

# SEATTLE POLICE DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

TO Chief Kathleen O'Toole  
Chief of Police - via Chain of Command

DATE September 6, 2017

FROM Detective Elizabeth Wareing  
Bias Crime Coordinator

SUBJECT Bias Crime Trends - First Half 2017

	2015	2016	2017
1 <sup>st</sup> Half	<u>103 Bias Incidents</u> 39 Malicious Harassments 28 Crimes with Bias elements 36 Non-Criminal Bias incidents	<u>128 Bias Incidents</u> 50 Malicious Harassments 42 Crimes with Bias elements 36 Non-Criminal Bias incidents	<u>178 Bias Incidents</u> 62 Malicious Harassments 71 Crimes with Bias elements 48 Non-Criminal Bias Incidents
2 <sup>nd</sup> Half	<u>102 Bias Incidents</u> 45 Malicious Harassments 29 Crimes with Bias elements 28 Non-Criminal Bias incidents	<u>128 Bias Incidents</u> 39 Malicious Harassments 47 Crimes with Bias elements 42 Non-Criminal Bias incidents	

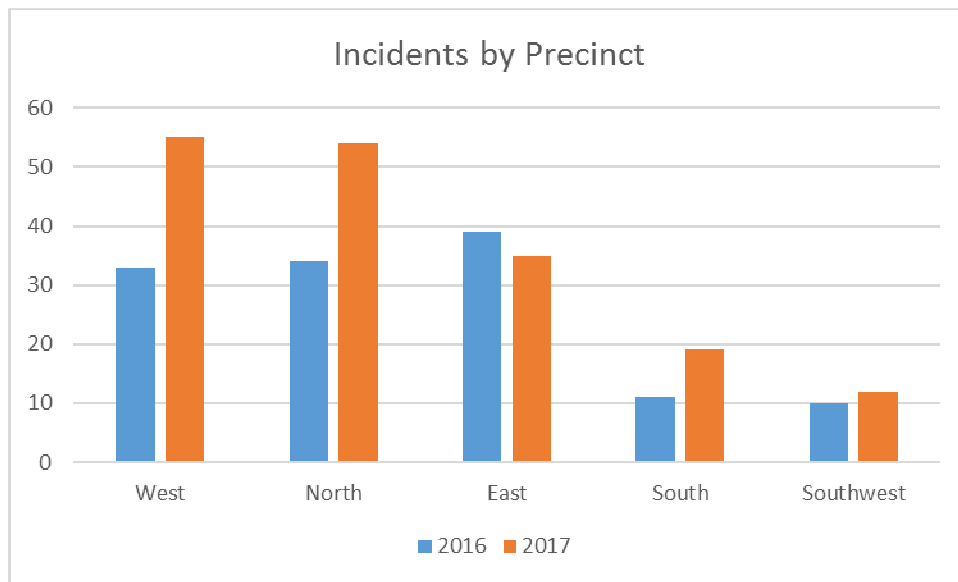
During the first half of 2017, **178** bias-based incidents were reported. This is a **39% increase** over this time last year. **Malicious harassment** cases increased by **22%**, the category of **crimes with bias elements** rose **64%**, and **non-criminal bias incidents** rose **33%**, respectively from the same period of time in 2016. The **clearance rate** for criminal cases during this period is **39%**. 13 cases remain open and may resolve with arrests.

