

## Profiling is Not an Option

May 1, 2003

The issue of racial profiling is one of the more disturbing and controversial issues to confront law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve in recent memory. While virtually all evidence to date is anecdotal, there exists to some degree the perception that law enforcement officers enforce traffic laws based on the ethnicity of the driver. This is a troubling development and one which carries concern to anyone charged with the enforcement of state's laws. Simply stated, local law enforcement cannot perform their responsibilities without the trust and support of all segments of the communities they serve.

It is the responsibility of the Ponce Inlet Police Department to provide law enforcement and related services to the public. In accomplishing this, officers must be observant, identify unusual occurrences and law violations using reasonable suspicion and act upon them. It is this proactive enforcement that keeps our citizens and streets safer. It further enables us in detecting and apprehending criminals.

All laws shall be enforced equally, regardless of race, color, ethnicity, sex, physical handicap or religion and bias-based profiling shall not be tolerated in enforcement efforts. This standard is established in accordance with Florida State Statute 30.15.

On or before January 1, 2002, every police department shall incorporate an antiracial or other anti-discriminatory profiling policy into their policies and practices, utilizing the Florida Police Chief's Association Model Policy as a guide. Anti-profiling policies shall include the elements of definitions; traffic stops procedures, community education and awareness efforts and policies for the handling of complaints from the public.

Bias-based profiling issues, including legal aspects, are provided to sworn members of the agency during in-service training and in accordance with the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission (CJSTC) requirements. Numerous polices incorporate the prohibition of bias-based profiling and members are responsible for ensuring all members of the community are treated with dignity and respect.

If you have any questions or would like more information regarding the Ponce Inlet Police Department's policies prohibiting bias-based profiling, please contact the Public Information Officer at (386)236-2160.