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April 18, 2006

Gerald Whitman  
Chief of Police  
Denver Police Department

Dear Chief Whitman:

Please find enclosed a report, prepared by Ohio University Professor Joseph De Angelis and Arizona State University Professor Aaron Kupchik, on behalf of the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM), detailing the results of the first annual survey of citizen complainants and Denver Police Department sworn personnel regarding their perceptions of the Police Department's complaint handling and disciplinary processes.

As you know, on December 16, 2003, Mayor Hickenlooper announced the creation of a broad-based Task Force to investigate various ways to improve the police oversight system, which had been under the auspices of the Public Safety Review Commission (PSRC), since 1992. On October 5, 2004, the Mayor, with the unanimous support of the Denver City Council, established the OIM and the Citizen Oversight Board (COB). I was subsequently hired as the Monitor and the OIM opened its doors as of August 1, 2005.

One of my first initiatives as Monitor was to create and distribute satisfaction surveys to complainants and Denver Police Department (DPD) officers to establish baseline information that my office could use to evaluate and improve on the Department's current complaint handling processes. In addition, I wanted to evaluate what effect the work of the Monitor's Office can have on community and officer perceptions of the Department's disciplinary processes. The results of this first survey instrument are historical. They gauge respondents' perceptions of the disciplinary system during the period when it was under the jurisdiction of the PSRC. Future surveys will attempt to gauge respondents' perceptions of the disciplinary processes that are subject to civilian monitoring by the OIM.

Chief Gerald Whitman  
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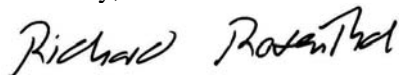
This survey was not intended to be a referendum on complainant or officer satisfaction with the Department's Command Staff nor the City administration. Looking at the surveys, you will see that all questions asked were within the context of satisfaction with the complaint handling and disciplinary processes. As such, the intent of the survey was to obtain information that the Monitor's Office can use, on an ongoing basis, to try to improve both community member and officer satisfaction with the complaint handling and disciplinary processes, in the long-term term.

We must recognize that the complaint handling and disciplinary processes were not created, nor intended to be used, as tools to ensure "customer" satisfaction. The complaint handling system is often incapable of satisfying the expectations of community members who are unhappy with police contacts. In addition, the disciplinary process cannot be expected to satisfy many of those officers who are forced to endure an internal investigation whether or not they are ultimately sanctioned by the Department for inappropriate conduct.

I note that the respondents in this survey (both complainants and officers) were, to a large extent, not satisfied with the processes in place during the existence of the PSRC. It would be naive of us to believe, however, that we can substantially improve these satisfaction rates in the short term, or that we that we will ever be able to satisfy a majority of the individuals involved in a system that is largely adversarial and, at times, punitive. But that does not mean that we should not try use the data collected in this survey, as well as future surveys, to continuously evaluate the manner in which the Department handles its complaint and disciplinary processes in order to achieve as high a level of satisfaction as possible while ensuring that the primary goals and intent of the complaint handling and disciplinary processes are met.

Finally, I want to thank you and your Department for your cooperation and assistance in making the administration and subsequent public distribution of this survey possible. Without your cooperation and assistance, this project would never have become a reality.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Rosenthal  
Independent Monitor

c: Honorable John Hickenlooper, Mayor  
Alvin LaCabe, Manager of Safety

# **Measuring Complainant and Officer Satisfaction with the Denver Police Complaint Process: Results from the Baseline Survey**

Conducted for the  
Office of the Independent Monitor  
Denver, Colorado

April 10, 2006

Joseph De Angelis, Ohio University  
Aaron Kupchik, Arizona State University

## Introduction

This report presents the results of the first stage of a multi-year research project that uses anonymous mailed surveys to examine how the implementation of Denver's Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) affects satisfaction among complainants and police officers.<sup>1</sup> The first stage, called the *baseline* survey, was an anonymous mailed survey sent in fall 2005 to all Denver police officers and to community members who filed police complaints PRIOR to the implementation of the OIM. In order to gauge how the OIM affects levels of satisfaction, a follow-up survey will be administered on a yearly basis to both Denver police officers and community members who file complaints through the new complaint system.

In this report, we discuss the results of the *baseline* survey. Specifically, we examine officer and complainant satisfaction with the previous citizen complaint process, as well as the attitudes of both groups on more general topics, such as satisfaction with local government and the police department generally. Later reports will compare the results of the baseline surveys to the results of the *follow-up* surveys, which will be distributed in 2006. Over time, this will allow for the examination of whether the OIM affects levels of satisfaction among police officers and citizen complainants.

The report is divided into four main sections:

- **Executive Summary:** In this section we highlight the central findings of the baseline surveys;
- **Methodology:** This section outlines survey methodology used in the research;
- **Research Findings:** In this section we report the findings of the research; and
- **Appendix:** This appendix contains copies of the survey instruments and respondent demographics

Questions and comments about the implications of the research for the City of Denver can be directed to the Office of the Independent Monitor at (720) 913-3306 or by email at [ois@ci.denver.co.us](mailto:ois@ci.denver.co.us).

Questions or comments about the research methodology or findings should be directed to Dr. Joseph De Angelis, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Ohio University at (740) 593-1371 or by email at [deangeli@ohio.edu](mailto:deangeli@ohio.edu). Inquiries may also be directed to Dr. Aaron Kupchik, Assistant Professor of Justice and Social Inquiry, Arizona State University at (480) 965-9632 or by email at [aaron.kupchik@asu.edu](mailto:aaron.kupchik@asu.edu).

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## Executive Summary

In November 2005, satisfaction surveys were sent to all Denver Police Department (DPD) officers and all community members who had closed police complaints filed between August 1, 2003 and August 1, 2005. Roughly 43% of the DPD officers and 20% of the available complainants completed and returned the survey. Of the officers who returned the survey, 60% reported being the subject of a citizen complaint within the last three years.

The following is a brief summary of the results of these surveys. We strongly encourage readers to read the more detailed results. However, due to the low response rate among complainants, caution should be used when drawing inferences about the overall population of complainants based on this small pool of survey respondents.

### Knowledge of the Complaint Process

- **Officers expressed confidence in their understanding of the complaint process.** Overall, officers generally expressed confidence in their understanding of the citizen complaint process. More than fifty percent of officers indicated that they understood the complaint process well or very well.
- **Complainants expressed less confidence in their understanding of the complaint process.** Just over one-third of complainants indicated that they understood the complaint process well or very well, while another third indicated that they had a poor or very poor understanding of the complaint process.
- **Complainants reported mixed views in terms of access to the complaint process.** Slightly more than forty percent of complainants reported that it was easy to file their complaint. Forty-one percent of complainants, however, indicated that a DPD employee attempted in some way to discourage them from filing their complaint.

### Satisfaction with Internal Affairs

- **Officers indicated overall that they believed that the Internal Affairs process was biased, yet officers with complaints reported high levels of satisfaction with the staff of Internal Affairs.** Almost forty percent of officers indicated that Internal Affairs is biased in favor of the citizen and almost half reported that Internal Affairs is biased against certain officers. However, even though officers were more likely to view the internal affairs *process* as biased, they still appeared to be relatively satisfied with the demeanor and thoroughness of the investigative *staff* of Internal Affairs. For example, forty-five percent of officers agreed that internal affairs staff investigates complaints thoroughly. Moreover, roughly two-thirds of the officers who received complaints reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their treatment by Internal Affairs investigators in regard to politeness, being treated with respect, having their description of the event listened to, and being asked fair questions.
- **Overall satisfaction with Internal Affairs was lower among complainants than among officers.** Slightly less than half of the responding community members reported that they were satisfied that Internal Affairs staff were polite and respectful, while twenty-one percent of respondents were satisfied with the objectivity of the complaint investigator.

## Satisfaction with Communication

- **Officers who received complaints were generally unsatisfied with the quality of communication in relation to the complaint process.** Only one-third of officers who received complaints were satisfied with how quickly they were notified of the complaint. Similarly, thirty-one percent of officers were satisfied with the notification they received regarding the outcome of the complaint.
- **Satisfaction with communication was lower among complainants than among officers.** Slightly less than thirty percent of complainants were satisfied that the complaint process had been clearly explained to them and thirteen percent of complainants were satisfied that they were adequately informed about what happened as a result of their complaint. Just over one-third of complainants indicated that they had not received a written notification about the outcome on their complaint.

## Overall Satisfaction with the Complaint Process and Outcomes

- **Officers reported that they believe that the complaint process is biased in favor of citizens.** Almost two-thirds of officers indicated that they believed that the complaint process is biased in favor of citizens. Almost all officers agreed that most citizen complaints against officers are frivolous. It was common for officers to write that the investigation process and outcomes vary depending on one's rank or who one knows, that politics drive the complaint process, and that officers are presumed guilty. While some officers offered positive comments about certain parts of the complaint process, a majority of respondents voiced dissatisfaction with the overall complaint process.
- **Complainants reported that they believe that the complaint process is biased in favor of officers.** Where most officers reported that the process was biased in favor of citizens, almost ninety percent of complainants reported that they believed the process to be biased in favor of police officers. Less than twenty percent of complainants were satisfied with the efficiency, thoroughness, and fairness of the overall complaint process. Roughly nine in ten complainants reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the outcomes on their complaints.

## Views on Citizen Oversight

- **Few officers agreed that citizen involvement improves the complaint process. Yet, officers appeared to be guardedly optimistic about the OIM.** Only fourteen percent of officers agreed that citizen oversight improves the quality of IAB investigations. Almost eighty-five percent of officers reported that the Public Safety Review Commission (PSRC) was biased in favor of citizens. Yet, almost forty-four percent of officers agreed and forty-one percent were neutral as to whether the OIM would improve the complaint process.

- **Complainants were more positive than officers about the role of citizen involvement in the complaint process.** Eighty-seven percent of complaints agreed that citizen oversight improves internal affairs investigations and ninety-four percent of complainants agreed that independent citizens should monitor the complaint process. Despite their strong belief in the importance of citizen involvement, more than two-thirds of complainants reported that they believed the PSRC to be biased in favor of police officers. Like officers, complainants appeared to be somewhat unsure, but guardedly optimistic, about how objective and effective the OIM would be. Forty-one percent of the responding complainants reported that they were neutral in relation to whether the OIM would be biased and forty-six percent of complainants agreed that the OIM would improve the complaint process.

## Views on Local Institutions

- **In general, few officers agreed that the police command staff or local government supports police officers.** About fifteen percent of officers agreed that the command staff support line officers and that police command staff usually make fair disciplinary decisions. Five percent of officers agreed that the city administration supports police officers. Ninety-three percent of officers agreed that they believe that the media is biased against police officers. Almost ninety percent of officers agreed that they had the support of their fellow officers. Overall, officers expressed mostly positive views of Denver’s community members, including their respect for officers, their cooperativeness, and their trust in officers.
- **In general, complainants voiced relatively little faith in the police and in local government.** Roughly twenty-three percent of the complainants agreed that the police in Denver were doing a good job and twenty-six percent agreed that the police are concerned with protecting people’s rights. Moreover, sixteen percent of complainants said that they believed that police officers are concerned with protecting all community members equally, while almost sixty percent of agreed that officers treat minority residents worse than other residents. Roughly 17% of complainants agreed that the city of Denver tries to hold officers accountable.

## Officer Job Satisfaction

- **Overall, officers reported mixed views on their job satisfaction.** A majority of officers (60%) reported that their morale is low. Reported morale was higher among officers who have not received complaints than officers with complaints. However, when responding to more specific questions about job satisfaction and job commitment, officers offered more positive views. Large proportions of officers report that they were satisfied with their jobs, overall (63.6%), that they are very involved in their work (89.1%), and that doing their job well gives them a good feeling (91.8%).

## Survey Methods

The surveys were designed to measure how the implementation of the Office of the Independent Monitor affects levels of satisfaction among complainants and police officers. Accordingly, the research project involves the distribution of two waves of surveys. The first wave, called the *baseline* survey, was distributed to complainants and police officers at the beginning of November 2005. The results from that wave of surveys are reported here. The second wave of *follow-up* surveys will be sent to police officers in fall 2006 and to complainants on a quarterly basis. The OIM will continue to report on the surveys on an annual basis.

### Survey Instrument Design

The survey instruments for both complainants and police officers were designed as an anonymous mailed survey (see appendices A and B for copies of the baseline survey instruments). Each survey respondent was provided with a survey form that solicited no individually identifying personal information and a postage paid return envelope in which they could anonymously return the completed survey. All respondents were informed of the goals of the study, their rights as research participants, that their participation was voluntary, and that their responses would be anonymous.

