



**THE SRG  
MUST BE  
DISBANDED**

On April 4, 2018, NYPD officers murdered **Saheed Vassell** in Crown Heights. Some of the officers responsible were part of the SRG, and they mistook Vassell's metal pipe for a gun. Vassell and his family never received justice. This is what happens when the SRG is deployed into our neighborhoods to "respond to crime" — **they murder.**

## THE SRG KILLS

## TAKE ACTION: HELP US DISBANDED THE SRG

Join us in demanding the SRG to be disbanded and its millions in funds be reinvested into communities and programs that keep New Yorkers safe.

**Join the campaign** to disband the SRG: [bit.ly/nyclusrgr](https://bit.ly/nyclusrgr)

**Listen to the SRG Soundwalk**, a series of sound pieces featuring testimony and footage of the SRG's violence at protests: [bit.ly/disband-srg](https://bit.ly/disband-srg).

**Find out** if the SRG is coming to your neighborhood: [bit.ly/SRGDashboard](https://bit.ly/SRGDashboard).

**Call** these two councilmembers and demand they sign on to disbanding the SRG:

**Justin Brannan**  
718.748.5200 or 212.788.7363

**Speaker Adrienne Adams**  
718.206.2068 or 212.482.6731

# THE STRATEGIC RESPONSE GROUP

**THE NYPD'S MOST VIOLENT UNIT — AND WHY IT MUST BE ABOLISHED**

a zine by Crown Heights C.A.R.E. Collective, NYC-DSA Racial Justice Working Group, and NYC for Abortion Rights



photo by Sean Waltrous | @seanwaltrous

## A PATTERN OF BIAS

The SRG is often deployed at BLM and leftist protests. In contrast, **far-right and white supremacist protests typically demonstrate without any interference** from the unit.

In 2018, the SRG let Proud Boys to march without a police escort and backed away when Proud Boys attacked counter-protesters. They then escorted Proud Boy founder Gavin McInnes to his car. The SRG also has a **pattern of targeting people of color**. The Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) shows there have been 455 complaints filed against SRG officers between 2015 and 2021. These numbers do not include many allegations made during or after the 2020 protests.

Of those complaints against the SRG that included a victim's race, **the impacted individual was a person of color 91% of the time**. Victims were:



## A UNIT RAMPANT WITH MISCONDUCT

SRG officers have disproportionately **high rates of misconduct complaints**, and the unit abuses New Yorkers at levels unseen in the NYPD at large.

Of officers who were named in at least one complaint while in SRG, **the median number of complaints since 2000 is six**. The median number of complaints received since 2000 for all officers in the database is three. **18.9%** of complaints against SRG officers involved **physical force**, compared to 14% against all NYPD officers.

**11%** of the 455 complaints against SRG officers were **substantiated** by the CCRB, compared to 71% of complaints against all NYPD officers.

One SRG supervisor in the Bronx, Ischaler Grant, has **32 complaints** against him dating back to 1990, across ten separate incidents. Only 2% of officers across the NYPD have more incidents of misconduct than this officer.

## WHAT IS THE STRATEGIC RESPONSE GROUP?

Also known as “**the goon squad**” or “**hats & bats**”, the Strategic Response Group (SRG) is the NYPD's rapid reaction force. They are most often seen conducting “crowd control” at protests, parades, and public gatherings.

The SRG is a voluntary unit. It attracts **aggressive officers** who are then trained to use **violent tactics** like mass arrests, kettling, and Long-Range Acoustic Devices (LRADs). Many SRG officers have long misconduct records.

With little transparency about the size, scope, and funding of the SRG, this unit functions as a **rogue entity**. This militarized unit has no place in protests, or in our communities.

**LATEST SRG  
KNOWN BUDGET:  
\$134 MILLION**

*Publicly available information on the SRG is scarce and often outdated. The numbers in this zine would be more relevant if they accounted for the many protests of 2020-2023, at which the SRG had a heavy presence.*

## THE SRG TODAY

- + **Gear:** Tactical bicycle, body armor, riot helmets, shields, zip ties
- + **Weapons:** LRAD, taser, batons, NYPD-issued pistol
- + **Budget:** est. \$134M (excluding overtime)
- + **Size:** est. 800 officers
- + **Tactics:** Kettling, LRAD, use of force (batons, fists), using bicycles, as weapons, mass arrests, pepper spray...



**EACH SRG BIKE SQUAD OUTFIT COSTS \$2,000+**

photo by Jason D. Little @halidehustle

## EARLY HISTORY OF THE SRG

- + **January 2015:** Under the NYPD's then Commissioner Bill Bratton, the SRG is established as a 350-person, \$13M unit. It is supposed to focus on “counterterror.” The same year, the SRG's budget balloons to an estimated \$90M+ and doubles in size.
- + **January 2015:** Activists speak out against the unit, concerned about its role in policing protests.
- + **January 30th, 2015:** The NYPD's then Chief of Department announces that the unit would “not be involved in handling protests and demonstrations.” Instead, he claims the unit would solely focus on counterterror work.
- + **April 2015:** Despite this promise, the SRG is deployed to a protest for Freddie Gray, where its officers brutalize protesters.
- + **2016:** The SRG's bike squad is created, with an estimated 275 officers.