crime rates while increasing the community's trust in the department.

PERF is very grateful to Commissioner O'Neill's service to PERF. As PERF President, and as a PERF Board Member from 2017 to 2019, Commissioner O'Neill had key roles in many PERF projects. With his support, NYPD hosted PERF conferences at NYPD headquarters, including our 2017 conference on the [opioid epidemic](#) and PERF's 2019 conference on strategies for reducing [suicides by officers](#). Commissioner O'Neill also encouraged the involvement of other NYPD leaders in PERF's work (including Chief of Detectives Dermot Shea, who was sworn in as the new NYPD Commissioner on December 2).

Tempe, Arizona Chief of Police Sylvia Moir was elected PERF's new President. She had been serving as PERF's Vice President since 2018. Chief Moir has held



LEFT TO RIGHT: NYPD Commissioner James O'Neill; Tempe, AZ Chief and PERF President Sylvia Moir.

the top position in Tempe since 2016, following six years as Chief of the El Cerrito, California Police Department. She spent most of her early career in the Sacramento Police Department, serving in every division of the department and gaining experience as a police trainer, and as Incident Commander in hundreds of events. Chief Moir has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from California State University and two master's degrees from the Naval Postgraduate School, Center for Homeland Defense and Security.

Chief Moir's website biography notes that "she is married, lives in Tempe, and enjoys reading, hiking, competing in marathons, and cheering on the Boston Red Sox and the Chicago Bears." She also maintains an interesting Twitter account, [@ChiefMoir](#).

Baltimore Police Commissioner Michael Harrison was appointed to an at-large position on PERF's Board of Directors. Commissioner Harrison was sworn in as the head

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of the Baltimore Police Department in March 2019, after a 28-year career with the New Orleans Police Department, including four years leading that agency as superintendent. He is a graduate of PERF's Senior Management Institute for Police.

In Baltimore, Commissioner Harrison has hit the ground running with new strategies for increasing the amount of time that officers spend in "micro-zones" of high violent crime levels; restructuring the department to reduce the number of command staff members, while creating new bureaus of Compliance and Public Integrity; and increasing the emphasis on recruiting. He also has released new policies on officers' use of force, which emphasize de-escalation of incidents, and is currently developing new policies on arrests, stops, and searches.

Aurora, Illinois Chief Kristen Ziman became an Aurora officer in 1994, rose through the ranks, and was named chief in 2016. She received a bachelor's degree from Aurora University and a Master's degree from Boston University, and is currently pursuing a second Master's degree in homeland security and defense. Chief Ziman is a graduate of PERF's Senior Management Institute for Police, the FBI National Academy, and several other leadership programs.

Chief Ziman and the Aurora Police Department have received honors for their response to a mass shooting in Aurora on February 15, 2019 in which five employees of a warehouse were killed, and five officers were injured.¹ Chief Ziman writes a [blog](#) in which she has discussed the mass shooting event and other issues.² She also is active on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

1. "IL Congresswoman Honors Aurora Police Chief On Women's Day." Patch.com, March 12, 2019. <https://patch.com/illinois/aurora/il-congresswoman-honors-aurora-police-chief-womens-day>

"Aurora police honored for acts of courage during Pratt mass shooting." Chicago Tribune, April 29, 2019. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/aurora-beacon-news/ct-abn-aurora-officers-honored-for-henry-pratt-response-st-0430-story.html>

"Aurora police release surveillance video of Henry Pratt mass shooting." ABC7 Eyewitness News, April 17, 2019. <https://abc7chicago.com/aurora-police-release-surveillance-video-of-henry-pratt-mass-shooting/5256164/>

2. "Hatred Is the Highest Form of Contempt." Chief Kristen Ziman blog. March 17, 2019. <http://www.kristenziman.com/2019/03/love-more-hate-less.html>



ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Baltimore Police Commissioner Michael Harrison; Aurora, IL Chief of Police Kristen Ziman.

RIGHT: Irving, TX Chief of Police Jeff Spivey.




See page 7 for Chief Ziman's comments at PERF's Town Hall Meeting on preventing suicides of police officers.

Irving, Texas Chief Jeff Spivey was elected Treasurer of PERF. Chief Spivey began his career with the Irving Police Department in 1986, became assistant chief in 2011, and was named chief in 2017. He has experience leading all three command bureaus: Investigative Services, Administrative Services, and Field Operations.

Chief Spivey has a Master's degree in criminal justice leadership and management from Sam Houston State University, and is a graduate of PERF's SMIP program.

