



Seattle Office of Police Accountability

May 18, 2023

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

Chief Diaz-

Please see the below Management Action Recommendation.

Case Number

- 2022OPA-0361 / 2023COMP-0001

Topic

- Money Evidence

Summary

- After an asset forfeiture was settled in 2022, the Fiscal Unit alerted the Narcotics Unit that a money envelope from a 2017 search warrant execution was short \$10,800.

Analysis

- In 2017, Seattle Police Department (SPD) officers and United States Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) agents recovered a large quantity of money during a search warrant execution.
- One money envelope (Envelope #1) listed its contents as \$13,916 in bills of various denominations, including one hundred thirty-five (135) \$100 bills and zero (0) \$20 bills.
- In 2017, the deposit bank alerted the Fiscal Unit that Envelope #1 contained only \$3,116—a shortage of \$10,800. The Fiscal Unit did not report this discrepancy until 2022.
- In 2022, it was determined Envelope #1 contained one hundred thirty-five (135) \$20 bills and zero (0) \$100 bills. The difference equals \$10,800.
- OPA found that more likely than not, the discrepancy was a clerical error: either an SPD officer or HSI agent mistakenly entered one hundred thirty-five (135) \$100 bills instead of \$20 bills.

Recommendation(s)

- SPD should review its policies, procedures, and training for employees collecting and submitting money evidence and evaluate its alignment with national best practices.
- SPD should assess whether tools like automated money counters would help money evidence processing by limiting counting errors and aiding in counterfeit detection.
 - Assess whether additional automated money counters should be purchased.
- SPD should address intradepartmental communication gaps in the money evidence process.
 - Revisit SPD policy 7.080 with particular attention to whether a representative from an outside agency meets the requirement that funds are to be counted by two sworn officers.

I appreciate your consideration, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gino Betts, Jr.".

Gino Betts, Jr.
Director, Office of Police Accountability