

INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

PEACE OFFICER NAME: Christopher W. Allen-Young

POST ID NUMBER: C46-H76

EMPLOYING AGENCY: Torrance Police Department

POST CASE NUMBER: POST2305111

WRITTEN BY: LEC Robert Bringolf

DATE: 04/11/2025

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I. Executive Summary

This case was submitted by the Torrance Police Department (TPD) which alleged the subject officer, Officer Christopher W. Allen-Young, hereinafter, "Respondent," was involved in serious misconduct when he sent text messages that contained racist, homophobic and transphobic sentiments which demonstrated his bias and inability to fairly and impartially perform his duties as a peace officer.

II. Background Information

a. Identity of Respondent

At the time of the events at issue, Respondent was employed as a Police Officer with the TPD. The Respondent was terminated from the TPD on January 5th, 2023.

b. Respondent's Service Record, Relevant Training, and Prior Complaints and Discipline[1]

When evaluating whether suspension or revocation is appropriate, Penal Code section 13510.8(c)(5) and California Regulation section 1213(a)(5) authorize the Commission to consider Respondent's prior conduct, discipline and service record. The relevance and weight the Commission may choose to assign to a peace officer's prior conduct and service record will depend on the facts in each case.

Respondent had no disciplinary actions on file with the Torrance Police Department and his most recent performance review indicated that his performance was generally meeting standards or above standards.

[1] In addition to the discipline summarized here, Respondent is the subject officer in five (5) other serious misconduct allegations, which the Torrance Police Department reported to POST. As of the date of the Investigative Summary and Recommendation in the present case (POST2305111) some, but not all, of the five unrelated cases remain open with the Division. The Division stands ready to provide additional details about these other allegations; however, the allegations are unrelated to the facts in the present case and were not relied upon in making the Division's recommendation here.

While employed as a peace officer, or deputy trainee, Respondent received the following training relevant to this allegation:

- Workplace Harassment Prevention – 8 hours – 11/20/2013
- Cultural Diversity – 8 hours – 03/07/2014
- Basic Police Academy
- Racial Profiling
- Racial Profiling Update – 4 Hours – 03/12/2019

c. Prior Employment History

Respondent began his law enforcement career with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department as a deputy trainee on November 18, 2013; he was promoted to deputy sheriff on April 6, 2014. Respondent's last day as a deputy sheriff at Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, April 24, 2017, was his first day as a police officer at the Torrance Police Department.[2]

d. Peace Officer Certification

Respondent is assigned POST ID C46-H76. He received the following peace officer certificates from the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST):

- Basic #179956 (Issued: April 21, 2015)

e. The Present Allegations of Serious Misconduct

1. ***Penal Code Section 13510.8(b)(5), as clarified by Commission Regulation 1205(a)(5)[3] – Demonstrating Bias:***

[2] Respondent's EDI Report
[3] See 11 Cal. Code Regs. § 1205(a)(5) (as modified on April 18, 2024).

(a)(5) Demonstrating bias on the basis of actual or perceived race, national origin, religion, gender identity or expression, housing status, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, or other protected status in violation of law or department policy or inconsistent with a peace officer's obligation to carry out their duties in a fair and unbiased manner. This paragraph does not limit an employee's rights under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

(A) An officer is "demonstrating" bias for purposes of this Regulation when the officer either shows or displays, by words, actions or other conduct, prejudice, intolerance, contempt, or hatred towards one or more persons due to that person's membership within a class of persons identified in Penal Code section 13510.8(b)(5), when such words, actions or other conduct would lead a reasonable person to conclude that the officer has not fairly and impartially performed, or will not fairly and impartially perform, their law enforcement duties.

(B) An officer engaging in racial profiling in violation of Penal Code section 13519.4 is demonstrating bias because profiling casts suspicion on a class of people without individualized suspicion as to the person being stopped.

