



Seattle Office of Police Accountability

October 15, 2019

Chief Carmen Best
Seattle Police Department
PO Box 34986
Seattle, WA 98124-4986

Dear Chief Best:

Please see the below Management Action Recommendation.

Case Number

- 2019OPA-0015/2019COMP-0030

Topic

- Use of Force

Summary

- An officer considered using a neck or carotid restraint as an alternative use of deadly force but did not do so, in part, due to a lack of training on how to use this tactic effectively.

Analysis

- *SPD Policy 8.200-POL-4* states that: “Deadly force may only be used in circumstances where threat of deadly or serious physical injury to the officer or others is imminent.” OPA finds that the force used by the Named Employee – the single shot that struck and killed the Subject – was consistent with policy and appropriate under the circumstances.
- OPA considered whether the outcome would have been different had the involved officers been trained in neck or carotid restraints. The SPD Training Sergeant explained to OPA that the Department does not currently train (and has not recently trained) on the use of a neck or carotid restraint. OPA ultimately determined that even had the involved officers been fully trained on this tactic, it would not have been a viable force option during the incident and, thus, the tactic would not have changed the outcome of the case. However, the use of a neck or carotid restraint could be determinative in a future scenario.

Recommendation(s)

- Provide instruction on how to properly apply the neck or carotid hold; the physiological results and risks of the tactic; and when the tactic is appropriate, with specific emphasis on the fact that it should only be used where deadly force would be justified.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

AM

Andrew Myerberg
Director, Office of Police Accountability