



City of La Porte

Established 1892

Police Department

Recognized as a Best Practices Agency by
the Texas Association of Police Chiefs



February 14, 2019

To: La Porte City Council

Thru: Corby Alexander, City Manager

From: Ron Parker, Chief of Police

Subject: Racial Profiling Report for the La Porte Police Department

Honorable Council Members:

The following report is provided in accordance with Article 2.132 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedures. The Code requires that the police department annually report, to its governing body, data collected on the race or ethnicity of individuals contacted on all motor vehicle stops, regardless of the enforcement action taken. Reporting must take place on or before March 1st of each year.

The following report meets this requirement by providing a detailed analysis of the La Porte Police Department's policies, training, and statistical information on racial profiling for the year 2018. To assist City Council in their examination of the included data, detailed demographic data has also been provided relating to the City of La Porte, Harris County, and the State of Texas. For the purposes of this report and analysis, the following definition of racial profiling is used: *racial profiling means a law enforcement-initiated action based on an individual's race, ethnicity, or national origin rather than on the individual's behavior or on information identifying the individual as having engaged in criminal activity (Texas CCP Article 3.05).*

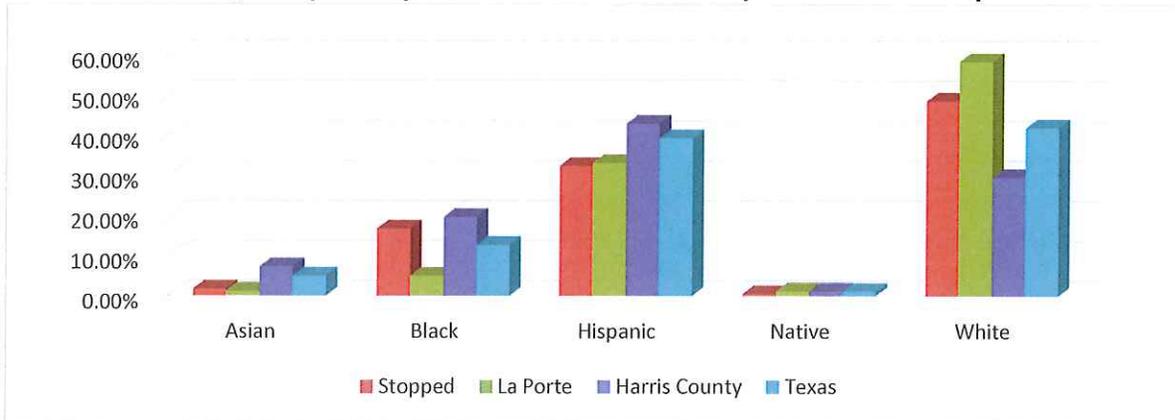
La Porte Police Department Policy/ Training on Racial Profiling

A review of La Porte Police Department Policy 314 and 401.2.6 provide evidence that the department has adopted policies in compliance with Article 2.132 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. There are several specific requirements mandated by Article 2.132 that a law enforcement agency's Racial Profiling Policy must address. Each of these requirements are covered in the La Porte Police Department's Racial Profiling Policy, which provides clear direction that any form of racial profiling is prohibited and that officers found engaging in inappropriate profiling may be disciplined up to and including termination. The regulations also provide a very clear statement of the agency's philosophy regarding equal treatment of all persons regardless of race or ethnicity. All members of the La Porte Police Department have received formal training required by the State of Texas relating to Racial Profiling and have been provided, and signed for copies of the departmental policy in question. Additionally, the policy is required to be reviewed with all employees by supervisors on a bi-annual basis.

