



February 1, 2022

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

Dear Chief Diaz:

Please see the below Management Action Recommendation.

Case Number

- 2021OPA-0094 / 2021COMP-0039

Topic

- Responding to Subjects with Knives

Summary

- It was alleged that the named employees used impermissible deadly force on a person in crisis brandishing a knife.

Analysis

- A suicidal subject approached two Port of Seattle police officers holding a large knife to his throat. The Port PD officers radioed for assistance and were soon backed by multiple Seattle Police officers, who began developing a tactical plan while keeping a safe distance.
- The named employees (NEs) arrived and intercepted the subject. The subject advanced toward one of the NEs with the knife raised up saying, “Do it, please, just shoot me.” Both NEs fired shots.
- [SPD Policy 8.200-POL-4](#) states: “Deadly force may only be used in circumstances where threat of deadly or serious physical injury to the officer or others is imminent.”
- As in [a previous case](#) with similar circumstances, OPA determined the use of deadly force was within policy after the subject made the decision to advance on one of the officers with the knife raised. However, this result may have been avoided if the NEs utilized time, distance and shielding.

Recommendation(s)

OPA renews its previous [recommendation](#), recognizing that SPD is already working on the items below.

- Revamp SPD training for responding to subjects with knives. Incorporate dynamic, outdoor role-playing exercises involving subjects with knives who are either moving toward or away from officers.
- Partner with OIG and OPA to conduct a national/international survey of other agencies’ tactics for dealing with subjects with knives.
- Research and test other less-lethal tools (e.g., Bola Wrap, net gun) to supplement SPD’s existing equipment which may reduce the use of deadly force.
- Set the expectation that shootings in these types of cases will not occur again, and work toward that goal.

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



Sincerely,

Gráinne Perkins

Gráinne Perkins
Acting Director, Office of Police Accountability