

# A Crisis of Trust

*A National Police Foundation Report to the Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners on the Los Angeles Police Department Response to First Amendment Assemblies and Protests Occurring May 27 – June 7, 2020*

# National Police Foundation Assessment Team

- **Subject Matter Experts**

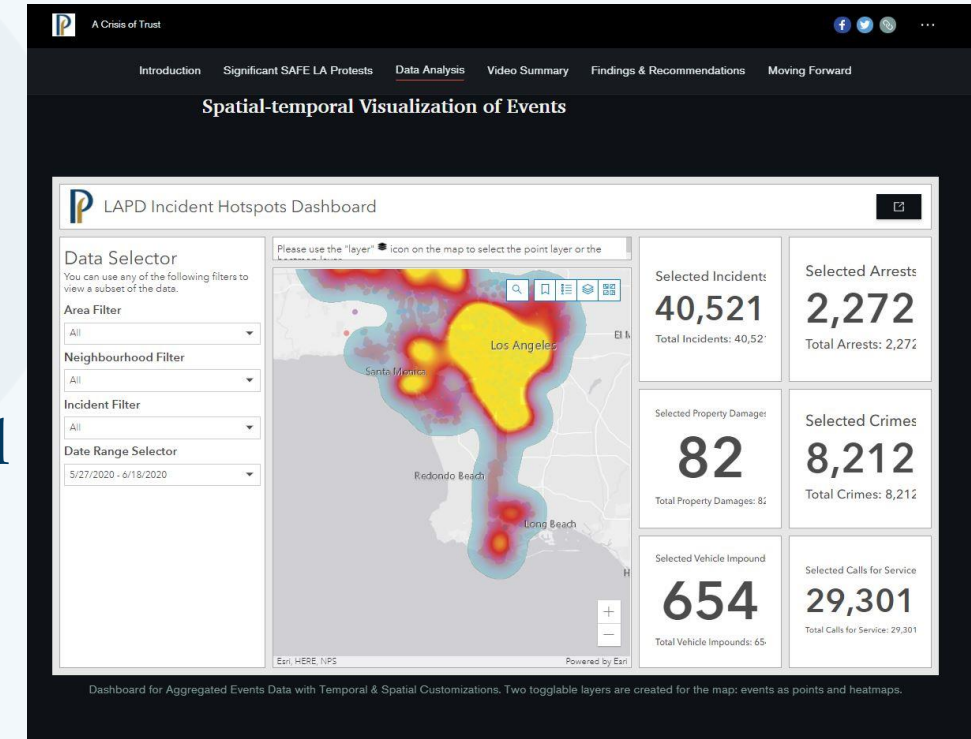
- Reverend Jeffrey Brown
- Commissioner (ret.) Charles H. “Chuck” Ramsey
- Chief (ret.) Robert C. White

- **NPF Staff**

- Frank Straub, PhD, Director, Center for Mass Violence Response Studies
- Jennifer Zeunik, Director, Local Programs
- Travis Taniguchi, PhD, Director, Research
- Ben Gorban, Senior Project Associate
- Katherine Hoogesteyn, PhD, Research Associate
- Christine Johnson, Project Associate
- Yukun Yang, Research Data Scientist

# Methodology

- Conducted interviews, focus groups, and listening sessions with:
  - LAPD personnel and family members
  - Community members and business representatives
  - City officials
  - Council member(s)
- Reviewed materials provided by LAPD and OIG
- Reviewed multimedia provided on external hard drive
- Analyzed LAPD and OIG data
- Analyzed social and open source media
- Researched crowd & protest management
- Reviewed and analyzed body-worn camera (BWC) videos



