

**Key Issue Report:**  
SFPD's Monitoring of Department  
Communications for Bias

*Interim Report for the Audit of SFPD's Handling of  
Officer Misconduct*

**CITY & COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO**

Department of Police Accountability

April 19, 2023

## **This Report's Objective**

Does SFPD follow the requirements of Internal Affairs Division Unit Order 18-02?

## **Why We Did This Report**

DPA has a Charter mandate to audit SFPD's handling of misconduct.

## Report Overview

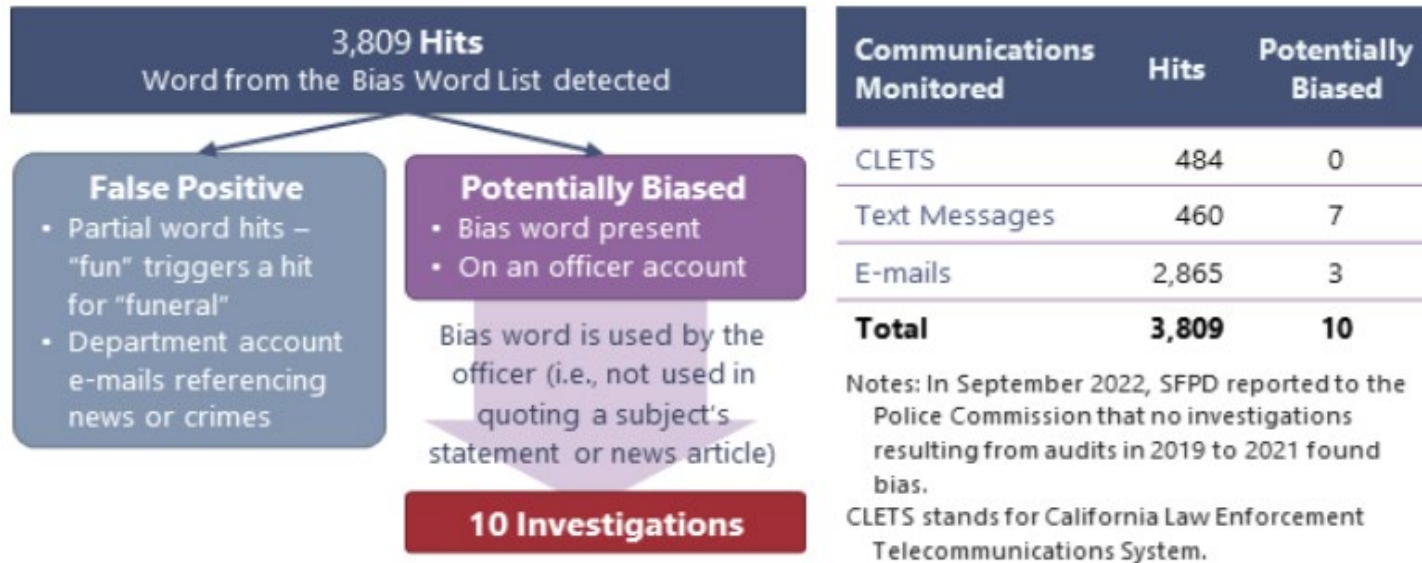
- ◆ A High False Positive Rate in SFPD's Communications Audits May Impair the Program's Effectiveness

*(Key Issue 1)*

- ◆ SFPD Can Better Ensure That the Monitoring Program is Current and That Results Are Reported Completely

*(Key Issues 2, 3, and 4)*

**Issue 1:** A high false positive rate (99.7%) in SFPD's communications audits may impair the program's effectiveness.



Source: DPA analysis of SFPD's electronic monitoring of communications quarterly reports from 2019 to 2021 and SFPD's September 2022 presentation to the Police Commission, and DPA interviews with Internal Affairs Division personnel.

## SFPD Can Better Ensure That the Monitoring Program is Current

**Issue 2:** SFPD does not systematically track its reviews of the bias word list, increasing the risk that necessary updates do not occur.

**Issue 3:** SFPD does not ensure that department-issued cell phones are enrolled in the monitoring system, increasing the risk it will not detect potentially biased text messages.

## SFPD Can Better Ensure That Monitoring Program Results Are Reported Completely

**Issue 4:** SFPD does not fully follow its own reporting requirements, reducing the transparency of its responses to potentially biased communications.

- ◆ Quarterly reports do not include the outcomes of investigations resulting from the monitoring.
- ◆ No year-end reports.

## Opportunities To Address These Issues

- ◆ Exempting certain department e-mail addresses from the audits may help SFPD reduce e-mail false positives.
- ◆ Regular reviews of the bias word list and the timely enrollment of department cell phones in the monitoring system can help SFPD ensure completeness and effectiveness.
- ◆ Improved reporting may help stakeholders make fully informed decisions about the effectiveness of SFPD's efforts to detect and address bias.

## Audit Next Steps

Next key issue report on SFPD's handling of officer discipline.

DPA will issue a full audit report that assesses whether SFPD handles and reports on allegations of misconduct, including officer bias, effectively and efficiently.



Questions?

