

Mission

The mission of the Independent Police Review Division (IPR) is to improve police accountability to the public and to provide the opportunity for fair resolution of complaints against the police. The IPR works with the Citizen Review Committee (CRC) and the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) to ensure that: (1) proper action is taken to address complaints about police activities; (2) complainants and officers have an opportunity for a fair appeal of the results; and (3) policies are changed to prevent the recurrence of problems identified through the complaint process.

Second Year Progress

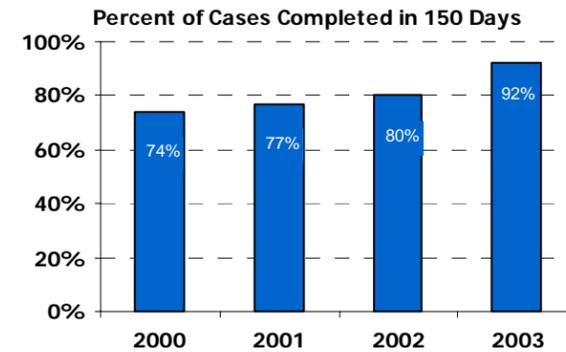
Further improvements have been introduced in the second year of operation to achieve this mission:

- Shared complaint tracking database between IPR and Internal Affairs Division (IAD)
- Adopted digital recordings to reduce costs and speed copying of IPR interviews for IAD
- Developed a shared electronic file system between IPR and IAD to reduce copying
- Enhanced the service complaint process to help address the increasing workload
- Prepared statistical reports for presentation to patrol shifts
- Continued to advocate for adequate IAD staffing to handle increasing complaint workload
- Successfully advocated for adequate IPR staffing to handle increasing complaint workload
- Better IAD investigations reduced the need for IPR requests for additional effort
- Increased IPR Director involvement in Review Level meetings to discuss significant cases
- Completed 20 mediations with high level of satisfaction of all participants
- Developed an officer commendation tracking system and recorded 274 commendations
- Presented full-day IPR/IAD training for sworn personnel to reduce complaints
- Worked with City Council to develop and apply new appeal procedures

Timeliness

City Council, complainants, and police officers have been unanimous in demanding more timely resolution of complaints. In 2003, IPR handled 1,473 information calls and initiated 761 complaints, of which 92% were completed within the Police Bureau's stated goal of 150 days.

The overall timeliness in the handling of complaints improved substantially between 2000 and 2003. Precincts have achieved their goal of completing 75% of service complaints within 30 days and nearly achieved the goal of completing 100% within 45 days. Despite gains in timeliness in 2003, there were a number of areas where improvement is still needed. The IPR did not achieve its goal of completing all intake investigations within 21 days, the speed of IAD assignments dropped over the course of 2003, and IAD did not achieve its timeliness performance goals for declines or full investigations.



Investigation Quality and Outcomes

The IPR Director ensures that IAD properly categorizes complaints, reviews IAD investigations for thoroughness, and evaluates proposed findings. In addition, the IPR is charged with monitoring the processing of citizen complaints and reporting publicly on case outcomes. Overall, the most common complaint filed with the IPR involved allegations of rude behavior. Of the complaints filed in 2003, 45% were referred to the Internal Affairs Division for handling. Of those complaints, 18% were assigned to an IAD investigator for a full investigation, 55% were handled as service complaints, and 26% were declined after review by the IAD Captain.

Ten Most Common Complaints Reported to the IPR	2003 Complaints
Rude behavior	215
Filed false charges/citations	100
Harassment	98
Unjustified behavior	85
Failure to take appropriate action	82
Excessive force involving hands/feet/knees	77
Profanity	63
Warrantless search and/or seizure	50
Unprofessional behavior	50
Intimidation	48

Constant communication between IPR and IAD has improved investigations. The IPR Director has free and unfettered access to Police Bureau records, IAD investigative reports, and the reasoning behind Police Bureau's decisions. The Director was actively involved in several investigations of alleged misconduct. The Director also participated in IAD interviews, as well as discussions with the Police Bureau Review Level Committee regarding recommended findings.

Complainants who are dissatisfied with the results of an investigation may appeal. Of the 20 appeals filed by complainants in 2003, 19 were resolved by year-end. After review of each case, full hearings were conducted on two of the appeals. In two appeals, the CRC voted to challenge 18 findings, and after reconsideration, the PPB accepted 14. The other four challenges (on one case), were appealed to City Council, which upheld the PPB findings.

Complainant Satisfaction

In 2003, a large proportion of respondents continued to be either satisfied or neutral in relation to the intake portion of the complaint process. However, only a relatively small proportion of respondents were satisfied with complaint outcomes.

Overall, there were no statistically significant changes between 2002 and 2003 in satisfaction with either the complaint process or complaint outcomes. 2003 respondent satisfaction with the complaint process remained noticeably higher than was observed with 2001 pre-IPR respondents.

