

# Handling Large, Preplanned Events

Recommendations from Preparations for  
the 2016 National Political Conventions



POLICE EXECUTIVE  
RESEARCH FORUM



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the 2016 National Political Conventions



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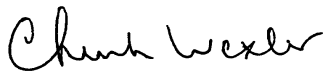
## Letter from the PERF Executive Director

Every four years, host cities must prepare for the Republican and Democratic National Conventions. These large, pre-planned events bring together participants, spectators, protesters, and counter-protesters in one location, and police are tasked with maintaining public safety for all groups throughout the event. Ensuring a peaceful convention takes significant planning and coordination by numerous local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.

For cities and law enforcement agencies that have not recently hosted such large events, the preparation can be daunting. Prior to 2016, the City of Cleveland had not hosted a national party convention since 1936. In advance of the 2016 Republican National Convention (RNC), the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), in collaboration with the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), provided technical assistance to the Cleveland Division of Police (CDP) through a Critical Response Technical Assistance Program cooperative agreement.

To assist CDP command staff in their preparation for the RNC, PERF convened a meeting of law enforcement executives with experience hosting national party conventions and other large, pre-planned events. In this peer-to-peer exchange, law enforcement executives candidly discussed the lessons they learned in handling past events, including unique challenges such as coordinating with federal agencies like the Secret Service. As CDP prepared for the RNC, it benefited from this collective knowledge.

PERF documented the lessons and advice shared about the law enforcement management of these events. Much of the discussion centered around how to ensure that the law enforcement response emphasizes community policing principles, while maintaining the safety and the constitutional rights of all those involved. The recommendations in this report provide valuable guidance to agencies hosting such events.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Wexler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chuck" and last name "Wexler" clearly distinguishable.

Chuck Wexler  
Executive Director  
PERF



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# Introduction

To assist the Cleveland Division of Police (CDP) in its preparations for the 2016 Republican National Convention (RNC), the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) provided technical assistance to the CDP through a Critical Response Technical Assistance Program cooperative agreement awarded to the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). PERF and the COPS Office facilitated an executive briefing—a roundtable discussion for representatives of the CDP and of the Philadelphia Police Department, who were preparing for the Democratic National Convention to be held the following week.

This document is a summary of the executive briefing's proceedings and is not intended to be a comprehensive planning guide for preparing for National Special Security Events (NSSE);<sup>1</sup> however, references to multiple resources for further reading on specific topics are included throughout this report. Additionally, many of the recommendations made in this document also apply to non-NSSEs, such as demonstrations, protests, and other mass gatherings.

Large, preplanned events such as national political conventions pose enormous challenges for the police agency of the host city. The local agency is called upon to safely manage and protect the constitutional rights of large

numbers of people, including political dignitaries, convention delegates, media personnel, and, in many cases, demonstrators. The agency must protect against both street crime and the potential threat of terrorist activity, and it must manage heavy volumes of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. In many cases, the host agency must enlist the support of outside agencies to provide personnel and equipment, or coordinate with other partners such as the United States Secret Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and must address the logistical and operational issues such collaboration may raise. And despite the considerable time, attention, and resources the host agency devotes to event-related activities, it must continue to provide high-quality policing services to the rest of the city's neighborhoods.

One of the most effective ways for police leaders to gather ideas and learn how to meet challenges effectively is to hear directly from their colleagues in other agencies who have managed similar events in the recent past. These experienced police leaders can offer unique insights into both the big picture issues associated with large-scale events and the specific and detailed logistical and operational concerns that can impact the success of an event.

On June 13, 2016, the COPS Office in collaboration with PERF convened an executive briefing with CDP command-level officials and current and retired police executives from departments across the nation whose cities have recently hosted Democratic and Republican national conventions, or who have experience

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<sup>1</sup> A National Special Security Event, or NSSE, is an event of such magnitude or significance that the Secretary of Homeland Security mandates that the Secret Service take the lead role in the design and implementation of the operational security plan. These plans rely heavily on partnerships with law enforcement and public safety officials at local, state, and federal levels.

with other large, preplanned events and associated demonstrations. Philadelphia Police Commissioner Richard Ross also participated in the briefing to ensure that the benefits of the conversation extended to the Philadelphia Police Department, which was responsible for security for the 2016 Democratic National Convention (DNC). The 2016 DNC was held in Philadelphia following the conclusion of the 2016 RNC in Cleveland. (See appendix A for a list of executive briefing attendees.) The day-long briefing was held at the CDP's Third District neighborhood police station.

Section 1 of this report provides a summary of the major principles derived from this executive briefing. Section 2 provides more detail on the key points made by the participants and the related recommendations for implementing the proposed strategies. The ideas and recommendations shared during this executive briefing focus on the planning and approaches needed to ensure successful crowd management while at the same time protecting the First Amendment rights of all participants.

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# Section 1: Summary of Principles for a Successful Event

The discussion at the executive briefing produced 18 general principles for successfully policing a large, preplanned event:

- 1.** Set a clear philosophy for the event focused on First Amendment rights, community policing, and public safety. Ensure this philosophy is consistent with applicable state and local laws and city and departmental policies, and states how officers should view their role and purpose.
- 2.** Communicate the event philosophy to all officers, including mutual aid officers, who will be working the event. This philosophy should be conveyed by the chief, both orally and in writing, such as in the introduction to the event's operational plan.
- 3.** Mutual aid agencies and the host agency should work as a unified force, with the host agency taking the lead on all key decision making, including the decision whether to make arrests. Agencies providing mutual aid support should subscribe to the event philosophy and accepted use of force policy.
- 4.** Internal preplanning is vital to the event's success and must be comprehensive, including multiple strategies for contingency planning as these events are often fluid and subject to change. Preplanning also includes ongoing work with local community groups and event stakeholders (as elaborated in principles 5, 6, 15, and 16).
- 5.** Work in advance to build relationships with demonstrators.
- 6.** Work with local businesses and their private security to prepare for the event and to enforce rules on private property during the event.
- 7.** Seek information and hold intelligence briefings as far in advance of an event as practical. The process for vetting information should be as efficient as possible.
- 8.** Be alert to crowd movement and behavior without constraining First Amendment rights.
- 9.** A logistics plan should be developed in advance of the event. During the event, plans should always account for the next operational period.
- 10.** Use the National Guard if necessary, but recognize the potential benefits and drawbacks of their deployment. For example, the Guard typically deploys in full military gear, and members may not possess the community policing skills of police officers. Using the National Guard in support assignments will allow the local agencies to deploy their officers in more critical areas and where they are more likely to need their community policing and de-escalation skills.

