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State of Louisiana
Department of Public Safety and Corrections
Public Safety Services

November 18, 2019

TO: CAPTAIN MARK RICHARDS
FROM: LIEUTENANT DAVID RYERSON
SUBJECT: CADET CLASS 99 CHEATING UPDATE

I was looking at photos Sgt. Clay Reavis took of the cadet MDTs when we originally picked them up. Sgt. Scott Davis was looking through browsing histories and came across an online chat between Cadet Starling and his wife. In it, Starling admits to having a copy of an exam, and says that he got it from Cadet Yetman.

When I wrote the original summary of what we found, I remembered seeing this chat, but I did not remember which cadet. I also did not see the photo, so I didn't include it.

Text of previous email, with Starling and Yetman added:

The following is a summary of information the Academy Staff discovered while researching the Cadet Class 99 cheating investigation. Unless otherwise noted, the information came from what we discovered when we looked at their MDTs and thumb-drives.

We were told that Internal Affairs was taking over the investigation, and to stop looking at MDTs and thumb-drives. As a result, we only looked at a small portion of the class.

The most severe violations are listed first.

Class 99 Cadets:

Cadet Michael Starling:

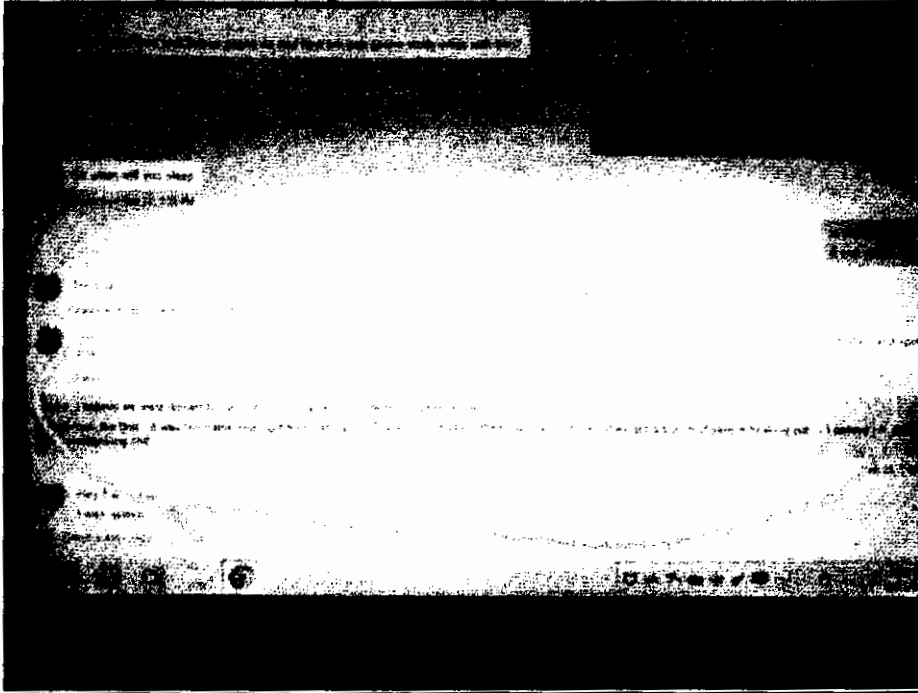
- We located an online chat with his wife that says, "Just took the test... it was the same one I got from Yetman. Thank God he place (sic) them guys around me.. they got a bunch of people freaking out." He appears to be referencing the "Domestic & Family Matters" exam on 09/27/2019. He received an 83.37% on the exam.

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Cadet Garrett Yetman:

- See the above entry for Cadet Starling, who implicates Yetman .

NOTE: Image on next page for Starling and Yetman.



Cadet Christopher Sink:

- Has all of the POST Lesson Plans (Instructor versions).
- Has "POST Review" file emailed from Tpr. Jake Voisine. This appears to be a copy of the POST Exam. This came from Tpr. Max Verrett.
- Has "Specialized Activities Review 021518" file emailed to him by Obed Marte. This appears to be a re-created Specialized Activities exam.
- He has so much information that was passed around during Cadet Class 97 that it's hard to even track.
- Admitted that he shared all of his old notes (including tests) with who wanted it.
- Said, "Sir, I realize I might get fired for this."
- Admitted his classmates copied exams with a snipping or Control C during online exam

Cadet David Lowe:

- Has virtually every LSP Exam: LSP Final Exam, All POST Exams, Taser, and SSGT Photocopy.
- The LSP Final Exam is a printed answer key that can only be generated through the testing system by an instructor. It is very likely that this was picked up from someone's desk in the Training Academy offices. This could have been anyone who has passed through including interns, current Troopers, Duty Officers, or civilian staff.

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Cadet Brandon Jinks:

- Photocopy of LSP Final
- Word documents dating to 2014. Every test for every subject.

Cadet Andrew Hern:

- Notes from Trooper Zavier Martin.
- Copy of Elective Exam created in 2018.
- Copy of Traffic Services Exam dating to 2015.
- Derogatory comments from Zavier Martin regarding ST Shannon Simpson.

