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A CUTE COMMUTE

A rabbit pauses on their hop through the dew covered grass of a yard near Keyport on April 18. MEEGAN M. REID/KITSAP SUN

War negotiations on shaky ground

Talks uncertain after U.S. seizes Iranian ship

Kathryn Palmer, Adrianna Rodriguez and Francesca Chambers
USA TODAY

Iran is considering attending peace talks with the United States in Pakistan, a senior Iranian official told Reuters on April 20, following moves by Islamabad to end a U.S. blockade of Iran's ports, a major hurdle for Iran to rejoin peace efforts. However, the official stressed that no decision had been made.

With a two-week ceasefire set to expire on April 22, a senior Iranian official said Tehran was "positively reviewing" its participation but no final decision had been made. The comments conveyed a clear change of tone from earlier statements ruling out attendance and pledging to retaliate for U.S. aggression.

See IRAN, Page 2A

People walk near an anti-U.S. billboard in Tehran, Iran, on April 20. A two-week ceasefire between the United States and Iran is set to expire on April 22.
MAJID ASGARIPOUR/WEST ASIA NEWS AGENCY VIA REUTERS

Mandated training for police falling far short on compliance

Jake Goldstein-Street
WASHINGTON STATE STANDARD

Washington law enforcement officers are way behind completing deescalation and mental health training required under the state's marquee police accountability law.

That's according to a report released this week by the state auditor's office. The audit found just 16% of veteran officers and 14% of new officers had finished the 40 hours of training. Roughly 42% of vets were at least halfway done. At this rate, under half of the state's officers will have finished the training by a 2028 deadline.

The mandated training aims to reduce use-of-force cases, making civilians and officers safer, and thus improving trust in law enforcement.

It includes 16 hours of mostly online community and cultural awareness courses, and 24 hours of in-person patrol tactics training every three years. Topics include managing distance between officers and the people they interact with, managing the pace of an interaction, communication strategies for engaging with those with mental health issues and physical force alternatives.

It stems from Initiative 940, the sweeping police reform effort voters approved in 2018, which became law the next year as the Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act.

Police departments have a newly added incentive to complete the instruction. To access the state's new $100 million grant program aimed to boost police hiring, agencies have to reach 50% compliance with the 40-hour training requirement.

"The goal of this law is to improve interactions between police officers and community members," state Auditor Pat McCarthy said in a statement. "By addressing the issues raised by our findings, Washington can continue to build better relationships between law enforcement agencies and the diverse communities they serve."

Roadblocks

McCarthy's office lays out a few reasons for the low uptake among the state's roughly 11,000 officers.

For one, the Criminal Justice Training Commission developed the

See TRAINING, Page 2A

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