The survey instruments for both complainants and police officers had a mix of closed and open questions that were designed to measure core issues,<sup>2</sup> such as:

- Satisfaction with the fairness, thoroughness, efficiency, and outcomes of the complaint process;
- Perceptions regarding the professionalism and objectivity of the internal affairs and police monitor staff;
- Satisfaction with the overall job the city of Denver is doing in responding to allegations of misconduct;
- Details about the survey respondents (such as the number of complaints in which they have been involved and demographic information); and,
- Ideas for improving the complaint process.

In addition, police officers also were asked about their overall thoughts on police oversight and Internal Affairs, their knowledge of the citizen complaint process, their job satisfaction and morale, and their confidence in police leadership and city government. Complainants were asked about their perceptions of police oversight, the police department and city government, and their history of filing complaints against officers.

The response format for many of the questions on the survey instruments consisted of five-point Likert-type scales that were anchored by either Very Satisfied/Very Dissatisfied or Strongly Agree/Strongly Disagree. Other questions included Yes/No responses and several questions were formatted to elicit open-ended comments about the complaint process.

### **Distribution of Officer Surveys**

The baseline surveys, along with a cover letter and a business reply envelope, were placed in the precinct mailboxes of ALL Denver police officers (DPD) in November, 2005. In order to boost the officer response rate to the survey, DPD officers were encouraged in an email from the Independent Monitor to complete and return the surveys. Approximately 1,500 officer surveys were distributed (representing all sworn DPD police officers and DPD police recruits)<sup>3</sup> and 648 were returned. This resulted in an estimated response rate of 43% for police officers, which is almost identical to response rates found in similar research efforts.<sup>4</sup> Of the officers who returned the survey, 60% reported being the subject of a citizen complaint within the last three years.

Demographic and case information supplied by officer respondents was compared to the overall population of DPD officers. Overall, the characteristics of the respondents were fairly similar with regard to complaints received, race/ethnicity, gender, age, rank, and number of years on the force to that of the overall population of DPD officers.<sup>5</sup> Thus, we are fairly confident that the sample is representative of DPD officers, overall.

### **Distribution of Citizen Surveys**

Since the goal of the baseline survey was to measure the attitudes of complainants PRIOR to the implementation of the OIM, all complainants with a valid postal address who filed a complaint against a Denver police officer and had it closed between August 1, 2003 and August 1, 2005 were surveyed.<sup>6</sup> Complainants were identified through the use of the Internal Affairs Bureau's (IAB) information management database.

The complainant survey procedures included three components: (1) surveys were mailed to complainants on November 10, 2005; (2) a reminder letter was mailed two weeks later; and (3) a second copy of the survey was mailed to complainants on December 6, 2005. Of the 1,118 complainants who were mailed a survey, 368 surveys were returned as undeliverable by the U.S. Post Office. Of the remaining 750 delivered surveys, 148 were returned, for a complainant response rate of 20%.

Even though this response rate is low, it is consistent with the response rates found in similar studies.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the respondent characteristics are very similar to those of the overall population of complainants with regard to gender and case outcome.<sup>8</sup> Nonetheless, it is important to note that those who did not respond may hold different views of the citizen complaint process than those who did respond. For example, respondents who are highly dissatisfied with the complaint process may have a greater incentive to respond to customer satisfaction surveys than respondents who are satisfied or neutral in relation to the complaint process. Thus, caution should be used when drawing inferences about the overall population of complainants based on this small pool of survey respondents.

### **Response categories were collapsed for this report**

Because of the low response rate among complainants, we chose to collapse the reported responses from a five-point scale to a three-point scale in this report. For example, on questions where officers and complainants reported being very satisfied or satisfied, responses were collapsed into the category of satisfied. On questions where the respondents reported very dissatisfied or dissatisfied, responses were collapsed into the category of dissatisfied.<sup>9</sup> Blanks and responses of "Don't Know" were excluded from the analysis.

# Research Findings

## Familiarity with the Complaint Process

The first section of the survey for both officers and complainants included questions that were designed to measure how well complainants and officers felt they understood the complaint process.<sup>10</sup> See Appendix C for a direct comparison of officers to complainants.

### Officers' Understanding of the Process

Overall, officers generally expressed confidence in their understanding of the citizen complaint process. More than half of officers reported that they felt they understood the process well, while 23% felt they had a poor understanding of the process.

How well do you feel you understand the citizen complaint process?  
(N=643)

	Percent
Well	54.2%
Neutral	22.6%
Poorly	23.1%

Officer knowledge of the complaint process came from several different sources. For example, over one-fourth of officers mentioned multiple sources of information about the complaint process. In general, the most common source of information for officers came from when they were the subject of a citizen complaint, though officers also received information from their academy training, from other officers, roll calls, and their supervisors.

How did you learn about the police complaint process?  
(N=640)

Multiple Sources	27.2%
Complaint Filed Against Me	15.9%
Academy	14.4%
Other Officers	11.4%
Roll Call	10.6%
Other Source	9.2%
Supervisors	8.4%
Union	2.8%
PSRC	0.0%

## Complainants' Understanding of the Process

Like the officer survey, complainants were also asked how well they felt they understood the complaint process. In general, complainants presented a much more mixed picture in terms of how confident they were that they understood the process. Roughly one-third of complainants reported that they understood the process well, while another third of the complainants reported that they had a poor understanding of the complaint process.

In order to identify how complainants accessed the complaint process, complainants were asked to identify where they first learned about the complaint process. Almost two-thirds of the responding complainants learned about the complaint process by contacting the Denver Police Department directly, either by telephone (48%), in person (12%), or by letter (4%). About 10% of the responding complainants found out about the complaint process by talking to friends or family members.

In addition to being asked about their knowledge of the process, complainants were also asked several questions designed to examine their perceptions regarding the accessibility of the complaint process. The first question from this section targeted how easy it was for the complainant to file their complaint. Just over 40% of the respondents indicated that it was very easy or easy to file their complaint, while another 32% indicated that filing the complaint was neither easy nor hard. However, 27% of the complainants indicated that it was hard or very hard to file their complaint.

### How well do you feel you understand the citizen complaint process? (N=145)

	Complainants
Well	35.8%
Neutral	28.3%
Poorly	35.8%

### How did you learn about the police complaint process? (N=136)

	Percent
Called DPD	47.8%
DPD Employee	11.8%
Friends/Family	9.6%
Other	6.6%
Called PSRC	5.1%
Newspaper	5.1%
Wrote a Letter to DPD	4.4%
Contacted Elected Official	2.9%
Police Website	2.2%
PSRC Website	2.2%
Other Agency/Organization	2.2%

### How easy was it for you to file your complaint? (N=144)

	Percent
Easy	40.9%
Neutral	31.9%
Hard	27.1%

Did any member of the Denver Police Department seek to discourage you from filing your complaint?  
(N=139)

	Percent
Yes	41.0%
No	59.0%

In addition to asking complainants how easy it was to file their complaint, they were also asked if any member of the Denver Police Department actively attempted to dissuade them from filing their complaint. Almost sixty percent of the respondents indicated that DPD employees had not attempted to

discourage them from filing their complaint. Just over forty percent of the responding complainants, however, indicated that they believed a DPD employee had sought in some way to discourage them from filing their complaint.

In order to better identify perceived barriers to the filing of complaints, we included two open-ended questions on the survey that asked complainants to describe any areas where they felt they encountered difficulty in filing their complaint. One of the most common responses to these questions was that respondents perceived the demeanor of some DPD employees to be an obstacle to the filing of their complaint. For example, a number of respondents wrote that DPD employees were defensive, rude, or biased:<sup>11</sup>

- "I initially left a message and the person returning my call wasn't friendly. Not that I was seeking a friend but the conversation made me somewhat tense."
- "Did everything he could to make me change my mind about the discrimination that we experienced."
- "Sgt. [A] was rude and defensive..."
- "Officer tried to talk me out of filing and made excuses for officer"
- "The Sgt. assisting me was very biased toward DPD and expressed his bias. [I] was told not a lot would come of it, but [I filed the complaint] anyways because it was right."

Other respondents wrote that they had difficulty finding DPD employees who would take their complaints seriously:

- "It was difficult to find anyone to take me seriously. The Lt. I spoke with wouldn't even tell me the name of the officer I was complaining about."
- "No one would listen or do anything positive."
- "Police don't believe citizens."

Some complainants reported that police officers and supervisors told them that it was unlikely that their complaint would be sustained:

- "[The officer] told me that nothing was likely to come from my complaint."
- "Was told probably nothing would be done."
- "Told me it would be difficult to prove physical abuse."

A number of complainants reported that they felt that a DPD employee had trivialized their concerns:

- “No info given-on how, unless pressed. Made to feel complaint was trivial, and another DWB (Driving while black) complaint.”
- “By treating me like a criminal and wasn’t worth their time.”
- “It was stated that my case was not important.”

Another theme was that some respondent’s perceived that they were being given the “bureaucratic run-around” when they attempted to file their complaint:

- “Kept getting passed around to different officers.”
- “I was told to go to about five different offices and ended up where I started.”
- “I was given the phone runaround. [I]t doesn’t seem to be under the heading of ‘anyone’s job’.”
- “Stonewalled at every level beginning with the officer then internal affairs.”
- “Had to be very persistent with multiple phone calls to many people.”

Finally, a number of complainants wrote that they felt that the process for filing complaint was not fully explained to them:

- “No actual process was ever explained to me.”
- “Didn’t have a procedure explain[ed] very well. Unsure of steps being taken to investigate.”
- “Not difficult, but in my conversation with the police officer he never mentioned that I could file a complaint.”

A smaller number of complainants reported that some DPD employees actively sought to intimidate them or engaged in retaliatory behavior in response to the filing of a complaint:

- “Officer parked outside of my house for a few days and the offending officer called continuously.”
- “They filed a complaint/summons after the incident and only after I filed a complaint.”
- “Officer’s supervisor came to my house and told me to withdraw complaint...threatened to charge me with a crime.”
- The officer himself threatened to arrest me for being a "pain in the ass" when asking for his badge #-he stated with sarcasm ‘sure I’ll even give you my card’.”

## Satisfaction with Internal Affairs

In the next section of the surveys, both officers and complainants were asked a series of questions that were designed to measure their opinions about the efficiency, thoroughness, and objectivity of the Internal Affairs Bureau.

### Satisfaction of ALL Officers

On the whole, officers reported mixed views of Internal Affairs. Many officers (44.5%) responded that Internal Affairs performs thorough investigations. Yet more than half of the officers agreed that Internal Affairs is biased against certain officers and over one-third agreed that Internal Affairs is biased in favor of citizens. Over one-half of the officers disagreed with the statement that that Internal Affairs' investigations are efficient. Additionally, nine out of ten officers agreed that Internal Affairs spends too much time on frivolous complaints

#### Officer Evaluations of the Objectivity, Thoroughness, and Efficiency of Internal Affairs

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
Internal Affairs is biased in favor of the citizen.	29.9%	31.5%	38.6%	616
Internal Affairs is biased against certain officers.	26.4%	21.5%	52.1%	595
Internal Affairs carefully weighs the information given by officers before issuing a finding on a complaint.	35.4%	22.5%	42.1%	565
Internal Affairs investigates all complaints in an unbiased manner.	49.2%	26.5%	24.3%	593
The actions of Internal Affairs negatively affects the morale of police officers.	17.6%	17.3%	65.1%	625
Internal Affairs investigates all complaints thoroughly.	30.6%	24.9%	44.5%	591
Internal Affairs investigates complaints efficiently.	59.4%	20.5%	20.0%	594
Internal Affairs spends too much time on frivolous complaints.	2.8%	5.6%	91.7%	609

### Satisfaction of Officers who Received Complaints

Officers who had received a citizen complaint within the last three years were more likely to view the Internal Affairs process negatively than officers who had not received a complaint. For example, officers with complaints were more likely to agree with the view that Internal Affairs is biased and spends too much time on frivolous complaints.<sup>12</sup>

#### Comparing Evaluations of Internal Affairs for Officers with Complaints to those without Complaints

	Agreement of Officers WITH Complaints	Agreement of Officers WITHOUT Complaints	N
Internal Affairs is biased in favor of the citizen	44.2%	30.0%	594
The actions of Internal Affairs negatively affects the morale of police officers	70.8%	56.4%	603
Internal Affairs is biased against certain officers	58.6%	42.8%	577
Internal Affairs spends too much time on frivolous complaints	94.8%	86.2%	588

Even though officers who received complaints were more likely to view the internal affairs *PROCESS* as biased, they still appeared to be relatively satisfied with the demeanor and thoroughness of the investigative *STAFF* of Internal Affairs. That is, officers who had received complaints tended to offer positive evaluations of Internal Affairs staff. For example, about two-thirds of officers with complaints were satisfied that Internal Affairs staff were polite, respectful, and listened to their description of the event. Despite these positive comments, only about one-half were satisfied that the investigator was unbiased, and almost two-thirds were dissatisfied with how soon after the incident they were interviewed.<sup>13</sup>

#### Satisfaction with Internal Affairs Staff for Officers Who Received a Citizen Complaint within the Last Three Years

	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	N
<b>How Satisfied Were You:</b>				
That the Internal Affairs staff were polite?	15.8%	15.8%	68.4%	342
That the investigator treated you with respect?	11.2%	18.5%	70.3%	357
With how well the investigator listened to your description of what happened?	18.6%	16.2%	65.2%	351
With the fairness of the investigator's questions?	19.4%	15.5%	65.1%	355
With the objectivity of the complaint investigator?	24.9%	26.3%	48.9%	358
That the investigator was unbiased?	20.5%	23.3%	56.3%	352
That you were interviewed soon enough after the complaint was filed?	62.7%	12.4%	25.0%	356

### Complainant Satisfaction with Internal Affairs

Overall, satisfaction with Internal Affairs was lower among complainants than among officers. Slightly less than half of the responding community members reported that they were satisfied that Internal Affairs staff were polite and respectful. Twenty-one percent of respondents were satisfied that the complaint investigator was objective.