How satisfied were you with:	2001 Pre-IPR Process	2002 IPR Process	2003 IPR Process
how well the investigator listened to your description of what happened?			
Satisfied	41.8%	50.5%	59.9%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	18.7%	17.2%	14.5%
Dissatisfied	39.6%	32.3%	25.6%
<i>Number</i>	91	93	172
how fair and thorough the investigator's questions were?			
Satisfied	39.1%	51.8%	50.0%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	19.5%	18.8%	14.1%
Dissatisfied	41.4%	29.4%	35.9%
<i>Number</i>	87	85	156

Mediation

The IPR contracted with a panel of professionals to begin offering mediation as an option for complaint resolution. During 2003, 20 mediations were completed, which represents the highest rate nationally. Only New York City and Washington, D.C. conduct more mediations; however, their police forces are substantially larger than Portland's. Participants complete evaluations at the end of mediation, with high satisfaction ratings from both complainants and officers.

	Complainants	Officers
Was the dispute resolved to your satisfaction?		
Completely	51.6%	70.0%
Partially	32.3%	15.0%
Not at all	16.1%	15.0%
<i>Number</i>	31	20
Did you get the opportunity to explain yourself in the mediation process?		
Yes	93.3%	95.5%
No	6.7%	0.0%
Other	0.0%	4.5%
<i>Number</i>	30	22
Would you recommend the mediation process to others?		
Yes	96.7%	85.7%
No	0.0%	4.8%
Unsure	3.3%	9.5%
<i>Number</i>	30	21

Policy Reviews

Policy reviews were conducted in several areas where the PPB might improve its practices. The IPR hired the Police Assessment Resource Center (PARC) to review officer-involved shootings and deaths in police custody between January 1997 and June 2000. The report issued in August 2003 evaluated PPB policies and training relative to national best practices. Their 89 recommendations addressed areas such as the deadly force policy, investigation procedures, internal review, incident tactics, and management of records. PPB accepted nearly all the recommendations and is issuing regular reports on the progress of its implementation. PARC is reviewing incidents between July 2000 and December 2002, with an expected release date this winter.

A policy review was issued on Officer Use of Profanity in November 2003, with PPB adopting all its recommendations. In addition, a policy review on Officer Use of Hooper Sobering Station was nearly completed, and found no evidence of abuse. The IPR is conducting reviews of the Police Bureau's handling of tort claims alleging misconduct and its *Early Warning System*.

Increased Accountability

A fair and thorough review of every complaint does not guarantee that each person who complains will be satisfied. Nonetheless, we have improved communications with complainants, established an open and orderly appeal process, implemented a powerful case management system, set standards for timely investigations, created a mediation option, developed a constructive working relationship with police management and labor, seen CRC decisions accepted by the police, participated in IAD investigations, and obtained the assistance of experts on officer-involved shootings and deaths in-custody.

We saw a substantial increase in workload and continue to seek further improvements in complaint handling and community policing: to increase the use of mediation, track the implementation of recommendations on officer-involved shootings, to expand access to the complaint tracking database to the Chief's Office and Personnel Division, to develop criteria to ensure consistency of IPR complaint decisions, to establish clear and effective work expectations between the IPR and CRC, and to improve our outreach to the public. In addition, we will continue working to achieve timeliness goals while ensuring fair and thorough complaint handling.

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IPR

**FOR THE
COMPLETE REPORT:**

www.portlandonline.com/auditor/ipr

or contact our office:
(503) 823-0146

The IPR's Tools for Improving Police Services

Portland City Council authorized a wide array of tools to improve police services:

Information and referral

Answering questions about police practices often resolves complaints. In addition, the IPR may refer callers to Risk Management or another agency's internal affairs division if it is a more appropriate avenue for redress.

Performance standards

Establishing expectations for timeliness, scope, and quality of complaint investigations will improve consistency and credibility of complaint handling.

Power to investigate and participate in investigations

Involvement in significant investigations can improve their thoroughness, professionalism, and timeliness.

Independent reviews of policies and operations

Detailed analyses of a particular policy or management issue by IPR staff can identify areas where the Police Bureau can make improvements. Issues are often identified during appeal hearings that CRC members, IPR staff, and student interns analyze to develop recommendations to improve police services.

Analysis for complaint patterns

Better problem definition contributes to effective changes in policies, supervision practices, or intervention with particular officers.

Mediation

Professional mediators bring officers and complainants together to resolve many types of issues, thereby strengthening police-community ties.

Citizen Review Committee appeal hearings

Public hearings provide a structured opportunity for complainants and police to testify on a complaint regarding a violation of Police Bureau procedures, and the findings that resulted from an investigation. Nine citizens vote to challenge or accept Police Bureau findings.

City Council appeal hearings

When differences in CRC and Police Bureau findings cannot be resolved, a structured hearing will be conducted before City Council. Council decisions on findings are final, and the Police Chief determines discipline.

Public outreach

Viewpoints, concerns, and feedback from the public in open forums and CRC meetings in various parts of the community can create channels of communication between the public and the Police Bureau, as well as help shape policy issues and priorities for CRC and IPR efforts.

Expert review of officer-involved shootings

Every year the IPR will contract with national experts for a review of past officer-involved shootings and deaths in-custody to identify policy recommendations to help prevent future occurrences.

Follow-through

Change takes time and persistence. The IPR and CRC will monitor and report on recommendations to ensure that they are being effectively implemented throughout the Police Bureau.

Working relationship with the Police Bureau

Improving police services means constructively challenging the thinking and behavior of all 1,400 employees in the Police Bureau through a good working relationship. IPR and CRC members regularly communicate with managers, supervisors, and officers in the Police Bureau.

Independent Police Review

City of Portland

Office of the City Auditor

Executive Summary

Annual Report 2003

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