



Seattle Office of Police Accountability

June 9, 2021

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

- 2020OPA-0741 / 2021COMP-0032

Topic

- Long Range Acoustic Device

Summary

- The complainant alleged they suffered a torn eardrum from an SPD Long Range Acoustic Device (LRAD).

Analysis

- SPD purchased the LRAD in response to claims that it did not adequately communicate orders to demonstrators during the summer 2020 protests.
- The LRAD has three sound settings: green, yellow, and red. Yellow is the preferred setting for outdoor events. The “alert” function—which emits a loud noise and can cause discomfort or hearing damage—is purposefully disabled so the device cannot be used as a sonic weapon.
- OPA found no evidence that the LRAD can cause injuries to community members when used intermittently and at the yellow setting.
- SPD does not yet have a policy or training covering the use of the LRAD. Current guiding documents for LRAD usage include the device’s operating manual and research performed by SPD.

Recommendation(s)

- Create a policy outlining the appropriate use of the LRAD, including sound level. Prohibit SPD from weaponizing the LRAD in the future through the “alert” function.
- Develop training for any officer who will be assigned to use the LRAD.
- Work with the accountability entities to ensure that the policy and training addresses community concerns and reflects best practices and standards of constitutional policing.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AM'.

Andrew Myerberg
Director, Office of Police Accountability