



Information Item

Date: July 29, 2021

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Jacqueline A. Seabrooks, Interim Chief of Police

Subject: Santa Monica Police Department's Response to the OIR Group's Independent After-Action Report Recommendations for the Events of May 31, 2020

Introduction

During the Council meeting of May 11, 2021, the Council directed Santa Monica Police Department (SMPD) staff to prepare a written response, in the form of an Information Item to the Office of Independent Review (OIR) Group's after-action report on the events of May 31, 2020. The document sets forth a plan for implementation of the OIR report's 44 recommendations, with priorities being leadership planning, use of force, and the mental well-being of SMPD officers.

Background

The women and men of the Santa Monica Police Department were dismayed and will never forget the horrific murder of Mr. George Floyd and the amount of unrest that occurred nationwide, regionally, and here in our community on May 31, 2020. The aftermath left our community and the Police Department damaged in ways both seen and not. In the days following May 31, 2020, in recognition of the need to improve its performance, SMPD began to take immediate actions to implement a variety of internal changes resulting from its self-critique of the events associated with May 31, 2020. In parallel, the City Council called for the OIR to conduct an independent after-action analysis. The Police Department committed to work alongside OIR as it assessed the circumstances and made its recommendations about the SMPD's performance. There was a sense of urgency to both the Police Department's and the OIR's work because there was a clear understanding that the community deserved to understand what occurred.

In the months since May 31, 2020, the Police Department has been on a journey of learning, reconciliation, and healing. The women and men of the organization have been working diligently to implement systems, policies, procedures, and training that improve individual and organizational performance in future unusual emergency circumstances.

The OIR report details its findings regarding the facts leading up to, during, and after the events of May 31, 2021. In preparing its report, OIR reviewed a large volume of materials, interviewed a wide range of participants in and observers of the events, held two public listening sessions, and focused listening sessions with various interested groups before completing its report. The report contains a series of 44 recommendations, one of which (#43) is satisfied by the preparation of this Information Item which indicates the Police Department's full acceptance of each of the recommendations and puts forth the ongoing processes and/or plans for implementation of the 43 remaining recommendations.

SMPD and its partners across the City organization are committed to rebuilding trust within our community, supporting one-another, and continuing to provide excellent municipal and safety services which embrace and integrate the OIRs recommendations into the Department's operations.

Discussion

SMPD is committed to improvement and is accountable for its response to the events on and around May 31, 2020. Accordingly, what follows is SMPD's response to and plans for each of OIR's recommendations:

- 1. When engaging outside assistance to review significant events, the Santa Monica Police Department (SMPD) and the City should carefully and deliberately consider the scope and terms of the review and should be open and transparent about the engagement.**

SMPD agrees with this recommendation and is committed to transparency as a means of fostering trust and credibility. In the future, the City and SMPD will openly and transparently collaborate on decisions to engage outside entities to conduct after-action analyses of significant events.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

- 2. The Chief of Police should make clear to the Department and City leadership when they will be out of town and clearly designate an Acting Chief in her or his absence.**

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. The Chief of Police will notify the Department and City leadership when he/she is out of town. It shall be the responsibility of the Chief to designate an Acting Chief who will command the Department in the Chief's absence and alert the Department's personnel as to this designation. In addition, SMPD revised department policy¹ to require that members at the rank of Lieutenant or Administrator and above and any Unit Sergeant or Supervisor shall use the email notification and voicemail systems to inform email recipients and callers of absences extending more than three days. For absences of less than three days, given the varied work schedules, system notifications are not required.

¹ [Policy Section 204.5, Electronic Mail](#)

[Policy Section 701, Personal Communication Devices](#)

Status: Implemented/On-going.

- 3. SMPD should develop written protocols to ensure that an operations plan is developed in advance of all potential crowd control situations, establishing expectations for the depth and inclusion as well as a chain of command approval mechanism.**

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. Existing Department policy directs the SMPD Planning and Intelligence Unit to develop comprehensive, incident-specific operational plans.

SMPD made immediate changes to the operational planning process for planned and unplanned events following the events of May 31, 2020. Planning and Intelligence have been consolidated into a singular unit within SMPD's Professional Services Division. The Unit is led by a team of two sergeants who are tasked with incorporating the Incident Command System (ICS) structure into every operational plan that has a potential to require crowd control.²

ICS Structure is the standardized approach to emergency response utilized by public safety officials nationwide and is supported by the City's Office of Emergency Management (OEM).

Status: Implemented/On-going.

