



IPR Quarterly

Volume 2, Issue 4, Fall 2006

The Independent Police Review and Citizen Review Committee



Newly appointed CRC members in front of City Council

IPR Creates Force Task Force

by Leslie Stevens

I have recently begun the process of chairing a task force to analyze patterns in the use of force within the Portland Police Bureau.

The Force Task Force will review the incidents of non-deadly force and identify any distinct patterns of use of force that should be modified through policies, supervision, and training.

Since August 2004, Portland Police officers have described the characteristics of incidents when force was applied in Use of Force reports. These reports have not been analyzed in a systematic manner since the data was first collected.

Other related data from the incident may be available from other data systems operated by the Portland Police. There is also data available from the IPR regarding complaints filed by the public alleging excessive force. The Task Force will also look to exemplary use of force procedures and training curricula from other police departments.

I have hired a contractor who will analyze the data in a systematic way to identify any patterns for the Task Force. The task force in turn will make recommendations to the Chief for addressing the patterns (e.g., individualized training, supervisor counseling, revised general training, and revised directives).

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Improving Disparate Treatment Handling

IPR invited community leaders to help find ways to improve the current process for handling disparate treatment complaints.

We are trying to find ways to address disparate treatment complaints in more systematic and constructive ways.

Possible options include improved tracking, analysis and reporting of disparate treatment complaints, and/or diverting more suitable cases for handling outside the disciplinary process.

We believe cases handled through alternative methods, including mediation and through supervisors as management issues, will generally yield greater satisfaction on all sides than investigations through disciplinary processes.

We hope not only to offer more constructive benefits to citizens, but also to officers who may feel unfairly accused, and to better report disparate treatment complaints to both the Portland Police and the community.

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Who We Are

IPR receives and monitors complaints about Portland Police officers. IPR may investigate, mediate or dismiss complaints, or forward them to the Portland Police for further review, investigation or resolution. IPR tracks and analyzes complaints and conducts policy reviews.

The nine citizen volunteers of the Citizen Review Committee are appointed by Portland City Council to hear appeals of Internal Affairs investigative findings, help IPR identify patterns of problems and develop policy recommendations, review how IPR handles complaints, and hear public concerns.

Together, IPR and the CRC work to improve police accountability to the public and help solve identified problems.

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Citizen Review Committee News

Welcome to New CRC Members

Three new and two continuing members were appointed by City Council after a competitive selection process. They were chosen from 22 applicants for the CRC in the annual recruitment period ending September 1, 2006.

Appeals to the CRC

Citizens and officers dissatisfied with the findings of complaint investigations may appeal to the IPR and CRC. In the second quarter of 2006, nine new cases were eligible for appeal. One request for appeal was filed and the CRC held a pre-hearing.

In this case a man alleged an officer used excessive force by pushing and bear-hugging him, knocked his video camera to the ground, and unlawfully seized the camera and its contents. The man had been filming an assault outside a bar, and an officer taking a suspect into custody afterward. The police investigation found no misconduct.

It was determined the officer told the man the video tape was evidence, and the man refused to turn it over. When the officer attempted to take it from him, the man tried to throw the camera to another man, who did not catch it. After reviewing the investigation and holding a pre-hearing, the CRC voted to decline the appeal.

CRC Workgroups

Appeal Process Workgroup

A guide was created for process advisors. Process advisors are former CRC members who assist people in appealing findings to the CRC.

Tow Policy Workgroup

Individuals involved with City tow practices and policies continue to be interviewed, in preparation to the workgroup developing recommendations to prevent or reduce tow-related complaints.

Protocols Review Workgroup

The first protocol under review is the Appeals Procedure protocol (PSF-5.03). The workgroup will develop recommendations to bring to the full CRC, as part of a periodic review process.

Oregon Law Center (OLC) Speaker



Monica Goracke was the guest speaker at the September CRC meeting in East Portland. She spoke of OLC advocacy work, particularly on behalf of the homeless. Tow Policy Workgroup members asked her to speak to the special issues of towing when people are currently living in the vehicles being towed.



CRC September meeting in East Portland

New Members:

Josephine Cooper is a graduate student in Conflict Resolution at Portland State University, and a volunteer Victim-Offender mediator with a certificate in Biomedical Ethics.

