

SANTA ROSA POLICE DEPARTMENT: AN INDEPENDENT REPORT ON THE INTERNAL REVIEW PROCESS RE MAY/JUNE 2020

May 4, 2021



OIR GROUP

- Independent police practices experts since 2001 www.oirgroup.com
- Reviews, Investigations, Evaluations (including 2020 protest response in 5 jurisdictions)
- Public Reporting



Scope of Work

- Part of a larger Santa Rosa Response
- Focused on May 30 to June 2
- Independent Review of:
 - SRPD use of force
 - Misconduct Investigations
 - Complaints



Process: A Unique Vantage Point

- “Real-Time” Participation and Monitoring of SRPD Internal Investigations
 - *Unfettered ACCESS*
 - Review and Consultation
 - Active role in Interviews re Alleged Misconduct
 - *INPUT* re Outcomes



Process: Thoroughness, Rigor, and Legitimacy

- Full cooperation from SRPD
“Professional Standards” team
- Body Camera Recordings, Reports, and other evidence
- Ongoing issue-spotting and additional investigative work as needed

Process: Thoroughness, Rigor, and Legitimacy

“...our vantage point allowed us to confirm the agency’s commitment to the appropriate handling of these matters.”



Process: Thoroughness, Rigor, and Legitimacy

- The dual components of effective internal review:
 - **Accountability**
 - **Systemic Reform**

SRPD Operations and Performance: Overview

- A national movement reaches Santa Rosa
- The challenge of “crowd management” vs. “crowd control”
- Use of Force incidents of unprecedented type and volume (May 30-June1)

SRPD Use of Force: Tear Gas and Other Less Lethal Munitions

- More than 120 40mm rounds
- 30 gas deployments
- (vs. 1 and 0 for all of 2019)



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SRPD Use of Force *Review* : Systemic Issues and Challenges

- Individual officer documentation and differences from usual process
- Reviewer as front-line “force user”
- Good faith efforts to assess policy compliance
- Further assessments at OIR Group request

SRPD Use of Force *Review: Findings*

- Almost all uses consistent with policy
- 2 instances of force out of policy – and both led to significant injury (See Misconduct Investigations)
- Complaint cases investigated/evaluated

SRPD Use of Force: Injury Cases

Facial Injury: Not intentional, found to be the result of unsafe practice

Groin Injury: Unintentional use of inappropriate 40mm munition (“Barricade Round”)

Discipline for two force users and two other officers due to related concerns

Other injury cases inconclusive

SRPD Use of Force *Review*: Reforms and Recommendations

- Reporting and review protocols
- 40mm use: new restrictions
- Control/distribution of munitions
- Dispersal Orders: (Is the crowd on notice?)
- Arrest teams

SRPD: Misconduct Investigations

- Treating legal claims as complaints
- Other citizen complaints
- Internally generated reviews (OIR Group)



SRPD: Misconduct Investigations

- Formal discipline in one other case
- Other interventions (BWC, professionalism, inappropriate comments)
- 10 identified issues, 8 officers
- Other cases exonerated w/ OIR Group concurrence



Recommendations: OIR Group

- 1. Enhance documentation for large-scale events
- 2. Maintain appropriate roles for supervisors
- 3. Separate actual force users from the formal review process
- 4. Engage with community re less lethal munitions in large crowd enforcement contexts

Recommendations: OIR Group

- 5. Enhance mechanisms for enforcement-related communication with large crowds
- 6. Engage with community re tear gas and protest activity
- 7. Strengthen controls/safeguards for use of different 40mm munitions in the field

SRPD Investigations: Conclusion

- Shortcoming addressed and identified through a rigorous, objective process
- Reforms for future performance
- Importance of ongoing dialogue with community

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