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Response to John Campbell Report, Assessment of Performance Measures: Internal Affairs Division

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I have read and evaluated John Campbell's *Assessment of Performance Measures: Internal Affairs Division* for the Police Bureau and submit this drafted response for Chief Kroeker. The Internal Affairs Division staff have also reviewed this document and provided feedback.

For each recommendation or area of concern reflected in Campbell's report (restated in bold), I have listed a Police Bureau response that articulates:

- What are our current efforts,
- What strategies are recommended for the future, and
- Is there a budget impact?

Campbell has provided a series of findings and recommendations in response to two areas of concern, (1) evaluation of performance for processing internal affairs complaints since the addition of five sergeants, and (2) how can performance data be improved to do a better job of providing timely, relevant information about the performance of internal affairs work.

Recommendations:

- A. IAD should handle all complaints, not just sustainable cases, in a way that builds the effectiveness of internal affairs work. Every complaint, whether sustained, unfounded, insufficient evidence or descriptive of behaviors that do not violate Bureau policy should be an opportunity to build understanding of the full mission of IAD work and improve confidence among officers and trust with citizens.**

Current efforts.

- During the intake process, complaint takers take additional time to attempt to resolve the problem, make referrals or provide resource information to the complainant.

- Closure letters to complainants contain a full explanation of the findings, terminology, reasoning behind each decision, and options available to the complainant.
- Copies of all closure letters are sent to the named officer and his or her commanding officer to enhance understanding of the Bureau's decision and policies regarding the complaint, and to build confidence in officers for IAD investigations.
- Complaint forms are readily available at various Police Bureau locations, are printed in a variety of different languages and complaints may be filed with any Bureau member or at any office.
- As an outcome of analyzing complaints, IAD communicates pertinent information on training or policy issues to Bureau units i.e., Training Division or Planning and Support.

Strategies for the future.

- Establish a goal to close complaints within 150 days (recommended by the Public Agency Training Council). Improving the timeliness may be one of the biggest factors in building confidence and trust in IAD and a sense of effectiveness.
- Whenever possible, include in disposition letters to complainants information on efforts made by the Bureau to address problems, or change policy or practice as a result of investigating their complaint.
- Develop the Citizen's Complaint Form on the Portland Police Bureau website.

Budget impact.

- Maintenance of current staffing levels in IAD.

B. Performance measures should give even the casual observer a balanced picture of the results.

Current efforts.

- Statistical measures describing IAD performance are unclear and not readily available to citizens or Bureau members.

Strategies for the future.

- Purchase and install an Internal Affairs software system to provide a more complete, balanced and timely report on IAD performance.
- Partner with the new IPR outreach worker to gather information on citizen concerns and priorities regarding IAD, and to improve communication at neighborhood and community meetings, and with block captains and Bureau advisory groups.
- Use resources such as the Bulletin, IAD fact sheets, PPB Community Policing Quarterly, PPB Website, citizen academies, neighborhood association newsletters, community and minority newspapers, The Rap sheet and bulletins to print information on the IAD performance.

Budget impact.

- Information and data software is estimated at \$27,000.

C. Address the “credibility gap” in perceptions of how the Police Bureau handles internal affairs issues.

Current efforts.

- Routine IAD training is provided to roll calls, supervisors, and basic and advanced academies. Sharing information and feedback on complaints and behavior issues helps build understanding and acceptance of the IAD process.
- Up front time and effort is spent resolving problems or educating complainants about police procedures and laws during the Intake phase of handling complaints to improve satisfaction with how complaints are handled.
- Letters to complainants fully explain the findings for each complaint, reasoning behind the Bureau’s decisions and information on pertinent policies, practice and laws.
- Quicker feedback and personalized responses to officers continue to be a priority among IAD investigators and are an essential ingredient in maintaining quality IAD staff.
- The Chief’s Office doubled the size of the IAD in Sept. 2000 to reinforce commitment to IAD work.
- Very little communication about IAD investigations and outcomes is done publicly.

Strategies for the future.

- IAD provide routine, statistical reports on the outcomes of IAD investigations to the public.
- IAD and Bureau command should increase efforts to improve understanding of the investigative processes for complaints to the public i.e., at community meetings and through newsletters.
- Build a working partnership with IPR, develop consensus in goals, and utilize IPR community outreach abilities to improve communication.

Budget impact.

- Maintenance of current staffing levels in IAD.

D. Measures should do a better job of tracking the issues that contribute to, or reduce, officer resentments toward IAD work.

Current efforts.

- Once IAD determines that a complaint is not valid because it is frivolous, without merit, untimely or identifies behaviors that are not a violation of

Bureau policy, a full investigation is not done and IAD informs officers by providing them with a copy of the complainant's disposition letter.

Strategies for the future.

- IAD to work closely with IPR to decline meritless complaints and develop a process, including the use of signed complaint forms, to handle chronic and/or dishonest complainers. Share information with officers.

Budget impact.

- None.

E. Develop a method to track and report on discipline and the corrective steps taken to address officer misbehavior. Report on lessons learned from the complaints we receive and how the organization has responded as a result.

Current efforts.

- IAD and the Police Bureau do not report information on discipline.
- Policy and procedural changes are implemented as a result of complaint investigations, but little is done to communicate to the public or Bureau members on the link between complaints and organizational responses as a result.

Strategies for the future.

