



Governor Sean Parnell
STATE OF ALASKA

December 11, 2013

Brad Wilson
Business Manager
Alaska Correctional Officers Association
203 East Fifth Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Mr. Wilson,

In your letter to Governor Parnell dated November 4, 2013, you articulated concern about Correctional Officers being required to retake the oleoresin capsicum (OC) training. Specifically, you asserted that officers can be ordered to participate in classroom training on OC, but they cannot be required to undergo another exposure of pepper spray. You characterized the exposure as hazing, harassment, and assault.

As a result of your letter, we requested an investigation be conducted by staff from the Division of Personnel and Labor Relations. In summary, the findings reveal that the retraining was conducted due to concerns about methods of use of OC that previously occurred with the officers at Mat-Su Pretrial. The training the officers received was the same as the students in the Correctional Academy. All participated in the classroom and exposure portion. While there was no evidence of current employees ever being required to be retrained in OC, there was also no reason that prevented the Department of Corrections from requiring these officers to attend the whole class and not just a portion.

The investigation revealed that although management staff at the Department of Corrections has the right to require training at any time, perhaps the training in this instance could have been handled differently. The same may be said of Officer McLellan's actions during the training.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike Nizich".

Mike Nizich
Chief of Staff