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DOJ OIG Releases Report on the U.S. Marshals Service's Tactical Training Officer Program

Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz today released a [review of the U.S. Marshals Service's \(USMS\) Tactical Training Officer \(TTO\) Program](#). Under the TTO Program, select Deputy U.S. Marshals (DUSM) are certified as TTOs to teach officer safety-related training in their own districts and throughout all of the USMS's 94 districts. The DOJ Office of the Inspector General (OIG) reviewed the program and its effect on DUSM safety following concerns that USMS staff raised to the OIG and to Congress about the operations of the TTO Program.

The OIG found that the USMS has made improvements to address officer safety risks through the TTO Program. However, we identified several gaps in the TTO Program's policy and operations that prevent it from ensuring that all operational staff consistently receive standardized officer safety-related training, which is the principal objective of the TTO Program. While the USMS is currently updating policy in ways that may address some of our concerns, this was not finalized at the time of our review. Specifically, the report found room for improvement in the following areas:

- **High Risk Fugitive Apprehension Training.** The majority of the USMS staff we interviewed told us that the TTO Program, and the High Risk Fugitive Apprehension (HRFA) training that is an important aspect of the TTO Program, has helped the agency to prioritize changes in training to improve operational tactics, with some describing the HRFA training as lifesaving. However, in February 2021, 41% of DUSMs had not taken HRFA training.
- **Unclear and Inconsistent Approach.** We found that the requirements for the tactics that TTOs teach and the types of officer safety training operational personnel are required to take are unclear; that not every district has a TTO; and that there is no requirement for Task Force Officers from state and local law enforcement agencies to take USMS training, even though they are frequently a part of USMS fugitive apprehension teams and are exposed to the same officer safety risks during tactical operations.
- **Skills Sustainment Training.** The USMS's Training Division has not developed and managed a TTO skills sustainment training program to ensure that TTOs maintain their skills as the USMS's TTO Policy Directive requires.
- **Performance Metrics.** The USMS has not established performance metrics or goals to determine whether the TTO Program is effective or whether it is accomplishing its objectives. Additionally, the USMS does not sufficiently track district training so that it can identify and address gaps.
- **Lessons Learned.** We found that USMS officer safety-related training is not systematically updated with lessons learned, even following a line-of-duty death, and that there is no formal process for

regularly incorporating lessons learned from critical operational incidents into training. We believe that the absence of such a process increases the likelihood that DUSMs will repeat past mistakes or continue to use tactics that could put officer safety at risk. While the USMS recently finalized a new policy that, if implemented, will establish a process to incorporate lessons learned into training, we are concerned that the policy does not include sufficient criteria for initiating After-Action Reviews and, if a review is conducted, whether and to whom information from the review should be released.

To assist the USMS in improving the TTO Program, the OIG made seven recommendations. The USMS agreed with all seven of the recommendations.

Report: Today's report is available on the OIG's website at the following link: <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/review-us-marshals-services-tactical-training-officer-program>.

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A DUSM engages in live-fire rifle target practice, with the safety of the shield operator a priority.

Source: USMS



A DUSM aims his weapon while giving “the fugitive” verbal instruction from a point of concealment during training.

Source: USMS, with OIG enhancement



USMS instructors debrief the students after completing a vehicle containment and fugitive arrest exercise.

Source: USMS, with OIG enhancement