

Paul A. Allen  
San Francisco, CA  
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(via email)

**San Francisco Police Commissioners:**

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Re: Drug Arrests and Overdose Death Data, 1/1/2023-6/30/2024

Dear Commissioners:

As you have surely read, yesterday the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner released the drug overdose death data for the prior month of June 2024. Continuing my past practice, the attached chart adds the June data to my prior charts on downtown dealer/user arrests and overdose deaths. As usual, overdose death data is from the SF Medical Examiner's Office<sup>1</sup>; dealer and user arrest data from the new DMACC dashboard.<sup>2</sup>

From the prior month, overdose deaths declined substantially by 27% to 48; dealer arrests increased slightly from the prior month, but user arrests increased by 18%. A slightly smaller percentage of deaths than the prior month, this time 58%, were in the Tenderloin, SOMA, and Polk/Russian Hill.

It seems increasingly evident that there is a negative or inverse correlation between dealer/user arrests and overdose deaths; that is, as dealer/user arrests increase, overdose deaths decline. One can see this (i) in the aggressive City response in the three months preceding the APEC summit; (ii) in January-April this year when arrests were generally high but deaths declined; (iv) in May when arrests declined but deaths

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2024-07/2024\\_07\\_OCME\\_Overdose\\_Report.pdf](https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2024-07/2024_07_OCME_Overdose_Report.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sanfranciscopolice.org/drug-market-agency-coordination-center>

increased; and (v) in June when arrests increased again but deaths declined. We know that correlation is not causation; and it could be that the association is random.

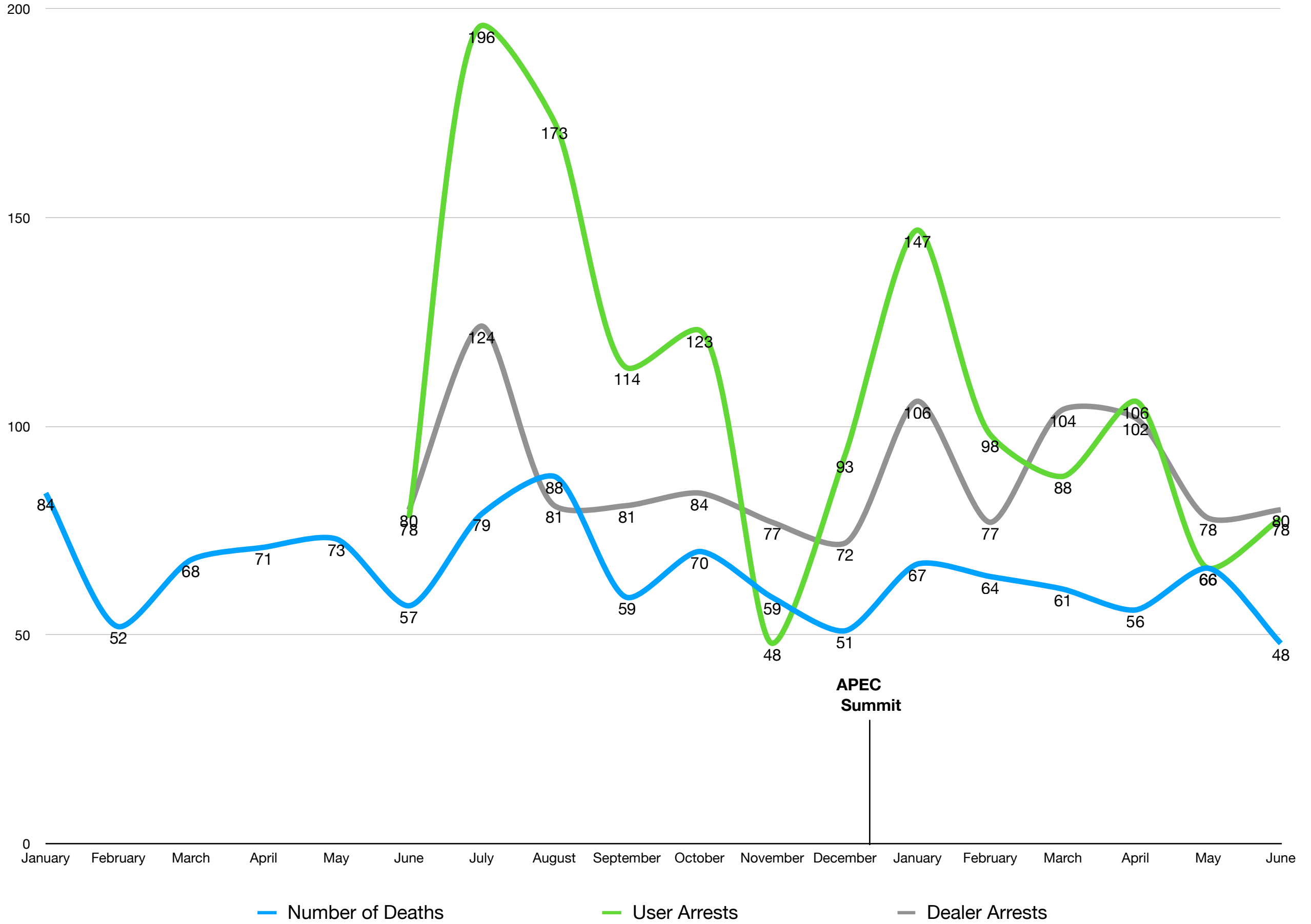
To help illuminate cause, it would no doubt be informative for the public to hear from the Department of Public Health and perhaps the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner on the one year of arrest and overdose death metrics: What is their opinion on the reason for the data fluctuations? Do they have data to support their opinion? Do they consider arrest metrics an influential variable? Perhaps the Police Commission could go on record at its meeting this week during the Chief's Report asking for same. The Commission prides itself on begin data driven. We have data and we appear to have correlation; but perhaps we do not have cause, nor are we privy to other variables relevant to drug overdose deaths, drug toxicity and DPH interventions obvious examples. The public indirectly and the Police Commission directly would benefit from other data and professional opinion given the police resources involved, the collateral effects of the downtown drug markets, Commissioner comments on these matters, and the Police Commission's policy making authority.

Sincerely,

Paul A. Allen

Attached: Chart of Number of City-Wide Overdose Deaths and Arrests per Month,  
January 2023-Jun 2024

### Number of City-Wide Overdose Deaths and Dealer/User Arrests Per Month, January 2023-June 2024



Sources: 1. SF Medical Examiner Reports for Deaths Data.  
2. SFPD DMACC Dashboard for Arrest Data.