

Sussex County Southeast Regional Accountability Committee
Quarterly Meeting August 14, 2025, 1 PM
Dagsboro Fire Department, 28331 Clayton St, Dagsboro, DE 19939

Voting Members Present: Chairperson Gayle Marie Brown Driver, Esq., Ms. Lauren Weaver, Ms. Claudia Rodgers, Esq., Mr. Ed Klima, Mr. Gregory Flynn, Mr. Denny Pridgeon, Mr. Scott Mumford, Ms. Holly Stiles, Mr. Tom Glenn, Ms. Diana Barrientos-Granados, and Mr. Scott Smith.

Non-Voting Members Present: Chief Jason Lovins, Chief Ken McLaughlin, Chief Nicholas Disciullo, Chief Brian Wilson, and Lt. Cliff Dempsey representing Dewey Beach.

Members Absent: Chief Constance Speake, Chief Michael Morrissey.

1. CALL TO ORDER/Pledge of Allegiance

2. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Minutes from May 8, 2025, meeting were approved unanimously and are available on the PAC website [SCSRPAC.com](https://www.scsrpa.com).

4. PRESENTATION

Chairperson Driver said she planned for all PAC meetings to include some type of presentation, tour, or guest speaker. This meeting's presentation was the use of the Wrap restraint device. Ocean View Police Department's Handcuffing and Restraint Policy was sent to PAC members to read before the meeting. Chief McLaughlin introduced Sgt. Rhys Bradshaw and Sgt. Justin Hopkins who would do the demonstration. Chief McLaughlin explained how difficult it can be to restrain someone against their will especially when they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. A spit guard is used along with the Wrap so Sgt. Hopkins put the spit guard on Kendahl Hearn and took her oxygen levels before and after to show the guard did not affect her breathing.

Mr. Flynn volunteered to have the Wrap used on him. Sgt. Hopkins explained that the Wrap is used when someone is violent or combative, they are a danger to others or themselves, and other methods have been exhausted. Officers had Mr. Flynn lie face down on a mat and demonstrated how 2 officers would administer the Wrap, always being sure the restrained subject is able to breathe properly. The Wrap has four components; ankle wrap, leg wrap, harness, and helmet. Once the Wrap was fully in place, Mr. Flynn was sitting up on the mat and he said he was surprisingly comfortable in the device. Sgt. Hopkins said he was skeptical about the use of the device when he first saw it but that they used it the first night they had it and have found it very useful. Chief McLaughlin said in actual use, the device only takes under a minute to administer, it is very safe, and the alternative would be use of force. The Wrap is also used as a medical restraint for subjects who are combative and need to be treated by EMS. Various

questions were asked and answered about the device. Chairperson Driver mentioned that officers receive ongoing training in the use of this and other tools and that this is a humane way to restrain someone. She hopes these types of demonstrations help committee members to better understand why devices like this are used and to pass this information on to members of the community. She asked members to let her know if there are other demonstrations they would like to see.

5. UPDATE ON REQUIRED 20 HOURS TRAINING

Chairperson Driver reported that two members stepped down from the committee; one due to health issues, and one due to time constraints. All of the members who have been on the committee more than one year have completed their required 20 hours training. She encouraged members to continue to work with their police departments.

6. OPEN DISCUSSION

Chairperson Driver mentioned that accreditation has been a big concern for departments and asked Chiefs to speak on that topic. Chief McLaughlin said all departments in Delaware must be accredited by 2028. OVPD recently completed its three-year reaccreditation. OVPD has MOU's with some of the neighboring agencies to use OVPD's detention facility. Some departments have had to make major changes to pass accreditation. POST continues to update standards and it is an ongoing process. Chief McLaughlin also spoke about a national decertification list that would identify officers who have been dismissed from service by other states. Delaware also requires police applicants to undergo psychological and background checks before joining a department even if they are already a certified police officer. He said it has been a busy summer and noted the increase in traffic this year.

Chairperson Driver mentioned that committee members should go to town meetings, especially when police department funding is discussed.