III. Investigative Methodology

This report summarizes the findings related to allegations of serious misconduct. This investigation was conducted in accordance with the regulations and policies of POST. The investigation included the review of TPD's administrative investigation which

contained interviews of witness officers and the subject officer. The TPD also provided the Peace Officer Standards Accountability Division (Division) the raw data seized from the cellular telephones of other Torrance Police Officers during a criminal investigation.

Information obtained was analyzed using the clear and convincing evidence standard. For purposes of this report, clear and convincing evidence means "evidence of a charge is clear and convincing so long as there is a 'high probability' that the charge is true. The evidence need not establish a fact beyond a reasonable doubt."

This report is necessarily summary in nature and does not include every fact or issue that might be found in the underlying investigation and attachments.[4] It does, however, contain reference to that evidence that I believe establishes the requisite facts, and proves the serious misconduct charged, by clear and convincing evidence.

IV. Factual Summary

On March 26, 2023, Torrance Police Department (TPD) reported allegations of serious misconduct against Respondent to POST pursuant to California Penal Code Section 13510.9(a)(3). The allegations stemmed from the discovery of homophobic, transphobic and racist texts sent between members of the TPD between May 2018 and February 2022.

On January 27, 2020, two other Torrance Police Officers, Christopher Tomsic and Cody Weldin, were the subject of a criminal investigation wherein it was alleged they had

[4] The Division, as described further below, received information concerning approximately 390 messages exchanged between several peace officers. Respondent both received and responded to a certain subset of these 390 messages. The Division also reviewed instances where Respondent's words, acts or other conduct did **not** demonstrate bias by clear and convincing evidence. The Division's Investigative Summary and Findings in this case does not attempt to summarize every single instance in which Respondent sent or received a message, however. Instead, the Division's Investigative Summary and Findings addresses specific messages where Respondent's words, acts or other conduct demonstrated bias within the meaning of Penal Code section 13510.8(b)(5).

vandalized an arrestee's vehicle by, among other means, spray painting a swastika and a smiley face on the interior of the arrestee's vehicle during an inventory/search.[5]

As a result of the criminal investigation, Torrance Police Detectives obtained a search warrant for Tomsic's and Weldin's DNA and their personally owned cellular telephones.

The data from the cellular telephones was provided to an analyst at the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office for review and with the intent to determine whether the two suspect officers had any ties to white supremacy.

During the review of the data, the District Attorney's analyst discovered around 390 messages that were believed to contain or reference antisemitic, homophobic, racist, or transphobic remarks. Those messages were sent between Tomsic, Weldin and several other officers, including Respondent.

On **February 14, 2019**, in a WhatsApp group chat with 14 other members of the Torrance Police Department, Respondent sent a meme[6] of David Chapelle that said, "When your GF is fucking a black guy, so you break a [taillight] on his car so the police stop him & shoot him." At the bottom of the picture it said, "Modern problems require modern solutions."

On **March 31, 2019**, in a direct text to Officer Weldin, Respondent texted, "Moon cricket[7] hunting!!!!" Officer Weldin responded, "They're chirping for sure."

[5] On Thursday April 10, 2025, Officers Tomsic and Weldin plead guilty to felony vandalism. They will spend two years on probation and must give up their right to serve as law enforcement officers in California as well as complete 100 hours of community service and 15 hours of anti-racism training.

[6] An image, video, piece of text, etc., typically humorous in nature, that is copied and spread rapidly by internet users, often with slight variations.

[7] "Moon Cricket is a racial slur against black people. The exact origin is obscure. One theory suggests it began with US slaves, who sang as a pastime – an act of community and resistance- at night after their labor – Source: dictionary.com

Respondent was on duty at the time of this message. As such, the indication was that Respondent was out patrolling, which he referred to as "Moon cricket hunting".

On **December 19, 2019**, Officer Weldin texted Respondent directly, "What's up monkey thumper." Respondent replied, "Hahaha, what's up bud."

On April 26, 2022, Respondent was interviewed as part of a large-scale internal affairs investigation stemming from the discovery of the above-mentioned messages. During the interview Respondent was advised of his Constitutional Rights per 3303(h) of the Government Code. Respondent invoked his right to remain silent and was compelled to provide a statement. A sergeant from TPD admonished Respondent pursuant to *Lybarger*[8] and then the interview continued.

