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DERRICK J. LEW
CHIEF OF POLICE

July 14, 2026

Supervisor Jackie Fielder
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 248
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Letter of Inquiry Response – Stud Alley and Trans March

Dear Supervisor Fielder,

Thank you for your June 30, 2026 Letter of Inquiry regarding the San Francisco Police Department's (SFPD or Department) response to two incidents occurring during Pride Weekend. I understand these incidents raised real concern in the community, and I appreciate the opportunity to lay out, in detail, what happened.

Your letter describes officers "clashing with residents and visitors participating in Pride activities..." That framing – and the apparent misconception that officers were targeting the transgender community or Pride participants – is not accurate. The arrests in both incidents involved a small number of people, out of many thousands who attended these events peacefully. Officers identified the individuals who were arrested as engaged in specific criminal conduct, including vandalism, unlawful assembly, and, at the Trans March, physically interfering with a lawful arrest.

I want to be clear from the outset: the SFPD is committed to serving and protecting every member of our community, including our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community members. That commitment extends beyond Pride Weekend and is written into our policies. Department General Order (DGO) 5.22 governs how officers interact with transgender, gender-variant, and nonbinary individuals (e.g., officers use a person's chosen name and pronouns, and ask, rather than assume, a person's preference when a search is required). We also maintain an LGBTQ+ Advisory Forum, work with community organizations on an ongoing basis, and have transgender officers on the force.

Further, the SFPD supports every person's right to peacefully assemble, celebrate, and exercise their constitutional rights. At the same time, the Department has a responsibility to respond when criminal activity threatens public safety or interferes with the rights of others.

The Stud Alley and Trans March incidents were not representative of Pride Weekend as a whole. The SFPD supported numerous permitted events, drawing hundreds of thousands of residents and visitors, and the large majority concluded without incident.

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I addressed these two incidents in my regular report to the Police Commission on July 8, 2026. The responses below reflect that report and, in some places, elaborate on details. Our responses are based on our current understanding of the facts and investigation to date, which remains ongoing.

Regarding SFPD deployment to Stud Alley

1. What were the circumstances surrounding this event? Please share whether SFPD's deployment was in response to calls for service to 9-1-1 or a proactive deployment targeting the Stud Alley event.

At approximately 8:58 p.m. on June 27, 2026, officers assigned to Southern Station Pride Command encountered about 20 people gathered for an unpermitted block party on the 100 block of Kissling Street. Several were wearing full face coverings and standing near spray paint cans and fire extinguishers. The crowd eventually grew to hundreds of participants occupying the public roadway and blocking vehicular traffic and Muni service. A white U-Haul van pulled up and unloaded DJ equipment, and loud amplified sound began playing. Attendees blocked the street using medium and large boulders. SFPD supervisors tried to negotiate with event organizers but were met by a group of about ten individuals who refused to cooperate and responded with verbal aggression.

About an hour later, a patrol lieutenant arrived, declared an unlawful assembly, and officers formed a line and issued multiple dispersal orders over a public address system. The group thinned significantly as most of the crowd complied with the officers' orders to disperse. As the line advanced, officers arrested two individuals who refused repeated orders to leave and pushed back against the advancing officers. Both individuals were cited at the scene and released. Around the same time, a group of individuals surrounded two passing Waymo vehicles and slashed all four tires on each, leaving both inoperable.

The crowd then moved off Kissling Street, but members of the same group, including the DJ and the same U-Haul van, began to set up again two blocks away on Washburn Street, between Mission and Howard. That drew a crowd of roughly 150 to 200 people who built a barricade across the alley out of wood, construction equipment, traffic cones, and sections of pipe. People spray-painted graffiti on nearby buildings and vehicles.

There, officers declared a second unlawful assembly, re-established a line, issued dispersal announcements over a public address system, and moved in to seize the U-Haul van and sound equipment, which was abandoned. A small group refused to leave, and eighteen people were arrested.

2. Please share the total number of officers deployed to the Stud Alley event.

From 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 27 until 3:00 a.m. on Sunday, June 28, Southern Station Pride Command was staffed with approximately 24 personnel (three sergeants and 21 officers) for all Pride activities in the district. However, at this time, we do not have a complete count of the number of officers who responded to the Stud Alley incident.

3. What is the existing SFPD policy regarding police response to Pride/LGBTQ block parties, permitted or non-permitted? To any block party with a noise complaint? Does that policy include deploying officers in full tactical gear?

