

*SEATTLE POLICE DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM*

To: R. Gil Kerlikowske  
Chief of Police

Date: 08/01/01

From: Assistant Chief John Diaz  
Operations Bureau 2

Subject: Mardi Gras 2001 After Action Report

Please find attached the After Action Report (AAR) for the Mardi Gras 2001 event. This AAR is designed to provide an objective review of our Department's handling of an event that erupted into a series of violent crowd incidents the likes of which we have not witnessed at Mardi Gras since the late 1970s. As you know, Seattle was not alone in the violence experienced during this year's Mardi Gras event. This report will include a copy of the minutes from the summit meeting we hosted with other police agencies that were confronted with violence during their own Mardi Gras 2001 celebrations.

The AAR project team spent over 100 hours debriefing key personnel regarding actions taken during the five-day event. The personnel debriefings were matched with radio transcripts and field notes to ensure a clear chronology of events. In addition, in developing recommendations for future operations, the project team reviewed news stories, reports, and videos from other police agencies.

In beginning a review of Mardi Gras, I would like to distinguish pre-planned events from emergency planning. Pre-planned events allow for a comprehensive review of strategies and tactics and ensure that a variety of contingencies are developed and vetted in table top exercises. This distinction is not offered to be defensive but merely to illustrate the challenges of planning for an event such as Mardi Gras 2001, which quickly placed commanders in an emergency planning mode with little time for review and testing of tactical concepts.

This report recommends a basic change in Department philosophy to deal with crowd dynamics. Recognizing that hostile crowds are not easy to manage, the Seattle Police Department encountered several problems in policing the Mardi Gras 2001 event, particularly in the areas of command and control, planning, and crowd management tactics. The following points are highlighted as lessons learned for future operations:

- Establish and maintain unity of command.
- Establish a command post with proper staffing and technology to monitor, analyze, and disseminate information quickly.
- Keep officers highly visible making arrests in the crowd as long as officer safety allows.
- When crowd activity becomes a threat to public safety and/or it becomes unsafe for officers to enter the crowd and deal with the problems, move immediately to disperse the crowd.

While I believe these recommendations will markedly improve our performance in future operations, I understand that there can be no ready-made template for dealing with large, volatile crowds. Crowd management is an imprecise art at best. Law enforcement agencies are required to take into account the unique circumstances of each event and to balance public safety with individual freedoms. Police intervention can, in some cases, be the tipping point toward escalation of violence and additional injuries and, in other cases, may resolve the situation and prevent further violence. Even allowing for the associated risks, I believe that a more aggressive, pro-active approach to crowd management will yield the best results.

cc: SPD Command Staff

Attachment: Mardi Gras 2001 After Action Report

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## **Event Summary**

Between Friday evening, February 23, and early Wednesday morning, February 28, 2001, the City of Seattle experienced a series of violent incidents in connection with a privately sponsored Mardi Gras/"Fat Tuesday" event in the Pioneer Square neighborhood. This after action report (AAR) provides a recap of police preparations for, and operations conducted during, that event.

This Seattle Police Department report is designed to enable learning from experience. Specifically, the AAR identifies areas that need improvement as well as areas to be commended and sustained in future operations. The ownership of this after action report is important. As an SPD report, the findings and recommendations included herein are not intended to represent the views of other agencies or address issues outside the scope of the police response. Mayor Schell has convened three task forces to look at the broader issues of special events, especially youth violence, which this year's Mardi Gras tragically illustrated.

## **Plans and Operations Summary**

Situation. The Mardi Gras celebrations for 2001 were heavily publicized in the local media and drew large crowds of people to the Pioneer Square area between Friday evening, February 23, and early Wednesday morning, February 28. On Friday and Saturday, the problems began in Pioneer Park as individuals, many of whom were underage and unable to enter the bars, gathered to participate in the Mardi Gras celebration. Many individuals who came to the event had been drinking and continued to do so, whether in the bars or on the streets. Benches along the edge of Pioneer Park became stages for women baring their breasts to obtain beads. As the scene developed, the crowd surged forward resulting in fights between individuals interested in looking at, groping, or protecting the women. The individual fights became increasingly more violent and eventually turned toward the police as officers attempted to protect people and property from the violent crowd. These assaults and related property destruction were a threat to public safety and resulted in a police response to clear the area.

Seattle Police Department planners did not anticipate the extent of these weekend disturbances. Although the Mardi Gras 2000 event resulted in disturbances on a small scale on "Fat Tuesday," there were few arrests and minor property damage that was handled by on-duty resources. In fact, there had not been significant civil disturbances surrounding Mardi Gras in Seattle since the late-1970s.

In retrospect, senior SPD commanders believe that the violence surrounding Mardi Gras 2001, which culminated on "Fat Tuesday," was in many respects unprecedented. The permissive tone established and conveyed by local advertisements and media coverage encouraged public drunkenness and indecent exposure, closely followed by assaults on private citizens and police and property destruction. As documented below, there were more than six dozen injuries and one tragic death that resulted from this violence. It also is important to note that Seattle was not alone in witnessing brazen violence during Mardi Gras 2001: Austin, Fresno, and Philadelphia experienced very similar problems (see the attached "Multi-Agency Mardi Gras Summit Meeting Summary").

Planning Process. SPD was aware of the established plans for the Mardi Gras celebration well in advance of the event. West Precinct planners attended multiple meetings with Pioneer Square club owners, the Pioneer Square Public Safety Committee, and the City's Special Events Planning Group during the last six months of 2000. Although questions were raised by the Police Department regarding the plans for the event, the Department remained supportive of what was a private event sponsored by Pioneer Square drinking establishments.

In this context, West Precinct planners developed an operations plan for Tuesday evening the 27<sup>th</sup> that involved 77 officers, 10 sergeants, and one lieutenant. Staffing for this event was to be drawn principally from West Precinct resources, with augmentation from the other precincts and the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team which is responsible for chemical and less-lethal munitions deployment. Command of the event would rest with command staff personnel from the West Precinct. Because there had been no civil disturbances surrounding Mardi Gras since the late 1970's, there was no contingency plan for the weekend preceding Mardi Gras, other than the normal response afforded by on-duty city-wide Task Force personnel.

When events turned violent on Friday night into Saturday morning, responsibility for orchestrating the SPD response for Saturday and subsequent evenings fell to the Department's Duty Captain and one of the Operations Bureau Assistant Chiefs. Without the time required to engage in a fully articulated, deliberate planning process typical of pre-planned events, SPD resorted of necessity to a hasty planning process. On Saturday, the Duty Captain, using the "Fat Tuesday" plan as a starting point, called the precincts to arrange expanded staffing for that evening. On Sunday, the commander of the Department's Special Deployment Unit (SDU) was contacted to task his team with developing a significantly larger deployment model for the remaining days of the Mardi Gras event. Events of Friday night demonstrated the need to increase staffing for traffic control and mobile field force capability. SDU planners worked on very short notice to increase staffing from 132 sworn personnel on Saturday to slightly more than 350 officers, including Mutual Aid support from other agencies, on "Fat Tuesday".

Tactical contingency plans were discussed almost continuously by command staff beginning on Saturday morning; however, a formal operations order for the expanded operation was never published. The original West Precinct plan for "Fat Tuesday" was, in effect, overcome by events and not implemented. In addition, the Field Incident Command responsibility shifted after Sunday night, with a different Bureau Assistant Chief and Captain exercising event and incident command on Monday and Tuesday.\*

The Seattle Police Operations Center (SPOC), staffed by SDU personnel, was activated on Sunday morning the 25<sup>th</sup> to manage staffing plans. However, the SPOC was not used to assist with intelligence gathering and managing the event, and the Department did not feel it was necessary to activate the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for the event. This left the burden of managing information and message traffic for the event to the Department's Field Command Post at Coleman Dock and the 9-1-1 Communications Center.

Operational Highlights. On Friday evening the 23<sup>rd</sup> and the early morning hours on the

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\* Duty Command responsibilities rotate on a schedule of Monday 0800 hours to Monday 0800 hours of the following week resulting in a seven day command cycle.

24th, SPD responded to the scene with Precinct Task Force, night SWAT, and other on-duty personnel under the command of the on-duty Watch Commander and a West Precinct Acting Lieutenant. Seventy-one officers responded to Pioneer Square and proceeded to form a line in the vicinity of 1st and Cherry, facing south. At approximately 0200 hours on Saturday, a riotous crowd estimated at 2,000 was ordered to disperse. The order was repeated a second time. Because the crowd did not respond, chemical munitions were released and officers cleared the area. The area was secured at 0350 hours.

On Saturday evening, 132 officers faced a crowd in the streets of Pioneer Square that grew to 4,000 to 6,000 after midnight. Officers were again faced with riotous behavior that included assaults on officers with rocks and bottles. The flashpoint on Saturday night, which transformed the raucous crowd into a mob, occurred when officers apprehended an individual reported to have a handgun at 1st and Yesler. Numerous spectators took this opportunity to pelt officers with rocks and bottles. The crowd proved unresponsive to verbal commands to disperse and the Event Commander/ Assistant Chief authorized the use of chemical and less-lethal munitions to restore order and clear the area. This decision resulted in the crowd splitting into two parts, leaving officers surrounded or flanked, depending on the perspective. This allowed elements of the crowd to proceed north along 1st Avenue, where some retail establishments suffered broken windows and looting. In responding to a report of looting at the North Face Store, an SPD sergeant suffered a broken arm in the attempt to apprehend a suspect. By 0330 hours, the Pioneer Square area had been cleared and crowd control operations ceased.

On Sunday evening the 25<sup>th</sup>, and again on Monday evening the 26<sup>th</sup>, SPD deployed slightly more than 200 personnel for crowd control in the Pioneer Square area. Compared with events on Friday and Saturday, both evenings were trouble-free.

On Tuesday the 27<sup>th</sup>, crowds grew steadily throughout the evening. By 2100 hours, officer safety concerns caused SPD commanders to pull officers back to the Coleman Dock field command post to change from Class A uniform into BDUs (black utility uniforms) and protective gear. Traffic also was rerouted to ease street congestion in the area. Officers subsequently were moved to staging locations on the perimeter of Pioneer Square, where they soon became the focus of rocks and bottles thrown from the crowd. By 2300 hours, with the street crowd swelling to an estimated 5,000 to 7,000, sporadic fights became more numerous, including several reports of individuals knocked to the ground. Officers entered the periphery of the crowd at times to make arrests and assist individuals who had been injured.

At half past midnight, more fighting and an overturned vehicle were observed. 911 calls for service emanating from the area increased significantly in number and severity. Police commanders, who were now gathered on the roof of the parking garage at 1<sup>st</sup> and S. Yesler Way, bordering Pioneer Park, believed that it would be imprudent to send significant numbers of officers into the crowd, for fear of inciting greater violence and/or panic.

By 0100 hours, the situation had become acute and commanders decided to clear the area. Initial orders were to give a dispersal order, wait five minutes, warn again and if the crowd did not respond, deploy chemical munitions to clear the area. Shortly after the initial order to disperse was issued, a report of shots fired was broadcast, prompting the

commanders to immediately disperse the crowd in the interest of public safety. By approximately 0230 hours, the area had been cleared and officers began to conduct mobile patrols throughout the downtown area.

