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**Metropolitan Police Department, Charles H. Ramsey, Chief of Police
Office of Organizational Development, Nola Joyce, Senior Executive Director**

Report on Survey of Crime Victims in Washington, DC

Executive Summary

During three weeks in February 2001, the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia (MPDC) conducted telephone interviews with 401 persons who reported being victims of crime during the months of November and December 2000. The crime victims were randomly selected to participate on the basis of citywide police reports of five crime types: aggravated assault, auto theft, burglary, robbery and simple assault. The survey was designed to: (1) establish a baseline measure of victim satisfaction with MPDC's response in the immediate aftermath of victimization; (2) assess victims' needs and expectations; and (3) increase the Department's capacity to systematically collect feedback from crime victims. This document summarizes the survey methodology and findings and offers recommendations for improving the Department's response to victims of crime.

Survey Methodology

The questionnaire for the MPDC Crime Victims Survey was designed to provide the Department with both general and specific information about the recent experiences of crime victims in their interaction with Department members. Twenty-nine members of MPDC Recruit Class 2000-5 administered the telephone interviews as part of their training. The recruits received specialized training to prepare them to conduct the interviews as well as to educate them about the needs of crime victims. The telephone survey introduced the recruits first-hand to the importance of responding to victims in a manner that ensures victim cooperation and confidence in the police. Interviews were conducted primarily during evening hours over a three-week period.

Summary of Results

Most victims reported that, overall, they were satisfied with the services they received and that most of the officers with whom they interacted were respectful. The survey analysis also found that officers demonstrated good skills in certain aspects of meeting the needs of crime victims, including offering reassurance, making victims feel at ease, listening without judging and showing concern for the victims. However, opportunities exist to improve services to victims, such as informing them of their rights and entitlements as crime victims, offering crime prevention information and providing referral information about other agencies that could assist them.

The survey found substantial levels of satisfaction with the initial police response, but the Department needs to improve the types of services members provide to crime victims, particularly with respect to follow-up contact and provision of information related to reducing the likelihood of repeat victimization. The following provides the results of each specific performance area:

◆ **Satisfaction with MPDC services**

A majority of victims (79 percent) surveyed indicated that overall, they were either very satisfied (51 percent) or somewhat satisfied (28 percent) with the services they received. Ninety-five percent of victims interviewed indicated that the initial responding police officers were either very respectful (80 percent) or somewhat respectful (15 percent) during the first contact.

◆ **Officer interaction skills**

Seventy five percent of the victims indicated that the officers demonstrated positive skills during their contacts with victims by showing concern, listening without judging, making them feel at ease and offering their names and phone numbers to the victim. However, less than half of the victims indicated that officers suggested counseling was available and provided appropriate referral information.

◆ **Officer's provision of service information**

The majority of victims indicated that they were not provided crime prevention or referral information to other agencies during the initial contact with officers.

◆ **Confidentiality and victims' rights**

More than half of the time, officers assured victims of confidentiality (60 percent) and conducted interviews in a private location (about 77 percent). However, the majority of victims were not informed about their rights as crime victims.

◆ **Crime Victims Compensation**

A majority of victims who were potentially eligible for financial compensation (67 percent) stated that they did not receive information about the District of Columbia Crime Victims Compensation Program.

◆ **MPDC follow-up with victims**

Of the 401 victims surveyed, 45 percent reported that they were re-contacted by the responding officer or another MPDC member after the incident; 55 percent indicated that they were not re-contacted. About two in three re-contacts occurred within a week of the original incident.

◆ **Services provided during re-contact**

More than 50 percent of the victims reported that officers provided assurance that they were concerned about them and information about the status of the investigation during re-contact. However, only 27 percent of the victims reported receiving crime prevention information; a copy of the police report was offered only 22 percent of the time, and referral to other agencies was offered only 17 percent of the time during re-contact. Further analysis reveals that follow-up information and/or assurances provided to victims are positively related to overall satisfaction with MPDC services.

◆ **Victim outreach to service providers**

Victims were more likely to seek counseling assistance from family and friends (54 percent) than from victim assistance groups (5 percent) or counselors/therapists (5 percent).

◆ **Victim's feelings of safety**

Nearly three out of four persons interviewed (71 percent) reported that they felt somewhat safe or very safe at the time of the interview, approximately 60-90 days after being victimized. A small but significant number reported that they felt either somewhat unsafe (17 percent) or very unsafe (11 percent). Within the crime categories, burglary victims are more likely to report feeling somewhat unsafe or very unsafe (40 percent) than victims of any other crime type.

◆ **Subsequent victimization**

Thirteen percent of the victims interviewed in this survey reported that they had been re-victimized within the preceding ninety days. Almost one in five of these victims reported they had been re-victimized for the same or a similar crime since the original incident occurred.

◆ **Satisfaction by demographics**

Asian, Alaskan Native, Multiracial and White/Caucasian respondents were most satisfied with police services. Dissatisfaction was highest among Hispanics, Latinos and Blacks/African-Americans. Male victims were slightly more likely to report being very or somewhat satisfied than female victims.

Next Steps

Victims of serious offenses may have a wide range of needs in the aftermath of crimes. While officers are not in a position to address all of those needs, it is incumbent upon MPDC to provide assistance to victims in ways that are consistent with the Department's mission.

- ◆ To increase referrals to other service agencies, the Department will educate officers about other assistance available to victims and develop a resource that makes it easy for officers to provide notice to victims of appropriate services available in the District.
- ◆ To improve our notification to victims of the financial assistance available through the Crime Victims Compensation Program, the Department will review and audit the existing district-level procedures to ensure compliance and will work with the Office of the Superintendent of Detectives to ensure awareness and compliance by investigators. In essence, MPDC will hold all components that interact with victims or the families of victims, accountable for providing information about the Crime Victims Compensation Program.
- ◆ Enhanced victim rights legislation was recently enacted in the District of Columbia. To ensure notification to victims of their rights, the Department will educate officers about the recently enacted legislation and will develop a resource that makes it easy for officers to provide notice to victims of their rights.
- ◆ In conjunction with the Office of the Superintendent of Detectives, the Office of Organizational Development will design and develop a Family Liaison function within the homicide division. The Family Liaison function will focus on the families of homicide victims to ensure the provision of support, referral and information.
- ◆ The Office of Organizational Development will review and revise the Department's policy regarding our interaction with victims, acknowledging MPDC's commitment to treating victims in a respectful, responsive and compassionate manner and recognizing their role as partners in the investigation process.
- ◆ To determine the impact of our expanded efforts, the Office of Organizational Development will conduct a follow-up survey of victims of crime.

Introduction

In February 2001, the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia (MPDC) conducted a telephone survey of 401 persons who had been crime victims in the previous 60–90 days. The purpose of the survey was to measure the quality of victim services provided by MPDC officers at the time of their initial response to the crime and during follow-up recontacts. This report summarizes the survey methodology and results and examines patterns in the information provided by crime victims regarding their experiences with MPDC members who responded to the initial call for service. It concludes with next steps for the Department.

Background and Survey Methodology

In 1999, under the leadership of Chief Charles H. Ramsey, the MPDC implemented *Policing for Prevention*, a community policing strategy designed to reduce crime through strategic law enforcement efforts, mobilization of community members, and engagement in a comprehensive approach with other agency providers to address the underlying causes and consequences of crime. The MPDC's three-pronged community policing strategy supports the Department's mission to prevent crime and the fear of crime and to build safe and healthy neighborhoods. Within that framework, improved service to victims is not only a key aspect of preventing crime and reducing the fear of crime but also a crucial component of community wellness.

