

Seattle
Community
Police Commission

Our city. Our safety.
Our police. Better together.

July 18, 2018

VIA EMAIL

Dear Chief Carmen Best,

We write to provide feedback on SPD's proposed revisions to the Use of Force policy as well as the department's report on 2017 Stops and Detentions data. We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on SPD's reports, audit methodologies, and policy revisions throughout the sustainment period of the Consent Decree.

Use of Force Policy

Initiative 940 as modified by HM 3003, when enacted, will establish a new "good faith" standard specific to Washington to determine whether an officer's use of deadly force is lawful. As SPD considers revisions to its Use of Force policies, we recommend that SPD now voluntarily move to adopt the same widely supported "good faith" standard in policy, in order to align with statutory language which is likely to be in effect soon, and which has proven to be common ground for diverse community leaders and key law enforcement organizations. The City of Seattle lobbied in support of this legislation in January, so hopefully this approach is in line with the City's values and approach.

Stops and Detentions Report

We understand that SPD has already submitted its 2018 Stops and Detentions report (on 2017 data) to the Court and would appreciate SPD's consideration of the following feedback for future reports on Stops and Detentions data.

There were several analyses that were in SPD's 2017 report (on 2016 data) that were not included in the 2018 report. We regret that at the time of publication of the 2017 report, we did not highlight certain data points in SPD's report on 2016 Stops and Detentions data as useful, as there were several analyses that we found illuminating and valuable. We learned, for example, that there are areas of clear promise that may yield lessons that can be shared more widely throughout the department. SPD's beat officers, who are assigned to bicycle and foot patrols, reported the most Terry stops per officer yet the lowest frequency of frisks. Despite frisking individuals the least often, beat officers reported the highest frequency of weapon recovery. It would be worthwhile to assess why and how this group of officers were able to more effectively identify individuals with weapons, therefore subjecting fewer people to frisks.

In addition to “Weapon Recovery by Functional Assignment,” other information we found helpful in the 2017 report that we did not see in the 2018 report are statistics by race in addition to White, Black, and Latino.

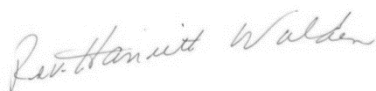
We accessed SPD’s Terry Stops dataset online in June 2018 to see whether data were available to enable the public to conduct these missing analyses. We found that certain key data elements that SPD reported on in its report on 2016 data were missing from the online dataset. Although SPD’s Chief Legal Officer, Becca Boatright, explained in an email on June 26 that SPD’s new Records Management System will be able to provide greater granularity around reporting relative to incidents, we highlight the missing data points relative to Stops and Detentions incidents here:

- Watch (1st, 2nd, 3rd)
- Functional Assignment (Though the dataset includes officer ID numbers, the public would not be able to identify the functional assignment of the officer)
- Administrative Assignment (same as above)
- Duration of stop

Finally, even if the public were to have access to all of these data points, we believe there is great value in the Department conducting these analyses itself as the vast majority of the public may not be able to navigate the dataset and run these queries to yield important analyses.

Once again, we appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on SPD’s Use of Force policy and its annual Stops and Detentions report.

Sincerely,



Rev. Harriett Walden, Co-Chair
Community Police Commission



Enrique Gonzalez, Co-Chair
Community Police Commission



Isaac Ruiz, Co-Chair
Community Police Commission

Cc:

Brian Maxey, Chief Operating Officer, Seattle Police Department
Lesley Cordner, Assistant Chief of Compliance and Professional Standards, Seattle Police Department
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