Police follow up investigations into the violence began in the early morning hours on the 28<sup>th</sup> and were then carried forward by a special Criminal Investigations Task Force that continued to pursue suspects and make arrests until it was disbanded on May 4, 2001 (see Impacts Section below for details).

## **Lessons Learned**

Officer Professionalism. SPD line officers did an outstanding job demonstrating discipline, endurance, and professionalism under the most trying circumstances. Throughout the five-day event, officers maintained discipline in the face of many unruly individuals who engaged in throwing rocks and bottles at officers from a distance.

Quick Staffing Response. Members of the Special Deployment Unit were placed in the difficult position of developing a staffing plan for over 300 sworn personnel in a matter of hours. Although this is not recommended as a standard planning methodology, the ability to marshal forces on short notice is a capability that should be maintained.

Investigations Task Force Follow Up. The dozen detectives and two supervisors who made up the Department's follow up Task Force should be commended for the careful work that led to the arrest and charging of 43 individuals for violent crimes committed on "Fat Tuesday," including the suspect in the homicide of Kristopher Kime. When the Task Force returned to regular duty in early May, all but four suspects had been apprehended. The task force model worked extremely well and strong consideration should be given to staffing a follow-up task force at the beginning of any large event where civil disturbance is likely.

Planning Process. Due to the emergent nature of the weekend situation, Mardi Gras 2001, initially a preplanned event, quickly became an exercise in hasty planning. Police did not foresee the need to prepare for a worst-case scenario involving a contingency plan for the weekend leading up to the event. Eleventh hour attempts to adapt the plan for "Fat Tuesday" to the preceding weekend were unsuccessful, as staffing needs considerably exceeded those planned. On Tuesday, confusion was further compounded when commanders made last minute changes to the revised "Fat Tuesday" operational concept. Accordingly, unit commanders and supervisors disagreed as to the substance and intent of the crowd control plans for Tuesday night.

As the Department learned during the World Trade Organization deployment and once again at Mardi Gras 2001, it is imperative to plan for and exercise multiple contingencies for major events, always including a worst-case scenario. While the fact that Mardi Gras had not posed significant problems in Seattle since the late 1970s is a mitigating circumstance, it does not make the failure to plan for a worst case any more acceptable.

Command and Control. There were numerous problems regarding the command and control of Mardi Gras operations that resulted from the failure to follow well-established

principles for commanding special events.\* As initially planned, the West Precinct Commander and his Operations Lieutenant were to exercise Incident Command on "Fat Tuesday." Due to the unforeseen crowds in the days preceding the event, the Duty Commander was placed in a position of developing a plan at the eleventh hour. Event and incident command shifted hands once again for operations on Monday and Tuesday. Although it is desirable whenever possible to have an event staffed by commanders from the precinct where the event is to take place, this is not realistic given the number of events that occur throughout the city on a yearly basis. In future events, if commanders from the affected precinct will not be available, the Duty Commander for that time period must be notified and involved in the planning process at the earliest opportunity.

On Tuesday, Incident Command was initially staffed by a precinct captain, with an Assistant Chief being the overall Event Commander. During the course of the evening, the Assistant Chief took over more and more of the command functions without formally assuming the role of Incident Commander. Additional confusion was caused due to the presence of a second Assistant Chief and a second captain, who appeared at the event in uniform as observers. The end result of this chain of events was confusion on the part of supervisors and officers regarding who was in charge of field operations. One consequence of this confusion was that some field unit commanders took actions that were not coordinated with either adjacent units or Incident Command. Some unit commanders also made staffing decisions without talking to, and at variance with, those made by the commander of the SPOC, which had been activated on Sunday to oversee staffing for the event. These problems can be averted in future operations by establishing a clear chain of command in published operations plans and orders that are presented in advance and then briefed uniformly to all officers, commanders, and supervisors.

In addition to these points, on Tuesday, the field command post at Coleman Dock was not organized properly to handle analysis of the reports being received referencing the level of violence within the crowd. This problem was compounded by the frequent absence of the Incident Commander from the command post. Commanders, believing they would gain a better perspective by positioning themselves in the field, chose to stage at the parking garage at 1<sup>st</sup> and S. Yesler Way. Due to the noise level and inability to get a clear view of the situation from the garage, the Incident Commander did not have an adequate picture of the level of violence. Although it is not always possible to get a complete picture of a riot, solutions to this issue include staffing the command post with individuals whose function is to review, analyze, and distribute intelligence on a timely basis to all commanders. The need for high quality police radio earpieces is critical for key commanders and supervisors, and it would also be wise to consider the purchase of video cameras with a direct feed to the field command post.

Police Tactics. After withdrawing officers from the crowd on Tuesday night to don protective gear, SPD commanders struggled to find a way to insert officers back into the crowd without inciting added violence and making the situation worse than it already was. Once officers were withdrawn, the crowd closed and fed upon itself, making any large-scale reentry hazardous to both citizens and police (aggressive entry with shields and batons would have caused injury and, quite possibly, provoked panic). Police

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\* The Incident Command System (ICS) prescribes a body of well-established principles for organizing and commanding special events involving police, fire, and emergency management specialists.

commanders were, in effect, confronted with a lose-lose situation.

While acknowledging that hindsight is always perfect and that simple solutions do not exist, the Department should give strong consideration to adopting a more aggressive, pro-active posture in dealing with unruly and unresponsive crowds. The use of more plainclothes officers in the crowd, supported by uniformed backup, should be considered for early intervention and enforcement actions. Horse, foot, bicycle patrols should be employed to identify problem individuals, write citations, and make arrests. Strong consideration should also be given to clearing crowds once the crowd activity becomes a threat to public safety and/or it becomes unsafe for officers to enter the crowd and deal with problems. Crowd dispersal, when possible, should begin with the issuance of verbal commands. If the crowd fails to respond to the verbal commands, it should be recognized that the deployment of chemical munitions may be the safest and most efficient tactic to disperse a crowd. The Department should continue to train all personnel in crowd management and further develop a cadre of officers with additional training in the specialized tactics of quick crowd insertion and extraction of violent offenders and victims.

## **Conclusion**

Mardi Gras 2001 celebrations in Seattle and other major cities across the country were marred by senseless violence. As documented in the attached Summit Meeting report, we have met with our colleagues from other cities to debrief Mardi Gras events and explore new tactics to help avert these tragedies in the future. The Department is committed to taking an aggressive and pro-active approach to improving its response at future events.

## Operational Chronology\*

February 23, 2001 – Friday

Deployment Information
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SPD deploys 71 officers, one Acting Lieutenant, and the on-duty Watch Commander/Lieutenant to respond to the scene in Pioneer Square. Officers are drawn from on-duty Task Force and Traffic resources and the SWAT Team.
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- 2000-2030 hours: Crowd behavior normally seen at bar closing time (0200 hours), including numerous individuals who were drunk and disorderly, is apparent early in the evening. SWAT deploys in its van and prepares for crowd movement. Officers observe a person on a light pole being goaded into jumping into a crowd of his friends. When he jumps, the crowd moves, causing him to land on the ground. When officers enter the crowd to assist the citizen, he is gone.
- 2100 hours: Task Force officers are notified of the potential for a call out to handle the crowd. The East Precinct Third Watch Lieutenant is notified as the on-duty Watch Commander.
- 0027 hours: Radio dispatches officers to Pioneer Square to handle a reported disturbance.
- 0034 hours: The West Precinct Acting Lieutenant activates Precinct Task Force personnel to respond to the Pioneer Square area. The Unusual Occurrence Van, containing demonstration management equipment, is staged at Coleman Dock.
- 0101 hours: Traffic resources and Precinct Task Force personnel begin to stage in the area. East Precinct personnel stage at Occidental Avenue and Washington Street.
- 0123 hours: North Precinct Task Force personnel stage in the vicinity of Pioneer Square.
- 0129 hours: A traffic plan is implemented diverting vehicular traffic from the Pioneer Square area.
- 0135 hours: Officers are assaulted with rocks and bottles at 1<sup>st</sup> and S. Yesler Way.
- 0139 hours: The West Precinct Acting Lieutenant calls for all units to stage on S. Yesler Way under the Alaskan Way viaduct. He reports that the crowd has tripled in size to approximately 2,000 individuals and is taking over the intersection at 1<sup>st</sup> and Yesler.
- 0149 hours: There are reports of damage to light poles as people climb on them and pull them down. Bottles are being thrown in Pioneer Park.
- 0155 hours: A fight is reported in the middle of the street at 1<sup>st</sup> and S. Yesler Way. Officers report that the fight is under control.

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\* This chronology was compiled from CAD printouts, Communication Center transcripts, field commander notes, and police debriefings.

- 0159 hours: The Watch Commander and West Precinct Acting Lieutenant direct the North Precinct Task Force, dressed in protective equipment, to 1<sup>st</sup> and Cherry. SWAT stages the Peacekeeper at 1<sup>st</sup> and Columbia.
- 0207 hours: The Watch Commander assumes command of operations, becoming the Incident Commander, and requests notification of the Duty Captain. The Chief Dispatcher notifies the Duty Captain that the crowd in Pioneer Square has turned violent and that an Acting Lieutenant is issuing orders to disperse the crowd. The Duty Captain notifies an Operations Bureau Commander and the Chief of Police.
- 0208 hours: The first dispersal order is given and officers are told to disperse the crowd to the south and east.
- 0214 hours: The Incident Commander directs that the final dispersal order be given.
- 0216 hours: The Incident Commander orders that the line of officers move toward the riotous crowd. The crowd continues to throw projectiles at the line of officers. SWAT deploys less-lethal munitions to protect the officers and disperse the crowd.
- 0220 hours: Radio notifies of a report of shots fired, possibly under the Alaskan Way Viaduct. Officers indicate the noise could possibly be from fireworks rather than a gun. Medics are requested to respond to 1<sup>st</sup> and S. Yesler Way to treat an individual for pepper spray exposure.
- 0226 hours: Bike units are requested to respond to the parking garage at 1<sup>st</sup> and Yesler. Officers are unavailable as they are in crowd control lines on the street. SWAT issues a dispersal order for Occidental and S. Yesler Way and Occidental at James Street.
- 0236 hours: Several reports are received of property damage at 1<sup>st</sup> and S. Main.
- 0248 hours: Seattle Fire Department responds to 1<sup>st</sup> and S. Yesler Way to treat an injured officer hit in the face with a beer bottle.
- 0250 hours: The Duty Captain arrives on scene and is briefed by the Incident Commander.
- 0253 hours: Pioneer Square arterials are opened to vehicular traffic.
- 0300 hours: The Operations Bureau Commander and the Chief of Police arrive and tour the Pioneer Square area. They discuss operational plans for the remainder of the weekend.
- 0350 hours: The Pioneer Square area is secured for the evening.

February 24, 2001 – Saturday

Deployment Information
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<p>SPD deploys 110 officers, 18 sergeants, two lieutenants, one captain, and one Assistant Chief for Mardi Gras crowd control activity. Officers and sergeants deploy in squads with geographic areas of responsibility. SPD SWAT Team also participates.</p>
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- 1100-1800 hours: The Duty Captain prepares plans to assume role of Incident Commander for Saturday evening.

