

Seattle Community Police Commission

Questions for Assistant Chief Leslie Corder regarding SPD's proposed use of force and crowd control policy changes

1. This is a huge number of policy changes. The CPC was only informed about them two weeks ago, and they haven't been made public to the community at large. What is SPD's plan to hear from the community at large about their thoughts on these changes? Do you believe, at the very least, a public hearing on these changes sometime after the holidays would be appropriate?
2. Seattle's elected leaders, the CPC, and the community at large helped pass laws earlier this year to reduce the number of weapons SPD could use against protesters. However, rather than getting rid of any of these weapons, SPD's proposed policy changes actually allow officers to formally use more weapons than they could before the protests began— for example, paintballs filled with pepper spray that officers may be shooting into crowds. Why is that? And how is that responsive to community demands?
3. These policy proposals do not incorporate the bulk of the CPC's recommendations on this issue – including recommendations that we have been making since 2016 regarding the use of blast balls. What is SPD's plan to actually incorporate the feedback you're asking from us today?
4. There are no substantive changes to SPD's "Use of Force Core Principles." There are no changes to the Use of Force Core Principles except for changing "should" to "will" in a few places. After all, we've seen over the past year, having listened to community demands and SPD stating it is committed to [re-envisioning public safety together](#). Is it the department's position that the core principles and core logic of using force do not need any updating?
5. SPD's current proposed policy changes would allow the department to continue to use blast balls. The CPC has recommended SPD stop using blast balls since 2016. The former police Monitor Merrick Bobb has called for SPD to stop using blast balls. SPD was just held in contempt of the federal court after violating court orders by using blast balls. Why should SPD be allowed to continue to use these indiscriminate weapons?
6. SPD's current proposed policy changes do not appear to affect SPD's ability to use tear gas. What is SPD's stance on the use of tear gas (both OC and CS) against protesters? Has SPD considered changing its stance on tear gas?
7. These policy proposals also contain changes to the way that SPD officers use dogs against people. Last year, a video was released that showed a Seattle Police dog bite a teen who had both hands in the air. Given that case, and considering the way police have historically used dogs against people, why should SPD continue to use dogs as a weapon rather than to perform non-violent tasks like bomb location?
8. The proposed policy changes offer some limited protections for the media and legal observers. Why does SPD also not extend similar protections to protest medics?

9. The bar is set incredibly low for when police can order a protest to disperse. These policy changes do not appear to change that. The policy changes also do not adopt our recommendation that SPD must publicly report why they are ordering protests to disperse. Why is that, and what is SPD's plan to address this issue?

10. The policy changes also say that the Seattle Police Department is committed to upholding laws while protecting all human life and property and maintaining civil order. After what we've seen over the past year, is it still SPD's position that police should protect property and order as much as they protect human life?