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Inspector General Slams NOPD In Letter To Mayor

IG Ed Quatrevaux Says 'Odious Smell' Hangs Over Police Force

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NEW ORLEANS -- The New Orleans Inspector General on Wednesday sent a letter to Mayor Ray Nagin blasting the Police Department and its leadership for what he called hampering the work of the Independent Police Monitor and even failing to comply with the law.

The [three-page letter](#) from Ed Quatrevaux cites a “groundswell of citizen displeasure” with the New Orleans Police Department. It notes last month’s guilty plea by a former lieutenant who admits to participating in a sweeping cover-up following the Danziger Bridge shootings in 2005.

Quatrevaux writes that such deceptions are all the more reason the department must cooperate with a third-party monitor. But he then details how department officials, including Superintendent Warren Riley, impeded the work of the Independent Police Monitor over the past year.

Among the most pointed remarks in the letter: “The odious smell hanging over the NOPD will affect all police officers, good and bad, until someone the public trusts certifies that the NOPD is properly investigating allegations of police misconduct.

“The Superintendent has repeatedly refused to comply with the law. The Superintendent said he is shocked by the misconduct of some (of) his officers, but ordered the very officers charged with investigating complaints of misconduct to ignore the law as it applies to the NOPD.”

Quatrevaux said that, on several occasions, Independent Police Monitor Holly Wiseman has tried to meet with high-ranking NOPD members to discuss serious department issues. The letter said that her efforts have turned up very little and she has not been granted any access to police documents.

The position of independent police monitor was created last year and is set up to maintain oversight of the department and its officers.

"Now more than ever it is imperative that the NOPD fully cooperate with the office of the independent police monitor and provide access to documents according to the law," said Councilwoman Shelley Midura.

Quatrevaux called on Nagin to take action, but it was not immediately clear what specific action was sought. Neither Nagin nor Riley were immediately available for comment.

The mayor's spokesperson, James Ross, issued a statement responding the the inspector general's letter.

"Having received the Inspector General's letter, Mayor Nagin will have a follow up conversation with Superintendent Riley," Ross said. "However, with multiple federal investigations of the Police

Department currently under way, the Inspector General cannot be guaranteed unfettered access until those federal investigations are completed."

Quatrevaux did not respond to repeated phone calls Wednesday night.

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