Complainant Satisfaction with Internal Affairs Staff				
	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	N
How satisfied were you:				
That the Internal Affairs staff were polite?	37.0%	19.0%	44.0%	127
That the investigator treated you with respect?	41.4%	15.8%	42.9%	133
With how well the investigator listened to your description of what happened?	49.6%	11.5%	38.9%	131
With the fairness of the investigator's questions?	51.5%	16.9%	31.5%	130
With the objectivity of the complaint investigator?	67.0%	12.0%	21.0%	134
That you were interviewed soon enough after filing the complaint?	47.7%	16.7%	35.6%	130

## Satisfaction with the Quality of Communication

Both officers and complainants were also asked questions that were intended to examine satisfaction with the quality of communication about their complaint. In particular, we wanted to measure how satisfied officers and complainants were that the complaint process was clearly explained to them, that they were kept adequately informed about the progress on their case, and that they were clearly informed about the outcome of the complaint.

### Officers

In general, officers were mixed in their satisfaction with the quality of communication during the complaint process. About one-third were satisfied with how promptly they were notified of the complaint and with the notification they received regarding the outcome of the complaint. Very few officers (13%) were satisfied that they were kept adequately informed of the progress of the complaint.

Officer Satisfaction with Communication on their Last Complaint				
	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	N
<b>How Satisfied Were You:</b>				
That you were promptly notified of the complaint?	48.7%	19.8%	31.5%	359
That the complaint process was clearly explained to you?	36.0%	24.3%	39.6%	358
That you were kept informed of the progress of the complaint?	73.3%	13.6%	13.1%	359
That you were told about what happened as a result of the complaint?	52.3%	16.3%	31.4%	356

## Complainants

Satisfaction with communication was noticeably lower among complainants. Only a very small proportion of complainants (less than 15%) were satisfied that they were kept informed about the progress on their complaint, with the quality of written communication, and with the notification they received regarding the outcome of their complaint.

Complainant Satisfaction with the Quality of Communication on their Complaint				
	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	N
<b>How satisfied were you:</b>				
That the complaint process was clearly explained to you?	49.6%	23.0%	27.4%	135
That Internal Affairs explained how long it would take to investigate your complaint?	61.7%	14.8%	23.4%	128
That you were kept informed about what was happening with your complaint?	76.6%	12.4%	11.0%	137
With the letters you received?	74.3%	11.4%	14.3%	140
That Internal Affairs gave clear explanations about how officers are supposed to act in incidents like yours?	80.9%	9.6%	9.6%	136
That you were informed about what happened as a result of your complaint?	73.4%	13.7%	13.0%	139

In addition, just over one-third of complainants indicated that they had not received a written notification about the outcome on their complaint.

Did you receive written notification explaining what happened as a result of your complaint? (N=140)	
	Percent
Yes	65.0%
No	35.0%

## Officer Satisfaction with Overall Complaint Process

In order to measure satisfaction with the overall complaint process and outcomes, both officers and complainants were asked a series of questions that were meant to measure their views regarding the neutrality, fairness, and legitimacy of the overall complaint process.

### Satisfaction of ALL Officers

The responses of officers, overall, demonstrated dissatisfaction with the complaint process. Two-thirds of officers agreed that the complaint process is biased in favor of citizens, over one-half disagreed that officers' basic rights are well protected, and forty-two percent disagreed that complaint investigations improve how the police department is run. Furthermore, almost nine in ten officers agreed that most citizen complaints against officers are frivolous.

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
The complaint process is biased in favor of citizens.	13.8%	19.8%	66.4%	616
Most citizen complaints against officers are frivolous.	3.5%	7.3%	89.1%	627
Officers' basic rights are well protected within the complaint process.	57.6%	17.9%	24.5%	625
The investigation of citizen complaints helps improve how the police department is run.	42.7%	22.1%	35.1%	624

### Satisfaction of Officers Who Received Complaints

When we compared officers who had received complaints to officers who had not received complaints in the last three years, we found that officers with complaints were more likely to agree that the complaint process was biased in favor of citizens and that most complaints are frivolous. Moreover, officers who received complaints were noticeably less likely to believe that the investigation of citizen complaints improves the police department.

	Agreement of Officers WITH Complaints	Agreement of Officers WITHOUT Complaints	N
The complaint process is biased in favor of citizens	72.8%	56.3%	596
Most citizen complaints against officers are frivolous	93.8%	81.3%	606
Officers' basic rights are well protected within the complaint process	20.3%	33.0%	606
The investigation of citizen complaints helps improve how the police department is run	30.0%	43.5%	604

When we looked specifically at officers who had been the subject of citizen complaints, we found fairly mixed results regarding satisfaction with the overall complaint process and outcomes. Almost one-half were satisfied that enough information was gathered, that they were treated fairly, and that they received the outcome they deserved. Likewise, more than one-half were satisfied that Denver is serious about investigating officer misconduct. Yet, two-thirds were dissatisfied with the time taken to reach a decision on the complaint and with the complaint process in general.

Satisfaction with the Overall Process and Outcomes for Officers who Received Complaints				
	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	N
<b>How Satisfied Were You:</b>				
That the decision on the complaint was made in a reasonable amount of time?	65.9%	14.3%	19.8%	364
That enough information was gathered before a decision was made on your complaint?	27.6%	25.7%	46.6%	362
That the Denver Police Department considered your views before making a decision on the complaint?	47.1%	24.9%	28.0%	365
That you were treated fairly?	29.9%	24.2%	45.9%	368
That you received the outcome you deserved?	34.8%	16.6%	48.6%	362
That Denver is serious about investigating officer misconduct?	17.4%	23.8%	58.9%	362
With the complaint process in general?	63.7%	24.7%	11.6%	369
That you had the opportunity to appeal the decision?	36.7%	43.6%	19.6%	280

## **Officer Comments on the Overall Complaint Process**

In order to more thoroughly consider officers' perceptions of the complaint process, officers were asked a series of open-ended questions about the strengths and weaknesses of Denver's complaint process. While some officers offered positive comments about certain parts of the complaint process, a majority of respondents voiced dissatisfaction with the complaint process, generally.

### ***Excerpted Officer Comments on Process Strengths***

Only a small number of officers made any positive comments, even when asked about the strengths of the complaint process. Of those who did see strengths, the most common strength was the quality and thoroughness of IAB's investigation:

- "IAB is thorough in gathering info pertaining to the case."
- "I have been treated fairly "by the system" and I.A.B. itself. The process allows for investigating police conduct fairly--something that is necessary and just."
- "Experienced investigators with integrity, for the most part, investigate complaints in internal affairs."
- "Hard working investigators. I don't think the average officer realizes how much work goes into investigating a complaint."
- "A solid investigation is conducted by IA."
- "Good investigative sergeants work the cases."

Others stated that the DPD was serious about investigating every complaint and encouraged citizen participation:

- "The dept. went to great lengths to prove or disprove a complaint. DPD would bend over backwards to listen and report every single complaint."
- "The process addresses the citizen and their needs. The citizens are given every opportunity to complain on officers. Officers are required to have the phone number to complain on us on the back of our business cards."
- "EVERYTHING is investigated."
- "Anyone can file a complaint, no one is barred."
- "It gives people a chance to complain on officers that deserve it."
- "Being open to listen to citizens – obtain feedback."

Some officers stated that investigating citizen complaints improves the DPD:

- "Over time these processes have improved police service/efficiency. Complaints are expected and we know this. Historically, police departments were more corrupt than today and the complaint process has dramatically reduced corruption in this line of work."
- "Citizens must be able to complain about law violations and misconduct by police officers. They must also have an outlet for rude and improper behavior. Without this, police departments are subject to corruption and citizen abuse. The new complaint process gives officers an outlet to have others review his case besides I.A. or their commanding officer. If other officers tell the accused that he is wrong, he may accept it better and see errors of his/her way."

Other officers voiced more general support for the complaint process:

- "The complaint process is thorough and appears to be unbiased."
- "Does eventually get to the bottom of the complaint & it gets resolved appropriately."
- "I feel complaints are presently thoroughly investigated. I feel the officer's direct commanders are fair in their recommendations."

### **Excerpted Officer Comments on Process Weaknesses**

When asked about weaknesses of the complaint process, a number of responses were repeatedly offered. One of the most common opinions expressed by officers was frustration with frivolous complaints and complaints about petty misconduct that could be more efficiently handled elsewhere:

- “All complaints receive an investigation without screening them to determine any validity. This is a waste of time and manpower back logging the system and causing undue stress for the subject officer and the investigator.”
- “This department entertains every whiny crybaby frivolous complaint from a citizen - those complaints should not be taken let alone expend man hours to investigate. These people should be shown the door and told to accept responsibility for their own stupid behavior.”
- “Takes too long and we spend too much time/ resources on complaints that are certainly not going to be sustained.”
- “The fact that every complaint is taken no matter how trivial causes officers to become bitter and morale suffers. Officers try to avoid citizen contacts to keep from getting complaints.”

Officers also voiced frustration that citizens are not sanctioned for false complaints, and that these false complaints stay on an officer’s record:

- “A citizen can make up any crazy story about a cop, and later admit to lying, but the complaint still stays on the cop’s record!”
- “Complaints are accepted without any basis of fact or merit.”
- “That the Department will take a complaint from anyone. No matter how drunk. Or a person with a criminal record a mile long that hates the Police because he or she gets arrested all the time.”

It was relatively common for officers to state that the investigation process and punishments vary depending on one’s rank or who one knows:

- “The whole process is very weak and stacked for the good old boys who the command favors and against those who are not known or misunderstood, or simply just line officers.”
- “Nepotism runs rampant depending on who you are ... if you a[re] politically connected you are lightly disciplined.”
- “The process is used by the command staff to eliminate officers they dislike. If you are a Lt. or above there is a good ol’ boy system in place. The rank & file has one set of standards & command another.”
- “There is a double standard on discipline for the brass and for the grunt. The brass gets off or a slap on the hand. The grunt gets stabbed in the back.”
- “Command officers impose punishment which is often arbitrary and unfair. Conduct by command often ignored.”
- “The process is not followed by the operation manual if you are part of the chief’s inner circle of command staff. There is an under-the-table process for them and a throw-the-book process for us. The term “rank has its privileges” is true in this department when it comes to discipline.”
- “Police command violates policy/procedures, but are cleared of all fault. We do same thing and are punished.”
- “The program isn’t with IAB itself, instead the commands that review and “makes findings”-- they screw us. The city wants to “punish” officer for political motives and avoids any positive influence.”

Other officers suggested that politics, the media, and activists drive the complaint process:

- “The whole system appears to be driven by politics more than striving to give the citizens of this community the best police department.”
- “City and department administration are uninterested in fair discipline and base decisions on politics. People in the "in-crowd" with administration are above discipline while line officers suffer excessive discipline. Discipline decisions are not based on if the officer did anything wrong but rather on what will look good in the news.”
- “Those that yell the loudest get the most attention whether it is just or not.”
- “I think the department takes too many frivolous complaints because they are afraid to stand up to the media and the activists.”
- “Discipline decisions are not based on if the officer did anything wrong but rather on what will look good in the news. The police dept is too driven by politics, they have changed rules during investigations so that they can file on officers for violating rules that did not exist during the incident.”
- “It seems to me that this police dept is so concerned with image and politics that truth or facts get lost in this process.”

