



JEFF LANDRY
GOVERNOR

COLONEL ROBERT P. HODGES
DEPUTY SECRETARY

State of Louisiana
Department of Public Safety and Corrections
Public Safety Services

To: Captain Saleem El-Amin
Commander, Internal Affairs

From: Captain Heath Guillotte
Commander, Force Investigation Unit

Date: June 17, 2025

Re: Response to Proposed Action of Discipline for IA Case 25-0005

On Friday, June 13, 2025, I, Captain Heath Guillotte, received my Loudermill letter as required by LSP Policy/Procedure 211.3(x) for Internal Affairs Investigation 25-0005, Dissemination of Information. Although the Loudermill letter didn't contain the reason for the proposed action or the description of the evidence supporting the proposed action, Colonel Robert Hodges met with me to discuss the reasons and evidence. Also in attendance for the meeting were Lieutenant Colonel Jody Hasselbeck and Lieutenant Colonel Cordell Williams. During the meeting, Colonel Hodges reviewed the evidence presented to the Disciplinary Review Committee (DRC) and explained the reasons for issuing the proposed action of a 16-hour suspension for Dissemination of Information.

Below are bullet points describing the evidence presented to the DRC:

- On April 19, 2025, I sent an email summary of an FIU investigation to the senior command staff.
- In this email, I included Robert Burns, of Soundoff Louisiana, instead of LTC Robert Burns, of Louisiana State Police (LSP).
- The information in the email was less detailed than in the press release, however, it contained the employee's name who was involved in the incident.
- During my interview with Internal Affairs, I admitted to sending the email and mistakenly including Robert Burns, of Soundoff Louisiana, instead of LTC Robert Burns, of the LSP.
- When asked by Internal Affairs, I admitted to having communication with Robert Burns, of Soundoff Louisiana, in 2022 or 2023 from my personal email account.

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- I admitted that I had deleted those emails, immediately after learning what happened, to prevent the chance of making the same mistake again.

Below are bullet points describing the reasons for the 16-hour suspension:

- Col. Hodges stated he and the DRC knew I did not intentionally include Robert Burns, of Soundoff Louisiana, in the email.
- They know there was no malice or ill intent involved in the incident.
- I am a 27+ year employee, Captain, and Commander of the Force Investigation Unit (an integrity-based unit).
- Commanders and above are held to a higher standard and punished more severely.
- Because of the number of years, rank, and assignment the violation was classified as a "Category C" violation and not lower.
- Although the inclusion of Robert Burns, of Soundoff Louisiana, was an unintentional mistake, I should have known better than to have ever communicated with him in the past.
- If I never had communicated with Robert Burns, of Soundoff Louisiana, then this mistake wouldn't have taken place.
- It was stated that, although there is no policy preventing employees from communicating with "people like Robert Burns," no one should be communicating with him on-duty, off-duty, for personal reasons, or LSP-related reasons.
- Because I am assigned to an integrity-based unit, contacting Robert Burns, of Soundoff Louisiana, could call into question my integrity, cause me to become a "Brady" issue, and cause the public's trust to be diminished.

Col. Hodges stated that for these reasons, the violation of Dissemination of Information was categorized as a "Category C" violation. He stated that the "mitigating factors" put the violation at the lowest level and that is how the 16-hour suspension was decided.

While I admit and accept full responsibility for the actions sustained in the Internal Affairs investigation # 25-0005, I feel the proposed action of a 16-hour suspension is overly harsh.

I joined the Louisiana State Police in January of 1998. Since then, I have been assigned to Patrol at Troop I, Troop I's Criminal Patrol Unit, Region 2 Detectives, and the Force Investigation Unit. I have never had a complaint filed against me and have only received discipline for a Fleet Crash that occurred in 2007. During my time with LSP, I have received numerous Departmental awards, commendations, and community awards. During my yearly evaluations, my level of integrity, work ethic, and leadership abilities are consistently recognized.

It is my opinion, that this violation of the policy Dissemination of Information should be classified on the Disciplinary Matrix as a "Category B" violation, at most. In addition, five of the seven mitigating factors listed in the Disciplinary Matrix apply to this situation.

I understand holding members of the Command Staff to a higher level for intentional violations of policy and procedure, however, this was not an intentional act nor was there any malice involved in the violation. It was simply me being outsmarted by a "smartphone" and not fully understanding how they operate.

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While I understand Col. Hodges' concerns that I had contact with Robert Burns, of Soundoff Louisiana, in 2022 or 2023, the Department refused to answer my public records request for information needed to support my EEOC complaint filed against the previous administration. LSP Policy required me to provide all relevant information to support my complaint. Robert Burns, of Soundoff Louisiana, had written an article containing the information I needed.

Col. Hodges stated that I should have not deleted the emails from 2022 or 2023. He said I should have kept them so I could prove what the contents of those emails were. The emails were deleted in order to prevent another incident like this from occurring again. I never imagined an innocent mistake would have resulted in an investigation, therefore, I didn't think I had anything to prove. It should be noted that the contents of the emails have absolutely no contribution to what occurred and, therefore, shouldn't be relevant to the investigation or the discipline.

Once again, I feel this violation should be listed as a "Category B" violation according to the Disciplinary Matrix. The "Standard" discipline for a "Category B" violation is 8 – 12 hours of leave without pay. With the mitigating factors of a lack of disciplinary history, complimentary work history, level of employment experience, the violation was the inadvertent result of reasonable and otherwise compliant performance, and I promptly accepted responsibility for the conduct and am willing to be held "appropriately" accountable this violation should be an Improvement Letter. It should also be noted that this incident didn't result in a negative impact on operations, nor was it disparaging or publicly embarrass LSP. Numerous times we have heard Col. Hodges use the analogy that when we are looking at the actions of our employees, "the tie should always go to the runner and our employees are the runner." There has never been a clearer example of a "tie" than an innocent mistake, without ill intent or malice, of including Robert Burns, of Soundoff Louisiana, on a Departmental email.

I respectfully request Col. Hodges and the Disciplinary Review Committee, review the information provided in this response and reconsider the proposed discipline issued on June 13, 2025. Should the decision remain the same, it is my full intention to appeal the 16-hour suspension to the Louisiana State Police Commission.

Thank you in Advance,



Captain Heath Guillotte,
Commander of Force Investigation Unit