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UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Inquiry into Circumstances Surrounding the Unsuccessful Completion of United States Capitol Police Recruit Officer Training, Recruit Officer Class 191

Investigative Number 2018-I-0002

June 2018

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UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE
WASHINGTON, DC 20003

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

PREFACE

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) prepared this report pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended. It is one of a series of audits, reviews, and investigative and special reports OIG prepares periodically as part of its oversight responsibility with respect to the United States Capitol Police (USCP) to identify and prevent fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement.

This report is the result of an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the office or function under review. Our work was based on interviews with employees and officials of relevant agencies and institutions, direct observation, and a review of applicable documents.

We developed our recommendations based on the best knowledge available to OIG and discussed in draft with those responsible for implementation. It is my hope that the recommendations will result in more effective, efficient, and/or economical operations.

I express my appreciation to those contributing to the preparation of this report.

Michael A. Bolton
Acting Inspector General

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

United States Capitol Police Entry-Level Training Academy	the Academy
Federal Law Enforcement Training Center	FLETC
Office of Inspector General	OIG
Recruit Officer Class	ROC
Training Services Bureau	TSB
United States Capitol Police	USCP or the Department

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States Capitol Police (USCP or the Department) Entry-Level Training Academy (the Academy) at Cheltenham, Maryland is part of the Department's Entry-Level Training Program. According to [redacted], dated April 2016, recruits must pass a series of written exams and practical exercises in order to successfully complete and graduate from the Academy. This includes passing the operational skills final practical exercises. The exercises comprise three scenarios. If a recruit fails more than one scenario, the Academy recommends removal.

USCP Recruit Officer Class (ROC) 191 began training on August 21, 2017, with 48 recruits. On March 10, 2018, ROC 191 completed their operational skills final practical exercises. 16 recruits failed 2 of 3 scenarios and the Academy recommended their removal from training.

At the request of the USCP Chief Administrative Officer and the Capitol Police Board, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the unsuccessful completion of USCP recruit officer training for the 16 recruits. Our inquiry included the ROC 191 recruit training, hiring process, and opportunities or steps for ensuring success in completing recruit training for future ROCs.

The inquiry revealed certain circumstances surrounding unsuccessful completion for the 16 recruits. The Department has opportunities and has already taken steps to improve its training and hiring process for recruits. Circumstances such as class size, weather, Government shutdowns, possible advance knowledge of final scenarios, and generational learning style differences were factors that surrounded the ROC 191 training. For example, multiple Department officials stated that a class size of 48 is typically harder to manage than a class of 24 because the larger class size increases the potential for problems and makes it more difficult for instructors to become familiar with the class. From this point forward, USCP plans to have ROCs with only 24 recruits. Multiple Department officials described ROC 191 as a young class and identified differences in learning styles they have noticed recently with younger recruits. A USCP official stated the Department has considered developing additional training to address these generational learning style differences.

Circumstances related to psychological testing and oral board interviews surrounded the ROC 191 hiring process. For example, USCP uses a rotating board with a rank of Sergeant or above for its oral board selection interviews. A USCP official stated they believed the Department could improve the oral board process if it used a more permanent oral board of sworn employees with the rank of Captain or above because those individuals have more experience when evaluating the candidates. According to guidance from the Office of Personnel Management,[1] a

[1] *Structured Interviews: A Practical Guide*, dated September 2008.

typical interview panel "consists of two or more persons who have extensive knowledge of the job and are trained in administering interviews."

Limiting the size of ROCs to 24 recruits, developing additional training to address generational learning differences, and using a trained oral board of sworn employees with the rank of Captain or above would improve the Department's training and hiring process for recruits. See Appendix A for a complete list of recommendations. On May 25, 2018, we provided a draft report to the Department for comment and attached their response in its entirety in Appendix B.

BACKGROUND

The United States Capitol Police (USCP or the Department) Training Services Bureau (TSB) is responsible for planning, developing, and implementing Department training programs. TSB consists of four Divisions: Entry-Level Training, In-Service Training, Physical Skills, and Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) Liaison. The TSB Entry-Level Training Division is responsible for the USCP Entry-Level Training Academy (the Academy).

The Department's Entry-Level Training Program has multiple phases. After a pre-FLETC orientation period, recruits must complete and graduate from the 12-week FLETC Uniformed Police Training Program. After successful completion of FLETC training, recruits must then successfully complete and graduate from the 14-week Academy at Cheltenham, Maryland. After graduation from the Academy, recruits must successfully complete 8 weeks of Police Training Officer field training.

