



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COPA DELIVERS REPORT OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPERINTENDENT IN FIRST CONCLUDED INVESTIGATION INTO ALLEGED MISCONDUCT OF TACTICAL TEAM MEMBERS LED BY FORMER SERGEANT RONALD WATTS

The Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) has concluded its investigation and delivered the first report of findings and recommendations to the Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department arising from complaints of misconduct by officers associated with former Chicago Police Sergeant Ronald Watts and his Tactical Team.

COPA's investigative findings and recommendations follow its review of certain complaints of misconduct regarding the actions of current Chicago Police Department officers who were members of the Watts Tactical Team that operated for years in and around the now - razed Ida B. Wells Homes on Chicago's South Side.

In March 2017, the City's Office of Inspector General began reviewing complaints of misconduct against former Watts Team members, before asking the Independent Police Review Authority (IPRA) to take over the burgeoning investigation. COPA assumed investigative authority in September 2017.

Over the past three years, COPA investigators interviewed dozens of witnesses, including current and former members of law enforcement, former Wells Homes residents, and former Cook County prosecutors. COPA investigators also reviewed thousands of pages of documentary evidence, including reports of various federal and local law enforcement agencies and transcripts of proceedings containing the statements of civil litigants, criminal defendants, and prosecutors and their witnesses, as well as members of the judiciary.

"The alleged misconduct in this matter began more than 15 years ago. Organizing, conducting, and carrying out the investigative activities in this case required the commitment of significant resources and bringing this investigation to conclusion was no small feat," said COPA Chief Administrator Sydney Roberts. "No matter how long ago an allegation of misconduct occurred, it is incumbent upon us to seek accountability. Our community deserves nothing less," says Roberts.

COPA delivered its investigative findings and recommendations to the Superintendent for review as mandated by ordinance (www.chicagocopa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/COPA-Ordinance.pdf).

COPA will post its Summary Report of Investigation (SRI) providing full detail of its analysis, findings, and recommendations on its website for public consideration upon the conclusion of the Superintendent's review and after the subject officers have been served with any resulting charges. As COPA's investigation of the misconduct of individual Team members remains ongoing, we anticipate the delivery and publication of additional SRIs in the coming months.

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