

*Metropolitan Police Department*

*District of Columbia*

FINAL REPORT

**Biased Policing Project**

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**Biased Policing Project**

*Metropolitan Police Department*

*Washington, DC*

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## *Introduction*

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In June 1999 the Department of Justice (DOJ) hosted a conference on “Strengthening Police-Community Relationships.” The conference recognized that police are more effective when they have the trust and cooperation of the residents in their community. However, in many communities, especially minority communities, a lack of trust remains between law enforcement and local residents. This tension is exacerbated by allegations of police misconduct such as racial profiling or other forms of bias in the delivery of police services.

The conference highlighted the need to identify proactive police practices to build trust, enhance police integrity and reduce police misconduct. By being proactive about recognizing and addressing police bias, communities can go a long way towards strengthening police-community relationships and improving the quality of services delivered in the community. Community policing efforts nationwide, though often effective in neighborhoods seem to have had little impact overall on the issues of community trust and confidence.

A number of highly publicized police-related incidents in the District of Columbia in recent years have underscored the need for the police to address community concerns over bias. Among the most significant events in recent history were the 1991 Mt. Pleasant disturbances, which were investigated by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. According to the report “The State of Latinos in the District of Columbia” (Council of Latino Agencies, 2002), many of the issues that were the underlying causes of the 1991 disturbances still remain.

Public concerns over allegations of excessive use of force by officers led Mayor Williams and Chief Ramsey to make an unprecedented request in January of 1999 to the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) to conduct a review of use of force by MPD officers. About six

months later, the Mayor reinstated the Civilian Complaint Review Board, originally established in 1980, to examine complaints of use of force, harassment and discrimination.

Later, in March, 2001, the Washington Post reported confirmation by top D.C. police officials that officers sent email messages to their peers in which they used offensive language including racist, vulgar, and homophobic comments about each other and citizens (Santana and Lengel, 2001). And in June, 2001 the Government of the District of Columbia, MPD, and the U.S. DOJ signed a Memorandum of Agreement, as a result of DOJ's earlier investigation. Later that same year, the MPD hired the Washington, D.C. based Police Foundation to conduct a "Biased Policing Project," the findings and substance of which are contained herein.

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# *Section 1*

## *Executive Summary*

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### Introduction

In April, 2002, the Metropolitan Police Department initiated an effort to conduct a comprehensive biased based policing project in the District of Columbia. In his news release on the biased policing project, Chief Ramsey stated that “through this project, the MPD is taking a thorough look at the issues that might impact our commitment to provide equitable and unbiased police services to all residents, workers and visitors in the District of Columbia.”

The Police Foundation prepared a response to the “Request for Proposals” (RFP) to perform a range of services to assist the Metropolitan Police Department with addressing the issue of biased policing, and was subsequently awarded a contract to perform the first two phases of the project. The Police Foundation, founded in 1970, is a non-profit, non-partisan organization whose mission is to improve policing in America.

### Project Phases

The scope of work outlined in the department’s RFP included four distinct phases. The first phase involved working with the MPD to establish a community-police task force and an employee committee to examine the issue of bias. Additionally, this phase included coordinating and conducting focus groups of community residents as well as employee focus groups inside the department. Finally, this phase provided for collecting and analyzing existing departmental data, reports, and information. The second project phase consisted of developing and administering a comprehensive community survey of perceptions of police and the services they provide to the residents of the District of Columbia. Subsequent to completion of the first two

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phases, the MPD decided to eliminate the third phase (stop data collection and analysis) from the scope of work and eventually awarded an additional contract to the Police Foundation to synthesize the findings of phases one and two, and make recommendations for minimizing and/or addressing bias.

### Process and Outcomes

Some problems were encountered in the process which limited our ability to draw firm conclusions for some areas we examined. First, there were some key stakeholder groups for which little or no data were obtained due to lack of access and/or scheduling problems. These included Asian adults and business owners, Muslim men, 18-25 year old African American males, and Latino youth. Also, employee focus groups were less well attended than would have been expected, with an overall participation rate of just 45%. Finally, elimination of the stop data collection and analysis phase limited our ability to assess the existence or degree of racial profiling in police stops.

Nevertheless, a substantial amount of relevant and useful information was obtained from the first two phases of the project allowing us to identify issues, raise concerns, draw conclusions, and make recommendations. It is hoped that the MPD will give serious consideration to the issues identified throughout this report as the results can help the department be more proactive in addressing and preventing biased policing and internal biases.

Recommendations are made in the final section of this report based on the synthesis of findings from this project, and in some cases are supported by previous research in the MPD.

### Findings

There were a number of areas in which the MPD can take pride. For example, the community survey revealed that ratings of police services, honesty, and respect for the police

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were generally high, although they varied somewhat by race. A majority of survey respondents (71%) felt that the police do a good job preventing crime in their neighborhoods. Residents surveyed also seemed to be satisfied with response time to calls for service and the demeanor of responding officers. For those individuals stopped by the police in the past year, most found the police to be polite (69%) and professional (79%). And, for those calling the police to report a problem, fully 92% felt the responding officer was polite or very polite.

At the same time, there were some significant differences with regard to perceptions of police services based on the race of the respondents. While 85% of surveyed respondents felt that MPD officers were “somewhat” or “very honest,” Hispanic (22%) and Black (18%) residents were significantly more likely to have a negative view of officers compared to whites.<sup>1</sup> And although most of the residents we surveyed felt the police are more likely to use force against those who are not white or are poor, Black and Hispanic residents were more likely than white residents to feel that way.

In terms of the visibility of the police, 42% of survey respondents claimed to see officers in their neighborhoods daily. However, African Americans were more likely to report seeing officers daily than were white residents. Yet, more than half of African American residents and about 40% of Hispanics felt that there are too few officers working in their neighborhoods. Similarly, almost half of black and Hispanic residents reported that the police are ineffective in controlling drug activity in their neighborhoods.

In the community focus groups (especially the African American and Latino adults), many community members expressed a desire to see more police in their neighborhoods and a

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<sup>1</sup> Asians were most likely to report that they had “some” or “a lot” of disrespect for MPD officers, compared to just 9% of Black and 8% of Hispanic residents. It is important to note, however, that the group of



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strong interest in police being more involved in their communities and with their youth. Several focus group participants asserted that police should be more involved in addressing the needs of youth and working with them in order to prevent affiliation with gangs or to prevent inappropriate behavior, a feeling expressed by adults and youth alike.

Community members and officers who participated in focus groups agreed that officers who interact positively with the community and demonstrate good performance should receive more recognition. Most community members we met with felt there is a need for additional training in communication, particularly in working within diverse communities. This includes expanding the department's language capacity as well (including Spanish, Asian languages, and Sign language). However, many officers we met with indicated that there is not enough supplemental training provided, and access to it is based on favoritism.

Furthermore, although employees participating in the focus groups did not seem to feel there was a systematic race or sex bias, many felt that favoritism is rampant at all levels of personnel decision making. This input is consistent with findings from a prior employee survey in MPD. Also, a consensus of employees we met with asserted that there is a strong bias against civilian (non-sworn) members of the department.

Most survey respondents felt that MPD officers are more likely to stop non-whites for traffic violations, yet the self reports about being stopped do not support this perception, in that the likelihood of being stopped did not vary by race. Furthermore, very few individuals (26% overall) felt that their race played a role in their being stopped. Again, the rates were higher for Hispanics (50%) and Blacks (40%) compared to just 11% of whites.

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responding Asians was quite small given their representation in the population of just 2.7% (Census, 2000), so these results should be interpreted with caution.

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At the same time, Hispanic drivers who had been stopped by MPD within the past year were stopped significantly more frequently than other groups. Indeed, 75% had been stopped three or more times, as compared to just 17% of Black and 4% of white drivers. Furthermore, 75% also felt that the police were either somewhat or very impolite as compared to just 35% of black and 22% of white drivers stopped. Again, a full 75% of Hispanics stopped felt that the type of neighborhood played a role in being stopped as compared to 56% of black and 31% of white drivers. Age and sex also were a factor; 62% of younger respondents (aged 18-34) believed their race was a factor in their being stopped and females also were more likely (54%) to hold this belief than were males (38%). Surprisingly, 75% of Hispanics felt the race of the officer played a role in their being stopped compared to all other groups (Blacks = 27%, Whites = 6%). Still, given the limited and somewhat contradictory results, this study was inconclusive as to the existence of racial profiling in traffic stops.

#### Next Steps and Recommendations

Due to limited data or inconclusive findings in some areas, some issues warrant further review and/or clarification. The department should examine its ability to support community policing given its emphasis on responding to calls for service, in light of the fact that some officers we met with felt that they are discouraged from interacting with the community due to the volume of calls for service. A review of the types and amount of training that are provided to officers with regard to interacting in a diverse community should be reviewed to determine if there is a need for supplemental training.

A total of seventeen (17) specific recommendations were made in the areas of Community Interaction and Outreach, Employee Development, and Monitoring of Agency Performance. They are summarized below.

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### Community Interaction and Outreach

Most of the recommendations involve interacting with the community in more positive ways and continuing to support positive efforts already made by the MPD. For example, we suggest the following:

- Continue to provide necessary support to the existing community liaison programs, implement recommendations of the Council of Latino agencies, and work to establish a Muslim liaison unit/program.
- Meet regularly with members of the Asian community to learn how to be more effective in addressing their concerns.
- Examine ways to more effectively balance community policing and responding to calls for service, perhaps by increasing bike and foot patrols in some of the more distressed areas and increase youth outreach programs and activities for minority youth or in areas with limited access to recreational opportunities.
- Establish a community-based drug reduction committee.

### Employee Development

The recommendations in this area are provided to encourage MPD to continue to provide career training and development to assist them in providing the highest quality services and maintain a positive internal culture. These include:

- Re-examine existing diversity and communications training programs to ensure information is provided on under-represented populations.
- Provide access to team-building skills training for sworn and civilian supervisors.

- Hire a consultant to examine personnel procedures and practices to ensure greater objectivity and less perceived favoritism in personnel actions.
- Develop a more comprehensive employee recognition program with community input.
- Continue to actively recruit Latino and Asian officers.

### Monitoring of Agency Performance

Finally, a number of recommendations are made to MPD regarding tracking and monitoring overall agency performance with regard to bias. Among them are:

- Initiate a stop data collection program and incorporate it into the Personnel Performance Management System so that the department can monitor patterns of profiling among various units or by individual officers.
- Conduct periodic studies on biased policing including surveying community and personnel.
- Conduct an analysis of adverse impact for the physical abilities test for the years 2001 through 2004 to determine if the prima facie case of adverse impact demonstrated from 1999 and 2000 is continuing, and if so, engage in a validation effort.
- Finally, conduct an objective review of the validity and efficacy of the Personal History Statement.

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## *Section 2*

# *Scope of Work: Project Phases*

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In order to best identify and address all of the issues, perceptions, and concerns associated with biased policing and minimize its occurrence and perception of occurrence, four separate project phases were recommended, and three were conducted. These phases were believed to represent the most comprehensive and systematic biased policing projected being proposed nationwide. The following presents each phase conducted and the associated goals:

***PHASE 1:*** Identification of Issues Associated With Biased Policing

- Goals:**
1. To comprehensively and collectively identify internal and external factors that influence bias *or perceived bias* within and outside the department;
  2. To assure sufficient input and representation of the stakeholder groups in addressing the issue of bias;
  3. To generate a range of intervention strategies and options that are responsive to departmental and community concerns.

***PHASE 2:*** Consumer Survey Development, Implementation, and Analysis

- Goals:**
1. To design a comprehensive citizen survey to assess the quality of interactions with police and existence and extent of perceived bias;
  2. To ensure that the survey instrument is a reliable and valid measure of perceived quality of service and bias;
  3. To determine baseline data on contacts with the police and perceptions that citizens were unfairly targeted for these contacts; and
  4. To develop a strategy that allows for analysis of geographical differences in perceptions.

***PHASE 4:*** Feedback, Intervention, and Reporting Stage

- Goals:**
1. To provide the results of the investigation in a manner that contributes to the solution, not the problem itself.
  2. To assure sufficient input and representation of the stakeholder groups in addressing the issue of bias;
  3. To generate a range of intervention strategies and options that are responsive to departmental and community concerns.

This report summarizes the findings of phases one and two of the biased policing project completed in 2003. It is important to note that these conclusions should be interpreted with caution due to limitations associated with the data, including low participation rates of officers and community members in the focus groups, a less than representative participation of Latino and Asian residents in the survey, and the decision by MPD to eliminate phase three of the project.

Although the solicitation and proposal envisioned a comprehensive, four-phase project, the Metropolitan Police Department originally awarded a contract to the Police Foundation for phases one and two of the project to commence on April 1, 2002, and indicated that phases three and four were to be contracted upon receipt of additional funding. However, the MPD decided to eliminate the stop data collection and analysis program (phase three) from the scope of work, and subsequently awarded a supplemental contract to conduct phase four (feedback, intervention, and development of final report).

The decision to eliminate the stop data collection and analysis program diminished the quality and quantity of data that would have been required for a more comprehensive review of the issue and a greater ability to draw more informed conclusions. Indeed, data generated from phases one and two of the project proved inconclusive with regard to the issue of racial profiling. Nevertheless, the data generated in phases one and two did allow the Police Foundation to identify some issues and concerns and develop relevant recommendations.

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## *Section 3*

# *Methodology*

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The methodologies used for phases one, two, and four are presented in this section.

These methods were used based on the contractor's prior experience with similar projects in other jurisdictions. In order to accomplish the tasks associated with phase one, data and information were collected regarding the climate, perceptions, and issues associated with biased policing. The methods used included focus groups, meetings of the Community-Police task force and employee committee, and the collection and analysis of departmental data. For phase two, a telephone survey of District of Columbia residents was conducted using a stratified, random sample. This will be subsequently referred to as the "Consumer Survey." The methodology for the final phase involved synthesizing all data generated from phases one and two.

### **PHASE ONE: Identification of Issues Associated With Biased Policing**

#### Tasks

1. Assist MPD in the development of both an Employee Committee and a Community-Police Task Force.
2. Facilitate the working sessions of the Employee Committee and the Community-Police Task Force.
3. Conduct employee and citizen focus groups, including identifying and providing facilitators.
4. Develop a focus group discussion protocol and method for selecting focus group members.
5. Design intervention strategies in response to the findings of the employee focus group.
6. Prepare a report that summarizes the results and recommendations of the focus group discussions.

The Police Foundation assisted in establishing the Employee Committee by developing some selection criteria (**see Appendix A**), and facilitating working sessions of the Employee Committee and Community-Police Task Force by working with the Metropolitan Police Department’s project manager to develop the meeting agendas. Additionally, the Police Foundation established focus group protocols including development of targeted questions, a participant selection method, and selection of appropriate facilitators. The meeting dates for both the Employee Committee and Community-Police Task Force are shown below.