According to the [redacted], dated April 2016, recruits must pass a series of written exams and practical exercises in order to successfully complete and graduate from the Academy. This includes passing the operational skills final practical exercises. The [redacted] state that the operational skills final practical exercises "measure the employee's ability to perform job-related tasks and their ability to demonstrate expected performance objectives, i.e., officer safety, prisoner control, and knowledge of applicable laws. These expected performance objectives are needed to bring police situations to a prudent, successful conclusion. Employees must bring each situation, scenario, and/or role-play to a successful conclusion." The operational skills final practical exercises consist of three scenarios. Recruits can fail only one of three scenarios on their first attempt; recruits failing one scenario receive one remedial attempt. The Academy does not allow recruits that fail more than one scenario to remediate any scenarios and recommends their removal from training.

USCP Recruit Officer Class (ROC) 191 began training on August 21, 2017, with 48 recruits. One recruit resigned early in the program for personal reasons, and the remaining 47 recruits graduated from the FLETC Uniformed Police Training Program in Glynco, Georgia. While in Glynco, ROC 191 experienced a 2.5-week break in training because of an evacuation for Hurricane Irma. After ROC 191 completed training in Glynco, another recruit resigned for personal reasons, and the Department recycled a recruit from a previous ROC into ROC 191. ROC 191 began the Academy on December 18, 2017. On March 10, 2018, ROC 191 completed

the operational skills final practical exercises. Of the remaining 47 recruits in ROC 191, 16 failed 2 out of 3 scenarios, and the Academy recommended their removal from training. The remaining 31 recruits from ROC 191 graduated from the Academy on March 23, 2018.

OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

At the request of the USCP Chief Administrative Officer and the Capitol Police Board, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the unsuccessful completion of 16 recruits in the USCP recruit officer training. Our inquiry included the ROC 191 recruit training, hiring process, and opportunities or steps for ensuring successful completion of future ROCs.

To accomplish our objectives, we interviewed pertinent Department officials and an officer from ROC 191 to gain an understanding of the following areas:

- Circumstances surrounding ROC 191 training
- Details of the hiring process for ROC 191
- Opportunities or steps the Department could take to ensure the successful completion of its ROCs

We reviewed Department personnel files for ROC 191 recruits, which included hiring information. We also reviewed Department training files for ROC 191 recruits. Furthermore, we reviewed instructor and curriculum data for ROC 191 as well as statistical data comparisons between ROC 191 and other recent ROCs. We also reviewed intra-agency memorandums related to ROC 191 and the [redacted], dated April 2016.

We also conducted internet research and reviewed guidance from the Office of Personnel Management. As a legislative branch entity, many laws and regulations that apply to executive branch agencies do not apply to USCP. We believe, however, that those laws and regulations represent appropriate guidance and industry best practices for USCP.

OIG conducted this work in Washington, D.C., from March through May 2018. We did not conduct an audit, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion on Department programs. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. OIG did not conduct this work in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Had we conducted an audit and followed such standards, other matters might have come to our attention. ~~This report is intended solely for the information and use of OIG, the Department, Capitol Police Board, and USCP Oversight Committees and should not be used by anyone other than the specified party.~~

RESULTS

The inquiry revealed certain circumstances surrounding unsuccessful completion by the 16 recruits during the USCP recruit officer training. The Department has opportunities and has already taken steps to improve its training and hiring process for recruits to ensure successful completion of future ROCs.

Training

Circumstances such as class size, weather, Government shutdowns, possible advance knowledge of final scenarios, and generational learning style differences surrounded ROC 191 training. The Department has opportunities and has already taken steps to improve its training for new recruits.

Class Size

ROC 191 began training with 48 recruits. Many ROCs begin training with 24 recruits but the Department has had other ROCs begin training with 48 recruits in the past. The standard class size at FLETC is 48 so the Department has used class sizes of 24 or 48 to fill either half or an entire FLETC class. A Department official stated that USCP had been successful with classes of 48 in the past but did not have the volume of ROCs[2] training at that time. Multiple Department officials stated it is harder to manage a class of 48 than a class of 24 because the larger class size increases the potential for problems and makes it harder for instructors to become familiar with the class. An officer from ROC 191 stated that the TSB staff seemed stressed by the number of recruits at Cheltenham at one time between ROC 191's large class size and the other ROCs also in training. A Department official also stated that USCP plans to only have ROCs with 24 recruits from this point forward.