The Department does not have a policy specific to Pride or LGBTQ+ events. Response to a public gathering depends on the facts and circumstances of the event and public safety considerations, not on who is participating or what viewpoint is being expressed. Operational decisions regarding police response weigh factors that include whether the event is permitted, whether criminal activity is occurring, impacts on public safety and emergency access, crowd behavior, and whether voluntary compliance can resolve the situation. Decisions regarding the deployment of personal protective equipment are made based upon the operational assessment of those circumstances.

4. What is the existing SFPD policy regarding police response to reports of graffiti?

Graffiti reports are investigated consistent with California law and Department policy governing all criminal investigations. The existence of graffiti alone does not dictate a specific enforcement response. Officers evaluate the full circumstances including whether criminal activity is ongoing, public safety concerns, available evidence, and whether a suspect can be identified.

5. How did this deployment rise to the level of deploying officers in full tactical gear? How many officers were deployed to the scene?

The decision to deploy officers in personal protective equipment reflected the operational assessment of what was happening at the scene: a rapidly growing crowd, the unlawful occupation of the roadway, barricades blocking vehicle access, vandalism that had been reported and observed firsthand, and the presence of boulders, glass bottles, and other objects that posed a safety risk to officers and the public alike.

6. According to SFPD Department General Order (DGO) 5.01: Use of Force Policy and Proper Control of a Person, “When determining the appropriate level of force, officers shall, when feasible, balance the severity of the offense committed and the level of resistance, based on the totality of the circumstances known to or perceived by the officer at the time, with the level of force used and its likely injury outcome.” Who made the judgement call to deploy officers in full tactical gear, and based on what factors?

The decision to deploy officers in personal protective equipment is distinct from the use of force and factors used to determine and appropriate use of force under DGO 5.01. The incident command structure made the deployment decision based on what officers were facing at the scene, including crowd size and behavior, ongoing criminal activity, public safety concerns, and the safety of officers themselves.

7. What is the nature of the reports about any injuries or destruction of property related to the Stud Alley party that led to SFPD deploying officers in tactical gear?

Records show acts of vandalism, including graffiti and unlawful barricades on both Kissling and Washburn Streets. Two Waymo vehicles were also damaged with all four tires slashed on each. Dispatch logged one 911 call regarding Kissling Street and nine separate calls regarding Washburn Street. Two officers sustained minor injuries during the Washburn Street enforcement action.

8. According to SFPD's DGO 5.01: Use of Force Policy and Proper Control of a Person, "Officers shall, when feasible, employ de-escalation strategies and techniques to mitigate the need to use a higher level of force and to increase the likelihood of a peaceful resolution." Were there other de-escalating strategies used first, to address graffiti or noise complaints that could have been deployed to avoid a clash between armed officers and unarmed party participants?

Yes, officers tried to identify and speak with event organizers, communicated repeatedly with attendees, and issued multiple lawful dispersal orders over a public address system, giving people time to comply voluntarily. Many attendees complied and left before officers advanced.

9. How many individuals were arrested at the Stud Alley event and on what charges?

There were twenty enforcement actions in total. Two people were cited at the scene on Kissling Street, and eighteen were arrested at the scene on Washburn Street, transported to county jail, processed, and cited for alleged violations including Penal Code sections 409 (Remaining Present at an Unlawful Assembly) and 148(a)(1) (Resisting, Delaying, or Obstructing a Peace Officer), before being released.

10. What time were officers first on the scene at the Stud Alley event, and when did the last officer leave the scene?

The incident began at approximately 8:58 p.m. on June 27, 2026, and the scene was clear just before 1:00 a.m. on June 28, totaling just under four hours.

11. And lastly, what is the nature of the complaints about any injuries or destruction of property related to SFPD's deployment of officers to the Stud Alley event?

To the extent there are pending complaints and investigations, the Department cannot comment regarding the substance of pending complaints and investigations, which are generally handled by the Department of Police Accountability.

Regarding SFPD deployment to Trans March

1. What were the circumstances surrounding this event?

- a. Please share whether SFPD's deployment was in response to calls for service to 9-1-1 or a proactive deployment targeting Trans March.**
- b. If a proactive deployment, how many officers were committed to being deployed at Trans March?**

The Trans March was a planned event beginning at Dolores Park. The route ran north on Dolores Street, east on Market Street, and toward Turk and Taylor Streets. As a planned event, four sergeants, 28 officers, and one captain (approximately 33 personnel in total) were assigned to the Trans March. Their objectives were to enforce the law, facilitate pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow for the protection of march participants, and support crowd management, while protecting the First Amendment rights of participants and adhering to Department policy on arrests, citations, and use of force. Additional specialized units were also assigned to support the event.