Several officers stated that the process favors the citizen and presumes guilt in the officer:

- “The process favors the citizens. Officers go through a lengthy process to prove the type of person we are before getting hired, but any drug user, drug seller, prostitute or other criminal that makes a complaint appears to be believed more so than an officer on the facts of a case/complaint.”
- “Some officers were assumed guilty before the investigation began.”
- “As it is, an officer is “guilty” until proven innocent.”
- “Officers are treated like they are guilty on serious cases. They are taken off the street before they are found guilty or responsible.”
- “It gives officers the feeling that they are guilty until proven innocent.”

Others stated that the process is too lengthy:

- “When IAB investigates its officers, the time that an officer has to wait is considered extreme by most. Investigations of possible rules and regs. violations should not take 1yr or more to resolve. This process drains the subject officer who oftentimes wants to move forward in their career.”
- “It takes several months for an outcome and discipline to be handed down.”
- “The command staff takes far too long to process the complaints. Operations manual speaks of time that a command officer has to respond. These times are never followed they do it at their leisure and leave the officer in limbo for months.”
- “The process takes too long.”
- “Too much time taken; too many levels of review.”

Several officers indicated that the complaint process takes discretion away from supervisors and does not allow them to informally resolve minor complaints:

- “The complaints used to come in through the station level for investigation by the sergeant and then forwarded on to IA if the complaint had merit. Now all complaints go through IA first. Every complaint is taken even if it is incompetent in nature.”
- “Sergeants are not allowed anymore to talk to complain[an]ts and try to find another solution to a problem before turning into a case against an officer.”
- “The fact that they are investigating anonymous complaints and third party complaints. Most of these complaints should be investigated by the officer's supervisor at the time of complaint.”

## Complainant Satisfaction with the Overall Complaint Process and Outcomes

Like officers, complainants reported that they believed that the complaint process was biased. However, where almost two-thirds of officers reported that the process was biased in favor of citizens, complainants overwhelmingly reported that they believed the process to be biased in favor of police officers.

### Complainant Evaluations of the Neutrality of the Complaint Process

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
The complaint process is biased in favor of the police.	4.5%	9.0%	86.6%	134
Filing complaints can make a difference in how the police department is run.	40.2%	14.2%	45.7%	127

Complainants reported very low levels of satisfaction with the overall effectiveness, fairness, and legitimacy of the complaint process. In terms of effectiveness, less than one-fifth of complainants reported that their complaint was handled quickly, that enough information was gathered on their case, or that the police department does a good job of investigating complaints. In relation to fairness, less than ten percent of the respondents were satisfied that they were treated fairly or that the DPD considered their views. When it came to the overall legitimacy of the process, only one in ten complainants was satisfied with the overall complaint process or that Denver is serious about investigating police misconduct.

### Complainant Satisfaction with the Overall Complaint Process

	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	N
<b>How satisfied were you:</b>				
That your complaint was handled quickly?	65.5%	16.2%	18.3%	142
That enough information was gathered before a decision was made on your complaint?	74.0%	13.0%	13.0%	131
That the Denver Police Department considered your views before making a decision on the complaint?	79.9%	11.2%	9.0%	134
That you were treated fairly?	72.9%	12.1%	15.0%	140
That the police dept. does a good job of investigating complaints?	82.6%	9.4%	8.0%	138
That Denver is serious about investigating police misconduct?	83.2%	8.0%	8.8%	137
With the complaint process in general?	74.5%	13.8%	11.7%	145

### Complainant Satisfaction with Outcomes

	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	N
How satisfied were you:				
With the outcome you received?	86.2%	5.8%	8.0%	138
That the right decision was made on your complaint?	86.0%	7.4%	6.6%	136

In addition to high levels of dissatisfaction with the overall complaint process, it was clear from the surveys that complainants were also highly dissatisfied with the outcomes on their complaints. For example, eighty-six percent of complainants reported being dissatisfied with the outcome they received.

In order to examine complainant goals for the complaint process, they were asked to identify the outcome they think should have resulted from their complaint. For the most part, complainants reported that their goal was not to have the officer(s) severely sanctioned. Instead, almost two-thirds of complainants reported that they would have liked to have had the officer reprimanded, counseled, or at least been able to speak with the officer's supervisor. Slightly less than one-third of complainants would have liked to have seen the involved officer suspended, fired, or sent to jail.

### What do you think should have happened as a result of your complaint? (N=140)

	Percent
Officer Sent to Jail	2.9%
Officer Fired	10.7%
Officer Suspended	19.3%
Officer Reprimanded	35.7%
Officer Counseled	19.3%
Had a Supervisor Talk With Me	6.4%
Explain my Complaint to the Officer	2.1%
Change Police Policy	3.6%

In order to shed more light on the aspirations of community members who file complaints, the complainants were asked to describe the type of outcome they would have liked to have seen on their complaint. One of the most common written comments was that complainants would have liked to have received an apology from the involved officer:

- "The officer should have apologized in some way..."
- "I should have received an apology for the mistreatment."
- "Not be treated like a joke. Given answers [and] given an apology."
- "Receive letter of apology."

Other complainants reported that they would have liked to have seen the officer given some sort of re-training or counseling:

- "I think that officer needs to learn how to speak to the public and respect them."
- "I would like to see the officer dismissed from the post of the incident, have him take counseling classes at his expense."
- "I said in my letter that police officers need special training and a certain personality to deal with airport environment and travelers-This was not addressed."

Another theme among the comments was that complainants would like to have seen a record of the incident placed in the officer's personnel file:

- "I would like to have my complaint put in the officers file, and it would have been nice to be communicated to if it would be in his file or not."
- "This officer should have received a written incident in his employee file to ID continued behavior."
- "The officer would have a mark on their record [of] having used excessive force and ...overreacted."

A number of complainants indicated that they would have liked to have been compensated for the harm they believed they had suffered:

- "I should have been compensated for my losses..."
- "I would like to be compensated for my injury I sustained and the officer to be suspended."

While it was less common, other complainants did report that they would have liked the officer to be fired or prosecuted:

- "I would like them to fire officers that discriminate..."
- "I would like him fired or suspended for his off-duty power trip and behavior."
- "At least four officers were involved and should be fired."
- "If a police officer breaks the law, they should be prosecuted just like normal citizens would. Instead, all they do is lie for each other or try to blame it back on the complainant."

## **Complainant Comments on the Overall Complaint Process**

Like officers, complainants were asked at the end of the survey to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of Denver's complaint process. And also like officers, complainants offered relatively few positive comments, while a majority of respondents voiced dissatisfaction with the complaint process.

### ***Excerpted Complainant Comments on Process Strengths***

Of those complainants who reported strengths, the most common identified strength related to the conduct and demeanor of the IAB staff. For example, a number of complainants suggested that the strength of the process was the IAB's timely response to their complaint:

- "Personal attention [and] timely communication."
- "I had never made a complaint before. But I was impressed how fast they contacted me and how quickly they followed up with my complaint."
- "They processed my initial concern and complaint in a timely manner and were [receptive] to some of my issues."
- "It was easy to file, quick process, all witnesses were contacted."

Other complainants reported that the main strength was that the police employees, and especially the IAB investigators, were polite, respectful, and listened to their concerns:

- "Internal Affairs met with us immediately after the incident. They were fair, professional, [and] unbiased."
- "The I.A. officer was great. He was friendly, treated me with respect, and overall, did a good job."
- "The sergeant from the Internal Affairs did let me tell my side of the story in my own words."
- "[The police supervisor] who took my complaint was concerned polite and asked for my [evidence] and a written explanation. He talked to the officer involved and returned my call with a [summary] of the conversation with the officer."

Several complainants reported that DPD staff were responsive, thorough, and did a good job of explaining police procedure and the complaint process:

- "I wrote a letter and received a phone call requesting more info. Then I received a follow up phone call giving us more info about what happened. The police did answer my questions about their procedure..."
- "They were very thorough in collecting all of my information and did not rush me through the process."
- "The process was complete and thorough. I was asked the same question in several different forms to make sure of my certainty."
- " [Command-level officer] acknowledged complaint. Assigned follow-up to [police supervisor]. Supervisor discussed complaint with me and followed up several weeks later. [He] was respectful, listened well and took appropriate action (counseled the officer)."

Finally, a number of complainants commented that the main strength of the process was that it existed at all:

- "The Public Safety Review Members seemed to try hard."
- "The fact that there is a complaint process, one exists."
- "At least I know a supervisor saw the complaint."
- That one (complaint process) does exist."

### ***Excerpted Complainant Comments on Process Weaknesses***

When asked about weaknesses of the complaint process, the most frequent negative comment related to the quality of communication on citizen complaints. For example, it was very common for complainants to write that they were not informed about the final outcome on their complaint:

- “Was never contacted after complaint made.”
- “Outcome of complaint not explained fully to me.”
- “I had to contact the internal affairs, he was very vague at first, never received any phone calls or letters. Do not know the outcome, what happened to the officer, told I would receive a letter from some higher upper person. No one has told me anything. Their attitude [is] don't call us, we'll call you.”
- “No follow up. What happened??”

In a similar vein, some complainants reported that they were contacted after they filed the complaint, but only received an incomplete or vague description of what happened:

- “All I know is what was said in one response letter-no indication of what was done with the officers involved...”
- “There was no explanation of their process of the investigation, and there was minimal explanation of the results.”

Other complainants reported that they only found out about the final outcome on their complaint by contacting internal affairs:

- “I made my complaint in writing to PSRC. Months later I'd heard nothing. I went to police building to inquire. Officer told me complaint never reached internal affairs. I made it again to police no one called. Weeks later I got a letter telling me no action was taken- reason given nobody talked to me. A police investigation of an officer is an exercise in forget about it- a farce.”
- “After the initial complaint, no one called or contacted me again. When I received the dismissal notice, I called the department back and asked what happened. I was told the officer denied my complaint so the dept. dropped it. What a waste of my time! Asking an officer to confirm his abusive behavior and accepting his denial hardly constitutes "an investigation"!!! Why bother complaining?”

Another frequent comment offered by complainants was that the complaint process was an empty, bureaucratic ritual:

- “The formality of the process gives the appearance of fairness, but the process does not have adequate investigation of the incident or allow for exchange of ideas and information.”
- “I was given an initial impression that a serious investigation would be sustained...However, as it was handed off down the line. It quickly became clear that there would be no "real" investigation and that it was a sham.”
- “The weaknesses were that they act like they process your complaint but they really do nothing about it and they call [you] and act like they did.”
- “They tell you what you want to hear so you feel that they are going to do something for you. But once you're out the door they do not investigate none of it.”
- “It just seemed like they were going through the motions and nothing would actually be done, which proved to be true.”
- “The attitude of most of the people I spoke with "just another nonsense complaint," fill out the paper work to cover the trail and be done.”

One of the most common comments from complainants was that investigators and supervisors were biased and sought to protect the named officers:

- “Denver police investigate their own!! And protect them when they know the officer is wrong.”
- “The investigation already seemed biased toward the officer in his favor. The supervisor was rude to me & stated that I overreacted & "misread" or "misunderstood" the intentions of the officer because the supervisor "knows" the officer in question.”
- “The sergeant taking call sided with officers and tried to dissuade me from complaining.”
- “I feel the police were/are biased towards the "brotherhood" of police. I also feel that my complaint wasn't even addressed other than by the complimentary letter from the supervisor.
- “Having the good old boy network investigate itself is a joke. All it is is a white wash procedure.”

Other complainants stated that no one took them seriously or seemed to care about their concerns:

- “I felt as though my complaint was blown off, the officers basically laughed at me...”
- “My complaint just seemed to fall on deaf ears. I heard nothing more until notified by mail that my complaint had been checked out and nothing was seen as being a problem as far as the officer's behavior was concerned. So in truth it does feel as if I just wasted my time.”
- “One of the weaknesses of the process is I don't think my complaint was taken seriously because I'm not the only person to file a complaint on the police [officer that] has harassed other people that I know. All they did is transfer him to another district.”
- “The people in the department were indifferent and defensive.”
- “No one listened or took me seriously w/my complaint.”

Other complainants indicated that the complaint process was needlessly intimidating, unfair, and biased against citizens:

- “I went to complain as the victim but I was treated like I was on trial. I was afraid I thought I would be in trouble for complaining.”
- “The procedure itself. Very intimidating.”
- “They could take over 6 months to process, but for me to appeal I was only given 3 days. They should listen more rather than assume to worst.”
- “When it's my word against theirs, the officer will have more power.”
- “The weaknesses of this complaint process is its complete bias.”

