

Serious and Deadly Force Investigation Taskforce

PRESENTATION TO GENDER EQUITY, SAFE
COMMUNITIES, NEW AMERICANS, AND
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

September 11, 2019

The Mandate

“Convene meetings with and lead stakeholders in assessing the feasibility of establishing mechanisms to use investigation and review processes wholly external to SPD for cases involving serious and deadly uses of force, and provide any recommendations adopted by the stakeholder group to the Council for consideration.”

Resolution 31753

The Taskforce

Jim Graddon (Co-Chair) Formerly with King County Sheriff's Office

André Taylor (Co-Chair) Not This Time

Emma Catague Community Police Commission
Filipino Community Center

Gregg Caylor Seattle Police Department

Leslie Cushman I-940 Campaign

Lisa Daugaard Public Defender Association

Kelly Harris City Attorney's Office

Mark Larson King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office

Jim Maher Council on American-Islamic Relations Washington

Michelle Merriweather Urban League

Andrew Myerberg Office of Police Accountability

Sweetwater Nannauck Idle No More

Lorena Sepin SafeFutures Youth Center

Staff: Community Police Commission staff

The Process

- Develop values and expectations
- Study Seattle's current investigation process
- Research best practices and models in other jurisdictions
- Talk to community members and law enforcement officers
- Consult with experts
- Produce recommendations
- Receive input from those most impacted by serious and deadly uses of force by police
- Deliver recommendations

Values

Trust: Community and police have confidence in the investigations of police officers' serious and deadly uses of force. (Also: **Credible**)

Clear: The investigation process and reports are clear and consistent so that community and police understand them. (Also: **Understandable**)

Fair: The investigations are conducted in a manner that is impartial and is not biased against the police or the victim. (Also: **Objective**)

Informative: The investigations produce information that is useful for determining a finding or revealing the truth of a matter.

High-Quality: The investigations are of high caliber, and investigators utilize generally accepted investigative and evidentiary techniques.

Respectful: Investigators treat involved people, such as victims, suspects, witnesses, family members, and officers, with respect and dignity at the scene and throughout the investigation process, including adopting a response protocol that includes an immediate acknowledgement and recognition of the impact of the incident, a neutral stance, a clear commitment to conducting a full and fair investigation, and information concerning the type of investigation to be conducted and its timeline.

Timely: Investigations are conducted efficiently and effectively.

Thorough: Investigations are exhaustive, in which all relevant details and leads are examined.

Transparent: The community and police understand the investigation process and understand how to access information about each investigation such as investigation reports.

Expectations

1. Investigators have expertise and experience in conducting high-profile, complex criminal investigations.
2. Investigators can and do respond to each incident promptly.
3. Investigators have sufficient capacity and resources to carry out high-quality, timely investigations.
4. Clear definitions and policies govern the investigations.
5. The investigation process protects against conflicts of interest and appearances of conflicts of interest.

Recommendations

Recommendations

1. Conduct long-term strategic planning to prevent serious and deadly uses of force.
2. Create a fund to support for families and loved ones of the individual involved in the incident.
3. Make liaisons available to people impacted by a serious or deadly use of force and consult community members to develop accessible materials about the investigation process.
4. Require timely and regular communication with the family and loved ones of persons killed by police.
5. Require that investigators demonstrate a commitment to integrity and civil rights and involve community members in hiring of investigators.
6. Select a leader who has a demonstrated commitment to communities most impacted by serious and deadly uses of force.
7. Require that investigators have relevant experience and have access to specific trainings.
8. Require investigators to disclose any conflicts of interest.

Recommendations

9. Require a specific timeframe for completing investigations.
10. Provide investigative reports in a timely manner.
11. Develop a media policy that protects those subjected to a serious or deadly use of force.
12. Collect key data related to investigations and publish reports of aggregate data regularly.
13. Conduct sentinel event reviews after every serious or deadly use of force to identify system flaws and to address them via policy and training.
14. Establish an investigative unit in the State Attorney General's Office to conduct criminal investigations of serious and deadly uses of force.
15. Establish a state-level entity to review all closed investigations statewide.