Employee Committee Meetings

<b>DATE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
June 19, 2002	MPD Headquarters
July 11, 2002	3 <sup>rd</sup> District
July 25, 2002	3 <sup>rd</sup> District
August 22, 2002	3 <sup>rd</sup> District
October 17, 2002	3 <sup>rd</sup> District
February 11, 2003	3 <sup>rd</sup> District
September 9, 2003*	MPD Headquarters
May 11, 2004*	MPD Headquarters

\*combined group (Employee and Community)

The Police Foundation also collected and examined a wide range of departmental data including policies, directives, general orders, and organizational structure. Additionally, we reviewed the existing safeguards for ensuring objectivity, including complaint procedures and the civilian complaint review process. The Police Foundation assessed whether there was perceived disparities in promotion, assignment, access to training, or disciplinary procedures.



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Community-Police Task Force Meetings

<b>DATE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
June 5, 2002	MPD Headquarters
July 17, 2002	MPD Headquarters
August 13, 2002	MPD Headquarters
October 17, 2002	MPD Headquarters
February 11, 2003	MPD Headquarters
April 8, 2003	MPD Headquarters
September 9, 2003*	MPD Headquarters
May 11, 2004	MPD Headquarters

\*combined group (Employee and Community)

**PHASE TWO: Consumer Survey Development, Implementation, and Analysis**

Tasks

1. Design a pretest and posttest survey to collect citizen feedback on their interactions with MPD officers.
2. Develop a sampling strategy based on neighborhoods with predominantly more residents from a particular race/ethnic group. This strategy will also include MAPPING technology to identify relevant households for the phone survey.
3. Input and analyze the information collected through the pretest.
4. Prepare a report that summarizes the results.

This study provided an examination of whether citizens from different racial groups and neighborhoods perceived differential treatment by the police in the District of Columbia. After an extensive review of a variety of earlier studies on citizen attitudes toward the police, Police Foundation staff developed a survey instrument (**See Appendix B**) to assess the attitudes of DC residents toward officers in the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

The survey instrument was designed to collect information about the frequency and nature of citizens' contacts with police, including both citizen and police initiated contact. Respondents were asked questions that measure their perceptions of whether police services are applied differentially to individuals and neighborhoods depending on race, ethnicity, income, age, and gender. Survey items also examined perceptions of police effectiveness in general. The survey did not ask respondents about their personal involvement in crime and victimization. Respondents were informed that their participation was voluntary, and their responses were strictly confidential and would only be used for research purposes.

The project involved conducting citizen phone surveys by sampling households in the District of Columbia evenly distributed by race/ethnicity. The sample was stratified by race and population density, something that requires cooperation of the census bureau to provide block data including characteristics of blocks such as race, income, and density. This methodology was used in a Los Angeles study we recently conducted in which the Census Bureau developed a data file for the Police Foundation specifically for this purpose.

The telephone surveys were conducted over a six-month period by sixteen research assistants from universities and temporary placement agencies. Students came from various local universities including the American University Washington Semester Program (students from DePauw University in Indiana, Stevens College in Missouri, Amherst College in Massachusetts, Westmont College in California, University of Texas at Austin, and Kalamazoo College in Michigan), the George Washington University, Morgan State University, and University of Maryland (College Park and Baltimore County).

The sampling process involved using a computerized telephone and address directory purchased from a commercial source that included 2000 Census blocks information for the

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District of Columbia. Using the directory to sample households within specific areas allowed researchers to locate the exact address and block group of respondents in the study. More importantly, it provided an excellent opportunity to examine how the racial composition of an area affects residents' experiences and attitudes toward the Metropolitan Police Department.

In selecting the sample for the study, a representative sample of households was established from three distinct types of neighborhoods that are predominately made up of white, black and mixed residents.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, the sampling procedure involved the following steps: 1) identification of Census block groups that contained 80 percent or more households of a particular race—each block group were divided into sampling units based on the block group racial composition; and 2) the sampling units were then distributed into four strata based on population density<sup>3</sup>. Based on the sampling procedure, a random sample of 20 Census block groups from white, black, and mixed groups were selected for a total of 60 block groups. In order to identify the neighborhoods and block groups, the following steps were taken:

1. *Finding the street segments:* This step allowed us to identify the street segments contained within the final sample of block groups. The street segments ranges were identified by mapping the block groups and obtaining the street segments within these block groups. Each block group's street segments' address ranges were listed in a file specific to that block group.
2. *Obtaining phone numbers within each block group:* The phone numbers within each block group were obtained by using InfoUSA Phone Disk software that allows the user to

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<sup>2</sup> In an examination of the 2000 Census data, it was found that there were no census block-groups that were predominately Hispanic, therefore, the mixed block groups were used.

<sup>3</sup> Population density was measured by the number of occupied households divided by block group area in square miles. The levels of population density were based on quartile ranges (e.g., 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles) derived from all block groups in the District.

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find phone numbers by address. Entire address ranges were identified and exported. All of a single block group's phone numbers that were contained in the Phone Disk software were identified through the street segments' address ranges and exported to SPSS.

3. *Random sample of phone numbers:* Using the total SPSS databases for each block group, a stratified random sample of phone numbers was chosen. Interviewers were trained on specific protocols and two of the sixteen interviewers were bilingual (English and Spanish). Interviewers were responsible for conducting follow-up calls. Surveys were coded and input for analysis in SPSS. Results were analyzed for race differences, geographical considerations, and overall perceptions of the quality and efficiency of police services provided by MPD, as well as bias in personal contacts with police.

The methodology also included a pilot test of the survey instrument. The purpose of the pilot was for interviewers to practice, to establish the time parameters for completing the survey, and to test the appropriateness of the various question formats. Approximately 115 individuals participated in the pilot survey.

#### **PHASE FOUR: Feedback, Intervention, and Reporting Stage**

##### Tasks<sup>4</sup>

1. Draft a comprehensive report.
  - 1.1 Synthesize findings from consumer survey and focus groups (internal and external) and summarize the methodology used across phases I and II.
  - 1.2 Describe all of the results of the analysis undertaken.
  - 1.3 Review relevant policies and procedures and provide appropriate recommendations for modifications to them.

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<sup>4</sup> Modified from the original proposal per the new contract.

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- 1.4 Offer recommendations including specific strategies/ interventions for department response based on the synthesis of the findings.
  - 1.5 Include all assessment tools and protocols.
  2. Present draft final report
    - 2.1 Meet with a combined group made up of the community-police task force, employee committee, and other departmental representatives to present a draft of the final report, receive input related to the report's recommendations, and obtain possible intervention strategies for responding to the recommendations.
  3. Revise the draft comprehensive report.
    - 3.1 Make revisions as per the recommendations of those individuals identified in 2.1 as necessary, appropriate, and reasonable.
    - 3.2 Deliver final report to MPD.

In this report, we synthesize and summarize the results of the consumer survey and focus groups, describe results of all analysis undertaken, and draw conclusions regarding the data reviewed. Additionally, we offer recommendations on a range of intervention strategies and options that can be considered in response to the findings of the focus groups, consumer survey, and analysis of departmental data and documents.

The Police Foundation assisted in facilitating discussions of the Community-Police Task Force and Employee Committee to identify those strategies and options that were responsive to the needs of MPD and the District of Columbia. Additionally, the foundation worked to incorporate members' feedback into the final report.

### **Methodological Controls**

#### ***Quality Control and Integrity of the Project***

In order to conduct the most professional, substantive, and cost-effective process, the Police Foundation abided by the following professional standards throughout this review:

- Maintenance of Confidentiality and/or Anonymity of Participants: All individuals cooperating in the study were guaranteed confidentiality, so that these individuals' identities were not associated with the inputs they may have made in the process.
- Objectivity: The Police Foundation ensured that no special interests (political or otherwise) were promoted through this process. Additionally, all methods used were based on generally accepted scientific practices designed to obtain the most objective, relevant, and accurate data possible.
- Professionalism: The Police Foundation worked to ensure that its interactions with members of the department and community were carried out in a highly professional manner, thereby contributing to the integrity of the overall process.
- Cooperation: The Police Foundation, through its relationship with the MPD project director, worked cooperatively with all governmental officials, community representatives, and departmental personnel.
- Integrity: The Police Foundation has not released any information associated with the study to any individuals not authorized to receive such information, and will not do so at any point in time unless agreed upon by the contracting parties.

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## *Section 4*

# *Results*

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### **PHASE ONE**

#### Employee Committee

##### Composition

In order to establish a representative employee committee, the Police Foundation provided the department with a list of some important things to consider in constructing an employee committee and establishing their responsibilities (**See Appendix A**). One of the key recommendations was that in order for the committee to accomplish its goals, bring credibility and reputability to the work of the group, and to facilitate professional working relationships, the committee should be representative in terms of race, ethnicity, sex, age/years of service, education, and rank. Additionally, it was recommended that individuals come from a variety of assignments and districts within the city.

The group size recommended was ten to twelve to include a member of upper command, two sergeants (one administrative and one field), a representative from the chief's office, an internal affairs representative, an Organizational Development staff member, three to four officers, a detective, and a civilian. A representative group of volunteers was selected to participate in the process.

##### Meetings

Six meetings were held with the Employee Committee during the period June 19, 2002 through February 11, 2003. Members of the Employee Committee were invited to a joint meeting with the Community-Police Task Force to get a preliminary report of the survey results

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in September 2003. This group contributed substantially to the process raising important issues and providing relevant input.

During the first meeting, the group focused on the consumer survey. Many important issues were raised that assisted the survey team in refining the instrument and conducting the interviews. Many raised concerns over the influence of the media in shaping perceptions of the police. The survey team explained that the survey would address media influences. Employees also raised concerns over whether or not the public can distinguish MPD officers from other officers working in Washington, D.C. This resulted in a revision to the survey asking residents how certain they were that they could distinguish MPD officers from others. Surveys would be discontinued for anyone who was not at least somewhat certain.

One employee group member mentioned that while Asians may be a small portion of the D.C. population, they represent a substantial portion of owners of establishments with liquor licenses. It was determined that it would be a good idea to try to meet with members of the Asian business community regarding their perceptions, since the survey would be conducted with D.C. residents only. A point was also raised about the diversity within the Asian community in D.C. including Chinese, Thai, Korean, Vietnamese, and others.

Given the concerns raised in the first meeting, and the broad sampling strategy being used for the consumer survey, the second meeting's focus was on identifying under-represented groups in the city and contact persons with whom we could work to address their concerns. These groups included: Asian business leaders, young African American men, students, faith communities, Hispanics, Arab/Muslim residents, and others.

Additionally, the group identified employee groups for the internal focus groups. Several individuals mentioned the need to meet with a civilian employee group, as well as commanders,



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detectives, and officers. Some discussion was also held about the project's third phase, the stop data collection program.

In the third and fourth meetings with the Employee Committee, the list of departmental focus groups was reviewed and a focus group plan developed (**See Appendix C**). The meetings also focused on perceived internal biases and underlying stressors. The results from these discussions of the Employee Committee were combined with the employee focus group findings, so as to protect the confidentiality of the Employee Committee members' individual inputs.

During the final two meetings of the Employee Committee, the Police Foundation provided the members with updates on the status of the community survey, the characteristics of those who responded to the survey, and the status of the employee focus groups. Members wishing to learn about the preliminary results of the survey were invited to participate in the presentation in September, 2003.

#### Community-Police Task Force Meetings

At the project's outset, the Chief of Police established a Community-Police Task Force made up of leaders from the community. The task force met six times between June 5, 2002 and April 8, 2003. A combined meeting of the task force and Employee Committee was held in September, 2003, so that the Police Foundation could present the preliminary findings of the consumer survey.

During the first meeting, the project phases and methodology were discussed. The question raised in the Employee Committee meeting about the ability of residents to distinguish MPD officers from other law enforcement officers working in Washington was also discussed in this group. Again, this discussion resulted in the need to ask residents this question first, so if they were not confident about their ability to distinguish MPD officers, the surveys could be

discontinued. There was also a discussion about the groups to include in the community focus groups. Members mentioned the need to meet with Asians, Middle-Easterners, youth, economically disadvantaged, and gay/lesbian residents. Subsequently, a focus group plan was devised (**See Appendix D**), but was later revised to include additional groups.

During the second meeting, the Police Foundation briefed the task force on the progress of the consumer survey. At that time, 150 surveys had already been conducted and numerous questions were raised about the survey process including whether it had been translated into Spanish and Asian languages. In response to a question about the expected cooperation rate, the survey team indicated that it hoped for a 70% cooperation rate, a very good rate for phone surveys. The employee focus groups were also discussed during that meeting. The Police Foundation sought input from the task force regarding contacts for under-represented groups including 18-25 year old African American men and the Latino/Hispanic population. It was agreed during this meeting that one of the employee focus groups would address the police perception about community bias toward police.

During the third meeting, the task force reviewed the survey and discussed perceptions of bias in the community, and various aspects of the consumer survey.

During the fourth meeting in the fall of 2002, an update was provided on the survey progress. The survey team reported the completion of 733 surveys, or more than 50% of the targeted amount at that time, and presented survey demographics. A report was also made about the status of employee focus groups, and another plea was made for generating additional community contacts in order to complete the community focus groups. The focus group questions were provided to the members for review during this meeting as well.

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At the next two meetings held in February and April 2003, the characteristics of the survey respondents were presented indicating the target had been reached. A report was presented on the employee focus groups, and a status update was made about the community focus groups and the need for additional representation, given that our success was limited in getting all of the groups to participate. The plan for the analyzing the survey data was also presented at that time and input sought on additional analysis. The police department suggested some analysis by districts and PSAs if possible. The final meeting was a combined group of both the task force and Employee Committee in September. At that meeting, the Police Foundation presented the preliminary results of the survey. During that meeting, the Police Chief recommended that the department focus its efforts on addressing the findings of the survey.

#### Individual Meetings

Subsequent to the initial meetings of the Community-Police Task Force, individual meetings were scheduled with willing members to discuss how to gain access to various under-represented groups and to get input on the consumer survey. The following meetings were conducted with members or affiliates of the Community-Police Task Force in June 2002:

- ✓ NAACP task force representatives
- ✓ Advisory neighborhood commissioner
- ✓ Office of Citizen Complaint Review staff
- ✓ Advisory neighborhood commissioner representing Hispanic/Latino communities
- ✓ MPD organizational development staff
- ✓ A community liaison working as a civilian department member
- ✓ Chief of community defender office

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✓ D.C. Chamber of Commerce representative

Also, we were invited to participate in an additional meeting with the NAACP Task Force which included representatives from the ACLU, Black Police Association, Gay/Lesbian Activist Alliance, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the National Lawyer's Guild, and the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless in August, 2002.

### Employee Focus Groups

#### Composition

As previously discussed, the Police Foundation worked with the Metropolitan Police Department's Employee Committee to establish a focus group plan. That plan (**refer back to Appendix C**) designated a total of eight groups consisting of approximately three to five individuals in each. Two of the groups were reserved for non-sworn/civilian personnel (one of which consisted of mid-level managers). Four of the eight groups were to consist of sworn officers, and one of those groups would focus specifically on the officers' perceptions of the community's attitudes toward police, whereas the remaining three were intended to focus on internal bias. One additional group was made up of sergeants, and the final group consisted of lieutenants, captains, and inspectors.