Finally, it was also relatively common for complainants to report that the complaint process was untimely:

- “It took too long.”
- “Amount of time it took for a resolution... “
- “It's not done in a timely fashion. The wait [and] process allows for memory to run cold, information to slip away by the time an investigator gets a chance to review the complaint.”

## Views on Citizen Oversight

Both complainants and officers were also asked a series of questions that were designed to determine their views on citizen participation within Denver’s police complaint process. In particular, we were interested in measuring three specific attitudes. First, we wanted to determine the extent to which both groups believed that citizen involvement in the complaint process is necessary. Second, we wanted to measure attitudes regarding the objectivity and effectiveness of the Public Safety Review Commission (PSRC). Finally, we wanted to examine perceptions regarding the potential objectivity and effectiveness of the Office of the Independent Monitor.

### Officer Views on Citizen Oversight

Very few officers agreed that citizen oversight improves the quality of Internal Affairs investigations (14%) or that citizens can competently review police complaints (18%).

Officer Views of the Role of Citizens within Complaint Process				
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
Internal Affairs does a better job of investigating complaints than do citizens (such as the PSRC).	3.5%	12.8%	83.7%	595
Citizen oversight improves the quality of Internal Affairs investigations.	54.8%	30.9%	14.2%	576
Citizens can competently review police complaints.	63.5%	18.3%	18.3%	526
The complaint process has improved in recent years.	73.7%	15.9%	10.4%	579

In addition, officer views of the PSRC were very negative – over three-fourths agreed that the PSRC was biased in favor of citizens.

Officer Views of the Public Safety Review Commission				
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
The Public Safety Review Commission was biased in favor of citizens.	3.4%	11.7%	84.9%	592
The PSRC carefully weighed information given by officers before making decisions.	78.0%	14.4%	7.6%	556
The PSRC was more fair than the police command in complaint dispositions.	62.2%	26.2%	11.5%	554
The presence of the PSRC affected how I acted towards citizens.	56.4%	26.7%	17.0%	614

Though officers appear to hold fairly negative views of citizen oversight generally (and the PSRC specifically), officers indicated that they were more guardedly optimistic in relation to the OIM. For example, only one-fifth of officers agreed that the OIM will be biased in favor of citizens, while almost one-half agreed that the OIM will improve the complaint process. In general, officers seemed to have adopted a “wait-and-see” attitude in relation to the OIM. For example, roughly half of the responding officers reported neutral views for all three questions relating to the OIM.

Officer Views of the Independent Monitor				
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
The new Office of the Independent Monitor will be biased in favor of citizens.	26.9%	55.2%	18.0%	455
The Office of the Independent Monitor will improve the complaint process.	16.0%	40.5%	43.5%	464
The Office of the Independent Monitor will do a good job of monitoring Internal Affairs investigations.	12.6%	53.1%	34.3%	437

**Excerpted Officer Comments on the Effect of the Implementation of the OIM**

When asked about how the OIM will change the complaint process, a number of officers expressed skepticism that much would change:

- “It’s bullshit and it needs to go away! Civilians have no concept of what police work is, they are jaded by what they see on T.V. and how they perceive police work is an unrealistic manner.”
- “Nothing will change until every corrupt supervisor starting with lieutenants are removed. The department is broken federal authorities need to take control and sweep the department clean.”
- “I’m not sure if there will be any changes good or bad.”

In particular, some officers worried that the OIM would be subjected to political influence:

- “I will wait & see, but it just looks like another politically motivated decision.”
- “I don’t know. It might be more political than the (PSRC).”
- “It probably won’t as long as politics are involved.”

Other officers, however, were more optimistic that the OIM would make the process fairer:

- "I have not had the chance to hear from the new monitor, but have heard that officers are optimistic about the process. I believe the complaint process is important and that the view of the public is important as well. Most officers feel the same and don't want the process slanted to the special interest groups who vehemently dislike the police. Please be fair and unbiased!"
- "Hopefully it will change dramatically. Integrity and trust may become part of the system the officer can rely on. All officers will be treated fairly and investigations will be done and discipline administered fairly across the board when necessary."
- "The process will be fair on how discipline is handed down now that there is a legitimate body to have oversight over all investigations and the reasoning behind disciplinary matters. It will be decent to have someone look at the facts of the incident and leave the public outcry and emotion out of the process of the investigation and discipline process. If discipline is found to be needed or not."
- "I believe the monitor to be better educated, unbiased and can remain neutral."
- "Hopefully they will gather all the facts prior to making decisions. Rash and unfair decisions and/or investigations are going to push officers over the edge- case point [officer A] who committed suicide after being treated as guilty instead of innocent until proven guilty. Officers are not treated fairly when being investigated citizens have so many right during this process, but officers don't. We are still citizens."

In particular, some officers suggested that the PSRC was staffed by anti-police activists, and that the professional staff of the OIM would be fairer and more objective:

- "PSRC was group of angry activists. 100% biased, closed minded and political. Monitor appears neutral. Early dismissal and mediation good ideas."
- "If "Independent" remains independent it will improve the process. The PSRC was too individually biased."
- "The PSRC was a political body with members who were openly biased against the police – not neutral in their oversight. It is my hope that the monitor will hold neutral oversight and confirm that the DPD is a professional, caring organization. This might silence the anti-police crowd somewhat."
- "I think it will help a lot. The PSRC was loaded with anti-police activists."

Other officers hoped that the new system would make the complaint system less political and subject to wild swings in public opinion:

- "Hopefully speed the process up, take the politics out."
- "Hopefully for the better. If a professional staff work[s] on it, instead of politicians using us and the disciplinary system to make political statements."
- "Won't be swayed by court of public opinion."

Other officers noted that it was too early to tell, since the OIM had just started:

- "A more professional image might result The OIM is still an unknown factor and their performance is unable to be rated."
- "Don't know as it has just started."
- "We will see the outcome."

## Complainant Views on Citizen Oversight

Unlike officers, complainants were much more positive about the role that community members can play in the complaint process. For example, roughly nine in ten complainants reported that citizen oversight improves the internal affairs investigations and that it is important to have citizens involved in the complaint process.

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
Citizen oversight of the police improves Internal Affairs investigations.	7.6%	5.3%	87.1%	132
It is important to have independent citizens monitor the complaint process.	1.4%	4.3%	94.3%	140
Citizens should investigate complaints instead of the police.	12.4%	19.7%	67.9%	137
The complaint process improved in recent years.	59.7%	32.3%	8.1%	62

Even though complainants reported a strong belief in the importance of citizen involvement, more than two-thirds of complainants reported that they believed the PSRC to be biased in favor of police officers. Only five percent of responding complainants agreed with the statement that the PSRC did a good job monitoring investigations.

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
The Public Safety Review Commission was biased in favor of officers.	4.8%	21.9%	73.3%	105
The Public Safety Review Commission did a good job of monitoring police investigations.	68.4%	26.3%	5.3%	95

Like officers, complainants appeared to be somewhat unsure, but guardedly optimistic, about how objective and effective the OIM would be. Almost half of the complainants indicated “Don’t know” on these three questions. In addition, only twenty-two percent of complainants had heard of the OIM (data not displayed). Of the complainants who responded, roughly forty percent reported neutral attitudes in relation to whether the OIM would be biased or do a good job in monitoring investigations. Almost half of the respondents, however, agreed that the OIM would improve the complaint process.

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
The Office of the Independent Monitor will be biased in favor of police officers.	23.5%	40.7%	35.8%	81
The Office of the Independent Monitor will improve the complaint process.	12.3%	42.0%	45.7%	81
The Office of the Independent Monitor will do a good job of monitoring police investigations.	14.9%	59.7%	25.4%	67

## **Excerpted Complainant Comments on the Effect of the OIM**

Complainants were, on the whole, fairly divided on the issue of what impact the OIM would have on the complaint process. When asked to describe how the replacement of the PSRC with the OIM would affect the complaint process, a number of complainants reported that the implementation of the OIM would not affect the complaint process, or would make the process worse. Other complainants indicated that they were more hopeful that the OIM would improve the complaint process.

Of the complainants who offered negative views of the OIM, the most common argument was that the implementation of the OIM would not change the complaint process:

- “It probably won't change anything because it is all government run, which corrupts the process.”
- “Nothing will change [to] be honest with you.”
- “Who are you kidding? Not one bit.”
- “No idea. It appears it will make the process more of a joke.”
- “Why would replacing the investigation process with citizens make this any better? Fix what is broken don't replace it with more problems.”

The complainants suggested that the OIM would just increase the number of bureaucratic layers:

- “Destroy citizens rights against police, by making a bureaucracy distanced from citizens, one man is too corruptible for a position of keeping police in their place. As servants of the people. It should be law that police should control their emotions better.”
- “Just another layer of somebody not able to do anything.”

Other complainants, however, offered more hopeful assessments of the potential impact of the OIM. For example, it was relatively common for complainants to report that the complaint process could not be any worse under the OIM:

- “Don't know but can't be worse.”
- “I have no idea, but I can't imagine it making it worse. We need citizen control of the process, not cops "investigating" themselves.”
- “I have no idea, although I hope it improves it given the current state of affairs, it probably can only get better because it can't be much worse.”

A number of complaints also stated that the OIM might improve the thoroughness and effectiveness of complaint investigations:

- “Hopefully w/the replacement of the PSRC w/OIM will result in more thorough investigation & complaints will be taken more seriously w/harsher penalties for officers whom think they are "above the law" so to speak.”
- “It will change by hopefully having good citizens that are honest and care about how some of the police officers treat citizens here in Denver...Hopefully they will look more into complaints than PSRC and not throw away cases even though they are petty.”
- “I think it would help, because officers think they are above the law.”

Complainants also reported that they hoped that the OIM would give citizens more of a voice within the complaint process:

- “I hope it gives more of a voice to citizens.”
- “I hope it will provide an environment where the citizens know and feel like they have a voice and the police department knows that unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated.”
- “Maybe make people feel more at ease about making a complaint.”
- “Hopefully people will be heard, complaints will be taken into consideration & bad police officers will treat people with respect.”

Other complainants indicated that the OIM might work to reduce bias within the complaint system:

- “Maybe it will bring a different, less biased perspective.”
- “If the Independent monitor is comprised of neither police officers or citizens who've ever been abused by police then they should prove to be an unbiased party as long as the police are investigating complaints against them, the process is a parody and not useful to the public.”
- “I would hope that this will lead to a nonbiased process that identifies the negative attitudes throughout the Denver Police Department and are instrumental in improving the image of the Denver Police Department to a trusting dept. that serves the community instead of themselves.”
- “I really don't know the process at all but it makes sense to me to have some citizens on the board to keep it from being biased.”
- “Hopefully - more objective, less association with police, less inside influence.”
- “I would hope that there would be a TRULY neutral party that gathers all the facts, informs all parties about the status and facts. Does not hold any bias to any party, but if so hopefully it would be towards the citizens and biased against the police.”

A number of complainants also indicated that they thought the OIM might be able to improve communication and timeliness:

- “They should explain to the people exactly what they did with the officer and let officers know that wasn't ok.”
- “Hopefully the Ind. Monitor will NOT be biased towards either party. Keep communication open between both parties throughout the process. Lastly, I hope the monitor will make all complaints open for public review as well as offer all complaints against an officer when a new complaint is filed.”
- “I hope it opens more resources for quick turnaround and timely response.”
- “I don't know. I want more info. Hopefully it involves citizens of all classes, races, and religions and communities working together, sharing info. With the cooperation of the police same I.A. (Internal Affairs) and other authorities with powers to oversee.”

Finally, several complainants suggested that the impact of the OIM will depend largely on its independence from the police department:

- “It depends of how "independent" the commission really is and what power it has over bad cops.”
- “Depending on who the citizens are; the process could potentially become more fair.”
- “I am not so sure that it will. I am concerned that biased citizens will be picked.”

## Officer Views on the Police Department, Local Government, the Public, and the Media

In addition to asking officers and community members about the complaint process, we also included several questions that were intended to measure how both groups viewed important local institutions, like city government and the police department generally.

### All Officers

About two-thirds of officers disagreed that the command staff supports line officers and that police command staff usually make fair disciplinary decisions. Over one-half disagreed with the statement that police command staff carefully consider information given by officers before making a decision. However, almost one-half of officers agreed that they accept command staff decisions, even if they think these decisions are wrong.

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
The command staff supports line officers.	70.0%	15.3%	14.7%	627
I accept the decisions made by command staff, even if I think they are wrong.	36.1%	19.9%	44.0%	632
Police command staff usually make fair disciplinary decisions.	65.9%	16.2%	17.9%	613
Police command staff carefully consider information given by officers before making a decision on a complaint.	60.6%	18.2%	21.2%	599

Eighty-seven percent of officers disagreed with the statement that the local city government supports police officers. A similar percentage of officers agreed that they have the support of fellow officers.

