

# **INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL MINUTES**

December 20, 2007

**LOCATION:** 140 West Flagler Street, Conference Room 908  
Miami, Florida 33130

## **PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT**

Michael Band, Esq.  
Jean-Robert Lafortune  
Doris Shellow  
Julia Ferguson, Esq.

## **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Jorge Reynardus, Esq. Chairperson  
Julia Dawson, Esq., 1st Vice- Chairperson  
Moeiz Tapia, Ph.D. 2nd Vice- Chairperson  
Josefa Perez Velis, Esq.  
Glen Falk, Esq.

## **PANEL STAFF PRESENT**

Eduardo I. Diaz, Ph.D., Executive Director  
Carol Boersma, Executive Assistant to the Director  
Kristin Anderson, Conflict Resolution Specialist  
Anna Sidan, Conflict Resolution Specialist

## **AUDIENCE:**

**MDPD:** James K. Loftus, Assistant Director, Investigative Services; Major Tyrone White, Robbery Bureau Commander; Major Charles Nanny, Narcotics Bureau Commander; Sheila Thomas, Investigative Support Division Chief; Russell Fischer, Criminal Investigations Division Chief; Oscar Vigoa, Assistant Director, Departmental Services; Victor Ramirez, South Operations Chief; Randy Heller, North Operations Division Chief; Lt. Arnold Palmer, Robbery Bureau; Lt. Luis Almaguer, Robbery Bureau

**Community Advocacy:** Dr. Larry Capp, Executive Director; Amy Carswell; Edward Harris  
**Civilian Investigative Panel (CIP):** Don March

**Agenda Item #1) Call to Order.** Michael Band called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. and asked staff to call roll.

**Agenda Item #2) Approval and adoption of the minutes from November 29, 2007.** Doris Shellow moved to adopt minutes as written. Jean-Robert Lafortune seconded. The motion was passed unanimously, pending ratification at the next Panel meeting due to the lack of a quorum.

**Agenda Item #3) MDPD Presentation: Deployment of Enhancement Enforcement Units (RID and TNT).** AD Loftus gave the history of the Robbery Intervention Detail (RID). He stated that RID was put together in 1991 to impact the high number of robberies (8,827) and the geographic area where robberies were occurring. With RID the number of robberies came down. In 1997 RID became a permanent part of the Robbery Bureau. In 2006 there were 2,308 robberies; however in 2007 there were 384 more robberies than in 2006.

AD Loftus reported that MDPD looks at where and when these robberies occur on a weekly basis, and RID is deployed to the area of greatest need. Robberies usually decrease in the district where RID is deployed, and stay down for 2-3 weeks.

Officers who work on the RID squad are chosen on their ability to make good decisions and they are provided 40 hours of specialized training. Trainees are constantly vetted for their ability to use good judgment.

The Tactical Narcotic Team (TNT) receives many calls from “sources,” community leaders, citizens, community organizations, etc. regarding drug activity. MDPD looks at crimes in the areas where drugs are reported and then deploys TNT to the district where there is the most violent activity. Violent crimes increased this year with the exception of murders. The number of murders in unincorporated Miami-Dade County decreased for the last two years.

Both RID and TNT are proactive. They are out there, not to answer calls, but to drive robbery numbers and narcotics sales and purchases down. TNT made 20,732 citizen contacts in 2006 and less than 1% resulted in a complaint.

Mr. Lafortune reported that while the community appreciates the hard work of the police department, there have been four police shootings in the last few weeks, an indication that something is wrong. Mr. Lafortune reported that there is a “disconnect” between the Black community and the police. The Black community wants independent investigations of police shootings.

AD Loftus replied that there were three shootings; the fourth was actually an “in-custody death” following the use of a taser. AD Loftus reported that he attended a community forum in reference to the shootings because MDPD needs community involvement. People said they had information but they didn’t bring the information to the police. AD Loftus stated that the shootings are currently under criminal investigation by MDPD and the State Attorney’s Office. Following the criminal investigation, there is an administrative review. The RID program is also being reviewed to determine how violent confrontations can be avoided.

Mr. Band asked what happens when a complaint is made against a RID officer. Robbery Bureau Major Tyrone White responded that the complaint initially goes to Internal Affairs and is forwarded to him if it is a personnel complaint. The Robbery Bureau then investigates the complaint and a report is sent to Internal Affairs.

Dr Diaz inquired whether MDPD is collecting information about any differential impact on robberies from District crime suppression efforts versus RID efforts. AD Loftus replied that robbery statistics are not broken down that way.

Ms. Boersma asked if ride-alongs could be arranged for RID and TNT. The response was affirmative.

**Agenda Item # 4) Joint IRP and CRB Community Meeting.** Dr. Diaz stated that Dr. Capp and Amy Carswell are involved in planning the joint IRP and CRB community meetings.

He referred to the draft document entitled “IRP police the community wants project” document, which takes into consideration some of the comments made by Panel members last month. He invited Panel members to contact staff regarding any suggestions for the community meetings.

Dr. Diaz reported that staff is reviewing research as a consequence of informing Director Parker of the intent to do a series of meetings about the police the community wants. Director Parker encouraged the IRP to look at research coming out of the Police Executive Research Forum and other entities that address police/community issues.

Mr. Band suggested that this item stay on the agenda so that Panel Members can follow the planning and provide input.

**Agenda Item # 5) Executive Director’s Report.** Dr. Diaz reported that the IRP is fully staffed and that everyone is working well. He stated that Commissioner Jordan is exploring the possibility of re-visiting the issue of subpoena power for the IRP. Dr. Diaz also stated that he provided her with input as to where the IRP has stood on that issue before. Dr. Diaz stated that it is his understanding that Commissioner Jordan may present a proposal to the Health and Public Safety committee in January.

**Agenda Item # 7) Adjourn.** Doris Shellow made a motion to adjourn. Jean-Robert Lafortune seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.