



**Training Advisory
Council Coursework
Comments and
Suggestions**

**Procedural Justice
Scenario**

August 19, 2019



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PROCEDURAL JUSTICE SCENARIO

August 19, 2019

1. TAC Participants

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2. High Level Summary

Overall the members of TAC who attended the dry-run were impressed with the course. The scenario was seen as detailed and well thought out and those involved as being professional and knowledgeable. Comments and suggestions largely focused on ways to increase the impact of the training.

3. Comments and Suggestions

TAC members viewed a dry run of the PPB's new Procedural Justice Scenario, presented by members of the Training Division staff on August 19, 2019. Thank you to the PPB officers and staff who set up this opportunity.

The focus of the training was to test how well officers put into action the central tenants of the bureau's Procedural Justice focus; notably giving people voice, exhibiting neutrality, building rapport, and creating trustworthiness; during a routine traffic stop. The goal is to create a baseline of the bureau's current ability to meet these tenants in order to help develop future training and scenarios involving procedural justice. Overall TAC members

were quite impressed with the training and what it is trying to accomplish. They were also appreciative of the difficulties involved in most interactions police have with the public.

The following items regarding the training were specifically mentioned:

- During the initial parts of a traffic stop, some tenants of Procedural Justice; most notably voice and rapport; are difficult to establish due to the need for officers to also focus on other key components of their job; such as safety and time management. It may be helpful to briefly pause the scenario in the middle to let the officer know that the car and driver have no warrants or other issues. This will give them the opportunity to show how they might further engage with the driver in a less stressful situation.
- Officers only have limited time to put into place the tenants of procedural justice during a traffic stop or other type of call. This is due to call volume and legal considerations regarding unnecessarily stretching out interactions. Given this, greater focus should be put on how to establish the procedural justice tenants in the limited amount of time available.
- The Pass/Fail aspect of the scenario does not seem conducive to using it as a teaching tool to promote widespread adoption of the tenants of procedural justice given the subjective nature of the topic. Instead, greater focus should be on how utilizing procedural justice will benefit the individual officers and the bureau.
- If the Pass/Fail grading of the scenario is retained, then it is recommended that the Training Division be candid and transparent with the individual officers regarding what they are trying accomplish, what metrics are being considered, what are the consequences of failing, and how it will improve the bureau. Given that this is a relatively new type of training for the bureau, at this stage the focus should be on bureau wide improvements rather than penalizing individual officers. Rather than focusing on what an officer might have done wrong, the focus of the debrief should be on what they can do better next time.
- The scenario seemed well thought out. Small details such as scattered hints that the driver was a veteran and the driver being played by actual veterans were appreciated. However, it was noted by some reviewers that there may have been too many visible hints that the driver was a veteran given that a focus of the training was building rapport giving people voice. It was also noted that the driver's military garb was out of date if the driver was supposed to be an Iraq War veteran.
- Concerns were raised that in most situations officers are likely not going to pull someone over for something like performing a rolling stop through a stop sign. Greater care can be made to better tie the scenario to the day to day carrying out of the officers' duties. For instance, it could be mentioned at the beginning of the scenario that the officer is in an area with a higher number of traffic accidents and fatalities, or one that would reasonably have characteristics that might be seen as potential threats by a veteran. Further details of the situation can also be provided at the beginning to paint a clearer picture for the officer.
- In the long-run the pre-scenario briefing would likely be better if it was in the form of a video showing the situation rather than a trainer telling the situation. In this case, the video could be from the prospective of the patrol car seeing the driver run the stop sign, beginning pursuit, and then the driver ignoring several opportunities to pull over. Policing is a detailed oriented field. A much larger number of details can be shown in a pre-briefing video.
- Concerns were raised that the scenario was not complicated enough to truly help drive home the tenants of procedural justice. A traffic stop for a low level citation was seen as a situation where an officer is more disposed to speak calmly to an agitated driver. It may be helpful to focus on more complicated situations, such as a rowdy individual in a café as described by members of the Training Division.

- It may be helpful to create a more detailed background for the driver. Though many of these details might never come up in the actual scenario, they will help the person playing the driver create a more nuanced and complete character. This is a common method used by actors.
- The Training Division needs to be careful to avoid procedural justice becoming officers following a script. Officers need to be able to utilize the tenants of procedural justice while also maintaining their own voice when dealing with the public, otherwise the efforts will not be seen as genuine. What the officer is saying needs to match their demeanor, tone, and body language.
- A greater focus needs to be on officers noticing the small nuances in their interactions with the public beyond what they say; such as their demeanor, tone, and body language. These small nuances, especially during the initial phases of an interaction, can significantly impact the quality of these interactions.
- One reviewer expressed reservations about the utilization of procedural justice as show in the scenario given that it went against their views that the best way to subdue illegal and possibly dangerous behavior is via no holds barred enforcement. Specifically, the reviewer took issue with citations for clearly illegal behavior, in this case running a stop sign, possibly not being issued depending upon the details of an individual's situation.

The TAC believes this course to be an excellent first step towards the institutionalization of procedural justice into the bureau's training and the day to day activities of its officers. The TAC looks forward to working further with the PPB further on such opportunities to improve the lives of officers and their interactions with the community they serve.

4. PPB Contacts

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