- 4. SMPD should develop written protocols to ensure timely and thoughtful designation of an incident commander for special operations.**

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD policy requires that the operational planning team establish Incident Command assignments, the chain-of-command structure, and the roles and responsibilities of those tasked with command assignments.^{3 4}

SMPD uses operational plans in other contexts such as in the service of search/arrest warrants; these operational plans also follow the ICS structure with identified incident command and chain-of-command and identification of the functional roles and responsibilities of those in the various command positions.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

- 5. SMPD should ensure that critical personnel, including those tasked with intelligence gathering and other crucial functions, remain in the City prior to a major incident and are not sent out as part of a mutual aid response or otherwise assigned supplementary duties.**

² [Policy Section 433.5, Planned Event Preparation](#) and [Policy Section 433.5.2, Operational Plans](#)

³ [Policy Section 433.5, Planned Event Preparation](#)

⁴ [Policy 433.5.2, Operational Plans](#)

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. The Planning and Intelligence Unit is staffed by two sergeants, whose primary duty is to provide timely information to the ICS Command Structure. In addition to the Planning and Intelligence Unit, an Intelligence Cadre, consisting of 13 members—including the two Planning and Intelligence sergeants—was created in November 2020. The Intelligence Cadre consists of both sworn and civilian staff who work diverse hours. This diversity in work hours provides the Department with readily available expertise that provides a broader ability to monitor online activity, while allowing for a more robust ability to vet intelligence about potential events. This larger team works cooperatively to share and disseminate relevant information pertaining to events having the potential to adversely affect the City of Santa Monica and surrounding areas. The information is shared with Police leadership in the form of an intelligence brief so timely and informed operational decisions can be made.

As a critical functionality associated with a major incident, the Planning and Intelligence supervisors and necessary Intelligence Cadre members will not be a part of a mutual aid response and will not be assigned supplementary duties.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

6. SMPD should establish a dedicated listserv with “read receipt” functionality for command to receive intelligence briefings in a formal and timely manner and confirm receipt of such information.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. Effective June 2021, the Planning and Intelligence Unit has instituted “read receipt” to all intelligence briefs.

Status: Implemented/Ongoing.

7. The Department should regularly review and update its Mass Booking Procedures policy to ensure that the listed contact information and location and availability of all itemized equipment is current and correct.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. Before the occurrence of the civil unrest of May 31, 2020, SMPD did not have policies or procedures governing the handling of mass bookings. After the events of May 31, 2020, it was determined that a mass booking policy was necessary. It was also discovered that surrounding law enforcement agencies also lacked related policies. SMPD was the first to create a policy addressing Mass Booking procedures in both a Covid-19 and non-Covid-19 environment. In October 2020, a mass booking policy and procedure was created and implemented⁵. This policy provides direction for the handling of mass bookings both inside the Public Safety Facility (PSF) Jail and at a temporary booking facility set up in the City to address a particular circumstance. The policy delineates housing, transportation, booking, processing, and release of arrestees. It also addresses the availability and accessibility of equipment needed both at the PSF Jail facility and in any off-site jail facility. The Department’s PSF Jail staff and

⁵ [Policy Section 901.11, Training and Policy Section 901.12 Policy Review](#)

police officers have been provided with needed training and equipment to operate in a mass booking environment. This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

8. SMPD should develop a tracking mechanism, such as a log for less lethal munitions, specifically to track how many of which types of munitions are used and by whom.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. During civil unrest situations, SMPD will embed an employee, either sworn or professional staff, within the Mobile Field Force Cadre and/or Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team to serve as a scribe and videographer - to assist and best document the usage of less lethal munitions. This will include, when applicable and safe to do so, using an officer's body worn camera to capture an officer verbalizing the less lethal munitions being deployed; the specific person to whom the munitions are directed; and, the actions leading to the deployment of less lethal munitions.

The embedded scribe/videographer positions are included in the planning phase of any Operations Plan/Incident Action Plan and will be consistent with Incident Command Structure protocols. The Department will continue to emphasize the need for all personnel to adhere to SMPD Policy 303.15 Reporting Use of Control Devices and Techniques, requiring officers to immediately report force use to a supervisor and to document the use of any less lethal munitions.⁶

Status: Implemented/On-going.

9. SMPD should examine the use of the flashbang device on May 31st through the lenses of accountability, advisability, and remediation.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD's SWAT Team are the only members equipped with and authorized to deploy Noise/Flash Diversionary Devices (NFDD) commonly referred to as "flashbang" devices.

Following the incident, the SWAT Team conducted remediation training for all team members on the appropriate usage of an NFDD. SWAT members will adhere to the guidelines set forth in the SWAT Manual governing the use of these devices. SMPD is reviewing and revising both Department policy and the SWAT Manual governing NFDD usage to specifically prohibit directing NFDD at any person(s) or in or at a crowd.