During the internal affairs investigation Respondent provided his cellular telephone number to the investigator[9]. Respondent advised he did not have another phone number while he worked for TPD and possessed that phone number for the previous ten years[10]. Respondent told investigators that he did not allow others to send text messages from his phone and that he used the cell phone to send and receive text messages to and from Torrance Police Department co-workers.

City of Torrance and TPD Policies

Penal Code Section 13510.8(b)(5) and Commission Regulation 1205(a)(5) both establish that the demonstration of bias in violation of department policy constitutes serious misconduct. The City of Torrance and the TPD enforce several policies relating to the

[8] *Lybarger v. City of Los Angeles,* 40 Cal. 3d 825 (1985).
[9] Respondent Transcripts 4/26/22 Interview Pg 10.
[10] Respondent Transcripts 4/26/22 Transcript Pgs 10-11.

conduct of their employees. What follows is a summary of some of the most relevant policies which relate directly to Respondent's conduct in this case:

- The Law Enforcement code of Ethics, Policy 104 states "I WILL keep my private life unsullied as an example to all…. I RECOGNIZE the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the police service."

- The City's Anti-Harassment Policy 34.10a, Protected Classifications prohibits harassment or discrimination because of an individual's protected classification. This classification includes race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age for individuals over 40 years of age, military and veteran status, and sexual orientation. Harassment can consist of virtually any form or combination of verbal, physical, visual or hostile work environment conduct. It need not be explicit, nor even specifically directed at the victim.

- The City's Anti-Harassment Policy 34.10d, Visual or Written Harassment prohibits the display or circulation of offensive or derogatory visual or written material related to race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age for individuals over 40 years of age, military and veteran status, and sexual orientation. This may include, but is not limited to, posters, cartoons, drawings, graffiti, reading materials, computer graphics or electronic media transmissions.

- The City's Anti-Harassment Policy 134.05 requires that all City employees shall immediately report any evidence of discriminatory harassment or complaints regarding sexual harassment made to them or which they have

directly observed whether or not reported by the employee who is the object of the harassment to their supervisor, manager, or to the Human Resources Division.

- The City's Anti-Harassment Policy 134.15 states it is the employee's responsibility to report any conduct which fits the definition of discriminatory harassment to their immediate supervisor or appropriate authority figure.

- General Orders 1.10.3(B), 2.01.1(A), 2.33.1(D) explain the Department's philosophy and expectations of personnel in their service to the community. Section 1.10.3(B) Service to the Community, emphasizes the rules and regulations of the Department such as maintaining a professional attitude and demeanor that will not in any manner communicate any personal prejudices. In addition, members of the Department shall avoid behavior which would tend to bring about criticism of the Department. Conduct, whether on or off duty, shall be such as to merit the respect and confidence of the public. General Order 2.01.1(A) explains it is the duty of all employees to familiarize themselves with and abide by Department rules and regulations. Employees who fail to comply are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. General Order 2.33.1(D) defines prohibited speech, expression, and conduct which tends to compromise or damage the mission, function, reputation, or professionalism of the TPD or its employees, such as speech or expression that could reasonably be foreseen as having a negative impact on the credibility of the employee as a witness, and additionally speech or expression that is contrary to the Mission Statement or Core Values of the TPD.

- TPD policies 319.4, 319.5.7(i), 319.5.8, 319.5.9, 401.2, 401.3, 1021.4 - TPD Policy Manual 319.5.8(i) prohibits any act on or off duty that brings discredit to the department. TPD Policy 319.5.9(g) prohibits the use of

obscene, indecent, profane or derogatory language while on duty or in uniform; and 319.5.9(m) prohibits any other on duty or off duty conduct which any member knows or reasonably should know is unbecoming a member of the department, is contrary to good order, efficiency or morale, or tends to reflect unfavorably upon this department or its members. Furthermore, TPD Policy Manual 401.2 states the TPD is committed to providing law enforcement services to the community with due regard for the racial, cultural or other differences of those served. It is the policy of the TPD to provide law enforcement services and to enforce the law equally, fairly, and objectively and without discrimination toward any individual group. TPD Policy Manual 401.3 prohibits bias based policing.

