



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

CHIEF OF POLICE

CRAIG N. MEIDL

Closed Use of Force Summary

Tracking Number: F18-034
Incident Number: 2018-20108952
Date of Incident: 6/8/2018
Chain of Command Finding: In Compliance with Policy

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS

Note: This incident did not contain a reportable force application; rather, it contained standard handcuffing procedures. However, SPD policy dictates that if an individual reports an injury, SPD investigates the incident as a reportable Use of Force incident.

Officers responded to a Medics call. Callers reported that a male was lying face down in the middle of the street, stopping traffic, and likely needed medical attention. Spokane Fire Department responded and requested police assistance. Fire personnel explained that they were trying to get the male to go to detox for the night, due to his level of intoxication. Officers approached the male in a calm voice about going to detox to get help. The male was very agitated and tried to walk away several times. Officers explained they needed to check on his welfare and detained him in handcuffs. They explained that he was going to the hospital tonight. At that point, the male said he wanted to die. After further conversation with the man, officers decided he was a danger to himself and required a mental health evaluation. When the ambulance arrived, the male became more upset, saying he did not want to go to the hospital and that he would assault people. Medics placed the gurney on the sidewalk, and officers walked him over to the gurney and instructed him to sit down. He initially sat, but then laid down on his back, putting pressure on his hands, which were in handcuffs. Officers told him to sit up so they could take the handcuffs off, because in that position, all of a person's body weight is on their hands. The male sat up, officers removed the handcuffs, and secured his arms to the side of the gurney. One of the officers followed the ambulance up to the hospital. The male stated that the officer had broken his finger. Due to that statement, the officer asked for an x-ray and requested personnel contact SPD if his finger was broken. The ER nurse later reported that he had a non-displaced hairline fracture on his pinky finger. The officer's sergeant visited the male in the hospital, but it was difficult to speak to him due to his intoxication level (.28 BAC). After a review of the body camera footage, the reviewing sergeant noted the moment when the male laid back on his hands and cried out. The sergeant found that the officers' actions did not cause an injury, and that they did not have any





SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

CHIEF OF POLICE

CRAIG N. MEIDL

physical contact with him when he laid back on the gurney while still handcuffed. The Chain of Command agreed with the review that the officer's actions were within policy and that he had not applied any force to cause injury to the finger.