In the summer of 2000, the Office of Organizational Development (OOD) implemented a four-phase training and research project consisting of:

- ◆ **Phase I:** crime victim survey design and pre-testing,
- ◆ **Phase II:** officer recruit training in victimization issues and telephone surveying techniques,
- ◆ **Phase III:** random crime victim case selection and survey administration, and
- ◆ **Phase IV:** survey data analysis and reporting.

The results of the survey will be used to identify needed changes in policy and procedure, and training in the area of interaction with victims. It will also serve as a baseline to measure the success of continued efforts.

Phase I

The Phase I survey questions were developed based on a review of victimization literature, including a 1996 report from the US Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, on best practices for serving the needs of crime victims and witnesses. Questions were designed to provide MPDC with both general and specific information about the recent experiences of crime victims in their interaction with Department members. The resulting MPDC Crime Victims Survey (see Appendix A) consisted of 27 questions pertaining to:

- ◆ Victim recollection of the crime and satisfaction with services provided by MPDC, including respect shown by officers for crime victims (Questions 1–3)
- ◆ Officer interaction skills and knowledge of available victim services conveyed to crime victims (Questions 4a–4m)
- ◆ Victim confidentiality and rights (Questions 5–11)
- ◆ MPDC follow-up with victims (Questions 12–16)
- ◆ Victim outreach to service providers and feelings of safety (Questions 17 and 18)
- ◆ Crime victims compliments, criticisms and additional suggestions for MPDC (Question 19)
- ◆ Subsequent victimization (Questions 20 and 21a–21i)
- ◆ Respondent demographics (Questions 22–27)

Phase II

In Phase II, twenty-nine police officer recruits at the MPDC Maurice T. Turner Jr., Institute for Police Science, received 12 hours of training in victim issues and telephone surveying techniques. The training was provided by OOD staff with extensive knowledge of victim services delivery, survey administration and survey research methods. Training topics included the following:

- ◆ Types of victimization;
- ◆ Physical and psychological trauma experienced by victims;
- ◆ Other forms of direct and indirect consequences of victimization;
- ◆ Victim rights;
- ◆ Victim services programs such as professional treatment services and other assistance programs;
- ◆ Ways in which crime victims are impacted by insensitive treatment from police officers and other members/components of the criminal justice system; and
- ◆ Ways in which police can treat victims of crime with sensitivity and mitigate the effects of insensitive treatment from the criminal justice system.

Police recruits were trained in telephone interviewing techniques, including making the initial contact, remaining neutral when probing, recording responses and ending the interview. After completing this training, recruits were assigned dates/times over a three-week period to conduct telephone interviews.

Phase III

In Phase III, victims were randomly selected from five crime categories—aggravated assault, motor vehicle theft, burglary, robbery and simple assault. With the exception of simple assault, these crimes are included in the Crime Index, a measure of reported crime that is more serious than non-Index crimes and that are serious problems within the District of Columbia.

The sample of victims was selected from citywide police reports filed during November and December of 2000 for these five crime types. Simple assault and auto theft were the two most represented categories (28 percent and 25

percent, respectively), while robbery and aggravated assault were the least represented categories (10 percent and 15 percent, respectively). Victims in each of the seven districts were represented, with the majority in the Sixth District (20 percent), the Fifth District (18 percent) or the First District (16 percent). The final sample consisted of 1,200 victims from approximately 2,030 victims eligible for inclusion in the study. Because of the sensitive nature of sexual assault and domestic violence, the Department conducted a separate survey with a sample of these crime victims.

Each recruit used a “Call Record Sheet” that listed the victim’s name, address, telephone number, type and date of offense, and the Central Complaint Number (CCN). On the Call Record Sheet, the recruits documented the result of each attempt to contact the victim. They were required to make a minimum of four attempts and were able to successfully contact and interview a total of 401 victims.

A number of victims selected for the survey (183) could not be contacted because of incorrect or disconnected telephone numbers. An even larger number (440) could not be contacted for other reasons, even after several attempts. Some of these reasons included victims who changed their phone numbers to unlisted numbers, victims who said they did not feel safe, victims who did not live at the phone number recorded on the police report and calls that were not answered after numerous attempts. However, only about 15 percent of the victims contacted refused to be interviewed.

One measure of successful interviewing practice is the *upper bound response rate*, also known as the *cooperation rate*, which is computed as $I/I+R$, where I = number of interviews and R = number of refusals.

This rate measures the level of cooperation attained among identified, eligible and capable respondents. In this survey the cooperation rate was 87 percent, which is considered very high for telephone surveys.

Phase IV

The data collected through the 401 telephone interviews were subsequently entered into a computer for data analysis in Phase IV.

Overall Survey Results

Most victims reported that, overall, they were satisfied with the services they received and that most of the officers with whom they interacted were respectful. Officers also demonstrated good skills in certain aspects of working with crime victims, including offering reassurance, making victims feel at ease, listening without judging, showing concern for the victim and informing victims about what to expect next from the Police Department. The survey also revealed several areas where police need to improve services to crime victims. These include informing them of their rights and entitlements as crime victims, providing referral information about government agencies or other providers of assistance to victims, and offering crime prevention information.

In general, the survey revealed that the Department performs quite well at the initial response but needs to improve the kinds of services members provide to crime victims, particularly with respect to follow-up contact and provision of information related to reducing the likelihood of repeat victimization.

Performance Area Summary

A. *Victim recollection of the crime and satisfaction with services provided by MPDC, including respect shown by officers for crime victims (Questions 1–3)*

Of the 401 victims interviewed, 98 percent recalled the incident (only three persons indicated they did not recall the incident, and no response was recorded for four persons). By and large, the victims presented an optimistic picture of how the police respond to calls for service. Figure 1 shows that, overall, 79 percent of victims indicated they were either very satisfied (51 percent) or somewhat satisfied (28 percent) with the services they received from MPDC during initial police contacts.

These numbers are somewhat higher than those reported in previous studies. In a survey of District of Columbia residents conducted by the Institute for Policy Research in 1998, about three-quarters of residents were at least somewhat satisfied with the way police handled an incident, but only 45 percent reported being very satisfied.

Ninety-five percent of victims interviewed said the police officers who responded to the initial call were either very respectful toward them (80 percent) or somewhat respectful (15 percent) during the first contact (see Figure 2).

Figure 1: Crime Victims' Satisfaction with Initial Police Response

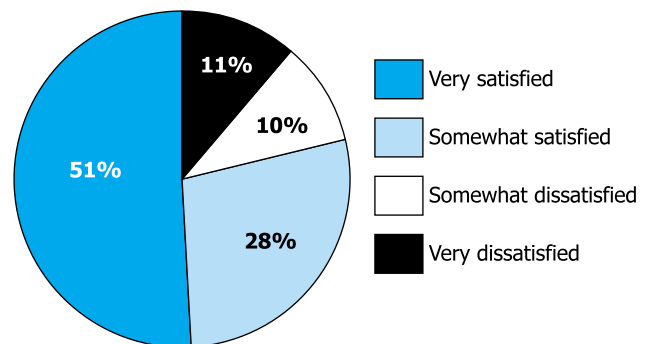
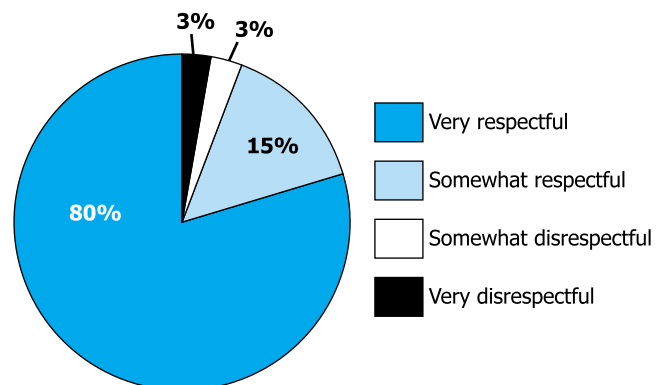


Figure 2: Crime Victims' Perception of Level of Respect of Responding Officers¹



¹ Percentages may total more than 100 due to rounding.

