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City of North Miami Beach Police Department
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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POLICE CHIEF'S RESPONSE TO SNIPER TARGET STORY

In response to the story that aired yesterday on South Florida's NBC 6, North Miami Beach Police Chief J. Scott Dennis would like to provide you with some clarifying facts / his statement.

1. On Dec. 5, 2014 our sniper team conducted sniper training exercises at the Medley Police Department range.
2. The North Miami Beach sniper team consists of 2 officers: 1 black male team leader and one Hispanic male.
3. The snipers fired at the 6 picture array of black males shown in the NBC6 story. These males were previously arrested by our department.
4. The 6 picture array of black males is one of many images, with 22 images in all.
5. We also have, and use, arrays and photos of white males, Hispanic males, white females, and others.
6. The 6 pictures are purposefully similar to make the precise identification of the correct person more difficult.
7. The 6 picture black male array contains pictures taken at least 10-15 years ago.
8. Only our 2 sniper officers ever practice with these real photo targets, and they do this drill 3-4 times per year.
9. Our police department has 95 officers, and only 2 are active snipers.
10. Real photo targets are used because snipers are taught in schools by the experts to train as real as possible.
11. A renowned sniper expert was interviewed by the media, but the footage was not used in yesterday's story.
12. The sniper team leader is the one who chooses the targets that get used, on December 5, 2014 that was a black male officer from our Special Response Team.
13. This is not a race issue. There was no mal-intent or prejudice involved. This same target inventory has been used for more than a decade.
14. When finished with training the used materials were placed in the trash receptacle at the Medley range.
15. It is very unfortunate and I can sympathize with the family discovering their brother's photo on the target.
16. When I, Chief J. Scott Dennis, was made aware of the situation on December 22, 2014 we immediately took action.
17. Within 2 hours: an investigation was ordered, all upcoming sniper training was suspended, contacted renowned sniper experts, and directed new images to be purchased from a vendor.
18. There is no North Miami Beach PD policy violation or discipline forthcoming. There is no law that was broken. There is no FDLE (Florida Department of Law Enforcement) standard that was violated. However, we can always improve, and will.
19. From this point forward, targets will be purchased from commercial vendors and not made with photos from within our police dept.
20. Our policy will change to ensure all sensitive targets are properly destroyed.
21. We realize how important this issue is during today's climate.
22. Copies of the targets are available in the emailed attachment. And the same targets are available to the media at the police station lobby desk.

I hope this helped address your questions, thank you for getting the story correct. We will not be providing any interviews or additional information today. # # # #