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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Baton Rouge Police Department Creates Critical Incident Video Release Policy

Today, Baton Rouge Police Chief Murphy Paul announced that the Baton Rouge Police Department has created a Critical Incident Video Release Policy. Under the new policy, the Chief of Police is required to make a decision within 12 days of the incident in question. Once the Chief decides that the release will not interfere with the integrity of the investigation and/or the prosecution, the Baton Rouge Police Department shall release critical incident video evidence as soon as possible. The grace period between the incident date and video release is meant to ensure that witnesses will not be endangered and that prosecutions will not be undermined.

“Public interest in use of force incidents involving law enforcement officers is at an all-time high,” said Chief Paul. “This is partly due to activism and protests when public perception is that an excessive level of force was used by law enforcement. It is also a result of the instantaneous exchange of information through various social media networks. As a result, the law enforcement community must respond to the rapidly changing media landscape that drives communication and public perception in the 21st century.”

The Baton Rouge Police Department recognizes that video evidence provides an incomplete but essential view of critical incidents involving officers and the citizens they serve. However, the videos also provide the public with a better understanding of police work. Releasing body camera and in-car camera video evidence in a timely manner enhances public trust in police officers. Postponements in releasing critical incident video evidence can negatively impact community-police relations.

“Transparency is essential in policing today. The public’s expectations of law enforcement have evolved, and it is our duty to respond to their concerns,” Chief Paul added. “Our new policy demonstrates that the Baton Rouge Police Department is a law enforcement agency committed to accountability and constant improvement.”

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