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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
Municipal Police Training Committee**

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TO: Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security
House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means
CC: EOPSS Legal, Legislative, and Communications
FROM: Municipal Police Training Committee
DATE: November 19, 2025

Dear Chairpersons Cahill, Cronin, Michlewitz, and Rodrigues:

In Section 115 of Chapter 253 of the Acts of 2020, the Legislature required the Municipal Police Training Committee (MPTC) to “investigate and study the benefits and costs of consolidating existing municipal police training committee training academies located in Boylston, Plymouth, Randolph, Reading and in Western Massachusetts and the 9 reserve or intermittent academies authorized by the municipal police training committee into a single, full time training institution with full time instructional staff.” This report outlines our findings.

I. THE CURRENT STATE OF TRAINING IN MASSACHUSETTS.

The MPTC is responsible for delivering and monitoring the training of over 20,000 sworn law enforcement officers employed by 438 law enforcement agencies throughout Massachusetts. Presently, the MPTC offers training for both student and veteran officers at academies in East Falmouth, Holyoke, Lynnfield, Marlborough (formerly Boylston), Northern Essex Community College/Haverhill (“NECC”), Randolph, and Plymouth, as well as training for veteran officers provided at an MPTC facility in Milford. The MPTC also oversees nine authorized academies independently run by the Boston Police Department, the Cambridge Police Department, the Lowell Police Department, the MBTA Police Department, the Springfield Police Department, the Worcester Police Department, Merrimack College, Fitchburg State University, and Quinsigamond Community College. All MPTC and some

MPTC-authorized academies offer recruit officer courses (ROC) and in-service and specialized training for veteran officers. In-service and specialized training is also offered at non-academy locations on occasion, and some programs are offered remotely.

In both Training Year (TY) 2023 and TY 2024, MPTC academies and MPTC-authorized academies graduated roughly 900 recruit officers from the 22-week program, with more than 20 ROC completed each year. In-service trainings are reaching more and more officers each year. In TY 2023, 620 in-person in-service trainings were offered, reaching 14,072 attendees.¹ In TY 2024, the number of in-person trainings offered rose to 751, reaching 23,572 attendees. TY 2025 is outpacing those numbers significantly, with 1,172 in-person trainings reaching 37,050 attendees by the beginning of June. Specialized trainings are also up, climbing from 316 events reaching 8,335 attendees in TY 2023 to 408 events reaching 10,318 attendees by June 2025. The overwhelming majority of these events – over 90% -- took place at an MPTC or MPTC-authorized academy.

MPTC's full-time staff oversees and administers recruit and veteran officer training, but the training itself is primarily delivered by instructors who are “certified” and “recertified” by the MPTC in subject matter areas. Approximately 2,800 instructors are certified by MPTC, with roughly 800 contracted to provide MPTC-authorized training at \$60/hour. The daily operation of MPTC academies relies largely on contract staff instructors who, working closely with the Academy Director, oversee the Academy schedule and student officer wellbeing and development. A second cadre of contract subject matter instructors teach topics like constitutional law, criminal law, motor vehicle law, interviews and interrogations, firearms, emergency vehicle operation, defensive tactics, and use of force. These certified instructors, most of whom are employed full-time as municipal law enforcement officers, live and work across the Commonwealth.

II. TRAINING IN SINGLE-ACADEMY STATES.

Only nine states in the country employ a single-academy model for recruit training. Of those nine, none have an officer population nearing that of Massachusetts – the closest, Oregon, has roughly 13,000 sworn law enforcement officers throughout the state. Most states have a shorter ROC than Massachusetts, usually 16 weeks. Vermont and West Virginia both claim more instructional hours than Massachusetts – 908 and roughly 1,000, respectively, compared to Massachusetts' 800 – but those totals would leave recruit officers under instruction for roughly 12 hours each day. New Hampshire has a waitlist of roughly four

¹ We refer to “attendees” rather than “officers” because most officers attend multiple trainings each year, resulting in a higher attendee count than the total number of sworn officers.

months for entry, while Montana's waitlist is approximately seven months long. Massachusetts has not had a waitlist in over five years. Most states graduate fewer than 200 recruit officers each year.

Single-academy states typically offer overnight accommodations for recruit officers; some offer separate accommodations for veteran officers attending in-service or specialized training, as well. Most states offer in-service or specialized training at the academy. Several of the states allow recruit officers to begin their service prior to attending the academy. Class sizes range from 40-70 recruit officers.