In August of 2002, the Police Foundation constructed lists of focus groups from the list of 137 volunteers or nominees provided by the Metropolitan Police Department. The list of volunteers included the names and associated units, tours of duty, race, sex, and years of service as requested by the Police Foundation. This allowed the groups to be constructed in such a way as to have representation and diversity. Volunteers were obtained from all except the sixth district and included those from the academy, communications, computer support, court liaison, detectives, special operations, and professional services. In order to ensure participation by three

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to five individuals per group, we selected between six and eight individuals for each group, assuming that there may be a few no-shows. In September, multiple notifications were made to the selected individuals to confirm attendance at various meetings throughout the month.

### Participation

The participation rates were much lower than expected with a total of just 22 of the 57 scheduled participants attending across eight sessions. Since the participation rates did not meet expectations, the Police Foundation agreed to conduct two additional focus groups at the Institute for Police Sciences (training academy) to those individuals currently attending in-service training. Twelve of nineteen volunteers participated in these two additional groups bringing the total to 34 individuals, thereby raising the overall participation rate from 39% to 45%.

The highest attendance rate (71%) was for Commanders (Lieutenants, Captains, and Inspectors), followed by Sergeants (57%). However, the officer groups were less well attended at only 38%. In addition, it is important to note that civilian members' attendance rate overall was higher than for sworn members (50% versus 44%). While these rates are fairly low, it is important to keep in mind that attendance was not mandatory.

These low participation rates may be an indicator of several things. The fact that officers made commitments to participate and then did not show may be indicative of anomie, previous lack of consequences for not attending department meetings, or concerns about confidentiality. Similarly, the low participation rate may demonstrate a lack of concern over the issue of bias or perceived lack of concern by management related to the issue of bias, or a belief that participation would not lead to any change. It is also possible that there may have been scheduling problems due to leave or other operational matters that could not have been avoided.

Participants were questioned about the mission, vision, and values of the department, their role and responsibilities, their relationship with the community, and perceptions of bias in the areas of recruitment, training, assignment, promotion, and discipline. The scripts used by the facilitators of the focus groups are presented as **Appendix E**. Each group had at least two facilitators and typically one of those came from law enforcement.

### Findings

There were some common themes and unique issues identified in various groups. Overall, most individuals had a good understanding of MPD's mission, but not necessarily the vision or values of the organization. Also, many individuals expressed that the agency's apparent focus on community policing is not actually supported in the field, as officers see themselves in a mode of running calls or as one person put it "married to the radio." Many individuals noted that there is not sufficient education of the community with regard to the police role, and in defining what constitutes an emergency.

Many of the individuals who participated indicated that training opportunities were too limited, and that there was a lack of recognition and rewards at all levels of the agency. However, concerns about supervision were much less consistent, with some individuals noting that there was too much supervision especially of younger officers, and other individuals asserting that supervision was very limited, with access to supervisors being most problematic.

While there were some accounts of bias against females, African Americans (especially female), and Latinos within the department, by and large there was a strong sentiment that there is not really any systematic bias based on race, ethnicity, or gender. At the same time, the most pervasive theme across all focus groups/interviews was that of a culture of "favoritism" and significant bias against non-sworn/civilian employees. It should be noted that some individuals

felt that the bias went both ways between civilian and sworn department members, but all felt that there were more or less two camps within the department.

The topical areas addressed in the employee focus groups are outlined below, with the specific points related to these basic themes listed in bullets.

### General understanding of mission, vision, and values

There was a fairly strong sense of understanding with regard to the specific mission of the Metropolitan Police Department. There was less knowledge or consistency of responses with regard to the vision and values of the department. However, it should be noted that some individuals felt strongly that the community is not apprised of the mission, vision, values, or responsibilities of the Metropolitan Police Department. The responses expressed included:

#### Mission

- To reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime
- To enforce laws and increase safety and protection of the community
- To establish a community relationship and improve the quality of life
- To build trust and integrity within the community
- To empower the community

#### Vision and Values

- To become a national policing model
- To become the safest city in the U.S.
- To expand technologically
- To keep the public informed
- To contribute to the image of the department

It is interesting to note that the group of lieutenants, captains, and inspectors mentioned that supporting field personnel was part of the agency's mission, noting that patrol is the "backbone" of the department. Yet some officers expressed that management does not support them.

### Perception of officer role and responsibilities

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While there was a sense of the role and responsibilities of police, several groups noted that there is some conflict with regard to the competing demands of responding to calls for service and community policing. One person summed it up by saying that the officer's role is to be a "liaison between government and the community." The following summarizes the general issues raised across respondent groups regarding how they see their roles.

- Diversity policing
- Call response
- Treat citizens according to the "golden rule"
- Motivate and listen
- Support citizens

Throughout the process, many made comments about how they want to do more community outreach and community policing type activities. Many employees felt that if the agency were to provide the support and allocate enough time to community policing, it could really be effective. However, not all individuals had a solid understanding of what community policing is about, given the variety of responses. One individual even indicated that it simply means "the customer is always right." Others, however, understood it to mean being approachable, available, and visible in the community, and still others felt it related mostly to community crime prevention and education.

### Community-Police relations

One focus group was directed to address how officers felt the community perceived the MPD and its members. This group felt that the community needed to know more about the police role, and several individuals felt the expectations of the community were unreasonable, something shared in other groups as well. One individual acknowledged that the community wants a "more user-friendly" police department, and another noted that the community tends to view the department as making excuses for its failures. Several officers commented that given



the call response approach of the department, management does not support and even discourages them from doing more community policing noting that limited staffing and deployment minimizes their effectiveness in working with the community. These sentiments were frequently expressed in other groups as well. In general this group also felt that by and large, perceptions of police in the Metropolitan Police Department differ based on race, economic status, and area (e.g. those in Northeast and Southeast are seen as having more negative views based on how they are treated by officers).

### Perceived Bias

#### Supervision

The focus group process revealed a great disparity in terms of the beliefs about supervision in the Metropolitan Police Department. The differences ranged from a belief that there is a lack of street supervision (“sergeants do not work streets”) all the way to assertions that there is too much supervision, particularly of younger officers. Some felt that the ability of supervisors to impose discipline was out of their hands, yet believed that sergeants can “make or break” one’s career. A few individuals mentioned that many sergeants are not well-informed and that there is a lack of consistency in supervision. This was seen as an important issue, due to the fact that supervisors with little experience and/or knowledge may do a poor job of mentoring newer officers.

#### Training

##### Access and availability

It was broadly held across groups that the opportunities for supplemental training are fairly limited. This is consistent with the department’s 2001 employee survey in which over

50% of respondents felt there were not enough training opportunities. The basic theme arising out of the focus groups on this issue was that favoritism and friendship were the major criteria for approving training requests. Some indicated that this bias may be imposed from outside the agency as well, and some also felt that the type of assignment (while also based on favoritism) determined who could have access to supplemental training.

A number of individuals expressed that training slots appear to be pre-determined, and the advertisement of them is just a smoke screen. A few individuals noted that training in communicating with other cultures or in other languages would be very helpful to building community relationships. One individual emphasized that the Chief of Police is aware of the limited training opportunities and the situation is beginning to improve.

#### Academy

It was noted during one of the groups that some academy staff demonstrate a bias against women, with one individual referring to women as “poodles.” It was suggested that there are not enough women instructors at the academy. Additionally, one individual noted that the physical testing at the academy appears to have an inherent bias against women. These comments prompted us to review departmental data and reports related to recruitment and academy standards.

In our analysis of data associated with recruitment and training academy performance (i.e. “applicant flow data”), an important statistic was uncovered. The department’s data do seem to support the claim made by the focus group participant that there may indeed be a bias against females in the hiring process with regard to the physical ability test.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 specifically prohibits employment practices that have “adverse impact” based on race, sex, color, religion, or national origin (referred to as

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“protected groups”). The term adverse impact refers to the extent to which a selection procedure or personnel practice negatively affects members of a protected minority group (Lowenberg and Conrad, 1998). The law requires employers to conduct separate analysis across protected groups to demonstrate that the passing/selection rates do not substantially differ. The most commonly used (though not necessarily most sophisticated) strategy for assessing adverse impact is called the “four-fifths” or “80%” rule. This rule stipulates that there is a *prima facie* (i.e. on the face) case of adverse impact when the proportion of those from a protected group who are successful on a hiring practice is less than 80% of that of non-protected groups. The following calculation is used to assess adverse impact.

**STEP ONE:**

Number of Males Passing  $\div$  Number of Males Taking Test = Selection rate for males

**STEP TWO:**

Number of Females Passing  $\div$  Number of Females Taking Test = Selection rate for females

**STEP THREE:**

Selection rate for females  $\div$  Selection rate for males = Adverse impact ratio

***Example:***

50 males take physical agility test; 38 pass

$38/50 = .76$  (76% passing rate for males)

36 females take physical agility test; 18 pass

$18/36 = .50$  (50% passing rate for females)

Female to male selection ratio:  $.50/.76 = .66$  (66% ratio) According to the 80% rule, there is a *prima facie* case of adverse impact whenever the selection ratio for one group is less

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than 80% that of the comparison group. Therefore, adverse impact was displayed in this example.

Departmental data from the years 1999 - 2000 demonstrate at least a *prima facie* case of adverse impact toward females on the physical ability test. In 1999 the adverse impact ratio for females to males on the physical agility test was **.34** and in 2000 it was **.42** (both *significantly* under the 80% rule).

If a plaintiff demonstrates that a pattern of disparate impact has occurred, then the burden of proof shifts to the employer to demonstrate that the employment practice is justified by business necessity and is scientifically valid, and that no other equally valid procedure is available that would lead to less adverse impact. Validity is typically established through a scientific job analysis and often requires studies demonstrating the ability of the procedure to predict subsequent performance on the job. The review of this previously collected MPD data suggests an area worthy of further action (see the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (1978) and the Principles for Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures (2003) for further guidance on this matter).

#### Assignments

Participants in the focus groups generally felt that assignments were made based on favoritism (i.e. the “buddy system”). It was made very clear across groups that if a commanding officer does not like an officer, then that officer will not get a good assignment. There were a number of concerns raised regarding bias in assignments including:

- Those transferring in from other agencies laterally are given preferential treatment in assignments and get higher salaries than current sworn officers
- In general, some feel that there are a lack of black officers in specialty units
- In certain units (e.g. communications and cell block), white females are more likely to get better assignments than black females

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- Sworn females see specialty positions as more likely to go to males and tend to get assigned to administrative rather than tactical specialties (e.g. “there are no female homicide detectives”)
  - It is easier for sworn members to get better post assignments than it is for civilians

It was generally held that the perceived biases are probably exacerbated by the fact that requests for transfers don't always go through the chain of command, applications for specialty assignments sometime “get lost,” and reasons are typically not offered for denying assignment requests. Therefore, it appears that the assignment process could be improved upon in some very specific ways.

### Promotions

While training and assignments seem to carry perceptions of unfairness or certain biases, the promotional process is seen as generally more fair due to recent improvements in testing procedures (e.g. use of outsiders, more objectivity). However, a few individuals noted that promotions still seem to result in more adverse impact upon blacks and women. One example provided was that only one of six assistant chiefs is female. Some actually see a “quota system” operating in the promotional process. Again, it was seen as easier for sworn members to be promoted than civilians, apparently due to the career development ladder and testing process in place for sworn members. One person indicated that the “residency preference” in making decisions about promotions is unfair. It was also mentioned by a few individuals that above the rank of Captain, promotions are made by appointment rather than a competitive process. This is also perceived to be subjective and based entirely on favoritism. It was even mentioned that promotions of women at this level were biased against those women who have children at home.

A specific concern was also raised regarding the recent change in standards for promotion to first level Detective (D1). While the change was intended to make those positions

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more accessible and less prone to subjectivity, the lowering of standards was seen by a few as having allowed for some with less experience and/or qualifications to be promoted to that important position.

### Recruitment

A couple of issues emerged in some of the groups when discussing recruitment efforts by the Metropolitan Police Department. First, it was noted by some people that more recent recruit classes have been dominated by white males. Some asserted that the department continues to do a poor job recruiting Asians. On a more positive note, some individuals did argue that the department is doing a better job recruiting Latinos (especially Puerto Ricans) as of late. One unanticipated remark in one of the groups related to discrimination in the selection of cadets. Although this was raised by only one individual, it warrants some examination since the cadet program is an early career entry path, and may be one way of exposing underrepresented groups like Asians to the department.

### Discipline

With regard to disciplinary actions, a number of issues arose out of the focus group discussions. A couple of individuals saw African Americans and Hispanics as receiving more severe punishments, although this sentiment was not echoed across groups. A few individuals said that due to greater scrutiny of younger officers, they often get disciplined for things that others do not. Still others noted that punishments often affect an entire group, rather than simply the individual responsible. Furthermore, it was stated that the person responsible for handing down the discipline is often someone with little or no contact with the person being disciplined. It was mentioned that the system appears to be improving under the new inspector (as of Fall 2002). Nevertheless, it was recommended that the Office of Professional Responsibility and the

Assistant Chief's roles should be more distinctly separated, something that several individuals agreed about.

Again, the common theme expressed with regard to bias in disciplinary procedures and outcomes was that of favoritism; specifically, how well someone is liked or connected often determines the outcome of their discipline. One even noted that upper command use discipline as a means of dealing with personal vendettas and past grievances. The role of one's rank in the disciplinary process was less clear. Some indicated that those at the lower ranks get worse punishments, and others that upper commanders get worse punishments. Some supervisors are perceived as being fairer than others, and therefore many participants felt that sergeants should not have as much discretion in deciding what gets forwarded to internal affairs and what gets resolved at their level. While some participants noted that the disciplinary process itself is fair, the problem arises out of its inconsistent application across supervisors.

There was also some concern over the privacy of discipline as well, but not specifically based on any particular bias. It was noted that documentation may be limited or even lost thereby slowing down the process and causing some cases to take much longer than others. Some individuals noted that some commanders have been known to "shut down" the disciplinary process for certain individuals without ever telling the supervisor their reasons. Some suggested that until this process was improved, the community may continue to perceive that officers do not receive sufficient discipline. Finally, it was noted that the early warning system in place has had a somewhat positive effect on minimizing discipline, as it offers the ability for early intervention.

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Sworn versus civilian bias

Another significant concern was the existence of a bias against civilian employees.

While most saw the bias as operating against civilian employees, a few individuals did note that the bias sometimes goes both ways. Several individuals claimed that officers tend to have a “superiority complex” over civilians, something that was expressed by civilian and sworn participants alike. Many felt that sworn and civilian managers often do not do a good job communicating with each other, which often impacts upon the amount of perceived bias. While most officers acknowledged differential treatment in some areas as shown below, they also conveyed that these were not reflective of systematic bias, but rather an artifact of the existence of separate bargaining units/unions. Some of the points raised by civilians and sworn members regarding the bias against civilians included:

Differential treatment

- Civilians are often forced to do two jobs and for less pay.
- Light duty is allowed for sworn, but not civilian employees.
- Civilian employees do not have access to the clinic.

On the other hand, there were many issues that were perceived to be within the control of sworn members or the department to influence, including the belief that many sworn supervisors are often harder on civilian employees, and they often give preference in work assignments to sworn members (particularly in the communications center). Furthermore, there was a general sense that civilian members are not valued in the department, and that there were many things that could be done to improve that. Some examples expressed are indicated below:

Not valued

- Civilians are often treated as “second class citizens.”
- Civilians sometimes feel that the leadership thinks they don’t matter (e.g. contractors are being brought in to replace staff, even though contractors may be more expensive).