Weather and Government Shutdown-Related Closures

While in training, ROC 191 experienced several weather and Government shutdown-related closures. During its FLETC training in Glynco, ROC 191 experienced a 2.5 week break (September 8-26, 2017) in training because of an evacuation for Hurricane Irma. Additionally, ROC 191 experienced a full-day Government shutdown on January 22, 2018, a partial-day Government shutdown on February 9, 2018, and a weather-related closure on March 2, 2018. Department officials stated ROC 191 made up any training originally missed or postponed by the closures.

Multiple Department officials stated they did not believe the weather and Government shutdown-related closures contributed to the failures in the operational skills final practical exercises because ROC 191 made up any training time it originally missed. An officer from ROC 191 stated the weather and shutdown-related closures during ROC 191's training did not create any extra challenges for the class because training always picked back up where it left off and they

[2] ROCs 189, 190, and 192 were also in the Academy for portions of ROC 191's time in the Academy.

didn't miss anything. According to a Department official, there are generally one or two weather-related closures each winter, and the official could not recall them negatively affecting any ROCs. We reviewed a comparison of ROC 191 and ROC 186 compiled by the Department. ROC 186 began training with 47 recruits and experienced a similar break in training (October 7-24, 2016) because of an evacuation in Glynco for Hurricane Matthew. The comparison revealed only three recruits in ROC 186 failed the operational skills final practical exercises.

Possible Advance Knowledge of Operational Skills Final Practical Exercise Scenarios

In the days leading up to the operational skills final practical exercises, TSB instructors had suspicions that certain recruits within ROC 191 possibly had advance knowledge of the planned scenarios. TSB instructors became suspicious after receiving and overhearing very detailed and specific questions and comments about the scenarios, indicating to them that the recruits might have known what the scenarios would be. Multiple Department officials stated the recruits might have become aware of the scenarios through intermingling with other ROCs or from TSB instructors divulging too much information. TSB changed the scenarios for ROC 191 in response to the suspicions. Department officials stated TSB vetted the scenarios ROC 191 received, and other ROCs had received the same scenarios in the past.

Department officials stated they were unsure if the change in scenarios contributed to the failures in ROC 191 but that the change should not have because the skills the recruits failed would have been present in any scenario. An officer from ROC 191 stated there were a few "curveballs" and they overheard other recruits saying the scenarios were not what they were expecting. The officer stated that the ROC 191 recruits received instruction during training on how to handle the situations presented in the scenarios.

Generational Learning Style Differences

Several Department officials stated ROC 191 was a relatively young class with many recruits that seemed to focus on how to pass the tests instead of understanding law enforcement concepts. According to one USCP official, the Department has had issues with recruits from the "millennial"[3] generation having a mindset where they focus only on how to pass the tests instead of focusing on critical thinking and understanding concepts. According to the *SIGNAL Magazine* article "Mind the Millennial Training Gap," dated December 1, 2017,[4] many millennials "were subjected to rote memorization" for standardized tests and therefore are "ill-equipped" for "inquiry, meta-analysis and synthesis of information." The article calls for adapting the classroom experience to this generation and the next. The official stated the Department has considered developing additional training to address these generational learning style differences.

[3] The United States Census Bureau defines millennials as America's youth born between 1982 and 2000.
[4] Marangione, M. (December 1, 2017). "Mind the Millennial Training Gap." *SIGNAL Magazine*. Retrieved from https://www.afcea.org/content/mind-millennial-training-gap. *SIGNAL Magazine* is the official publication of the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association, an association made up of professionals from the military and industry.

Conclusions

USCP plans to have ROCs with only 24 recruits from this point forward. The Department has also considered developing additional training that addresses generational learning style differences. We believe limiting the size of ROCs to 24 recruits and developing additional training that addresses generational learning differences would assist the Department in improving its new recruit training. Therefore, OIG makes the following recommendations.

Recommendation 1: We recommend the United States Capitol Police consider permanently limiting the size of its Recruit Officer Classes to 24 recruits unless otherwise unavoidable.

Recommendation 2: We recommend the United States Capitol Police consider developing training for its Recruit Officer Classes that addresses generational learning style differences.

Hiring Process

Circumstances related to psychological testing and oral board interviews surrounded the ROC 191 hiring process. The Department has opportunities and has already taken steps to improve its hiring process for new recruits.