As Chief of Police, Spivey has emphasized the importance of procedural justice in policing. "This manner of policing is taught to every member of the Police Department and is reinforced throughout the department's culture," he said. "When our employees follow the tenets of Respect, Voice, Transparency, and Equality, we believe the process by which a decision was made will be fair, and the outcomes will be understood and more fully accepted."

Chief Spivey can be followed on Twitter at [@IrvingPDChief](#). 

PERF Unveils Training on “Suicide by Cop” Situations

AT PERF’S TOWN HALL MEETING IN CHICAGO ON October 27, PERF shared its new Protocol and Training Guide on “Suicide by Cop” situations (SbC). A short video of this Town Hall session is available on PERF’s website at <https://www.policeforum.org/suicidebycop#THvideo>.

To develop this training, PERF convened a group of police and sheriffs’ department leaders and other experts at the Macon County, Illinois Law Enforcement Training Center. In addition to experienced use-of-force trainers and specialized SWAT/Emergency Service Unit personnel, participants included a psychologist with more than 40 years of experience working with police departments.

Suicide by Cop, which occurs when a suicidal person attempts to force a law enforcement officer to use lethal force, happens more frequently than many may realize. According to the *Washington Post*, in recent years there have been 900–1,000 fatal officer-involved shootings per year³, and by various estimates, approximately 10 to 29 percent of fatal shootings are Suicide by Cop situations⁴, so these types of incidents may account for 100 or more fatal police shootings per year.

The [Protocol and Training Guide](#) teaches dispatchers and officers how to recognize a Suicide by Cop incident, and officers then respond in a 3-step process: (1) Officers make themselves safe and ensure public safety; (2) Officers must be aware that pointing a gun at a potentially suicidal person will exacerbate the situation;


and (3) Officers use their most effective tool—their communication skills—to resolve the incident.

Several of the experts who helped design the training spoke at the Town Hall Meeting.

Dr. Mariya Dvoskina, a police and public safety psychologist, explained why officers should avoid pointing a firearm at a gunless suicidal person. “When an officer points their weapon, it raises their own anxiety, and it also ramps up the subject’s anxiety. More importantly, you’re sending a mixed message; you’re telling someone, ‘I want to help you,’ but you’re pointing your gun at them at the same time.”

Glendale, Ohio Police Officer Josh Hilling, who was involved in developing PERF’s protocol, discussed an encounter he had with a suicidal man in 2016⁵. “Each situation is different, and it’s hard to process everything that is happening so quickly in a high-stress situation,” Officer Hilling said. “But if I had had this training as a foundation, it would have helped me understand that just repeating ‘Drop the knife’ wasn’t going to get me anywhere.”

All the training materials, including scenario-based training videos, are available on PERF’s website at <https://www.policeforum.org/suicidebycop>. The training includes components of PERF’s Integrating

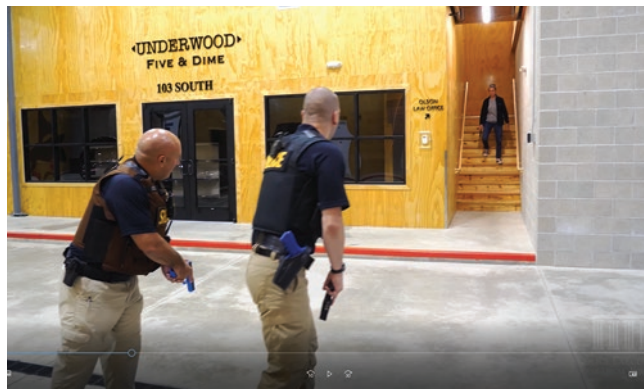
Communications, Assessment, and Tactics (ICAT) training⁶, such as the Critical Decision-Making Model. So the SbC protocol is a natural fit within a larger ICAT training program. 



ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Dr. Mariya Dvoskina; Officer Josh Hilling, Glendale, OH Police Department.



BELOW: Still image from one of PERF’s scenario-based training videos on how to resolve a Suicide by Cop incident.



3. “Fatal Force.” *Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/national/police-shootings-2019/>

4. Patton, Christina L. and Fremouw, William J. “Examining ‘Suicide by Cop’: A critical review of the literature.” *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 27 (2016) 107–120.

