



Seattle Office of
Police Accountability

Report: Crowd Control Weapons

PUBLIC SAFETY & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE | SEPTEMBER 11, 2020

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Presentation Outline

1. Background
2. Process
3. Recommendations: crowd control weapon use
4. Recommendations: crowd management policy
5. Recommendation: executive approval process

Background

1. Council passed ordinance banning SPD use of crowd control weapons (June 15th)
2. Court halted implementation of ordinance so it could evaluate accountability entities' feedback (present)
3. Accountability entities submitted feedback on whether crowd control weapons should be reauthorized (August 15th)

Process

OPA staff interviewed SPD personnel and reviewed relevant documentation, including:

- Studies on impact weapon use
- SPD policies, the SWAT Manual, and Incident Action Plans
- SPD use of force data & body-worn video footage
- Past SPD uses of less-lethal tools in non-crowd control contexts

Recommendations: Crowd Control Weapon Use

1. Reauthorize use of all less-lethal tools for non-crowd control situations
2. Reauthorize use—with new restrictions—of all less-lethal tools except CS gas for crowd control situations

Recommendations: Crowd Management Policy

1. Prevent individual officers from using less-lethal tools during a demonstration solely to prevent property destruction
2. Require incident commanders to circulate detailed plans prior to deploying officers at demonstrations

Recommendations: Crowd Management Policy

3. When safe and feasible, minimize presence when demonstrations are in response to law enforcement
4. Make portable public address systems available and require audible broadcast of orders to disperse
5. Explore the feasibility of tactics allowing targeted arrests of people engaged in criminal activity

Recommendation: **Executive Approval Process**

1. Do not create a crowd dispersal authorization process that requires Executive approval

Questions?