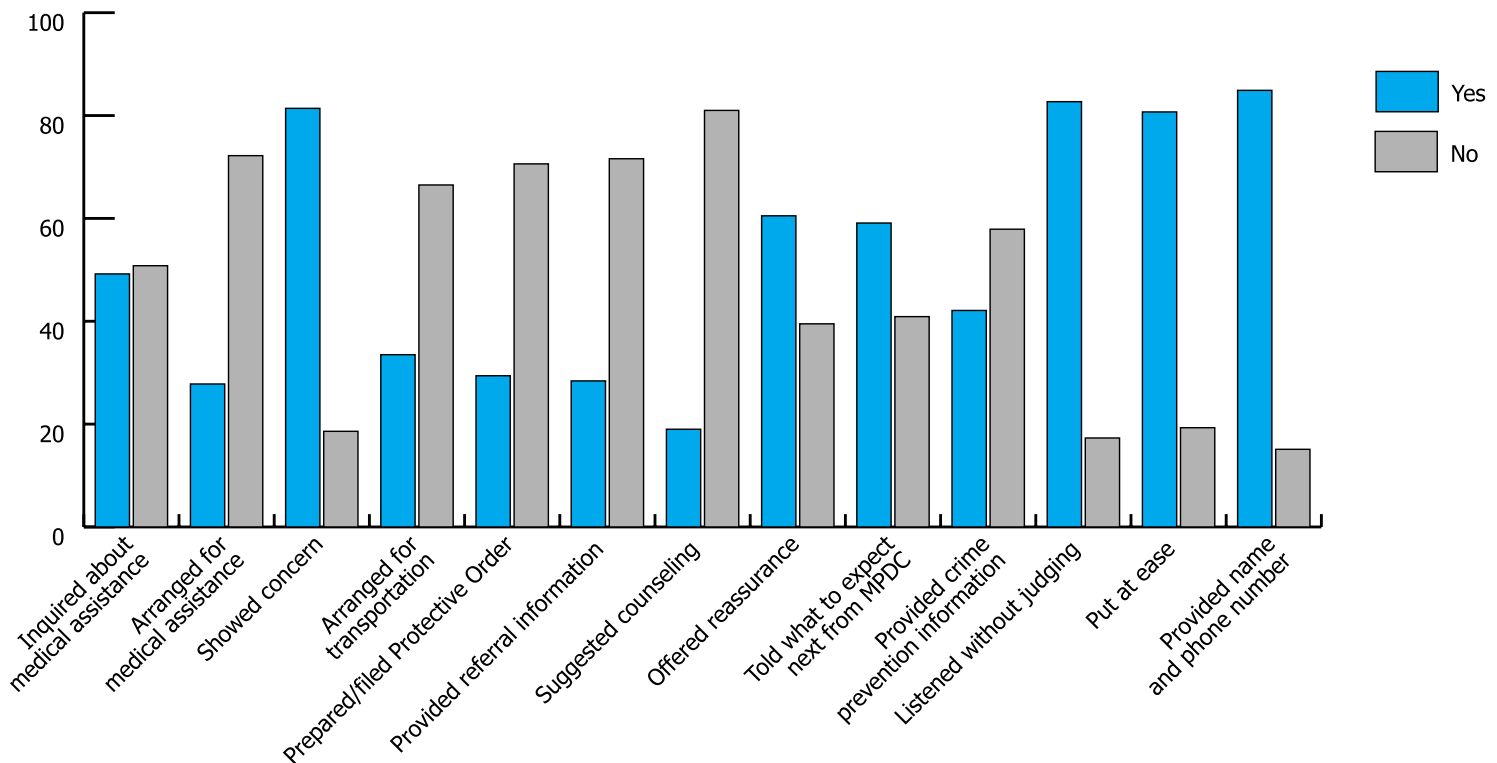
B. Officers' interaction skills and knowledge of available victim services conveyed to crime victims (Questions 4a–4m)

Victims were also asked whether they were provided with services and information in several specific performance areas.² As illustrated in Figure 3, seventy-five percent or more of victims indicated that officers showed concern for their current situation, allowed them to talk about their situation without judging, made them feel at ease, and provided the victim with their names and phone numbers for follow-up questions. More than half of the victims indicated that the officers who responded to the scene

offered reassurance that made them feel safe or told them what the Department would do next on their case (61 percent and 59 percent, respectively).³

On the other hand, the majority of victims who responded to this question (58 percent) indicated they were not provided with crime prevention information. Eighty-one percent indicated that the officers did not suggest that counseling was available, while 72 percent indicated they were not provided referral information about other agencies that could assist them.

Figure 3: Service Provision in Special Knowledge and Skills Area



² It should be noted that for victims of crimes such as auto theft and robbery, such questions were not as applicable. Regardless, all answers for those who chose to respond to this question were included in Figure 3.

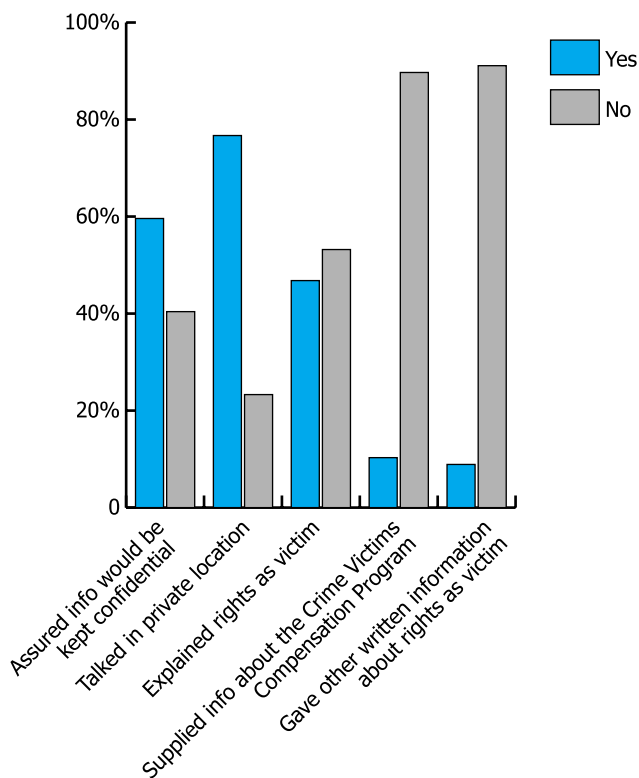
³ Unless otherwise indicated, missing responses are not displayed in figures, tables or narrative in this report.

C. Victim confidentiality and rights (Questions 5–11)

Victims were asked several questions pertaining to whether officers treated their identity and details of the crime with confidentiality. Figure 4 illustrates that in more than half of their interactions with these victims, officers assured them that their information would be kept confidential (60 percent) and/or interviewed them in a private location (77 percent). However, victims were provided explanations about their rights less than 50 percent of the time and were supplied with written victim’s rights information and offered information about the District of Columbia Crime Victims Compensation Program in fewer than 11 percent of contacts. It is important to note, however, that victims of auto theft are not generally eligible for compensation. Of the victims surveyed who are considered eligible, 67 percent reported that they did not receive information about the program. Of the 36 victims who said they did receive information about this program, 80 percent of them rated the information they reviewed as being either very helpful or somewhat helpful.