La Porte Police Department Statistical Data on Racial Profiling

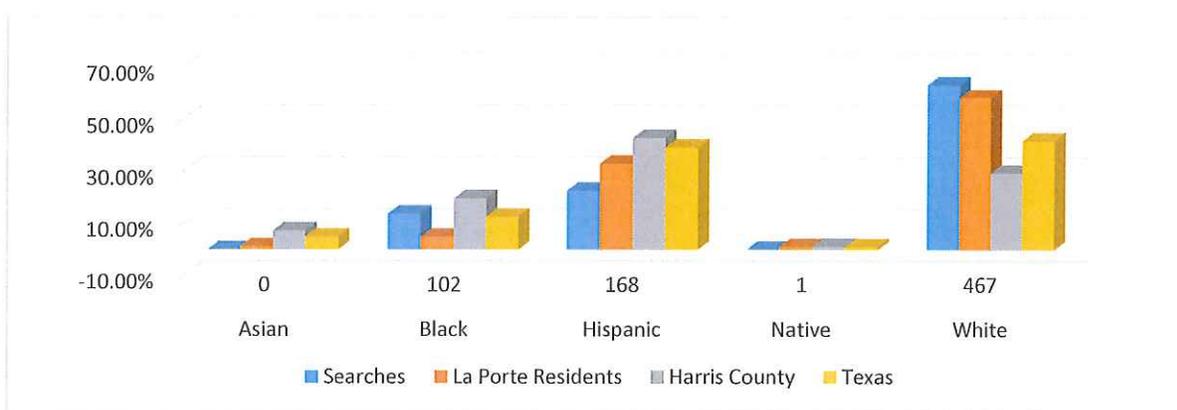
In accordance with Departmental Policy, Officers of La Porte Police Department submitted statistical information on all motor vehicle stops in 2018 and accompanying information on the race of the person contacted. This data has been aggregated and is presented in the following tables, accompanied by relevant information on searches, arrests, and demographic information.

Percentage Stops Compared with Overall Race Representation in Population



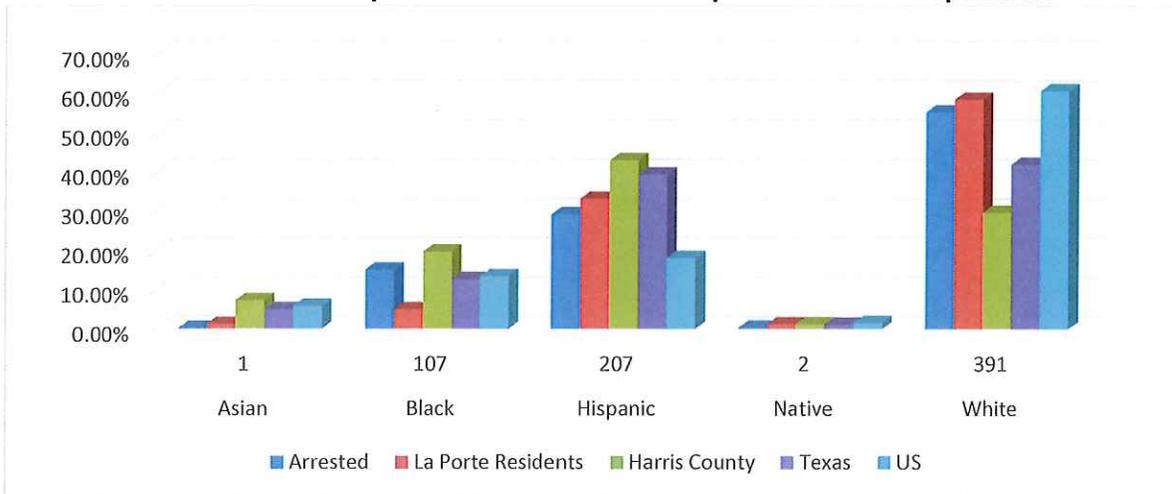
Race	La Porte PD Stops	LPPD Percent Stopped by Race	La Porte Population Representation	Harris County Population Representation	Texas Population Representation
Asian	387	1.67%	1.20%	7.30%	5.00%
Black	3889	16.74%	5.00%	19.70%	12.70%
Hispanic	7543	32.47%	33.20%	43.00%	39.40%
Native	109	0.47%	1.20%	1.20%	1.10%
White	11301	48.65%	58.50%	29.70%	42.00%
Total	23229	100%	99.10%	100.90%	100.20%

