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By Alan Merridew

THE CHICAGO Police Department's new Office of Professional Standards has started its first major investigation.

The unit is probing the death of George Lemon, 27, who was fatally shot in a scuffle with police Jan. 7 outside his burning apartment building at 2454 W. Pershing Rd.

Two days later, the department's Internal Affairs Division said there was no wrongdoing by policemen involved. A coroner's jury ruled Feb. 6 that the shooting was justified.

But last Thursday police Supt. James M. Rochford told the Police Board that he would order an OPS investigation of the incident.

The next day, James J. Casey, one of three men named in May to head the new department, announced that the investigation was under way.

"I'M DOING this one myself," said Casey. He said he was receiving the IAD investigation, and "beyond that, I have no further comment."

Rochford announced the creation of the OPS on Feb. 17—the day Mayor Daley announced Rochford's appointment as superintendent. It has taken over the IAD's responsibility for investigating and eliminating police brutality and corruption.

Rochford agreed to order the OPS probe of Lemon's death after about 20 members of a citizen's group, Rising Up

Angry, asked for a "blue ribbon investigation." They had a petition which contained 1,100 signatures of persons who wanted the investigation, a spokesman for the group said.

Marc Kadish, who said he represents George Lemon's mother, Helen, said Mrs. Lemon wants "adjudication of the rights of all mothers whose sons die at the hands of police officers."

HE SAID THE state's attorney's office had determined that it would be virtually impossible to prove any criminal liability of policemen involved in the incident.

Kadish said he also wants the OPS to determine whether the officer who fired the fatal shots is psychologically fit to

be a policeman.

Lemon, a mechanic, was shot twice in the chest after confronting three Deering District policemen with a shotgun and a .38 caliber revolver on the stairs leading to his second-floor apartment, police said.

Firemen, who said they had been chased out of the apartment while trying to fight a fire there, called the police.

POLICE SAID Lemon pointed the shotgun at the face of Sgt. Nicholas Baffa, who grabbed the barrel and pointed it toward a wall, into which the gun discharged.

Patrolman Merrill Kaval then fired his pistol four times at Lemon, killing him, police said.