On page 65 of its report, OIR mentions a Department employee who directed a NFDD at a person(s) or crowd; the employee was immediately counseled by a supervisor of the SWAT Team. The Department is not aware of any other utilization of NFDD on May 31, 2020.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

⁶ [Policy 303, Control Devices and Techniques](#)

10. SMPD should conduct a detailed analysis regarding whether the Pepperball deployments on May 31st were consistent with Department policy and expectations.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD convened Incident Review Boards on January 27 and February 3, 2021, to review all uses of force, including the pepperball deployments occurring on May 31, 2021 to determine whether the deployments were consistent with Department policy and expectation.

An analysis of the outcomes of those Review Boards indicates additional training is required. This training will be part of the upcoming advanced officer training cycle beginning in September 2021.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

11. SMPD should revise its use of force policies to either specially define “riotous” or eliminate the terminology from its policies.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD has removed the word “riotous” from the relevant policies and procedures⁷. Currently, the Office of Emergency Management uses the term “civil unrest” as defined by U.S Code Title 18 § 231 – 233 in the development of the City of Santa Monica’s Civil Unrest Annex. SMPD will also adopt the federal definition of civil unrest and the State definition of unlawful assembly.⁸

Status: Implemented.

12. SMPD should amend its policy to provide further guidance regarding deployment of less lethal munitions, particularly to guard against injuries to the face and head.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. Current policy has guiding language that specifically states the head, neck, spine and groin should be avoided when deploying the pepper projectile system (pepperball). The kinetic energy device policy states the head and neck should be avoided. For consistency, this policy is currently being revised to include spine and groin. To ensure this policy and these guidelines are followed, the training on these devices will also include the importance of avoiding these sensitive impact areas.⁹

Status: Implemented.

13. SMPD should conduct regular and ongoing training on use of impact munitions in crowd situations so that all officers trained in the use of these munitions are advised of how to most effectively deploy them and have a clear understanding of Departmental expectations.

⁷ [Policy 433, First Amendment Assemblies](#)

⁸ [United States Code: Civil Disorders. 18 U.S.C. §§ 231-233 \(Suppl. 5 1964\).](#)

⁹ [Santa Monica Police Department Manual. Policy 303, Control Devices and Techniques.](#)

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. While all officers receive annual training and perform a qualification test to demonstrate competency with impact munitions, only the Mobile Field Force and SWAT Team are authorized to use these munitions in crowd situations.

In September 2021's cycle of advanced officer training, all SMPD officers will receive training of the use of impact munitions in crowd control situations; this training will include a de-escalation component.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

14. SMPD should engage with its community and City leaders to determine whether and to what degree gas and other less lethal munition should be used in the First Amendment activity context.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD will work with both the City Attorney and the Public Safety Reform and Oversight Commission to solicit community input and review and determine if and to what degree gas and other less-lethal munitions should be used in the context of First Amendment activity.

Status: On-going/Pending.

15. After having the above discourse, SMPD should revise its use of force policy related to deployment of tear gas and less lethal impact munition in crowd control situation to specify the circumstances, if any, under which they may be used.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD is currently reviewing and revising its tear gas deployment policy¹⁰ based on a review of the best and most promising law enforcement practices associated with the deployment of tear gas and impact munitions in crowd control situations. SMPD will further review and revise its policy after obtaining input from the Public Safety Reform and Oversight Commission and the community per Recommendation 14.

Status: On-going/Pending.

16. Training for supervisors on unlawful assembly should emphasize the need to follow Department policy and reach out to event organizers or participants with the goal of gaining voluntary dispersal prior to issuing formal dispersal orders.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD has a long-standing history of compliance with this policy. In its September 2021 cycle of advanced officer training, SMPD will emphasize that supervisors should continue to follow this policy and attempt to gain voluntary dispersal before issuing formal dispersal orders.

The SMPD contacted event organizers of two of the three scheduled protests on May 31 before the events occurred. SMPD was unsuccessful in efforts to contact the event organizer of the third and much larger protest before May 31, 2020. On the morning of the

¹⁰ [Policy 303, Control Devices and Techniques](#)

protest, it appeared that the event had been canceled by the organizer. There was no contact person; the group was leaderless.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

17. In crafting dispersal orders to instruct crowds about the routes of egress from a protest, SMPD policy and training should require officer to consider conditions such as traffic and officer deployment to ensure the feasibility and safety of any direction provided about dispersal routes.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. Current policy is under review and revision to require routes of egress be included in all dispersal orders¹¹. SMPD will also reprint dispersal order cards issued to officers; these new dispersal order cards will include the requirement.

Status: In-Progress/On-going.

18. SMPD policy and training regarding dispersal orders should be revised to require personnel officer (*sic*) to include express warnings about the potential use of force should the order be defied.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. Current policy is being reviewed and revised to require express warnings about the potential for force to be used; this express warning shall be a part of all dispersal orders. The requirement will be included in the reprinted dispersal order cards issued to the officers as mentioned in response to Recommendation 17.

Status: Implemented.