- 11.** Mobile Field Force (MFF) units should be flexible and deployed in soft gear if the crowd dynamics permit. MFF equipment should be kept close to the units, but out of sight until needed, such as in the event of a major crowd disturbance.
- 12.** The decision to employ less-lethal options and other equipment should always come from the host agency—specifically, from the law enforcement official in charge of the response.
- 13.** All decisions should be well-documented prior to and throughout the event, and city or department attorneys should be consulted before, during, and after the event.
- 14.** Mass arrests should be avoided whenever possible. If mass arrests become necessary, the process should be clear, methodological, and extensively documented. If possible, mass arrests should be handled by the host agency.
- 15.** Work to establish relations with the news media, e.g., by hosting a media orientation session before the event. The host, or lead agency in the case of an NSSE, should dictate the media policy, and all agencies should adhere to the policy.
- 16.** Use social media to both gather information and to communicate with the public directly.
- 17.** Have a plan in place to debrief on lessons learned and other aspects of the event after its conclusion, and express gratitude to all officers—both local and mutual aid agencies.
- 18.** Event and incident documentation protocols should be clearly outlined in the initial event briefing by the host agency. It is also recommended that After Action Report (AAR) templates be distributed and collected at the conclusion of the event by the host agency.

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## Section 2: Discussion Points and Detailed Recommendations

This section provides details of the executive briefing's discussion points, principles, and recommendations.

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### Setting a clear event philosophy focused on first amendment rights and community policing approaches

Long before an event starts, the law enforcement executive should establish an event philosophy and articulate it to all of the officers involved, both those in the host agency and officers from other assisting departments. Throughout the planning phase, it is critical that the chief deliver a clear and consistent message about how the department intends to approach and manage the event. This philosophy will guide every officer in every interaction he or she has with the public.

- **Recommendation:** The law enforcement executive should set forth an event philosophy for all personnel about what behavior is expected, and should emphasize protecting the First Amendment rights and safety of all who attend the event. This philosophy should be conveyed both orally and in writing, such as in the introduction to the event's operational plan.
  - » At the core of this philosophy should be the protection of rights granted under the First Amendment to assemble peacefully, speak freely, and petition the government for redress of grievances. The police must display an abiding respect for the rights of individuals to assemble and speak—especially if the content of that speech is critical of the police or is disagreeable to individual officers.

- » Many participants at the executive briefing stated that unless serious criminal activity is threatening people or property, the guiding philosophy of the event should allow demonstrations to proceed without substantial police interference, even if they may not be properly permitted. Absent exigent public safety considerations, the lack of a permit should not by itself be cause for the police to try to stop or shut down a demonstration that is proceeding peacefully.
- » Infusing this operational philosophy early on—through written documents such as policies and procedures and through messages delivered in person and via video—will convey to all officers involved both the agency's expectations and the standards to which they will be held. Responsibility for articulating the philosophy rests largely with the law enforcement executive; he or she must be out front and must lead this communications effort.
- » Adequate resources—whether time, training, or equipment—should be allocated to provide for the safety of all attendees. All efforts should be made to ensure that all officers and attendees remain safe throughout the event.

- ▶ **Recommendation:** Community policing should be the cornerstone of the event philosophy.
  - » The law enforcement executive should reinforce his or her commitment to community policing in all messages regarding the event.<sup>2</sup>
  - » Officers should be encouraged to engage with the community and demonstrators in a positive manner and to focus on building constructive relationships, both before and throughout the event. Starting with this mindset can reduce combative exchanges between officers and demonstrators later, as the event unfolds.

It is also important to recognize that internal preplanning is vital to the event's success and must be comprehensive, including multiple strategies for contingency planning as these events are often fluid and subject to change. Preplanning also includes ongoing work with local community groups and event stakeholders.

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### Promoting peaceful interactions and building relationships with demonstrators

The sheer volume of people at most large, preplanned events requires careful planning and handling. When the mix of people includes those who are attending the event and those who are actively demonstrating at or near the event site, the crowd management considerations become even more complex. In particularly volatile situations, the criminal behavior of a few people

can pose risks to event attendees and those who are attempting to demonstrate peacefully.

- ▶ **Recommendation:** Meet with protest group leaders long before the event.
  - » One of the major themes that emerged from the executive briefing was the need to establish good relationships with potential demonstrators early on. Even if protest leaders do not wish to meet with the police, agencies should press ahead with establishing some form of dialogue. This is especially important at events such as national political conventions, where the number of demonstration groups may be large, many demonstrators are from out of town, and they may encompass a variety of issues and causes.
  - » Police will likely need to take different approaches to building relationships with different groups of demonstrators. For local protest groups, the department should be able to draw upon contacts and relationships that are already in place (another advantage of having developed those relationships ahead of time). For groups from outside the area, departments may need to devote additional time and attention to identifying and meeting with group leaders, explaining the philosophy and basic operational procedures of the department, and ongoing relationship building. Reaching out to other law enforcement agencies that have experience and relationships with out-of-town groups can be helpful.
  - » A logical first step to establishing relationships is to meet with groups that have requested permits to demonstrate. This can be a casual meeting or a more formal briefing, depending on the department's current relationship

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<sup>2</sup> For more information on community policing in the context of managing mass demonstrations, see Tony Narr et al., *Police Management of Mass Demonstrations: Identifying Issues and Successful Approaches* (Washington, DC: PERF, 2006), [http://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Critical\\_Issues\\_Series/police%20management%20of%20mass%20demonstrations%20-%20identifying%20issues%20and%20successful%20approaches%202006.pdf](http://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Critical_Issues_Series/police%20management%20of%20mass%20demonstrations%20-%20identifying%20issues%20and%20successful%20approaches%202006.pdf); PERF, *Constitutional Policing as a Cornerstone of Community Policing* (Washington, DC: COPS Office, 2015), <https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-p324-pub.pdf>; and a forthcoming publication by PERF and the COPS Office, *The Police Response to Mass Demonstrations: Promising Practices and Lessons Learned*.

with the group. The purpose of these meetings should be to constructively engage with the groups, to let them know the department's expectations for their behavior throughout the event, and to work collaboratively toward an outcome that protects the rights of demonstrators while avoiding violence or other criminal behavior during the event.

► **Recommendation:** Use liaisons to communicate with demonstrators.

- » Another way to initiate discussions and work productively with demonstrators is to communicate through designated liaisons, both within and outside the police department. Many of these liaisons already have established relationships with protest leaders.
  - In the Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) Police Department, the Civil Affairs Unit (CAU) works with community groups on a regular basis and has built lasting relationships with many community leaders and activists. During high-profile events, the CAU is a familiar presence to demonstrators. CAU members wear suits instead of uniforms, which reinforces the idea that they are not there to enforce or restrict demonstrators, but to work with them to help ensure a peaceful event.
  - Other groups that are familiar to demonstrators, such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), National Lawyers Guild, and members of the clergy, can be included in the discussions. These groups can liaise with the crowd in a manner that demonstrators may find less threatening than a uniformed police presence.

- » Additionally, the liaisons can play an important role during an event. For example, if there are initial signs of isolated, minor criminal activity within a crowd, the liaisons may be able to intervene and help prevent the situation from escalating to the point where the deployment of uniformed officers becomes necessary.
- » Finally, law enforcement should be prepared for interactions with community members of different language communities (see sidebar).