As the march reached the Market Street corridor at around 7:00 p.m. on June 26, 2026, officers observed several people using Super Soaker-style water guns filled with paint to spray-paint buildings and private security cameras along the route.

A Department drone helped track two vandalism suspects to the area of Turk and Taylor Streets, capturing footage of them placing the water guns into a paper bag, discarding the bag on the sidewalk, and removing their outer clothing and face coverings in an apparent attempt to blend back into the crowd of law-abiding marchers.

When officers moved to detain the two suspects at approximately 7:40 p.m., a crowd immediately surrounded them. Some in the crowd, estimated at roughly 300 people, linked arms, chanted for the suspects' release, and threw glass bottles. As officers attempted to place the two detained individuals into a patrol car, one person climbed onto the roof of the vehicle and was pulled down by officers, and another forced open the rear door in an attempt to free the suspects, while others pushed officers back.

Given the size and intensity of the crowd, additional officers were called in, and a line was formed between the crowd and the arresting officers.

The whole incident lasted about an hour and eight minutes, from when officers first observed the vandalism to when the arrests were completed. However, the march itself proceeded without disruption for most of that time. Active enforcement was concentrated in an approximately 22-minute window. The scene was stabilized by approximately 8:02 p.m., allowing the march to continue safely.

While officers were already assigned to facilitate the Trans March as a planned event, the enforcement action at Turk and Taylor Streets was a response to reported and observed criminal activity and the crowd's interference with a lawful arrest. It was not a response to the march itself. I am aware these events occurred near the site of Compton's Cafeteria, which is of real

significance to the transgender community. Officers responded to that location because that is where the suspects were located.

2. Please share the total number of officers deployed to responding to Trans March.

As noted above, as a planned event, approximately 33 personnel, along with additional specialized units, were assigned to the Trans March. However, at this time, we do not have a complete count of the number of officers who responded to the incident at Turk and Taylor Streets.

3. What is the nature of the reports about any injuries or destruction of property along the Trans March route?

Department reports document vandalism to numerous public and private properties along the march route, including one damaged and one stolen Flock Automated License Plate Reader, graffiti on Mission Dolores Basilica, damage to 24 privately-owned surveillance cameras, damage to a BART station entrance and damage to other public infrastructure. Investigators recovered evidence including water guns containing paint, paint containers, gloves, and other items believed to have been used during the vandalism.

One officer sustained a hand injury during the arrest response, and another was exposed to bodily fluids.

4. According to SFPD's DGO 5.01: Use of Force Policy and Proper Control of a Person, "Officers shall, when feasible, employ de-escalation strategies and techniques to mitigate the need to use a higher level of force and to increase the likelihood of a peaceful resolution." Were there other strategies deployed first, that could have been deployed to avoid a clash between armed officers and unarmed Trans March participants?

Yes, rather than intervening broadly in the march, officers relied on direct observation, a 911 caller's report, and drone tracking to identify people suspected of criminal conduct and make targeted arrests. During the arrest operation itself, officers gave repeated verbal commands telling the crowd to move back and not interfere.

The SFPD response was directed at specific individuals suspected of crimes and interfering with lawful arrests. It was not aimed at dispersing or stopping the Trans March.

5. How many individuals were arrested at Trans March and on what charges?

There were six arrests associated with the incident. Not every charge applies to every individual, but taken together, the alleged violations include felony vandalism (Penal Code 594), conspiracy (Penal Code 182), resisting, delaying, or obstructing a peace officer (Penal Code 148(a)(1)), resisting an executive officer (Penal Code 69), battery on a peace officer (Penal Code 243(b)), a hate-crime enhancement, and releasing a prisoner from custody.

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6. What time were officers first on the scene of Trans March and when did the last officer leave?

Officers were assigned to the march from its start at Dolores Park as part of the planned deployment. The vandalism was first observed as the march reached the Market Street corridor at around 7:00 p.m.; the arrest attempt began at approximately 7:40 p.m., and the scene was stabilized by 8:02 p.m.

Thank you again for your inquiry. The Department remains committed to serving every member of our community with professionalism, fairness, and respect. I am personally committed to transparency and accountability, and I appreciate the opportunity to provide this additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Lew', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

DERRICK J. LEW

Chief of Police

San Francisco Police Department