Psychological Testing

During the inquiry, one Department official provided a concern with ROC 191's selection process. The official stated they believed that the previous psychological report provider (Provider A) did not focus on aspects most important to law enforcement. The official stated the hiring process for ROC 191 occurred just prior to the end of USCP's contract with Provider A. The official also stated the current provider (Provider B) conducts multiple tests, including certain tests specific to law enforcement, also offering that the Department might not have hired some of the recruits in ROC 191 if Provider B had evaluated them.

We reviewed copies of psychological reports from both Provider A and Provider B. Review of the reports revealed Provider A rated candidates on an "A" to "F" rating scale. Provider A's reports included summaries for educational history, employment history, personal/social history, health history, social interaction and responsibility, psychological findings and impression created. Provider B's reports rated candidates as clinically appropriate or inappropriate to be considered as a USCP Police Officer. Provider B's reports also provided ratings for candidates as below average, average, or above average in both clinical and pre-employment tests. Provider B's reports had several layers and included a Clinical Summary Report as well as a Clinical Interview and Psychological Testing Report. The Clinical Interview and Psychological Testing Report included a Clinical Interview, Psychological Testing and Assessment Findings (Clinical Assessments and Pre-employment Assessments).

Oral Board Interview

A Department official stated that USCP uses a rotating board with a rank of Sergeant or above for its oral board selection interviews. The official stated they believe the Department could improve the oral board process if the Department uses a more permanent oral board of sworn employees with the rank of Captain or above because those individuals have more experience to rely upon when evaluating the candidates. According to Office of Personnel Management guidance, *Structured Interviews: A Practical Guide*, dated September 2008, a typical interview panel "consists of two or more persons who have extensive knowledge of the job and are trained in administering interviews."

We reviewed the oral board selection interviews for the ROC 191 recruits that failed the operational skills final practical exercises. The interview panel for each of the recruits consisted of three officials with the rank of Sergeant or above. Of the 16 recruits, 4 had 1 captain on their panel. The remainder of their panel and the panels for the other 12 recruits consisted of Sergeants and Lieutenants.

Conclusions

The hiring process for ROC 191 occurred just prior to the end of USCP's contract with its previous psychological report provider. We believe using a trained oral board of sworn employees with the rank of Captain or above would assist the Department in improving its new recruit hiring process. Therefore, OIG makes the following recommendation.

> **Recommendation 3: We recommend the United States Capitol Police consider using an oral board of sworn employees with the rank of Captain or above with training in administering interviews for its new recruit hiring process.**

APPENDICES

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: We recommend the United States Capitol Police consider permanently limiting the size of its Recruit Officer Classes to 24 recruits unless otherwise unavoidable.

Recommendation 2: We recommend the United States Capitol Police consider developing training for its Recruit Officer Classes that addresses generational learning style differences.

Recommendation 3: We recommend the United States Capitol Police consider using an oral board of sworn employees with the rank of Captain or above with training in administering interviews for its new recruit hiring process.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE
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June 11, 2018

COP 180480

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Michael A. Bolton
Acting Inspector General

FROM: Matthew R. Verderosa
Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Response to Office of Inspector General draft report *Inquiry into Circumstances Surrounding the Unsuccessful Completion of United States Capitol Police Recruit Officer Training, Recruit Class 191* (Investigative Number 2018-I-0002)

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the United States Capitol Police response to the recommendations contained within the Office of Inspector General's (OIG) draft report, *Inquiry into Circumstances Surrounding the Unsuccessful Completion of the United States Capitol Police Recruit Officer Class Training, Recruit Officer Class 191* (Investigative Number 2018-0002).

The Department generally agrees with all of the recommendations and appreciates the inquiry made by OIG to further improve upon hiring processes and opportunities to ensure the future success of recruit classes. The Department has begun assigning Action Plans to appropriate personnel regarding each recommendation in effect to achieve long-term resolution of these matters. Additionally, I would like to mention for the record that every recruit class, to include Recruit Officer Class 191, receives the same hour for hour training and we will continue to ensure, regardless of extenuating circumstance(s), that this will remain Department practice.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the OIG's draft report. Your continued support of the women and men of the United States Capitol Police is appreciated.

Very respectfully,

Matthew R. Verderosa
Chief of Police

cc: Steven A. Sund, Assistant Chief of Police
Richard L. Braddock, Chief Administrative Officer
[redacted] USCP Audit Liaison

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