Cadet Nicholas Rowell:

- Emailed the current Taser exam to all other cadets. This version of the exam cannot be located online (there are only older versions). It had to have come from a Taser instructor (who could work for any agency).
 - All cadets received this email. Many (but not all) saved the files to their desktop.

Cadet Peggy Jennings:

- Told Cadet Small by text that she had an answer key, but didn't want to send it out en masse.

Cadet Tomas Quintero:

- Has "legal study material" file. This is what someone remembered was on the test.
- Has email from Cadet Small where she asked, "He got it open?" and he said, "Naw."
- No Taser files saved.

Cadet Brandon Blackburn:

- Has a copy of the Taser Exam saved to his desktop.

Cadet Jeffery Heriot:

- Has "Legal test review" file. May or may not be test questions.
- No Taser files saved.

Cadet Jameson Jordan:

- Has "Exam" file in Recycle Bin. This is what someone remembered was on the test. Lots of True/False listings.
- Has "Legal Exam 1" file in Recycle Bin. This is what someone remembered was on the test.

Cadet Paul Davis:

- Nothing but normal study notes.
- No Taser files saved.

Cadet James Pelley:

- Just regular notes: same email as others.

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Current Troopers:

In addition to the Class 99 cadets, several current Troopers who assisted with the passing exam information.

Trooper Jake N. Voisine

- February 19, 2018: emailed "POST Review" file to his cadet class. This appears to be a copy of the POST Exam.
 - Sent to Cadet Sink, who saved it.

Trooper Max Verrett

- March 17, 2018: emailed "review" file to the cadet class. It says, "Didn't get full questions, just key words and paraphrasing."

Trooper Adam Wentzel:

- We were told that Wentzel was involved in passing exams to the Troop D cadets. I believe Lt. Marie learned this when he was involved in the initial cadet interviews at Internal Affairs.

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Lt. Ryerson,

I completely concur. I believe that since the whole educational process has been compromised, the cadets should be re-evaluated. This evaluation should include the all of the knowledge and skills that, by certifying them as troopers, we are assuring the rest of the world they possess. I believe failure to do so would not only jeopardize our good name and the faith that others have in us, but border on criminal action concerning our part. Since cadets are entering an academic phase that will source instruction from an outside agency, we will have time to constitute an examination schedule over the next few weeks.

I expect to have this completed by the end of the month.

Sgt. Clay Reavis
Louisiana State Police
Training Academy
225-925-4951

From: David Ryerson <David.Ryerson@la.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 2, 2019 11:10 AM
To: Mark Richards <Mark.Richards@la.gov>; Patrick Jackson (DPS) <Patrick.V.Jackson@la.gov>; Clay Reavis <Clay.Reavis@la.gov>
Subject: Class 99 Cheating Recovery Recommendation

As we are all aware, the cadets in Class 99 participated in in widespread cheating. Several cadets had a copy of our Final Exam, as well as copies of all other exams. Because it is clear that they had the stolen material from the start, there is no doubt that many of them simply paid little attention during class. In fact, when looking at their MDTs, we saw that some spent a lot of their classroom time chatting with family members online. I question how much these cadets actually learned during this time.

As trainers, it is our duty to ensure the cadets have the best possible training. We have a long custom/tradition of excellence. POST only requires 70% on written exams. We've required 80% as far back as the mid-1990s. Our practice has always been to ensure that the cadets did more than meet the minimum requirements.

Although we have started to create new exams for upcoming classes, the damage has been done for the material the class has already covered. Unfortunately, much of this material covers the core of law enforcement. Not only was the entire Legal Aspects block covered, but also De-escalation, Diversity in the Community, Bias Recognition Policing, Integrated Use of Force, and more.

We know that some cadets had exam questions prior to each class. We can't disregard the fact that at least some of them paid less attention to the material because of this. I worry that many of these courses cover issues involved in constitutional rights.

Recommendation:

The most conservative tactic would be to re-teach (and re-test) all of the classes from this period. Unfortunately, it initially covered six weeks of the cadet class. I believe we could knock that number down to three to four weeks. However, it would be a large dump of information and take much time.

Less conservative, but probably more realistic would be to simply give all of the cadets a Final Exam that covers all of the material (this includes those cadets who are taking the POST Exam). We could run review sessions for all classes during the evenings.

Classes covered:

First Aid/CPR

Orientation to Criminal Justice

Orientation to the LA Criminal Justice System

History of Law Enforcement

Integrated Use of Force/Response to Resistive Behavior

Standards of Conduct

Crime Prevention

The Role in the community

Attaining Respect for the Peace Officer

Diversity in the Community

Bias Recognition Policing

Drugs & Drug Law

Interview & Interrogation

Fingerprinting

Sex Crimes

Burglary Investigation

Robbery Investigation

De-escalation

Taser

OC Spray

Preparing for Deadly Force and Other Serious Events

Domestic Violence

Handling Juveniles

Law Enforcement and the Elderly

Victim Assistance and Notification

The full Legal Aspects course (60 hours)