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
<b>Views on City Government</b>				
The City Administration supports police officers.	87.4%	7.7%	5.0%	624
<b>Views on Other Officers</b>				
I have the support of my fellow officers.	5.7%	7.1%	87.3%	637

### Comparing Officers with Complaints to Officers without Complaints

Overall, officers who had received complaints offered more consistently negative evaluations of police command staff and local government than officers who had not received complaints. For example, officers with complaints offered more negative assessments of (1) the fairness of police command staff disciplinary decisions, (2) whether the command staff considered the views of officers, and (3) the support of command staff and the city administration for line officers.

Comparing Evaluations of Police Command Staff and City Government for Officers with Complaints to those without Complaints

	Agreement of Officers WITH Complaints	Agreement of Officers WITHOUT Complaints	N
Police command staff usually make fair disciplinary decisions.	12.6%	27.0%	594
Police command staff carefully consider information given by officers before making a decision on a complaint.	15.0%	32.6%	580
The command staff supports line officers.	9.7%	23.3%	607
The City Administration supports police officers.	1.6%	10.2%	605

### Officer Views on the Public

Despite commonly voiced frustrations with the citizen complaint process, officers expressed mostly positive views of Denver’s citizens. Most officers agreed that the public generally respects and supports police officers. However, over nine in ten officers agreed that the news media is biased against police officers and that the public does not understand what police officers have to put up with.

Officer Evaluations of the Public and the Media

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
The majority of the public respects police officers.	17.0%	8.5%	74.6%	636
Citizens are generally cooperative.	10.5%	8.0%	81.5%	635
The citizens of Denver support police officers.	19.9%	17.6%	62.5%	625
I don't feel the public trusts me as a police officer.	51.0%	21.1%	28.0%	622
The news media is biased against police officers.	3.0%	4.1%	93.0%	638
The public does not understand what police officers have to put up with.	2.4%	3.6%	94.1%	639

## Complainant Views on Police and Local Government

Roughly twenty percent of the responding complainants indicated that they thought the police in Denver were doing a good job, while twenty-five percent of complainants agreed that the police protect people’s rights.

Moreover, it seemed clear that many of the respondents believe that the police treat community members differently, depending on each person’s characteristics. For example, only sixteen percent of responding complainants agreed that police officers were concerned with protecting all citizens equally.

Complainant Faith in the Police				
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
Overall, the police are doing a good job in Denver.	53.1%	24.2%	22.7%	128
I should accept the decisions made by the police, even if I think they are wrong.	85.9%	4.9%	9.2%	142
People's basic rights are protected by the police.	56.4%	17.9%	25.7%	140
Police officers are concerned with protecting all community members equally.	65.1%	18.6%	16.3%	129
Police officers don't care what citizens think.	23.4%	16.1%	60.6%	137
Police officers treat minority residents worse than others.	16.7%	23.7%	59.6%	114
The police are nicer to residents in rich neighborhoods than to residents in poor neighborhoods.	11.4%	19.3%	69.3%	114

Almost seventeen percent of complainants agreed that they trusted the city of Denver to make decisions that were good for everyone, or that the city of Denver was serious about trying to hold officers accountable. Almost seventy percent of complainants indicated that they believe the city tries to protect bad officers. Yet a higher percentage (33%) agreed that the government does a good job of serving its citizens.

Complainant Faith in Local Government				
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
I trust the city of Denver to make decisions that are good for everyone.	58.4%	24.8%	16.8%	137
Overall, government does a good job of serving its citizens.	46.7%	20.4%	32.8%	137
The City of Denver tries to hold officers accountable.	67.2%	16.0%	16.8%	125
The City of Denver tries to protect bad officers.	13.0%	20.3%	66.7%	123

## Officer Job Satisfaction

Officers were also asked several questions that sought to measure their overall job satisfaction. Overall, the morale among responding offices is low, with over one-half reporting that they had low morale.

How would you rank your overall morale?

(N=643)

	Percent
Low	60.3%
Average	25.8%
High	13.8%

Not surprisingly, reported morale was lower among officers who had received complaints within the last three years than among officers who had not been the subject of a citizen complaint.

Percentage of Officers who Indicated that they had Low or Very Low Morale by Whether They Received a Citizen Complaint in the Last Three Years

(N=620)

	Officers WITH Complaints	Officers WITHOUT Complaints	N
How would you rank your morale? (% Very Low or Low)	69.4%	47.8%	620

When responding to more detailed questions about job satisfaction and job commitment, however, officers offer more positive comments. Two-thirds of officers agreed that they are satisfied with their jobs and nine in ten officers agreed that they are very involved in their work.

### Officer Job Satisfaction

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
I am very involved in my work.	5.0%	5.9%	89.1%	641
I feel burned out from my work.	48.9%	19.8%	31.3%	636
I have become more callous since I took this job.	20.7%	15.5%	63.7%	631
Doing my job well gives me a good feeling.	1.9%	6.3%	91.8%	639
All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	19.1%	17.2%	63.6%	638

# Appendices

# Appendix A

## 2005 DENVER COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY

The person who fills out this questionnaire should be at least 18 years old and the person who filed the complaint. If you filed more than one complaint against the Denver Police Department, please answer the questions using the **LAST** complaint you filed. Your participation in this survey is **VOLUNTARY**. Your responses to this survey will be completely **ANONYMOUS**. Please do not write your name or other identifying information on the survey. For each question, please check the box that best fits your opinion. After you complete the survey, please mail it back to us using the enclosed business reply envelope. The postage has been paid. **Thank you for your help!**

**Section A. One of the responsibilities assigned to the Office of the Independent Monitor is the job of telling the community about the complaint process. The following will assist us in learning about useful outreach opportunities.**

Q1. How well do you feel you understand the citizen complaint process?      Very Well      Well      Neutral      Poorly      Very Poorly

Q2. How did you learn about the police complaint process?

<input type="checkbox"/> --Police Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> --Public Safety Review Com. Website
<input type="checkbox"/> --Called Denver Police Department	<input type="checkbox"/> --Friend Told Me
<input type="checkbox"/> --Police Website	<input type="checkbox"/> --Newspaper
<input type="checkbox"/> --Called Public Safety Review Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> --Other: _____

Q3. How easy was it for you to file your complaint?      Very Easy      Easy      Neither Easy Nor Hard      Hard      Very Hard      Don't Know

Q4. If you encountered any difficulty filing your complaint, please explain briefly: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Q5. Did any member of the Denver Police department seek to discourage you from filing your complaint?      Yes      No      Don't Know

Q6. If yes, please explain briefly: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Q7. To the best of your knowledge, are ALL citizen complaints kept in an officer's personnel file?      Yes      No      Don't Know

Q8. To the best of your knowledge, approximately what percentage of citizen complaints are dismissed?      Less than 10%      10—20%      21—30%      31—40%      More than 40%      Don't Know

Q9. Approximately, what percentage of citizen complaints are sustained?      Less than 10%      10—20%      21—30%      31—40%      More than 40%      Don't Know

**Section B. In this section we would like to ask about your satisfaction with the Internal Affairs staff and investigators.**

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Sat. Nor Dissat.	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know/ NA
Q1. with the objectivity of the complaint investigator?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q2. that the Internal Affairs staff were polite?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q3. with how well the investigator listened to your description of what happened?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q4. with the fairness of the investigator's questions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Survey continues on the next page.....

**Section B (continued)**

How satisfied were you :	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Sat. Nor Dissat.	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know/ NA
Q5. that you were interviewed soon enough after filing the complaint?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q6. that the investigator treated you with respect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section C. In this section we would like to ask you about your satisfaction with the information you received about your complaint.**

How satisfied were you :	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Sat. Nor Dissat.	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know/ NA
Q1. that the complaint process was clearly explained to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q2. that Internal Affairs explained how long it would take to investigate your complaint?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q3. that you were kept informed about what was happening with your complaint?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q4. with the letters you received?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5. that Internal Affairs gave clear explanations about how officers are supposed to act in incidents like yours?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q6. that you were informed about what happened as a result of your complaint?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section D. In this section, we would like to ask you about your satisfaction with what happened with your complaint.**

How satisfied were you :	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Sat. Nor Dissat.	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know/ NA
Q1. that your complaint was handled quickly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q2. that the right decision was made on your complaint?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q3. that the Denver Police Department considered your views before making a decision on the complaint?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q4. that enough information was gathered before a decision was made on your complaint?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5. that you were treated fairly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q6. that the police dept. does a good job of investigating complaints?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q7. with the outcome you received?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q8. that Denver is serious about investigating police misconduct?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q9. with the complaint process in general?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Survey continues on the next page.....

**Section E. In this section, we would like to ask you about the details of your complaint.**

Q1. What was your complaint about? Excessive Force  Discrimination  Rude Behavior  Police Procedure  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Q2. In considering the final outcome of your complaint, was your complaint: Sustained  Not Sustained  Mediated  Dismissed  Other  Don't Know

Q3. Did you receive written notification explaining what happened as a result of your complaint? Yes  No  Don't Know

Q4. What do you think should have happened as a result of your complaint? --Officer Sent to Jail --Officer Fired --Officer Suspended --Officer Reprimanded --Officer Couseled --Had a Supervisor Talk With Me --Explain my Complaint to the Officer --Change Police Policy

Q5. If you would have liked a different outcome on your complaint, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Q6. How many complaints have you previously filed against Denver Police Officers? None  One  Two  Three or more  Don't know

**Section F. In this section, we would like to ask about how you feel about Denver's police oversight mechanisms.**

Q1. Were you contacted by the Public Safety Review Commission (PSRC) about your right to appeal the finding on your complaint? Yes  No  Don't Know

(If Yes, please continue with Q2)  
(If No, please skip to Q3)

Q2. Did you appeal the finding? Yes  No  Don't Know

The City of Denver recently replaced the PSRC with the Office of Independent Monitor.

Q3. Have you heard of the Office of the Independent Monitor? Yes  No  Don't Know

For your information, the new Office of the Independent Monitor will be responsible for monitoring the Denver Police Department's investigations into citizen complaints. Please mark your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/ NA
Q4. It is important to have independent citizens monitor the complaint process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5. Citizen oversight of the police improves Internal Affairs investigations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Survey continues on the next page.....

Section F. (continued)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/ NA
Q6. Citizens should investigate complaints instead of the police.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q7. The Public Safety Review Commission was biased in favor of officers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q8. The Public Safety Review Commission did a good job of monitoring police investigations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q9. The complaint process improved in recent years.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q10. The Office of the Independent Monitor will be biased in favor of police officers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q11. The Office of the Independent Monitor will improve the complaint process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q12. The Office of the Independent Monitor will do a good job of monitoring police investigations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section G. In this section, we would like to ask you some general questions about how you feel about the police and city government. Please mark your level of agreement with each of the following statements.**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/ NA
Q1. The complaint process is biased in favor of the police.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q2. Filing complaints can make a difference in how the police department is run.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q3. My encounters with Denver police officers have been positive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q4. I trust the city of Denver to make decisions that are good for everyone.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5. People's basic rights are protected by the police.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q6. Police officers don't care what citizens think.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q7. I should accept the decisions made by the police, even if I think they are wrong.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q8. My encounters with Denver police officers have been negative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Survey continues on the next page.....

Section G. (continued)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/ NA
Q8. Police officers treat minority residents worse than others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q9. The police are nicer to residents in rich neighborhoods than to residents in poor neighborhoods.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q10. Overall, the police are doing a good job in Denver.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q11. I feel very safe in my neighborhood.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q12. The neighbors in my neighborhood know each other well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q13. Police officers are usually friendly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q14. The City of Denver tries to protect bad officers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q15. Police officers are concerned with protecting all community members equally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q16. Overall, government does a good job of serving its citizens.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q17. The City of Denver tries to hold officers accountable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section H. Since this survey is anonymous, we would like to ask you some background questions.						
Q1. What is your age?	18-24 <input type="checkbox"/>	25-34 <input type="checkbox"/>	35-44 <input type="checkbox"/>	45-54 <input type="checkbox"/>	55-64 <input type="checkbox"/>	65 or Over <input type="checkbox"/>
Q2. What is your race/ethnicity (check all that apply)?	African American <input type="checkbox"/>	Hispanic/Latino <input type="checkbox"/>	White/Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/>	Native American <input type="checkbox"/>	Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Q3. What is your gender?	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>				
Q4. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?	Some High School <input type="checkbox"/>	High School Graduate <input type="checkbox"/>	Some College <input type="checkbox"/>	College Graduate <input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced Degree <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>

Survey continues on the next page.....

