



OIRGroup.com

TO: City of Santa Monica
FROM: OIR Group
DATE: 3-15-21
RE: Eighth 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 eighth update describes the progress we have made since our last posting.

Project Status

Our recent progress has had a couple of components. One of these is a review of internal documents and other source materials that the Department has provided. These include an initial collection of body-worn camera video from key moments during the May 31 deployment. The availability of these recordings – which we are connecting back to specific milestones in the day as a means of enhancing our understanding of them – allows us to independently assess the

actions of line-level officers and get a more comprehensive feel for the evolving conditions that day.

We have also looked at the Use of Force reports that were eventually prepared by responding officers as part of SMPD's standard supervisory review process. We have met with SMPD to get a specific understanding of that process – and to learn of the challenges in applying the Department's standard force review paradigm to the unique circumstances of that day. (For example, documentation of any injuries and statements from subjects of force were largely missing here, because a large percentage of force uses – such as munitions – were intended to disperse crowds as opposed to taking people into custody). We look forward to receiving a copy of the "Incident Review Board" report that was ultimately generated by a panel of Department experts.

We are also supplementing our review of specific dimensions of the May 31 response. For example, with cooperation from the Office of Emergency Management, we will be reviewing a sample of the calls for service that were received that day. We are also delving into ways that the Department's mass arrests in the later hours of May 31 were handled in terms of procedures, conditions, and arrestee treatment. Finally, we have also received information about the mechanics of the City's curfew orders during those critical days – a subject of recent scrutiny as to legality and efficacy.

As we get closer to the report-writing phase of our process, we continue to welcome correspondence from individuals who would like to share information or viewpoints. Please contact us at the following email address: Michael.Gennaco@oirgroup.com