Our team interviewed members of academy leadership from several single-academy states. While they felt that a single-academy model ensured consistency in recruit instruction, they cited several difficulties inherent in the model: travel times for trainees and staff, the need to provide accommodations, staffing issues, and waitlists.

III. BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF A SINGLE ACADEMY.

A single police academy would have some benefits. It would allow for the consolidation of facilities and the development of a single experienced full-time faculty, and it could arguably simplify the development and delivery of a standardized curriculum.

Single academies, however, are necessarily inconvenient for many recruits. Many may live several hours from a consolidated academy, requiring on-site accommodations and dining facilities to eliminate impractical multi-hour commutes. Recruits would be largely absent from their families and communities for an extended period – 22 weeks – placing a burden on families. While State Police recruits in Massachusetts enlist with the understanding that they could be assigned to serve anywhere in the state, local police recruits anticipate serving close to home, making an extended absence onerous and a potential impediment to recruiting.

Consolidation to a single academy would require the closure of not only MPTC facilities, but also the nine MPTC-authorized academies scattered around the Commonwealth. The departments and educational institutions responsible for these institutions would likely decry the loss of local control and input on officer training and its impact on officer culture. Recruit officers from these academies would have to travel to the consolidated academy, requiring lodging and dining facilities. The economic impact of closing established academies must also be considered. Six MPTC-authorized academies, however, consistently enroll less than 40 recruit officers each year. Consolidating these academies

into higher-performing academies may be a way to improve efficiency and standardize curriculum delivery more.

Facility costs for a single consolidated academy would be enormous. Consolidation would require the construction of a campus large enough to facilitate the training of more than 900 recruit officers each year, setting aside in-service and specialized training. With that volume of recruits – expected to rise as departments seek to replace officers lost to accelerated attrition – it would be virtually impossible to keep class sizes around 50 recruit officers, considered the best practice. Even at 100 officers per class, the academy would have to accommodate nine 22-week training sessions each year, with the capacity to run multiple 100-member ROC at any given time. That would require multiple dormitories, dining facilities, and other services – in essence, a fully-functioning college campus. None of MPTC’s current facilities have the capacity for development of an academy of that scale.

Consolidation to a single academy would result in a dramatic increase in wait times for academy entry at the precise moment when departments are most in need of new officers. The unpalatable and inadvisable alternative would be a reduction in training hours, which would serve to drastically undercut the modest gains in standardization achieved through consolidation. Consolidation of underperforming academies into more active academies, however, would advance the overall goals of increased efficiency and curriculum standardization. A report from the State Auditor covering 2021-2022 found that 11 of 46 ROCs conducted during the audit period had variations in hours required and six did not deliver all required lessons.² While the Auditor recognized that MPTC had subsequently implemented new measures to ensure regularity in the delivery of standardized training, consolidating the underperforming MPTC-authorized academies into existing MPTC academies would strengthen MPTC’s ability to conduct oversight.

MPTC has active long-term leases for its current academies, listed below. The sunk costs of current facility construction and upkeep, combined with financial penalties for breaking leases, would need to be combined with the costs of developing a single academy campus in evaluating the fiscal impact of consolidation.

² State Auditor’s Report, Municipal Training Committee for the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022 (2024).

Location	Annual Lease Payment (based on final month of lease)	Lease End Date
East Falmouth	\$ 1,067,296.00	January 31, 2035
Holyoke	\$ 870,842.00	September 30, 2032
Lynnfield	\$ 1,199,143.93	June 30, 2032
Marlborough	\$ 3,327,171.62	June 30, 2035
Milford	\$ 724,368.96 ³	November 30, 2033
NECC	\$75,000.00	
Plymouth	\$ 61,800.70 ⁴	
Randolph	\$ 1,166,287.00	January 31, 2031

Our team consulted with stakeholders in the law enforcement community, including the Massachusetts Police Association. In addition to the concerns raised above, stakeholders raised concerns about funding for overnight accommodations and meals, which could impose an increased funding burden on local police departments.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS.

The MPTC recognizes the benefits of consolidated curricula and standardized training and agrees that movement toward some consolidation would have beneficial impacts. As an initial step, the MPTC suggests a moratorium on the construction of additional academies for the foreseeable future. Moving forward, the MPTC will examine the feasibility of closing underutilized academies and enrolling their recruit officers at other existing academies, reducing the overall number of academies and consolidating training at a more controllable number of locations.

³ Interagency service agreement (ISA) with State 911 Department.

⁴ ISA with Plymouth County Sheriff's Department.