Robert Milesnick is an Intensive Supervision Case Manager for the Oregon Judicial Department, an attorney, a mediator, and is active in the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods.

Sherelle Owens is a social worker (MSW) with a Developmental Disabilities program, a Mental Health therapist, a former Corrections Counselor, and a Board Director for the Portland Rose Festival.

Reappointed Members:

Michael Bigham is a retired Port of Portland Police Lieutenant with a Masters in Fine Arts who volunteers with homeless, low income, and special needs individuals.

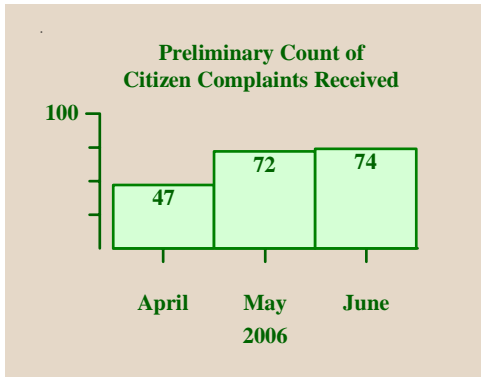
Lewellyn Robison is a retired Port Director for the US Customs Service who volunteers with the Multnomah Country Library and her homeowner's association.

They will join continuing members Loren Eriksson, Irene Remi-Lekun Ogouma, Robert Ueland, and CRC Chair Hank Miggins.

Oversight Report

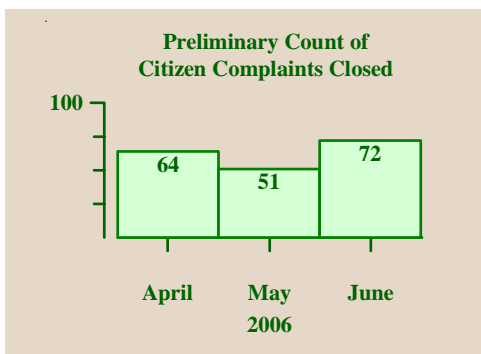
Report for Second Quarter 2006

The following charts show the number of: complaints received, allegations in each complaint category, and cases closed from April to June 2006. (Complete figures are not yet available for the third quarter).



IPR records and tracks all citizen-initiated complaints. During the second quarter of 2006, IPR received 193 new citizen complaints and closed 187. June was the busiest month of the quarter for complaint intakes and closures.

Most complaints contain multiple allegations, each classified and tracked separately. Hence there are more allegations than cases for any period. Many new cases involved conduct, courtesy, or procedure allegations.



Conduct complaints involve "behavior bringing discredit" to the Portland Police or the City. This category includes conformance with laws, professionalism, and truthfulness.

Courtesy complaints allege rudeness, disrespect, or offensive language or behavior (not including disparate treatment).

Procedure complaints allege that an administrative or procedural requirement was not met. This category includes evidence handling, identification, and reporting requirements.

Second Quarter Case Descriptions

IPR randomly selected one citizen complaint and one commendation from each of the three months of the second quarter to provide examples of the types of cases received.

April

A man from out of town was the subject of a traffic stop. He alleged he was treated disrespectfully, improperly searched, and cited for having no operator's license when he had an out of state license. He alleged officers used profanity, made derogatory comments about his mother and his socio-economic status, calling him "tattooed white trash," and told him to take his "little cowboy ass" back to Wyoming. He said, "I should have splattered the guy's nose across his face, but he was wearing a gun and a badge."

