

# US Park Rangers Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police

## Five-Point Safety Plan

July 2013

### ***1. Increase staffing levels to those recommended for increased safety by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.***

The standard recommended by the International Association of Chiefs of Police is the only professional review of the NPS law enforcement program in a generation. The NPS never attempted to meet this top safety recommendation. Instead, it has put a “no-net-loss” staffing policy into place, yet even this policy has not been seriously enforced for a decade. Systemic failure to even approach this standard puts both rangers and the visiting public at risk every day.

Budgets are always a factor, but the NPS has had 15 years to prioritize its budget to take any steps to enhance officer safety – and has failed to so.

### ***2. Give employees the best training at the beginning of their career.***

The NPS is taking two steps backward in entry-level law enforcement training: moving to privatize the training and cutting total training time for law enforcement staff.

On the privatization front, NPS is looking to transfer training away from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), and move it to community colleges. The lack of standardization and quality control entailed in this shift is of special concern.

At the same time, rangers often have to wait several years before going to FLETC or receiving field training, all the while still performing their law enforcement responsibilities as they wait to be fully trained. Rangers need to have the best basic training possible, at the very start of their careers, just like every other law enforcement agency.

### ***3. Better distinguish law enforcement staff by improving uniforms and vehicle marking.***

More than 80 percent of rangers surveyed say their uniforms don't distinguish them from employees without law enforcement duties. This creates a hazard for non-law-enforcement employees as well as officers, and confuses the public.

The reason law enforcement personnel are often indistinguishable is that NPS puts tradition ahead of employee safety. Rangers need both a distinctive law enforcement uniform and the word “police” should be prominently placed on patrol cars. The word “police” is internationally recognizable and would assist the public in obtaining law enforcement assistance more rapidly.

***4. Improve screening for new employees to ensure they're suited for law enforcement.***

There is no standard interview process for new law enforcement employees. In fact, some officer candidates do not get interviewed at all. There is no psychological screening, a lack which violates Department of Interior policy.

Poor screening increases the uncertainty that a ranger cannot be sure that the new employee coming to back him or her you up has ever been asked if they really want to be in law enforcement or why. The life-and-death situations in which rangers find themselves merits the same level of professional screening applied in other nation law enforcement organizations.

***5. Upgrade the aging law enforcement firearms inventory.***

We are now at the point where new employees are issued firearms almost as old as they are. NPS equips rangers with some of the oldest firearms in federal law enforcement.

The aging stock raises both safety and reliability concerns and the oldest weapons should be replaced immediately.

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