

Beat: News

California CHP officers shared nude photos of detained women

-, 26.10.2014, 23:47 Time

USPA News - A senior California Highway Patrol (CHP) official has said he is "very disappointed and disgusted" by allegations that at least two San Francisco-area officers shared nude photos which were stolen from the cell phones of female detainees, but he emphasized it was not a widespread practice. Addressing reporters at a late-night news conference on Saturday, CHP Chief Avery Browne of the Golden Gate Division said he was first notified of the investigation on October 8. "I'm very disappointed and disgusted with the allegations of misconduct and I want to thank the young lady for having the courage to bring this to our attention," he said.

The allegations first surfaced when a 23-year-old California woman discovered six explicit photos - which were stored on her iPhone - had been forwarded to her arresting officer while she was detained in August for driving under the influence. An investigation revealed that the photos were shared with at least one other officer. "As an organization we expect the highest levels of integrity and moral strength from everyone in the California Highway Patrol and there is no place in our organization for such behavior," Browne said. "When I read the accounts and responses that were mentioned in the search warrant documents, the callousness and depravity with which these officers communicated about women is dehumanizing, horribly offensive, and degrading to all women." One of the officers involved told investigators that he had stolen photos belonging to about "half a dozen" female arrestees over the past several years, but Browne emphasized the misconduct was confined only to the Dublin CHP Area office, which is just southeast of San Francisco. A third officer involved in the alleged photo theft is considered to be a "witness." Browne, speaking at the press conference, said the alleged behavior does not reflect the professionalism of the thousands of CHP officers across the state. "As we progress through the investigation, I want to reiterate our commitment to public safety, service, and security to the people of California," he said, recognizing that the behavior "gravely undermines" the public trust in law enforcement. The Contra Costa District Attorney's Office is expected to make a decision next week on whether to file criminal charges in the case. In late June, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously ruled that law enforcement officers cannot search the cell phones of individuals when they are arrested if police do not have a search warrant to do so. Since the landmark ruling in favor of electronic privacy, officers are only allowed to examine a phone's physical aspects to eliminate any potential physical threats.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-2839/california-chp-officers-shared-nude-photos-of-detained-women.html>

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