5. “Man shot by police on I-75 said ‘kill me’ over 40 times.” *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, April 5, 2016. <https://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/2016/04/05/prosecutor-discusses-video-75-police-involved-shooting/82650042/>

6. <https://www.policeforum.org/icat>

Controversy Over Facial Recognition Technology Discussed at Town Hall Meeting

FACIAL RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY CAN BE AN extremely useful tool for law enforcement agencies, but many community members and privacy advocacy organizations have voiced concerns about it. One major area of concern is studies indicating that the technology can generate large numbers of “false positives” in matching photographs with persons, especially involving persons of color and women.

Cities such as San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley, California and Somerville, Massachusetts have banned city agencies from using facial recognition technology⁷, and the state of California has passed a three-year moratorium on the use of facial recognition in police body-worn cameras.⁸

At PERF’s Town Hall Meeting, police officials discussed how their agencies are considering facial recognition and addressing concerns in their communities.

NEW YORK CITY POLICE COMMISSIONER DERMOT SHEA:

Facial Recognition Is Essential, But You Must Explain It to Your Community

I think there’s an expectation that we’ll do a professional job in our investigations, and it would be almost negligent not to use facial recognition in some capacity to help us do that. Facial recognition is essential to the NYPD, and we need to keep the public, elected officials, and legislators informed about what we’re doing.



If you don’t do a good job of telling the public how you’re using or planning to use this technology, the message to the community will be written by someone else.

BARRY FRIEDMAN, FACULTY DIRECTOR OF THE POLICING PROJECT AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY:

Facial Recognition Has Various Purposes, With Different Levels of Accuracy

These technologies are sweeping by us at an incredibly fast pace, and it’s hard to keep up with them. I think it’s wrong for people to be against a technology in some sort of Luddite, frightened way. We need to weigh the benefits of the technology, in terms of public safety, against the costs. And the costs are not just financial. There can be costs to privacy, and to racial justice.



At the Policing Project, we think a lot about the danger of pushback from the communities. Those of you in policing need to figure out a way to educate your communities about how facial recognition works, give people a voice in what’s happening, and let them own it. If you don’t do that, there’s the risk that the tools will simply be taken away in many places.

It’s important to think about how the technology works. There are three types of uses for facial recognition:

1. Face **verification**, where you know a face and need to make sure it matches the person in front of you;
2. Face **identification**, where you have a lead and are trying to match a name to the face; and
3. Face **surveillance**, where you’re running facial recognition on cameras in real time, or tracking movements retrospectively.

You’re going to get much different public reactions to those three uses. And you’ll get wildly different levels of accuracy in results. You’ll see much greater accuracy in some types of cases than in others.

For example, the Axon Artificial Intelligence Ethics Board, which I am part of, told Axon not to put facial recognition on body cameras, because it currently is not accurate enough and displays great racial bias in who it can identify correctly (and not).

You need transparency and you need discussions with the community. People will be afraid of things they don’t understand, but they’ll be willing to work with you on things they do understand.

7. “Berkeley bans facial recognition.” *San Jose Mercury News*, October 16, 2019. <https://www.mercurynews.com/2019/10/16/berkeley-bans-facial-recognition/>

8. “New law bans California cops from using facial recognition tech on body cameras.” *Sacramento Bee*, October 8, 2019. <https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article235940507.html>

DETROIT CHIEF OF POLICE JAMES CRAIG:

**There's a Human Element
to Preventing False Identifications**

In Detroit, we use facial recognition only as a tool to develop leads, and we only use it for violent crimes and home invasions. We have safeguards in place. If we were to just let the software do the work, it would probably misidentify 90 percent of the time. But we use trained analysts and supervisory approval. Our analysts are only passing 30 percent of our leads on to the next level, which indicates that they're doing their jobs and are being careful about checking the leads. In the leads that are passed along, we haven't had one misidentification.



NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR JACK MCDEVITT:

**If You Welcome Community Input,
You Will Likely Win Community Support**

I think there are a lot of important benefits when you bring the community into the conversation, they help define the policy, and they understand all the competing concerns as the policy is developed. If you do all that, you will have community spokespersons who step up and say, "We were part of this decision-making process, and we think it's being used legitimately."



But if you try to use facial recognition without community input, you'll get a narrative that's incredibly damaging to law enforcement.

BERKELEY, CA CHIEF OF POLICE ANDREW GREENWOOD:

**I Wasn't Able to Calm Community Members' Concerns
About Facial Recognition**

We had not made an effort to acquire Facial Recognition tools, but we wanted to preserve the ability to use it, once we could establish what our policy would be and how we would use it. Our City has a surveillance technology ordinance, due to an ACLU effort, which in effect bans any

surveillance technology until we provide a policy, demonstrate how it's going to be used, and get approval from the city council.