# Report Outline

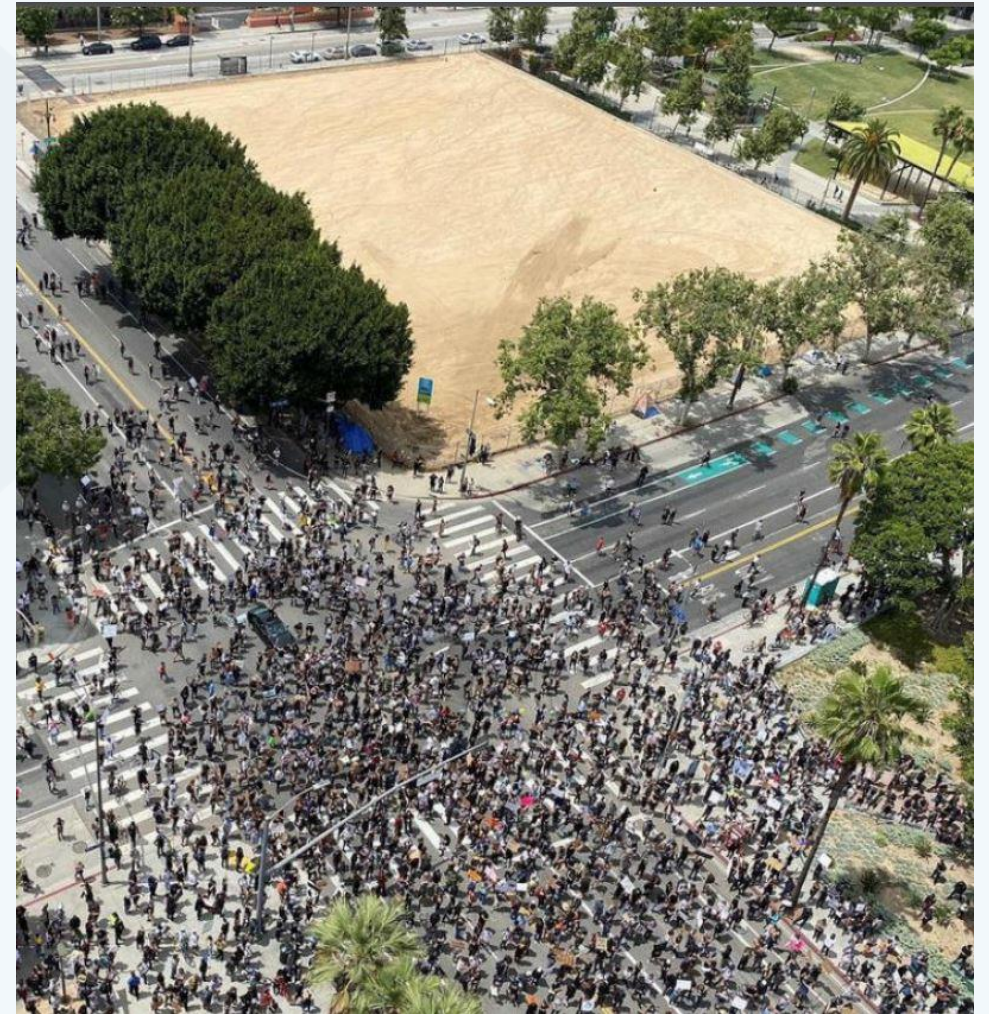


- Executive Summary
- Purpose and Scope
- National and Local Context
- Areas of Evaluation
  - LAPD Provisions and Training
  - Leadership and Incident Command
  - Public Communication and Social Media
  - Officer Wellness and Morale
  - Community Engagement and Perspective
- Moving Forward
- Appendices



# Purpose and Scope

- Purpose, Scope, and Approach
  - To provide an independent assessment of the LAPD response to the SAFE LA First Amendment assemblies and protests and to promote LAPD's study and improvement of the systems, processes, and strategies executed by their members.
- Access to Data, Information, and Perspectives
- Challenges and Limitations
  - COVID-19
  - Coinciding Investigations, Review, Inquiries & Assessments
  - Limited Participation
  - Multiple Stakeholders



# National and Local Context

- National Context
  - George Floyd and Subsequent Police-Involved Shootings
  - The “New” Protest Environment
- Local Context
  - History of LAPD Policing and Policing Demonstrations
    - Rodney King 1992
    - May Day 2007
    - Crowd Management Reforms and Community Policing
    - LAPD Relationships with Communities of Color
    - Public Perception of LAPD

# LAPD Provisions and Training

- LAPD had well-developed crowd management policies and practices that had proven successful during previous events, but were inadequate to handle the disparate groups, identify leaders amongst the protesters, and address the violence that erupted.
- Although it aligned with LAPD's use of force provisions and procedures, documentation of uses of force were inconsistent.
- Some LAPD personnel had not been provided updated training on crowd management, mobile field force, supervision, de-escalation, or the use of less-lethal instruments.
- While LAPD has clear policies around use of force, crowd management, and First Amendment event and protest response, the department does not have a comprehensive policy that brings the policies together in a consolidated document.



# BWC Video Analysis

## The Effect of Tactical Gear





# Leadership and Incident Command

- The City of Los Angeles lacked a well-coordinated city-wide political, policy, communications, and law enforcement response to SAFE LA First Amendment events and protests.
- Communication within LAPD—particularly in the first few days—was inconsistent. This created significant challenges regarding identifying a cogent operating philosophy, determining operations, and establishing coordination and consistency between shifts.
- The issuing and cancellation of Tactical Alerts contributed to confusion and frustration amongst supervisors and officers.
- LAPD did not effectively leverage intelligence and information city-wide—including publicly-available social media—that may have enhanced situational awareness of officers and their ability to rapidly assess multiple venues and deploy resources.

# Public Communication and Social Media

- Although a virtual JIC was established, the review process impacted the ability of LAPD to post timely messages to its social media accounts.
- The LAPD decision to not fully leverage social media to share information and respond to false accusations allowed demonstrators to control the narrative and overwhelm LAPD on the information front.