- 2100 hours: The Incident Commander directs the initial deployment of officers by squad into designated geographic areas. Officers are instructed to work in pairs and actively manage the crowd.
- 2300 hours: Officers report the first fight of the evening in Pioneer Park. The crowd is becoming increasingly hostile toward Mounted and Bicycle officers as they travel through the Park. Firecrackers are being tossed at the horses as they move through the crowd. The crowd in Pioneer Park grows to 1,500 to 2,000 people. The Assistant Chief arrives on scene.
- 2311 hours: Because the crowd dynamic has become highly volatile, the Incident Commander gives the order for officers to begin the transition into protective equipment by withdrawing personnel from Occidental Park.
- 2317 hours: The SWAT Commander arrives at the command post at Coleman Dock to review the situation with the Incident Commander. Communication is becoming increasingly difficult, requiring use of the SWAT communications system to keep the Incident Commander apprised of the crowd dynamic.
- 2330-0000 hours: The Pioneer Park crowd becomes increasingly volatile. Mounted and Bikes are not getting the response desired as they move through the Park. Per the observation of plainclothes officers, the crowd is no longer responding to police direction. Bar patrons are standing in lines south of Yesler waiting to enter the bars. Command post staff begin calling the bars south of Yesler to ask that they close their doors, as police may need to move into the area. The traffic plan is implemented to close vehicular access to the area. Officers continue to report to the command post to change into protective equipment.
- 0100 hours: Plainclothes officers notice that the crowd is beginning to focus on the officers. The Field Commander asks the plainclothes officers to continue monitoring suspects who are throwing items at officers but that no arrests be made at this time. A SWAT sergeant and three SWAT officers are staged at 1<sup>st</sup> and Cherry. The SWAT contingent at 1<sup>st</sup> and Columbia is unable to join the SWAT officers at 1<sup>st</sup> and Cherry due to the size and demeanor of the crowd.
- 0105-0115 hours: Officers chase a suspect reported to have a gun into the crowd in Pioneer Park. As officers apprehend the suspect and take him to the ground, a nearby officer hears metal hit the ground near the arrest. Believing the suspect dropped the gun in a large angry crowd, the officer orders the group to move back. When the group fails to respond to his command, he deploys a burst of pepper spray to repel the crowd. Rather than disperse, the crowd turns on the officers. The Field Commander notifies the Command Post that three squads of hardened troops are ready to respond to 1st and Yesler. Officers dressed in protective equipment and supported by SWAT move to the flash point at 1<sup>st</sup> and Yesler to address the crowd around the suspect with a gun. SWAT notifies the command post that it is not safe to move the crowd with hand-to-hand tactics. Because of the threat to public safety, SWAT requests and receives permission to deploy chemical and less-lethal munitions to repel assaults on officers, citizens, and property, and to disperse the crowd. Permission to use chemical and less-lethal munitions is granted by the Assistant Chief. The crowd in Pioneer Park splits as a result of the police tactical deployment, effectively flanking the police formation and allowing the crowd to move north as well as south and east.

- 0120 hours: Suspects in the crowd assault individual officers, requiring deployment of exact impact less-lethal weapons to repel the assaults. All deployment of these weapons is under the direct supervision of a sergeant.
- 0122 hours: Mounted units report that they are being assaulted from the north with rocks and bottles at 1<sup>st</sup> and Cherry.
- 0124 hours: Radio requests that units respond to 1<sup>st</sup> and Cherry on a report that suspects in the crowd are attacking a Metro coach that is blocking traffic in the intersection.
- 0131 hours: A crowd control line is established at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Columbia, where officers report considerable property damage.
- 0132 hours: The Field Commander requests reinforcements at 1<sup>st</sup> and Washington.
- 0138 hours: Plainclothes officers report that the crowd is beginning to clear the area. Individuals leaving the bars add to the overall numbers being cleared from the street, resulting a crowd estimate of 4,000 to 6,000 individuals.
- 0145-0200 hours: SWAT reports that suspects on the third floor of a parking garage at 1<sup>st</sup> and Columbia are throwing rocks, bottles, and construction materials, including a 90 pound sandbag, at officers. SWAT deploys chemical munitions to clear the parking garage. At the same time, the crowd flanks police formations moving north as well as south and east, creating confusion and making unified crowd control difficult. Property damage is reported to be occurring north of the Pioneer Square area. Orders are given to re-deploy troops from 1<sup>st</sup> and Cherry, to consolidate police units. The Incident Commander requests that King County Sheriff's Deputies backfill patrol in the South and North Precincts, allowing additional SPD officers to respond to Pioneer Square.
- 0152 hours: Suspects in the crowd are reported to be overturning a car at Occidental Avenue and S. Yesler Way.
- 0155 hours: An additional squad arrives from South Precinct as a result of the request for assistance from the King County Sheriff's Office. The squad is deployed to assist at the south end of Pioneer Park.
- 0157 hours: Officers respond to area of 1<sup>st</sup> and Yesler and begin to move the crowd east and south from that location. The Field Commander asks for two more squads at Occidental and Yesler to assist with crowd dispersal.
- 0215-0230 hours: SWAT and available officers move to address looting and property damage north of the Pioneer Square area. Medics are requested to a man-down call (knifing) at 1<sup>st</sup> and Marion. A large crowd remains in the intersection and Seattle Fire Department is unable to respond. SWAT responds to find a man down, unconscious and bleeding. SWAT medics respond and find an additional man down on another corner of the intersection. SWAT is forced to deploy less-lethal munitions to clear a safe perimeter and allow the Fire Department to enter the area and render aid. A final order to disperse is issued in the Pioneer Square area. Squads respond in a unified manner to move the crowd from the Pioneer Square area.
- 0219 hours: There is a report of looting at the North Face Store. Plainclothes officers attempt to arrest the looting suspect and are surrounded by the crowd. During the apprehension of the suspect, a sergeant's arm is broken. Individual impact weapons are needed to reach and assist the injured sergeant.

- 0239 hours: A Seattle Fire Department Battalion Chief calls dispatch asking for officers to handle a large crowd outside Fire Station 10. Officers respond to the scene as requested.
- 0330 hours: Pioneer Square is secured for the evening.

February 25, 2001 – Sunday

Deployment Information
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<p>SPD deploys 176 officers, 29 sergeants, five lieutenants, one captain, and one Assistant Chief for Mardi Gras crowd control activity. Officers and sergeants deploy in tactical units with geographic areas of responsibility. Tactical units include two crowd control platoons (one in Class A uniform, one in BDUs and protective equipment), one anti-violence platoon, a prisoner processing team, a situational assessment team, Traffic cars, and the SPD SWAT Team.</p>
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- 0900 hours: The Incident Commander activates the Seattle Police Operations Center (SPOC) for the duration of the Mardi Gras event.
- 1200 hours: The Chief of Police and the Mayor begin a walk through of Pioneer Square. The Mayor is fully briefed on the actions taken and planned for the remainder of the event.
- 1215 hours: SPOC is briefed on staffing needs based on the events of the previous two nights.
- 1230-1500 hours: The Incident Commander, Assistant Chief, SWAT Commander, and SPOC personnel develop contingency plans based on the crowd dynamics of the previous two evenings. The plan involves dividing the Pioneer Square area into geographical sections and assigning unit commanders to crowd control platoons in each area. Logistical requests are made through SPOC.
- 1500-1600 hours: The Incident Commander and Assistant Chief brief the Chief of Police and staff from the Mayor's Office about operations of the previous two nights as well as plans for the event through Sunday night. The Chief of Police and staff from the Mayor's Office decide to cancel the permit for the live stage in Occidental Park and agree to review the event after observing activity over the next two nights.
- 1800-1830 hours: The Incident Commander and Assistant Chief conduct roll call. Supervisors and commanders are briefed on the contingency plans. To confirm plans for staffing, SPOC asks each squad to fill out a roster of their personnel.
- 1900 hours: The command post at Coleman Dock begins to operate. The Incident Commander immediately begins to coordinate staffing through Radio to establish a personnel roster and plot on the zone location map.
- 2200 hours: Information from the field reveals that the bars are quiet and the streets have minimal traffic. The Incident Commander begins to relieve personnel.
- 2330 hours: The Incident Commander reports that groups of juveniles are beginning to congregate in the Pioneer Square area. The officers remaining are deployed to keep the group moving.

- 0030 hours: Radio broadcasts a report of an individual flashing a gun from a “blazer type” vehicle. SWAT officers are able to apprehend the suspect and vehicle without incident at 1<sup>st</sup> and S. Yesler Way.
- 0100-0130 hours: The Field Incident Commander issues orders to disperse to the group gathered in Pioneer Park. The group disperses and officers are released to their normal duty assignments.

February 26, 2001 – Monday

Deployment Information
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<p>SPD deploys 176 officers, 29 sergeants, five lieutenants, one captain, and one Assistant Chief for Mardi Gras crowd control activity. Officers and sergeants deploy in tactical units with geographic areas of responsibility. Tactical units include two crowd control platoons (one in Class A uniform, one in BDUs and protective equipment), one anti-violence platoon, a prisoner processing team, a situational assessment team, Traffic cars, and the SPD SWAT Team.</p>
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- 0800 hours: Duty Command responsibilities shift to a new commander, per department policy, initiating a change in Mardi Gras Incident Command.
- 0900 hours: The Chief of Police and West Precinct Commander conduct a City Council briefing regarding Mardi Gras activities over the weekend.
- 1000-1700 hours: Discussions are initiated between the Chief’s Office and the Seattle Special Events Committee Chairperson regarding the possibility of canceling the Tuesday evening event. It is learned that the only permitted event is the live radio feed from the KISS Stage in Occidental Park. All other activity is sponsored by the bars and does not require a permit. Other than canceling the permitted event, and absent the conditions that would allow declaration of a state of emergency, there is no legal basis for requiring closure of the bars in advance of problems.
- 1730-1800 hours: A briefing is conducted for the new Incident Commander and Assistant Chief. The outgoing Incident Commander and Assistant Chief give the new commanders information regarding the weekend’s activities as well as the contingency plans that were developed.
- 1800 hours: The incoming Incident Commander and Assistant Chief conduct roll call. A position roster is disseminated with a request that supervisors complete information as to specific officer assignments.
- 1900 hours: Officers are deployed into the Pioneer Square area per the concept of operations developed during preceding evenings.
- 2200 hours: The Incident Commander relieves personnel as the Pioneer Square area is quiet.