Of the 401 crime victims surveyed, less than one half (178) said they did not receive any information, verbal or written, about their rights as a crime victim (Questions 7 and 10). Of those who received written information, more than three-quarters rated the information as very helpful, while another 22 percent reported the information was somewhat helpful.

Figure 4: Percent of Victims Who Were Afforded Confidentiality, Privacy and Information



D. MPDC follow-up with victims (Questions 12–16)

Victims were asked several questions related to follow-up contact initiated by MPDC. Forty-five percent of victims surveyed (175) said they were re-contacted by the responding officer or another officer after the incident, while 55 percent (216) said they were not re-contacted.

Almost 60 percent of victims who reported that they had been re-contacted by either the responding officer or another officer after the original incident indicated that the follow-up took place within one day, 2–3 days or 4–7 days. In other words, almost two in three re-contacts took place within a week of the original event. Responses to follow-up questions regarding the re-contact indicate that 88 percent of officers seemed to be either very concerned or somewhat concerned about the status/welfare of the victims. When questioned about whether the officers provided information about the case or only seemed interested in getting additional information for the report, 38 percent of the

victims reported that the officers seemed principally interested in providing information. Almost the same percentage (32 percent), however, said the officers were only interested in *getting* additional information from the victim.

The follow-up did not have to be within one day; respondents were as likely to be satisfied if follow-up contact was made within 4–7 days.⁴

Table 1 lists the percent of instances, as reported by victims, in which officers provided specific types of information during re-contact. Information on the status of the investigation and reassurance that MPDC is concerned about the victim were the most common types of information provided during follow-up. Providing a copy of the incident report, referrals to other service agencies and provision of crime prevention information were reportedly provided less often.

Table 1: Specific Information Provided During Re-Contact

Information Type	Yes	No
Information on the status of the case	51%	49%
Copy of police incident report	22%	78%
Referral to other service agencies	17%	83%
Reassurance that MPDC is concerned about what happened	59%	41%
Crime prevention information	27%	73%

⁴ Readers should keep in mind, however, that in general, the majority of respondents reported being very satisfied with police services.

Follow-up information by type of victimization

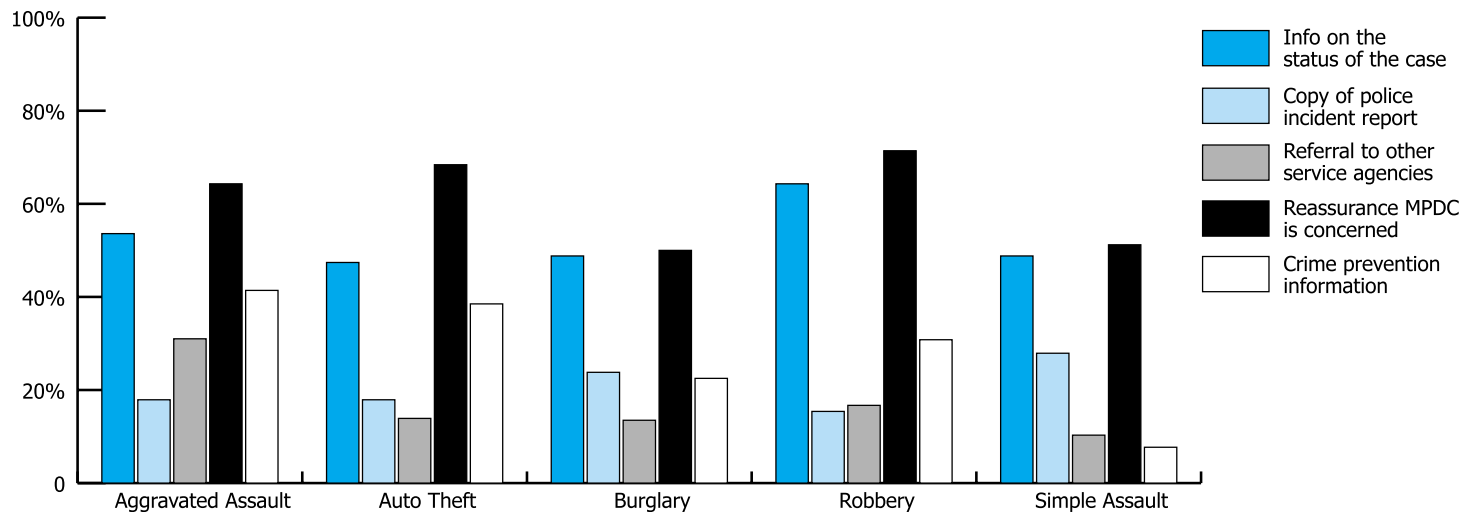
The type of follow-up provided by officers varied depending on the type of crime (see Figure 5). Case status information and reassurance that MPDC was concerned about the victim's welfare were highest for all of the types of crimes, followed by crime prevention information for victims of aggravated assault, auto theft and robbery, and copies of police incident reports for victims of burglary and simple assault.

As reported above, only 27 percent of the victims reported that they received crime prevention information during follow-up contacts. This item also showed the highest fluctuation among the five crime categories. Indeed, 41 percent of aggravated assault victims who were re-contacted—versus just 8 percent of simple assault victims—reported that they received this type of information.

Further analysis reveals that follow-up information and/or assurances provided to crime victims are positively related to overall satisfaction with MPDC services. Put another way, victims who received additional information and/or reassurances during follow-up contacts were three times as likely to report being very satisfied than somewhat satisfied with the officer(s) who first responded.

In other words, when rating their overall satisfaction with MPDC services, factors that were important to victims included the provision of additional information and/or assurances.

Figure 5: Percentage of Cases in Which Additional Information and Assurances Were Provided



E. Victim outreach to service providers and feelings of safety (Questions 17 and 18)

Table 2: Type of Victim Services Used

Type of Service	Yes	No
Health care provider	15%	85%
Family and friends	54%	46%
Victim assistance group	5%	95%
Counselor or therapist	5%	95%
Church support group	11%	89%
Other assistance	5%	95%

Victims were queried about the types of services they sought following the crime incident. As shown in Table 2, more than half of the victims sought counseling assistance from family and friends.

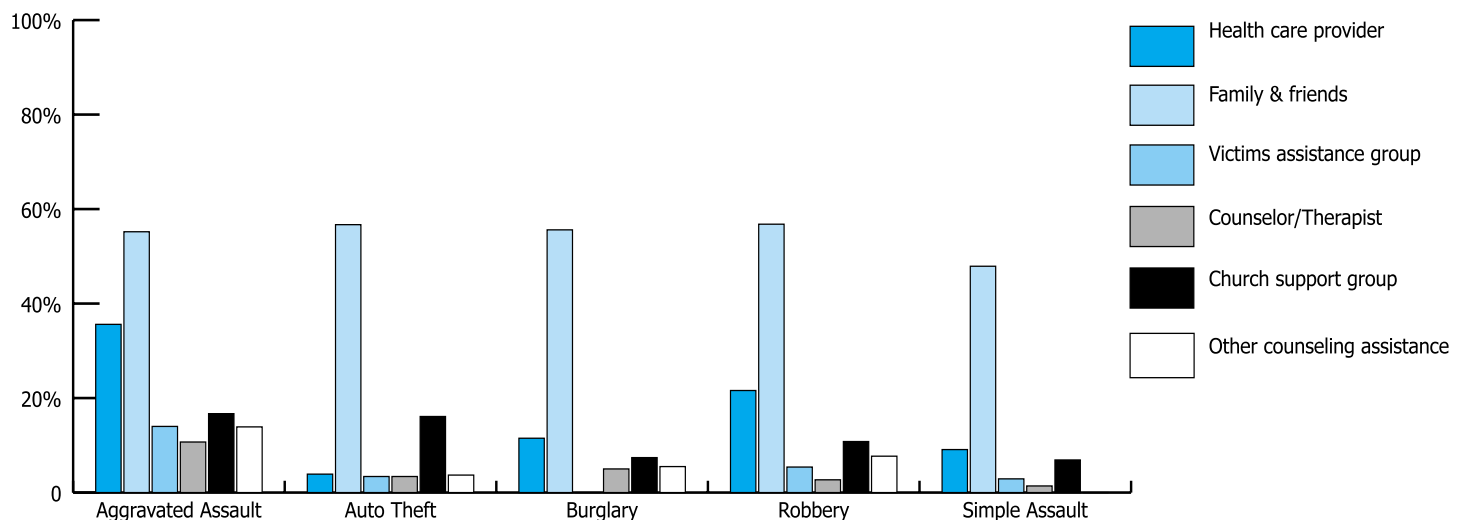
As illustrated in Figure 6, this was true across all crime categories. Health care services were the second most common type of service sought by victims of each of the five crime types—except auto theft—followed by church support groups.

