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Tuesday night, Arlington Police Chief Theron Bowman presented the Burleson Police Department with its seventh re-accreditation certificate from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). Bowman is one of 21 commissioners for CALEA. The certificate was accepted by Burleson Police Chief Tom Cowan, Commander Cindy Aaron and Accreditation Manager Jae Berg.



Bowman read from the summary report submitted by assessment team leader Capt. Christopher Smith from Indiana's Kokomo Police Department. Smith said the Burleson Police Department "is a very good law enforcement agency. The agency has sound directives and excellent leadership. (Staff) is well trained and dedicated to their job responsibilities and the community they serve." Smith

added that the "agency's public relations and citizen involvement are very impressive. The agency recognizes the importance of citizen involvement and partnerships with the people."

The police department's re-accreditation team included Accreditation Manager Jae Berg, Sgt. Roger Hall and Officer Shaun Kellum. Capt. Smith said "it is clear that the agency and personnel are striving to keep the high standards and excellent service of the Burleson Police Department."

Assessors representing CALEA visited Burleson in April of this year. The team of Smith and Capt. Christopher Settle from Virginia's Culpepper Police Department interviewed police department employees. The City also hosted a public hearing to garner input from residents and business owners.

Burleson was the first police department in Texas to be accredited by CALEA in 1987. The Arlington Police Department was accredited by CALEA in 1989.

The accreditation program requires agencies to comply with standards in four basic areas: policy and procedures, administration, operations and support services. Every three years, the commission provides a team of trained assessors to conduct an on-site re-assessment of the agency. This is a requirement of the process to maintain the agency's accredited status. The process is similar to the accreditation of hospitals and universities. It provides the agency with an unbiased account of their service and performance to the community.

The voluntary accreditation program for law enforcement agencies was created through the joint effort of four major law enforcement executive membership associations: International Association of Chiefs of Police; National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives; National Sheriffs' Association; and the Police Executive Research Forum. The Burlison Police Department provides annual reports to the commission to prove continued compliance and report changes or difficulties experienced during the year, including actions taken to resolve noncompliance.

CALEA was formed to establish standards to increase law enforcement agency capabilities to prevent and control crime; increase agency effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of law enforcement services; increase cooperation and coordination with other law enforcement agencies and with other agencies of the criminal justice system; and, increase citizen and employee confidence in the goals, objectives, policies, and practices of the agency.