



The Washington Report

The Newsletter of the National Association of Police Organizations
Representing America's Finest

August 18, 2014

NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT

NAPO Responds to NFL's Policy Regarding Qualified Off-Duty Officers Carrying Concealed Firearms

On August 12, 2014, NAPO's Executive Director, Bill Johnson, sent the attached letter to NFL Commissioner Goodell regarding the League's policy of not allowing qualified off-duty officers to carry their concealed firearms at games and events, even though the NFL allows private security guards to be armed at those same venues. Copies were also sent to the commissioners of the NBA, NHL, MLB, and the CEO of the National 9/11 Museum in New York, which also has such a policy.

NAPO will keep our members updated on the status of this initiative. If you have any questions about NAPO's position, please contact Bill Johnson at: bjohnson@napo.org.

NAPO Supports SALTS Act

On August 15, 2014, NAPO sent the attached letter of support for the Synthetic Abuse and Labeling of Toxic Substances (SALTS) Act of 2014 (H.R. 4975), sponsored by **Congressman Mac Thornberry (R-TX)**. The bill was introduced on June 25, 2014 as the House companion to **Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), and Dianne Feinstein's (D-CA)** bill, which NAPO decided to support in August 2013.

The SALTS Act will address the growing problems associated with synthetic drugs. There have been reports from states around the country of people acting violently while under the influence of these drugs, leading to deaths or injuries to themselves and others. While taking these drugs, people can experience elevated heart rates and blood pressure, hallucinations, seizures, and extreme agitation. By making it easier to prove that synthetic drugs are intended for human consumption, this legislation will help law enforcement in their efforts to get these drugs off the streets and out of stores.

NAPO looks forward to continuing to work with Congressman Thornberry and his staff to pursue the passage of this bill. If you have any questions about this legislation, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

NLEOMF Issues Report Regarding Officer Fatalities

On July 22, 2014, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund issued a new report stating that 67 officers have been killed in the line of duty during the first half of 2014—a 31 percent increase over the same period last year. Of these 67 officers, 26 were killed in traffic-related incidents; 25 were killed by gunfire; and 16 died due to job-related illnesses and other causes. The following includes details from the report:

- Traffic-related incidents were once again the leading cause of officer fatalities, with 26 officers killed in the first half of 2014—a 37 percent increase over the same period last year.
- Firearms-related fatalities spiked to 25 in the first half of this year—a 56 percent increase over the first six months of 2013. Investigating suspicious persons or situations was the leading circumstance of fatal shootings, with six officer fatalities; followed by ambushes, with five officer fatalities.
- Sixteen officers died due to other causes in the first half of 2014, the same as the number reported during the same time last year. Job-related illnesses, such as heart attacks, increased 62 percent in the first half of 2014, with 13 officer fatalities compared to eight during the same period last year.
- California led all states with eight officer fatalities; followed by Florida, New York, Texas, and Virginia, each with four peace officer fatalities.

“We had seen significant declines in officer fatalities the last two years, so the spike in deaths this year is particularly alarming,” declared NLEOMF Chairman and CEO Craig W. Floyd. “The sharp rise in officers killed by gunfire—many in ambush-style attacks—as well as a significant increase in fatal on-duty heart attacks reminds us that much more work needs to be done to improve officer safety and wellness.”

A copy of the full research bulletin, “Law Enforcement Officer Deaths: Mid-Year 2014 Report,” is available at www.LawMemorial.org/ResearchBulletin.

This report illustrates the importance of NAPO’s unrelenting efforts to pass legislation to keep our officers safe, including the National Blue Alert Act and the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program Reauthorization Act. We hope our members will continue to work with us to pursue the passage of these important bills.

Source:

"67 Law Enforcement Officer Fatalities Nationwide in First Half of 2014." *National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund*. National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, 22 July 2014. Web. 15 Aug. 2014. <<http://www.nleomf.org/newsroom/news-releases/2014-mid-year-fatalities-report.html>>.

