



September 11, 2019

Director Andrew Myerberg  
Office of Police Accountability  
PO Box 34986  
Seattle, WA 98124-4986

Dear Director Myerberg,

Please see the below Management Action Recommendation response.

**Case Numbers**

- 2018OPA-0577 (2019COMP-0001)

**Topic**

- De-Escalation

**Summary:**

- Employee threatened to shoot a fleeing suspect stating that the threat served as a form of de-escalation. OPA disagreed that this constituted de-escalation.

**OPA Recommendations:**

- SPD should revise the language in Policy 8.100 to make clear that threats, including threats of force do not constitute a de-escalation tactic.

**Action Taken:**

- On August 16, 2019, revisions to Seattle Police Department Policies and Procedures Manual **Title 8 – Use of Force**, were approved by Federal Court Judge Robart. To address the recommendation, the policy now reads: *(in part)* (Full De-escalation Policy is attached)

***1. When Safe, Feasible, and Without Compromising Law Enforcement Priorities, Officers Shall Use De-Escalation Tactics in Order to Reduce the Need for Force***

*(a). Officers shall conduct a threat assessment so as not to precipitate an unnecessary, unreasonable, or disproportionate use of force by placing themselves or others in undue jeopardy.*

*(b). Team approaches to de-escalation are encouraged and should consider officer training and skill level, number of officers, and whether any officer has successfully established rapport with the subject. Where officers use a team approach to de-escalation, each individual officer's obligation to de-escalate will be satisfied as long as the officer's actions complement the overall approach.*

*(c). Selection of de-escalation options should be guided by the totality of the circumstances with the goal of attaining voluntary compliance; considerations include:*

***-(i) Communication***

*Using communication intended to gain voluntary compliance, such as:*

*- Verbal persuasion*

*- Advisements and warnings (including Taser spark display tests to explain/warn prior to Taser application), given in a calm and explanatory manner, Exception: Warnings given as a threat of force are not considered part of de-escalation.*

**SPD considers this Management Action**

- Fully Implemented

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Lesley Cordner  
Assistant Chief, Professional Standards Bureau