February 27, Tuesday

Deployment Information
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<p>SPD deploys 279 officers, 39 sergeants, five lieutenants, two captains, two Assistant Chiefs, and the Chief of Police for Mardi Gras crowd control activity. Officers and sergeants deploy in tactical units with geographic areas of responsibility. Tactical units include two crowd control platoons (one in Class A uniform, one in BDUs and protective equipment), one anti-violence platoon, a prisoner processing team, a situational assessment team, Traffic cars, and the SPD SWAT Team. SPD is supported by 20 Washington Liquor Control Officers, patrol car units from the Washington State Patrol (for traffic control assistance), and the King County Guardian One helicopter for airborne surveillance.</p>
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- 1300-1400 hours: The Incident Commander and Assistant Chief meet to discuss operational plans for the evening.
- 1730-1800 hours: The Incident Commander and Assistant Chief charged with event command conduct a supervisor and commander roll call.
- 1800 hours: The Incident Commander and Assistant Chief conduct roll call for officers. Because nearly 300 officers arrive for the 1800 roll call, it is necessary to split the officers into separate roll calls. The Incident Commander and Assistant Chief jointly prepare for the briefing to ensure the same information is presented to each group. Both roll calls were briefed on staffing, mission, and overview of the tactical concept of operations.
- 1930 hours: Due to logistical difficulties in moving large numbers of officers, many officers have not yet been transported to the command post.
- 2030-2100 hours: The Incident Commander and unit commanders meet at the command post at Coleman Dock to discuss the tactical plan. One unit commander insists on changes to the tactical plan, causing other unit commanders to question why the tactical plan is being changed at this time. There is disagreement among the unit commanders as to where officers will be placed once they are equipped as well as disagreement over the tactics to be employed to clear the crowd. While there is a general understanding of the plan, no specifics are decided before the unit commanders return to their field positions.
- 2100-2130 hours: The Incident Commander orders officers to begin transition from Class A uniforms to BDU's with full crowd control equipment. The traffic plan is implemented with pre-arranged assistance from Washington State Patrol personnel. Officers are re-deployed to crowd perimeter positions throughout the Pioneer Square area once they don their crowd management equipment. Plainclothes officers are removed from the crowd and placed at 1<sup>st</sup> and Columbia as their uniformed back-up officers are being placed in crowd control equipment and deployed to assist with the overall tactical plan. The plainclothes officers are detailed to gather intelligence only from this point forward. Commanders attempt to drive through the crowd and move to the parking garage at 1<sup>st</sup> and S. Yesler Way.
- 2200 hours: Officers are staging at locations closer to Pioneer Square. Radio is broadcasting reports of fights in the crowd. Officers are reporting that they are the

focus of rocks and bottles being thrown from the crowd. People leaving the area are informing officers on the perimeter of fights, thefts, and robberies in the crowd.

- 2207 hours: One instance of flashing is reported at Post and S. Yesler Way. The crowd surges toward the female flasher and a male receives a head injury in the process. When officers and Fire Department paramedics enter the crowd to assist, the crowd turns on the officers forcing them to withdraw.
- 2230 hours: A platoon commander receives permission to have his officers take a break from standing ready on the line.
- 2245 hours: Officers report they are seeing more fights, lasting 10 to 20 seconds, at 1<sup>st</sup> and S. Yesler Way. It is discovered that two platoons have switched to an alternate communications channel (TAC 3) and some activity that may have been broadcast is not reaching the tactical channel (TAC 2). Several requests are made to have all personnel operate off of TAC 2.
- 2300 hours: Officers are fully re-deployed on posts after transitioning into crowd control equipment. Some unit commanders indicate they believe deployment into the crowd is imminent. Other unit commanders believe they are to wait until the bars close before moving into the crowd. The commanders on the parking garage are observing the crowd; however, they do not observe much violence at this point. Commanders consider their options in light of the fact that there is a large crowd, many of whom are not engaging in criminal conduct as well as many individuals who are perched on platforms, poles, etc. who could be injured if the crowd were pushed to disperse. Concurrently, the commanders become a focal point for the crowd as they approach the edge of the garage to observe the street below. Due to the noise of the crowd, it is difficult for the commanders to hear radio transmissions regarding crowd activity.
- 2308 hours: An officer assigned to an observation post reports that there are about five groups of approximately 20 suspects each moving through the crowd and assaulting people at random.
- 2314 hours: Officers report that there are five Asian male suspects wearing red and pointing guns at people. An arrest is made and a weapon recovered at 2316 hours.
- 2330-2400 hours: The Assistant Chief in charge of the event, who has gradually assumed Incident Commander functions, directs the command post to call the bars and ask if they will close. Of the 15 bars participating in the event, seven are contacted and four agree to close.
- 2338 hours: A commander on the garage roof broadcasts that a person is down in front of Doc Maynards, and officers move to enter the crowd to assist the victim. The commander notices the crowd running from loud noises then surging back as the noise dissipates, with the crowd activity appearing to be concentrated at 1<sup>st</sup> and S. Yesler Way.
- 2400 hours: The Incident Commander, the Chief of Police, and other observing commanders are located at the parking garage and are monitoring the crowd. Some commanders believe the crowd is thinning from the estimated peak of 5,000 to 7,000; however, the suspects who remain appear to be more violent. Officers are reporting that they are having greater problems extracting themselves from the crowd as they deploy from the fringe of the crowd. One squad is having difficulty securing the access to the garage, requiring a second squad to assist with this duty.

- 0026 hours: A tactical unit commander advises that sergeants should move their troops back if necessary, based on the belief that officers would be at risk if left in small groups at the edge of the crowd.
- 0030 hours: There is a marked increase in the severity of calls for service and one commander states that the crowd appears to be “turning on itself.” All commanders are now at the garage. Commanders observe fights, bottle throwing, and an overturned vehicle.
- 0048 hours: Guardian One, which is operating in the air space over Pioneer Square, is asked to turn off its spot light as it appears to be inciting the crowd.
- 0049 hours: Officers report that there is a group of five to 15 black male suspects dressed in dark clothing and stocking caps who are causing most of the problem. They appear to be looking for victims and are observed committing random acts of violence in the crowd.
- 0051 hours: A tactical unit commander instructs officers not to enter the crowd.
- 0056 hours: Officers report that four suspects in front of Starbucks are donning black face masks.
- 0058 hours: Officers report that there is a group of 20 to 30 females baring their breasts as they stand on the second floor balcony at S. Yesler Way and Post Alley.
- 0109 hours: Officers report that a large group is gathering at the base of the parking garage at 1<sup>st</sup> and Yesler moving toward the Bohemian Club. One male is reported as being seriously assaulted in the alley behind the club.
- 0111 hours: Radio broadcasts a request for assistance for an injured person at 2<sup>nd</sup> and S. Yesler Way. Two off-duty firefighters are attending to the individual who has a head laceration and is convulsing.
- 0112 hours: Officers request that an aid car be sent to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue side of the garage to assist an injured male.
- 0113 hours: Officers report that about six people are carrying an unconscious person east on S. Yesler Way towards Occidental Avenue S.
- 0116 hours: Officers report an additional assault victim at James Street and S. Yesler Way where the individual was slammed against some dumpsters.
- 0117 hours: Officers request that Fire Department paramedics expedite their response to 2<sup>nd</sup> and S. Yesler Way. Officers state they are taking rocks and bottles at 2<sup>nd</sup> and S. Yesler and ask for any transport vehicle available to get the officers and victims out of the area. The officers transport the victims to Fire Station 10 at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Main Street.
- 0129 hours: The Incident Commander directs that the crowd be cleared from the area based on the marked increase in violence and aggression demonstrated by the crowd. Information is broadcast that once the order to disperse is given, wait five minutes and monitor the crowd response. If the crowd does not disperse, the use of chemical munitions is authorized at SWAT’s discretion. At approximately the same time, officers at the north end of the deployment area receive information that there is a citizen down mid-block on 1<sup>st</sup> between Columbia and Cherry. SWAT initiates a citizen rescue, clearing the crowd as they approach the area. When SWAT arrives, they find the citizen is no longer there. As SWAT has moved out of position, SPD

commanders discuss the placement of SWAT personnel during the tactical deployment. Eventually SWAT officers are placed behind the line of officers facing south at 1<sup>st</sup> and Columbia.

- 0140 hours: Officers report shots fired at 1<sup>st</sup> and S. Yesler Way. The suspects are described as six to seven Black males wearing grey jackets with hoods, armed with two handguns. Some of the suspects are reported to be carrying chains.
- 0142 hours: Officers are ordered to don their protective masks. However, one unit commander orders his officers to deploy without wearing masks. This would later require this platoon to halt the deployment to don masks, after the release of chemical munitions.
- 0144 hours: Crowd dispersal begins. Some commanders on the garage proceed to the Public Safety Building and observe the media coverage of the event. A sergeant is detailed to Harborview Hospital to gather information on the number of individuals injured as a result of the event. The sergeant reports that two individuals are in critical condition, one from jumping from an overpass and one from an assault.
- 0230-0245 hours: The Pioneer Square area is cleared. Officers are deployed in mobile patrol force after the crowd is dispersed. Officers are instructed to break up groups to avoid looting and further assaults.

## Mardi Gras Impacts

### Financial Impacts

The financial costs resulting from the Mardi Gras event were substantial. Costs were incurred for staffing, supplies, and other services.

Personnel Costs. As shown in the Table, SPD staffing costs exceeded \$368,800 for Mardi Gras, with approximately two-thirds of this amount for paid overtime.

Pay Code	Hours	Dollars
Paid Overtime	5,680	\$251,584
Regular Duty	3,454	100,524
Comp Time	528	16,696
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,662</b>	<b>\$368,804</b>

More than 85 percent all of the paid overtime cost was incurred by sworn personnel on demonstration management duty over the five nights of the event, beginning with the call out on Friday night, February 23 and concluding at 0300 hours on February 28. The balance of the paid overtime was incurred by the Department's Criminal Investigations Task Force that pursued leads against individuals suspected of participating in the violence on the evening of February 27 (see below for details).

The day-by-day SPD staffing totals (all sworn personnel) during the event were as follows:

Friday, 02/23/01	71
Saturday, 02/24/01	132
Sunday, 02/25/01	212
Monday, 02/26/01	212
Tuesday, 02/27/01	328

Other Charges. Supplies and other services provided for the Mardi Gras event cost approximately \$17,700, as detailed in the Table.

Item	Cost
Pepper Spray	\$5,949
Less Lethal Munitions	2,726
Metro Van Rental	1,511
Sanitation Services	2,721
Video Equipment	3,281
Other Supplies & Food	1,514
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$17,702</b>

### Arrests

Over the five days of the event, SPD officers made 29 arrests connected with Mardi Gras. Eight of these were made over the weekend; the balance on Tuesday evening the 27<sup>th</sup>. Most of those arrested were cited for simple assault/fighting, reckless

endangerment (throwing rocks and bottles), or liquor violations (minor in possession); a smaller number were cited for obstruction or failure to disperse.

Beginning immediately after the conclusion of the Mardi Gras field operation, SPD activated a special Criminal Investigations Task Force to develop case leads against suspects identified by examination of video and other evidence. As of June 22, 2001, as a result of Task Force efforts, an additional 43 arrests had been made in connection with the Mardi Gras violence, including an arrest in the homicide of Kristopher Kime. At the same time, the Task Force had warrants outstanding for the arrest of four suspects still at large.

### **Injuries and Property Damage**

Injuries. Both civilians and police officers sustained injuries during the Mardi Gras event. In what was by far the most serious incident, Kristopher Kime, a 20-year old male, sustained critical head injuries and later died as a result of the assault. Another 20-year old male was seriously injured after leaping from a 30-foot overpass at 4<sup>th</sup> and Yesler. In addition to these most serious cases, approximately 70 other citizens sustained injuries, with most of these being minor injuries involving cuts and bruises.

