



OIRGroup.com

**TO: City of Santa Monica**  
**FROM: OIR Group**  
**DATE: 12-3-20**  
**RE: Third Status Update for “May 31, 2020 After-Action Review”**

### ***Introduction***

OIR Group was selected by City officials to conduct a comprehensive review of the City’s response to the multi-faceted events of May 31. We are a team of police practices experts whose members have worked in the field of civilian oversight of law enforcement for nearly twenty years.

Our specific mission in Santa Monica is to independently assess the Police Department’s response to the evolving conditions on May 31, a day on which peaceful protests were rendered more complex by a significant amount of criminal activity that included vandalism and looting of local businesses. Utilizing our access to internal Department records (including audio and video recordings of events from that day), our opportunities to interview Department members involved in the response, and our involvement in various forums for receiving public feedback, we look forward to providing the City with a report that details our findings and recommendations.

This third “bi-weekly” update describes the progress we have made since our first posting on November 19.

### ***Project Status***

#### **Document Review**

We continue to gather materials that are helping us piece together the elements of the Police Department’s knowledge of, preparation for, and response to the various dimensions of the protests and collateral unrest in the City on May 31. For example, we now have access to a

significant amount of email and other internal communications among Department members in the days leading up to the 31<sup>st</sup>. Among other things, this correspondence is providing us with a sense of how (and how effectively) SMPD tracked the growing national landscape of public reaction to the death of George Floyd as it gathered momentum and led to incidents of unrest in adjoining jurisdictions. The internal documents and other evidence – including radio transmissions from throughout May 31—are helping to refine our detailed understanding of the different challenges as they emerged individually and in relation to each other.

## **Interviews**

Our fact-gathering in this session has partly been focused on meetings with individual Department members who were actively involved in the SMPD preparation and deployment. We have now had a chance to speak with the former Chief and five high-ranking members of SMPD's current leadership team, each of whom participated in the Department's handling of May 31. These conversations have been very useful to our understanding of what happened, and we appreciate the candor and full cooperation of each person we've met in this context.

## **Listening Sessions**

In the aftermath of our first formal listening session on November 17, facilitated by the City, we have continued to receive correspondence and supplemental materials from local residents who wished to inform us about their specific perspectives. This information is helping create a more complete picture of May 31 as it was experienced by people who felt adversely effected, including protestors who thought the police tactics were unjustified, residents and business owners who found themselves perplexed at unchecked vandalism and looting, and observers who were trying to understand the Department's decision-making as the day progressed. We appreciate the insights these people are offering, and welcome others to share with us at the following web address:

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