# Officer Wellness and Morale

- For more than 50 years, LAPD has endeavored to assist its personnel through Behavioral Science Services and aligned groups. LAPD should be recognized for its innovative programs and leadership in the law enforcement profession regarding physical and mental wellness.
- LAPD, elected officials, and the LA community should recognize that research indicates that crowd management and other critical incidents have a significant negative impact on law enforcement personnel, their significant others, and children.
- Officer morale has been described almost universally as ‘at an all-time low’. In addition to being the “target” of the protests, frustration with LAPD leadership and inconsistent messaging, some statements and decisions made by elected officials during and after the protests have been perceived as demonstrating a lack of support for the department.

# Community Engagement and Perspective

- Despite continuous efforts to improve relationships with the community, the LAPD has been challenged by historical events that fueled tension and mistrust between the community and the department.
- The tenuous relationship between the police and communities of color, nationally and in LA, fueled the protests and violence following the death of George Floyd.
- After the initial days of the protest, the LAPD was able to leverage its relationships with business owners, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), faith and community leaders, including activists to facilitate SAFE LA 1st Amendment assemblies and protests particularly at the Bureau-level.



# Conclusion: Moving Forward



Jen Zeunik

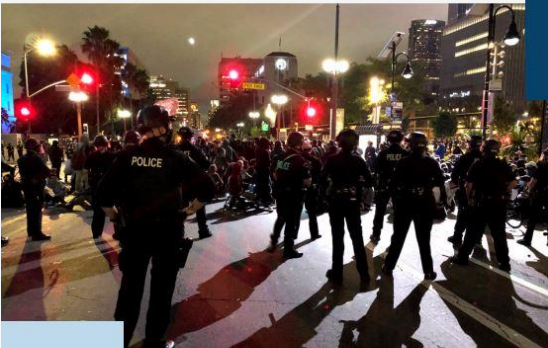
# NPF Reports and Analyses

## Technical Report

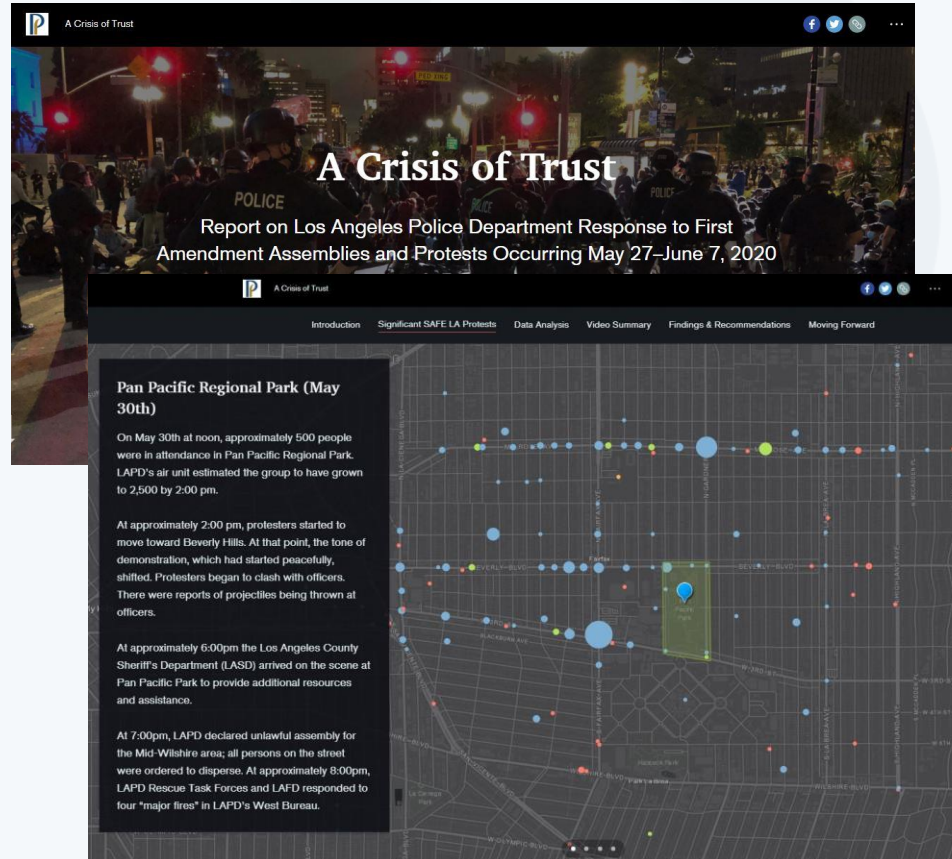
NATIONAL POLICE FOUNDATION  
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## Interactive E-Report



## BWC Video Analysis



All available at: [www.policefoundation.org/lapdreview](http://www.policefoundation.org/lapdreview)