19. SMPD should continue to impress upon its supervisors the need to follow all dispersal order protocols before any introduction of less lethal munitions.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. Once the current policy is revised, all supervisors will be instructed on dispersal order protocols.

Status: Implemented/In-progress/On-going.

20. SMPD and the City should engage with the community as it considers the circumstances required for a public protest to be declared an unlawful assembly. The resulting guidelines should be publicized in a way that provided City residents and stakeholders a clear understanding of under what circumstances the SMPD will declare an unlawful assembly.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD, along with the City Attorney's Office, will work with the Public Safety Reform and Oversight Commission to solicit community input

¹¹ [Procedure 433, First Amendment Assemblies](#)

for and draft guidelines on the circumstances required for a public protest to be declared an unlawful assembly and the process for disseminating this information for public education.

Status: In-Progress.

21. SMPD should continue to provide command level staff with updated training on the ICS so that command staff is knowledgeable about its use and benefits.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. All SMPD above the rank of sergeant— lieutenants, captains, deputy chief, and police chief-- are required to attend increasingly advanced Incident Command System (ICS) courses in the Los Angeles area; these courses are taught jointly by the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles Fire Department and FEMA.

Status: Implemented/In-Progress.

22. SMPD should ensure that all command staff personnel are well versed in contemporary crowd control responses, particularly in the First Amendment context.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. Exposure to best and most promising practices, contemporary procedures, and laws are paramount to a progressive law enforcement organization. Membership in professional organizations including the California Police Officers' Association (CPOA), the California Police Chiefs Association (CPCA), Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC), Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the National Tactical Officers Association (NTOA) supplement attendance at various professional development conferences and assist in meeting this goal.

Regular ongoing discussions with the City Attorney's Office about this and other relevant issues and approaches also operate to ensure SMPD is contemporary with changing legal parameters and expectations.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

23. SMPD should continue to regularly train all officers in Mobile Field Force tactics, to include the newest techniques with live, hand-on scenario training and new laws related to First Amendment Assemblies and civil unrest.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. Following the May 31 civil unrest, SMPD provided department-wide, mandatory Mobile Field Force (MFF) training to all sworn personnel on two occasions in July 2020 and April 2021. (See attached for SMPD Training Announcement and April 2021 Training Curriculum.)

In September 2020, SMPD formed the MFF Cadre which consists of 1 Lieutenant, 6 Sergeants, and 33 officers. The MFF Cadre has received substantial training in crowd control and management tactics since its inception. This training includes interdepartmental cross-training with SMPD's Special Weapons & Tactics Team and regional mutual aid partners from the police departments of Beverly Hills, Culver City, and

the University of California at Los Angeles. The MFF Cadre will provide department-wide refresher training on a semi-annual basis.

SMPD will continue to align with its regional mutual aid partners to coordinate training on First Amendment assemblies and crowd control/management tactics. As of this writing, SMPD has been the primary department leading the regional training efforts in contemporary principles of crowd control/management using the MFF model.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

24. SMPD should consider additional Department-wide trainings on topics such as use of de-escalation techniques and other tactics to reduce tension in civil unrest or other similar scenarios.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD is committed to the principle of de-escalation. Upcoming department-wide advanced officer training will focus on de-escalation as an approach to reducing police-community tensions in a variety of scenarios, including civil unrest.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

25. City leadership (specifically, the Office of Emergency Management) should hold a City-wide training event with all relevant City agencies to review the Civil Unrest Annex so that all agencies are aware of their role and expectations during times of spontaneous civil unrest.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. On October 22, 2020, the City's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) held training and an Emergency Operations Center drill involving the Civil Unrest Annex in preparation for the 2020 Election; this drill requires participation. Additional training has been scheduled for summer 2021. The Office of Emergency Management will continue to host annual training on the Civil Unrest Annex for inter-departmental staff. The training will incorporate protest/civil unrest scenarios, general and disaster exercises/drills.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

26. SMPD should consider who from command-level staff will take on the role of Overall Field Incident Command if the Civil Unrest Annex is activated and train this/these personnel on the requirements and expectations of the plan.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. This has been a long standing and on-going policy and practice. When operational plans are created, ICS roles are pre-designated and discussed as part of the planning phase of an incident.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

27. City leadership, in collaboration with Public Works, should consider determining guidelines for use of barriers in advance of civil unrest, both protective fencing on public and private property and for traffic control, that are practicable and effective.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. Based on collaboration with the relevant municipal partners, the following action steps have been taken:

- The City's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) obtained 50 waterfilled barricades and 200 traffic style A-Frames for use during various events and activities where crowds are likely. This equipment may be used upon request by Public Works, SMPD, or other City departments for general emergency use.
- Public Works will provide personnel and water trucks to fill plastic K-rail barriers when deployed by SMPD Traffic Control Officers as a traffic control mechanism at designated locations.
- Public Works will make available all operable disposal vehicles--fleet vehicles at the end of their service life waiting to be disposed of-- for SMPD/Traffic Control to use as barricades at predetermined locations.
- Public Works will provide two (2) Electronic Message Sign (EMS) boards to assist in redirecting traffic.
- SMPD has developed traffic circulation and closure plans which control traffic movement in relevant areas as determined by SMPD's Planning & Intelligence Unit or the operation's field incident commander as determined by the ICS model. These plans can be used during special events, civil unrest, or other identified emergencies.

