



STATEMENT OF THE FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE AND THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE ON USE OF FORCE STANDARDS

Our two organizations have long been dedicated to improving the profession of law enforcement and the practice of policing the United States' streets and neighborhoods. Our members serve the public because they have heard and answered the call of duty—a call that places the highest premium on the protection of human lives, even of those who seek to take the lives of others.

Improving the profession does not and should not mean that officers abandon the oath they took when they promised to protect citizens. We cannot reasonably expect law enforcement officers to walk away from potentially dangerous situations and individuals in the hope that those situations resolve themselves without further harm being done. Reasonable use of force in any given situation must be at the discretion of a fully sworn and trained officer. This is why we train our officers for so many different scenarios. One of the tools an officer relies on the most is his or her judgement. Officers are not just taught how to shoot or how to restrain a violent suspect—they are trained to use their best judgement to resolve any given situation and to do so with the safety of the public, the officer, and the suspect as their foremost objectives. Sound judgement, not their marksmanship or physical skills, is the reason our officers have the tools and authorities they possess.

At a traffic stop, in the dark alley, or during a call of shots fired, we are relying on the judgement of that officer. These brave men and women are thoroughly trained to respond appropriately to a variety of different situations, especially those in which the just and lawful application of force is necessary. That is why both of our organizations reject any call to require law enforcement agencies to unilaterally, and haphazardly, establish use-of-force guidelines that exceed the “objectively reasonable” standard set forth by the U.S. Supreme Court nearly 30 years ago (*Graham v. Connor*). It is clear that we must continue to place our trust in the hands of the law enforcement practitioners who protect our streets and neighborhoods.

However, as part of our continuing efforts to further advance the profession, the FOP and the IACP will be convening a law enforcement leadership summit to examine use of force by law enforcement officers, discuss our differences with recent proposals, identify areas of consensus and, collectively, map out a path forward on use of force issues.

Our organizations are committed to improving our profession and look forward to working together to do so.

Sincerely,


Chuck Canterbury
National President



Terrence Cunningham
President
International Association of Chiefs of Police