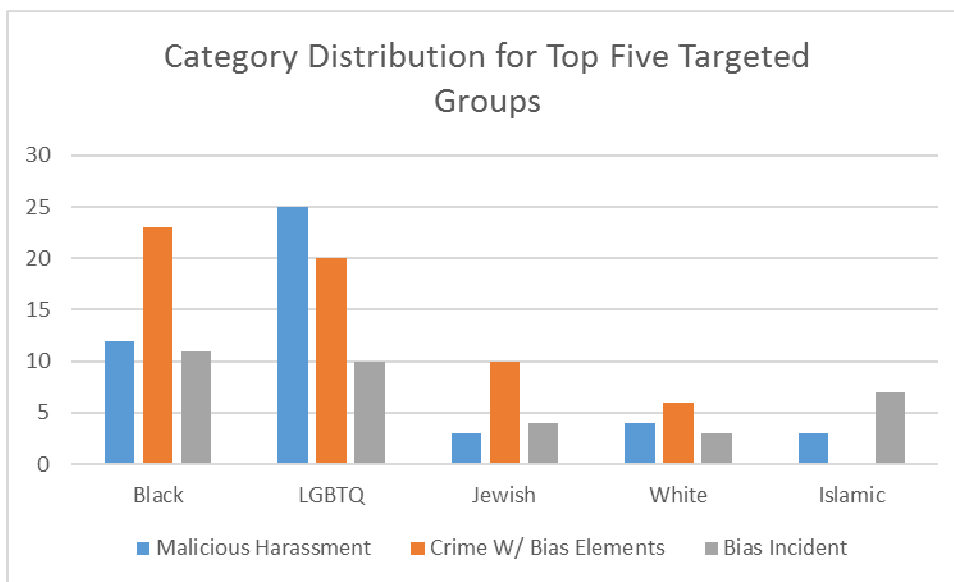
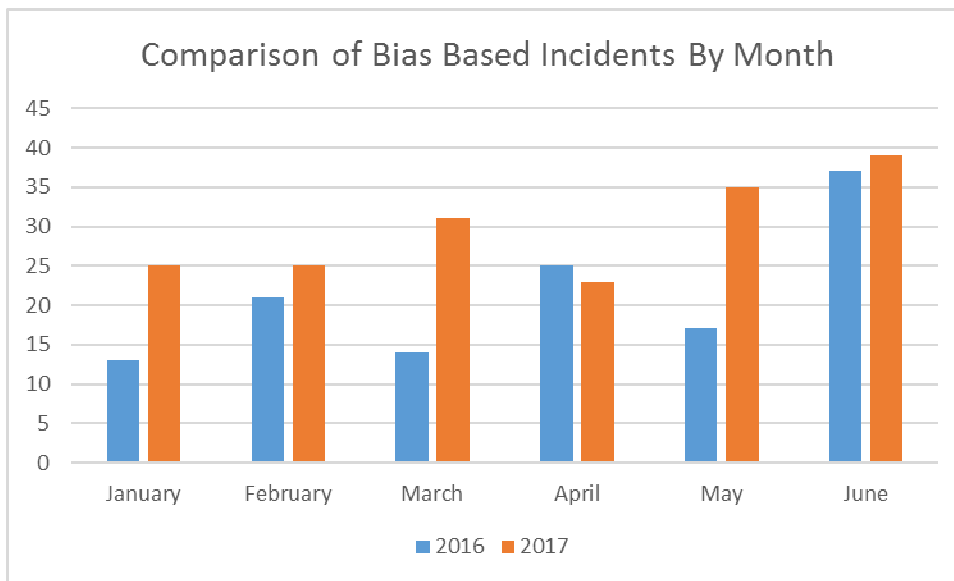
During the first half of 2017, **Anti-LGBTQ** (aggregated anti-Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual, Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming) incidents accounted for **31%** of the 178 bias incidents reported. **Anti-Black** incidents represented **25%** of the total. while **Anti-Jewish** represented **10%** of the total. **Anti-White** cases represent **7%** of the total number this period.

These incidents are scattered throughout the city. Of the **178** reported bias incidents: West Precinct (**55**) and North Precinct (**54**) had the highest number of bias incidents in the first half of 2017. Other precinct tallies: East Precinct (**35**), South Precinct (**19**), and Southwest Precinct (**12**). Many of the incidents can be attributed to street disorder issues. An average of **30%** of cases are *documented* to involve **mentally ill or intoxicated subjects**. This is a new factor which is being tracked each month.

**City-wide bias incidents distribution comparison:**

Total Reported Bias Incidents	1 <sup>st</sup> Half 2017 (178)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Half 2016 (128)	1 <sup>st</sup> Half 2016 (128)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Half 2015 (102)	1 <sup>st</sup> Half 2015 (103)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Half 2014 (66)	1 <sup>st</sup> Half 2014 (60)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Half 2013 (61)	1 <sup>ST</sup> Half 2013 (49)
East Precinct	21%	25%	31%	31%	32%	17%	38%	16%	27%
West Precinct	31%	33%	26%	25%	35%	27%	30%	36%	31%
North Precinct	30%	17%	27%	22%	15%	36%	13%	31%	27%
South Precinct	11%	13%	9%	14%	14%	15%	13%	11%	12%
Southwest Precinct	7%	13%	8%	9%	5%	3%	8%	5%	4%





**Malicious Harassment** A crime in which the motivation for the suspect targeting a particular person was based on their belief about the victims’ membership in one or more of the legally prescribed categories.

**Crimes with Bias Elements** Involves the commission of any crime that is not bias based and during the incident the suspect uses a derogatory comment directed at the victim’s protected status or group.

**Non-Criminal Bias Incident** Most often offensive derogatory comments directed at a person’s protected status. While not criminal in nature because they fall into the free speech realm, the comments may cause a level of fear and concern in the targeted community.