SMPD will coordinate other needs, such as protective fencing and board up services for public and private property, with the Office of Emergency Management and/or Public Works as determined by the contours of the incident.

Status: Implemented.

28. City leadership, in collaboration with Public Works, should consider establishing guidelines for use of heavy equipment to support defensive enforcement action.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. Based on the collaborations between municipal leadership and Public Works, the following guidelines for the use of heavy equipment to support defensive action have been developed:

- The Public Works Department's heavy equipment and vehicles will be made available to barricade critical locations, including city entry points. These vehicles will include maintenance and construction equipment from both the Engineering and Street Services and the Water Resources Divisions and front load and side load trucks from the Resource Recovery and Recycling Divisions.
 - It was determined that equipment will only be used as a last resort for barricading city entry points in preparation for civil unrest.
- Public Works staff will be made available to place the heavy equipment at the designated barricade locations only during preparations for civil unrest or when conditions are safe. If conditions escalate during the barricading process, SMPD personnel will escort Public Works staff out of harm's way and back to their base of operations.

Status: Implemented.

29. SMPD leadership should work with Area A partners to develop solutions to address the bureaucratic challenges exposed on May 31st and ensure an equitable distribution of National Guard assets in future situations involving civil unrest.

While SMPD supports the rationale for this recommendation, the recommendation itself warrants examination by a broader array of stakeholders. Unfortunately, neither SMPD nor its regional mutual aid law enforcement partners have authority over or responsibility for the deployment of National Guard resources. Established policy within the State of California and within Los Angeles County requires that all requests for National Guard assistance are to be routed through the Emergency Operations Bureau of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) by the Chief of Police for the requesting law enforcement agency, Emergency Services Director, or their designee. The National Guard resources are then deployed at the direction of LASD.

In view of the delays encountered in receiving National Guard assistance on May 31, 2021, SMPD has strengthened its direct relationship with the California Office of Emergency Services which will, in parallel, track and monitor future SMPD requests for aid made through LASD.

SMPD has also independently strengthened its Mobile Field Force (MFF) staffing and training while also working with its regional mutual aid partners to ensure a timely and consistent response when needed.

Status: Neutral.

30. SMPD should reach out to other law enforcement agencies who confronted violence and looting in the summer of 2020 and review after action reports from other jurisdictions to identify best practices that could be imported to Santa Monica in response to future activity.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD has since reviewed the public after action reports completed by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) as well as the reports published by other cities such as Portland, Chicago, and New York. SMPD will continue to scan the public safety environment for the best and most promising practices identified in various professional publications and the after-action reports of other affected communities

While many of the findings and recommendations have been consistent across jurisdictions, the most consistently identified areas for improvement were similar to those raised by the OIR which included strengthening command and control systems; effectively managing resource (personnel and equipment) challenges; and ensuring robust and timely intelligence gathering.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

31. The Public Safety Communications Center should review a sampling of calls (of varying degrees of effectiveness) as a platform for the staff-wide reinforcing of strengths and offering of constructive alternatives as warranted.

The SMPD agrees with this recommendation. In this circumstance and others, SMPD requests that the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) leadership review calls as a means of reinforcing Center strengths or identifying potential performance challenges. Based on circumstances associated with May 31, 2020, the following actions were undertaken:

- Office of Emergency Management Public Safety Communications all-staff meetings on July 22, 2021 and July 24, 2021 included a review of 12 minutes of May 31, 2021 call taking audio samples.
- Discussion on areas of improvement and strengths including the following:
 - 82% of calls were answered within 15 seconds or less (equal to 1 week of calls, only 89 abandoned).
 - Effective triaging and slowing of calls to obtain clarifying information ensured response to five traffic collisions and nine structure/vehicle fires.
 - Recommended scripting when advising multiple reports at same location.
 - Handling open line 911 calls and non-emergency line triaging.
 - Scripting on field response times.
 - Staffing plan when SMPD/SMFD implements Tactical Alert/Task Force to complement increase in staffing.

Status: Implemented.

32. The City should engage with its community in developing guidelines on whether and how curfews should be deployed, particularly when adjacent to First Amendment protected activity.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. The City Attorney's Office (CAO) has agreed to solicit community views on appropriate guidelines for implementing curfews. CAO will conduct outreach with the seven recognized neighborhood groups, Downtown business owners and operators, and the Chamber of Commerce. CAO will also work with the City's Communications team to identify additional outreach efforts.

