

COLUMBIA POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION



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MEDIA RELEASE

Response to 2007 Columbia Police Department Racial Profiling Report

Earlier today, the Columbia Police Department released its Annual Report to the Attorney General. The report contains statistical data related to vehicle stops conducted by the Columbia Police Department. The Columbia Police Officers Association would like to point out a few facts that may help the public better understand the data.

- (1) In order for a police officer to legally stop a vehicle the officer must be able to articulate reasonable suspicion that criminal activity is afoot or probable cause that a law violation has occurred. It is a violation of the Constitution of the United States, the constitution of the State of Missouri, and the policies of the police department for an officer to stop a vehicle without reasonable suspicion or probable cause.
- (2) The circumstances and legality of vehicle stops that result in traffic or other criminal charges are reviewed by police supervisors, municipal and state prosecuting attorneys, and criminal defense attorneys.
- (3) In 2007 the Columbia Police Department received no complaints that any of the 15,734 traffic stops that were conducted were illegal or motivated by race. (*source: Columbia Police Department*)
- (4) In 2007 no officers of the Columbia Police Department were sued for conducting an illegal vehicle stop. (*source: Columbia Police Department*)
- (5) Police officers use traffic stops as an investigatory tool to legally uncover evidence of other, more serious, crimes. In 2007, Columbia Police officers uncovered evidence of other crimes during traffic stops, including assault with a firearm, drug distribution, robbery, and many others.
- (6) Any time the driver or another occupant is arrested for a crime during the course of a traffic stop, police officers may legally search the vehicle.
- (7) In 2007, nearly 2/3 of all motorists stopped were given warnings, not citations. (*source: Columbia Police Department*).

Please direct further inquiries to DonaldRWeaver@centurytel.net.

Sincerely,

Donald R. Weaver, President
Columbia Police Officers Association

The Columbia Police Officers Association (CPOA) is a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Missouri. The CPOA exists to give the police officers of the City of Columbia, Missouri Police Department a unified voice, to improve working conditions of our membership, and to serve and protect those that serve and protect the citizens of the City of Columbia. For more information about the Columbia Police Officers Association, please see our website, www.columbiapolice.org.



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