### Limited English Proficiency Populations

"Limited English Proficiency: A Federal Interagency Website" ([www.lep.gov](http://www.lep.gov)), and especially the Law Enforcement and Language Access Program Planning sections of its "Resources by Subject" page (<https://www.lep.gov/resources/resources.html>), provides a large number of items that may be helpful, including the following:

- "Limited English Proficiency Resource Document: Tips and Tools from the Field," Executive Order 13166, September 21, 2004 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division," [https://www.lep.gov/resources/tips\\_and\\_tools-9-21-04.htm](https://www.lep.gov/resources/tips_and_tools-9-21-04.htm)).
- Hablamos Juntos, "Five Steps to Improving Communications with LEP Populations," (Fresno, CA: UCSF Fresno Center for Medical Education & Research, 2009), [http://www.hablamosjuntos.org/mtw/html\\_toolkit/pdf/toolkit2\\_finlo-zamoedits\\_r4\\_PROOF.pdf](http://www.hablamosjuntos.org/mtw/html_toolkit/pdf/toolkit2_finlo-zamoedits_r4_PROOF.pdf).
- Rongfang Liu, "Critical Issues in Serving the Needs of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Communities," paper presented September 3, 2008 at the Federal Interagency Conference on Limited English Proficiency, Bethesda, MD, [https://www.lep.gov/resources/2008\\_Conference\\_Materials/FindingandRetrievingData.pdf](https://www.lep.gov/resources/2008_Conference_Materials/FindingandRetrievingData.pdf).

The COPS Office webpage "Policing New Immigrant Communities" (<https://cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=2461>) also discusses interacting with LEP populations.



- ▶ **Recommendation:** Ensure that officers on the front line do not react unnecessarily to non-threatening provocations from the crowd.
  - » While attention is often placed on the behavior of demonstrators, many of the executive briefing participants stressed that the behavior of officers needs to be monitored and managed by supervisors during demonstrations.
  - » It is important to have well-disciplined officers who will remain calm and professional throughout the event. Executive briefing participants stressed that officers' actions—especially those that are considered unprofessional and should not be tolerated—are likely to be captured on video and widely shared through social and traditional media outlets.
  - » Some demonstrators or criminal agitators may attempt to provoke officers to create a conflict for their own agenda. Officers must be trained to avoid reacting to these provocations.
    - In Tampa, the police department created a training video in advance of the 2012 Republican National Convention that told officers, “Don’t be that guy.” The video showed officers who overreacted to non-threatening actions, such as blowing bubbles at an officer, and emphasized that some actions may not require any reaction from the police. Other actions should be met with de-escalation strategies instead of the threat of arrest or other immediate enforcement actions.<sup>3</sup>

- To avoid unnecessary confrontations on the front line, supervisors should be alert for any signs that officers may be becoming fatigued or need a break.

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### Tactics for managing large demonstrations

During the actual event, the police department will be responsible for overseeing the safe movement of thousands of people with various expectations and agendas. At this point, the department must address the dual (and not mutually exclusive) challenges of protecting the First Amendment rights of demonstrators and ensuring the overall safety of the event.

- ▶ **Recommendation:** Create dedicated spaces for demonstrators.
  - » As a way of allowing demonstrators to gather and exercise their First Amendment rights while also allowing the primary event to take place safely and as scheduled, most departments set aside specific public spaces for demonstrators to use, including designated parade routes and event zones.
    - To ensure the safety of participants, some departments have provided lighting throughout the night within the space.
    - Some executive briefing participants suggested fencing off the designated areas with established ingress and egress points. This can help manage crowds and increase security.
  - » Proximity of the demonstration areas to the actual event space will likely vary, based on availability of land and the security needs of the event. Prior legal rulings have established that the government may impose *reasonable* restrictions on the time, place, and manner of an event in order to reduce the amount of disruption it will

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<sup>3</sup> Andrew J. Tobias, “Tampa Police Say Their Friendlier Approach for 2012 Republican National Convention Paid Off,” *Cleveland.com*, August 3, 2015, [http://www.cleveland.com/rnc-2016/index.ssf/2015/08/tampa\\_police\\_say\\_their\\_friendl.html](http://www.cleveland.com/rnc-2016/index.ssf/2015/08/tampa_police_say_their_friendl.html).



cause; however, a demonstration should be allowed to take place within “sight and sound” of its intended audience.<sup>4</sup>

- » Police leaders should be aware that not all demonstrators will use the designated protest spaces, especially if they feel those areas are not close enough to the main event venue.
  - Some demonstrators may find other locations to stage, including parking lots, sidewalks, abandoned property, and space available for lease. Departments should identify these potential alternative locations prior to the event. Executive briefing participants stressed that monitoring multiple locations is resource-intensive and logistically challenging for the police, but is critically important.
  - Some demonstrators and free speech organizations may take legal action to secure protest areas that are more proximate to the event venue. (Two weeks after the executive briefing, CDP officials agreed to revise security plans to provide demonstration space that was closer to the main RNC venue.)
  - For these and other reasons, executive briefing participants stressed the importance of police officials working with protest leaders and affiliated groups early in the process, with the goal of developing plans that meet the security needs of the event and protect the First Amendment rights of the public.

► **Recommendation:** Ensure there are multiple avenues for demonstrators to exercise their First Amendment rights.

- » In Cleveland, all of downtown was considered a “free speech zone.” This meant that individuals were not restricted to the dedicated space to demonstrate peacefully.
  - Additionally, permitted groups were given a time slot to use the designated parade route.
  - There also was an official speakers’ platform that individuals could use. This platform was located within the public viewing area in the Cleveland Public Square (approximately half a mile from the RNC site).
- » Recognizing that not every protest group will have permits or will remain in designated areas, police agencies need to be flexible in how they handle such occurrences.
  - Crowds should be managed and, where possible, redirected to designated areas, and traffic should be directed to alternative streets as needed.
  - Arrests should be considered as a last resort, and only if there is violence or serious property damage. For minor or isolated incidents that are not directly impacting public or officer safety or causing serious property damage, police should consider documenting the incident and identifying the individual(s) responsible so that citations or arrests can be made later at an appropriate time when the arrest itself is not likely to escalate matters.
  - As one executive briefing participant put it, “You don’t get in a riot over a piece of asphalt.” In other words, if demonstrators block a street and police can reroute traffic, that is a better solution than provoking a confrontation.

<sup>4</sup> *Clark v. Community for Creative Non-Violence*, 468 U.S. 288, 305 (1984); *Phelps-Roper v. Nixon*, 545 F.3d 685, 693-94 (8th Cir. 2008).

► **Recommendation:** Restricted areas closer to the primary event venue will require greater security, including security checkpoints and prohibition of certain items.

- » In order to ensure safety for all involved, some items may need to be prohibited in restricted areas near the primary event space, including seemingly innocuous items such as tennis balls.<sup>5</sup>
  - In Cleveland, the city passed an ordinance prohibiting specific items near the convention center. Executive briefing participants stressed that the list of items should be disseminated widely throughout the city and among known demonstration groups in advance of the event.
- » To enforce the ban of prohibited items within the restricted zone, checkpoints should be established at multiple entrances to the restricted area. Demonstrators should be able to discard prohibited items and then allowed into the restricted area, if appropriate. If demonstrators want to keep their items, they will have to stay outside the checkpoint.
  - Departments should also be alert for items already within the restricted zone that could be used by individuals with criminal intent. In the days leading up to the event, police should sanitize the area to ensure that potential projectiles, such as loose landscaping, construction materials, and unsecured trash cans, newspaper vending machines, etc. have been cleared.