Status: In-progress.

33. The City and SMPD should continue to evaluate and refine the ways it communicates with the Santa Monica community following any significant event involving a police response, guided by principles of transparency, accuracy and objectivity.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD understands the importance of consistent and accurate, open-flow communication with its community. SMPD's approach to communicating information places a premium on transparency, objectivity, proactivity, and accuracy as these factors are essential to building and maintaining community trust. SMPD has refined its approach to community communication by proactively ensuring that

there is an adequacy of information made publicly available in anticipation of those events/activities that have the potential to become significant for the community.

SMPD has substantially increased the staffing making up its Press Information Team (PIT). This approach ensures there is always a trained Public Information Officer (PIO) available to report on significant events and ensure that accurate information is shared in a timely manner. PIT has been meeting regularly to share information, to discuss best practices for press releases and social media usage, to strategize regarding optimal outreach methods, and to provide necessary on-going training. PIT works collaboratively with the City's Communications team on a frequent basis to ensure message accuracy and consistency. Both SMPD's PIT and the City's Communications team meet monthly to discuss events occurring in the City and to strategize on approaches to effectively communicate with our community. Information is then shared with members of SMPD's Community Affairs Unit, which includes the Neighborhood Resource Officers and Crime Prevention Coordinators, to further disseminate vital information to and through our Neighborhood Organizations and Business Improvement Districts using various modalities including video, virtual meetings, emails, etc.

The Department has created an extensive Crisis Communications Plan. This plan provides step by step instructions for PIT and personnel running the Command Post during a significant incident. Information in the plan includes messaging ideas as well as instructions for using all necessary outlets (e.g., social media, traditional media, reverse 9-1-1, etc.) to release important information.

SMPD has been very active issuing timely and accurate media releases on a variety of platforms so that the community can be informed both about criminal activity occurring within the City and also the excellent work done by the men and women of SMPD as they address crime and the fear of crime in our community. All media releases are disseminated by email to reporters who request them and are also available on the City's main [Press Room](#) page.

The SMPD (through PIT personnel) continues to be very active on all social media platforms (including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and NextDoor). These platforms allow the SMPD to share pertinent information regarding significant incidents/ arrests and educational pieces, while also highlighting Department personnel to provide valuable insight into the men and women that serve the Santa Monica community.

The Department is hosting an upcoming Community Conversation to discuss the events of May 31, 2020, the subsequent OIR report, and this response. The Community Affairs Unit (CAU) has also resumed outreach activities and PIT continues to highlight these events online to promote opportunities for the community to meet with and discuss their concerns with PD personnel (while adhering to all COVID-related restrictions). The CAU has hosted several *Coffee with a Cop* events in the past few months and has more scheduled. Additionally, the CAU is currently planning 2021's National Night Out.

Status: In-Progress/Ongoing.

- 34. SMPD should develop and approve a use of force reporting policy/procedure requiring officers to document force used in civil unrest situations, or any circumstance where the subject of a use of force cannot be identified, and make clear that in crowd control situations, officers are expected to document all reportable force, including each deployment of less lethal munitions.**

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. The SMPD force reporting policy is currently under review and revision to require the documenting of ALL force in ALL situations, including civil unrest.

Status: In-Progress.

- 35. SMPD should revise its force reporting policy to require that all documentation of use of force be completed prior to an officer completing her/his shift and entrust supervisors to enforcement of this policy.**

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD's Use of Force reporting policy has been amended to include the requirement that the reporting force must be completed before the officer completes her/his shift¹². Supervisors are then required to complete all Use of Force documents before the end of the work week in which the force was reported; this provides the supervisor with an appropriate amount of time to conduct any preliminary assessments and to recommend any needed next steps.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

- 36. SMPD should complete the two Department-wide training items identified in the Internal Review Board memo related to uses of force on May 31: (1) review of body-worn camera policy and (2) review of Department Use of Force reporting policy.**

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD produced a training bulletin and a policy review,¹³ specifying activation requirements for body worn cameras. SMPD's Use of Force reporting policy is currently under final review for changes associated with the timing of the reporting (see Recommendation 35) as this was not previously contained within the Use of Force policy.

Status: Implemented/In-Progress.

- 37. SMPD should develop and deliver on-going Department-wide training related to documenting and reporting use of force in civil unrest situation or other large-scale incidents, and incorporate body-worn camera procedures and use of force reporting into all departmental tactical training.**

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. Topics of timely reporting of uses of force during all situations and body-worn camera procedures have been addressed during briefings and

¹² [Policy 300, Use of Force](#)

¹³ [Training Bulletin, Body Worn Cameras](#) and [Policy 425, Portable Audio/Video Recorders](#)

in various training bulleting; and, the topic will be addressed at the upcoming Advanced Officer Training scheduled for September 2021.

