



September 11, 2023

Director Gino Betts, Jr.
Office of Police Accountability
PO Box 34986
Seattle, WA 98124-4986

Dear Director Betts,

Please see the below Management Recommendation response

Case Numbers: 2021OPA-0281 & 2021OPA-0287 / 2022COMP-0003

Topic: Vehicle Pursuits

Summary of the Management Action:

It was alleged in two separate incidents that SPD supervisors authorized out-of-policy vehicle pursuits.

Original Recommendation:

Reevaluate the language in SPD Policy 13.031-POL-4 to clarify what constitutes a “significant imminent threat of death or physical injury to others.” Instruct officers on any changes to the policy and provide department-wide guidance on this matter.

Action Taken:

SPD believes that the language “significant Imminent threat” is already defined by RCW 71.050.020 and believes this is better addressed in training rather than policy. Officers are trained both in the State Academy and SPD specific training to consider numerous factors before engaging in a pursuit. The decision to pursue, if the facts meet the standard laid out in policy, is based on the totality of the circumstances. The RCW defines “significant imminent threat of death or physical injury to others” as “the State or Condition of being likely to occur at any moment or near at hand, rather than distant or remote.” Training throughout the State reinforces this concept, and it is the responsibility of each individual officer to evaluate all of the factors present when deciding if and when to engage in a pursuit. We will continue to reinforce this concept and the specific policy language that defines when pursuits are permissible.

SPD Considers this Management Action:

Declined

Please contact me if you have additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'ADZ'.

Adrian Z. Diaz
Chief of Police