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- Civilians are often not utilized effectively and their institutional knowledge is not valued.
  - Training opportunities for civilians have recently been all but “cut off” completely<sup>5</sup>.
  - When sworn officers are assigned to units where civilians work, they are perceived as “taking over,” even though the civilians have to train the sworn members, and then sworn officers are responsible for evaluating civilians’ performance.
  - Sworn members have been known to “steal” ideas generated by civilians and then take or get credit for them.

At the same time, the issues can cut both ways, as indicated in these comments:

- Many civilians view sworn officers as lazy and only looking out for themselves.
- Civilians are seen by some sworn officers as having too much authority over sworn personnel.
- Sworn officers believe that civilians and volunteers have too much access to information.

Throughout the employee focus groups, we attempted to learn about underlying stressors that may have an impact on internal or external biases. Other than perceptions of favoritism, participants did not express any overwhelming stressors that directly led to biases. However, many individuals felt that some of the everyday stressors may indirectly influence bias. Among them were:

- Administrative duties appear to be more stressful for officers than street duties.
- Civil litigation resulting from doing one’s job exerts an undue amount of stress.
- Internal investigations against officers are seen as very stressful for officers.
- Unavailability of parking for the court and at headquarters is an ongoing stress factor.
- The frequency of new assignments adds stress due to change in responsibilities and environment.
- Balancing personal and professional life is an ongoing stressor.

### Summary

The employee focus groups were quite informative in terms of the culture of the department and specific concerns of its personnel. While a number of concerns were expressed regarding bias, there were also a variety of concerns raised that related to administrative matters.

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It is important to note that the low participation rate (less than 50% overall) makes it difficult to draw conclusions from the groups. Nevertheless, a number of interesting issues and concerns emerged that either warrant further review, or were consistent with other departmental data or findings from previous studies.

Overall, there was a good understanding of the mission of the MPD, but less so of the vision and values of the agency. While it is quite important for department members to be fully aware of the agency's mission, the role of the vision and especially department values in shaping individual and group behavior is paramount. Some of the perceived biases may in fact be linked to a lack of awareness and/or institutionalization of the department's vision and values. In a survey of department members conducted by the Urban Institute in 2001, researchers found that only 50% of respondents understood the MPD mission and values that guide how to accomplish that mission. It is possible that there has been some improvement since that time, or perhaps the earlier finding is consistent with information gained from our focus groups that more individuals understood the mission than knew what the vision or values of the department were. In the Urban Institute survey, the question dealt with mission and values as a combined issue.

While the mission appears to be largely understood, it is not believed to be adequately conveyed to residents. It is possible that this stems from the competing demands of responding to calls for service and community policing. Some officers who participated in the focus groups expressed that there was a lack of support and/or time for interacting with the community. It is important to note that balancing these demands and strategies is a challenge faced by most agencies throughout the country, and one which is not easily resolved.

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<sup>5</sup> It was noted that there is still some limited training provided at the Academy, and that there are a few opportunities available for training at the University of the District of Columbia, but even that may not be approved, even if the employee offers to pay for it themselves.

In attempting to gain insight as to how MPD members feel the community perceives them, we learned that some officers feel that community members perceive the department differently based on their race, ethnicity, neighborhood, and/or economic status. If true, this would not be surprising given the fact that national studies do suggest differential perceptions of police based on race, ethnicity, neighborhood of origin, and economic status.

In general, there was a shared sense that the MPD offers limited training, recognition, and rewards for its employees, both sworn and civilian. Furthermore, there appears to be a widely held bias toward civilian employees within MPD as expressed across focus groups. While some of the differential treatment stems from the employment contracts that are negotiated separately, much of it appears to be perpetuated by policies, practices, or individual behavior of sworn department members.

One very positive aspect of the focus groups was the fact that there was no pervasive sense of systematic bias based on race, ethnicity, or gender expressed across groups. However, there did seem to be a widespread belief that there is a culture of favoritism within MPD in terms of access to training, assignments, high-level promotions, and disciplinary practices. This finding is consistent with the findings of the Urban Institute's culture survey in MPD in 2001. That report indicated that 68% of employees believed that "it's not individual accomplishment, but who you know that gets you ahead in MPDC." In the department's employee survey of 2001, over 70% of officers (excluding those at Detective rank and above) disagreed that those members who do their jobs well get ahead in MPD, and that advancement depends on individual accomplishments not race or ethnicity.

As previously mentioned, conclusions cannot be confidently drawn from the focus groups based on the limited amount of participation. However, many of the themes expressed

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were repeated across groups, thereby indicating some validity to the concerns. Also, some of the points raised alerted us to examine departmental data to see if there was any other evidence that the concerns expressed warranted greater attention.

### Community Focus Groups

#### Composition

This portion of the project was designed to address perceived bias in certain segments of the population, particularly the under-represented communities. Unlike the consumer survey which used a scientific sampling procedure to represent the D.C. population, the community focus groups were identified to target attitudes in groups whose participation could not be reflected in the survey (i.e. youth), whose representation in the population was too small to be fully represented in the survey (e.g. Latinos, Muslims), whose identities were not made clear in the survey (e.g. deaf/hard of hearing or gay/lesbian, or bisexual), or for whom we were attempting to gain a deeper understanding of the issues confronting them (i.e. African American residents).

#### Participation

The original community focus group plan (**refer back to Appendix D**) proposed and accepted by the department was to include four to five community groups or more as deemed necessary or appropriate by the Community-Police Task Force. The goal was to work with the Community-Police Task Force to identify groups and individuals that could help to set up the meetings. The revised plan called for expanding the original group to the following 11 community groups:

1. African American/Black residents
2. Arab/Muslim community
3. Asian residents
4. At-risk Black males aged 18-25

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5. Business community at large (with focus on Asian business owners)
  6. Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals
  7. Faith community
  8. Gay/lesbian/bisexual residents
  9. Hispanic/Latino residents
  10. White residents
  11. Youth

With the department's help, the Police Foundation made numerous contacts to recommended individuals to try to arrange these focus groups. Many of those individuals were non-responsive, and the department intervened by assisting in identifying other contact persons.

The final result was that a total of twelve groups were scheduled\* and eight groups were actually conducted. A total of 52 individuals participated in the following community focus groups:

1. African American youth
2. Chinese youth
3. Vietnamese youth
4. African American/Black residents
5. Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals
6. Gay/lesbian/bisexual residents
7. Hispanic/Latino residents
8. Muslim females

Engaging the community in Washington, D.C. proved much more complicated than was anticipated. In other cities where the contractor has worked, community outreach has resulted in a much greater response than here in Washington. The MPD project manager and police foundation staff worked diligently to set up a variety of focus groups with limited results.

- \* Scheduled, but did not conduct focus groups with Latino youth, the faith community, Muslim males, and transgender residents

Given the lack of participation, additional measures were taken to increase participation in the focus groups including requesting the assistance of all Advisory Neighborhood

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Commissioners, attending meetings (the Merchant’s workshop on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2003, and the “Project Asian American Pacific Islander” Youth Partners’ meeting on April 17, 2003) to discuss ways in which we could gain access to the Asian business community and Asian youth, and working with MPD representatives to try to arrange groups.

Although the focus groups were conducted with some under-represented groups, it was unfortunate that we were unable to meet with Asian adults and Asian business owners. We also worked with various youth leaders to try to establish a focus group for at-risk Black males aged 18-25, to no avail. While the primary emphasis of these focus groups was on under-represented groups, our energies went to attempting to hold meetings with the identified groups within a specified time period. As a result, we were not able to schedule a meeting of white residents in D.C, nor did it appear necessary after reviewing the survey results.

While the number of groups was greater than that originally proposed and approved by the MPD, it is important to note that there are some very apparent, though unintentional omissions. The issue of bias for at-risk or under-represented groups cannot be fully addressed without including viewpoints from these missing groups. While the timeline and scope of this project limited our ability to complete meetings in these communities, it is highly recommended that this issue be re-visited by the Metropolitan Police Department.

The questions addressed in the focus groups were designed to complement the questions asked in the consumer survey. The focus group questions were open-ended and designed to address the department’s strengths and weaknesses, issues related to fairness and bias.

Facilitator scripts and focus group questions were developed and revised for both the adult and youth focus groups (see **Appendix F**).

### Findings

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*African American Youth*

Ability to identify MPD officers. The African American youth participants said that for the most part, they could identify officers as being with MPD by their uniforms and cars.

Diversity. The youth in this group noted that there are only black and white officers, no Asian or Hispanic officers. These youth also felt that there was a need for more black officers.

Visibility and response time. African American youth we met with felt that MPD officers are visible in their neighborhoods, however not really at the schools unless they come to break up fights. They say that the police are visible on bikes and horses, as well as on foot and in patrol cars. The participants indicated that some youth know the officers in their neighborhoods by name, and that the officers tend to know the young people in the neighborhood.

Perceptions of MPD. While some African American youth said that the police help people out and help to keep drugs off the street, they commented that the police are most concerned with locking people up and controlling people with the badge and gun. One young man noted that there is a particular cop with a Black Taurus who “harasses us a lot...he tells us to get out of the area-- to move on.” Also, a young person noted that in one instance, an officer thought he and his friends were past their curfew and chased them with dogs. Another young man mentioned that there are some “crooked” cops who help drug dealers, or won’t lock them up; “they take their drugs and then let them go.” Several of these youth did not have good feelings about the police, indicating that the officers sometimes harass them or try to control them by telling them to go into their houses. On a surprising note, these young people felt that the media is skewed in favor of the police, and is more positive towards the police than they deserve.

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Improving police services. When asked how the young people could help the police do a better job, they indicated that the best they could do was to “stay out of their way, stay out of trouble.” A few youngsters said that it would be helpful to have more community activities, noting that the Boys and Girls Club is the only recreation center in their area. In terms of how the police could improve their relationship, the young folks in this group felt that the curfew should be extended or eliminated and that more resources should be made available for recreation centers, weekend basketball and football tournaments, adding some dirt bike tracks, fixing basketball courts, as well as fixing sidewalks and streets. Finally, several of these youth felt that these focus groups and similar type sessions are extremely helpful in getting their voices heard.

There were a few other issues raised by these youth. Some asserted that the juvenile court system in D.C. is unfair. Still others expressed concerns over the city “knocking down inexpensive housing,” which may force them to leave their neighborhoods.

### **Chinese Youth**

Ability to identify MPD officers. The Chinese youth said it is hard to tell MPD officers from others, but that the cars and the 9 millimeter weapons were the main differences.

Diversity. With regard to diversity, these youth also indicated that there are mostly Black officers, some white officers and no Asian or Hispanic officers. The youth in this group felt it would be helpful if there were more Asian officers. Like the African American youth, the Chinese youth also felt there was a need for greater diversity in the police department.

Visibility and response time. The youth said they see the police in patrol cars, on bikes, foot, horses, and at schools, but don’t seem them hardly at all in their neighborhoods. They tend



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not to know the officers in their neighborhoods well, although one youth claimed to know who they are. They didn't feel the police responded quickly enough in their neighborhoods.

Perceptions of MPD. Chinese youth mentioned that the police tend to be friendly with civilians, and a few actually care about the safety of the neighborhood. While some saw the police as open-minded, some also indicated that they never talk to officers, as they are scared of them, since the police always seem so serious. One individual felt the police treat everyone the same, whereas another felt that they profile based on appearance. Some of the youth felt that the police are reluctant to do their jobs and give excuses, and that some officers are rude and mean.

Improving police services. In terms of the role the youth could play, the Chinese youth felt that they should follow the law, not "screw up," and report crime when they see it. One youth mentioned that when there was a break-in in the neighborhood, the police were not very friendly and kept them in the dark with regard to the case. Even though the youth recognize the need for some confidentiality of information, they felt the police could be more forthcoming with the status of the case.

Several of these youth agreed that the police could improve their relationship with the community if there was more outreach to Asian youth. Currently, the only attention they get is when there is an Asian officer, but otherwise the police were not concerned about them. Surprisingly, these youth felt that the police should continue to protect them, and "not play with them," as there is "too much crime in the city, and not enough officers the way it is." Additionally, youth in this group said that the MPD should put more officers in bad neighborhoods, and respond more quickly when called. Finally, similar to the African American youth, these youth felt that there should be some basketball tournaments to bring the youth together. Some of the other suggestions made by the Chinese youth included the need for

scholarship programs, after-school tutoring, and officers who are more proactive and can serve as “motivational speakers.”

### *Vietnamese Youth*

Ability to identify MPD officers. The Vietnamese focus group participants claimed they could recognize MPD officers by their uniforms.

Diversity. With regard to diversity, the Vietnamese youth noted that they have seen a lot of different races of cops in the neighborhood, but that there are still language barriers.

Visibility and response time. While these youth do notice officers mostly in patrol cars, they too don't see them much in their neighborhoods, although they have noticed them on patrol more frequently this year compared to last year. They mentioned being aware that the police now run the cars with flashing lights at all times. They said they also notice the police on bikes in and around parks. One was aware that an officer lives in the neighborhood. They prefer to have the officers on bikes so that they could see what happens in alleys and shortcuts, like drug dealing. As it is now, these youth indicated that most of the time, the drug dealers have people watching out for them and scatter when a patrol car nears. These youth couldn't really say if they knew police in their areas.

Perceptions of MPD. They indicated that the police in D.C. help protect the community. These youth also noted that the officers teach young people about drugs and how to avoid them (e.g. “leave a party if there are drugs around”). They also felt that the MPD officers listen and answer questions through both the GREAT and D.A.R.E. programs. One youth mentioned a program in which the police explain to them how their behavior could affect their careers and futures, which was seen as positive. Most of the Vietnamese youth agreed that MPD officers are mostly fair, but that some stations were better than others.

Interestingly, these youth felt that the police are stricter with some teenagers based on how the young people dress. One individual noted that a younger sibling was scared of the police, likely due to some graffiti that talks about cops negatively.

Improving police services. In terms of what the youth could do to help the police, the youth in the Vietnamese group suggested that they could provide information about the neighborhood, such as shortcuts and hangouts. They claimed that they could also help by just staying out of trouble and gangs. Some of these Vietnamese youth felt the police could improve relations if they threw block parties to get the people involved. They also felt the police could attend career fairs, have young people ride-along, and provide more protection at schools.

Some of the Vietnamese youth suggested the police communicate with them more and get to know the young people. One youth mentioned that they should ban cell phone use by police, because this youngster sees them driving around talking on the cell phone constantly, something that prevents them from seeing what is really going on in the neighborhood.

### **African American Adults**

Ability to identify MPD officers. Individuals in this group were very confident about their ability to identify an MPD officer as compared to other types of officers working the District.

Diversity. The participants in this group did not express strong concerns over departmental diversity, but rather focused on the behavior of various officers.

Visibility and response time. Many individuals noted that the police spend too much time in their patrol cars and not enough on foot. Additionally, many felt that there were more officers on patrol in Georgetown and other affluent neighborhoods in the city. Several individuals felt that visibility and police response was worse in areas like Southeast and

Northeast, with response to calls much slower than in other parts of the city. They also felt that police did not pay attention to drug trafficking in these neighborhoods. One individual said that in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District the response time was very good, there is a visible presence of police, and that the police follow-up and are very professional.