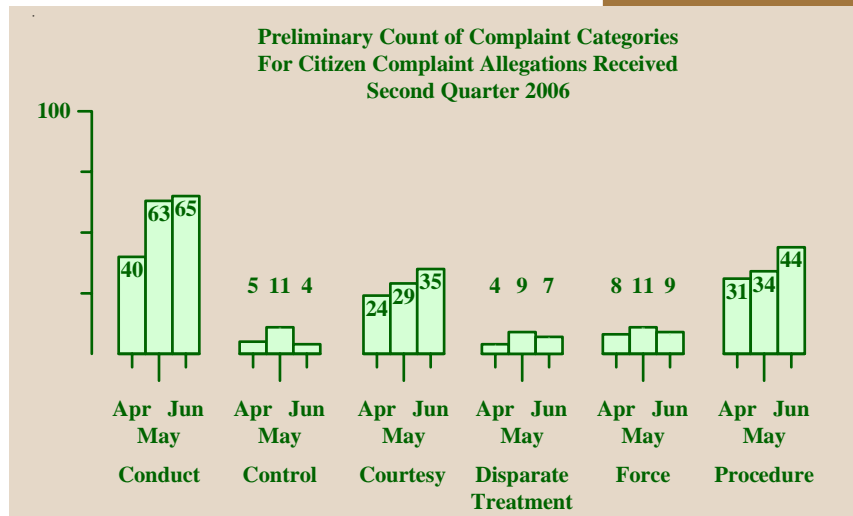
A man jogging downtown had a heart attack. A nearby police officer and a Multnomah corrections officer came to his aid and immediately began administering CPR until the paramedics arrived, saving the man's life. "For this I am forever grateful... Words can't do justice to someone who has saved one's life."

May

A woman was the subject of a traffic stop and alleged the officer was rude, angry, and unnecessarily "chewed her out" even though she was very nice and respectful to him, apologized, and admitted she had done wrong.

A member of the Trail Blazers basketball team reported that he was the victim of a theft. The officer who took the report immediately opened an

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Case Descriptions *(continued from page 3)*

investigation, interviewed potential suspects, obtained a confession, and quickly solved the case. The letter of commendation said, "His actions exemplify the motto 'to protect and serve,' and his professionalism reflects positively on the Portland Police Bureau."

June

A man was arrested for assault and attempted murder after a lengthy fight with the victim. Once in jail, he reported gradually increasing pain in his neck. He was diagnosed with an unstable fracture by an emergency room doctor two days after his arrest. He attributed his injury to an officer stepping on his neck during his arrest. Because he alleged police had used excessive force and caused the injury, the doctor alerted a jail supervisor and IPR.

Over two dozen business owners in Southeast Portland wrote a letter commending an officer for his dedication to community policing, how he had taken the time to get to know residents, and responded promptly to their concerns and information, resulting in several arrests and a decline in area crime. The officer was recently transferred to a new assignment, and the business owners wrote, "We need him back. PLEASE."

Calls for Assistance Received by IPR

In the second quarter of 2006, IPR received 574 phone calls, for a total of 1183 calls for the year so far. (By the end of the second quarter in 2005 IPR received 1072 phone calls.)

Second Quarter Mediations

The IPR Mediation Program is an alternative to the disciplinary process, a way for citizens and officers to meet and resolve their issues directly with each other, with the help of professional mediators. Eight new mediation cases were opened and two mediated in the second quarter of 2006.

Forms Available in Korean and Chinese

IPR commendation/complaint forms are now available in Korean and Chinese, in addition to English, Spanish, and Russian. The forms are also available online in pdf format. For more information or to request forms, call IPR.

Task Force *(continued from page 1)*

The Task Force will also assist me in preparing a report (without identifying individual officers) describing Portland Police actions to carry out those recommendations. The report may be released as early as February 2007.

The Force Task Force consists of representatives from the Citizen Review Committee, IPR, and the Portland Police.

Other News

New Office of Youth Violence Prevention

In July, Mayor Potter announced the creation of a new office to focus on reducing youth and gang violence in Portland, headed by John Canda, formerly executive director of the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods.

Canda has been involved in youth gang violence outreach and prevention efforts since 1990, and co-chairs the Youth Gang Violence Task Force (GVTF) along with a Portland Police Precinct Commander. He has helped develop an interdisciplinary approach to problem-solving for youth gang issues.

The new office reflects the Mayor's emphasis on attacking the root causes of problems in neighborhoods rather than simply focusing on policing efforts.

The Office of Youth Violence Prevention will research best practices and apply for grant funding to supplement local resources; and will create a coordinating council that includes city bureaus, county, state, and federal partners, businesses, schools, and the faith community to provide consistent policy input, guidance, and advocacy to address youth violence.

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CRC Public Meeting Schedule

December 19 5:30 pm	City Hall Lovejoy Room 1221 SW 4 th Avenue
January 16 5:30 pm	St. Johns Community Center 8427 North Central
February 21 5:30 pm	City Hall Lovejoy Room 1221 SW 4 th Avenue