Seven SPD officers also were injured during the five-day Mardi Gras event. Six of these injuries were minor ones involving cuts, scrapes, and bruises. One injury was more serious: a West Precinct sergeant sustained a broken arm suffered when he fell while chasing looters of the North Face store on First Avenue.

Property Damage. During the five nights of the event, approximately \$24,000 in property damage was documented in police incident reports. Most of this damage, predominantly broken windows in storefronts or parked vehicles, was sustained during the first four nights of the event, prior to the 27<sup>th</sup>. A few of the cars were extensively damaged.

Police reports also documented approximately \$20,000 in stolen property that resulted from break-ins or strong arm robberies during the Mardi Gras event. Cameras, cell phones, and wallets were commonly cited stolen items.

Community estimates of property damage range from \$100,00.00 to \$200,000.00.

## Lessons Learned: Planning, Staffing, and Training (PST)

Item	Issue	Recommendation
PST-1	Although an operations plan had been written by West Precinct for Tuesday the 27 <sup>th</sup> , there was no written contingency plan for the preceding weekend. This resulted in emergency planning methods that were characterized by confusion regarding incident command, lack of thoroughly developed tactical plans, and difficulties finding staff to work the event.	Develop and exercise standing contingency plans and orders, including a worst-case scenario, for all unusual occurrences. These plans must provide clear definition of notification responsibilities, the chain of command and the plans to be executed. The plans should be universal in application to similarly categorized events, ie., earthquake, plane crash, major crowd disturbance. The plans must be disseminated clearly and unambiguously to all personnel.
PST-2	The Special Deployment Unit was not tasked to arrange staffing for the event until Sunday the 25 <sup>th</sup> . On short notice, it was not possible to develop a complete roster of personnel available to support the event on Sunday or Monday. A roster was developed by Tuesday but unit commanders made last minute changes at roll call without coordinating with the Special Deployment Unit. This led to confusion about who was working for whom.	To ensure sufficient time for staffing and notification of personnel, require early involvement of the Special Deployment Unit for all special events that have the potential for controversy or disturbance. Develop a secure, comprehensive database of SPD personnel containing daily information on personnel status, thereby facilitating staffing for all special events.
PST-3	Initially, SPD planned to field squads of officers for crowd control without forming them into platoons and/or specialty units headed by lieutenants. This would make command and control difficult and complicate communications by overburdening the system.	Staff for special events with command personnel following Incident Command System (ICS) principles. Assign individuals to specific units to perform specialized functions (e.g., prisoner processing, logistics, and plain clothes assignments).
PST-4	Officers have had squad-based training in crowd control tactics, including formations, commands, and movements. When fights broke out within the crowd on Tuesday, specialized tactics for crowd insertion and extrication of violent suspects and victims were required.	Continue squad-based crowd control training and expand to include large unit formations and special tactics for crowd entry and victim evacuation. Establish specialized Anti-Violence Team (AVT) to perform high-risk insertion and extraction operations and serve as an expert training resource in these tactics. Utilize Mounted Patrol to assist with crowd control.
PST-5	An Investigations Task Force was set up immediately after the event to review video footage for the purpose of identifying law violators for subsequent arrest. This task force was highly successful in locating suspects and having them arrested.	Sustain the Task Force model for use in similar situations in the future, to ensure successful prosecution of law violators. Review the City Intelligence Ordinance to determine the extent to which crowd videos can be used before an event turns violent. Employ SPD Video Team to the extent allowed by law.

### Lessons Learned: Planning, Staffing, and Training (PST), Continued

Item	Issue	Recommendation
PST-6	Mounted Patrol can be of great value in crowd management; however, the use of part-time riders in this role is not advisable. SPD currently is authorized funding for only four full-time riders requiring the use of part-time riders to staff special events.	The Demonstration Management cadre should include funding for a mounted unit of twelve mounts and riders as well as specialized training to address large crowd dynamics.
PST-7	Although available part of the time, State Liquor Control Board personnel were not available throughout the entire Mardi Gras event to assist with enforcement and provide timely information.	Work through appropriate City agencies to request that Liquor Control Board personnel be available to work with SPD for the entire duration of similar events in the future.

## Lessons Learned: Operations and Tactics (OPS)

Item	Issue	Recommendation
OPS-1	On Saturday night, events required police to enter the crowd at 1 <sup>st</sup> and Yesler rather than push the crowd from 1 <sup>st</sup> and Cherry, as initially planned. This move split the crowd, effectively surrounding police and making crowd control more difficult.	Be pro-active and follow the plan, avoiding unplanned tactical movements dictated by the crowd.
OPS-2	The Seattle Police Operations Center (SPOC) was not activated to support the event until Sunday the 25 <sup>th</sup> . SPOC was not fully staffed to support operations. The field command post had no log clerk to document events, making it difficult for commanders to control operations.	SPOC and field command posts should be activated to support all significant special events and be organized in accordance with Incident Command System (ICS) principles. Event logs must be kept by both SPOC and field command posts to document all such events.
OPS-3	On Tuesday night, violence erupted at multiple locations within a large crowd of 5,000 to 7,000. Officers had been withdrawn from the crowd earlier for reasons of officer safety and to avoid inciting the crowd. When violence broke out, police commanders initially decided not to intervene believing that this could have panicked the crowd and caused substantial injuries.	In similar situations in the future, give serious consideration to a more aggressive crowd management strategy: keep the crowd moving and position anti-violence squads within the crowd for quick response to incidents. When officers can no longer safely position themselves within the crowd, commanders should consider moving promptly to disperse the crowd. The final decision must remain with the Incident Commander.
OPS-4	Unit commanders made decisions without coordinating their actions with other unit commanders or overall event/ incident command. This resulted in delayed and, therefore, less effective tactical responses to the crowd situation.	It is the responsibility of the Incident Commander to ensure that platoon and specialized field unit commanders coordinate decisions through the Incident Commander. If there is a life safety issue, personnel are expected to assess the situation and take action as appropriate. Whenever possible personnel should coordinate their response through a structured chain of command. Ensure curriculum is developed for basic and refresher training in leadership and critical incident decision making for all supervisors and commanders.

## Lessons Learned: Command, Control, and Communications (CCC)

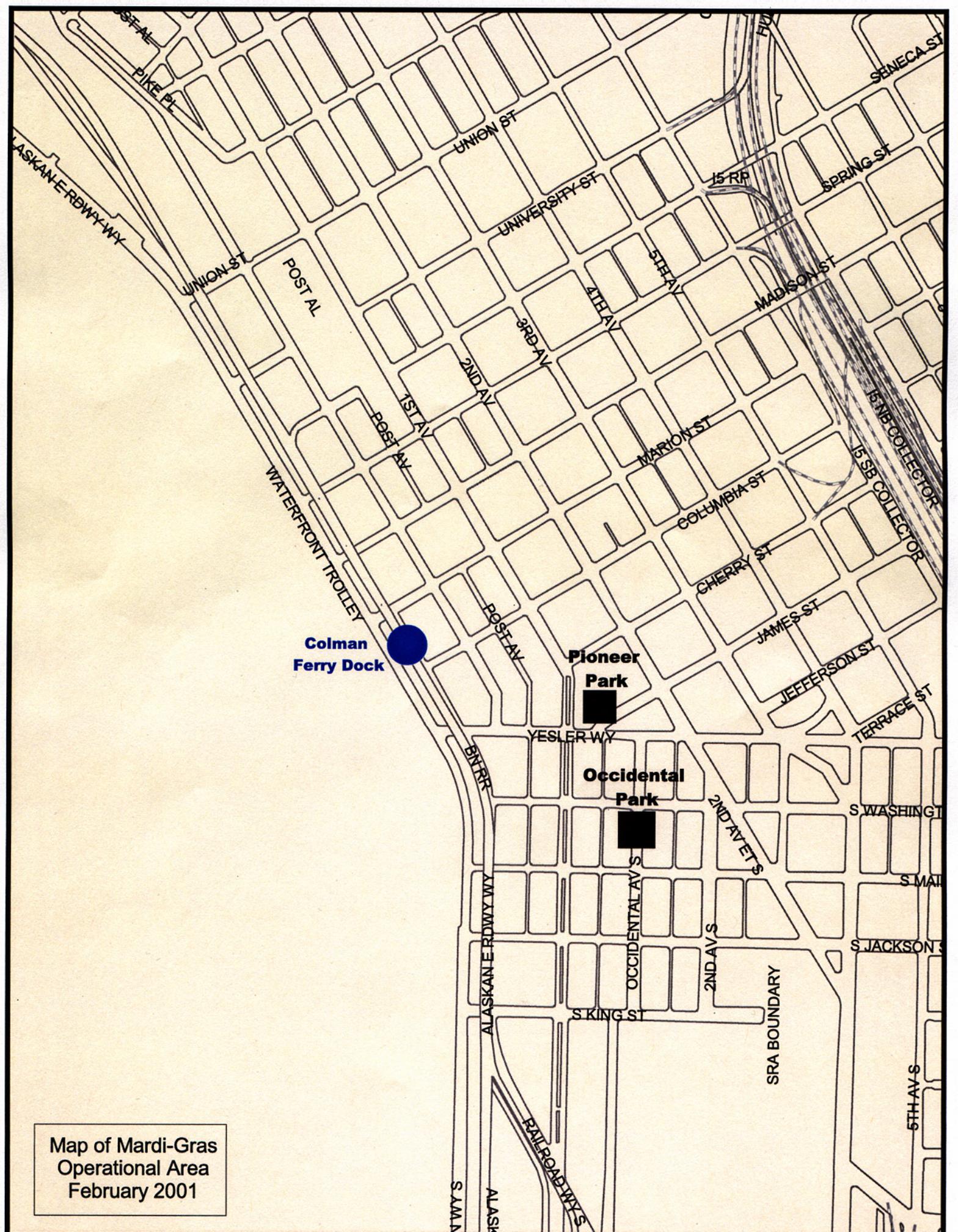
Item	Issue	Recommendation
CCC-1	On Monday and Tuesday, many unit commanders and sergeants expressed confusion over who was in command of the overall operation. On Tuesday, the presence of the Chief of Police, multiple Assistant Chiefs, and captains only added to the confusion. In part as a result of this confusion, some unit commanders began to make unilateral decisions uncoordinated with other unit commanders or the Incident Commander.	The Field Incident chain of command, including succession of command, needs to be specified clearly in written operational orders and briefed consistently to all supervisors and officers. Plans should allow latitude for individual commander action when consistent with the Incident Commander's intent, as expressed in written orders. All deviations from plans must be approved in advance by the Incident Commander. There is a need to establish an assumption of command protocol.
CCC-2	A written operations plan developed at West Precinct for "Fat Tuesday" the 27 <sup>th</sup> was not employed on Monday or Tuesday. The lack of a previously disseminated written operations plan contributed to confusion regarding the tactical plan and subsequent problems with supervisory procedures. Officers and supervisors came out of multiple roll calls on Tuesday with differing understandings regarding who was in charge and what the plan was.	All special event operations, even those conducted with short notice, require written operational orders that specify clearly the chain of command and the plans to be executed. This information must be disseminated clearly and unambiguously to all personnel participating in the operation.
CCC-3	The West Precinct commander, who normally exercises control of Pioneer Square operations, was out of town the weekend preceding Mardi Gras. As a result, captains less familiar with the intricacies of the event exercised Incident Command.	Develop a consistent policy regarding special event command. In the past, precincts have handled their own events. If special event field command is assigned to a Duty Commander or other SPD commander, this individual must contact the precinct prior to the assignment to determine special event scheduling and participate in plan development.
CCC-4	In spite of the prior designation of the Coleman Ferry Dock as the field command post (CP), there was confusion regarding the location of event commanders throughout the event. Commanders often were not present in the CP when information required assessment for timely decisions, and communications to commanders away from the CP did not provide a reliable alternative. The movement of event commanders to the parking garage at 1 <sup>st</sup> and Yesler on Tuesday only complicated this situation by requiring special security.	Command posts are designed to provide the Incident Commander with robust communications and intelligence assessment capabilities. Away from the CP, commanders will find it difficult to maintain an accurate picture of the situation. SPD should review the special event protocol to ensure that the field command post has these capabilities. If an Incident Commander must leave the CP <u>and</u> is not available to make timely decisions, command decision-making must be transferred to an alternate as specified in the operations order.