Perceptions of MPD. Most of the individuals participating in this group felt that the police tended to use more profanity and demonstrate less professionalism in Black communities. Some noted that Black men are discriminated against by police when in affluent neighborhoods. They also felt that crimes were not being recorded when reported in poor neighborhoods.

There were also some very positive comments made in this group. It was noted that the MPD has a very good SWAT team. Some indicated that there are certain officers who are very good at communicating with residents (“give residents an inside voice”). Some felt that the Boys and Girls Club provided a good forum for the police to interact with youth. One individual mentioned that the community needs to understand that sometimes the judicial system, not the police are to blame for crime problems. Several individuals noted that MPD officers take too much sick and annual leave, however, they did not tell us how they knew that. Finally, some felt that upper command can be too flippant or unconcerned.

Improving police services.

Suggestions for improvement included improving police visibility, taking complaints more seriously, reducing the power of the union, making fewer excuses for not addressing problems in neighborhoods, acquiring better technology, and improving officers’ behavior, appearance, and writing skills. Several individuals agreed that there should be greater enforcement of white people buying and selling drugs, rather than focusing on African

Americans. A couple of individuals from the 7<sup>th</sup> District said that the Commander should get promoted since he has done so much for the community.

### **Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community**

Ability to identify MPD officers. Participants from the deaf/hard of hearing community felt that the main difference they notice between MPD and other agencies in the city is the uniforms.

Diversity. The issue of departmental diversity did not appear to be a major concern of this group.

Visibility and response time. Members of this group noted that the police are quite visible in their areas, but that they don't know the officers. However, several of them don't understand why MPD uses "flashing lights" on patrol now, they cannot tell whether they are being pulled over, or if there is some other reason like needing them to pass.

Perceptions of MPD. These individuals felt that there has been an increase in communication between deaf community and MPD recently. Some would like to talk to the police, but are afraid of how they will respond. Several individuals felt that the younger officers seem to be more tolerant and responsive to deaf community. One individual commented on her frustration in taking a year and a half to get an accident report. It was conveyed that sometimes MPD officers' body language comes across as offensive and unwelcoming to the deaf community.

Improving police services. With regard to how the deaf/hard of hearing community can help the police to be more efficient and effective, the participants suggested having MPD's deaf/hard of hearing unit monitor what's going on in the community, offer workshops for police officers and teach them basic signs. They also think the MPD should offer mandatory training

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sessions in which members of the deaf community teach portions of the course, and have some deaf individuals teach at the academy as well. One individual suggested that the MPD expose officers to the deaf community, especially to children and another said the policies should be changed to allow deaf individuals to be hired as police. Importantly, one person urged the department to publicize positive stories about the police in order to gain community support.

The individuals in this group felt that MPD needs to understand the importance of providing interpreters when dealing with deaf/hard of hearing folks. They suggest that the department offer more training to officers about the deaf/hard of hearing community. The fact that some officers now can use sign language has improved the relationship. However, given the growth rate of the deaf community in D.C., some participants felt that MPD will not be prepared to handle their needs. One person mentioned that the police and deaf community cultures conflict with each other. They would like to see police treat all people with disabilities fairly. They suggested additional police outreach like through an advisory board. Deaf/hard of hearing participants said that these focus groups were a good start at improving their relationship with the MPD. They suggest having additional meetings between them.

### **Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Residents**

Ability to identify MPD officers. Participants in this group felt confident that they could distinguish between MPD officers and all other types of officers working in the District.

Diversity. Many of the participants are concerned that there are not enough openly gay officers – many are in the closet for various reasons. Yet most agreed that advertising for cops in the Washington Blade (a publication for the gay community), has been positive. Most thought it would be helpful if there were more female officers in general.

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Visibility and response time. Like in other groups, the members of the gay, lesbian, and bisexual focus group said the police spend too much time in their cars and not enough interacting with the community, and therefore emphasized the need for officers to walk the beat. In terms of the interaction of the police with gay men, these individuals said that most of their interaction with police is at gay clubs, where the police tend to park outside, mostly in the DuPont Circle area. They noted that the police tend to have established relationships with bouncers at these clubs.

Perceptions of MPD. All of the individuals participating in this group had high praise for the department's gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender liaison. Many of these individuals do not trust the MPD at large, so they call that liaison directly on his cell phone in an emergency rather than rely on 9-1-1. These participants claimed that this officer is the reason the relationship with the police department is currently somewhat positive. On the other hand, the participants indicated that not all members of these communities know the liaison.

Most of the participants in this group agreed that the police are arrogant, nasty and rude to members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender populations. They claim that MPD officers speak to residents using intimidating gestures, and act like they do not want to be there. The gay men believe that they are treated worse due to their sexuality, noting that "previous chiefs" extorted money from gay men. While their feelings are more favorable about the present leadership, they feel the department did not take the email scandal seriously enough. It was also mentioned that the email scandal demonstrated rampant hatred of gays. Within the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities, it was noted that domestic violence is a large problem,

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but that complaints about it are not taken seriously by police.<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, one person believed that “perceived class and race supersede the issue of homosexuality.”

One issue that was raised was about “group homes.” A couple of attendees at the focus group indicated that cops don’t want to go to the group home, noting that cops say things like, “we’re in the crazyhouse.” Clearly, the consensus was that the officers need better information and education to provide better solutions and to eliminate bias. They commented on how the officers wear gloves due to fear of HIV.

A couple of criticisms included the police being quick to draw their weapons, and the fact that officers have too much job security (i.e. they can’t lose their jobs if they perform poorly, only if they commit a crime). Some individuals are bothered by the fact that the Chief claims that MPD has the “finest police in the country,” when they believe that overall it is not very different from many other police departments.

In terms of some of the favorable comments, they indicated that some police sometimes put people at ease. One person added that the fact that there is an openly gay alderman is changing police reaction. However, these individuals felt that most police live outside the city and therefore don’t have much exposure to the D.C. gay community.

Improving police services. In terms of steps that members of these communities could take, they say that there should be more power vested in the Civilian Complaint Review Board. They also feel that they could be helpful in educating or training the police. They feel that activism on their part has helped in raising awareness, noting that D.C.’s gay community is the best organized in the country.

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<sup>6</sup> It is important to note that the report of the Independent Monitor Michael Bromwich for the period of June 2001 through February 2003 indicated that their brief review of the e-mail scandal suggested that MPD had taken significant efforts to conduct a thorough and well-documented investigation of the matter.



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Suggestions offered for the police department included establishing greater accountability with regard to civil rights violations, educating the community on their means of recourse, teach officers how to be more polite, spend less resources on using undercover officers to arrest gays for sex in public (particularly at the P Street beach) and pay more attention to mediating community disputes. Most individuals agreed that the union was part of the problem, and that better training was needed, yet they are frustrated when the leadership claims that training is too expensive and keeps officers off the streets. They also suggested that gay officers in MPD play a larger role in educating other officers. They think the department should recognize those officers who deliver good service and show respect toward the community. Finally, one person suggested the chief establish a diversity office under his authority.

### **Latino Adults**

Ability to identify MPD officers. Most Latino adults felt confident that they could distinguish MPD officers from other officers working in D.C. based on their uniforms, cars, and where they work (e.g. Capitol Police tend to Patrol around the vicinity of the Capitol).

Diversity. Several of the Latino adults saw the recent recruitment of Puerto Rican officers as a positive step toward having multi-lingual representation in MPD (although this does not address the lack of Latinos at higher ranks). It was also mentioned that the fourth district now has more Spanish-speaking officers. At the same time, a participant pointed out the critical concern that police understand not just the language differences, but also cultural differences. One person said “just because officers speak Spanish (Puerto Rican officers), does not mean they will understand other Spanish-speaking community members’ culture like Puerto Rican officers in Salvadoran/Mexican communities.”

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Visibility and response time. These participants felt that visibility has improved over the past few years. They said that some officers go out of their way to meet people and interact. Some claimed that response times were too slow both on calls for service and general inquiries about community needs. Some feel that the MPD has resources, but they just aren't being used effectively.

Perceptions of MPD. Some of the strengths of the MPD included easy access to officers and the department's interest in working with the community. They felt that the city's May 3, 2003 event for Latinos was very positive. Participants in this focus group also noted that the police and community meet every month in the 4<sup>th</sup> District, and that there is an office in that district where Latino citizens can air complaints. Additionally, these residents thought that police going house to house to meet residents and open dialogue was a very positive action on the part of MPD. However, some felt that not enough is done with complaints filed against police.

The Latino community has found great support in the liaison unit which they claim has been instrumental in bridging the relationship of MPD to the community. Most of the focus group members felt that the situation with MPD and the Latino community will get better over time. These participants also indicated that most Latino officers are very friendly and helpful.

In terms of some of the limitations of the MPD, participants in the Latino focus group indicated that communication about community events with police do not reach all segments of the community. Some individuals agreed that there are still some racial attitudes being expressed by police. They feel that the call takers provide different levels of customer service based on hearing an accent in one's voice. There are still stereotypes of Latinos being illegal, and mistreatment by police based on the perception that a person may be illegal.

More importantly, some claimed that there is still an issue of abuse of authority against all minority communities in D.C., and therefore, more sensitivity is needed from police. Specifically, some expressed continued concern over the amount of force used by police in Mount Pleasant. One person noted that there is not enough media coverage of excessive force or incidents within the community, unless there is a scandal or major incident like the Mt. Pleasant riots. Some felt the September 11 attacks led to more acceptance of bias.

One person indicated that many police show no interest in the community, and are only there to respond to calls. One example provided was that officers in Columbia Heights sit in the 7-11 convenience store while drug dealing and other crime is going on right in front of them.

Improving police services. In terms of what the Latino community could do to help the police be more effective and efficient, most agreed that the Latino organizations could do more to reach out to the police. They feel there could be greater collaboration and trust between the police and their communities. Some felt that citizens should be more willing to file class-action lawsuits against the department for discrimination and violations of civil rights. Also, it was advocated that community should participate more in public events to show that Latinos have a vested interest in the community so that the police view Latinos in a positive light.

With regard to things that MPD could improve upon, the members of this group mentioned a better selection process for police candidates to eliminate those who are prejudiced. One person noted that even with training, if a candidate is not a good one, their behavior won't change when they are on the job. Another comment was made about the difference between the chief's vision and officers' behavior.

Another suggestion was made that the police initiate programs in the schools to teach Latino youth how to interact with the police appropriately. Like some of the other groups we

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met with, the Latino adults suggested the police organize cultural/social events for police and community participation (i.e. soccer games, community picnics) to see the human side of both the police and the community members. One person recommended that the police set up booths at both the Mt. Pleasant and Adam's Morgan Day events.

Some other interesting suggestions included offering bonuses to officers who perform exceptionally, or participate in the community and attend community events. Another person recommended that the mission statement be clarified to include responsibility, service, and integrity as central. As in other groups, this group mentioned that the Union has too much influence over hiring and firing, and the chief should be able to make these decisions.

As mentioned in the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender focus group, participants in the Latino focus group suggested the department publicly recognize officers who are noble and good cops (the community would recommend these officers).

This group indicated the need for better training and especially sensitivity training, due to unprofessional behavior by some officers. This group also noted the need for better supervision rather than blaming the chief for everything.

### **Muslim Females**

Ability to identify MPD officers. The small group of Muslim women we met with said they could distinguish MPD officers based on their patches, uniforms, and cars.

Diversity. The Muslim females we met with mentioned that there aren't enough officers of different races and backgrounds in the community, and that in the last few months there had been a "mass influx of white officers."

Visibility and response time. In terms of visibility, this group also felt that police spent too much time in their patrol cars and not enough on foot or on bikes. Participants in this group

also said they occasionally see sergeants and lieutenants on the street as well. They indicated that response time is generally good.

Perceptions of MPD. In terms of bias, these participants noted that when they see officers lining up individuals on the streets, they are always young Black men, and they make them sit on the sidewalk. They felt that community members are treated differently based on the district they are in, but that some of it has to do with individual officer behavior.

At the same time, those in the group mentioned that the bias that does exist tends to be about “Black” or “White,” and not as much based on culture. However, they did indicate that while most officers know that Muslims have services on Fridays, cars get ticketed, whereas on Sundays for Christians, there is no ticketing taking place. This is seen as an act of blatant disrespect.

The focus group members also had some very positive things to say about the police in D.C. indicating that their experiences with police showed the police to be polite and nice. These women commented that officers struggle to do their jobs, and take time in taking reports and going the extra mile to help the community. They did mention that there was a time when officers had an attitude of “this isn’t my PSA” and didn’t get involved, but that this had changed.

Improving police services. The Muslim females we met with suggested some improvements on the part of MPD. Two of the participants remembered the “officer friendly” program and wish that would be reinstated. We were surprised when the participants provided us with a brochure on Islam made for police officers entitled “Law Enforcement Official’s Guide to the Muslim Community” (can be obtained through the Council on American-Islamic

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Relations<sup>7</sup>). The Muslim females we met with felt that MPD officers do not know enough about Islam, and could use sensitivity training. They suggested the officers do more foot patrol in order to improve community relations, especially since trust had been lost based on past corruption problems.

### Summary

The community focus groups proved useful in tapping into some of the concerns shared by various constituencies in D.C. While each group had some unique concerns and experiences, there were some common themes shared across some of the groups. There seemed to be a wide consensus in these community focus groups that there was a greater need for foot and bike patrols throughout the city. While many individuals were aware of the recruitment of Puerto Rican officers, there was also a shared concern that MPD does not have sufficient officers from under-represented groups (e.g. Latinos/Hispanics, Asians, Gays, etc.). Numerous participants recognized the department's recent attempts at improved diversity and outreach.

Both young people and some adults made mention of the need for more youth centers or hang-outs in the city as a whole, but also specifically requested greater officer involvement in, or organization of, youth activities like sports tournaments and block parties. This finding is consistent with the community survey conducted five years ago (Skogan, 1998) in which residents rated too few recreational programs as the biggest citywide problem (31%), with 57% mentioning that it was at least somewhat of a greater than average concern.

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<sup>7</sup> Council on American-Islamic Relations, 453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003 Phone (202) 488-8787 and email [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org) [www.cair-net.org](http://www.cair-net.org)

Several groups remarked that the police union is too powerful, and wished that its role could be reduced. In a couple of the groups, it was mentioned that follow-up on investigations and complaints is not sufficient.

Due to expressed attitudes about rudeness, disrespectful comments, and profanity used by some officers, most groups mentioned the need for training to improve communication and language skills including sign language. A couple of groups (e.g. African American adults and Muslim females) expressed a belief that some police response and behavior was based on the neighborhood in which the resident lives or other forms of bias. Examples include slower response times in African American neighborhoods and tickets being issued to Muslims who park for religious services but not for Christians, and other such comments. Finally, at least two groups also mentioned the need for public recognition of good officers or officers who demonstrate positive steps toward improving community relations.

## **PHASE TWO**

### Survey

#### *Pilot Test of Survey*

During June and July of 2002, a pilot sample was selected to pre-test the consumer survey protocols, process, and instrument. A total of 115 residents completed the interviews.