LPPD Searches Compared with Overall Race Representation in Population



Race	LPPD Searches	La Porte PD Percent Searched by Race	La Porte Population Representation	Harris County Population Representation	Texas Population Representation
Asian	0	0.00%	1.20%	7.30%	5.00%
Black	102	13.82%	5.00%	19.70%	12.70%
Hispanic	168	22.76%	33.20%	43.00%	39.40%
Native	1	0.14%	1.20%	1.20%	1.10%
White	467	63.28%	58.50%	29.70%	42.00%
Total	738	100.00%	99.10%	100.90%	100.20%

LPPD Arrests Compared with Overall Race Representation in Population



Race	LPPD Arrests	La Porte PD Percent Arrested by Race	La Porte Population Representation	Harris County Population Representation	Texas Population Representation
Asian	0.14%	1.20%	7.30%	5.00%	5.80%
Black	15.11%	5.00%	19.70%	12.70%	13.40%
Hispanic	29.24%	33.20%	43.00%	39.40%	18.10%
Native	0.28%	1.20%	1.20%	1.10%	1.50%
White	55.23%	58.50%	29.70%	42.00%	60.70%
Total	100.00%	99.10%	100.90%	100.20%	99.50%

The above statistics seem to indicate that black drivers were contacted, searched, and arrested incident to motor vehicle stops at a rate higher than the percentage of their respective residency within the City of La Porte, but at a lower rate than the percentage of their respective residency within the greater Harris County Region. As such, while noticeable, easy determinations regarding whether or not La Porte officers have “racially profiled” a given motorist are difficult given the fact that many drivers stopped by police officers are not residents of La Porte and may be traveling within or through the City from other areas of the county/state/country. As detailed above, these areas are much more highly represented by minority populations and may therefore account for larger percentages of non-resident motor vehicle operators, making comparisons relating strictly to La Porte area populations impractical.

In the interest of being thorough, the police department made a statistical analysis of the data in order to determine actual motor vehicle stops of La Porte residents, along with respect to percentages by driver’s race. Findings revealed, that overall, approximately 20% of all motor vehicle stops conducted by LPPD involved La Porte residents. This equates, approximately, to only one of every five motor vehicle stops conducted, involved local residents. Otherwise stated, 80% of all motor vehicle stops made by La Porte Police Officers involved drivers who do not live in the City of La Porte. Furthermore, when broken down by driver race, the majority of stops were overwhelmingly white drivers (69%). The remaining breakdown by race, regarding La Porte

residents stopped by La Porte Police Officers in 2018, were as follows: Hispanic – 17% black - 13%; Asian - 0.75%; Native American – 0.19%.

Additionally, the absence of any verifiable race/ethnicity data on the driver's license is troubling given the possibility that officers may misclassify individuals. This is a particular problem when dealing with citizens who are of mixed racial decent. As such, the validity of any racial/ethnic disparities discovered in the aggregate level data becomes threatened in direct proportion to the number of subjective "guesses" officers are forced to make when trying to determine an individual's racial/ethnic background. This may account for why Hispanic drivers are represented at a rate far lower than local, county, and state population projections, while Caucasian and Black drivers are more highly represented. In other words, officers may, for example, be listing mixed race drivers as being Caucasian or Black, when these individuals may, for census purposes, have identified themselves as Hispanic.

Finally, it is important to note that the included census data represents U.S. Census population figure estimates according to Demographic Profile Data of General Population and Housing Characteristics representing all age groups, yet does not take into account a specific combination of age and race regarding the percentage of the drivers who were actually stopped. Additionally, while population figure estimates are represented here, updates of the actual demographic statistics for the year 2018 are not yet available.

Still, the La Porte Police Department is committed to providing public safety without bias of any type and will continue to closely track, monitor, and regulate employee activities in order to ensure that biased-based policing does not occur. A review of internal administrative records indicated that during 2018 the department received no motor vehicle stop complaints that could be categorized as involving some type of racial profiling allegation.

In summary, the foregoing analysis shows that the La Porte Police Department is fully in compliance with all relevant Texas laws concerning racial profiling, including the existence of a formal policy prohibiting racial profiling by its officers, officer training, and the collection of data in compliance with the law. As a result of this analysis, and the listed statistics, it is my belief that the officers of the La Porte Police Department are operating appropriately and without bias relating to individual violator race, ethnicity, or national origin.

Respectfully Submitted,



Ron Parker
Chief of Police