- Additionally, departments should be vigilant for any potentially disruptive items that may have been hidden in the area prior to the event's start. If any items are confiscated, they should be photographed prior to removal. Photographs of questionable items may later be needed as evidence if the items found are deemed to be illegal. Any questionable items should be handled with care and disposed of or stored with caution.

► **Recommendation:** The crowd of demonstrators will likely move and grow in size throughout the event; departments need to be prepared to respond accordingly.

- » As the crowd grows, so should the number of officers working in the area. One participant noted that his agency used officers embedded in the crowd to pass out flyers containing rules that demonstrators were expected to abide by.
- » Typically, crowd management plans organize police officers into specific geographic zones. Executive briefing participants stressed that if the timeframe for a demonstration or march crosses command zones or shifts, command should remain consistent throughout that unique event. Command should not be passed along to the next zone or shift. Keeping command consistent throughout a single demonstration or march helps ensure that relationships already built between police and the crowd will be retained and communications will remain consistent.
  - For example, the New York Police Department typically designates "escort teams" to monitor and work with specific demonstrations or marches, as opposed to venue teams that have a stationary assignment.

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<sup>5</sup> In the past, tennis balls and other items have been used to conceal explosives. Andrew J. Tobias, "Cleveland Officials Approve New RNC Security Rules Following Lawsuit Settlement with ACLU." *Cleveland.com*, June 29, 2016, [http://www.cleveland.com/rnc-2016/index.ssf/2016/06/cleveland\\_officials\\_approve\\_ne.html](http://www.cleveland.com/rnc-2016/index.ssf/2016/06/cleveland_officials_approve_ne.html).

- **Recommendation:** Officers must always be alert for any criminal agitators.
  - » In a large crowd, it is possible that some individuals will be there solely to cause trouble, while others may be planning to get arrested as a political statement. It is important that officers recognize individuals who may fall within these different groups and respond appropriately.
- For isolated criminal activity, executive briefing participants stressed the importance of crowd intervention tactics that target only the criminal activity and do not attempt to stop or disrupt the crowd as a whole.
- If individuals who want to be arrested can be identified prior to the event, the department should work with them as far in advance as possible on issues such as timing, location, and logistics of the arrests. This helps ensure that the police can have their arrest assets pre-positioned and the demonstrators have an opportunity to make a statement, while minimizing any associated risks or disruptions.

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### Working with local businesses

Local businesses can be an important source of information and support to the police during large, preplanned events. Outreach to the business community should begin as early as possible and should remain constant throughout the planning period and the event itself.

- **Recommendation:** Work with local businesses to identify quasi-public spaces that demonstrators may attempt to use during the event.
  - » Demonstrators who choose not to use predesignated areas for demonstrating may attempt to use quasi-public spaces such as parking lots and outdoor seating

areas closer to the main event location. In the days prior to the event, demonstrators may attempt to congregate or sleep in certain locations in order to test how police will respond.

- » Prior to the event, businesses should post signs indicating that sleeping on benches, use of outside catering, and loitering are prohibited in their quasi-public spaces.

- **Recommendation:** Work with the private security of local businesses to enforce prohibitions and prevent trespassing.

- » In order to maximize its resources, police should work with private security officials of local businesses and office buildings in or near the event zone. If the department is confident that the private security will be working throughout the event, the department may be able to focus some of its resources in other critical areas.

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### Mutual aid—acting as a single agency

For many large-scale events, the number of officers required for safe and effective crowd management will exceed the number of officers working for the host agency. Mutual aid, therefore, is likely to be called upon to bolster the staffing levels for the event. While a critical measure, mutual aid presents a number of challenges the host agency must plan for and address.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of this report, “mutual aid” refers to aid from both agencies with whom the host agency has formal mutual aid agreements and outside agencies that are brought in to assist on a one-time basis for the event. Agencies with formal mutual aid agreements will likely require less orientation and background than one-time agencies, and they may be able to take on more complex and sensitive assignments, especially if they have trained jointly with the host agency. Still, the event philosophy and strategic plan should be communicated to and reinforced with all supporting officers.

► **Recommendation:** The host agency executive should communicate with all mutual aid officers to convey the overall event philosophy and strategy and to reaffirm who is in charge.

» All of the executive briefing participants agreed that the chief is responsible for establishing leadership over all of the officers involved, because confusion and mixed or contradictory actions by different officers can damage the overall police response, and because the behavior of individual officers will reflect upon the host agency regardless of what agency they actually work for.

- To do so, participants suggested that the chief have an initial orientation session for all participating officers and use that event to lay out the strategic plan and philosophy. In some cases, this meeting may be needed to cross-deputize officers from the outside agencies.
- Additionally, participants encouraged the chief to participate in roll calls and other preevent meetings with mutual aid agencies to reinforce the notion that they are all one agency for the duration of the event.

► **Recommendation:** Mutual aid assignments should be strategic and should reinforce the overall event plan.

» Executive briefing participants underscored the importance of making sure, whenever possible, that assignments match the agencies' and officers' particular skill sets. For example, officers who most directly engage with demonstrators should ideally come from assignments in which they routinely interact with the community.

» CDP officials indicated that in their assignments, they planned to try to keep mutual aid agency personnel together, to promote unit familiarity and cohesion.

» CDP officials also planned to assign Ohio State Highway Patrol and other state police personnel largely to traffic posts, given their expertise in traffic control and enforcement.

► **Recommendation:** The host agency should take the lead on all key strategic and operational decisions and actions. Mutual aid officers should act as support to the host agency.<sup>7</sup>

» In general, mutual aid agencies should be used to provide the host agency with relief and support. **Executive briefing participants stressed that, absent**

**exigent circumstances, any arrests made throughout the event should be authorized and carried out solely by the host agency.**

» The host agency should staff all supervisory and command positions in the field and relay orders from incident commanders.

» The host agency's officers and resources should be used on the front lines.

- Personnel from agencies that have a longstanding relationship and regularly train with the host agency may be considered for front-line assignments as needed.

- Some participants relayed that they have used mutual aid personnel to protect critical infrastructure and to staff stationary posts (such as event hotels), allowing the host agency to focus on staffing the front lines.

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<sup>7</sup> For additional resources and guidance on mutual aid, see Narr et al., *Police Management of Mass Demonstrations* (see note 2) and the FEMA Resource Management and Mutual Aid website at <https://www.fema.gov/resource-management-mutual-aid>.

► **Recommendation:** Assign officers from the host agency to be liaisons for all mutual aid officer groups.

- » Because mutual aid officers, especially those from agencies that do not have formal mutual aid agreements with the host agency, may be unfamiliar with the geography of the area, it is important to assign liaison officers from the host agency with each platoon of mutual aid officers.
  - This is particularly important in cases where mutual aid agencies are assigned traffic duties or similar assignments with extensive public interaction, as the officers may not be familiar with how best to direct people in vehicles or on foot.
- » Additionally, it is important to have a host agency officer familiar with the community to help guide mutual aid agencies in community interactions.
- » In addition, liaison officers can also help to maintain records documentation and record financial reimbursement information.