#### *Data Analysis Plan for MPD Biased Policing Project*

The survey instrument (English and Spanish versions) was designed to examine D.C. residents' opinions and experiences with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). Specifically, the survey questions focused on the resident perceptions and experiences in the following areas: 1) assessment of the relationship between the police and community; 2) responsiveness of the police to the community; 3) assessment of fairness and effectiveness of

police services; and 4) assessment of police officer behavior or performance during police-citizen encounters (e.g., traffic and pedestrian stops, and calling police to report a problem).

The analysis plan involved exploring whether perceptions and experiences were significantly different with respect to survey respondents racial background, gender, age, household income, and racial composition of respondents' neighborhoods. We examined visibility and perceptions of police performance in terms of success in preventing crime, controlling drug activity, enforcing traffic laws, communicating with residents, and demonstrating concern for neighborhood problems. We also assessed departmental diversity, perceptions of officer honesty, and beliefs related to bias associated with police stops, as well as use of force against non-whites and the poor.

Finally, the analysis plan allowed us to review characteristics of encounters with the police (stops and response to calls for service). Specifically, we examined the behavior of officers during stops including whether or not they searched vehicles or persons, issued tickets, or used force. Some of the specific questions of interest included perceptions that one has every received unfair treatment by MPD officers based on their race, age, gender, whether the individual has ever filed a complaints against an MPD and if so, their satisfaction in addressing it, and a range of other questions related to call response, fairness, and impact of the media.

The analyses conducted included perceptions of policing and officer behavior during contacts. The approach was to analyze a series of statements concerning respondent perceptions of police performance of various services as well as law enforcement and order maintenance duties. The perceptions of officer behavior involved analysis of several questions to assess the type of contact respondent had and their perceptions of officer behavior during the encounter.



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Multivariate analysis included conducting a regression equation to examine the influence of respondent demographic characteristics (i.e., race, age, gender, neighborhood, etc.).

### Survey Methodology

The interview process served to ensure some degree of randomness in the selection of a respondent within a household. During the initial telephone conversation, interviewers were to establish the identity of a household member aged 18 and over. Once the person was identified, an interview was requested with that individual. About 27 percent of the interviews were conducted immediately upon contact with the household, if the person was available, or a call back was made for an interview at a later date and time (mean number of interviewer contacts was 4.2 times per household).

A total of 5,129 addresses were initially selected in the sample (the total reflects additional addresses selected when insufficient numbers of households could be reached). Overall, 1,385 or 27 percent of addresses sampled were eliminated because of either no telephone number (3.7%), telephone number was non-residential (4%), the phone number was linked to a fax machine (1.9%) or the telephone number was disconnected (17.3%). Of the 1,693 eligible households contacted for the study, 1,259 respondents agreed to participate, for an overall participation rate of 74 percent.<sup>8</sup>

Additionally, an overall survey completion rate was calculated to include the total number of households contacted that either 1) were disqualified due to respondent inability to distinguish an MPD from other law enforcement agency personnel<sup>9</sup>; 2) the respondent partially

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<sup>8</sup> The "participation rate" reflects the total number of households reached in which an eligible person was *willing* to participate and actually completed the telephone survey. Respondents were identified as the first adult (at least 18 years old) residing in each household available to participate in the survey.

<sup>9</sup> The first item on the survey asked the respondent "how certain are you that you can tell the difference between MPD officers and all other types of officers working in D.C.?" Almost 7 percent of the respondents indicated that they were "very uncertain", "somewhat uncertain" or "don't know" and as a result were disqualified from the survey.

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completed the survey; 3) the respondent did not speak English (and for whom no translation was available); or 4) the respondent refused to participate. Taking those factors into consideration resulted in a 67 percent completion rate.

#### Characteristics of the Sample

The sampling method produced an even distribution of respondents living in block groups composed of each race and level of population density. A map representing the block groups is provided as **Appendix G**. Table 1 presents a comparison of the race/ethnicity of the survey respondents to the percentages measured from the 2000 Census of the District of Columbia population as a whole. The table below shows that the number of participants attained were under-represented among blacks (44 percent), Hispanics (3.3 percent), and Asians (1.1 percent) in comparison to the respective race/ethnicity in the Census profile. Conversely, the sample was over-represented with respect to respondents describing themselves as white (42.4 percent) and other race (6 percent)—the “other race” designation was probably composed of respondents indicating multiple race/ethnicity when asked to describe themselves. These deviations from the race/ethnicity characteristics of the 2000 Census are related probably in part to the non-response problems mentioned above.

Table 1. *Comparison of Survey Respondents Race/Ethnicity and Census 2000*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Respondents (Unweighted)</b>	<b>Respondents (Weighted)</b>	<b>Census 2000*</b>
Black	44.0%	57.1%	60.0%
White	42.7%	29.3%	30.8%
Hispanic	3.3%	7.5%	7.9%
Asian	1.1%	2.5%	2.7%
Other	6.0%	3.6%	1.7%
Refused	2.9%	NA	NA

\* Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

To compensate at least partly for under- and over-represented respondents, the survey data were “weighted” and are also reported in Table 1. It is common to account for unequal selection probabilities by weighting the data. The table shows that the weighting adjustment of race/ethnicity produced similar proportions in each group compared to the Census data. Therefore, the survey findings should be properly recognized as estimates of District of Columbia residents’ views and experiences rather than simple counts of survey responses. However, while the weighted data offers better descriptive representations of the population from which they were drawn, they are not suitable for analyses that rely on tests of statistical significance. As a consequence, significance tests reported herein will be based on un-weighted data<sup>10</sup>.

A comparison of the age of respondents to the District population as a whole also revealed some deviations (see Table 2).

<sup>10</sup> An examination of the survey data indicated that the results of descriptions drawn from weighted and un-weighted data generally differed only at the decimal place, so only un-weighted results and the appropriate tests of significance will be reported.

Table 2. *Comparison of Age of Survey Respondents and Census 2000*

<b>Age</b>	<b>Respondents (N = 1,259)</b>	<b>Census 2000*</b>
18-24 years old	6.4%	NA
25-34 years old	21.7%	17.8%
35-44 years old	21.0%	15.3%
45-54 years old	14.3%	13.2%
55-64 years old	12.5%	8.7%
65-74 years old	8.3%	6.3%
75 years and older	8.1%	6.0%
Refused	7.9%	NA

\* Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

Each of the age categories was over-represented in the achieved sample of respondents. It is interesting to note, although not revealed in the table, the under-representation of blacks aged 18 years to 34 years old (21.6 percent) in the sample in contrast to the proportion of young persons sampled among whites (34.4 percent) and Hispanic (60 percent) respondents.

Comparing the gender profile of the survey respondents with the Census figures shows the distribution of males and females are very similar (see Table 3). Females comprise about 53 percent of the District's population as compared to the 56 percent of all survey respondents. The distribution of female respondents varied by race/ethnicity (not shown), with more than half among white (53.7 percent) and Hispanic (55 percent) and 63.4 percent female among black respondents.

Table 3. *Comparison of Survey Respondents Gender and Census 2000*

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Respondents (N = 1,259)</b>	<b>Census 2000*</b>
Male	40.2%	47.1%
Female	56.7%	52.9%
Refused**	3.1%	NA

\* Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File1/\*\*or wasn't asked

Table 4 presents the household income characteristics of the achieved sample. Six percent of the respondents reported income less than \$10,000 while 24.2 percent reported incomes of \$25,000 to \$60,000. Thirty-six percent of the respondents indicated a household income of over \$60,000. With respect to the employment status of the respondents (see Table 5), 67.3 percent were either working full or part-time and almost 20 percent indicated that they were retired.

Table 4. *Respondent Income Levels*

<b>Income Level</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than 10k	76	6.0
10k to 25k	125	9.9
25k to 60k	305	24.2
Over 60 k	453	36.0
Unknown/Refused	300	23.8
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>1,259</i></b>	<b><i>100.0</i></b>

Citizen Encounters With the Metropolitan Police Department

This section examines survey questions relating to the frequency and nature of respondent contacts with officers in the Metropolitan Police Department, including traffic and pedestrian

Table 5. *Respondent Employment Status*

<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Full Time	728	57.8
Part Time	120	9.5
Not Working	76	6.0
Retired	245	19.5
Other	68	5.4
Unknown/Refused	22	1.7
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>1,259</i></b>	<b><i>100.0</i></b>

stops, and calling the police to report a problem. The specific behaviors of the officer(s) during police-citizen encounters are explored, as well as the respondents' assessment of the officer(s) performance during the encounter.

Survey respondents were asked how often they had seen MPD officers (either on foot or in a car) in their particular neighborhood. Overall, about 42 percent of the respondents indicated seeing officers in their respective neighborhood on a daily basis. With respect to the race/ethnicity of the respondents, almost 44 percent of blacks reported seeing officers on a daily basis compared to about 39 percent of white respondents (see Table 6). Half of the respondents describing themselves as an "other race" and 46 percent of Hispanic respondents indicated seeing the police daily.

Table 7 presents the frequency of seeing an officer in the neighborhood as it relates to the racial composition of households within the respondents neighborhood. In areas where black residents comprise 80 percent or more of the households—41 percent of the respondents

Table 6. *Frequency of Seeing MPD Officers in Neighborhood by Race (N = 1,215)*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Few a Year</b>	<b>Once a Month</b>	<b>Once a Week</b>	<b>Few a Week</b>	<b>Daily</b>	<b>Not at All</b>
White	2.6%	7.1%	16.7%	33.6%	38.6%	1.3%
Black	3.4%	10.9%	12.9%	27.6%	43.6%	1.6%
Hispanic	0.0	4.9%	17.1%	26.8%	46.3%	4.9%
Asian	7.1%	0.0	14.3%	42.9%	35.7%	0.0
Other	7.9%	9.2%	7.9%	21.1%	50.0%	3.9%

Chi-square = 34.116 *df* = 20 *p* ≤ .05

indicated seeing the police on a daily basis. Almost 40 percent of respondents in areas with predominately white residents reported seeing the police daily, while 30 percent in racial mixed areas of the city reported seeing the police daily.

Table 7. *Frequency of Seeing MPD Officers by Neighborhood Racial Composition (N = 1,251)*

<b>Neighborhood Race</b>	<b>Few a Year</b>	<b>Once a Month</b>	<b>Once a Week</b>	<b>Few a Week</b>	<b>Daily</b>	<b>Not at All</b>
Black	4.3%	13.2%	13.0%	27.4%	40.7%	1.4%
White	2.2%	6.9%	19.7%	32.9%	35.9%	2.5%
Mixed	3.1%	6.7%	11.4%	29.7%	47.5%	1.7%

Chi-square = 36.938 *df* = 10 *p* ≤ .001

The amount of police presence in a particular neighborhood may impact on how survey respondents view the police and police services. To examine whether respondents from different racial/ethnicity groups are exposed to different levels of police presence in their neighborhood,

respondents were asked if they felt there were too many, about the right number, or too few officers in their neighborhoods. These views differed substantially by race, with more than half of the black and 40 percent of Hispanic respondents feeling that there were too few officers in their neighborhood (see Table 8). In contrast, only a quarter of white respondents reportedly felt there were too few police officers in their neighborhoods.

Table 8. *Perception of Sufficient Number of Officers by Race (N = 1,173)*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Too Many</b>	<b>About Right Number</b>	<b>Too Few</b>
White	2.8%	71.5%	25.7%
Black	3.3%	41.8%	54.8%
Hispanic	2.5%	57.5%	40.0%
Asian	7.1%	57.1%	35.7%
Other	6.9%	54.2%	38.9%

Chi-square = 99.964 *df* = 8 *p* ≤ .001

Sizable disparities were also apparent between the racial compositions of the respondent neighborhood. Table 9 shows that 58.4 percent of respondents living in areas comprised of 80 percent or more black resident households feel there are too few officers compared to 19.2 percent of respondents living in majority white resident household neighborhoods.

Table 9. *Perception of Enough Officers by Neighborhood Composition (N = 1,206)*

<b>Neighborhood Race</b>	<b>Too Many</b>	<b>About Right Number</b>	<b>Too Few</b>
Black	3.2%	38.4%	58.4%
White	3.6%	77.2%	19.2%
Mixed	3.0%	53.0%	44.1%

Chi-square = 132.068 *df* = 4 *p* ≤ .001



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Perceptions of the Quality of Police Services in Respondent Neighborhoods

Respondents were presented with a series of statements designed to assess their views of the quality of police services in their particular neighborhoods. Specifically, the respondents were asked whether police in their neighborhood: 1) do a good job preventing crime; 2) do a good job controlling drug activity; 3) care about neighborhood problems; 4) do a good job enforcing traffic laws; and 5) are good at communicating with residents in the neighborhood. The survey response<sup>11</sup> findings are presented below. Each of the questions were subjected to comparisons of subgroup responses by race and neighborhood racial composition. For example, are the perceptions of white residents different from those of black residents or other minorities? Does it matter if the respondent lives in a predominately black or mixed race neighborhood?

As to the question of whether the police do a good job in preventing crime in the respondents' neighborhoods, 71 percent of the respondents agreed that police are doing a good job in preventing crime in their respective neighborhoods. Compared to a national Harris poll conducted in 2000 in which 65 percent of respondents agreed that police do a good job preventing crime, MPD fares quite well on this issue. There were, however, significant differences in the percentages of whites, blacks and other minorities who viewed the police as not doing a good job in crime prevention (see Table 10). Thirty-seven percent of black respondents and 40 percent of respondents of other races felt the police were not doing a good job compared to only 20 percent of white respondents who felt that way.

Significant differences were also apparent when examining the racial composition of the respondents' neighborhood. Table 11 shows that respondents living in predominately black (38 percent) and mixed race (31.6 percent) neighborhoods were more likely to disagree that police

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are preventing crime in neighborhoods than those respondents in predominately white neighborhoods.

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<sup>11</sup> The analyses of the questions were converted into “agree/disagree” format to simplify the presentation of the data.

Table 10. *Perception that Police Do a Good Job Preventing Crime in Your Neighborhood by Race (N = 1,152)*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	79.9	20.1
Black	63.0	37.0
Hispanic	78.0	22.0
Asian	84.6	15.4
Other	60.0	40.0

Chi-square = 41.844 *df* = 4 *p* ≤ .001

Table 11. *Perception that Police Do a Good Job Preventing Crime in Your Neighborhood by Neighborhood Type (N = 1,185)*

<b>Neighborhood Race</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
Black	62.0	38.0
White	83.7	16.3
Mixed	68.4	31.6

Chi-square = 46.914 *df* = 2 *p* ≤ .001

With regard to the questions of how good a job the police are doing in controlling drug activity in respondents' neighborhoods, some 61 percent of all survey respondents felt that the police were doing a good job in that regard. From the perspective of the race/ethnicity of respondents (see Table 12), nearly 52 percent of black respondents indicated that police were not effective in controlling drug activity compared to 24 percent of white respondents. Moreover, about 42 percent of Hispanic and 44 percent of other race respondents felt the police were not doing a good job controlling drug activity in their neighborhoods. Similar results (see Table 13) were present when comparing responses based on the racial composition of the respondent neighborhoods. Respondents residing in predominately black (51.3 percent) and mixed race

Table 12. *Perception that Police Do a Good Job Controlling Drug Activity by Race (N = 1,057)*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	76.0	24.0
Black	48.3	51.7
Hispanic	58.3	41.7
Asian	75.0	25.0
Other	56.1	43.9

Chi-square = 77.641 *df* = 4 *p* ≤ .001

(47.7 percent) neighborhoods were more likely to feel that the police were not doing a good job controlling drug activity compared to a mere 13 percent of respondents in predominantly white neighborhoods who felt that police were not doing a good job.

