



Washington Association of
**SHERIFFS &
POLICE CHIEFS**

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December 15, 2022

Greetings from your Executive Director:

As we wind down 2022, and look toward 2023 and the legislative session soon to begin, I wanted to offer some thanks and some information as you hopefully will be able to spend some time with your families this holiday season.

Last week, along with the Washington Association of County Officials (WACO) and CJTC we provided newly-elected training and seminars for the recently elected Sheriffs in our state. We offer our congratulations to those who will be serving, and thanks to the veteran Sheriffs who assisted on providing training and input during our “Sheriff’s Roundtable”: Kittitas Co. Sheriff Clay Myers, Mason Co. Sheriff Casey Salisbury, Snohomish Co. Sheriff Adam Fortney, and Pierce Co. Sheriff Paul Pastor (retired).

Use of Force and Duty to Intervene Training Funding Available

On November 11, WASPC sent out a GTWO announcing the availability of state funds to assist with the costs of training of certain legislation enacted in 2021 and 2022. If your agency hasn’t already submitted for its share of these funds, please do so via this link [2022-2023 Training Funding Information](#). Any funds not disbursed by June 30, 2023 will be returned to the WA State General Fund. WASPC would like to thank the Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs (WACOPS) for their diligent efforts to secure these training funds.

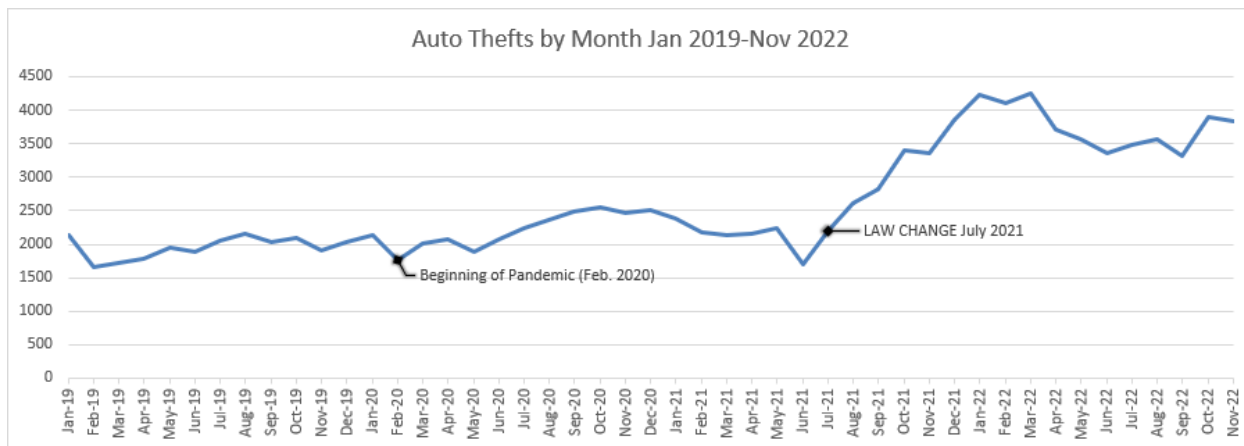
Media Stories and Use of Data

At our spring conference we had a panel that included Bob Scales on the use and misuse of data in policy analysis. Last week, Real Change (a Seattle-based paper which describes itself as a “voice to low-income and homeless people while taking action for economic, social and racial justice”) did an [article](#) basically saying the pursuit law changes were good, citing data from Martina Morris, a retired professor and member of the Coalition for Police Accountability. The paper itself does not hide its perspective, advocating for social change in Seattle, and the professor is also clear in her advocacy for police reform. However, these “media” and “data” are frequently cited as sources that are somehow reliable and objective by [legislators and others](#) (note that the author of this article misstates the revised

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possession penalty). Mr. Scales does a good analysis, not from the perspective of law enforcement, but simply as someone interested in good data and making sure its useful, in this [post](#) he completed on LinkedIn. Its worth a look just to get some context in how data is, again, being used and misused.

Speaking of data, here is the most updated numbers on auto thefts from the WA Crime Information Center (WACIC). We have now seen about 3500-4000 auto thefts per month become the “norm” in our state, and this graph shows where the spike began:



Also...

In the Spokane area, as agencies have been working to reduce crime and community complaints about the large “Camp Hope” site while providing some resources for those who will accept help, some [media stories](#) cite advocacy groups saying law enforcement is “all about intimidation”. This depiction is debunked [by body cam footage](#) of officers visiting the camp to offer resources to help people get off the streets.

You may have seen [coverage last week](#) following a press release from the Attorney General about high-capacity magazines. Washington's high capacity magazine ban was enacted through the passage of SB 5078 - an Attorney General request bill - in the 2022 legislative session.

There are two enforcement mechanisms in the act:

1. Criminal: Gross misdemeanor to manufacture, import, distribute, sell, or offer for sale a large capacity magazine (RCW 9.41.370); and
2. Civil: Violation of the Consumer Protection Act to distribute, sell, offer for sale a large capacity magazine (RCW 9.41.375).

While the Attorney General's press release uses terms that are commonly associated with criminal law enforcement action ("sweep," "investigators," and "defendants"), the Attorney General's actions all appear to be under the civil enforcement function pursuant to RCW 9.41.375 (the Consumer Protection Act piece). These lawsuits are civil in nature-- just FYI.

Finally, as we continue to work for a better solution to the Blake decision in the upcoming session, [this column](#) does a good job of defining the problem as some sort of balance between “prison and pamphlets”. Pamphlets and leaving people on the street to die is not compassionate. While some may continue to try to characterize law enforcement in this state as just trying to solve every problem with jail and the criminal justice system, we know the reality and the complexity of these issues. Your teams are doing their best to provide some kind of justice and closure for victims, and getting people off the street and healthy with too few tools and too few resources.

Executive Leadership Training

WASPC is actively working to help build exceptional and ethical leadership at all levels of our law enforcement organizations. Along with our free online leadership development program, we just hosted two in-person seminars where class participants learned more about principles of leadership, leadership ethics, labor law, effective communications and emotional intelligence. A special thanks to our guest facilitators: Lakewood Chief Mike Zaro, Shelton Chief Carole Beason, San Juan County Chief Criminal Deputy Mike Hairston and Peter Altman from Summit Law.

We look forward to bringing the seminars to the east side this coming April 25th and 26th to be held at the Ellensburg Police Department. Sign-up for these sessions will open early next year.

You can find more information about our ICLD program, and sign up your agency by clicking on this [link](#).





Which brings me to my heartfelt thanks for you and for the people with whom you work- thanks for what you do, for your service, and for what you do every day. Please know that people appreciate and value what you do, and it is my privilege to work with each of you. Wishing you and your families the happiest and safety of holiday seasons. Take care of yourselves!

-Steve