The first half of 2017 has been a period of substantially increased media attention on the topic of hate crimes, a reflection of increased tensions nationally. Locally, these six months have been characterized by an increase in local sensitivity to this issue. Witnesses have contacted the police department to report incidents they have observed at a higher rate than in past reporting periods. Incidents in the category of “crimes with bias elements” have increased 64%, an indication that involved parties and officers are recognizing the use of slurs as an element of bias at a higher rate than before. Media inquiries and requests for data have also increased. SPD’s response to bias based incidents is under greater scrutiny than any time in the past. The highlights below are a summary of how the Bias Crimes Unit is responding to this increased demand.

### **Highlights**

- The Bias Crime Coordinator continued outreach efforts to the immigrant and refugee community. Detective Wareing continued to present to English as a Second Language (ESL) classes through the Refugee Women’s Alliance (ReWA) each quarter, and expanded outreach to the Seatac ReWA location at their request. Detective Wareing presented on bias based incidents at the Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS). As part of this outreach effort, Detective Wareing created a brochure to help inform immigrant and refugee communities about bias crimes and non-criminal bias incidents and how to report them. This brochure has been translated into 18 languages and utilized at a number of different events in the community. It has been provided in PDF format to ReWA and other community partners to ensure that they have access to the handout as needed.
- Detective Wareing has initiated outreach efforts to Seattle’s homeless population. Mary’s Place serves homeless women and families. The homeless population cuts across many other categories protected under the Malicious Harassment RCW and SMC. Detective Wareing is in talks to train staff to recognize bias crimes and engage them in helping their clients report having been victimized. She has presented to homeless women at the center as part of their day program.
- Detective Wareing has responded to requests from businesses, religious institutions and community groups for education and guidance regarding bias based incidents. She has attended several gatherings to answer questions from the public about how to respond if they are the victim of an attack or if they witness an attack on someone else.
- The Bias Crime Coordinator continues to work with the Seattle Office for Civil Rights to ensure that criminal cases reported to SOCR are also reported to the police department when appropriate. Formal training for SOCR call takers is scheduled in September. Detective Wareing has exchanged materials with SOCR and has a verbal agreement with SOCR that each entity will disseminate informational brochures of the other alongside their own.
- Detective Wareing instructs the bias crimes block at the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) for each class of recruits.

- At the request of the Bias Crimes Unit, the Crime Analysis Unit provided an analysis of malicious harassment incidents for the first six months of 2017. No hot spots or other deployable factors were identified. This analysis is attached.
- The Bias Crime Coordinator creates monthly reports documenting all known reported bias based incidents. She looks for trends in reporting and works to put these trends in a broader context.
- The Bias Crime Coordinator has worked with the precincts to diffuse several neighborhood-based conflicts, traveling to meet with involved parties on multiple occasions. She has also engaged precinct CPT units to help resolve and/or monitor ongoing problems.
- The Bias Crime Coordinator serves as a resource to officers and their chain of command, assisting them in decision making in bias based incidents.
- The Bias Crime Coordinator responds to inquiries to the Chief's Office regarding bias based incidents.
- The Bias Crime Coordinator worked with the City Auditor's office over the course of many hours and numerous meetings on an audit of the City of Seattle's response to bias crimes.
- The Bias Crime Coordinator works closely with the Media Unit. During the first half of 2017, the Bias Crime Coordinator gave interviews to the Seattle Times, the Stranger and the New York Times. The Bias Crimes Unit was featured in multiple articles, both in print (Seattle Times, Kitsap Sun, the Seattle Globalist) and television news (King 5). The Media Unit has also been very helpful in locating incidents which have not been reported but are being discussed in social media. Copies of articles in which the SPD Bias Crimes Unit has been featured are attached. The April 6 Seattle Times article was featured on the front page of the Seattle Times print version.
- Increased attention and awareness of hate crimes continue to play a role in increased reporting of bias based incidents to the Seattle Police Department. The Bias Crime Coordinator has noted an increase in incidents reported by witnesses and individuals who have seen discussions of bias based incidents on social media.
- Detective Wareing and LGBTQ Liaison Officer Ritter continue to work closely together in addressing crime against the LGBTQ community. Officer Ritter provides vital support and referrals to LGBTQ victims, enabling Detective Wareing to focus on investigative tasks. Additionally, they attend many outreach events together as a team.
- Detective Wareing works closely with the King County Prosecutor's Office, the United States Attorney's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Justice Outreach Unit. This collaboration goes beyond criminal investigations and prosecutions, and includes attendance at a number of community events aimed at educating the public about bias based incidents.