



Media Advisory

Henry Porretto, Chief of Police
City of Galveston

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with
RESPECT

For Immediate Release

OC Canisters Deployed During Mardi Gras Sweep

(Galveston, TX) March 2, 2014 – This morning at approximately 12:40 a.m. officers from the Galveston and UTMB Police Departments began the sweep of the event area at the close of Mardi Gras. This movement is performed by lining officers across the roadway and sidewalks at 20th Street marching west in unison down the Strand to 25th Street. The goal of the sweep is to turn all pedestrians west towards the exits.

At approximately 12:53 a.m. officers encountered a large group at 22 and Strand. The crowd had taken fencing used to safeguard the public from parade floats and barricaded the street. A team of officers were sent forward from the line in an attempt to move the fencing. The crowd observed this and began throwing bottles at them. The officers returned to the line and were unable to advance for several minutes. An order was then given to deploy an oleoresin capsicum canister, but the crowd still did not move. Another canister was utilized, the crowd began to disperse, and the fencing was cleared. A confirmed gang member was arrested after he was observed to be a main agitator of the disturbance. A total of 19 arrests were made during the sweep or immediately thereafter. No serious injuries were reported and no private property was damaged in this incident.

Chief Porretto said, “Officers used practiced and authorized techniques to disperse the crowd and clear the barricaded street. We will continue to evaluate and train our personnel to handle such incidents.”

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