There are two gaps in Figure 6: no burglary victims sought assistance from victims’ groups, while no victims of simple assault sought counseling from “other” groups.

Victims of aggravated assault were, on average, most likely to seek any type of assistance (26 percent); however, victims of property crimes—namely, auto theft and burglary—were almost as likely to seek such assistance (25 percent and 22 percent, respectively). Victims in the remaining crime categories sought counseling assistance in less than 20 percent of cases (16 percent of simple assault and 12 percent of robbery victims).

The next survey question dealt with how safe victims felt at the point of time the interview was conducted. Of the 393 victims who answered this question, 33 percent said they felt very safe, and 39 percent said

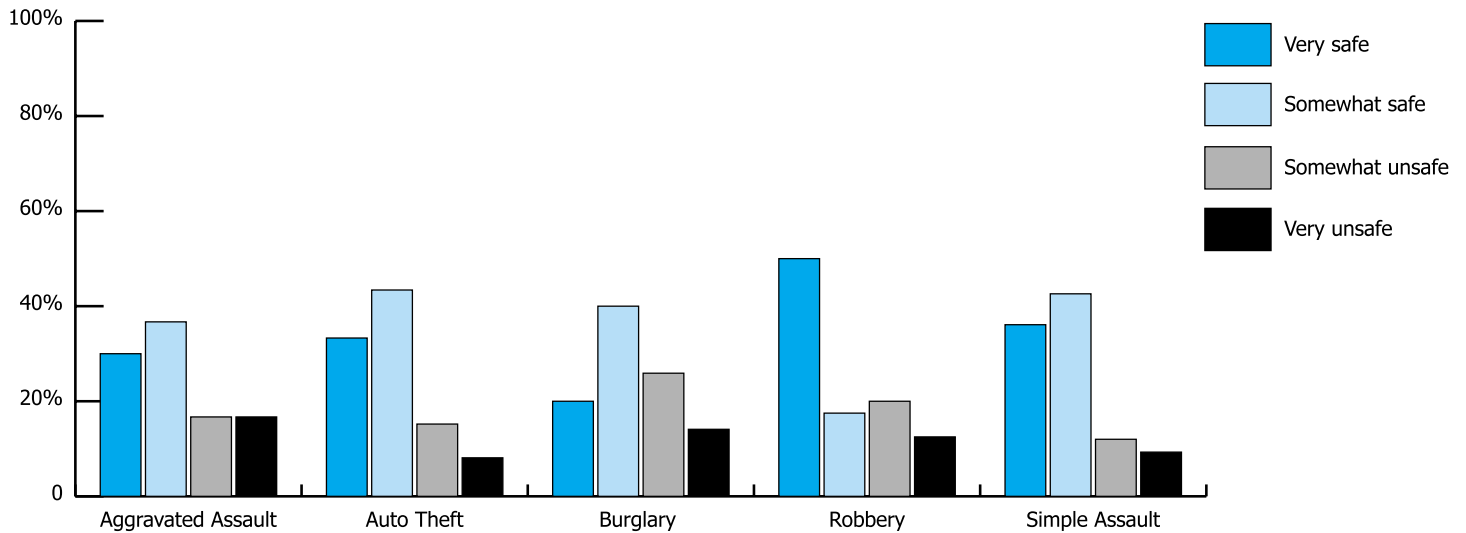
Figure 6: Number of Crime Victims Who Sought Victim Assistance



they felt somewhat safe. Thus, almost three-quarters of those interviewed reported that they felt somewhat safe or very safe approximately 60–90 days after being victimized. A small but significant number, on the other hand, reported that they felt either somewhat unsafe (17 percent) or very unsafe (11 percent). Further analysis by crime type (see Figure 7) reveals

that burglary victims are much more likely to report feeling somewhat unsafe or very unsafe (40 percent) than victims of any other crime type. The next largest figures, unsurprisingly, belong to victims of two of the three violent crimes, aggravated assault and robbery (33 percent each).

Figure 7: Level of Perceived Safety by Offense Type



F. Crime victims' compliments, criticisms and additional suggestions for MPDC (Question 19)

In this question, victims were given the opportunity to comment regarding their perceptions about what MPDC could have done differently to help them after they became victims of crime in the city.

This qualitative data was categorized as compliments (18 percent), criticisms (43 percent), "did everything possible" (8 percent), combined positive and negative remarks (3 percent), requests or suggestions (12 percent), and "no comment" (16 percent) (see Figure 8).

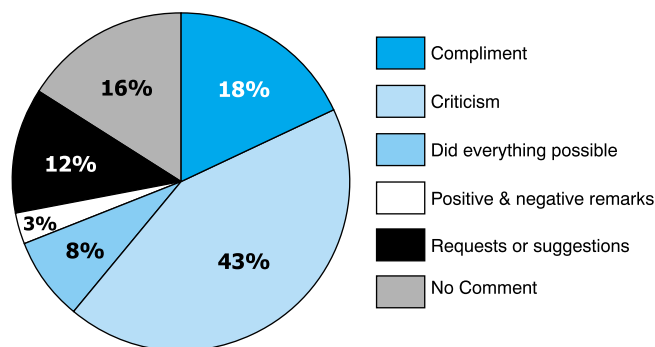
Compliments

Many victims indicated that they received good services from MPDC officers, and that in many instances officers were professional, respectful, informative and helpful. Typical comments in this category were, "They did an excellent job," "They were very helpful and professional," "You all couldn't have done anything better. Officers were true to their word," and "The officers did a good job and handled the situation thoroughly."

Victims often combined praise with criticism on various topics. For example, numerous victims reported that the police did everything possible to investigate their case; however, a few comments reflected frustration because respondents felt police were not doing everything they could to solve the case. Some examples were: "They did a good job. However, they could have done a better job by looking for the suspect," and "They did the best they could, but I think they could have canvassed the area for clues."

In other instances, victims praised the officers, but criticized the lack of follow-up and that they weren't provided with additional information. Remarks that reflected this perception were, "They responded quickly and were very respectful to me. However, they did not follow up with me timely about the status of my case," and "The officer conducted himself in a very professional manner. He should have told me about the victims compensation program and given pointers on crime prevention."

Figure 8: Percentage of Open-ended Victim Responses by Type



Criticisms

Criticisms generally fell into one or more of the following categories:

- ◆ Not acting on available evidence at the time of the original response;
- ◆ Not following up on evidence subsequent to the original response;
- ◆ Not re-contacting the victim to let them know how the case was progressing;
- ◆ Not providing a copy of the police report;
- ◆ Not informing the victim regarding what to expect next; and
- ◆ Not providing enough information about referral services, crime victim compensation or crime prevention.