38. SMPD should remind all officers – in daily briefings, a Department-wide training or Training Bulletin, and specifically in briefings prior to any protest activity – of the requirement to activate their body-worn camera generally per policy and during crowd control incidents in specific.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. The requirement to activate the body-worn camera before the occurrence of any incident has been added to all Incident Action Plans and has been specifically emphasized in all pre-incident briefings as well as in the traditional service briefings occurring at the beginning of an officer's duty day.

SMPD produced a training bulletin on May 17, 2021 addressing the requirement to activate body-worn cameras before going into service¹⁴.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

39. SMPD should identify and consider appropriate remediation for those officers who failed to comply with the Department's body-worn camera policy on May 31, 2020.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. It bears noting that the rapidly evolving events on May 31, 2020 and the need for officers to quickly deploy to the field duties, some officers did not equip themselves with their assigned cameras. Others had body-worn cameras in possession but did not turn them on because their duties did not involve activities likely to result in enforcement action or they were not actively engaging in a use of force. In some of those cases, as the situation the officer(s) faced rapidly changed, the officer(s) responded to the new dynamics but did not manually activate their cameras. In others, because of the extended duty period, camera batteries were drained rendering the devices inoperable. In those instances where officers did not have their body worn cameras or did not activate the cameras, the actions are in contravention to Department policy governing body worn camera activation and accordingly do not reflect best and most promising practices. Although SMPD has been actively reviewing protocols and practices associated with body-worn cameras, the use of these cameras will be a focus of upcoming Advanced Officer Training in September 2021.

Status: Implemented.

¹⁴ [Training Bulletin - Body Worn Cameras](#)

40. SMPD should regularly audit body-worn camera use by officers to ensure that policy requirements and expectation are being met in the field regarding activation.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. In accordance with long-standing policies¹⁵ governing the management of the body-worn cameras, SMPD policy has required each officer's supervisor conduct a random sampling audit of the officer's footage; these audits occur on a monthly basis.

In the aftermath of May 31, 2020, SMPD identified the need for body-worn camera system updates to provide additional accountability mechanisms to promote auditing. SMPD collaborated with the body-worn camera vendor to acquire this enhanced technology. These enhancements will become effective in October 2021 as this capability is an add-on to the existing contract.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

41. SMPD should conduct and document a meaningful administrative review of officers' use of force following civil unrest situations or other large-scale incidents and should consider "investigative referral" of specific uses of force that may be out of policy or require specific remedial action.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD conducted an Incident Review Board for Use of Force wherein body-worn camera footage from reported uses of force was reviewed.

The Department is examining uses of force not previously reported or identified by OIR; appropriate corrective action will be undertaken as appropriate.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

42. SMPD should review its systems for supporting officer wellness, including the availability of counselors and other professionals, and should consider ways to encourage officers to take advantage of those programs who may be struggling with the trauma of the events of May 31 and other events of the past year.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD has long had an effective Peer Support Program supported by licensed police psychologists and Police Chaplains. The program is over 20 years old and is made up of personnel from a variety of ranks both sworn and civilian who serve in this role as a collateral assignment. This program allows personnel to speak with Peer Team members in a supportive and confidential setting to help them through traumas and stressors. Peer Supporters respond to traumatic scenes in the field, follow up with SMPD, and check in on personnel who are away from work due to injuries or administrative leaves.

The Peer Supporters can also coordinate services from licensed professionals such as psychologists and therapists. The Peer Support Team hosts group stress debriefs facilitated by licensed professionals after large scale traumatic incidents. This included a large number

¹⁵ [Policy 425.10, Review of Recordings](#)

of stress debriefs that were held over several days for all personnel after the events of May 31st.

SMPD, in conjunction with the City's Human Resources Department, supports a confidential billing program that allows personnel complete confidentiality in seeking therapeutic assistance from licensed psychologists. This confidential approach to billing has proven to be an effective way of encouraging personnel to seek help and support, especially for those who may be reluctant to seek help. There has been a significant increase in services being utilized in year 2020 from both the Peer Team and licensed professionals. The Peer Support Team membership was increased by 20% staffing last year and is on track to increase by another 20% this year.

In 2020, the Santa Monica Police Department embarked on a new Wellness Initiative for our personnel and their families. The Wellness Team is made up of personnel from a variety of ranks, both sworn and civilian, who perform this function collaterally from their daily roles in the department. The Wellness initiative seeks to build a culture of wellness by promoting emotional and mental health through a structure of education and accessible resources. The Wellness Team provides training and education on topics such as *tools for coping with trauma and stress, mindfulness techniques, resiliency skills, and physical health*. The team is committed to provide educational speakers and a wide variety of resources in these areas from both inside the public safety industry and outside of the industry. In addition, the team is also creating outreach and positive inclusive involvement with these programs for the families of our personnel.

