



USCP Response to OIG Report #4

June 15, 2021 | Press Release

The United States Capitol Police welcomes and is already implementing many of the recommendations detailed in the Office of Inspector General's (OIG) fourth flash report on the Containment & Emergency Response Team (CERT) and the First Responders Unit (FRU).

For example, all recommended policy updates are being completed to reflect current practices and the Department is developing a plan to ensure cross division training.

USCP leadership has already acknowledged there were communication shortfalls on January 6 and has pledged that will not happen again. In the future, the CERT commander will be leading from incident command posts and establish tactical command to coordinate with outside units.

CERT will also now be involved in planning future major events. That will happen under the direction of Wesley Schwark, a Ret. Secret Service Agent who Acting Chief Yogananda Pittman and Acting Assistant Chief Sean Gallagher brought in to help with the Department's major event planning.

Mr. Schwark was assigned to the Secret Service's Presidential Protective Division and later transferred to the Dignitary Protection Division. His areas of responsibility included inter-agency coordination with federal, state, and local agencies, private industry, and all levels of law enforcement for National Special Security Events (NSSE). Schwark has been intimately involved with the planning and coordination of every NSSE since 2014. The most recent includes the 2020 State of the Union Address, the 2018 State Funeral for President George H.W. Bush, and the 2017 Presidential Inauguration.

Officers with the First Responders Unit (FRU) carry less than lethal options such as saber red spray and batons. Less than lethal launchers and hand held munitions are currently deployed by certified members of the Department's Civil Disturbance Unit. The Department is looking to train FRU officers on the launchers and hand held munitions.

The Department is also working to hire additional Hazmat Techs to help with a variety of responses to include decontamination. The Department has also recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Health and Human Services that would support EMT requirements for USCP missions.

The USCP will work to coordinate with the Architect of the Capitol to ensure officers have the ability to quickly secure the tunnel system.

USCP leadership is answering the calls for change from all of the post January 6 reviews to ensure a violent attack like that never happens again.

The team is thankful for its partnership with the Office of the Inspector General and Congress for their hard work to help make critical changes to improving the Department.

Northern Red Response

The training facility provides a high-level training course, which is only for active duty military and law enforcement. In the past, the United States Capitol Police Containment and Emergency Response Team (CERT) and other federal law enforcement agencies have trained there. The USCP facility is not built for high-powered weapons. The last time the Department used the training facility was in 2019. CERT has not trained there since and does not intend to in the future, which is only compounded by these new concerns from the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). Acting Chief Pittman believes it is time for a culture change in the law enforcement profession. Diversity and inclusion has been a passion of hers throughout her entire career. Acting Chief Pittman and all of the USCP leadership team takes extremist ideology seriously and are working on a plan to ensure that kind of cancer does not find its way into this Department. It has no place here.