On January 5, 2023, the City of Torrance, CA sent Respondent a letter of intent to terminate his employment as a police officer with TPD. In the letter, authored by then-Assistant City Manager Danny E. Santana, Respondent's involvement in the above-listed messages was classified as racist, and TPD terminated Respondent based on Respondent's violation of several Torrance Police Department Policies.

On May 8, 2023, The Commission on POST's Assistant Executive Director, Annemarie Del Mugnaio issued an immediate temporary suspension for Respondent's POST Basic Certification.

V. Analysis and Findings

a. Establishing Jurisdiction

The Commission on POST may initiate proceedings to revoke or suspend a peace officer's certification for conduct which occurred before January 1, 2022

if the employing agency makes a final determination regarding its investigation of the misconduct after January 1, 2022.[11]

The final determination in this allegation of serious misconduct resulted in Respondent's termination, which occurred on January 5, 2023.[12] The investigation was still ongoing after January 1, 2022 as evidenced by Respondent's internal affairs investigation interview on April 26, 2022.[13] Because the TPD made its final determination regarding its investigation of Respondent after January 1, 2022, the Commission on POST has jurisdiction to consider this serious misconduct action.

b. Does the alleged conduct violate Penal Code 13510.8(b)(5) and California Regulation 1205(a)(5) – Demonstration of bias on the basis of race?

When analyzing the serious misconduct allegation of Penal Code section 13510.8(b)(5) and Regulation 1205(a)(5), "demonstrating bias," the Division evaluates whether the subject officer, through words, action or other conduct showed prejudice, intolerance, contempt or hatred towards a protected class of persons. If the subject officer did show prejudice, intolerance, contempt or hatred towards a protected class of persons, the Division then considers whether the words, action or conduct would lead a reasonable person to conclude that the officer has not or will not fairly and impartially perform the officer's law enforcement duties. If so, serious misconduct is shown if the officer's words, action or conduct either: 1) violates applicable law, 2) violates department policy, or 3) is inconsistent with the officer's obligation to carry out the officer's duties in a fair and unbiased manner.

[11] California Penal Code 13510.8(g)(1)(B).
[12] Termination letter dated January 5, 2023, Pg 1.
[13] Compendium file, Respondent's Interview Transcripts.

During the analysis of each instance of potentially biased behavior, the conduct was analyzed based on the above guidelines to determine whether the allegation of bias was true to a clear and convincing standard.

Regarding the **February 14, 2019** WhatsApp message between Respondent and 14 other members of the Torrance Police Department in which Respondent sent a "Modern problems require modern solutions" image meme of Dave Chapelle that said, "When your GF is fucking a black guy, so you break a [taillight] on his car so the police will stop him & shoot him." The Division finds this message was inherently offensive and racist. Respondent's conduct in sending the image meme message showed prejudice toward a protected class of persons. Respondent's message violated several of the Torrance Police Department's policies, including but not limited to: TPD's Anti-Harassment Policies (34.10 through 34.25, and 134.05 through 134.20), and General Orders 1.10.1, 1.10.3(B) and 2.33.1(D).[14] A reasonable person would conclude that Respondent's conduct demonstrates that he has not or will not fairly and impartially perform his law enforcement duties when interacting with certain protected classes of persons in the Torrance community. Accordingly, the Division finds that Respondent demonstrated bias within the meaning of Penal Code section 13510.8(b)(5) when he sent the image meme of Dave Chapelle.