- Annually report aggregate information on Police Bureau responses to sustained complaints including training and education to reduce the incidence of misconduct, discipline and consequences, and policy and procedural changes that have resulted. Reports should be made available to City Council, Chief's Forum, community groups, and included in the PPB Website, PPB Annual Reports, etc.
- Establish a current Police Bureau discipline plan.

Budget impact.

- Maintenance of current staffing levels in IAD

F. Implement and track efforts to reduce those complaints that are essentially unrelated to officer misbehavior.

Current efforts.

- IAD investigators provide information/referrals to complainants about police procedure and routinely correct misunderstandings on policy, rules and laws.
- Once the Intake is completed, it is an important part of the IAD process to decline to investigate complaints from chronic or frivolous callers. Feedback is given to officers on the declination of these complaints.

- Information is provided to citizens through Police Bureau brochures, pamphlets, the website and other sources to help educate citizens on procedures, policies and laws when being contacted by the to police.

Strategies for the future.

- Reinforce IAD and Bureau efforts to regularly provide information about general police procedures and practices at community meetings and through newsletters, website, etc. Routinely obtain feedback from community on important issues of police conduct i.e., traffic stops, “profiling”. Improve education and communication efforts.

Budget impact.

- Unknown.

G. Raise the credibility with complainants, the public, City Council and officers by speeding up the entire IAD process – from the moment the complaint is made to the implementation of discipline, if sustained. Find a way to reduce the number of different people who must write about a case. Accelerate the discipline process. Improve timing in handling short cases.

Current efforts.

- The size of the IAD has been increased and the speed of investigations in IAD has significantly been improved, as outlined in Cambell’s report. Citizens and officers are kept apprised of the process through letters or memos.
- On complaints where discipline will be imposed, complainants are notified when the finding is determined, rather than when discipline is imposed, to speed up the notification process.
- PPB Inspections and Control Unit is reviewing the discipline process to improve efficiency and speed.

Strategies for the future.

- Install new IAD data software to improve tracking of complaint investigations and providing better accountability in monitoring the process.
- Begin efforts to evaluate the process and improve the efficiency of reviewing cases after they have been investigated to shorten the time to closure.
- Work with command staff to establish a Bureau policy for tracking and handling Service Complaints in a timelier manner. Set a ten-day completion goal to improve timeliness.

Budget impact.

- Software costs (see above)
- Maintenance of current staffing levels in IAD

H. Make it easier to understand investigation outcomes by the categories that will interest outside observers.

Current efforts.

- IAD categorizes findings of complaints using ten different classifications: unfounded, unfounded with debriefing, exonerated, exonerated with debriefing, insufficient evidence, insufficient evidence with debriefing, sustained, declined, inquiry and mediation.
- IAD provides Bureau management with the total number of complaints for each month, dispositions, timelines and findings by classification.

Strategies for the future.

- Proposed IAD software is capable of reporting IAD statistical information in four categories that aggregate overall complaint investigation information into: (1) sustained complaints, (2) complaints with insufficient evidence, (3) mediation, inquiries and other debriefings, and (4) complaints that are not valid. This methodology should be examined to aid decision-makers and outside observers in understanding and evaluating complaint outcomes.
- Examine the terminology and use of “Inquiry” investigations done at precincts and other Bureau units. Redefine the role of Inquiry Investigations in the complaint process.

Budget impact.

- None.

I. Use terminology that better communicates what the Bureau does with complaints.

Recommended terminology:

- Use of the language “suspension with out pay” is recommended over “days off” when describing discipline.
- Declining a complaint. The term is somewhat misleading. No citizen complaints are declined without a preliminary investigation to determine their validity. This process involves interviewing the complainant, sometimes checking with witnesses, collecting evidence, police reports and computer printouts. My recommendation is to report cases that are declined as *declined after preliminary investigation*.
- The term “complaint” should not be replaced with the word “incident” because “complaint” is a clear and meaningful concept to the community and means only one thing. “Incident”, on the other hand, has different meanings in addition to complaint. The challenge is to effectively identify and report the differences between “complaints” and “allegations” which can be confusing. Data produced by an effective tracking system should help in more clearly delineating between the two for reporting purposes.

- Treating “closure” data as an outcome goal instead of a process goal. Improved data collection and tracking should allow information about complaints and their results to be characterized more effectively to enable managers and others to evaluate outcomes.

J. Tracking investigation time.

Current efforts.

- No specific information is tracked on number of hours to investigate a complaint.

Strategies for the future.

- Tracking the number of hours to investigate a complaint may be too cumbersome or time consuming, but should be explored with a temporary field within our data tracking software.

Budget impact.

- None.

Data Collection Needs

All of the data collection recommendations in Campbell’s report are capable of being incorporated into our proposed management information tracking software to be used by both IAD and IPR. Every single complaint will be tracked providing managers with data on the complainant, incident, investigation, officers, results, and quality control.

Complainant and Officer Satisfaction Surveys

I recommend that each of the surveys be adopted and implemented by IAD and IPR for each complaint. Note: IPR has begun surveying citizen complainants using a revised form of this survey. The information obtained from the survey results will be instrumental in maintaining the integrity of investigations, improving process, and improving satisfaction and accountability. IAD, in partnership with IPR, should develop a system of tracking information from surveys and produce regular reports to the Bureau and interested community members.