**Section I. In this final section, we would like you to explain some of your feelings in more detail.**

Q1. Overall, what were the strengths of the complaint process?

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Q2. Overall, what were the weaknesses of the complaint process?

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Q3. How will the replacement of the Public Safety Review Commission with the Office of the Independent Monitor change the complaint process?

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**End of Survey**

**Please place the survey form in the return envelope and place it in the mail. The postage is already paid.  
Thank you very much!**

If you have questions or concerns about this survey, please contact

Joseph De Angelis, Ph.D.  
Ohio University  
Department of Sociology and Anthropology  
Phone: (740) 593-1371  
Email: deangeli@ohio.edu

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact:

Jo Ellen Sherow  
Director of Research Compliance  
Ohio University  
Phone: (740) 593-0664

# Appendix B

## 2005 DENVER POLICE OFFICER SATISFACTION SURVEY

In this survey we are concerned with understanding what officers of the Denver Police Department think about the citizen complaint process. In particular, we are concerned with getting officers' input on the quality of Denver's complaint handling system PRIOR to the implementation of the Office of the Independent Monitor. Your participation in this survey is VOLUNTARY and responses will be completely ANONYMOUS. Please do not write your name or any other identifying information on this form. For each question, please check the box that best fits your opinion. After you complete the survey, please return it to us in the enclosed business reply envelope. **Thank you for your help!**

**Section A. One of the responsibilities assigned to Internal Affairs and the Office of the Independent Monitor is the job of telling officers and the community about the complaint process. The following will assist us in learning about useful outreach opportunities.**

Q1. How well do you feel you understand the citizen complaint process?	Very Well	Well	Neutral	Poorly	Very Poorly	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Q2. How did you learn about the police complaint process?	<input type="checkbox"/> --Academy Training <input type="checkbox"/> --Roll Call Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> --Public Safety Rev. Comm. <input type="checkbox"/> --Supervisors		<input type="checkbox"/> --Union <input type="checkbox"/> --Other Officers <input type="checkbox"/> --Had Complaint Filed Against Me <input type="checkbox"/> --Other: _____			
Q3. To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of citizen complaints are dismissed?	Less than 10%	10—20%	21—30%	31—40%	More than 40%	Don't Know
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q4. To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of citizen complaints are sustained?	Less than 10%	10—20%	21—30%	31—40%	More than 40%	Don't Know
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5. How would you rank your overall morale?	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Section B. In this section we would like to ask you how you feel about Internal Affairs. Please mark your level of agreement with each of the following statements.**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/ NA
Q1. Internal Affairs is biased in favor of the citizen.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q2. Internal Affairs carefully weighs the information given by officers before issuing a finding on a complaint.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q3. The actions of Internal Affairs negatively affects the morale of police officers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q4. Internal Affairs is biased against certain officers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5. Internal Affairs investigates all complaints thoroughly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q6. Internal Affairs investigates complaints efficiently.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Survey continues on the next page...

**Section B. (continued)**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/ NA
Q7. Internal Affairs investigates all complaints in an unbiased manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q8. Internal Affairs does a better job of investigating complaints than do citizens (such as the PSRC).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q9. Internal Affairs spends too much time on frivolous complaints.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section C. In this section, we would like to ask you how you feel about Denver's police oversight mechanisms. Please mark your level of agreement with each of the following statements.**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/ NA
Q1. Citizens can competently review police complaints.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q2. The Public Safety Review Commission (PSRC) was biased in favor of citizens.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q3. The PSRC carefully weighed information given by officers before making decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q4. The PSRC was more fair than the police command in complaint dispositions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5. The presence of the PSRC affected how I acted towards citizens.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q6. Administration of the complaint process has improved in recent years.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q7. The new Office of the Independent Monitor will be biased in favor of citizens.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q8. Citizen oversight improves the quality of Internal Affairs investigations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q9. The Office of the Independent Monitor will improve the complaint process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q10. The Office of the Independent Monitor will do a good job of monitoring Internal Affairs investigations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section D. In this section, we would like to ask you how you feel about the complaint process in general. Please mark your level of agreement with each of the following statements.**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/ NA
Q1. The complaint process is biased in favor of citizens.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q2. Most citizen complaints against officers are frivolous.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q3. The investigation of citizen complaints helps improve how the police department is run.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section D. (continued)**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/ NA
Q4. I accept the decisions made by command staff, even if I think they are wrong.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5. Officers' basic rights are well protected within the complaint process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q6. Police command staff usually make fair disciplinary decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q7. Police command staff carefully consider information given by officers before making a decision on a complaint.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section E. In this section, we would like to ask you some questions about your job. Please mark your level of agreement with each of the following statements.**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/ NA
Q1. I am very involved in my work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q2. The majority of the public respects police officers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q3. Citizens are generally cooperative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q4. The command staff supports line officers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5. The City Administration supports police officers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q6. The citizens of Denver support police officers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q7. I feel burned out from my work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q8. I don't feel the public trusts me as a police officer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q9. All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q10. I have the support of my fellow officers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q11. I have become more callous since I took this job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q12. The news media is biased against police officers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q13. Doing my job well gives me a good feeling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q14. The public does not understand what police officers have to put up with.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section F. In this section, we would like to ask you about your experience with citizen complaints.**

Q1. Have you been the subject of a citizen complaint within the last three years?      Yes                      No                      Don't Know  
                                           

**(If YES, please continue with Q2. If NO, please skip to Q1 in Section I)**

Q2. If yes, how many complaints have been filed against you in the last three years?      1      2      3      4      5      More than 5      Don't Know  
                                         

**(If more than 1 complaint has been filed against you, please answer the remaining questions using the most recent complaint)**

Q3. What type of complaint was filed against you?      Excessive Force      Discrimination      Rude Behavior      Police Procedure      Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
                                                                                        \_\_\_\_\_

Q4. What was the outcome on that complaint?      Sustained      Not Sustained      Mediated      Dismissed      Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
                                                                                        \_\_\_\_\_

Q5. How were you informed about the complaint (check all that apply)?      Letter      Phone Call      Email      In Person      Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
                                                                                        \_\_\_\_\_

Q6. Who informed you of the complaint?      Supervisor      District Commander      Internal Affairs      Other Officers      Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
                                                                                        \_\_\_\_\_

**Section G. In this section, we would like to ask you about your satisfaction with the Internal Affairs investigation.**

How satisfied were you :	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Sat. Nor Dissat.	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know/ NA
Q1. With the objectivity of the complaint investigator?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q2. That you were treated politely by the staff of Internal Affairs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q3. With how well the investigator listened to your description of what happened?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q4. With how fair the investigator's questions were?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5. That the investigator was unbiased?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q6. That you were interviewed soon enough after the complaint was filed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q7. That the investigator treated you with respect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q8. That you were promptly notified of the complaint?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q9. That the complaint process was clearly explained to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q10. That you were kept informed of the progress of the complaint?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q11. That you were told about what happened as a result of the complaint?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Survey continues on the next page...

**Section H. In this section we would like to ask you about your overall satisfaction with the citizen complaint process.**

How satisfied were you:	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Sat. Nor Dissat.	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know/ NA
Q1. That the Denver Police Department considered your views before making a decision on the complaint?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q2. That enough information was gathered before a decision was made on your complaint?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q3. That you were treated fairly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q4. That the decision on the complaint was made in a reasonable amount of time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q5. That you received the outcome you deserved?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q6. That Denver is serious about investigating officer misconduct?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q7. With the complaint process in general?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q8. That you had the opportunity to appeal the decision?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section I. Since this survey is anonymous, we would like to ask you some background questions.**

Q1. What is your age?	18-24 <input type="checkbox"/>	25-34 <input type="checkbox"/>	35-44 <input type="checkbox"/>	45-54 <input type="checkbox"/>	55-64 <input type="checkbox"/>	65 or Over <input type="checkbox"/>	
Q2. What is your race/ethnicity (check all that apply)?	African American <input type="checkbox"/>	Hispanic/Latino <input type="checkbox"/>	White/Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/>	Native American <input type="checkbox"/>	Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
Q3. What is your gender?	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>					
Q4. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?	Some High School <input type="checkbox"/>	High School Graduate <input type="checkbox"/>	Some College <input type="checkbox"/>	College Graduate <input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced Degree <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
Q5. How long have you worked for the Denver Police Department?	Less than 1 year <input type="checkbox"/>	1—3 years <input type="checkbox"/>	3—5 years <input type="checkbox"/>	5—10 years <input type="checkbox"/>	10—15 years <input type="checkbox"/>	More than 15 years <input type="checkbox"/>	
Q6. What is your rank?	Officer <input type="checkbox"/>	Corporal/Technician <input type="checkbox"/>	Sergeant <input type="checkbox"/>	Lieutenant <input type="checkbox"/>	Captain or Higher <input type="checkbox"/>	Reserve Officer <input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____ _____
Q7. What district are you currently assigned to?	Dist. 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Dist. 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Dist. 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	Dist. 4 <input type="checkbox"/>	Dist. 5 <input type="checkbox"/>	Dist. 6 <input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____ _____

Survey continues on the next page...

Section J. In this final section, we would like to give you the opportunity to explain, in greater detail, your perceptions of the complaint process.

Q1. Overall, what were the strengths of the complaint process?

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Q2. Overall, what were the weaknesses of the complaint process?

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Q3. How will the replacement of the Public Safety Review Commission with the Office of the Independent Monitor change the complaint process?

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**End of Survey**

**Please place the survey form in the return envelope and place it in the mail. The postage is already paid.  
Thank you very much!**

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Joseph De Angelis, Ph.D.  
Ohio University  
Department of Sociology and Anthropology  
Phone: (740) 593-1371  
Email: deangeli@ohio.edu

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact:

Jo Ellen Sherow  
Director of Research Compliance  
Ohio University  
Phone: (740) 593-0664

## Appendix C

### Comparing Officers and Complainants on Key Questions

#### Knowledge of the Complaint Process

	Officers	Complainants
<b>How well do you feel you understand the citizen complaint process?</b>		
Well	54.2%	35.8%
Neutral	22.6%	28.3%
Poorly	23.1%	35.8%
Number	643	145

#### Satisfaction with Internal Affairs Staff

	Officers	Complainants
<b>How satisfied were you that the Internal Affairs staff were polite?</b>		
Satisfied	68.4%	44.0%
Neutral	15.8%	19.0%
Dissatisfied	15.8%	37.0%
Number	342	127

<b>How satisfied were you that the investigator treated you with respect?</b>		
Satisfied	70.3%	42.9%
Neutral	18.5%	15.8%
Dissatisfied	11.2%	41.4%
Number	357	133

<b>How satisfied were you with how well the investigator listened to your description of what happened?</b>		
Satisfied	65.2%	38.9%
Neutral	16.2%	11.5%
Dissatisfied	18.6%	49.6%
Number	351	131

<b>How satisfied were you with the fairness of the investigator's questions?</b>		
Satisfied	65.1%	31.5%
Neutral	15.5%	16.9%
Dissatisfied	19.4%	51.5%
Number	355	130

<b>How satisfied were you with the objectivity of the complaint investigator?</b>		
Satisfied	48.9%	21.0%
Neutral	26.3%	12.0%
Dissatisfied	24.9%	67.0%
Number	358	134

<b>How satisfied were you that you were interviewed soon enough after filing the complaint?</b>		
Satisfied	25.0%	35.6%
Neutral	12.4%	16.7%
Dissatisfied	62.7%	47.7%
Number	356	130

## Satisfaction with the Quality of Communication

	Officers	Complainants
<b>How satisfied were you that the complaint process was clearly explained to you?</b>		
Satisfied	39.6%	27.4%
Neutral	24.3%	23.0%
Dissatisfied	36.0%	49.6%
Number	358	135

	Officers	Complainants
<b>How satisfied were you that you were kept informed about what was happening with your complaint?</b>		
Satisfied	13.1%	11.0%
Neutral	13.6%	12.4%
Dissatisfied	73.3%	76.6%
Number	359	137

	Officers	Complainants
<b>How satisfied were you that you were informed about what happened as a result of your complaint?</b>		
Satisfied	31.4%	13.0%
Neutral	16.3%	13.7%
Dissatisfied	52.3%	73.4%
Number	356	139

## Evaluations of the Neutrality of the Process

	Officers	Complainants
<b>The complaint process is biased in favor of [citizens/police].</b>		
Agree	66.4%	86.6%
Neutral	19.8%	9.0%
Disagree	13.8%	4.5%
Number	616	134