► **Recommendation:** Have a plan to communicate with mutual aid officers in the field prior to the event's start.

- » Host agencies must consider how they will communicate with mutual aid officers, as their radio communications equipment may not be compatible with the host agency's system.
  - When feasible, issuing every mutual aid officer a radio will ensure officers have access to the same radio channels and will receive direct information. Tampa was able to do this during the 2012 RNC.

- Short of that, agencies should attempt to equip at least one high-ranking supervisory officer from each mutual aid agency with a radio. This is the approach Charlotte-Mecklenburg police used during the 2012 DNC.
- If issuing radios is not possible, it is important to clearly convey to all officers how to communicate with commanders and where information will be coming from.
- For example, one executive briefing participant described an agency's experience using Nixle, a communications service that can send out messages to a broad audience or to a specific listserv.
  - » Agencies may want to consider encrypting the radio channels they plan to use for a major event. In some instances, demonstrators monitor police radio traffic.
  - » Having a communications plan for mutual aid agencies established before the event will help reduce confusion during the actual event.

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## National Guard

The National Guard can be an invaluable source of additional personnel during a large-scale event, planned or unplanned.<sup>8</sup> However, special consideration needs to be given to how the Guard will be deployed. To some event attendees or demonstrators the idea of the military policing may be threatening; therefore, the host agency

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<sup>8</sup> Under Ohio state law, the National Guard may be activated by the governor to respond to domestic emergencies such as natural disasters and civil disturbances. For NSSEs and other preplanned major events, the Guard is typically activated prior to the event.



needs to be aware of how their use of Guard personnel will be viewed by the public and plan deployments accordingly.

- **Recommendation:** Use the National Guard in critical but lower-profile assignments that can take advantage of their skills and expertise.
  - » Many of the executive briefing participants advised against having the National Guard function on the front lines of the event, both because National Guard personnel may not have the necessary community policing experience and because the optics of having military personnel overseeing demonstrators will not be in keeping with the overall event philosophy.
  - » Participants agreed that using the National Guard for critical infrastructure protection (generally away from the main event venue) or security at arrest processing facilities was an appropriate use of their skills. These types of assignments would serve as a force multiplier by freeing up local police resources for other, more visible assignments or even neighborhood patrols.

## Mobile Field Force

Mobile Field Force units have the specialized training and equipment needed to respond to criminal activity and serious disruptions within a mass demonstration.<sup>9</sup> To some members of the public, however, the tactical gear frequently used by these units presents an intimidating image and may further antagonize some demonstrators. This same effect can occur when regular,

front-line officers don similar gear. Therefore, departments should have detailed policies and procedures outlining both how they deploy Mobile Field Force units and the posture of their front-line personnel.

- **Recommendation:** Be flexible with Mobile Field Force (MFF) units; use them in a variety of assignments.
  - » Executive briefing participants stressed that MFF units should not be relegated to waiting on standby throughout the event in case they are needed for crowd control, including arrest operations. Rather, they should have regular assignments and multiple roles (e.g., relief for officers on the front lines). That way, MFF units can serve as force multipliers during key periods of the event.
  - » If they are needed, MFF officers should have ready access to their gear.
    - In Cleveland, MFF officers wore Class B uniforms, but their specialized gear was staged strategically throughout the city.
    - In Minneapolis, during the 2008 RNC, the department rented minivans to follow the MFF units with their gear inside. This added to the mobility of the teams.
  - » Executive briefing participants said even the terminology used can impact the tone and conduct of an event. They suggested using terms such as “crowd management” to refer to the overall approach (avoiding “crowd control” or “mass arrests” unless referring specifically to those defined activities)<sup>10</sup> and “personal

<sup>9</sup> The “mobile field force” concept emphasizes team movement rather than individual actions. Actions taken by a field force are under the direct command, control and responsibility of the field force leader. A field force can be deployed to restore order, move crowds, rescue victims and isolate problem areas. See Narr et al., *Police Management of Mass Demonstrations* (see note 2).

<sup>10</sup> It is important to note that the terms “crowd management” and “crowd control” are two distinct concepts, which involve separate tactics and response. Crowd management refers to planning for and managing a mass gathering or event; crowd control refers to mechanisms to restore order once crowds begin to behave in disorderly or dangerous ways. Effective crowd management can mitigate the need for crowd control in many cases.

protection equipment” (moving away from terms like “riot gear”) unless necessary for department clarity.

### Less-lethal munitions and other equipment considerations

How and when agencies might deploy less-lethal munitions during a major event is a critical consideration that needs to be discussed and planned well in advance. So are the plans for other equipment, including police bicycles and physical barriers. Executive briefing participants discussed the importance of these and other elements of any major event plan.

- ▶ **Recommendation:** The host agency should make the decision of when to deploy less-lethal munitions.
  - » The host agency should know what type of equipment mutual aid agencies have available to them and ensure that, absent exigent circumstances, they do not deploy less-lethal options without the command of the host agency.
- ▶ **Recommendation:** Make extensive use of officers on bikes for crowd management.
  - » Almost all of the executive briefing participants agreed that bike officers are one of the most useful resources during a peaceful mass demonstration or other large-scale event.
    - Bicycles are nimbler and more mobile than cars and therefore can follow crowds more easily.
    - The bicycles themselves make effective barriers when needed.
    - Bicycles do not present an intimidating visual, and crowds generally respond to them positively.

- » CDP indicated that it had doubled the number of bike units available for the 2016 RNC.

- ▶ **Recommendation:** Be strategic when using barriers.
  - » Fences and bike racks are useful for defining restricted spaces and controlling crowds. When deploying these resources, the department needs to place equipment strategically, with specific crowd management objectives in mind.
    - The CDP made decisions on the placement of bike racks on a day-to-day basis in response to current needs.
- ▶ **Recommendation:** Agencies should evaluate whether they need to encrypt additional radio channels.
  - » Equipment used regularly by the department may need to be modified for the event. For example, to enhance security, departments may decide to encrypt additional radio channels. This process and any other modifications should be completed and tested well in advance of the event.

### Supplies and logistics

Logistics planning is an essential part of the overall preplanning and operational planning processes for mass demonstrations, and one of the key steps outlined in the Incident Command System (ICS) and National Incident Management System (NIMS). Having the necessary supplies on hand and developing sound logistical plans to get those supplies to officers will facilitate a smooth operation. Officers need to have access to equipment and supplies throughout the operation, and the logistics to facilitate distribution need to be clear to all participants.

- ▶ **Recommendation:** Have a plan for how to get supplies, such as food and water, to officers on the front lines. Use outside resources if they are available.
  - » To the extent possible, supplies should be brought to the deployed officers in the field, as opposed to having officers report to a centralized location for supplies. The latter approach takes time and can create crowding and confusion at the supply staging area.
  - » In Tampa, during the 2012 RNC, the Red Cross assisted the police department with the distribution of water to officers and demonstrators.
  - » Other executive briefing participants suggested having designated rest areas near the front lines where officers can take a break. In these spaces, officers should have access to food, water, sunscreen, and other essentials.
- ▶ **Recommendation:** Logistics planning should be a continuous process, with the next operational period always planned in advance.

