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Press Release

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MPD Statement Regarding Outside Agency Officer Assignments

MILWAUKEE, WI— The Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) provided information to the public about an officer-involved incident that occurred on Tuesday, July 16, 2024. On that day, Columbus Division of Police (CPD) officers assisting the Milwaukee Police Department were assigned to bicycle patrol and were located on the 1400 block of West Vliet Street. These officers observed an armed subject in an altercation with an unarmed subject that resulted in an officer involved shooting. Since that time, MPD has received a number of inquiries about the assignment of these out of jurisdiction officers. In planning for the RNC, we had informed the public that these officers would be placed in non-forward-facing assignments and our goal was to have those in contact with the community to be MPD officers. See <https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/investigations/2024/07/09/rnc-2024-what-rules-do-milwaukee-police-follow-during-protests-tear-gas-mass-arrests/74313279007/>.

MPD prioritizes transparency and wants to respond to those inquiries. What follows are responses to frequently asked questions by both the public and media regarding outside agency assignments:

Was the 1400 block of Vliet part of the assigned area for Columbus Division of Police Officers?

The incident occurred blocks away from the soft perimeter that was published. The soft perimeter ends at 7th and Vliet. The CPD bicycle unit officers were seven (7) blocks from that published soft perimeter on 14th and Vliet. This was part of their assigned area. Assigned areas also cover the perimeter immediately surrounding the “soft perimeter” as these are access points to vehicle and pedestrian entry into the soft perimeter. Of note, a protest occurred the day before in the vicinity of 14th and Vliet.

We believed MPD was handling “regular calls” and outside agencies were handling patrol of RNC security/perimeter. This occurred far away from the RNC. Why were outside agencies there? Were they responding to calls?

MPD is handling all “regular calls.” Outside agency bicycle officers would not respond to calls for service. MPD officers would respond to calls for service. At the time of the incident, the CPD bicycle unit officers were briefing and de-briefing the day’s events. CPD had responded to demonstrations in the area of 14th and Vliet the day prior. CPD’s response to this incident was not prompted by a call for service, but by officers’ observation of an armed individual threatening another unarmed person. Bicycle units are a specialty unit, assigned



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to tasks such as traffic control, demonstration control and surveillance of areas of concern. Bicycle units would not be considered interactive forward-facing units, as those officers on bicycles are best suited to use their bicycles as tools to navigate traffic and demonstrations.

Is MPD reevaluating and/or changing anything related to outside police agencies due to this situation?

Since this incident, MPD has ensured that an MPD officer is assigned to not just forward-facing roles, but also specialty units such as bicycles.

Are the Columbus Division of Police officers involved in this incident still working the RNC?

The CPD officers involved in this incident will not continue to work the RNC.

Are there other areas outside the perimeter where officers from around the country are policing? Can you share where those are?

All outside agencies have been assigned to areas that include the hard perimeter, the soft perimeter, and/or the area immediately surrounding the soft perimeter. Specific assignments will not be shared with the public as they are operational and sharing those could pose a security risk to the event.

MPD is confident in the operational plan in place for the RNC. That being said, we recognize the importance in making continual improvements as situations occur. MPD has made adjustments at this time by adding MPD representation in bicycle units in an effort to best serve our community and its needs.

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