



Cathryn L. Hazouri, Executive Director • Mark Silverstein, Legal Director

August 25, 2008

Deputy Chief John Lamb
SENT VIA EMAIL: john.lamb@denvergov.org

Re: Display of name and badge number of officers

Dear Chief Lamb:

Thank you again for making the time to take my phone call and speak with me yesterday afternoon. It was extremely helpful for me to be able to reach you directly and communicate regarding the quickly developing situation on Lincoln. I again express my appreciation for your willingness to keep those lines of communication open.

Yesterday afternoon, I spent most of my time on the streets observing several interactions with officers and the public at Lincoln, and then at different locations near the 16th Street Mall. During that time, I received a substantial number of complaints from bystanders and some protestors that many of the officers had their name and/or badges completely or partially obscured. Other legal observers and media reported this to me and to the staff of the People's Law Project as well, and I personally observed many officers whose name-plate, badge, embroidered name plate and/or embroidered badge number was covered. In addition, some officers appeared to have received equipment with a name-plate and badge number that was embroidered in black thread on a black uniform, making it nearly impossible to read even when not obscured.

As you know, DPD Operations and Procedures Manual §111, "Uniforms and Equipment," has standards requiring officers have their name and badge number clearly displayed on all variety of uniforms (for example, whether the officers are in their regular street uniforms, or wearing protective body armor). In addition, you communicated to us in our meeting on August 19th, 2008 that the issue of clearly displayed names and badge numbers was something taken into account when ordering uniforms and equipment for the DNC. At the meeting, you also helped clarify for us that even though there would be officers from many different jurisdictions in Denver during the DNC, all officers would be playing by the "home rules," i.e. Denver's policies and procedures would apply to officers from other jurisdictions at any time they were employed by Denver during the DNC. I understood this to mean that officers from other jurisdictions would be required to display their names and badge numbers just like Denver officers, and identify themselves by name and badge number (or provide a business card) when asked by any member of the public, just like Denver officers. See DPD OPM

Rules and Regulations 129, "Giving Name and Badge Number," ("[m]embers shall give a business card with their names, badge numbers, and other pertinent information to any violator or other person when requested to do so, unless such action is likely to jeopardize the successful completion of a police assignment"); DPD OPM § 109.02 (119) ("all officers should have business cards available on their person or in their vehicles and use them to comply with OM RR-129 and other situations in which these cards could be utilized").

I do not believe there is any disagreement between the ACLU of Colorado and Denver about the necessity and importance of having officers' names and badge numbers clearly displayed at all times for the purposes of identification should members of the public, the media, internal affairs, and/or the Office of the Independent Monitor need to record a commendation or complaint against any officer, or to later investigate or follow-up on such a commendation or complaint.

There were numerous instances yesterday where officers' names and/or badge numbers were obscured or otherwise not clearly displayed. I've attached a few representative pictures to the end of this letter to illustrate. It appeared that in some instances the name-tag or badge was covered up by the chest strap of officers' backpacks or camelbacks, and that the problem could be easily remedied by simply communicating to officers that they need to move the chest strap up or down, or attach their badge higher on their chest, as necessary to permit a clear view of their identifying information. Where the equipment itself has been fashioned in such a way as to make the clear display of identifying information difficult or impossible, perhaps a remedy would be to use white athletic tape to record the badge number and then affix that to the outside of clothing or helmets. I write now with the hope DPD can communicate to all officers from Denver and other jurisdictions the requirement and importance of clearly displaying this information, and remedy the situation for the remaining four days of the convention.

If I can provide any additional information, please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Taylor Pendergrass". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Taylor Pendergrass
Staff Attorney, ACLU of Colorado

cc. Brian Vicente, People's Law Project (via email)
Richard Rosenthal, Office of the Independent Monitor (via email)



Name plate and badge obscured



Name plate and badge number in black thread



Badge obscured