

In March of 2021, the City selected **OIR Group** to fulfill a new contract for the role of IPA (independent auditor) in Las Cruces. OIR Group officially began their review work on May 1, 2021. In their role as the IPA, OIR Group will review investigations of formal citizen and Department-initiated complaints completed by LCPD to determine whether they were complete, objective, and thorough, and that actions taken in response to the investigations were appropriate. OIR Group will also review closed litigation against the City of Las Cruces that involved members of the LCPD. One key element of the IPA model is to increase police accountability through the presentation of periodic public audit reports.

Listed below is the history of how the Las Cruces Police Department came to have an auditor and the companies that filled the roles to present date.

The Las Cruces City Council around the time of 2009 felt the department had issues with transparency and community satisfaction, the Council contracted with **Justice & Security Strategies, Inc (JSS)** in 2009 to consider these issues. JSS was hired by the City of Las Cruces; JSS was asked to examine the following issues as part of its assessment:

- Evaluate use-of-force incidents, including supervision, tactics, and subsequent investigations
- Assess internal police investigations
- Track community satisfaction with the police department
- Explore the department's exposure to litigation and develop procedures to learn from past lawsuits
- Identify best practices that will help police leaders develop and implement management strategies that promote accountability at all levels
- Based upon the results of the assessment, develop and present a final report that will provide definitive insight into whether a community oversight agency is needed and, if so, provide a recommended methodology for establishing such an agency, its purpose, objectives and authorities.

JSS staff and consultants from March through April 2009, conducted 58 interviews of city officials, residents, business people, and police; received 292 internet surveys from residents; received 38 police officer surveys; went on ride-alongs with police; convened three 'town meeting'; and reviewed policies and procedures of the Las Cruces Police Department.

Based upon their assessment and review of best practices they did not believe that a community oversight agency would remedy the problems that they felt currently existed in the Las Cruces Police Department. Instead, they recommend the adoption of the **Police Auditor** model and made 13 recommendations for improvements in Use of Force Incidents, Internal Police Investigations, Community Satisfaction with Police, Police Department's Exposure to Litigation and Best Practices to Promote Accountability for Management.

Our first Police Auditor was hired by the City of Las Cruces; they were the **Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)**; they were our Police Auditor from June 2010-June 2014. PERF started their services in 2010 by reviewing Las Cruces Police Department's internal investigations, high risk policies, implementation plan of policy recommendations

and the conducting of focus group meetings. The last two years (2012 and 2013) PERF concentrated its review of Las Cruces Police Department's internal investigation and process.

**Public Safety Strategies Group (PSSG)** was hired by the City of Las Cruces in August of 2014 to be our next Police Auditor. The contract may be extended annually for up to four years upon agreement. PSSG reviews LCPD's Professional Standards Unit's investigation of internal and external complaints that lead to a formal investigation. The department has monthly teleconference meetings with PSSG to review formal investigations submitted to them for review. PSSG gives a bi-annual presentation to City Council to update them on their findings.