Typical comments were: "The officers should have provided me with information on victim rights and crime prevention;" "The police department should be timelier in contacting victims about the status of their case;" "MPD needs to contact victims on a continuous basis, especially when an arrestee is in the process of getting out of jail;" and "They should have provided me with information so I could have gotten professional help." In some instances, victims perceived that officers did not explain the next steps, criminal justice procedures or possible options that they could pursue without police intervention.

A few victims of auto theft were financially impacted because of lack of timely follow-up. Their criticisms centered on the Department's vehicle impoundment procedures, particularly regarding failure to contact victims prior to towing a recovered stolen auto or giving timely notice of impoundment. As a result, these victims incurred substantial financial costs for towing and storage of their vehicles.

Several victims said that officers were "disrespectful and judgmental," "insensitive," "very nonchalant" or needed "sensitivity training." In some instances, these criticisms were specifically directed toward detectives and dispatchers. For example, one victim observed, "The first responding officer was great; he was courteous. The only complaint I have is about the detective who is handling my case. She seems to only care about getting information on the crime and not concerned with me as a victim." Another victim observed, "All the Communications Dispatchers at MPD need to be more understanding, sensitive, and empathetic when victims call for assistance."

Requests and Suggestions

In general, victims wanted to see a greater police presence in their communities, more rapid police response and more aggressive enforcement of the law. Many of the victims in this survey also disagreed with the way the police conducted the investigation, feeling that more could have been done to catch the suspect. This included some observations from victims who felt that officers/detectives could have canvassed the area, or canvassed it better, looked for clues at the crime scene more thoroughly, or acted more quickly on information received about the case.

G. Subsequent victimization (Questions 20 and 21a–21i)

Questions 20 and 21 asked the victim whether he/she had been a victim of any other crime in the past three months. These crimes included rape, sexual assault, assault, domestic violence, robbery—including purse snatching—burglary, motor vehicle theft, theft from auto, and “other.” Fifty-two of the 393 persons who answered this question (13 percent) reported that they had been re-victimized within the preceding ninety days.⁵ Further, almost one in five of these victims (10, or 19 percent) reported they had been re-victimized for the same or a similar⁶ crime since the original incident occurred. This included seven repeat victims of assault/domestic violence, one of burglary and two of auto theft. No respondents indicated they had been re-victimized for rape or sexual assault. In addition, out of these 52 respondents, five reported that they had been re-victimized *two or more times* within this time period.

The average age of the 52 respondents who experienced subsequent victimization was slightly younger (36 years) than that of all survey respondents (40). Interestingly, for five out of the seven types of crimes

for which respondents were re-victimized (excepting theft from auto and robbery), females accounted for a greater number of victims than males.

Almost the same number of respondents who were re-victimized received crime prevention information from the officer(s) who responded to the original incident (23) as did not receive this information (28). Of the 10 respondents who were subsequently victimized for the same or a similar crime, six (60 percent) received crime prevention information after the original incident occurred. Although these results seem to indicate that the provision of crime prevention information doesn’t have much of an impact on re-victimization, the sample size is too small to draw conclusions. Some explanations for these results may include the possibility that respondents did not read and/or understand the crime prevention literature; the literature did not entice respondents to change their behavior; and/or it did not offer the right kind of information—or enough information—to prevent future incidents.

⁵ Two respondents reported they had been victimized but did not provide information about the type of incident (Q21). Their answers to these two questions were therefore discounted for purposes of this analysis.

⁶ For purposes of this section of the report, domestic violence was considered a type of “aggravated” or “simple” assault. Of the 174 respondents who were initially victims of aggravated or simple assault, 7 (4 percent) reported being a victim of a separate assault or domestic violence incident over the past three months.

H. Respondent Demographics (Questions 22–27)

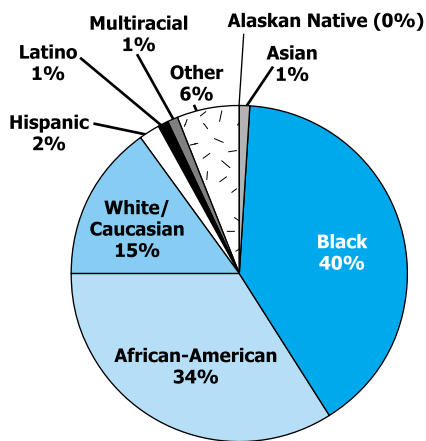
Gender and Age

Nearly equal numbers of males and females were interviewed (gender was missing for one respondent). The average age was 40 years at the time of the survey;⁷ respondents' ages ranged from 9 to 92. In instances where the victim was under the age of 12, MPDC interviewed the victim's parent or guardian, which is the procedure used for the National Crime Victimization Survey.

Race

In this survey, categories for races reflect the categories used by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. This includes providing choices for "Black," "African American," "White/Caucasian," "Hispanic," and "Latino." As indicated in Figure 9, 74 percent of victims identified themselves as being either Black or African-American, 14 percent more than the 60 percent reported for the estimated 2000 Census for the District of Columbia. Fifteen percent identified themselves as being White/Caucasian, less than one half of the 31 percent reported in the estimated 2000 Census. The remaining 11 percent reported being of another race (i.e., Alaskan Native, Asian, Hispanic, Latino, multiracial or "Other").

Figure 9: Victims' Race



⁷ Assuming all the respondents had already had their birthday for calendar year 2001.

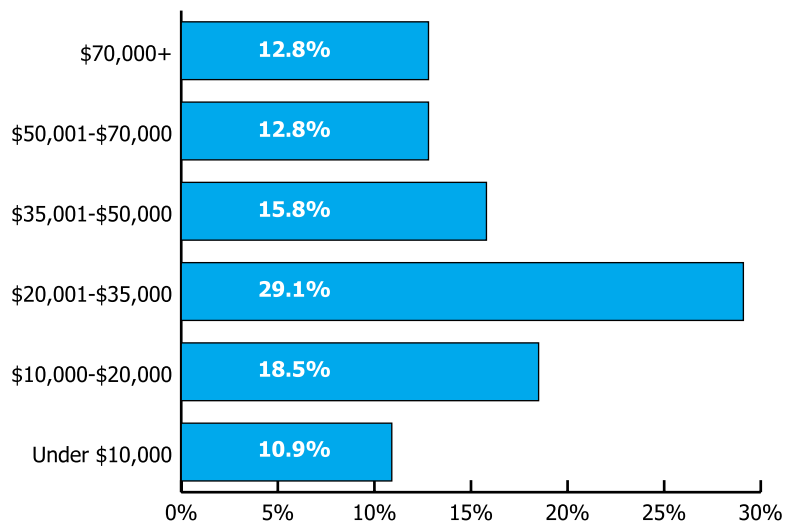
⁸ Over one-third (34 percent) of interviewees did not know their total household income, refused or otherwise did not provide an answer to this question.

Similar percentages apply to those who were re-victimized over the past three months, with one exception: the percentage of Hispanics was slightly higher (6 percent) and the percentage of Whites/Caucasians slightly lower (6 percent) in the re-victim-ized population.

Income

Figure 10 shows the levels of household income, before taxes, reported by respondents for the year 2000. Approximately 29 percent of those who answered this question⁸ made \$20,000 or less, while 26 percent made more than \$50,000. Average income could not be calculated for this variable, although 29 percent reported their income to be between \$20,001 and \$35,000. Similar findings hold true for the 52 respondents who were re-victim-ized within 90 days of the initial incident.

Figure 10: Victims' Reported Income



Demographic Comparisons

The data generally revealed satisfaction with MPDC services across all demographic categories of crime victims. Asian, Alaskan Native, Multiracial and White/Caucasian respondents were most satisfied with police services (85 percent or more reporting being somewhat or very satisfied) (see Figure 11).⁹

Among the minority of respondents who reported being somewhat or very dissatisfied, the percentages were highest among Hispanics, Latinos and Blacks/African-Americans (25, 25 and 24 percent, respectively).

