



PHOENIX LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSOCIATION

The Professional Association of Phoenix Police Officers Since 1975

December 27, 2018

Press Release re: Poder travel advisory

On December 21, 2018, the Arizona Republic reported that local Phoenix advocacy group, Poder in Action had issued a "travel advisory" urging "visitors – especially black and brown people to exercise increased caution in the City of Phoenix due to the record number of police shootings."

The vast majority of the populace will view Poder's statement for what it is, a publicity stunt heavy on emotion and inflammatory rhetoric designed to create racial divisiveness and the illusion that Phoenix Police officers are intentionally targeting minorities with deadly force. Like most activist organizations, Poder runs on controversy, and if there isn't enough, they will generate their own as evidenced by their bogus travel advisory and banners they have been hanging up around town, some which accuse the police of committing acts of murder.

While the number of officer involved shootings (OIS's) in 2018 is concerning, no group is more concerned than the officers who daily patrol the streets.

In an effort to be more transparent with the public, the Phoenix Police Department recently began publishing detailed statistical data tied to OIS's on the publicly accessible pages of its website. Here's a portion of the data for 2018:

- There have been 43 OIS incidents, year to date. 20 of those resulted in fatalities
- Of the 43: 16 suspects were hispanic, 15 suspects were white, 9 suspects were black, and 3 suspects were classified as Native American
- Of the 43 OIS incidents, four involved suspects using some type of edged weapon, 36 involved suspects using a firearm as a weapon, one involved a suspect using a vehicle as a weapon and two involved suspects using blunt objects as weapons

In each and every one of the above listed instances, police or citizens and sometimes both were being threatened by criminals exhibiting active aggression while armed with weapons to include one instance where a suspect attempted to disarm an officer. In many of these instances lesser means of force were either not an option or when tried, failed to deescalate the situation. This necessitated the use of lethal force to stop the threats posed to officers and citizens.

Poder and their supporters live in a fantasy world while police officers have to deal with reality. They strive to legitimize criminals and their actions while making cops out to be the bad guys. Police Officers are paid by the city to go into harm's way and run to the gunfights. We are expected to insert ourselves into chaotic situations to restore order, situations most citizens wouldn't touch with a ten-foot pole. In the vast majority of cases, things turn out OK. Unfortunately, bad guys don't always follow our directions, nor do they respect us simply because of the badge and uniform. In fact, suspects often get more aggressive when we show up.

Contrary to the image being ginned up by Poder of "black and brown people" being targeted by police, the facts clearly show this not to be the case. To suggest this as reality is an insult to not only all of the hard-working men and women who patrol our streets but to any citizen who reads the data for themselves.

Maybe there should be a travel advisory for certain parts of the city. An accurate advisory would caution against the higher than normal levels of criminal activity in certain areas. However, we all know that accuracy is the last thing Poder is concerned with.