## Comparing Satisfaction with the Overall Complaint Process

	Officers	Complainants
<b>How satisfied were you that your complaint was handled quickly?</b>		
Satisfied	19.8%	18.3%
Neutral	14.3%	16.2%
Dissatisfied	65.9%	65.5%
Number	364	142
<b>How satisfied were you that enough information was gathered before a decision was made on your complaint?</b>		
Satisfied	46.6%	13.0%
Neutral	25.7%	13.0%
Dissatisfied	27.6%	74.0%
Number	362	131
<b>How satisfied were you that the Denver Police Department considered your views before making a decision on the complaint?</b>		
Satisfied	28.0%	9.0%
Neutral	24.9%	11.2%
Dissatisfied	47.1%	79.9%
Number	365	134
<b>How satisfied were you that you were treated fairly?</b>		
Satisfied	45.9%	15.0%
Neutral	24.2%	12.1%
Dissatisfied	29.9%	72.9%
Number	368	140
<b>How satisfied were you that Denver is serious about investigating police misconduct?</b>		
Satisfied	58.9%	8.8%
Neutral	23.8%	8.0%
Dissatisfied	17.4%	83.2%
Number	362	137
<b>How satisfied were you with the complaint process in general?</b>		
Satisfied	11.6%	11.7%
Neutral	24.7%	13.8%
Dissatisfied	63.7%	74.5%
Number	369	145

## Views on Citizen Oversight

	Officers	Complainants
<b>Citizen oversight of the police improves Internal Affairs investigations.</b>		
Agree	14.2%	87.1%
Neutral	30.9%	5.3%
Disagree	54.8%	7.6%
Number	576	132
<b>The Public Safety Review Commission was biased in favor of [officers/citizens].</b>		
Agree	84.9%	73.3%
Neutral	11.7%	21.9%
Disagree	3.4%	4.8%
Number	592	105
<b>The Office of the Independent Monitor will be biased in favor of [officers/citizens].</b>		
Agree	18.0%	35.8%
Neutral	55.2%	40.7%
Disagree	26.9%	23.5%
Number	455	81
<b>The Office of the Independent Monitor will improve the complaint process.</b>		
Agree	43.5%	45.7%
Neutral	40.5%	42.0%
Disagree	16.0%	12.3%
Number	464	81
<b>The Office of the Independent Monitor will do a good job of monitoring police investigations.</b>		
Agree	34.3%	25.4%
Neutral	53.1%	59.7%
Disagree	12.6%	14.9%
Number	437	67

## Appendix D Demographic and Complaint Characteristics for Complainants

### Respondent Demographics

	Number	Percent
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	8	5.4%
25-34	25	16.9%
35-44	30	20.3%
45-54	59	39.9%
55-64	15	10.1%
65 or Over	7	4.7%
Total	144	
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
African American	18	12.2%
Hispanic/Latino	21	14.2%
White/Caucasian	96	64.9%
Native American	0	0.0%
Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Other	2	1.4%
Two or more Races/Ethnicities	6	4.1%
Total	143	
<b>Age</b>		
Male	76	51.4%
Female	68	45.9%
Total	144	
<b>Education</b>		
Some High School	4	2.7%
High School Graduate	15	10.1%
Some College	42	28.4%
College Graduate	41	27.7%
Advanced Degree	41	27.7%
Other	1	0.7%
Total	144	

## Complaint Characteristics as Reported by the Complainant

	Number	Percent
<b>What was your complaint about? (multiple selections allowed)</b>		
Excessive Force	40	27.0%
Discrimination	28	18.9%
Rude Behavior	94	63.5%
Police Procedure	67	45.3%
Other	24	16.2%
<b>In considering the final outcome of your complaint, was your complaint:</b>		
Sustained	9	6.5%
Not Sustained	9	6.5%
Dismissed	78	56.1%
Other	9	6.5%
Don't Know	34	24.5%
Total	139	
<b>How many complaints have you previously filed against Denver Police officers?</b>		
None	111	76.6%
One	25	17.2%
Two	6	4.1%
Three or More	3	2.1%
Total	145	

### Additional Complainant Questions

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N
I feel very safe in my neighborhood.	31.6%	17.3%	51.1%	133
The neighbors in my neighborhood know each other well.	28.5%	22.3%	49.2%	130
My encounters with Denver police officers have been negative.	22.5%	19.6%	58.0%	138
My encounters with Denver police officers have been positive.	60.1%	18.1%	21.7%	138
Police officers are usually friendly.	39.0%	21.3%	39.7%	136

# Appendix E

## Demographic and Complaint Characteristics for Officers

### Characteritics of Responding Officers

	Percent
<b>Age</b>	
Under 25	1.5%
25-34	21.2%
35-44	40.8%
45-54	29.7%
55 and over	6.8%
Number of Officers	532

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	
African American	4.4%
Hispanic	17.4%
White	72.7%
American Indian	1.0%
Pacific Islander	0.0%
Other	4.2%
Number of Officers	523

<b>Gender</b>	
Male	88.9%
Female	11.1%
Number of Officers	532

<b>What is the highest level of education that you have completed?</b>	
Some High School	0.2%
High School Graduate	4.9%
Some College	45.7%
College Degree	39.7%
Advanced Degree	9.2%
Other	0.4%
Number of Officers	534

	Percent
<b>How long have you worked for the DPD?</b>	
<1	4.9%
1--3	3.4%
3--5	7.5%
5--10	21.6%
10--15	21.8%
15 and over	40.9%
Number of Officers	533

<b>Rank</b>	
Officer	46.8%
Corporal/Technician	19.6%
Sergeant	20.0%
Lieutenant	5.2%
Captain or Higher	2.4%
Reserve Officer	0.2%
Recruit	2.8%
Detective	2.4%
Other	0.4%
Number of Officers	459

<b>What district are you currently assigned to?</b>	
Dist. 1	6.9%
Dist. 2	8.4%
Dist. 3	8.4%
Dist. 4	12.2%
Dist. 5	7.4%
Dist. 6	14.3%
Academy	3.8%
HQ	4.8%
Traffic	5.3%
Other	28.6%
Number of Officers	476

## Characteritics of Complaints Against Officers

Percent	
<b>Have you been the subject of a citizen complaint within the last three years?</b>	
Yes	59.9%
No	40.1%
Number of Officers	623

Percent	
<b>What was the outcome on that complaint?</b>	
Sustained	15.8%
Not Sustained	57.6%
Mediated	1.7%
Dismissed	18.5%
Other	6.4%
Number of Officers	297

<b>If yes, how many complaints have been filed against you in the last three years?</b>	
1	40.8%
2	26.1%
3	19.1%
4	6.7%
5	2.3%
More than 5	5%
Number of Officers	341

<b>How were you informed about the complaint?</b>	
Letter	46.4%
Phone Call	5.0%
E-mail	0.9%
In Person	38.2%
Other	1.9%
Multiple Sources	7.5%
Number of Officers	319

<b>What type of complaint was filed against you?</b>	
Excessive Force	19.5%
Discrimination	2.5%
Rude Behavior	32.2%
Police Procedure	22.3%
Other	3.4%
Multiple Complaints	20.1%
Number of Officers	323

<b>Who informed you of the complaint?</b>	
Supervisor	43.2%
District Commander	4.0%
Internal Affairs	40.1%
Other Officers	2.8%
Other	1.9%
Multiple Sources	8.1%
Number of Officers	322

## **Appendix F**

### **About the Researchers**

**Joseph De Angelis, Ph.D.** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Ohio University, and conducts research in the areas of citizen oversight of police, criminal justice performance measurement, and on the role that the police and courts can play in urban redevelopment initiatives.

**Aaron Kupchik, Ph.D.** is an Assistant Professor in the School of Justice & Social Inquiry at Arizona State University, and the author of *Judging Juveniles: Prosecuting Adolescents in Adult and Juvenile Courts* (forthcoming, NYU Press).

## Endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> We would like to thank Chris Kast, Tyler Wall, and Sheruni Ratnabalasuriar for their research assistance on this project. We would also like to thank Richard Rosenthal, Dr. Jon Proctor and Gerylann Castellano of the Office of the Independent Monitor for their help in completing the first wave of officer and community member surveys.

<sup>2</sup> A number of the questions used on the complainant and officer surveys were tested and employed in previous research projects. Several questions on the complainant surveys were adapted from a survey instrument employed by the Independent Police Review Division in Portland, Oregon. See for example *Independent Police Review Division Annual Report 2004*. Office of the City Auditor, City of Portland, Oregon, pgs. 97-107. In addition, several of the questions on the officer survey were adapted from a survey instrument used during an evaluation of the Albuquerque Police Department and from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire. See Betsey Kreisel (1998) *An Analysis of Police Officer's Perceptions of Internal and External Systems of Citizen Complaint Procedures of Police Misconduct*, unpublished dissertation.

<sup>3</sup> Surveys were distributed to roughly 80 DPD recruits who were completing their academy training. This was done with the goal of examining in later reports how patterns of satisfaction vary by the career stages of officers. Since the number of responding recruits was very small, it was not possible to determine if there were significant differences between recruits and sworn officers. We will, however, examine this issue in more detail in the post-implementation report.

<sup>4</sup> For example, Kreisel (*ibid*: 96) in a similar survey of police officers in Albuquerque, New Mexico achieved a response rate of 44%.

<sup>5</sup> A few small differences between the sample and DPD population did emerge. Relative to the population of DPD employees, the pool of responding officers may have contained a slightly higher percentage of officers who received complaints, and a slightly smaller percentage of female officers, Hispanics, African Americans, officers under age 35, officers who have been on the force five or fewer years, and detectives. However, information relating to gender, race, and age was missing for roughly 20% of the respondents. Rank information was missing for 29% of respondents. Officers with missing data on the demographics were statistically compared to officers with demographic information, and there were no meaningful differences between the two groups. Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine whether subpopulations were underrepresented because they were less likely to complete the survey, or because they were less likely to fill in the demographic information because they feared identification. Comments written in the margins next to these questions by respondents indicated that some officers feared identification because of their small numbers in the overall DPD population. Because of these patterns, we evaluated whether the use of statistical weights for race, gender, and rank would affect the findings by computing and comparing the satisfaction results for both weighted and unweighted data. The use of statistical weights for these categories did not result in any meaningful differences in the patterns of satisfaction (almost all changes were less than 1%). Because of the large number of missing data and the small numbers for some of these subpopulations, we report only the unweighted results.

<sup>6</sup> For citizens with multiple complaints, we arranged the data so that we included only the most serious allegation on the most recent complaint for each complainant. This left us with a data file with 1,118 unique individuals.

<sup>7</sup> Police complainants are traditionally a difficult population to survey. For example, Waters and Brown (2000, 623) in a mailed survey of police complainants achieved a 26% response rate and reported the results of another survey that had a 14% response rate. See Ian Waters and Katie Brown, (2000) "Police complaints and the Complainants' Experience." *Brit. J. Criminology*. 40: 617-638. The Independent Police Review Division in Portland, Oregon has reported complainant survey response

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rates of 24-35% (*ibid*: 114).

<sup>8</sup> The IAB data file contained high levels of missing data on the race and age for the overall population of complainants. No population data were available on the education levels of police complainants. Thus, it was not possible to determine how well the respondents matched the population in relation to race, age, and education. However, the IAB database did have reliable measures of gender and case outcome, so the respondents were compared to the population on the basis of those two measures. While the respondents were nearly identical to the overall population in terms of case outcome, females were overrepresented by just more than 3% relative to their proportion in the complainant population (though we don't know the exact magnitude, since almost 4% of the respondents did not mark their gender). However, because females were overrepresented, we evaluated whether the use of statistical weights would affect the findings by computing and comparing the satisfaction results for both weighted and unweighted data. The use of statistical weights for gender resulted in less than a 1% change on each of the satisfaction variables. Because of the small difference and the small number of complainants, we have chosen to report the unweighted results.

<sup>9</sup> The same pattern was followed on questions that asked respondents to strongly agree/strongly disagree with a statement.

<sup>10</sup> In addition, both officers and complainants were asked several questions that were designed to measure their actual knowledge of the complaint process. Because a large proportion of both officers and complainants check "Don't Know" on these questions, we do not report the results of these questions.

<sup>11</sup> The comments we list throughout this report are examples of comments made by officers and complainants. Rather than listing all statements written on the surveys, we have chosen statements that represent thematically the most commonly voiced sentiments. In order to ensure the clarity of comments, minor editing involving spelling and punctuation was performed on the reported complainant and officer comments.

<sup>12</sup> In this report, when presenting data comparing officers with and without complaints, we show only results that are statistically significantly different across these two groups ( $p < .01$ ).

<sup>13</sup> Note that only officers who received complainants within the last three years answered these questions.