

# Memorandum



DATE: September 18, 2009

TO: Members of the Public Safety Committee

SUBJECT: **Crime Reporting Procedures**

Attached is briefing material on the “**Crime Reporting Procedures**” to be presented to the Members of the Public Safety Committee on Thursday, September 24, 2009.



Ryan S. Evans  
First Assistant City Manager

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Attachment

CC: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Dallas City Council  
Mary K. Suhm, City Manager  
Deborah Watkins, City Secretary  
Tom Perkins, City Attorney  
Craig Kinton, City Auditor  
Victor Lander, Administrative Municipal Judge  
Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager  
A.C. Gonzalez, Assistant City Manager  
Forest E. Turner, Assistant City Manager  
Dave K. Cook, Chief Financial Officer  
Helena Stevens-Thompson, Assistant to the City Manager Mayor/City Council



# Dallas Police Department Crime Reporting Procedures

Public Safety Committee

September 24, 2009



# Challenges with Crime Reports

- A review of offense reporting was conducted in January 2007 with the following findings:
  - Virtually any report of a crime was being made into a criminal offense report and counted toward crime statistics
  - Expeditors were taking offenses over the phone and no investigative follow-up occurred because offenses were suspended due to lack of workable leads
    - Resulted in a number of potentially fraudulent cases being reported
    - Offenses could not be unfounded by detectives for lack of information
  - DPD needed to improve its UCR reporting practices
    - Over reporting aggravated assaults
    - Time and Place Rule

# Crime Reporting Improvements

- Responses to the review began in April 2007
  - The UCR team was expanded to conduct a more thorough review of criminal offense reports
  - Revised Staff Review manual to reflect UCR guidelines
  - Revised DPD General Orders Section 210 as it relates to Offense Reporting
    - Gave officers and expeditors the ability to use reasonable belief as the standard for making offense reports
  - Trained all officers on evidence needed for aggravated assault offenses

# Crime Reporting Improvements

- Introduced the Auto Theft Affidavit in June 2007
  - Officers were dispatched to all reports of stolen vehicles
  - Citizen is presented an Auto Theft Affidavit to complete
    - Citizen must attest that the vehicle has been stolen and not loaned or bartered in any way
    - Citizen must agree to participate in the prosecution of any suspect arrested for the theft of their vehicle
    - If the citizen refuses an offense report is not made

# Crime Reporting Improvements

- Expeditors were provided training on preparing a preliminary report (“investigation of”) of BMV and theft claims in March 2008
  - BMV with no damage, no ransacking or other evidence of crime except citizen statement was made a preliminary report
  - Thefts of single objects with no evidence except citizen statement were entered as preliminary reports
  - Citizen was advised to contact detective with further info
  - Detectives were trained to attempt contact with citizens to confirm report
  - Confirmed reports were changed to criminal offenses

# Crime Reporting Improvements

- In September 2008 officers were given the ability to complete preliminary burglary reports
  - Officers utilize their investigative training to develop a professional opinion on whether to create a preliminary report or a criminal offense report
  - Completion of criminal offense report should be based on the officers reasonable belief that a crime occurred
  - Detective still required to attempt contact with citizen
- In February 2009 officers are allowed to make preliminary reports for any offense
  - Officers must articulate the reasons why they do not believe an offense has occurred

# Crime Reporting Improvements

- Based on deficiencies recently discovered in application of the preliminary reports for BMV and thefts, the following steps are being enacted by October 15th:
  - All preliminary reports created by expeditors are being reviewed and complainants contacted by mail to determine if they should be changed to criminal offense reports
  - Expeditors will no longer make BMV reports by phone
  - Officers will be dispatched to Burglary of Motor Vehicles calls
  - Officers will provide a BMV/Theft Form to complainant to complete
    - This form will be similar to the one already in use for vehicle thefts
- DPD responded to all media requests throughout this process and media reports regularly detailed DPD progress



# Questions?