

## **Sussex County Southeast Regional Accountability Committee**

Quarterly Meeting November 13, 2025, 1 PM

Ocean View Community Center, 32 West Ave., Ocean View, DE

**Voting Members Present:** Chairperson Gayle Marie Brown Driver, Esq., Ms. Lauren Weaver, Mr. Ed Klima, Mr. Marlin Van Horn, Mr. Denny Pridgeon, Ms. Holly Stiles, Mr. Tom Glenn, Ms. Diana Barrientos-Granados, and Mr. Scott Smith.

**Non-Voting Members Present:** Chief Michael Morrissey, Chief Jason Lovins, Chief Ken McLaughlin, Chief Nicholas Disciullo, Chief Constance Speake, and Capt. Brian Parsons representing Selbyville.

**Members Absent:** Ms. Claudia Rodgers, Rev. Dr. Rebecca Collison, Mr. Gregory Flynn, and Mr. Scott Mumford.

### **1. CALL TO ORDER/Pledge of Allegiance**

### **2. GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

### **3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes from August 14, 2025, meeting were approved unanimously and are available on the PAC website [SCSRPAC.com](http://SCSRPAC.com).

### **4. PRESENTATION**

Chief Lovins provided a demonstration of PowerDMS, which is the electronic file and data-sharing system police departments in Delaware use to support the accreditation process. Assessors can log-in from remotely to check department files. There are currently eight chapters in the Delaware Police Accreditation Commission (DPAC) Standards Manual containing 108 standards with numerous subsections. Chief Lovins demonstrated how agencies upload their written directives (policies) for each standard section and then provide “proof” that the department is following each section. Proofs can be in the form of reports, videos, pictures, training certificates, etc., which are highlighted to show compliance. He showed the section dealing with field training officers as an example.

Chairperson Driver asked for further explanation about how a department proves compliance and Chief Lovins explained that departments have manuals and officers must sign off on all policies and procedures. There was further discussion about procedures and how proofs are collected demonstrating that the digital system is better. Chairperson Driver mentioned that the requirement for all police departments in Delaware to have a police accountability committee is now a standard. Chief Lovins pulled up that standard, the written directive, and proofs which included PAC website and flyers and minutes from PAC meetings. He also explained that on-site assessments are done every three years, but certain sections will be checked by assessors in PowerDMS yearly.

### **5. OPEN DISCUSSION FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Mr. Pridgeon congratulated the departments who have completed their accreditation. Chairperson Driver mentioned some community events she recently attended and enjoyed, including Dewey Beach’s Community Appreciation and Safety Day and Ocean View’s Cops and Goblins. She noted that various departments and agencies were represented at both events and she especially enjoyed a demonstration at the Dewey Beach event where Delaware Drug and Alcohol Enforcement had a simulator which

demonstrated what it felt like to drive under the influence. She encourages PAC members to attend these events.

Mr. Van Horn was impressed to learn that Lord Baltimore Elementary has a School Resource Officer. Chief McLaughlin spoke about School Resource Officers and Constables and said OVPD officers also go to Lord Baltimore for arrival and dismissal. Chief Morrissey noted that his department and others in the area train at Lord Baltimore every summer, so they are familiar with the school and prepared in case of an emergency. Chairperson Driver mentioned that departments' jurisdictions are limited to schools located in the incorporated limits of their towns, as discussed in previous PAC meetings in reference the Indian River High School being outside the town limits of Dagsboro. There was further discussion about how School Resource Officers are funded. Chief McLaughlin mentioned an OVPD initiative in which all 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Lord Baltimore will be CPR-certified. Mr. Klima said it is important for PAC members to learn about this type of thing to advocate for the money needed by police departments to continue these programs. He also asked for an overview of statistics from each department at the next meeting, possibly including year-to-year call volume. Chairperson Driver added that the stats should include the number of calls responded to by officers which were outside the town's jurisdiction. Chief Morrissey said 20-30% of FIPD's responses are outside of their jurisdiction. There was discussion about the numerous new housing developments in the area and about how many of these housing developments are not in incorporated towns. Chief McLaughlin said Ocean View is currently in the process of a \$30,000 study with the International Chiefs of Police studying what it costs the town for OVPD officers to respond to calls outside their jurisdiction. He said liability is the biggest issue and Chiefs are pushing for the state to cover officers in lawsuits when they are assisting Delaware State Police.

## **6. OPEN DISCUSSION FROM POLICE CHIEFS**

Chief McLaughlin said OVPD is trying to get better access to the state Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) for municipal departments and explained that the current way they do things is very inefficient, noting that officers have to enter the same data into several systems to do a simple report. OVPD now has Fire and EMS calls from local fire departments displayed in the department in real time and would like to do the same with police calls being handled by other jurisdictions, but they haven't been able to get permission. Chief Speake said Dewey Beach created their own 24-hour dispatch center because of this but the problem with that is that departments using the state system and Dewey Beach officers cannot see each other's locations because they are not on the same system. Lt. Dempsey explained further why Dewey Beach had to get their own dispatch system. Chief McLaughlin said he and other nearby departments might eventually create their own regional dispatch system but then they would not be able to see state troopers. He has also investigated moving local police departments on to the Sussex County Fire/EMS system. Ms. Weaver asked if local police departments are included in County EOC during emergencies. Chief McLaughlin said OVPD sets up a satellite EOC in those instances and officers train with them to prepare and test systems.

