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DOI'S OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR THE NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT RELEASES A REPORT AND ANALYSES ON THE NYPD'S CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM INITIATIVE

The Department of Investigation's ("DOI") Office of the Inspector General for the New York City Police Department ("OIG-NYPD") issued a Report today on its findings regarding the New York City Police Department's ("NYPD") current initiative on how officers should handle situations involving people in mental crisis. The investigation found that while NYPD has developed an effective Crisis Intervention Team ("CIT") training, shortcomings in NYPD's approach to CIT remain. Among the deficiencies, NYPD has not implemented and operationalized a full-scale CIT program that dispatches CIT-trained officers to mental health calls, has not created a dedicated staff to coordinate CIT efforts, and has not aligned NYPD policy with the goals and principles of NYPD's CIT training. NYPD has indicated that it is considering and discussing DOI's recommendations to improve this initiative. DOI has asked the NYPD to provide a concrete timeline of such changes within 90 days and will follow up thereafter.

The Report issued today documents the approximately 18-month, independent investigation into NYPD's CIT model, which provides officers with knowledge of the tactics that stabilize and de-escalate situations involving mental health crisis incidents. NYPD first began providing officers with CIT training in June 2015. As of December 2016, approximately 4,700 NYPD officers have completed the CIT training, representing 13% of all NYPD officers and 21% of the Department's patrol officers. However, NYPD has not created a mechanism to have the newly trained officers dispatched to situations where the training is needed.

DOI Commissioner Mark G. Peters said, "For NYPD to advance its policing in this critical area, it must implement an effective system for getting the newly trained officers to the situations where their training is most needed. Our independent investigation found that this is not yet happening and recommends practical ways to immediately improve NYPD's efforts in responding to incidents involving mental health crises. I'm pleased that the NYPD has agreed to continue tackling this issue."

Inspector General for the NYPD Philip K. Eure said, "NYPD has developed a strong CIT training, and we encourage NYPD to carry that initiative further and expand its training into a comprehensive CIT program to improve results for officers and the public alike. In particular, the Department needs to begin to actually assign CIT-trained officers to mental crisis incidents and create a real timeline for doing so."

The investigation included interviews with officials from NYPD and other city agencies, service providers, and advocacy groups, as well as reviews of CIT programs in other jurisdictions and U.S. Department of Justice consent decrees involving this issue and municipal police departments. OIG-NYPD also conducted

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a focus group with CIT-trained officers from NYPD precincts, bureaus, and units where there are frequent mental health calls for service. Finally, OIG-NYPD personnel attended four NYPD CIT trainings over the course of 15 months and analyzed dozens of NYPD policy and instruction documents related to encounters with persons in mental crisis.

OIG-NYPD's analysis resulted in several key findings, including:

- NYPD handles approximately 400 mental crisis calls a day, but has not taken steps to implement a dispatch system that ensures CIT-trained officers are consistently assigned to calls involving people in mental distress. NYPD's computer dispatch system is currently unable to identify officers who have undergone CIT training. As a result, whether a CIT-trained officer arrives at the scene of a crisis incident is left to random chance.
- NYPD has not updated its policies to align with its own CIT training. NYPD's current policies for responding to people in mental crisis focus on containment, placing individuals into custody, and tactics for dealing with potential violence from a person in crisis. CIT-trained officers learn additional tactics that can aid in de-escalating the encounter—reducing the likelihood of injury to officers and members of the public.
- NYPD has no dedicated personnel to coordinate NYPD's CIT efforts. NYPD lacks a staff member or unit charged with improving data collection and analysis, incorporating community and officer feedback, and aligning NYPD policy with NYPD training. These functions are currently fragmented between numerous NYPD units with no central coordinator.
- NYPD is not collecting or analyzing data about mental health incidents in an effective way. Currently, NYPD requires officers to use a variety of different forms depending on the outcome of the incident, none of which address the specifics of the mental health issues involved or the procedures used by the officers. As a result, NYPD cannot monitor officer compliance with CIT procedures nor track how CIT is working on the ground.

The Report includes 13 recommendations aimed at improving NYPD's approach to mental health incidents. Major recommendations include:

- NYPD should commit to creating a timeline for any changes to its CIT program within 90 days of the publication of this Report.
- NYPD should adjust its dispatch procedures so that officers with CIT training can actually be directed to crisis incidents.
- NYPD should create a dedicated mental health unit, or appoint a CIT coordinator whose primary responsibility is to manage all aspects of NYPD's CIT program.
- NYPD should revise its Patrol Guide to reflect the purpose and goals of a CIT program by requiring CIT-trained officers to use their CIT skills in the field and to respond to crisis incidents when practicable. The Patrol Guide should encourage officers, when appropriate, to resolve a crisis incident by using community and social services in place of emergency rooms or jail cells. The Patrol Guide should also provide guidance to non-CIT-trained officers and supervisors on how and when to request the assistance of CIT-trained officers.
- NYPD should develop a new, unified form that can capture detailed data on incidents involving people in crisis and should require that officers complete this form for all such incidents. NYPD should then use this form to analyze data about all of these incidents, including their nature, frequency, and disposition. This will help NYPD measure whether its CIT program is meeting the needs of the public.

CIT programs are used by more than 2,600 police departments throughout the country to improve outcomes for people in mental crises. The primary goals of a CIT model are: 1) to improve officer and public safety, by reducing the likelihood of use of force against people in crisis and 2) to reduce unnecessary arrests and incarceration by increasing opportunities for diversion to a range of mental health services. The U.S. Department of Justice frequently requires the implementation of a CIT program as part of federal consent decrees. Effective CIT programs include training that emphasizes de-escalation strategies through role-playing scenarios and a full-time, dedicated CIT staff to coordinate day-to-day operations and improvements to the program.

NYPD recently indicated it will be considering changes to its CIT effort, including how it dispatches officers to crisis calls and its policies governing interactions with people in mental crisis. DOI commends NYPD for recognizing the need to further enhance its CIT program, but the Department must develop specific timelines for implementing all of these critically important changes.

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The Office of the Inspector General for the NYPD (OIG-NYPD) is an oversight office charged with investigating, reviewing, studying, auditing, and making recommendations relating to the operations, policies, programs, and practices of the New York City Police Department (NYPD). The goals of OIG-NYPD are to enhance the effectiveness of the police department, increase public safety, protect civil liberties and civil rights, and increase the public's confidence in the police force, thus building stronger police-community relations. OIG-NYPD is part of the New York City Department of Investigation and is independent of the NYPD. Inspector General Eure reports to DOI Commissioner Peters.

The New York City Department of Investigation (DOI) is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country and is New York City's corruption watchdog. DOI investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official, or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City. DOI's strategy attacks corruption comprehensively, through systemic investigations that lead to high-impact arrests, preventive internal controls, and operational reforms that improve the way the City runs. Bribery and Corruption are a Trap. Don't Get Caught Up. Report It at 212-3-NYC-DOI. Learn more at www.nyc.gov/doi.

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