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### Information sharing and intelligence briefings

As with any law enforcement event, having accurate intelligence is crucial to preventing criminal activity and to ensuring the safety of all participants. Intelligence efforts often begin months in advance of a preplanned event and continue throughout its duration. In addition, intelligence collection and dissemination should rely on a mix of strategies, including having officers stationed with demonstrators and aviation support.

- ▶ **Recommendation:** Have a clear plan in place for how information will be vetted and how intelligence will be shared during the event.

- » Executive briefing participants noted that the accurate vetting of information is one of the most important aspects of intelligence gathering and processing. During an event, incidents move quickly. If the vetting process takes too long, then the incident may be over or have changed in nature and location before officers have had a chance to properly respond.
  - To the extent possible, agencies should attempt to streamline the information-vetting process to omit any extraneous steps. Overly complicated procedures can delay critical intelligence in reaching the field in a timely manner.
  - Additionally, the original information may become distorted if it has to go through too many channels.
  - To streamline the process and promote accuracy, departments should assign intelligence officers both in the field and with the incident commander to facilitate communications. Intelligence officers should be responsible for intelligence briefings to ensure they are as accurate as possible.
- ▶ **Recommendation:** Stationing officers in crowds of demonstrators can be useful for observing the crowd for issues that may evolve.
  - » Participants stated that having officers in the crowds of demonstrators was one of the best sources of information during the event.
  - » Officers on the ground are usually able to provide the most accurate information about the nature and scope of an incident. At times, relying on a command center or other distant location to monitor crowds can lead to misreading the situation on the ground. For example,



isolated criminal activity may appear to be much more serious and receive a larger response than what may be necessary.

- Some cities (such as Chicago during the 2012 NATO Summit) have officers within the crowds to pass out fliers which indicate what behavior is allowed and what is prohibited. They described this activity as policing “inside out.”

► **Recommendation:** Use aviation support to monitor large crowds when needed.

- » When monitoring large crowds, video feeds from aviation support such as helicopters can give officials a better sense of the crowd’s overall size, direction, and momentum than can be gleaned from the ground perspective.

► **Recommendation:** Participate in regional command centers, but focus attention and resources on your own police or city command post.

- » Participants noted that during major events, it is common for various federal, state, and regional entities to stand up command centers. Participants said that while it is important for the host police agency to have representation at those command centers—mostly to ensure effective communications with other partners—key police personnel should be assigned to the main police department or city command center.

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### Ensuring a legal and constitutional police response

Following large events, police departments often face lawsuits over how they handled the event. While it is likely that legal challenges will come regardless of how well the event was managed, departments should take steps to protect themselves legally.

► **Recommendation:** City or department lawyers should be deployed with officers throughout the event.

- » Police departments should request that city or department lawyers be present at all major events. Barring exigent circumstances, lawyers can then advise officers on critical issues such as whether to make mass arrests. Attorneys in the field can also help ensure all proper legal procedures are followed if arrests are made.

- To facilitate communication, the Los Angeles Police Department established a branch in its Incident Command structure for the ACLU and other lawyers, ensuring they would be present and informed throughout the event.

- » In locations that have established an Office of Police Complaints or similar complaint oversight agency, the host agency should have a relationship with this office and may want to consider having its representatives ride with a police official during the event. This will give them a clear understanding of the agency’s understanding of the crowd dynamics and attempts taken to maintain a peaceful event during the response.

► **Recommendation:** Ensure there is clear documentation of all decisions made throughout the event, especially for any arrest decisions.

- » The “after action report” for the event should be started when planning for the event is initiated, well before the event itself starts. All decisions, including early planning steps, should be thoroughly recorded in a master document for the event.
- » Accommodations made for demonstrators and adjustments to the original plans should be included in the master document.

- » Orders to disperse should be well documented, with verification that the orders could be heard by the entire crowd.
    - The New York Police Department places an officer at the back of the crowd who can verify that any dispersal orders could be clearly heard by the entire crowd. If possible, a visual acknowledgment by the designated officer should be recorded on video as well as on the police radio and documented in the arrest report.
  - » Documentation should occur at the individual officer level as well. Officers need to know that they may be called upon to discuss any arrests or decisions they made months after the event. Keeping accurate and thorough documentation is critical for the protection of the individual officer and the agency as a whole.
- **Recommendation:** Use ICS form 209 to document the event from start to finish.
- » The form, “Incident Status Summary,” aids in the documentation of specific incidents that may occur during the event. The form provides a thorough documentation checklist that may be helpful once the event is complete.
    - The Los Angeles Police Department enlarges the form and posts it in the command center to keep everyone updated on active incidents while the event is in progress.

## Arrests

Mass arrests should always be the very last resort and are strongly discouraged as a means of crowd control. If, however, criminal activity involves a large number of individuals and orders

to disperse have not been heeded, the decision may be made to conduct a number of arrests, each of which must be documented and justified. Departments often are criticized during mass arrests when officers are unable to identify who has been arrested and articulate why every individual arrest was made.

- **Recommendation:** If at all possible, mass arrests should be avoided.
- » Mass arrests are often chaotic and can lead to confusion and processing errors. These errors can lead to lawsuits against the city and department and can have a detrimental impact on longer-term police-community relationships.
- **Recommendation:** The decision to make multiple arrests should come from the host agency, and officers from that agency should make the arrests.
- » In the planning stages, those with the power to approve arrests should be clearly designated. In many cases, the decision will be made by the incident commander, unless there are exigent circumstances that require an immediate decision from commanders in the field. Even in these cases, an individual from the host agency should make the ultimate decision.
  - » Officers from the host agency should make the actual arrests. They are most familiar with arrest processing protocols and will be available for any follow-up court hearings that may require the presence of the arresting officers.
- **Recommendation:** Arrests should be documented, on video if possible. Documentation should start prior to the arrests.
- » As mentioned previously, proper documentation is crucial during a large, preplanned event and even more so for arrests made during the event. If available,

the entire arrest process should be documented on video to provide clear evidence that can be accessed later.

- » If used, filming should begin **before** arrests are made. This helps to ensure that the events leading up to the arrests, including dispersal orders, are documented.
  - In Los Angeles, the department's internal affairs and use of force investigators are on call during large, preplanned events so that they can immediately start taking statements from officers following arrests and begin the documentation process.
  - In Seattle, sergeants are tasked with ensuring that the department's use of force policy (put in place following a consent decree) is followed throughout the arrest period.
- » Photographs should be taken of each arrestee with the arresting officer, for documentation purposes.
- » For the 2012 DNC in Charlotte, every officer was issued a bar-coded wrist band which was scanned to document every time that officer had contact with an arrestee.

► **Recommendation:** Arrests should be used as a last resort and conducted as carefully and methodically as possible.

- » Officers should ensure that demonstrators are given enough time to disperse before making arrests. If not enough time is given, the courts may later determine that demonstrators were arrested without cause.
- » One executive briefing participant noted that unless individuals are being hurt or significant property damage is occurring, there should be no rush to make arrests.