Table 13. *Perception that Police Do a Good Job Controlling Drug Activity by Neighborhood Type (N = 1,092)*

<b>Neighborhood Race</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
Black	48.7	51.3
White	87.0	13.0
Mixed	52.3	47.7

Chi-square = 128.096 *df* = 2 *p* ≤ .001

As to whether residents felt that the police care about problems in their respective neighborhoods, nearly 77 percent of the respondents agreed that police seem to care about problems in their neighborhoods. Again, significant differences in the percentages of whites and minorities existed with respect to whether the police care about neighborhood problems (see Table 14). Thirty-three percent of black and about 26 percent of Hispanic respondents thought

that police did not care about neighborhood problems compared to nearly 13 percent of white respondents. A similar pattern existed when comparing the racial composition of the respondent neighborhoods (see Table 15). Respondents living in predominately black (31.9 percent) or mixed race (24.6 percent) neighborhoods were significantly more likely to feel that the police were not concerned about problems in their neighborhood. This is consistent with other research that has shown that non-whites living in areas with a high concentration of non-whites have less favorable views about the police than those living in racially mixed areas (see for example, Smith, Graham, and Adams, 1991).

Table 14. *Perception that Police Care About Problems in Your Neighborhood by Race (N = 1,100)*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	87.4	12.6
Black	67.0	33.0
Hispanic	74.4	25.6
Asian	76.9	23.1
Other	74.6	25.4

Chi-square = 57.718 *df* = 4 *p* ≤ .001

In terms of residents’ perceptions about the effectiveness of police in enforcing traffic laws in respondents’ neighborhoods, there were some surprises based on race. Table 16 presents the responses based on the race/ethnicity of the respondent. Surprisingly, more white respondents (36.5 percent) viewed the police as being ineffective when it comes to enforcing

Table 15. *Perception that Police Care About Problems in Your Neighborhood by Neighborhood Type (N = 1,129)*

<b>Neighborhood Race</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
Black	68.1	31.9
White	87.6	12.4
Mixed	75.4	24.6

Chi-square = 40.240 *df* = 2 *p* ≤ .001

traffic laws in their neighborhoods than blacks (29.5 percent) and Hispanics (20.5 percent). An examination of responses based on the racial composition of the respondent neighborhoods (data not shown) revealed no significant differences among the type of neighborhood. About 72 percent of respondents living in predominately black neighborhoods, 67 percent in white, and 65 percent in mixed race neighborhoods indicated that the police were doing a good job enforcing traffic laws.

Finally, respondents were asked whether they thought police officers in the neighborhood were good at communicating with residents. Sixty-one percent of the respondents reported that police were effective in communicating with residents in their neighborhoods. There were no significant differences with respect to the race/ethnicity of the respondents—67 percent of whites, 58 percent of blacks and about 57 percent of Hispanic respondents felt the police communicated well with residents in the neighborhoods. Also, no significant differences were revealed when comparing the racial composition of the respondents' neighborhood.

#### Crime Rate and Police Patrol District Analysis

In this section we examine the different levels of police presence and perceptions of the quality of police services as they relate to the levels of reported serious crime and MPD patrol

Table 16. *Perception that Police Do a Good Job Enforcing Traffic Laws in Neighborhood by Race (N = 1,151)*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	63.5	36.5
Black	70.5	29.5
Hispanic	79.5	20.5
Asian	85.7	14.3
Other	67.6	32.4

Chi-square = 10.550  $df = 4$   $p \leq .05$

districts of the respondents. We examined the extent to which those living in areas with high serious crime experience different levels of police presence or quality of police services than those living in lower crime areas.

Data for the number of offenses reported to the MPD were obtained for the time period of one year before the survey was conducted (July 1, 2001) through the month when the interview process was completed (December 31, 2002). The type of offenses included: homicide, sex abuse, robbery, assault with a deadly weapon, burglary, theft, and auto theft. The data included the patrol district and PSA (police service areas) in which offenses occurred—the MPD has 83 PSA's<sup>12</sup> organized into seven police patrol districts.

Table 17 presents the number of offenses reported to the MPD by patrol district, and Table 18 presents the distribution of survey respondents within MPD patrol districts. Using the crime rates calculated for each district, we collapsed the police patrol districts into the following

<sup>12</sup> PSAs are the smallest geographical subdivision in the city of Washington, DC. The size of a PSA usually follows neighborhood boundaries. Because of the large number of PSAs and the distribution of respondents within a given PSA, the unit of analysis was conducted only for the seven patrol districts.

Table 17. *Reported Offenses by Patrol District (July 1, 2001- December 31 2002)*

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of Offenses<sup>a</sup> Reported to Police</b>	<b>Crime Rate<sup>b</sup></b>
1st District	6,806	11.9
2 <sup>nd</sup> District	5,476	9.6
3 <sup>rd</sup> District	7,470	13.1
4 <sup>th</sup> District	7,306	12.8
5 <sup>th</sup> District	6,560	11.5
6 <sup>th</sup> District	6,447	11.3
7 <sup>th</sup> District	4,742	8.3

<sup>a</sup>Offenses include the following crimes: Homicide, Sex Abuse, Robbery, Assault with Deadly Weapon, Burglary, Theft, and Auto Theft

<sup>b</sup>Number of reported crime per 1,000 population in 2000

crime rate categories: High Crime Rate (District 1, District 3 and District 4); Medium Crime Rate (District 5 and District 6); and Low Crime Rate (District 2 and District 7).

Table 18. *Survey Respondents by Patrol District (N = 1,254)*

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of Survey Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> District	205	16.3
2 <sup>nd</sup> District	368	29.3
3 <sup>rd</sup> District	103	8.2
4 <sup>th</sup> District	163	13.0
5 <sup>th</sup> District	220	17.5
6 <sup>th</sup> District	134	10.7
7 <sup>th</sup> District	61	4.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,254</b>	<b>100.0</b>



Table 19 presents the frequency of seeing an officer in the neighborhood as it relates to the level of reported serious crimes within the respondents neighborhood. In areas with a high crime rate—46.6 percent of respondents reported seeing the police on a daily basis compared to about 40 and 37 percent, respectively, among respondents in low and medium crime rate areas. When examining the frequency of seeing officers by police patrol districts (see Table 20), 57.4 percent of respondents in the 7<sup>th</sup> District (a low crime rate area) reported seeing police daily compared to 49, 46.5, and 43.8 percent in the highest serious crime rate areas (1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Districts, respectively).

Table 19. *Frequency of Seeing MPD Officers in Neighborhood by Crime Rate (N = 1,246)*

<b>Crime Rate</b>	<b>Few a Year</b>	<b>Once a Month</b>	<b>Once a Week</b>	<b>Few a Week</b>	<b>Daily</b>	<b>Not at All</b>
High	3.4%	7.1%	12.2%	29.2%	46.6%	1.5%
Medium	3.7%	13.9%	14.5%	28.7%	37.2%	2.0%
Low	2.1%	7.0%	17.3%	31.8%	39.7%	2.1%

Chi-square = 25.149 *df* = 10 *p* ≤ .01

Table 20. *Frequency of Seeing MPD Officers in Neighborhood by District (N = 1,246)*

<b>Patrol District</b>	<b>Few a Year</b>	<b>Once a Month</b>	<b>Once a Week</b>	<b>Few a Week</b>	<b>Daily</b>	<b>Not at All</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	2.0%	7.9%	10.3%	30.0%	48.8%	1.0%
2 <sup>nd</sup>	1.6%	6.8%	19.1%	33.2%	36.8%	2.5%
3 <sup>rd</sup>	4.0%	5.0%	15.8%	24.8%	46.5%	4.0%
4 <sup>th</sup>	4.9%	7.4%	12.3%	30.9%	43.8%	0.6%
5 <sup>th</sup>	4.1%	15.1%	15.5%	28.8%	34.2%	2.3%
6 <sup>th</sup>	3.0%	12.0%	12.8%	28.6%	42.1%	1.5%
7 <sup>th</sup>	4.9%	8.2%	6.6%	23.0%	57.4%	0.0%

Chi-square = 65.191 *df* = 30 *p* ≤ .01

With regard to the question of whether respondents residing in areas with high crime rates and in particular police patrol districts feel that there are enough officers patrolling their neighborhoods, those respondents in medium crime rate areas were more likely to indicate that there are too few officers (59.6 percent) compared to 42 percent of the respondents in areas with high crime rates (see Table 21). Of particular interest was the finding that the almost 73 percent of respondents in low crime rate areas and a majority of respondents (55 percent) in high crime rate areas feel that about the right number of officers are patrolling their neighborhoods. With respect to the respondents' police patrol district (see Table 22), 66.2 percent of respondents in the 7th District reported too few officers in their neighborhoods compared to 55.6 percent in the 5th District, 54.5 percent in the 7th District and about 52 percent in the 4th District.

Table 21. *Perception of Sufficient Number of Officers by Crime Rate* (N = 1,202)

<b>Crime Rate</b>	<b>Too Many</b>	<b>About Right Number</b>	<b>Too Few</b>
High	2.4%	55.1%	42.4%
Medium	2.9%	37.5%	59.6%
Low	4.4%	71.8%	23.8%

Chi-square = 100.937  $df = 4$   $p \leq .001$

Table 22. *Perception of Sufficient Number of Officers by District* (N = 1,202)

<b>Patrol District</b>	<b>Too Many</b>	<b>About Right Number</b>	<b>Too Few</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	2.0%	56.9%	41.1%
2 <sup>nd</sup>	4.6%	76.6%	18.8%
3 <sup>rd</sup>	4.1%	66.0%	29.9%
4 <sup>th</sup>	1.9%	46.2%	51.9%
5 <sup>th</sup>	3.7%	40.7%	55.6%
6 <sup>th</sup>	1.5%	32.3%	66.2%
7 <sup>th</sup>	3.6%	42.1%	54.4%

Chi-square = 143.853  $df = 12$   $p \leq .001$

So far the results have shown that differences do exist among respondents in certain crime rate areas and police patrol districts with respect to the perceived amount of police presence in their respective neighborhoods. Tables 23 through 28 display additional differences in community perceptions based on the crime rate and patrol district as well. As would be expected, those living in the lowest crime rate area were most likely (80.8 percent) to report that the police do a good job preventing crime in their neighborhood (see Table 23).

Table 23. *Perception that Police Do a Good Job Preventing Crime in the Neighborhood By Crime Rate (N =1,181)*

<b>Crime Rate</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
High	69.7	30.3
Medium	61.2	38.8
Low	80.8	19.3

Chi-square = 34.490 *df* = 2 *p* ≤ .001

As shown in table 24, those in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 1<sup>st</sup> police patrol districts were most likely to feel that police do a good job preventing crime in their neighborhood (84.3 percent, 76

Table 24. *Perception that Police Do a Good Job Preventing Crime in the Neighborhood by District (N =1,181)*

<b>Patrol District</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	71.2	28.8
2 <sup>nd</sup>	84.3	15.7
3 <sup>rd</sup>	76.0	24.0
4 <sup>th</sup>	63.8	36.2
5 <sup>th</sup>	60.5	39.5
6 <sup>th</sup>	62.4	37.6
7 <sup>th</sup>	59.6	40.4

Chi-square = 53.672 *df* = 6 *p* ≤ .001

percent and 71.2 percent, respectively). The lowest ratings came from those residing in the 7<sup>th</sup> (59.6 percent) and 5<sup>th</sup> districts (60.5 percent).

On the issue of police doing a good job controlling drug activity in the neighborhood, again those in the lowest crime rate areas (see Table 25) believed that police do a good job (82.6%). When reviewing this topic for police patrol districts (see Table 26), those in the 2<sup>nd</sup> district were far more likely to believe that he police do a good job controlling drug activity (88.7 percent) as compared to all others (ranging from 43.8 percent to 65.1 percent).

Table 25. Perception that Police Do a Good Job Controlling Drug Activity by Crime Rate (N = 1,089)

Crime Rate	Agree	Disagree
High	53.8	46.2
Medium	48.3	51.7
Low	82.6	17.4

Chi-square = 98.559 *df* = 2 *p* ≤ .001

Table 26. Perception that Police Do a Good Job Controlling Drug Activity by District (N = 1,089)

Patrol District	Agree	Disagree
1 <sup>st</sup>	56.6	43.4
2 <sup>nd</sup>	88.7	11.3
3 <sup>rd</sup>	65.1	34.9
4 <sup>th</sup>	43.8	56.3
5 <sup>th</sup>	48.2	51.8
6 <sup>th</sup>	48.5	51.5
7 <sup>th</sup>	49.1	50.9

Chi-square = 139.380 *df* = 6 *p* ≤ .001

While most respondents believed that police care about problems in their neighborhoods, those in low (82.6 percent) and high (76.4 percent) crime areas were somewhat more likely than those in medium (70.3 percent) crime areas to feel that way as shown in Table 27. Finally, this perception that police care about neighborhood problems was least prevalent in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> districts respectively (54.7 percent and 67.2 percent) as compared to all others, with the highest rating again in the 2<sup>nd</sup> district (87.2) as demonstrated in Table 28.

Table 27. *Perception that Police Care about Problems in the Neighborhood by Crime Rate (N = 1,126)*

Crime Rate	Agree	Disagree
High	76.4	23.6
Medium	70.3	29.7
Low	82.6	17.4

Chi-square = 14.536  $df = 2$   $p \leq .001$

Table 28. *Perception that Police Care about Problems in the Neighborhood by District (N = 1,126)*

Patrol District	Agree	Disagree
1 <sup>st</sup>	81.3	18.7
2 <sup>nd</sup>	87.2	12.8
3 <sup>rd</sup>	75.6	24.4
4 <sup>th</sup>	70.7	29.3
5 <sup>th</sup>	72.3	27.7
6 <sup>th</sup>	67.2	32.8
7 <sup>th</sup>	54.7	45.3

Chi-square = 47.942  $df = 6$   $p \leq .001$

Respondent Attitudes Toward Police Officers in the MPD

The survey included a series of questions to assess the general public’s perceptions of police officer behavior in the Metropolitan Police Department. We asked survey respondents about the degree to which officers in the department are honest, and whether respondents had mutual respect for officers in the MPD.

In general, a majority of respondents (85.3 percent) felt that officers in the department were either “very honest” or “somewhat honest”. However, these views differed substantially according to racial background (see Table 29), with minorities having a more negative view of honesty among officers. While only 8.4 percent of white respondents viewed police officers as being “dishonest” or “very dishonest”, 22 percent of Hispanic and 18 percent of black respondents held similar views about the police. Similar proportions were observed when examining the racial composition of respondent neighborhoods.

This study shows a significant improvement over the state of affairs from ten years ago and as compared to the nationwide poll of the same period as shown on the chart following Table 29.

