



## CRIMINAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

data-driven information. Performance indicators such as use of force, vehicle pursuits, sick leave, and personal digital recording devices (body cameras) are analyzed, and when deficiencies are identified, the captains and lieutenants are responsible for implementing intervention plans. Perhaps most importantly, OPD developed a close yet formal research partnership and technical assistance engagement with Associate Professor Jennifer Eberhardt and Stanford University. Eberhardt and her staff are currently conducting an in-depth analysis of stop data body camera footage using a variety of different benchmarks and variables; the results are anticipated in spring 2016.

While it is politically expedient to implement a plan for data collection/analysis for every police department, this subcommittee believes there are lessons to be learned about the methodology, technology, and analysis tied to

data collection, particularly from OPD. Changing a police culture takes considerable time. Change for its own sake will get us nowhere. Changes that are thoughtful, comprehensive, and designed with the help of those who truly understand twenty-first century policing are likely to be effective; we need to get it right.

This subcommittee will soon have concluded sufficient research to make significant recommendations to the SFPD in 2016.

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## BIAS IN POLICING

## SUBCOMMITTEE

### Making Recommendations to Address Bias in Policing

**Kate Chatfield**

In 2002, the ACLU of Northern California released a report, *A Department in Denial—The San Francisco Police Department's Failure to Address Racial Profiling*. Although this report addressed only traffic stops and subsequent searches, it painted a disturbing picture of an organization that engaged in racial policing and that refused to address the issue of race in any meaningful way.

In the following decade, we have seen the magnitude of the problem. We have read about racist texts sent by San Francisco police officers. We have seen video of a group of police officers conducting illegal searches in hotel rooms and read their conflicting testimony about these searches. We have read declarations of African American defendants filed in federal court that suggest a persistent level of racial and sexual abuse by members of the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD). We have read of officers shooting the mentally ill and we



have seen video of an African American man with a knife being shot at least fifteen times and killed by officers in the Bayview.

In order to address these serious issues, the Bias in Policing Subcommittee first spent months researching the solutions offered in consent decrees, settlement agreements, the U.S. President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, and other research studies and reports issued by both governmental agencies and independent researchers. Subcommittee members also met with SFPD Chief Greg Suhr and discussed many ideas intended to address the issue of bias in policing.

The subcommittee worked on a list of draft recommendations related to (1) officer training, including training on ways to understand and limit the impact of subconscious associations and perceptions that compromise the ability to accurately and safely assess individuals, situations, and the threats that they present; (2) updating the policy and practices of police officers regarding use of force and reporting requirements related to the use of force; (3) transparency in disciplinary proceedings; and (4) employment and recruitment reform.

As with the Civilian Oversight Subcommittee, the Bias in Policing Subcommittee has begun to shift its focus to a statewide approach to curtailing abuses by police officers in our community. At the same time, we will continue to work with various organizations, including representatives of SFPD, to reach solutions to particular policing problems in San Francisco.

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photo by Jim Block



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