- » The arrest process should be undertaken methodically to ensure all proper procedures are being followed.
- » When conducting mass arrests, officers should ensure they can articulate each arrest they physically make.

- If a judge later dismisses the charges, the dismissal can be used as per se evidence that it was an unlawful arrest.

- » Participants warned that agencies need to be vigilant in ensuring that members of the news media are not inappropriately included in mass arrest situations.

► **Recommendation:** Consider designating trained individuals or teams to conduct arrests during the event.

- » Before the event, designate teams and or individuals who will be responsible for making arrests if the need arises. The designated individuals will be responsible for the arrest reports and processing duties. This frees the majority of officers to remain in the field.
  - Confer with prosecutors on the arrest plan well in advance of the event.
- » In addition to the arresting officers, agencies should have supporting personnel either on scene or on call and readily available.
  - These personnel include prosecutors, internal affairs, any specialized use of force investigative teams, etc.
  - To ensure adequate supervision, Seattle Police Department officers ensure that there are sergeants on all arrest processing teams, transportation vans, and use of force investigative teams.

- ▶ **Recommendation:** Ensure that arrest processing facilities are able to handle a potentially large influx of arrestees.
  - » The size and physical condition of the arrest processing facility may become a point of controversy if it is unable to safely and efficiently handle a large number of arrestees. Prior to the event, ensure that any needed technology is functioning correctly and that there are enough resources and supplies to last the duration of the event.
  - » It is also advisable to have a doctor on site who can provide medical treatment to any arrestees.
  - » All efforts should be made to process individuals as quickly and efficiently as possible. The New York Police Department, for example, has the ability to arraign individuals in its arrest facility.
- ▶ **Recommendation:** Staff the arrest processing facility with officers who are detail-oriented.
  - » Having the right staff in place at the arrest facility is important to the outcome of a mass arrest. Participants noted that intake is not the most exciting assignment, but stressed the need to ensure that facilities are staffed with detail-oriented officers.
    - In Charlotte, the police department often uses detectives to staff the intake center, as they are trained to maintain meticulous records.

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## Media relations

Without question, large, preplanned events will draw a significant amount of media attention. In Cleveland, the CDP expected more than 15,000 media personnel to be covering the RNC and related events. During major events, departments must protect the media's rights to cover events while also keeping media personnel safe.

- ▶ **Recommendation:** Host a media orientation prior to the event.
  - » Prior to the event, invite media representatives to participate in an orientation day with the police department. At this meeting, brief the media on the department's preparations for the event and media logistics.
    - This may also be an opportunity to demonstrate some of the officer training exercises and other preparations the department is undertaking for the event.
    - Additionally, brief reporters on tactics demonstrators sometimes use to garner attention but which can be misleading, such as the use of fake blood.
    - It is also important to brief media on the potential risks they face during mass demonstrations and how to protect themselves.
  - » Some executive briefing participants found it useful to invite elected leaders and community representatives to the media orientation or to hold separate orientation sessions for them.
  - » The media should also be briefed on what they can and cannot do. For example, while the media enjoy broad protections to report on activities taking place on public space, media representatives still must abide by any dispersal orders. It is important to clarify these expectations up front.
- ▶ **Recommendation:** Decide before the event if the department will allow journalists to embed with officers.
  - » Many of the executive briefing participants stated that they had no issue with embedding journalists with officers during

an event. In fact, some saw utility in allowing journalists behind police lines, to give them a sense of how officers are seeing the event unfold. Departments should retain discretion, however, over which journalists and how many will be allowed behind the police lines.

- **Recommendation:** Designate a media staging area.
  - » The media who are covering possible demonstrations should be given a designated area in which to operate, ideally with electricity, online connectivity, and risers.
    - For major events such as national political conventions, most journalists will be covering events inside the main venue, and event organizers will establish an extensive media operation for those reporters. In addition, if there are demonstrations associated with the event, some reporters will be covering that activity on the street.
    - For the 2012 RNC, Tampa set up a camp for the media covering outside activities near the main event venue. The area included electricity for the media's equipment and a platform from which they could get a better visual of the event.
- **Recommendation:** Determine protocols for verifying media credentials prior to the event.
  - » It can be difficult at times to establish the credentials for media outlets, as definitions of who is a "journalist" have changed drastically in recent years. In addition, major events such as political conventions will draw a large contingent of national and international reporters who will be unfamiliar to the local police public information team.

- » While the police department should be as inclusive as possible with new forms of media and journalism, the department must work to distinguish actual journalists from individuals falsely claiming to be media. The department should have a set process to determine appropriate media credentials so as to avoid claims of bias, such as the belief that only media favorable to the police will be given access. Having a transparent process in place prior to the event will mitigate these claims.

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### Social media—receiving and sending information

During large-scale events, social media play two important roles: as an important source of information about the event (including providing intelligence about potential threats), and as a critical channel for the department to communicate directly with the news media and the public, minute by minute, in a very efficient way.

- **Recommendation:** For gathering information, identify which social media platform(s) will yield the most information.
  - » Because it may not be feasible to keep an eye on all social media platforms during an event, the department should work to identify which platforms will yield the most information.
  - » In many instances, Twitter will be the most commonly used social media platform for disseminating "breaking news" about an event and associated demonstrations.
  - » Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and other social media platforms will likely be used to share stories, often through video and photographs.

- » Departments should already have social media capabilities for everyday operations. Sufficient personnel should be assigned to these operations leading up to and throughout the duration of the major event.
- **Recommendation:** Use geo-fences to capture information from social media efficiently.
  - » Geo-fencing technology<sup>11</sup> enables posts to be collected from a set geographic area. Doing so streamlines information-gathering efforts and focuses intelligence on physical locations critical to the event.
- **Recommendation:** Use social media strategically when communicating with the public.
  - » During large events, social media is an efficient platform to communicate with the public. Departments can alert the public to areas they need to avoid, direct both vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and give event updates.
    - These social media posts can help the police direct the crowds and isolate criminal activity.
    - Social media posts can also serve to dispel inaccurate statements and rumors spread through social media.
- **Recommendation:** Host a debriefing session and share feedback and lessons learned.
  - » After the event has concluded, host a debrief meeting (or series of debriefs) with involved personnel to identify what worked, as well as lessons learned for the future. Consider involving community leaders, business owners, and other stakeholders in the debrief process. Document and share these findings with all stakeholders, as appropriate, ensuring that sensitive intelligence is protected.
- **Recommendation:** Have a plan for how to retrieve equipment from mutual aid agencies.
  - » Once the event ends, mutual aid agencies will likely depart as quickly as possible. The host agency should have a process in place for mutual aid officers to return any equipment given out by the host agency.
- **Recommendation:** Recognize the efforts of all of the officers involved.
  - » It is important for the host agency to recognize the time and effort all officers—local and mutual aid—have devoted to the event. Many organizations give officers challenge coins or service pins to commemorate the event and thank them for their service.

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### Debriefing and lessons learned—successfully concluding a preplanned event

Once the official event ends, the department must work to scale back its response and return to normal operations. As with all other aspects of the police response during the preplanned event, demobilization requires advance planning.

