

AFTER-ACTION ASSESSMENT REPORT

*Santa Rosa Police Department*

City Council Briefing  
May 4, 2021

# About Hillard Heintze

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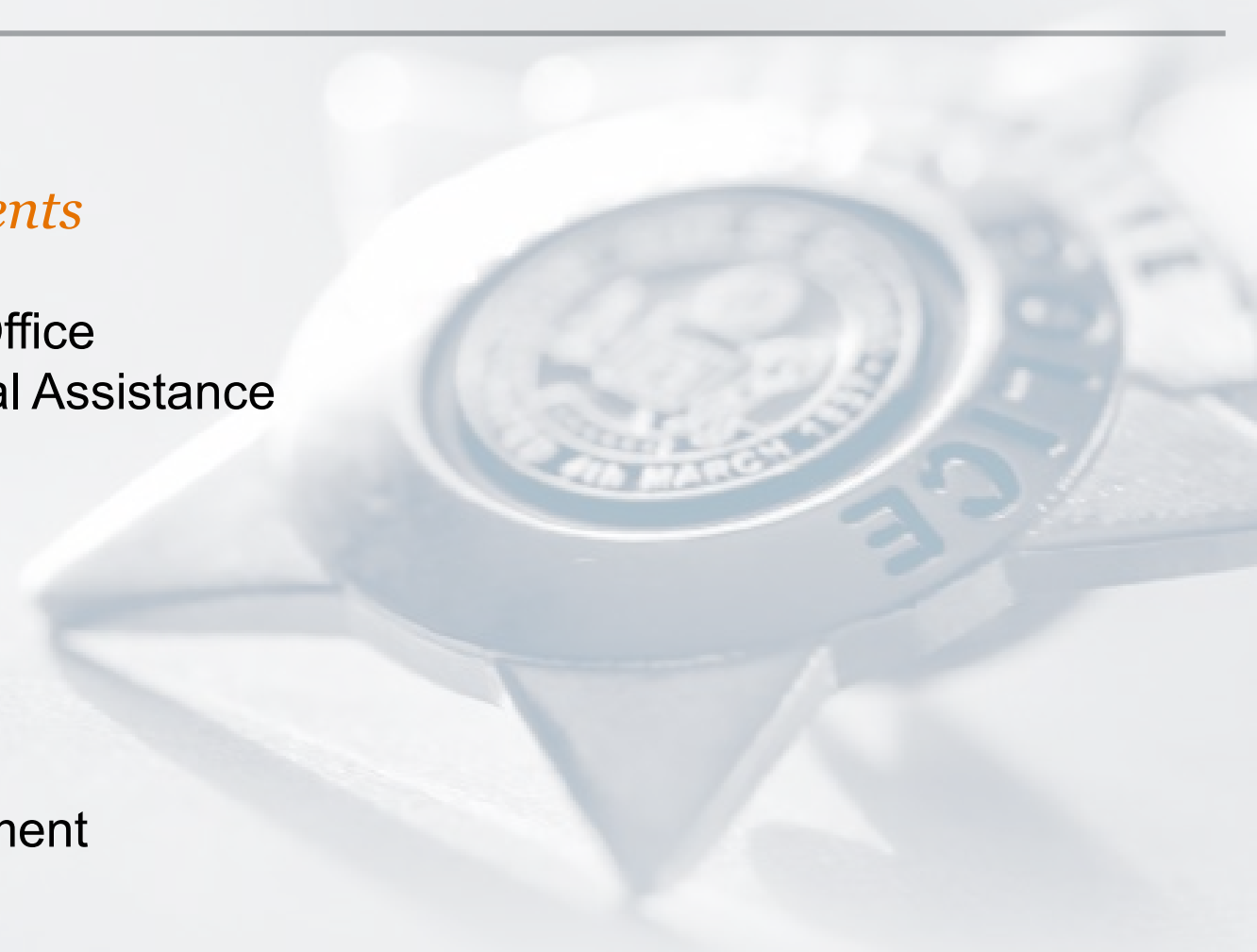
*Hillard Heintze, a Jensen Hughes company, is one of the leading security risk management firms in the United States. We help clients protect their people, performance, interests and reputations by offering services that provide insight, deliver assurance and instill confidence.*