Chief Disciullo said Dagsboro will have their mock assessment on December 3<sup>rd</sup> and their on-site in January for their initial accreditation. Dagsboro Police Department is in the process of creating a regional collision reconstruction unit. He introduced Cpl. Anthony Valenti who is experienced and certified in this area. Chief Disciullo has heard that the state is moving away from helping local departments with these investigations. He is looking for funding and will be reaching out to local agencies to see who is interested and which departments have officers who are already certified and/ or interested in training for this unit.

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

Chairperson Driver read a letter dated October 23, 2025, from Frankford Police Chief, Kevin Smith asking to join the Sussex County Southeast Regional Committee. Cpl. Loulou was in attendance representing Frankford as the Chief was attending a funeral. Ms. Stiles asked how Frankford is doing in their accreditation process. Cpl. Loulou said she is the accreditation manager and they have brought in an experienced person to help so they are doing well in the process. Chief Disciullo expressed concern that he had had difficulty contacting Chief Smith. Chairperson Driver mentioned that Frankford was invited to join the PAC a year ago and didn't respond until now. Chief Morrissey said the PAC Commission in Dover is under great pressure to get all departments in compliance with this law and he supports allowing Frankford into the PAC but that should be the last agency admitted. He also offered his department's help to Frankford and the other agencies in their accreditation process to get all of the departments in compliance with the law. Chief Speake agreed and said Frankford is a very small department working on accreditation and trying to comply with the laws and regulations and should be allowed to join. Ms. Stiles said since this PAC is already the largest in the state, she thought it had been agreed that no other agencies would be added after Selbyville. Ms. Weaver said the PAC had always talked about Frankford possibly joining. Mr. Klima expressed concern that if the duties of the PAC are expanded someday, as he suspects they will be, such a large PAC will become unmanageable and the bylaws need to be updated to address that potential. Chief McLaughlin said that if state law changes and the duties of the PAC change to the point that they are involved in internal investigations, the regional PAC would probably have to be dissolved and reconstructed. He thinks this will be manageable with the PAC's current responsibilities and since the agencies surrounding Frankford are in the PAC, they should be included but he does share Chief Disciullo's concerns and hopes Frankford will be active in the PAC. He foresees the departments in the PAC working together more in the future. He agrees that bylaws need to be updated to include mechanism for removing agencies from the PAC. Ms. Weaver mentioned that there is the requirement that PAC members must complete 20 hours of training in their first year. Chief Morrissey added that they learned during their accreditation that an agency cannot be accredited until their PAC members have completed their 20 hours training.

Mr. Klima reiterated his concern that the bylaws need to include evaluation of participation by departments. He said he feels he should be visiting all of the departments in the PAC to see how they do things. Ms. Weaver said it was her understanding that a PAC member's service is to their department although it is good that joint training is offered. Chairperson Driver said that is mainly up to the individual how involved they want to get with the other departments. She has taken advantage of training at various departments and as the chairperson, she feels she should see all of the departments to prepare for the meetings. She believes departments will weed themselves out if they do not participate in the PAC. Chief Speake agreed with Mr. Klima that there should be requirements for active participation by the agencies. Ms. Weaver thought there was something in the bylaws that members had to attend a certain number of meetings. Chief Lovins also wanted to know if there is a requirement to actively participate in meetings and a way to remove departments that don't. Chairperson Driver suggested starting a committee to evaluate the bylaws and add language to strengthen bylaws to include the participation required to stay in the PAC. Ms. Stiles said it has been a big investment by the departments getting PAC members trained and she would like to ask Chief Smith some questions and that maybe the vote should wait until he was able to attend a meeting. She asked Cpl. Loulou why Frankford didn't

respond when first asked to join the PAC. Cpl. Loulou said they were having a difficult time finding PAC members until they found out the person didn't have to live in the town, just have a vested interest. She feels the PAC will be a great opportunity to increase communication between Frankford and the other agencies.

Ms. Weaver made a motion to accept Frankford into the PAC. Mr. Pridgeon seconded the motion. Mr. Van Horn also said he would rather wait to vote until they could ask Chief Smith some questions. Ms. Weaver, Ms. Barrientos-Granados, Mr. Smith, Mr. Pridgeon, and Mr. Glenn voted in favor of accepting Frankford into the PAC. Ms. Stiles, Mr. Van Horn, and Mr. Klima opposed. Chairperson Driver announced the vote was passed and assured dissenting voters that Chief Smith will address their questions at the next meeting. Mr. Pridgeon asked Cpl. Loulou to impress upon the Chief how important his participation is and to get the communication issue resolved.

## **8. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be Thursday, February 12, 2026, at the Fenwick Island Town Hall, 800 Coastal Hwy., Fenwick Island, DE.

## **9. PUBLIC COMMENTS** None

## **10. OTHER COMMENTS**

Chief Speake wished everyone a happy, safe Thanksgiving and Christmas. Chairperson Driver informed the group that they can sign up to participate/ observe Dewey Beach's seasonal academy in the Spring and if they know any young people (18 or over) who would like to be a seasonal, they are taking applications. Ms. Weaver said Ocean City is holding CERT (Citizen's Emergency Response Training) next week.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:36 PM.

*Respectfully submitted, Kendahl Hearn, SCSR PAC Administrative Assistant*

[Link to Meeting Video](#)