## Lessons Learned: Command, Control, and Communications (CCC), Continued

Item	Issue	Recommendation
CCC-5	One unit commander brought from the precinct and deployed a supply of CS gas.	Centralize storage and control of CS-gas in the SWAT unit. Only fully trained SWAT personnel are authorized to deploy CS munitions.
CCC-6	There was considerable confusion throughout the event regarding communications. In one case, two unit commanders moved their units to alternate tactical frequencies without authorization or communication with event command.	Develop, train, and exercise a standard communications protocol for special events. Specify any deviations from the protocol in written operations orders. Hold commanders accountable for following the communications protocol.
CCC-7	Incident command did not always possess or relay critical information to field units. A lack of communication between unit commanders resulted in a lack of clear understanding of the situation and the plan.	Ensure that the Incident Commander has adequate communications at all times. Ensure that vital intelligence is relayed promptly to Incident Command and subordinate unit commanders as appropriate. Ensure that the field command post has robust intelligence processing and communications capabilities. Ensure that SPD video personnel make full use of video capabilities within the parameters of the law.

## Lessons Learned: Equipment and Logistics (LOG)

Item	Issue	Recommendation
LOG-1	Logistics arrangements for Mardi Gras 2001 were hastily arranged and austere. One result of this was that officers were slow to respond to the field after roll calls, given the shortage of transportation for officers and their equipment.	Develop a flexible, rapidly deployable logistics command headed by a lieutenant and capable of supporting emergent special events.
LOG-2	Crowd noise made it difficult for officers and commanders to hear communications on their radios.	Purchase high quality earpieces for the radios.
LOG-3	Bicycle officers, a highly effective crowd management resource, do not have sufficient gear to protect them against injuries.	Purchase additional protective gear for bicycle officers to use in crowd control situations.
LOG-4	SPD does not have readily portable equipment to allow field commanders to stay informed of televised media coverage that may have a direct bearing on the tactical situation.	Consider purchase of additional video equipment that can provide a direct feed to the command post. Each mobile precinct should be monitoring all news channels. (Two televisions have already been purchased for two of the five mobile precincts.)
LOG-5	Officers deployed in crowd control equipment that lacked special markings to identify the unit and/or squad that individual officers belonged to. This made it difficult for commanders to direct operations.	Develop and equip officers with easy-to-recognize unit insignia to facilitate command and control.



**Colman  
Ferry Dock**

**Pioneer  
Park**

**Occidental  
Park**

Map of Mardi-Gras  
Operational Area  
February 2001

# Multi-Agency Mardi Gras Summit

Sunday March 11, 2001



## *Meeting Summary*

**Distributed by:**

The Seattle Police Department  
July, 2001

Austin

Fresno

Philadelphia

Portland

Seattle

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# Introduction:

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Mardi Gras 2001 was marked by violence in a number of cities across the United States, including Seattle. To better understand the dynamics of the event and to better address policing responses in the future, the Seattle Police Department invited law enforcement officials from around the country to a Summit Meeting, held in Seattle on Sunday, March 11, 2001. Officials from the Austin, Texas; Fresno, California; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; police departments agreed to send representatives and make presentations. Other agencies from the local Seattle area and the Northwest also attended.

The meeting began @ 8:30 AM. Chief Kerlikowske opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending. He stated that there were a lot of things to learn and strategies to evaluate after what all of us saw in our communities. What we all saw made us greatly concerned about youth violence and the ability of law enforcement to effectively deal with large crowds of young people bent on violence and destroying property. He ended by saying that he doesn't believe there is some simplistic template that can be put over a crowd everywhere, but that we hoped to open a dialog today and learn from each other.

The agenda for today is:

- Looking at what happened in the four different cities and critically examining those events
- Explore best or promising practices and expand the discussion to other cities that have had disturbances
- How we can and must prevent this type of violence—rampaging youth

**Facilitator for the day Assistant Chief Clark Kimerer, SPD:**

Thank you for coming to discuss the emerging tide of youth violence and problematic crowd behaviors. We have important tasks to talk about and an ambitious agenda. There are two things we need to get done:

- Provide those we work with and for, information about what happened

Discuss strategies and tactics so we can learn from each other as peer professionals how we can best serve our cities.

# Agency Debriefs:

## Austin Police Department Experience:

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Assistant Chief Rick Coy & Commander Robert Dahlstrom

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Austin showed a video that was filmed by their staff. Their Mardi Gras celebration occurred downtown on 6<sup>th</sup> Street, the area is called Old Pecan Street. It is a 6-block area that is mainly made up of bars & restaurants. There are 57 bars in the 6-block area. This is the main area in Austin for entertainment, it draws a large crowd from the University of Texas as well as local High Schoolers. The drinking age is 21 but bars can let people in under 21 they just can't serve them alcohol. The streets are shut off on Saturday nights with barricades routinely to accommodate the 10-30,000 people who gather down there. Last year there were open sales of alcohol and things got out of control. Prepared a little more this year because of that. They have developed a CMT (Crowd Management Team) and made more use of their mobile videographer.

The Mardi Gras Celebration was planned to begin on Friday and go until Tuesday. Austin showed their video, which depicted a huge crowd lining the streets. The crowd was predominately made up of males. There were people on the rooftops and the crowd was pretty controlled for a while. A lot of officers initially didn't wear helmets or riot gear. Later during the riot, the crowd went to the alley and got beer bottles out of the dumpsters and began throwing them at the officers. Several fights broke out and the crowd began to throw objects at the police officers. It was at that time that they gave the order to disperse several times. The police were predominately located mid block when the large disturbance began. They were forced to clear out the crowd from the middle of the crowd outwards. As soon as they cleared one direction, the crowd marched back the other way. Businesses were closing down. Typical age group was late teens. The estimated crowd size was 80,000\*. When they moved the crowd west they seemed to get a lot more aggression from the crowd. Seventeen rounds of stingers and one beanbag were used because of all the projectiles being thrown by the crowd.

Because of events on Saturday, some Mardi Gras events (including the evening parade) were cancelled. Tuesday night they doubled their force and had no problems. At 0300 they started to move them out with the horses. Went very smoothly, unlike Saturday when they were getting rocks, bottles and bricks thrown at the officers. They had deployed 110 Officers in full riot gear. On Tuesday they discussed the impact of deploying in riot gear vs. in regular uniforms and the message that was sent. They didn't use barricades and were criticized for that. They feared that the barricades would be used as weapons if they lost control of the crowd.

Question: Was Saturday night the biggest problem?

Answer: Mardi Gras is on its third year-first year it fizzled. In Austin the city will allow private citizens to get a street closure. That is what happened last year and within 6 hours

2,000 cases of bottled beer were sold. This year the Police got street closure permits so they would have more control over the crowd. They also estimated that the crowd was 80% males about 18-20 years old, there were many females who were exposing themselves. On Saturday they had deployed 110 officers, on Tuesday they had deployed 220.

Question: What was the extent of the assaults?

Answer: On 6<sup>th</sup> Street they are fairly used to the crowd sizes, they typically handle the area with 24 officers. Sunday and Monday were quiet. Same deployment on Sunday, Monday night had their full walking beats—over 50 officers. Friday night may have been the spark that set it off.

Question: Could you penetrate the crowd and make arrests?

Answer: Yes, Officers were stationed in each block all night long, every night. Officers escorted EMS in and out of the crowd and made arrests and broke up fights all night until the actual riot. The street was cleared after about 90 minutes on Saturday night.

Question: And on Mardi Gras night itself, what happened?

Answer: The bars have a total capacity of about 15,000. At 2:00 AM you traditionally add 15,000 to the number on the street. They will let them hang out until about 3:00 AM, but that is how they clear the street on a regular basis. Saturday night was a pretty typical until the crowd started throwing bottles.

Question: How much effect did canceling the parade have?

Answer: When the parade was cancelled a lot of the people who would come early for the parade waited until later. If they had come earlier, they may have been much more intoxicated than they were. They also found that on Sunday, Monday, & Tuesday, young men were coming up to officers and apologizing for getting out of control.

There were 19 calls to IIS, 2 complaints have been filed to date. Principally 18-21 year old males were in the crowds. Last year they had more couples. This year females were there to get beads; \$40,000 sold in beads last year and \$70,000 sold this year.

# Fresno Police Department Experience:

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Captain Marty West & Lieutenant Andrew Hall

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405,000 people live in the city, with 800,000 in county 51% of the population is Hispanic, with a large Hmong community as well. Fresno Police Department has 701 sworn officers, 1050 total employees. It is basically an agricultural community and very conservative. It sits half way between San Francisco and Los Angeles and is the largest entertainment area for the valley. Fresno is changing from mid size community to large community. Many people are moving away from the urban areas and out into the suburbs. This has caused a lot of problems for the downtown area. The city leaders are concerned about maintaining downtown viability and are very supportive of any activities that occur down there.

Mardi Gras was held in the Tower district, which does not have a well-established entertainment venue. It is a diverse entertainment area. You find a lot of rave parties, a sizable gay community as well as a group of white supremacists that hang out there. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> year Mardi Gras has occurred. There are about 28 restaurants and bars in the area. First 3 years there were no major problems. In 1999 had some problems and they had to call in support from other agencies. There was a lot of damage but no real fights. After that the organizers met with Police to discuss how to do Mardi Gras differently. The Police agreed that they could sell alcohol in beer gardens. There were three square blocks that were designated for that. They closed off the area with temporary fences to control access. Fresno also has contract services so they can charge businesses when they want to have large parties. Last year it rained so there was a much smaller crowd. This year, nice weather, big event highly publicized, radio stations were pushing the event, especially stations like hip-hop, etc.

The Mardi Gras event on Tuesday was scheduled to start at 1800 PM. By 2100 hours the crowd size was @ 20,000.

