



OFFICE OF POLICE OVERSIGHT

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March 19, 2024

Robin Henderson, Interim Chief of Police
Austin Police Department
715 E. 8th Street
Austin, TX 78701

RE: OPO Policy Recommendations For Improvement to Austin Police Department's
General Order 214.6.4 Low Speed Intervention

Dear Chief Henderson:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide feedback and recommendations for improvement to the Austin Police Department's (APD) General Order (GO) 214.6.4: Low Speed Intervention.

The Office of Police Oversight (OPO) conducted oversight of Internal Affairs case #2023-0531. The officer was found to have violated policy 214.6.4 by performing a Low Speed Intervention tactic without exigency and without considering the unintended consequences of their action.

The specific policies reviewed in this memorandum are as follows:

- 214.6.4 Low Speed Intervention

We look forward to addressing the items identified and improving these policies for the benefit of the community and APD's sworn personnel.

Sincerely,

Gail McCant, Director
Office of Police Oversight



214.6.4 Low Speed Intervention

Recommendation #1:

OPO recommends that APD provide a concise definition.

Low Speed Intervention (LSI) lacks a clear definition in the General Orders. The OPO recommends that APD clearly define what constitutes "low speed." Currently, deciding how to perform an LSI is subjective, and the lack of clarity can result in potential violations.

Recommendation #2:

OPO recommends that APD create training to address LSI.

The OPO recommends that APD implement practical application training for LSIs. The current policy language is insufficient in describing how to execute the maneuver properly, nor does it provide specific instructions regarding where to impact the target vehicle.

Recommendation #3:

OPO recommends that APD require lights and sirens activated before engaging in any LSI tactic.

OPO recommends that APD require officers to be Code 3 before an LSI impact to allow the subject time to comply. Low Speed Intervention is currently the only pursuit intervention tactic that does not require the officer to be running Code 3.

Recommendation #4:

OPO recommends that APD clearly outline the factors in which LSI tactics may be used.

The LSI policy should be consistent with other pursuit termination tactics that require exigency and be reserved for situations where there does not appear to be another reasonable or alternative method.