CDC/NIOSH Law Enforcement Studies

Personnel from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)/National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) have shared the following studies involving law enforcement and noise hazards, which have been conducted through the Health Hazard Evaluation (HHE) Program:

- NIOSH investigators evaluated noise exposures that Utah Highway Patrol troopers are exposed to at work in the following study: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2003-0094-2919.pdf>.
- NIOSH evaluated noise exposures and potential hearing loss experienced by police officers in the Cincinnati Police Canine Unit (CPCU) in the following study: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2006-0223-3029.pdf>.
- NIOSH evaluated noise and lead exposures at an outdoor firing range in California in the following study: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2011-0069-3140.pdf>.

NAPO continues to participate in National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Public Safety Sector Council meetings, and will keep our members updated on relevant studies, such as the evaluations highlighted above. If you would like further information on the reports above, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

Please monitor NAPO's website www.napo.org, and Facebook page: National Association of Police Organizations, and follow us on Twitter @NAPOpolice for breaking news and updates.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

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August 8, 2014

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Mr. Roger Goodell
Commissioner, National Football League
280 Park Avenue, 15th Floor
New York, New York 10017

Re: NFL's policy on law enforcement officers carrying concealed firearms

Dear Commissioner Goodell,

On behalf of the more than 200,000 law enforcement officers represented by our Association, including officers in a sizable majority of the cities represented by the League's teams, I wish to ask you to reconsider the League's policy regarding the carrying of concealed firearms by qualified, off-duty law enforcement officers. As you know, the League, by memo dated September 11, 2013, purported to strictly prohibit the possession of firearms by anyone other than on-duty law enforcement officers working a game or event, and private security guards engaged by a club.

First, let me clear that no single group of professionals abhors firearms violence more than us. Our National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial adds the names of *hundreds* of our fallen comrades to its marble walls each year. In addition, no one works harder than us to rid our communities of firearms and other weapons in the hands of criminals. However, the NFL's own policy on firearms, by allowing their possession by qualified individuals, recognizes the value of the presence of armed officers at games and venues.

It is unquestionable that large gatherings of citizen spectators at events such as NFL games can provide a tempting target for the deranged and the wicked. In recognition on this fact, every state in the Union of which we are aware, and the federal Congress as well, provides for the ability of off-duty law enforcement officers, who are otherwise fully qualified and trained, to carry on or about their person a firearm. Our society, through its elected representatives, recognizes both the value of additional, armed "good guys" at well-attended events, as well as the necessity of officers' being able to protect themselves and others. Also, we understand that the NFL's policy is not enforced at League games and events in Texas, and is under serious legal challenge in Minnesota. Finally, the reasons proffered in support of the policy, such as officers not being held to account for their actions, are spurious, in that every single jurisdiction in the United States which hosts NFL games already criminalizes the reckless display or use of a firearm. This is in addition to law enforcement agency policies that also rigidly govern the use of force by officers, both on and off duty.

We would therefore respectfully request that you revise this policy to allow otherwise qualified off-duty officers to retain their firearms at League games and events.

Sincerely,

William J. Johnson
Executive Director



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NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

WILLIAM J. JOHNSON
Executive Director

August 15, 2014

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
United States House of Representatives
2329 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Thornberry:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), representing 241,000 rank-and-file officers from across the United States, I am writing to you to express full support for the Synthetic Abuse and Labeling of Toxic Substances (SALTS) Act of 2014 (H.R. 4975).

NAPO is a coalition of police unions and associations from across the United States that serves to advance the interests of America's law enforcement through legislative and legal advocacy, political action, and education. Founded in 1978, NAPO now represents more than 1,000 police units and associations, 241,000 sworn law enforcement officers, and more than 100,000 citizens who share a common dedication to fair and effective crime control and law enforcement.

The SALTS Act will address the growing problems associated with synthetic drugs. There have been reports from states around the country of people acting violently while under the influence of these drugs, leading to deaths or injuries to themselves and others. While taking these drugs, people can experience elevated heart rates and blood pressure, hallucinations, seizures, and extreme agitation. By making it easier to prove that synthetic drugs are intended for human consumption, this legislation will help law enforcement in their efforts to get these drugs off the streets and out of stores.

NAPO stands ready to support with any efforts necessary to pass this important legislation. If you have any questions, or if we can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me at: (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

William J. Johnson
Executive Director