



February 4, 2021

Interim Chief Adrian Diaz
Seattle Police Department
PO Box 34986
Seattle, WA 98124-4986

Dear Chief Diaz:

Please see the below Management Action Recommendation.

Case Number

- 2020OPA-0328 / 2020COMP-0011

Topic

- Complex Incident Command

Summary

- It was alleged that SPD Incident Commanders did not retain responsibility for crowd management decisions during protests in late May and early June 2020.

Analysis

- Simultaneous demonstrations took place at multiple locations throughout the east and west precincts.
- There was one designated Incident Commander on each date. Lieutenants and captains were on scene monitoring the various and sometimes converging demonstrations. The Incident Commanders largely delegated management of individual demonstrations, including decisions to disperse crowds, to the subordinate commanders, who were quickly moving from location to location in response to violence and property destruction.
- SPD Policy 14.090-POL-8 states, "The Incident Commander Retains Ultimate Responsibility for the Decisions of Subordinates."
- OPA found that the Incident Commanders' decisions to defer to subordinates resulted in confusion and a lack of unified command.

Recommendation(s)

- Strengthen incident management protocols, command structure for complex incidents, and training for SPD commanders to better ensure SPD leadership's effective planning, active control, and unified command over officers in complex incidents.
- Engage with the Sentinel Event Review to assess weaknesses in SPD's existing Incident Command structure.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

AM

Andrew Myerberg
Director, Office of Police Accountability
