Professional Standards Division

The Professional Standards Division (PSD) was established during the administration of Colonel C.E. “Mel” Fisher on May 1, 1990, as part of a reorganization of the Patrol’s management structure. The division was created to provide management with a centralized investigative unit capable of conducting agency-wide, internal disciplinary investigations in a fair, professional, and consistent manner. The establishment of PSD provided the Patrol with trained internal affairs investigators, improved investigative techniques, quality reports, and more consistent administrative discipline.

Before the inception of PSD, there were no written policies or procedures governing the administration of internal disciplinary investigations. Investigations of official misconduct were assigned to officers of various ranks and were not always conducted in a manner consistent with procedures used for internal affairs cases. Officers assigned to the same component as the accused were routinely assigned to investigate allegations of misconduct. In some instances, the investigating officer was also the accused employee’s supervisor. The lack of a full-time professional unit within the Patrol to handle allegations of misconduct often resulted in inconsistent investigations, reports, and administrative punishment.

Notable incidents of alleged misconduct have occurred rarely in the Patrol’s history; however, when such allegations were brought to the attention of Patrol management, the response has been swift and decisive.

The 1980 investigation of allegations of ticket-fixing in Troop C was an important factor in Colonel Fisher's decision to create an internal affairs unit within the Patrol. He cited his exposure to the progressive management style of Chief Clarence Kelley of the Kansas City Police Department as a contributing factor that influenced his decisions regarding training, written policy, and procedural directives when PSD was created. Colonel Fisher's exposure to the internal affairs policies of the Kansas City Police Department during his early years as a member of the Troop A management staff demonstrated to him the virtues of a centralized and professional internal affairs unit.

An interview conducted in 1980 with Ms. Tillie Sonnen, retired secretary to the early superintendents of the Patrol, revealed that internal disciplinary issues were not a phenomenon brought about by recent social changes or lapses in moral standards. Breaches of public trust by employees were documented early in Patrol history and required the agency to take quick, decisive action to establish discipline and order within the organization.

Ms. Sonnen revealed in her interview that the Patrol's first disciplinary action occurred only six months after the organization was formed. The first incident of misconduct occurred in February 1932 and resulted in the officer's termination for accepting a bribe. The officer later wrote a letter to Colonel Lewis Ellis, apologizing for betraying the trust placed in him, but the termination was upheld. A short time later, another officer was accused of misconduct for consuming alcoholic beverages while in uniform. The Patrol held a formal hearing, found the officer guilty, and fired him as well.

During PSD's brief history, various changes have been made to the written disciplinary policies and procedures. Some noteworthy changes to the Patrol directives and Section 43.150 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri occurred in 1990, entitling the accused employee to have legal counsel present during an interview or interrogation related to a formal complaint. This policy change brought the Patrol into compliance with prevailing administrative procedures governing employee legal representation during internal disciplinary investigations.

In 1998, during the administration of Colonel Weldon L. Wilhoit, major changes were made to Section 43.150 RSMo. and to the Patrol's policy and procedure directive. The legislation changed the make-up of the disciplinary hearing board from five to six members, including one nonvoting captain, one sergeant, and four members of the same rank as the accused employee. The new statute language also required the Patrol to provide the accused employee with copies of the internal investigation reports and to give the accused employee the opportunity to respond in writing to the facts contained in the reports. Additionally, the new language entitled the accused employee to a 48-hour period after receiving a copy of the formal complaint before they were interviewed or required to respond in writing.

In 2015, PSD implemented a process for submitting complaints and commendations online. This change allowed the Patrol to stay current with technology and generational changes and provided an easily accessible, efficient method for acknowledging good employee behavior, extraordinary efforts, or other accolades.

Each change, whether in statute or directive, has been enacted to bring the Patrol's policies into compliance with prevailing administrative procedures and established case law related to internal discipline investigations, and to provide employees with a fair and impartial administrative due process system.

Directors of the Professional Standards Division:

Captain L.C. White	May 1, 1990 to September 30, 1992
Captain E.M. Raub	October 1, 1992 to July 22, 1994
Captain J.S. Gordon	July 23, 1994 to August 31, 1996

Captain J.L. Merritt	September 1, 1996 to August 31, 1997
Captain R.E. Bloomberg	September 1, 1997 to January 31, 2000
Lieutenant R.L. Walker	February 1, 2000 to February 28, 2000
Captain B.W. Jones	March 1, 2000 to July 31, 2005
Captain R.P. Stieffermann	August 1, 2005 to June 1, 2011
Captain V.S. Rice	June 1, 2011 to June 30, 2013
Captain M.A. Henderson	July 1, 2013 to November 30, 2014
Captain C.J. Schoeneberg	December 1, 2014 to June 30, 2018
Captain J.L. Armistead	July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2020
Captain K.A. Davis	August 1, 2020 to January 31, 2026
Captain J.A. Veasman	February 1, 2026 to Present