Chief Disciullo said Dagsboro Police Department now has a certified firearms instructor and they have a tentative on-site evaluation date for accreditation of December 3rd and they will be using Millsboro Police Department's detention facility until their new building is completed. He noted that POST just added two new standards.

Chief Lovins said it has been a busy summer. South Bethany Police Department is scheduled to have their on site accreditation August 27th. He mentioned that accreditation is very time-consuming and expensive and also that police salaries are going up all the time. He hopes to hire someone to help with accreditation.

Lt. Dempsey was representing Dewey Beach in Chief Speake's place. He said when he was assigned to handle his departments accreditation, he had to start from scratch creating all new policies with the help of Lexipol. He is solely in charge of accreditation and they are going through accreditation with their old building while their new building is being built so that is a challenge. He said they had a great summer. They were busy but did not have as many significant events.

Chief Wilson said Selbyville is tentatively scheduled for their on site accreditation visit the end of September. They share a former bank building with the town hall and have to work out some things to be in compliance with accreditation. He said they are upgrading their fleet which is very expensive and are also upgrading some other equipment. They have a recruit graduating from the Academy in September and are still hiring.

There was discussion about police departments applying for grants for funding.

Chief McLaughlin mentioned that Chief Morrissey couldn't attend today because he was the only officer on the road. Fenwick Island had their on site accreditation visit in July and will be officially accredited at the quarterly DPAC meeting in October in Dover. PAC members are welcome to attend that meeting and will be notified when the meeting is scheduled. DPAC meetings are also available online.

Ms. Weaver asked if police departments are using artificial intelligence (AI) and if there are policies in place on the use of AI. Chief McLaughlin said they are using it in small ways and policies will be necessary at some point. He said there is technology where some departments download police video and AI writes the report but they aren't doing anything like that at this point.

Chairperson Driver asked Chiefs what they would like committee members to do for them. She also asked members to let her know if there were other presentations they would like to see.

Lt Dempsey mentioned everyone is invited to Dewey Beach's Public Safety Day, September 20th. Chief McLaughlin invited everyone to attend Cops and Goblins October 25th and mentioned that OVPD is working on several children's books.

Mr. Pridgeon said he read about a noise meter designed for traffic violations where violations are issued like a speed camera. There was discussion about noise violations and how difficult it is to isolate a violation over ambient noise.

Mr. Mumford said this is the first time in his life he has seen traffic this bad and he is concerned about the infrastructure in this area from a public safety standpoint.

Chief McLaughlin said Sussex County Police Chief's Association is planning to send a Chief of Police to County Council meetings to bring up concerns. He also mentioned that the small departments in Sussex County often provide services outside of their towns' jurisdiction. He said the departments are not compensated for those services, but they can face liability issues that are not covered by their respective towns' insurance. Concerns about response time for fire and ambulance as well as police were discussed.

Ms. Stiles mentioned that she has participated in working groups with the Delaware Office of Highway Safety and some of these topics have come up. Some of

these are in-person and some are webinars. The groups are posted on Eventbrite and she said they were very useful.

There was more discussion about all the development around the Ocean View and Selbyville areas and how something needs to be done about the roads as more development is coming. There was also discussion that so much of the money brought in by Sussex County is not used in Sussex County.

Ms. Weaver mentioned that the Chamber has had recent success in working with businesses to combat shoplifting. Officers recommend mediation for some young offenders and the offenders have to perform community service among other requirements. Lt. Dempsey said DBPD often has them pick up trash in the town. Chief MacLaughlin said OVPD has some incidents of organized shoplifting with people from out of town.

Chief McLaughlin also mentioned that POST Director Moriarty uses the SCSRPAC as an example for other PACs.

Chairperson Driver would like to get a group photograph at the next meeting.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Thursday, November 13, 2025, at the Ocean View Community Center, 32 West Ave, Ocean View, DE 19970

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS None

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Kendahl Hearn, SCSRPAC Administrative Assistant

[Link to Meeting Video](#)