However, our Council voted to add a full ban on *all* facial recognition technology into our existing ordinance. The argument that facial recognition is a beneficial tool was not enough to outweigh the community's concerns about which databases our investigative leads would be compared to. In my view, they didn't understand how facial recognition works, and I was not able to maneuver through those conversations.

There is a problem of community members not trusting law enforcement. I also think there are some legitimate concerns about facial recognition, because some states are running comparisons of suspect photos against DMV databases, which include people who have not done anything wrong. We have to work out how to address those issues. But like other issues in policing, it's always difficult with 18,000 separate police departments in 50 states.

BURLINGTON, VT CHIEF BRANDON DEL POZO:

**Facial Recognition Is Just One Element
Of an Investigation**

We have a lot of detective squads in America with fairly low case closure rates, and agencies say, "Our communities don't trust us enough to work with detectives, to name suspects, or to cooperate as witnesses." We need to work on that.

On the other hand, facial recognition says, "We don't need community trust. We just need a DMV database, and we'll get pictures and find out who did it."

I think if we got the investigative part right, where people felt comfortable working with detectives and cooperating with investigations, they wouldn't be so suspicious of facial recognition.

New York City does a great job of making it clear that facial recognition technology is just one piece of establishing suspicion, and the rest of the case still has to be built.



PERF Members Share Ideas for Preventing Police Suicide

IN OCTOBER, PERF RELEASED *An Occupational Risk: What Every Police Agency Should Do to Prevent Suicide Among Its Officers*⁹. This report is based on research and a national conference of police and sheriffs' department officials at the New York City Police Department headquarters last April. It provides 10 recommended actions for preventing suicide among officers.

At the Town Hall Meeting, PERF members discussed how their agencies are working toward that goal:

LOS ANGELES POLICE CHIEF MICHEL MOORE:

We Have 17 Police Psychologists on Staff, But There Is Still a Stigma to Getting Mental Health Care

The LAPD is in its 50th year with trained police psychologists on staff, and we currently employ 17 of them. As those psychologists work with our sworn and civilian personnel, we rely on them to constantly evaluate how much risk people pose to themselves.



Like any organization with 13,000 people, the LAPD has individuals who are going through psychological challenges. About 150 to 200 of our people self-refer to our psychologists each year. One element of addressing this issue is providing people a safe space to reach out early for confidential help.

We are by no means perfect. With our support, our union just conducted a survey and found that 60 to 70 percent of our personnel who responded said that there is still a stigma to reaching out and trying to get help.

On the question of whether to take an officer's firearm away when there are mental health issues, we tend to be hesitant to take that step. We worry about creating a psychological crisis by taking what many of us in law enforcement see as part of our job and our life. For as long as we've been in law enforcement, that weapon has been part of our identity. Whether that's right or not, I do believe that taking the weapon away can undermine a person's confidence.

Now, every supervisor has the authority to disarm an officer who they think may pose a threat to themselves. But we caution supervisors not to make that decision emotionally, and to carefully consider what, on balance, is in the best interest of the safety of everyone involved. Our goal is always to find ways to intervene and get people help before it gets to that point.

NYPD CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT TERRY MONAHAN:

We Help Officers Get Help from Private Psychologists, In Case They Are Reluctant to Use Our People

Like the LAPD, we have to be careful about taking guns away for self-referral cases, because if we take someone's gun away as soon as they come forward and seek help, very few people will come forward. We want to do everything we can to encourage people to seek assistance in the first place.



We're helping people go to private psychologists outside our agency who accept our insurance. Then our people can get help, even if they don't feel comfortable with us being involved in the process.

AMTRAK CHIEF OF POLICE NEIL TRUGMAN:

As Part of Their Jobs, Officers See Horrific Things, So We Must Provide the Support They Need

As part of our jobs, officers see horrific things that can be very stressful. It is important for us to have a strong mental health program and a culture where officers see the value and want to use the resources available.



Together with our Employee Assistance Program, we work to provide our officers with the support they need following critical incidents. I take an active role in supporting our officers and creating a culture of strong peer support for mental health care, by sharing my personal experiences of participating in EAP programs throughout my career, to reduce the stigma some might feel about mental health care.