Regarding the **March 31, 2019** text message between Respondent and Officer Weldin in which Respondent was on duty and wrote, "Moon cricket hunting!!!!," and Officer Weldin responded, "They're chirping for sure." The exchange between Officer Weldin and Respondent is inherently offensive and racist. Respondent's conduct, in sending the message "Moon cricket hunting!!!!" violated several of the Torrance Police Department's policies, including but not

[14] See Attachment G - Torrance Policies.

limited to: TPD's Anti-Harassment Policies (34.10 through 34.25, and 134.05 through 134.20), and General Orders 1.10.1, 1.10.3(B) and 2.33.1(D).[15] Even when viewed in the light most favorable to Respondent, his racist epithet used to describe members of the Torrance community who might be subject to enforcement action from the Torrance Police Department necessarily erodes the public's confidence in Respondent's ability to fairly perform his law enforcement duties. A reasonable person would conclude that Respondent's message shows Respondent has not or will not fairly and impartially perform his law enforcement duties when interacting with certain protected classes of persons in the Torrance community, specifically because, "hunting" indicates that Respondent is targeting a certain demographic for enforcement action because of their race. Accordingly, the Division finds that Respondent demonstrated bias within the meaning of Penal Code section 13510.8(b)(5) when he wrote: "Moon cricket hunting!!!!"

Regarding the **December 19, 2019** text in which Officer Weldin texted Respondent directly, "What's up monkey thumper." Where Respondent replied, "Hahaha what's up bud.": This message is another example of the use of a racist epithet and an indication of a use of force on a protected class of persons. Respondent's response and involvement in this message exchange violated several of the Torrance Police Department's policies, including but not limited to: TPD's Anti-Harassment Policy (34.10 through 34.25, and 134.05 through 134.20), and General Orders 1.10.1, 1.10.3(B) and 2.33.1(D). While the racist epithet was not used by Respondent, his reply to Officer Weldin indicates a tacit approval of the use of dehumanizing and racist language and shows intolerance and prejudice toward black people. When reading this text exchange, a reasonable person would conclude that Respondent cannot or will

[15] See Attachment G - Torrance Policies.

not fairly and impartially perform his duties as a law enforcement officer. The message exchange also implies that Officer Weldin is indicating Respondent is known for using physical force against black people, or that using physical force against black people is a foregone conclusion between these two officers. Accordingly, the Division finds that Respondent demonstrated bias within the meaning of Penal Code section 13510.8(b)(5) when he wrote: "Hahaha what's up bud" in response to a message in which Officer Weldin called Respondent a "monkey thumper."

These types of statements violate several department policies and discredit the Torrance Police Department in potentially irreparable ways. Respondent's remarks also violated several of the Torrance Police Department's policies. Respondent's text messages and responses would lead a reasonable person to conclude that Respondent has not or will not fairly and impartially perform his law enforcement duties. Accordingly, the Division finds that Respondent demonstrated bias within the meaning of Penal Code section 13510.8(b)(5) and Regulation 1205(a)(5).

VI. Supporting Evidence and Documentation

Attachment "A" – Executive Review and Peace Officer Standards Accountability Division Recommendation

Attachment "B" - Respondent's EDI Report

Attachment "C" – Letter of Termination.

Attachment "D" - Respondent Transcripts 4/26/22 Interview Pg 10

Attachment "E" - Respondent Transcripts 4/25/22 Transcript Pg 11

Attachment "F"- Text messages –sorted by date

Attachment "G" - Applicable Torrance Policies

VII. Findings

Based on the evidence that Respondent sent discriminatory messages in violation of TPD policies, and because a reasonable person would conclude that Respondent has not or will not perform his duties fairly and impartially as a result, the Division finds there is clear and convincing evidence that Respondent engaged in serious misconduct, to wit demonstrating bias in violation of Penal Code section 13510.8(b)(5) and Commission Regulation 1205(a)(5). Therefore, reasonable grounds exist to submit this case to the Peace Officer Standards Accountability Advisory Board and the POST Commission for consideration of suspension or revocation of Respondent's POST certification in accordance with the Executive Review and Peace Officer Standards Accountability Division Recommendation.[16]

[16] See Attachment A.