



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Accountability for Transit Police Falls Short of Community Expectations

The City Auditor's [Independent Police Review](#) (IPR) found that the management model used to provide police services for the transit system leads to some adverse outcomes for community members when they have a negative encounter with an officer. Responsibility for this unit may shift away from the Portland Police Bureau at the end of the year but the accountability issues and management challenges will still be relevant to the community and all agencies responsible for policing the transit system. Our recommendations should be adapted and implemented by whichever agency oversees the division. The [report](#) can be found on the IPR website.

TriMet contracts with 14 local law enforcement agencies to police the region's public transit system. A Portland Police Commander supervises officers assigned to work under the contracts. Community members often approach IPR with a complaint about an encounter with Transit Division officers and are sometimes disappointed to learn that it cannot investigate unless the officer who is the subject of their complaint works for the Portland Police Bureau. IPR recommends improvements to the system for processing complaints to ensure complaints get to the correct agencies and agencies take actions required by the intergovernmental agreement.

The structure of the division also puts the managing agency in a difficult position of having to coordinate officers from a variety of agencies who are accountable to their home agencies and policies and directives. IPR recommends the Bureau work with TriMet to identify which agency's policies should govern law enforcement on the system.

The Independent Police Review was created in 2001 as the City of Portland's civilian oversight agency of the Portland Police Bureau. IPR is the division in the City Auditor's Office that takes community



member complaints or commendations about Portland police officers and conducts policy reviews of the Bureau.

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