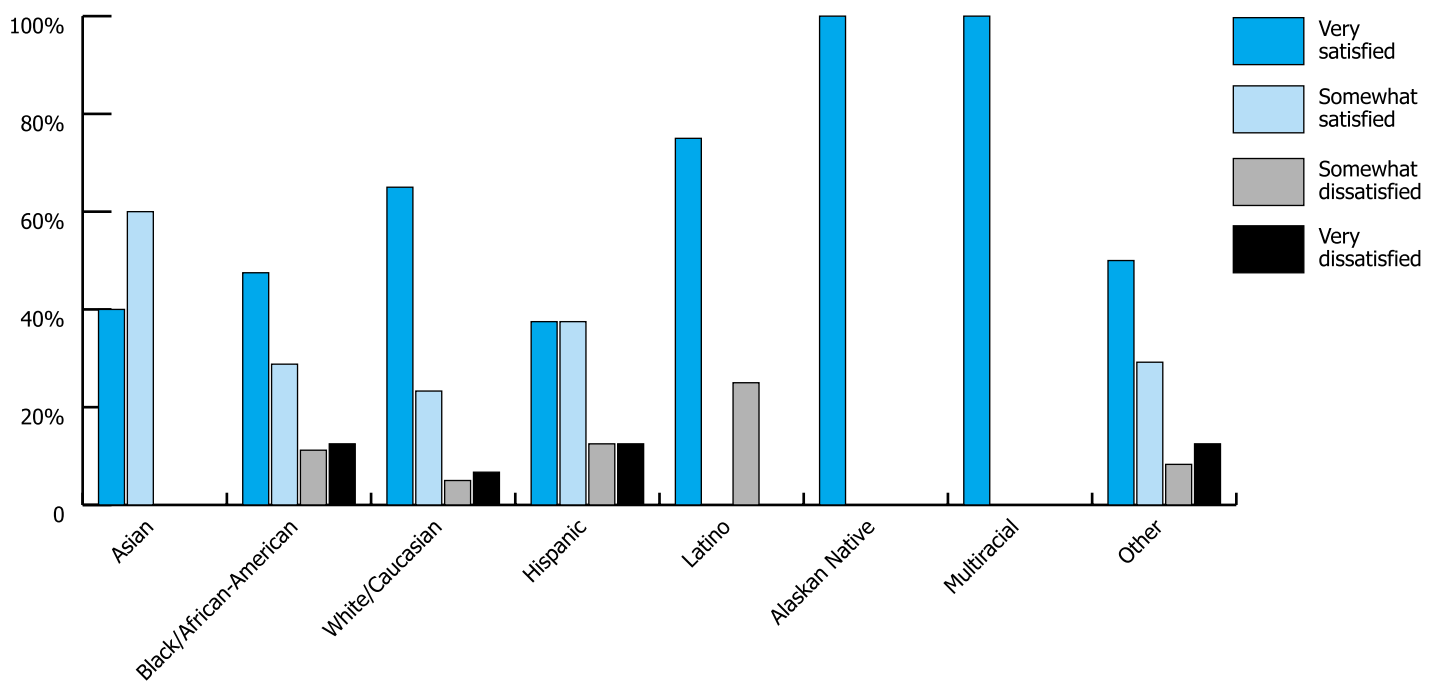
There was little difference between police service satisfaction rates among lower-income victims (those with a total household income of \$20,000 or less) versus higher-income victims (those with a household income of more than \$50,000). Seventy-seven percent

of lower-income respondents, versus 79 percent of higher-income respondents, reported being somewhat or very satisfied.

Similar statistics are revealed for victims in the largest race category. Among Blacks/African Americans, 75 percent of lower-income respondents, versus 76 percent of higher-income respondents, reported being very or somewhat satisfied. For Whites/Caucasians, on the other hand, 100 percent of lower-income respondents, versus 84 percent of higher-income respondents, reported being very satisfied or somewhat satisfied.

Finally, male victims were slightly more likely to report being very or somewhat satisfied than female victims (80 versus 77 percent).

Figure 11: Victims' Satisfaction With Police Services by Race



⁹ Percentages based on small numbers of respondents representing a particular racial group (e.g., Asians, Latinos and Hispanics) should be interpreted with caution.

Next Steps

Victims of serious offenses may have a wide range of needs in the aftermath of crimes. While officers are not in a position to address all of those needs, it is incumbent upon MPDC to provide assistance to victims in ways that are consistent with the Department's mission.

- ◆ To increase referrals to other service agencies, the Department will educate officers about other assistance available to victims and develop a resource that makes it easy for officers to provide notice to victims of appropriate services available in the District.
- ◆ To improve our notification to victims of the financial assistance available through the Crime Victims Compensation Program, the Department will review and audit the existing district-level procedures to ensure compliance and will work with the Office of the Superintendent of Detectives to ensure awareness and compliance by investigators. In essence, MPDC will hold all components that interact with victims or the families of victims, accountable for providing information about the Crime Victims Compensation Program.
- ◆ Enhanced victim rights legislation was recently enacted in the District of Columbia. To ensure notification to victims of their rights, the Department will educate officers about the recently enacted legislation and will develop a resource that makes it easy for officers to provide notice to victims of their rights.
- ◆ In conjunction with the Office of the Superintendent of Detectives, the Office of Organizational Development will design and develop a Family Liaison function within the homicide division. The Family Liaison function will focus on the families of homicide victims to ensure the provision of support, referral and information.
- ◆ The Office of Organizational Development will review and revise the Department's policy regarding our interaction with victims, acknowledging MPDC's commitment to treating victims in a respectful, responsive and compassionate manner and recognizing their role as partners in the investigation process.
- ◆ To determine the impact of our expanded efforts, the Office of Organizational Development will conduct a follow-up survey of victims of crime.

Appendix A

Survey Instrument

Survey of Victims in Washington, DC
MPDC Baseline Survey
February 2001

MPDC Survey of Victims

CCN # (1-6)
District (7)
Offense Type (8)

Hello, my name is _____, may I please speak with (_____). [Once you have your respondent on the phone, continue with the following; otherwise arrange a callback:] I am calling on behalf of the Metropolitan Police Department in the District of Columbia. We are conducting a citywide survey to assess citizens' opinions of services provided by the police to crime victims. The information you give us will help the Department provide better response to victims of crime in the city. Your responses to the survey will be confidential and anonymous, as required by law. The interview will take about 10 minutes.

1 First, let's talk about the incident that you reported to the police on _____ [INSERT DATE]. According to the crime report, you were a victim of _____ [READ THE TYPE OF CRIME ON THE INCIDENT REPORT (FORM 251)]. Do you recall that incident?

- 1. YES (9)
- 2. NO
- 8. DON'T REMEMBER

2 Now, thinking about the time you were a victim of [INSERT CRIME FROM Q1], how satisfied were you with the services you received from the police officer(s)? Would you say you were:

- 1. Very satisfied, (10)
- 2. Somewhat satisfied,
- 3. Somewhat dissatisfied, or
- 4. Very dissatisfied?

3 How respectful was the police officer(s) who responded to your call? Would you say the officer(s) was:

- 1. Very respectful, (11)
- 2. Somewhat respectful,
- 3. Somewhat disrespectful, or
- 4. Very disrespectful?

4 I am going to read you a list of some things the police officer(s) may have done when s/he (they) responded to the scene. As I read each one please tell me whether s/he did that. [INTERVIEWER: SKIP ITEMS THAT ARE NOT RELEVANT TO THE VICTIM] The first one is did the officer(s) . . .