There were 30 officers and 2 sergeants paid for by organizers plus other officers for a total of over 90 officers deployed. At 9:30 they were closing the gates. People were frustrated because they had already bought tickets but were standing in line waiting to get in when the gates closed. There were three gates and when they were closed, people started to jump the fences. The police put the horse patrol where they were jumping the fence, that stopped them but they found the two other gates and then began to push the other gates. It was very difficult to have officers to move through the crowds.

Question: Did you have any officers in the crowd?

Answer: Initially we had 6 undercover officers in the crowd. What we found was that when they tried to make an arrest, officers were immediately surrounded and overwhelmed. Also officers kept calling for help, pulling other officers off their posts.

Question: Were there any problems prior to the Tuesday Mardi Gras event?

Answer: No, we had problems last year at the parade but none this year.

Question: What injuries were sustained?

Answer: A bottle struck one woman, requiring aid; four other minor injuries in the crowd; no officers injured.

At about 10:30 police officially shut the event down. 180 officers at that time to help disperse the crowd. Moved crowd to the west. Consequences for breaking it up so early, the crowd became very hostile and began vandalizing businesses. Smashed out about 50 windows, theft (1), 26 arrests: 10 public intoxication: 2 felony battery, 1 minor battery. There is a local ordinance that prohibits public exposure, but the reality is that it is very hard to enforce. Another problem they had was a large number of inexperience officers because of the growth of the town. Crowd estimated at @ 20,000.

Question: Was there a predetermined rally point for officers?

Answer: Yes, but most officers left their riot gear in the command post vehicles. It became impossible to get officers placed in the area.

Question: What was the status of businesses in the area?

Answer: Most retail establishments were closed, restaurants and bars were open.

Question: Were there any problems with dispersal into the surrounding area?

Answer: Yes, the surrounding area is mostly residential with no parking. We had **998** calls to 911 while we were trying to disperse the crowd. There is a police station about 2 blocks away that was vandalized along with some of the police vehicles.

Question: How long did it take to disperse?

Answer: About 1.5 hours. We found that the crowd got more unruly as the night went on. The problem wasn't the adults who were in the establishment, problems were typically with the younger kids on the streets.

Bars and restaurants had the best retail sales of the year that night. The police were criticized for ending the party at 10:30. Since the beer gardens closed at 10:00 PM the closure didn't bother anyone in the establishments.

Question: If you had no gate access problem earlier would you have shut it down as early as you did?

Answer: Probably not. There was a lot of pushing and shoving, we feared people would be hurt in the crowd and the potential for major injuries was high. We had tried to talk to the organizers about providing better control of ticket sales and admission. Last year the organizers made \$60,000 on the gates last year (in the pouring rain).

Question: Were there any arrests for failure to disperse? Do you get prosecutions?

Answer: No, we just use it to disperse the crowd. Most of the crime was occurring in the crowd where we couldn't see what was happening. We do have an ordinance on indecent exposure that is relatively new that was passed by the former mayor and council. We're not sure how effective it will be.

It will be interesting to see whether we can close off streets and charge admission next year. There is a movement from the retail establishments to get an injunction against the event next year. We do know that the temporary barricades don't work and would push for something more permanent, possibly the concrete barriers that are used on roadways.

# Philadelphia Police Department Experience:

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Chief Inspector Frank M. Pryor and Captain John Darby

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Philadelphia has 6 divisions and Chief Pryor commands 4,000 people in his bureau (all patrol). South Street area is where most of the activity occurred, a 3-4-block area, with approximately 23 bars. On an average weekend we will draw 10,000+ to the area. The previous year we had spring break for five major colleges and it was 76 degrees on March 3 which was Fat Tuesday. This year there was no spring break and it was colder than last year so we thought we'd have a much easier time. The area that had the Mardi Gras events was south of downtown. In the last few years we have seen an evolution of violence. This year we had thousands of people in line for bars very early (first patron was in line at 0130 hours). Fat Tuesday (which is a franchised restaurant) was the epicenter for us. Alcohol was the engine that was driving this event and the violence. We put out french interlocking barriers because last year we grew from 5,000 to 25,000 people coming down for the event. The media had a camera set up all day watching the crowd. The crowd was predominantly 18-23 year olds, mostly male and mostly white, half of the arrests were from out of town.

Something is changing to see this kind of violence from young people. Up to 7:00 PM everything was running fine. It is not unusual to have lots of people on the street and we keep traffic open. About 7:00 PM we could feel the crowd changing. Ended up with about 300 officers. It is important to remember that this is not a City sponsored event. A bar and restaurant brought the crowds in and the media was giving people cameras and paying them to take photos and video.

Public Safety issue when you have that many people. I (Chief Pryor) was criticized for not being aggressive enough but I knew that if I pushed them they would cause huge problems. The outside crowd was 17-22 years of age. There were approximately 7,000 people in the street along a 1-2-block area. It was also sweeps month for the media which influenced the way it was covered.

The barricades became a problem and were used as weapons by some in the crowd. We brought in about 25 horses. The officers and horses started being attacked by the crowd so we pulled them back. Then a fire truck got stuck in the crowd. We had to push the crowd back to get to fire truck. That was a turning point, up to that point we didn't have bottles or rocks being thrown. Once the truck got stuck we had to break off our formation to get the truck out. This took us away from our plan and instigated the crowd. We pulled the horses back when the crowd turned. It took us 2 hours to clear a block. There was \$60,000 worth of property damage. Problems arose because the event was not sanctioned by the city or anyone really. We were criticized for clearing the streets, but at the 11:30 newscast the media kept showing the crowd and asking "where are the police, where are the police?" We are using our web site to get assistance in locating the offenders from the fights. We made 100 arrests. The event also provided an opportunity for criminals to come down and participate in the melee. Police used a lot of restraint. The most disturbing thing was the crowd wouldn't listen to the police. Also that the crowd seemed to enjoy the escalating violence. There was a serious injury with one person cut on the throat requiring 100 stitches.

Question: It took four hours to disperse? Did you use chemical weapons or have “hard” officers?

Answer: We didn’t use any chemical weapons or riot officers. In Philadelphia if we call in SWAT it is a very serious problem. We are precluded by ordinance from using tear gas

Question: How many arrests?

Answer: Over 100. We had a judge standing by to handle underage drinking and he gave out fines and community service on site. The misdemeanors will go into the court system. There have been 8 to 9 felony arrests made off the website.

Question: Did you have any sexual assaults?

Answer: Yes

Question: Did you work with the Liquor Control Board?

Answer: Yes, they left at 1900 hours (end of their shift)

Even with the number of police, assaults can be occurring 15 feet away and not be seen.

## Seattle Police Department Experience:

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Chief Gil Kerlikowske and Assistant Chief Dan Bryant

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Assistant Chief Bryant was the Incident Commander for “Fat Tuesday” and stated he was amazed at the similarities between the cities. We have a video but in the interest of time we can just provide it to you. Pioneer Square is where the Mardi Gras events were centered. It is the oldest part of the city with several bars and restaurants. There has been a lot of growth of residential population over the last 5 years. The area is a 6 to 8 square block with most of the problems focused on 3 square blocks. In the mid-70’s we had significant civil disturbances during Mardi Gras. Since 1979, Mardi Gras has been downplayed. Things have been fairly quiet until last year when we had some problems, on a much smaller scale. We were able to deal with it with our on duty resources. There were a few arrests and minor damage last year.

This year we put together operational plan and supplemental staffing was 40-60 officers for Tuesday. Friday night had the beginning of problems, there were a lot 17-25 years old who came down to watch the activity on the street. We called out our task force (on duty) and 100 officers handled the crowd with chemical agents. We had property damage and the next night we staffed at 118 officers. We also had barricades that were used to protect some new plants and street trash cans removed. The poles were coated with vegetable spray to prevent people climbing on them. On Saturday night the crowd was pretty intoxicated and we were getting ready to give the dispersal order when the crowd moved into a parking structure and took the high ground.

Flash point on Saturday night was an attempted arrest. It was similar to what you saw in Austin, kids were confrontational and looking for a fight. It was clear that going into the crowd was a calculated risk since it might only increase the problem. Not only was there the crowd on the street but an additional 5,000 people in the bars who could have come out and cause additional problems.

After Friday and Saturday we were criticized as being too aggressive. In getting the area cleared, we split the crowd in two on Saturday which gave them opportunity to do property damage in two directions.

Because of our experience on Friday and Saturday we had 230 Officers staffing Sunday and Monday and had no problems at all.

Throughout the weekend a radio station was promoting the Tuesday night event encouraging listeners to come down and participate in the party. A columnist in one of our newspapers did a story where an individual was quoted (from a song) to “fight for your right to party” “raise hell and take out your aggressions”. The same columnist quoted another person as saying “Cops became too aggressive and were using Gestapo tactics.” This set a tone for the crowd. The local establishments who were hoping to make a lot of money also promoted it.

The media encamped with armed off-duty King County officers on the parking garage every night waiting for something to happen. Their equipment and lights were visible to the crowd below.

Question: What is the protocol for use of chemical weapons?

Answer: We always give a dispersal order. When we go in with hard platoon(s) pushing the crowd does not work because only the first 3 or 4 in the crowd see the movement the rest don't see why they are being pushed and it is ineffective. Once the hand-held chemical weapons are thrown the people who don't want to get into a fight leave and the hard core ones are left. With the smaller group you don't get the kinds of property damage and injuries you do with the push. Were able to disperse crowd in 30 minutes. Friday and Saturday we received criticism from some officers and media about moving in too quickly.

In preparation for Tuesday we had the dumpsters emptied, a lesson learned from WTO. A radio station had a permit for an outdoor stage that the Mayor cancelled at our request. They then got one of the nightclubs to allow them to move the stage inside.

Staffing: Class A uniforms about 100 officers deployed in squads to provide a large visible presence and to make arrests. We had about 100 in demonstration management equipment. The plan was to push the crowd south and east which would not allow them to go north into the retail core for looting. We also had a platoon of plain clothes and uniformed that would work cooperatively to make arrests. We had a traffic plan and wanted to keep streets open as long as possible. We had prisoner-processing teams ready to accept prisoners. We also had a SWAT contingency. We also had worked with about 20 agents from the Washington State Liquor Control board who were working in the bars. We had officer available to trail large groups when they broke up and we had spotters.

The field command was set up 3 Blocks away. This allowed us to pull uniformed officers to command post where they geared up and supplemented the perimeter course. 1800-2000 hours were fully staffed. People were coming in already intoxicated. 2200-2400 hours closed down the traffic in the area. Some in crowd were doing property damage. We had officers who were watching for problems and would then direct the uniformed officers to the location. In Pioneer Square there is triangular garage that was taken over by the media broadcasting live at times. As the crowd grew uglier they would launch projectiles above street level when they saw police up there. At 2300 hours we had our first major incident. We had a call about a man with a gun in the crowd. Officers located him and found a loaded cocked 45-caliber semi-automatic pistol. Arresting officers were in a squad of 10-12, during the arrest they started taking rocks and bottles from the surrounding crowd.