NYPD COMMISSIONER JAMES O'NEILL:

We Are Responding in Several Major Ways To the Spate of Officer Suicides We Experienced

We had a one-star chief who was 30 days away from retirement take his own life in June, and soon after that, we had six more officers take their own lives in a short span of time.

We felt that we had programs in place prior to 2019—the Employee Assistance unit, the chaplains' unit. But with 10 suicides in one year, we knew we had to take additional steps. Everyone's smartphone now has an employee assistance app that lists the signs of depression and tells people where they can go for help.

9. <https://www.policeforum.org/assets/PreventOfficerSuicide.pdf>

There were three big things we did. We had command-level training for all captains and above to give them guidance on how to address every roll call. We're also going to have peer counselors in every command throughout the city and on multiple tours.

And the biggest thing we did was enter into a partnership with New York Presbyterian, a major medical center, where a police officer can call, FaceTime, or get an appointment within 24 hours. It's anonymous and it's free.

AURORA, IL CHIEF OF POLICE KRISTEN ZIMAN:

A Firearms Owner ID Card Requirement Was Problematic in Illinois

In Illinois, you need a firearm owner's identification (FOID) card in order to purchase a weapon, and police officers must have one as well. If you're deemed ineligible for a FOID card, then you cannot have a firearm.

About two years ago, one of my off-duty officers was at home and had taken his firearm out with the intention of dying by suicide. He made one call first, and that person called our officers. Our officers responded, and the officer was cooperative, acknowledged he needed help, and checked himself into a mental health facility.

Inpatients at mental health facilities are ineligible for FOID cards, so he lost his card when he checked himself into the facility. He got the help he needed, and his doctor signed off on him coming back to full duty. The city was worried about liability, but we fought for him and had a third-party physician clear him to come back. Eventually we prevailed and he came back on duty, and he's doing great. But he was off for more than a year as we fought that system.

Unfortunately, all of this sent a message to the rest of our department that they shouldn't ask for mental health care. So we raised this issue with our state legislature, and they passed a law removing the requirement that officers need to have an FOID card. But even with the legislation, I still don't think our officers are convinced that they should come forward. They saw another officer go through hell because he asked for help. So we still have work to do.¹⁰

RETIRED MILWAUKEE CHIEF OF POLICE ED FLYNN:

We Need to Address Alcohol Abuse In Connection with Officer Suicide

To understand police suicide, I think it's crucial for us to understand the culture of alcohol abuse in policing. Many cops treat depression with alcohol. They treat stress with alcohol. And most of the suicides in agencies where I've been a police chief have involved alcohol.



10. "Don't You Dare Give Up on This Life." Chief Kristen Ziman blog, Nov. 9, 2019. <http://www.kristenziman.com/2019/11/dont-you-dare-give-up-on-this-life.html>

I wonder how we can go about tackling those two issues at the same time. They are related, and we need more research on that connection.

VIRGINIA BEACH CHIEF JIM CERVERA:

Many of My Officers Sought Assistance After a Horrific Mass Shooting in May

We had a mass shooting on May 31 that was the most horrific thing you can imagine.¹¹ After our incident, we set up an intense system of counseling and peer support. I was amazed at the number of cops who were there, and who they were. Everyone was there because they needed to get some things off their chests. I think it's created a huge culture shift in our department.

I'd encourage everyone else not to wait for something terrible to happen before you work on creating that culture shift.



FAIRFAX COUNTY CHIEF ED ROESSLER:

We Chiefs Need to Lead the Way To Ending Stigma and Establishing Wellness Programs

As leaders in the profession, we need to recognize that stigma is the issue, and we must lead the way in getting rid of the stigma. Chiefs need to get out in front of it from the beginning, talking to the recruit classes to let them know that "it's okay not to be okay." We must expose recruits to the psychologist and peer support in the academy, so it becomes accepted as a normal part of policing.

And it's good to have mandatory mental health checks that coincide with your physicals.



ANN ARBOR, MI CHIEF OF POLICE MICHAEL COX:

We're Working on Creating Incentives To Participate in Wellness Programs

In Ann Arbor, we want to put incentives in place to encourage officers to participate in wellness programs. We're looking to count points towards promotion for officers who participate in the wellness program. It's an incentive and may be a way to break down the stigma that can be associated with those programs. Over time, we're hoping it will lead everyone to participate in our wellness program.



11. "New details emerge in the Virginia Beach mass shooting that left 12 people dead." CNN, June 3, 2019. <https://www.cnn.com/2019/06/02/us/virginia-beach-shooting-sunday/index.html>



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