



**Training Advisory
Council Official
Recommendation**

**Demographic Data
Inclusion in Annual &
Quarterly Use of Force
Reports**

March 13, 2019





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DEMOGRAPHIC DATA IN ANNUAL & QUARTERLY USE OF FORCE REPORTS

March 13, 2019

1. Team

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2. Recommendations

In order for the TAC to carry out its duties it is important for the reporting of use of force to be put into context. While PPB currently includes custody data in its reporting, this is felt to be insufficient given that certain populations tend to interact with police to a greater degree than others. To rectify this, the TAC recommends:

- The inclusion of U.S. Census Bureau race and ethnicity demographic data for Portland into annual and quarterly PPB Use of Force reports to aid in contextualizing data.
- Demographic data should be included in all areas of the report where the sample is comparatively appropriate or a comparable sample can be utilized, such as a similar city based on population.
- Specifically, and at minimum, this data should be included for comparison on the same page of the report as “Total PPB Custodies.” Any additional data that can help strengthen the context of proportion of representation should be considered for inclusion as well.
- To mitigate concerns about comparability of data between U.S. Census and PPB custody and use of force data, a disclaimer should be included along the lines of: “It should be noted that a direct comparison between city census demographic data and PPB demographic data cannot be made due to differences in data sets.”

3. High Level Summary

The DOJ Settlement Agreement includes a requirement (page 32) that the TAC make written recommendations to the Chief regarding proposed changes in policy, training, and/or evaluations based on data presented by the Inspector of the Professional Standards Division. Contextual demographic data will help the TAC to better understand the proportion of specific community groups impacted in order to fulfill its mission and for the purpose of informing future training recommendations.

4. Challenges

- There are two different populations to consider: those that have contact with officers and the entire city population as a whole. Using the entire city as a benchmark presents a confound as there are some groups that are more likely to have police encounters and be arrested by police.
- Currently, custody data is used as the comparison population for Use of Force reports. Given that historically people of color are overrepresented in their interactions with police, this skews the context this data is intended to provide in that it fails to highlight the larger effect on the community as a whole.
- As an example of this overrepresentation: According to the PPB's 2017 Force Analysis Summary Report, we know that Black/African-American populations accounted for 28% of subjects of uses of force (page 4) and 21% of PPB custodies (page 5). In comparison, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, Black/African-Americans account for only approximately 6% of Portland's population (2010).
- Data presented as it is currently, with just a comparison to custodies, makes it appear as though some populations of color are a larger proportion of the group than actually represented in Portland. This makes the data more difficult for the general public to interpret/understand if certain groups are over/underrepresented in the data without having background knowledge of research and evaluation to think critically of the figures provided.

5. Opportunities

The Portland Compliance Officer/Community Liaison (COCL) Compliance and Outcome Assessment Report regarding Use of Force (September 2018) reported, "findings did show that males, African Americans, Hispanics, younger community members and transients are more likely to have higher levels of force (either in total or in the first force applied by an officer) used against them compared to their counterparts." (page 5). Given these findings, it is apparent that the TAC must continue to focus on the issue of demographics in relation to uses of force.

The inclusion of contextual demographic data will make the PPB Use of Force reports easier to interpret and understand, and therefore help the TAC create more meaningful recommendations. While the TAC acknowledges the limitations of utilizing city-wide demographic data for direct comparison with Use of Force data, it is held that the benefits of making a good faith effort in the service of transparency and accountability outweigh the statistical rationale for excluding such data from the reports.

It is worth noting that such city-wide demographic data is included in the Annual PPB Stops Data Collection Report (page 10), albeit with additional clarification regarding shortfalls of this type of comparison and presentation of alternative disparity benchmarks (page 11). Given the inclusion of this type of data in the Stops Data reports, the TAC sees no reason why it cannot be included in the Use of Force reports.

6. References and Sources

PPB Personnel Included in Discussions Related to this Topic

Lieutenant Craig Dobson, Inspector, Professional Standards Division
Shannon Smith, Crime Analyst, Office of Strategic Services
Kate Bonn, Crime Analyst, Office of Strategic Services
Aubrey Perry, Crime Analyst, Office of Strategic Services

Reports Referenced by Recommendation

DOJ Settlement Agreement (2012)
<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/article/506328>

2017 Annual PPB Force Analysis Summary Report (2018)
<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/article/682975>

Compliance and Outcome Assessment Report: Section III Use of Force (2018)
<https://www.portlandcocl.com/s/Compliance-and-Outcome-Assessment-Report-Use-of-Force-FINAL-with-appendices.pdf>

2017 Annual PPB Stops Data Collection Report (2019)
<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/article/710479>

Other Reports Relevant to Recommendation

State of Black Oregon 2015, Urban League of Portland (2015)
<https://ulpdx.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/State-Of-Black-Oregon-2015.pdf>

The African American Community in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile, Coalition of Communities of Color (2014)
<http://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/research-and-publications/the-african-american-community-in-multnomah-county-an-unsettling-profile>

The Native American Community in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile, Coalition of Communities of Color (2014)
https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1093&context=socwork_fac

PPB Plan to Address Racial Profiling (2009)
<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/article/230887>