The Wellness Team, in conjunction with the Office of the Chief of Police, facilitated department-wide stress debriefs and team building workshops for personnel beginning in May 2021 at the one-year anniversary of the May 31, 2020 events. The first anniversary of a traumatic event can be significant for personnel and this was designed to assist and support employees through those effects.

The Peer Support Team, The Wellness Team, and several licensed professionals from our community have been working collaboratively to provide the most positive and effective impact on our personnel since the events of May 31, 2020. Some of the efforts of the Wellness Initiative have helped encourage our personnel to seek mental health support through Peer Support and licensed professionals.

The City of Santa Monica's Human Resources Department also provides an Employee Assistance Program for mental health and other surfaces. This is available to all City employees including the police employees.

Status: Implemented/On-going.

43. The City should request that SMPD prepare a response to this report indicating the degree to which it accepts each of the recommendations made and setting out a plan for implementation.

This Information Item submitted by SMPD indicates the organization's acceptance and commitment to implementation of OIR's recommendations as contained in their after-action report. The implementation plan has been ongoing for the past year and is reflected in SMPD's responses, the collaborative efforts undertaken, the timing of those efforts, and the organization's commitment to learning from the events of May 31, 2020.

Status: Completed.

44. The City should develop a plan for independent evaluation and public reporting on the status of SMPD's implementation of the recommendations.

SMPD agrees with this recommendation. SMPD anticipates continuing to work collaboratively with the City's leadership as well as the Public Safety Reform and Oversight Commission as both independently evaluate and publicly report on the Police Department's implementation of the recommendations.

Status: Implemented.

Prepared By:

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JACQUELINE A. SEABROOKS, CHIEF OF POLICE
SANTA MONICA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Training Bulletin

CONFIDENTIAL - FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT USE ONLY

Training Bulletin #21-003

April 6, 2021

ALL PERSONNEL:

As we continue to prepare for the results from *Minnesota's Chauvin Trial* and any potential for civil unrest, our training and preparedness is of the utmost importance. Over the next two weeks while we remain in POD Deployment, the Mobile Field Force Cadre will be providing refresher training on tactics to include but not limited to crowd control, riotous type situations, use of zip ties, MFF formations and application of tangle tape. The MFF Team has scheduled training to all sworn personnel within each Unit and POD individually.

If you were unable to attend the individual Unit training or want to get extra training in, additional dates will be made available. Field based Professional Staff (PSO, CSO, HARBOR, ACO and TSO) are welcome and encouraged to attend any of the training sessions. Below are the additional dates:

- **April 12, 2021 - Monday- 0600 hours & 1800 hours**
- **April 14, 2021 - Wednesday - 0600 hours & 1800 hours**
- **April 16, 2021 - Friday - 0600 hours & 1800 hours**

*** For the April 12, 14 & 16 training dates, meet in the B1 Briefing Room. Bring your baton, helmets and gas masks. ***

If you have any questions, please reach out to Lt. Roberto Lucio or Captain Rodriguez.



CYNTHIA RENAUD, CHIEF OF POLICE
SANTA MONICA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Training Announcement

TA# 20-005

July 7, 2020

MOBILE FIELD FORCE REFRESHER TRAINING

Who: MANDATORY for All Sworn Personnel

What: Mobile Field Force Refresher Training
Part 1: Powerpoint Review
Part 2: MFF Review and Practice

Where: Briefing Room- B1 (Part 1)
TBA(Part 2)

When: **PART 1 (Powerpoint- Briefing Room)**
07/13/20 (Monday): 0600 hours, 1400 hours, 1800 hours
07/14/20 (Tuesday): 0730 hours (CID)
07/15/20 (Wednesday): 0600 hours, 1400 hours, 1800 hours
07/17/20 (Friday): 0600 hours, 1400 hours, 1800 hours

PART 2 (MFF Practical Application- TBA)
07/27/20 (Monday): 0600 hours, 1400 hours, 1800 hours
07/28/20 (Tuesday): 0730 hours (CID)
07/29/20 (Wednesday): 0600 hours, 1400 hours, 1800 hours
07/31/20 (Friday): 0600 hours, 1400 hours, 1800 hours

Equipment: For Part 2, all sworn personnel will need to bring their duty belt, baton, helmet, and gas mask.

Format: The training will be in two parts. The first part will be the classroom portion with a Powerpoint and the second part will be the practical application. Sworn personnel must attend Part 1 and Part 2. The training will take approximately 1-1.5 hours to complete

Anyone with questions regarding the information contained in this bulletin, may contact the Training Unit at extension 8415.