From that point on the crowd turned. We had officers going into the crowd and trying to rescue people, but the crowd would turn on the officers. At around 2400 hours there were no good

decisions to make, the mood of the crowd was continuing to escalate. We were seeing more fights and aggression toward each other. You would see groups of people in mutual combat. For a brief period of time we could see people starting to leave but something would happen and they began heating up again. There was a car parked close to a parking structure and people started vandalizing it, eventually turning it over, at about the same time, a spotter could hear gun shots and we knew we needed to disperse the crowd. It took 15 minutes to assemble and then we gave the order to disperse. It took 30-45 minutes to disperse the crowd. (Assistant Chief Bryant) my fear was when you start to disperse a drunk and unruly crowd you don't know how many people are going to get hurt by being trampled or pushed through windows on the narrow street.

70 people reported injuries. There was 1 death due to assault by a closed fist. Another critical injury occurred when someone jumped from an overpass and fell 30 feet to the concrete below several blocks away from the scene. 27 arrests were that night. We initiated a taskforce to conduct follow up investigations. Criticism from media and internally was that we weren't aggressive enough on Tuesday night.

Chief Kerlikowske: Philadelphia was closest to what we had, there was no City sponsored event. The density of the crowd was a critical factor. The advertising for the event had a level of titillation and promiscuity. We arrested a group who had a CS grenade. People were there for a fight and a brawl.

Assistant Chief Bryant: The crowd seemed to fear no consequences for bad behavior. Since WTO people seem to feel they can riot without fear of being held accountable.

Mayor Paul Schell: Thank all for taking the time to come to share your experiences. You are doing valuable and important work. There is a challenge for us to figure out how we deal with this. The perception of safety is so key and the media plays into that so much. I have been visiting businesses that are worried about our image and church organizations that are worried about their kids. We don't have a magic pill that will eliminate this kind of behavior. In a free society we will never have enough police. In a free society we have to rely on individual responsibility. What role do all the players have? We have to understand it before we can respond to it. This is the beginning of getting back to the past when we didn't celebrate this type of violence.

# Analysis

## Looking for Common Threads:

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### Commonalities:

- Youth
- Alcohol
- Us vs. Them mentality-Crowd vs. Police
- Lack of respect for authority
- Lack of respect for others and for property
- Lack of responsibility-“ME” mentality
- Little fear of being held accountable:
  - Portland is moving towards having community- based prosecution. Last event they had a city attorney there on scene and made a big difference in how he advised and supported the Police (Larry Findley). In Philadelphia they have legal advice during the planning stage. This provides some clarity around the enforcement of law.
- Closing down the street and giving them the street:
  - Two cities have a curfew (16 and under have to be home by 10 PM).
- Legal Structure, what types of laws do you have?
  - Austin:** Failure to disperse: Give order to disperse if don't then move them. Regularly get prosecution out of it. Curfew: Open Container-no alcohol consumption on street; No legal restrictions on OC spray, SOP's that direct that.
  - Fresno:** Curfew-unless at event and not dispersing. Curfew center staffed by Police. Nudity ordinance which is new. Consumption of alcohol on street (open container). Beer sales must be in plastic containers. Beer garden enclosed; Unleashed animals were problems in previous years. Failure to Disperse-first have to make an announcement then we have the authority to move: We have to do it in English and Spanish 3 times and have to have someone in the back of crowd that verifies they could hear. There is no individual warning. we do not have a track record for prosecution since they haven't been used much. We do video tape at the point of origin and at the person at the back to verify.
  - Philadelphia:** Curfew, underage drinking, open container, indecent exposure, disorderly conduct, Restraints of chemical agents: policy that narrows the ability to use chemicals. The Chief makes that decision. Obstruction Ordinance. When we have a mass arrest we

usually use obstruction of the highway. They have unit that handles that particular type of problem.

**Seattle:** In both Portland and Seattle there are restraints around collecting intelligence and video taping of events.

Question: A question about a dispersal order has emerged in Seattle-can they move a few blocks, reposition themselves and be in compliance unless another dispersal order is given?

Answer: In Seattle for N30 had a problem with crowd moving block by block and feeling that the dispersal order had to be restated each time. Seattle also has a rioting ordinance; very serious but burden is also high. They also have a pedestrian interference ordinance.

Question: Do ordinances work-are there holes?

Answer: Overwhelming feeling is that the ordinances weren't the problem, the issue was the crowd sizes and the ability to see what was going on.

- None of the events were official City Sponsored events. What are your options when you don't have a sponsored event.

**Fresno:** We have ordinances that allow the person hosting to set up beer gardens. The city is sort of hands off on it, but then who manages? We agreed on the fence proposed by the marketing committee and signed off on the street closure events. But they (marketing committee) controlled the admission and ticket sales.

**Austin:** They went after the street closures because they could have more control over the security and perimeters. They insisted on no musicians, no open beer gardens, etc.

**Philadelphia:** More permitting wouldn't really help. We have tried to move things to safer venues but the public won't do it. They want to go to the regular venues.

- Media role/hype: Provocative ads, especially pitched to underage patrons.
- Media becoming part of the news rather than reporting the news
- Private benefit at the expense of the public funds.
- Officers often couldn't go into crowds because of the density. Horses were effective in getting dense crowds (Austin) to disperse. Take EMS and Fire with you so they can pick up anyone who gets hurt.
- Women exposing themselves. A lot of the problem spots were in areas in the crowds where women were exposing themselves to get Mardi Gras beads.
- Mood of the crowd/hostility directed toward the officers. Crowd & bystanders indifferent to or

fueled the conflict. The crowds did very little self-policing.

- Markets that were selling alcohol, youth coming to the event with cases of beer and selling out of their cars.

Question: Were there any other Firearms arrests?

Answer: Austin heard shot being fired but never found the person responsible. Philadelphia had some knives but no guns.

Question: Was there any value in preparing the community beforehand?

Answer: **Philadelphia:** We had a community forum prior to the event. Blaming the police was minimized because we told them what was going to happen. Stakeholders need to be told about the police response and plan. **Seattle:** Pioneer Square community meeting four days after—only one person critical of the police, but they really held the bar owners accountable for bringing this type of behavior to the neighborhood. In Philly the same thing happened. **Fresno:** Our event was billed as a family event. The public has no idea of the types of problems that arise out of these kinds of things. We need to get stakeholders to understand what we've done so they don't think we just weren't prepared.

- Free society/Free Speech issue
- Accusations of overreaction or underreaction as well as balancing those two.
- Public education is needed. Have to get the stakeholders involved.

# Lessons Learned:

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## **What should be done differently:**

- Proactive Staffing without worrying about what the overtime costs might be.
- More proactive deployment.
- Density of the crowd gave the impression of the mob mentality. Keeping the crowd size down would go a long way to reducing the sense that you are anonymous.
- Use more horses and keep the crowd moving. Horses work well if there is someplace to move the crowd. Philly had to pull back because they had no place to push people. French interlocking fencing was set up to give people a place to wait to get into the bars. Next year will not have them as they became a barrier to the police.
- Look for legal methods to hold businesses accountable that bring the crowds in as well as the promoters of the event.
- No tolerance of these non-sponsored events.
- If it is a sponsored event then professional organizers need to be brought in during the planning and asked/required to work with the police. Set high cover charges and increase the cost of drinks. In Seattle the bars became the safe havens. People in the bars weren't the trouble. Kids who couldn't get in were causing problems.
- Educate the public about the consequences of law breaking: Seattle did that for N30 and was accused of intimidating and threatening the public.
- Fresno is considering fencing that is more permanent as well as special event permits issues.
- Look for legal methods to restrict the people who had no reason to be in the area.
- Cities formally sponsoring the event. If liquor is going to be served in Portland at any event it must be approved by the PD. The event organizers must have a security plan that satisfies the Police.
- Pre-sales and tickets: Eliminate lines and limit crowd size. Increase the age limit and control the inside participants.

- Getting the clergy involved/community leaders. Consider using them as marshals.
- Police tactics/private police staffing: Check points leading up to the area.
- Get information on the crowds from mass transit; who and how many people are coming in, are they intoxicated?
- Develop clearinghouse for lessons learned and operations plans. Focus on the areas that go well and what can be improved. Develop a format for a standard After Action Report.
- Civil suits against those who are responsible for the behavior. Go after the costs incurred because of the behavior.
- Seattle had a tactical plan that then changed. Interspersing resources versus perimeter line. How do you get the 100 or so people out who are causing the problem? Philly tried to do this with the liquor control board officers. They were in the crowds so they wouldn't have uniformed officers pulling people out of the crowd. This became a safety issue and they ultimately had to pull them out. Austin looking at specific start and end times for events. Finding the balance between when you move in and hold back.
- Austin explained their CMT Program-Crowd Management Team. It is a team that takes mobile field force concept and expands on it. Austin took 114 officers and split them into 12 different squads. Each squad has a sergeant and every 3 squads has a lieutenant. They all get the riot gear, they each have a less lethal weapon, there is one officer with a 12 gauge, 1 with a 40 mm, 1 with a M46, and one with a 9 mm with OC spray. There are two teams, an Alpha and Bravo. Everyone on CMT gets extra training. In preparation for Mardi Gras they laid 6<sup>th</sup> street out at the training academy. Overall very new, Fortune 500 was their first event. Nothing like WTO; Saturday night Mardi Gras was first time they used stingers, used more OC that night than they have in the history of Austin. Train 8-10 times a year-Alpha, Bravo, then together—they train together with other jurisdictions and are trying to do that every year. Selection is hand picked. Was hard to get people in at first but have plenty now. Learning a lot as they go along. CMT is about a year old right now; so far it has been successful. Everyone is on a pager to respond, but the reality of getting people out in emergency is not great. CMT assignment (i.e. specific squads) is permanent. Only time that changes is if someone leaves the squad. No extra pay for being in the unit. Portland has a very similar unit. Philly's got their SWAT unit and only call them in when there is a huge problem. Portland wants to have a platoon to go out on bicycles. Bicycle officers have problems with losing bikes to the crowds. Philly lost a lot of Harley's because of overheating in last years Mardi Gras.

# Follow Up:

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- Write up case studies.
- What can PERF do to contribute in the future?
- Tactical issues are dynamic and it is hard to focus on them, but we can focus on the emerging issues we are seeing when you have this kind of crowd (young, disrespectful, intractable, confrontational).
- Perhaps need to look at a blended response versus having one particular group go in.
- Helpful to know that there are other departments with similar experience. That gives us more confidence in our decisions.
- Actually being able to go out and work with other jurisdictions would be helpful for PERF to sponsor and coordinate.
- Providing resources that give others ideas about what is out there so they can learn from other agencies.
- Training on crowd dynamics and crowd psychology.
- Educating elected officials about the importance of utilizing less lethal weapons and not allowing even minor violations of the law.
- Educating the public and the media that dealing with hostile crowds is not a science and that no agency has developed a response that ensures that there will be no violence or destruction of property.
- National or Regional access to concise summaries and tapes of other jurisdictions events. Bring groups together to talk about this information. Conference that focuses on Large Events and how to plan and prepare for them.
- Information on what tactics the “groups” that come to cause problems will use would be valuable to the officers and planning staffs.