# Our experiences and qualifications

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## *Extensive experience in police reform and independent departmental assessments*

- + Sole service provider for the DOJ COPS Office Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA)
- + Louisville, Kentucky
- + La Mesa, California
- + Denver Sheriff's Department, Colorado
- + San Francisco, California
- + King County, Washington Sheriff's Department
- + Boulder, Colorado
- + Maplewood, New Jersey
- + Lancaster, California





# What you asked us to do

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## *Independent after-action report on the SRPD's response to the protests occurring in late May and early June 2020*

- + Review the planning, strategy and response from the Santa Rosa Police Department and other City Departments to the events of May 30 through June 5, 2020
- + Review and assess what went well, issues and lessons learned from a retrospective review of the planning and actions before and during the protests
- + Understand community perspectives on the SRPD's response to the protests

# What is an after-action assessment?

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*Opportunity to understand what happened, why it happened and identify strengths and weaknesses*

- + Focus on pre-incident planning, incident response and post-incident follow up
- + Helps SRPD prepare the department for future incidents
- + Measured in part against principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS)
- + Protection of First Amendment Rights



# What we did

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## *A comprehensive process*

- + Reviewed documents
- + Visited the sites where protests occurred
- + Interviewed
  - Police
  - Fire
  - Government officials
  - Community members
- + Compared what we are learning about SRPD's planning, response and follow-up to best practices employed by similar agencies



# Key Findings

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## *Overall observations and key findings*

- + SRPD embraces the concepts and principles of the Incident Command System
- + SRPD's dedicated Incident Management Team is a best practice which facilitates effective and efficient management oversight
- + Lack of available experienced commanders contributed to SRPD's ineffective span of control during the early days of the protests
- + SRPD's processes allowed them to adapt well and improve its tactics as events unfolded
- + SRPD did not initially have a formalized process whereby the outgoing Incident Commander shared information with the incoming Incident Commander

## *Community interviewee summary of comments and concerns*

- + Concerned that SRPD's relationship with the community was strained even before the protests
- + Perception that the police showing up in riot gear increased the level of aggression of the crowd
- + Concerned about SRPD's use of force during the events and critical of the SRPD's arrest procedures on the night of June 2
- + Perception that SRPD provided preferential treatment to counter-protestors as opposed to Black Lives Matter supporters
- + Generally, interviewees were optimistic that SRPD and the community can move forward in a positive manner



# Recommendations

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## *Policy and staffing considerations*

- + Amend policy provisions related to less-lethal munitions
- + Revise policy to renew focus on preserving First Amendment rights during large-scale events
- + Continue to adhere to ICS principles
- + Ensure SRPD has enough command-level officers to operate efficiently and create a strong succession program

## *Technical considerations*

- + Work to ensure radio interoperability that supports interagency communications during multiple-agency responses
- + Provide situational awareness briefings to incoming incident commanders
- + Follow phone calls with radio broadcasts when requesting assistance from other law enforcement agencies
- + Install a duplicate computer-aided dispatch (CAD) workstation, rather than a portable workstation, for tactical dispatchers to use during activations.



# Recommendations

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## *Operational considerations*

- + Ensure that only authorized or assigned personnel are permitted entry to the Department Operations Center during activations
- + Develop a process to audit and update the point of contact for each business in the city to contact and inform them of emergencies when necessary
- + Ensure that the mass arrest policy and resources are maintained and the protocol for mass arrests is reviewed and practiced



## *Communications considerations*

- + Create formal, written operational protocols to guide SRPD's and the City's public information officers as they draft messages to share with the public

*Questions?*