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>N/A</u>	
a. Inquire if you needed medical assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(12)
b. Provide/arrange for medical assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(13)
c. Show concern for your current situation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(14)
d. Provide/arrange for transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(15)
e. Help in preparing/filing a Protective Order	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(16)
f. Provide referral information about other agencies that could assist with your needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(17)
g. Suggest that counseling was available and provide referral information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(18)
h. Offer reassurance that made you feel safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(19)
i. Tell you what the Department would do next on this case	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(20)
j. Provide crime prevention information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(21)
k. Allow you to talk about your situation without judging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(22)
l. Make you feel at ease	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(23)
m. Provide you with his/her name and phone number in case you had any questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(24)

5 Did the officer(s) assure you that the information you provide would be kept confidential?

- 1. YES (25)
- 2. NO
- 8. DON'T REMEMBER

6 Did the officer(s) talk with you in a private location?

- 1. YES (26)
- 2. NO
- 8. DON'T REMEMBER

7 Did the officer(s) who responded to your call explain your rights as a victim?

- 1. YES (27)
- 2. NO
- 8. DON'T REMEMBER

8 Did you receive any information from the officer about the Crime Victims Compensation Program?

- 1. YES (28)
- 2. NO [SKIP TO Q10]
- 8. DON'T REMEMBER [SKIP TO Q10]

9 How helpful was the crime compensation information you received? Would you say it was:

- 1. Very helpful, (29)
- 2. Somewhat helpful,
- 3. Not very helpful, or
- 4. Not at all helpful?

10 Did the officer(s) give you any other written information about your rights as a victim?

- 1. YES (30)
- 2. NO [SKIP TO Q12]
- 8. DON'T REMEMBER [SKIP TO Q12]

11 How helpful was the victims' rights information you received? Would you say it was:

- 1. Very helpful, (31)
- 2. Somewhat helpful,
- 3. Not very helpful, or
- 4. Not at all helpful?

12 Have you been contacted by either the police officer(s) who answered your call or another officer(s) since the initial report was taken?

- 1. YES (32)
- 2. NO [SKIP TO Q17]
- 8. DON'T REMEMBER [SKIP TO Q17]

13 How soon were you contacted? [DON'T READ LIST]

- 1. NEXT DAY (33)
- 2. WITHIN 2-3 DAYS
- 3. WITHIN 4-7 DAYS
- 4. MORE THAN 7 DAYS

14 Now, thinking about your well-being, how concerned (was/were) the officer(s) who contacted you after the initial report? Would you say the officer(s) was/were:

- 1. Very concerned , (34)
- 2. Somewhat concerned ,
- 3. Not concerned, or
- 4. Not at all concerned?

15 Did the officer(s) provide you with information about your case or only seem interested in getting additional information for the report?

- 1. Provide me information about the case (35)
- 2. Only interested in getting additional information
- 3. Both 1 and 2
- 8. DON'T REMEMBER

16 Did the officer(s) who contacted you after the initial report provide any of the following: [READ LIST]

- | | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> | <u>N/A</u> | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------|
| a. Information on the status of the case | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (36) |
| b. A copy of the police Incident Report | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (37) |
| c. Referral to other service agencies | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (38) |
| d. Reassurance that the Department was concerned about what happened to you | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (39) |
| e. Crime prevention information | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (40) |

17 Which, if any of the following counseling assistance did you use following the crime?

- | | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> | <u>N/A</u> | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------|
| a. Health Care Provider | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (41) |
| b. Family and friends | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (42) |
| c. Victims Assistance Group | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (43) |
| d. Counselor or Therapist | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (44) |
| e. Church Support Group | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (45) |
| f. Other: _____
(Specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | (46) |

18 How safe do you feel now? Would you say you feel:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> | Very safe. | (47) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> | Somewhat safe, | |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> | Somewhat unsafe, or | |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> | Very unsafe? | |

19 Now, please tell me what you think the Metropolitan Police Department could have done differently to help you after you became a victim of crime in the city. [PROBE: What else?] (48)

20 Other than the crime we just talked about, have you been a victim of any (other) crime(s) in the past three months?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> | YES | (49) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> | NO [SKIP TO Q22] | |
| 8. <input type="checkbox"/> | DON'T REMEMBER [SKIP TO Q22] | |

21 What crime(s) have you been a victim of in the past three months?" [DON'T READ LIST BUT CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> | RAPE | (50) |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> | SEXUAL ASSAULT | (51) |
| c. <input type="checkbox"/> | ASSAULT | (52) |
| d. <input type="checkbox"/> | DOMESTIC VIOLENCE | (53) |
| e. <input type="checkbox"/> | ROBBERY (includes purse-snatching) | (54) |
| f. <input type="checkbox"/> | BURGLARY | (55) |
| g. <input type="checkbox"/> | AUTO THEFT | (56) |
| h. <input type="checkbox"/> | THEFT FROM AUTO | (57) |
| i. <input type="checkbox"/> | OTHER: _____
(Specify) | (58) |

22 Finally, I'd like to ask you a few questions about yourself that will help us understand different victims' experiences with crime and how they feel about the services they received from the Police Department. How long have you lived at your current address in the city?

Years: _____ Months: _____

(59-60) (61-62)

23 In what year were you born?

Year of Birth: _____

(63-64)

24 What race do you consider yourself to be? [CHECK ONE]

- ALASKAN NATIVE
- AMERICAN INDIAN
- ASIAN
- BLACK
- AFRICAN-AMERICAN
- PACIFIC ISLANDER
- WHITE/CAUCASIAN
- HISPANIC
- LATINO
- MULTIRACIAL
- OTHER _____

(65)

(Specify)

25 What was your total household income from all sources, before taxes for 2000? [CHECK ONE]

- 1 UNDER \$10,000
- \$10,000-\$20,000
- \$20,001-\$35,000 [SKIP TO Q27]
- \$35,001-\$50,000
- \$50,001-\$70,000
- Above \$70,000
- DON'T KNOW [ASK Q26]
- REFUSED [ASK Q26]

26 Would you simply indicate if it was under \$20,000 in 2000, or over \$20,000?

- Under \$20,000
- Over \$20,000
- REFUSED

(67)

27 SEX:

- 1 MALE
- 2 FEMALE

(68)

Thank you for your cooperation. You have been very helpful.

**Metropolitan Police Department
300 Indiana Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001
mpdc.dc.gov**

The Survey of Crime Victims in Washington DC could not have been completed without the assistance of numerous individuals who contributed much time and effort to this project. In particular, we would like to acknowledge Recruit Class 2000-5 who graduated from the Institute of Police Science on March 16, 2001. Each of the following persons displayed enthusiasm for the task at hand and managed the responsibility with professionalism and concern for the victims. Thank you to Frederick Piquette, Sean Hearn, Adam Grossman, Thaddeus Modlin, Steven Dronsfield, James Jaffe, Sylvania Davis, Kenneth Downey, Nancy Oliver, Chad Howard, Thomas Dunn Jr., Fradi Fawzi, Norbert Dengler II, Mosette Harmon, Arnette Perkins, Elvin Green, Kenneth O'mard, Travis Barton, Jr., Kevin Carey, Ulysses Delaney, Dauane Davis, Brian Wymbs, Katrina Everett, Timothy Francis, Dion Smith, Robert Underwood, Kief Green, and Michael Gruchacz, Charles Weems, Sherwin Douglas, Courtney Flash, James Huff. Finally, we would like to acknowledge those persons who agreed to participate in the survey. It is only with your cooperation and input that we can learn how to improve our response to victims of crime.

For additional copies or for more information, contact the Office of Organizational Development at 202-727-2900.