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<sup>11</sup> Geo-fencing technology uses GPS to define virtual geographic boundaries around a specific area, so social media traffic can be monitored in that area.



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# Conclusion

While each law enforcement operation presents its own unique challenges, departments can help offset the unknowns of large, preplanned events by working far in advance and using the knowledge of other departments that have hosted similar events. It is impossible to plan for every incident or contingency that might occur; however, steps can be taken to maximize opportunities for success and mitigate potential risks.

This report covers some of the key areas that law enforcement agencies hosting major, preplanned events need to consider and prepare for. They range from such big-picture issues as setting the philosophy and tone for the event and drafting mass arrest protocols to specific logistical details such as radio interoperability, use of social media, and equipment retrieval after the event.

Taken together, the recommendations in this report, summarized in Section 1 on page 3, provide a checklist for agencies faced with managing these types of events in the future. And while the nature of large-scale events and associated demonstration activity continues to evolve, the ability of police leaders to learn from experienced colleagues remains extremely valuable. With every new event, the body of knowledge and best practices continues to grow.

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## Appendix A. List of Participants

**Chief (ret.) Jane Castor**  
Tampa Police Department

**Chief (ret.) Tim Dolan**  
Minneapolis Police Department

**Captain Phil Fontanetta**  
Los Angeles Police Department

**Chief (ret.) Terry Gainer**  
U.S. Capitol Police Department

**Assistant U.S. Attorney John Gallagher**  
DOJ, Eastern District of Pennsylvania

**Deputy Chief Steve Georgas**  
Chicago Police Department

**Deputy Chief Bob Green**  
Los Angeles Police Department

**Chief (ret.) Rodney Monroe**  
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department

**Chief William Morris**  
New York Police Department

**Chief of Citywide Operations Tom Purtell**  
New York Police Department

**Commissioner Richard Ross**  
Philadelphia Police Department

**Assistant Chief Steve Wilske**  
Seattle Police Department

**Executive Director Chuck Wexler**  
Police Executive Research Forum

**Director of Project Management  
Kevin Morison**  
Police Executive Research Forum

**Research Assistant Sarah Mostyn**  
Police Executive Research Forum

**Collaborative Reform Specialist  
Nazmia Comrie**  
COPS Office

**Senior Advisor Katherine McQuay**  
COPS Office



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# About PERF

The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) is an independent research organization that focuses on critical issues in policing. Since its founding in 1976, PERF has identified best practices on fundamental issues such as reducing police use of force; developing community policing and problem-oriented policing; using technologies to deliver police services to the community; and developing and assessing crime reduction strategies.

PERF strives to advance professionalism in policing and to improve the delivery of police services through the exercise of strong national leadership; public debate of police and criminal justice issues; and research and policy development.

The nature of PERF's work can be seen in the titles of a sample of PERF's reports over the last decade. Most PERF reports are available without charge online at <http://www.policeforum.org/free-online-documents>.

- Guiding Principles on Use of Force (2016)
- Identifying and Preventing Gender Bias in Law Enforcement Response to Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (2016)
- Advice from Police Chiefs and Community Leaders on Building Trust (2016)
- Gun Violence: Regional Problems, Partnerships, and Solutions (2015)
- Implementing a Comprehensive Performance Management Approach in Community Policing Organizations: An Executive Guidebook (2015)
- Labor and Management Roundtable Discussions: Collaborating to Address Key Challenges in Policing (2015)
- Constitutional Policing as a Cornerstone of Community Policing (2015)
- Re-Engineering Training on Police Use of Force (2015)
- Overcoming the Challenges and Creating a Regional Approach to Policing in St. Louis City and County (2015)
- Police Accountability – Findings and National Implications of an Assessment of the San Diego Police Department (2015)
- Defining Moments for Police Chiefs (2015)
- Implementing a Body-Worn Camera Program: Recommendations and Lessons Learned (2014)
- Local Police Perspectives on State Immigration Policies (2014)
- New Challenges for Police: A Heroin Epidemic and Changing Attitudes Toward Marijuana (2014)
- The Role of Local Law Enforcement Agencies in Preventing and Investigating Cybercrime (2014)
- The Police Response to Active Shooter Incidents (2014)
- Future Trends in Policing (2014)

- Legitimacy and Procedural Justice: A New Element of Police Leadership (2014)
- Social Media and Tactical Considerations for Law Enforcement (2013)
- Compstat: Its Origins, Evolution, and Future in Law Enforcement Agencies (2013)
- Civil Rights Investigations of Local Police: Lessons Learned (2013)
- A National Survey of Eyewitness Identification Procedures in Law Enforcement Agencies (2013)
- An Integrated Approach to De-Escalation and Minimizing Use of Force (2012)
- Improving the Police Response to Sexual Assault (2012)
- How Are Innovations in Technology Transforming Policing? (2012)
- Voices from Across the Country: Local Law Enforcement Officials Discuss the Challenges of Immigration Enforcement (2012)
- 2011 Electronic Control Weapon Guidelines (2011)
- Managing Major Events: Best Practices from the Field (2011)
- It's More Complex than You Think: A Chief's Guide to DNA (2010)
- Gang Violence: The Police Role in Developing Community-Wide Solutions (2010)
- Violent Crime in America: What We Know About Hot Spots Enforcement (2008)
- "Good to Great" Policing: Application of Business Management Principles in the Public Sector (2007)

- Police Management of Mass Demonstrations: Identifying Issues and Successful Approaches (2006)
- Managing a Multi-Jurisdiction Case: Identifying Lessons Learned from the Sniper Investigation (2004)

In addition to conducting research and publishing reports on our findings, PERF conducts management studies of individual law enforcement agencies; educates hundreds of police officials each year in the Senior Management Institute for Police, a three-week executive development program; and provides executive search services to governments that wish to conduct national searches for their next police chief.

All of PERF's work benefits from PERF's status as a membership organization of police officials, who share information and open their agencies to research and study. PERF members also include academics, federal government leaders, and others with an interest in policing and criminal justice.

All PERF members must have a four-year college degree and must subscribe to a set of founding principles, emphasizing the importance of research and public debate in policing, adherence to the Constitution and the highest standards of ethics and integrity, and accountability to the communities that police agencies serve.

PERF is governed by a member-elected President and Board of Directors and a Board-appointed Executive Director.



Hosting a political convention poses unique challenges. In addition to the usual requirements of policing mass events, law enforcement must protect convention dignitaries, reroute traffic, and work with partners such as the FBI and U.S. Secret Service. Law enforcement must also accommodate the needs of the media and manage any demonstrators, supporting their First Amendment rights while maintaining public safety.

To help the Cleveland Division of Police (CDP) prepare for the 2016 Republican National Convention, PERF and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services hosted a roundtable discussion with police executives who had experience with similar events. Participants provided CDP leaders and Philadelphia Commissioner Richard Ross Jr., whose city was preparing for the Democratic National Convention, with advice on a wide range of topics crucial to successful policing of a political convention. Many of these recommendations can also be applied to other large-scale events, such as mass demonstrations.



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