Table 29. *Perceptions Regarding MPD Officers’ Honesty by Race* (N = 1,003)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Very Honest</b>	<b>Somewhat Honest</b>	<b>Dishonest</b>	<b>Very Dishonest</b>
White	22.6	69.0	7.2	1.2
Black	13.2	68.8	14.0	4.0
Hispanic	25.0	52.8	19.4	2.8
Asian	0.0	90.9	9.1	0.0
Other	17.5	55.6	20.6	6.3

Chi-square = 42.285 *df* = 12 *p* ≤ .001

**Comparison of results of honesty, integrity, and ethical standards for MPD officers, and officers nationally**

<i>Race</i>	<i>This study*</i>	<i>Washington Post Poll 1993**<sup>13</sup></i>	<i>Nationwide Gallup Poll 1993***</i>
White	92%	53%	53%
Black	82%	45%	28%

\*those saying MPD officers are somewhat or very honest

\*\*those saying MPD officers have good or excellent honesty and integrity

\*\*\*those rating police as high or very high on honesty and ethical standards

Table 30 reveals that respondents living in areas with predominately black and mixed race households were more likely to view police as dishonest (20.3 percent and 14.7 percent respectively) compared to a mere 7 percent among respondents living in predominately white neighborhoods.

Table 30. *Perceptions of MPD Officers' Honesty by Neighborhood Type* (N = 1,028)

<b>Neighborhood Race</b>	<b>Very Honest</b>	<b>Somewhat Honest</b>	<b>Dishonest</b>	<b>Very Dishonest</b>
Black	15.4	64.3	16.5	3.8
White	19.4	73.5	6.5	0.6
Mixed	18.6	66.7	11.0	3.7

Chi-square = 26.165 *df* = 6 *p* ≤ .001

When asked about the degree of respect they had for officers in MPD, the majority of respondents (93 percent) indicated having “a lot” or “some” respect for police officers (see Table 31). This finding is comparable to that of a national Gallup poll conducted in 2000 which found that about 90% of respondents had respect for the police. Nonetheless, there were a notably minority of respondents who had “some” or “a lot” of disrespect for officers. Over a quarter of

<sup>13</sup> 1993 was the year in which there were several highly-publicized negative events associated with MPD officers which could have accounted for the low ratings of honesty and integrity that year.

Table 31. *Level of Respect for Police by Race* (N = 1,203)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Lot of Respect</b>	<b>Somewhat Respect</b>	<b>Some Disrespect</b>	<b>Lot of Disrespect</b>
White	37.0	57.9	4.3	0.8
Black	36.7	54.5	5.5	3.3
Hispanic	50.0	42.5	2.5	5.0
Asian	7.7	69.2	15.4	7.7
Other	30.1	61.6	1.4	6.8

Chi-square = 30.486 *df*=12 *p* ≤ .01

Asian respondents indicated no respect for officers compared to 8.8 percent black, 8.2 percent other race and 7.5 percent Hispanic respondents who shared a similar view of officers.

In addition to the general statements eliciting overall perceptions of officers in the MPD, respondents were asked whether they thought MPD had a racially diverse group of officers working in the department. Overall, more than half (53.9 percent) of the respondents felt that MPD had sufficient racial diversity among officers with minorities more pessimistic than whites (see Table 32). Three quarters of Asians, 58.3 percent of Hispanics, and 54.3 percent of blacks felt there were not enough officers of different races were working in the department.

#### General Perceptions of Disparate Police Practices

Respondents were asked a series of questions designed to elicit their perception on whether: 1) residents who are non-white or white, or poor or middle-class, make a difference in



Table 32. *Belief that there is Sufficient Diversity by Race* (N = 958)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	65.3%	34.7%
Black	45.7	54.3
Hispanic	41.7	58.3
Asian	25.0	75.0
Other	54.1	*45.9

Chi-square = 38.989  $df = 4$   $p \leq .001$

the treatment they receive from the police and, 2) investigations of police misconduct are conducted in an unbiased manner. The results are presented below.

On the matter of whether or not respondents felt that MPD officers treat everyone equally when enforcing traffic laws, 64.3 percent of respondents felt that police were more likely to stop people who are not white for a traffic violation than people who are white. These views differed substantially according to the respondent's racial background (see Table 33), with about 72 percent of blacks, 68 percent Hispanic and 66 percent other race respondents saying that police are more likely to stop non-whites. Of particular interest, over half (55 percent) of white respondents also felt police did not treat people equally with respect to traffic enforcement.

Table 33. *Belief that Police are More Likely to Stop Non-Whites For Traffic Violations by Race* (N = 961)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	55.0%	45.0%
Black	71.9	28.1
Hispanic	67.6	32.4
Asian	58.3	41.7
Other	66.1	33.9

Chi-square = 26.759  $df = 4$   $p \leq .001$

Respondents also perceived differential police conduct with respect to situations in which force is used by police. A majority (65 percent) of the respondents indicated that police are more likely to use force against people who are poor than against those who are not poor. Table 34 demonstrates that while 55 percent of white respondents felt that police were more likely to use force against the poor, higher percentages subscribe to this view among minority respondents (between the ranges of 70 to 73 percent for Asian, other race, and black respondents; and about 64 percent for Hispanic respondents).

Table 34. *Belief that Police are More Likely to Use Force Against the Poor by Race* (N = 988)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	55.0%	45.0%
Black	72.8	27.2
Hispanic	63.6	36.4
Asian	70.0	30.0
Other	71.2	28.8

Chi-square = 32.071  $df = 4$   $p \leq .001$

Similar proportions were also found with respect to whether police were more likely to use force against people who are not white than against whites (see Table 35). While about 74 and 71 percent of black and Hispanic respondents, respectively, feel that police are more prone to use force against non-whites, only 50 percent of Asian and nearly 58 percent of white respondents shared this viewpoint of the police.

This finding is consistent with other research indicating that police are significantly more likely to use force against citizens in black or racially mixed communities than in white communities (Smith, 1986). In addition to the general view that police practices tend to

discriminate against people of color and poor people, respondents also expressed reservations as to whether police can effectively police themselves.

Table 35. *Belief That Police Are More Likely To Use Force Against Non-Whites By Race* (N = 979)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	57.8%	42.3%
Black	73.8	26.2
Hispanic	71.1	28.9
Asian	50.0	50.0
Other	65.1	34.9

Chi-square = 26.731  $df = 4$   $p \leq .001$

When asked whether investigations of police misconduct are conducted in a fair manner, 67 percent of all respondents felt that investigations were biased in favor of the police. With respect to respondents' race/ethnicity, about 82 percent of Asians, 75 percent of blacks, 72 percent other race and 66 percent of Hispanics agreed that investigations were biased compared to 56 percent of white respondents (see Table 36)

Table 36. *Belief that Investigations of Police Misconduct are Biased in Favor of the Police by Race* (N = 936)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	56.1%	43.9%
Black	75.3	24.7
Hispanic	65.6	34.4
Asian	81.8	18.2
Other	72.4	27.6

Chi-square = 36.689  $df = 4$   $p \leq .001$

In sum, a majority of most respondents believe that police treat minorities and poor people differently than whites or those whom are not poor. Moreover, most respondents also believe that investigations of police misconduct are conducted in a biased manner that favors the police. While the racial differences in interpretations of police practices are consistent with previous research (Decker, 1991; Smith, et al., 1991) showing that a higher percentage of minorities express more negative attitudes toward police, it is somewhat surprising that the majority of white respondents shared similar interpretations of general police practices. One possible explanation for why a majority of white respondents were inclined to agree that police treat people differently and that investigations of misconduct tend to favor the police may be related to their exposure to various media coverage concerning issues on racial profiling and high-profile cases of misconduct by police (i.e., incidents of police use of excessive force).

#### *The Quality of Citizen Encounters with MPD Police*

Citizens initiate contact with the police for a variety of reasons, such as to report crimes, emergencies, suspicious persons and other events. However, contacts between citizens and police are not only the result of actions taken by the public. Police also initiate contact with citizens for a variety of reasons. Two important ways that the police initiate contact with citizens are by pulling individuals over while driving and stopping them on the street while out walking or standing in a public area.

The survey included a series of questions for respondents who had direct encounters with MPD officers. Specifically, respondents were asked whether, in the past year, they had: 1) been stopped by an MPD officer while driving; 2) been stopped by an MPD officer while standing or walking in a public area in the DC metropolitan area; and 3) called the MPD to report a problem in their neighborhood or home. For each type of encounter, respondents were asked to assess

their satisfaction with the performance of the officer(s) involved in the encounter. The key findings are summarized below.

*Stopped While Driving*

Overall, about 13 percent of the respondents indicated having been stopped by an MPD officer while driving within the past year. There were no significant differences in the percentages among the respondents with respect to race/ethnicity—13 percent for both white and black respondents. Significant differences, however, were present when examining the gender of the respondents with 16 percent of males being stopped while driving compared to 10.8 percent females ( $p \leq .01$ ). While this study did not reveal racial differences in stops, a U.S. Department of Justice study conducted nationally in 1999 revealed that 12.3% of Blacks versus 10.4% of whites reported being stopped by police while driving.

Table 37 presents the results of being stopped while driving by the respondents reported socio-economic status. As indicated in the table, there was substantial variation between respondents in the lower and higher socio-economic status. While 5.3 percent of respondents

Table 37. *Stopped While Driving by Household Income*

Household Income	No	Yes	Total
Less 10K	72 (94.7%)	4 (5.3%)	76 (100.0%)
10K to 25K	107 (87.0)	16 (13.0)	123 (100.0)
25K to 60K	268 (88.4)	35 (11.6)	303 (100.0)
Over 60K	379 (83.8)	73 (16.2)	452 (100.0)

Chi-square = 8.182  $df = 3$   $p \leq .05$

with a household income less than \$10,000 indicated being stopped, 16 percent of respondents with incomes over \$60,000 had been stopped by the police in the past year.

With respect to the age of the respondents, overall almost 40 percent of respondents whom had been stopped by police were between the ages of 18 to 34 years old (see Table 38). There were sizable disparities between respondents aged 18 to 24 years old who were stopped and respondents aged 25 to 34 years old. For example, almost 23 percent of respondents 18 to 24 years were stopped while driving compared to about 16 percent of respondents aged 25 to 34 years old. Furthermore, whereas almost 40 percent of younger drivers (18-34 years old) had been stopped in the past year, just 21 percent of those age 55 and older had been and that number is even lower for those 65 and over (<10 percent).

An additional question was asked of respondents who indicated being stopped while driving to ascertain the number of times they had been stopped within the past year. An overwhelming majority of the respondents (72.8 percent) indicated being stopped only once during the past year, while 15.2 percent were stopped twice and 12 percent reported being stopped 3 or more times. An examination by the race/ethnicity of respondents and the number of times stopped while driving revealed significant differences (see Table 39). Three-quarters of

Table 38. *Respondent Stopped While Driving By Age* (N = 1,152)

Age	No	Yes	Total
18-24 years	61 (77.2%)	18 (22.8%)	79 (100.0%)
25-34 years	228 (84.4)	42 (15.6)	270 (100.0)
35-44 years	226 (86.3)	36 (13.7)	262 (100.0)
45-54 years	153 (85.0)	27 (15.0)	180 (100.0)
55-64 years	138 (87.9)	19 (12.1)	157 (100.0)
65-74 years	99 (96.1)	4 (3.9)	103 (100.0)
75 years +	96 (95.0)	5 (5.0)	101 (100.0)

Chi-square = 22.309 *df* = 6 *p* ≤ .001

Table 39. *Number of Times Stopped in the Past Year by Race (N = 157)*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Once</b>	<b>2 Times</b>	<b>3 or more</b>
White	82.6%	13.0%	4.3%
Black	66.2	16.9	16.9
Hispanic	25.0	0.0	75.0
Asian	100.0	0.0	0.0
Other	72.7	18.2	9.1

Chi-square = 22.294 *df* = 8 *p* ≤ .01

Hispanic and almost 17 percent of black respondents reported being stopped 3 or more times compared to 9 percent for other race and only 4.3 percent of white respondents<sup>14</sup>. Moreover, responses differed according to the age of respondents. For example, 38.9 percent of respondents aged 18 to 24 years were stopped 3 or more times compared to 7.3 percent and 8.6 percent for those aged 25-34 and 35-44 years old, respectively.

To assess the quality of the police encounter, respondents indicating being stopped by the police were asked additional questions detailing the experience. The following analyses are only for those respondents indicating that they were stopped while driving by an MPD officer.

In response to the question of whether the individual felt that the police officer was justified in stopping them, there were no significant differences in the percentages with respect to the race/ethnicity of respondents. In fact, 67.3 percent of respondents felt the officer was justified in stopping them. A large majority of white respondents (71.2 percent) thought the

<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that while the results seem to suggest that blacks, Hispanics and other race residents were more likely to be subjected to multiple stops within the past year—it does not necessarily imply that MPD officers are actively engaged in racial profiling practices. Further analyses outside the scope of the present survey would be needed to accurately assess the issue of racial profiling.

officers' action was justified, compared to 67 percent of black respondents and half of the Hispanic respondents.

When asked whether the stop resulted in the respondent receiving a traffic citation (ticket), verbal warning or something else from the officer—about 52 percent of the respondents indicated that the stop resulted in a verbal warning from the officer. Twenty-eight percent of the respondents received a ticket and only 11.5 percent indicated that the stop resulted in no action from the officer. Sizable disparities were observed when examining the consequence of being stopped by an officer with respect to the race/ethnicity of respondents. Table 40 reveals that a large majority of white respondents (63.8 percent) reportedly received a verbal warning from the officer compared to 42 and 45 percent of black and other race respondents, respectively.

Table 40. *Outcomes of Stop by Race* (N = 157)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Nothing</b>	<b>Warning</b>	<b>Ticket</b>	<b>Something Else<sup>a</sup></b>
White	4.3%	63.8%	31.9%	0.0%
Black	16.9	42.3	25.4	15.5
Hispanic	25.0	0.0	25.0	50.0
Asian	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Other	18.2	45.5	27.3	9.1

Chi-square = 30.884  $df = 12$   $p \leq .01$

<sup>a</sup>Arrested (2 individuals), talked to and let go (2 individuals), identification check (2 individuals), brought into the station, road block, seat belt check, cursed at, and took car away.

On the other hand, white respondents were more likely to have received a ticket (31.9 percent) as a result of the stop than among black (25.4 percent) and other race (27.3 percent) respondents. Of particular interest are those instances when the officer stopped respondents and, based on the discretion of the officer, no action was taken. While it is unknown why the officer initiated the stop (i.e., observed a traffic violation), 18 percent of other race respondents and



about 17 percent of black respondents indicated that the stop resulted in no enforcement action by the officer.

When asked about the officers’ demeanor, most respondents described the officer who stopped them as either “very” or “somewhat” polite (68.7 percent), and an even greater majority characterized the officer as either “very” or “somewhat” professional<sup>15</sup> (78.8 percent) during the course of the encounter. Table 41 presents the descriptions of the officers’ demeanor by the race/ethnicity of respondents. Hispanic and other race respondents were more likely to describe the officer as either “somewhat” or “very” impolite (75 percent and 45.5 percent, respectively) compared to black (35.2 percent) and white (21.7 percent) respondents who were critical of the demeanor of the officer.

Table 41. *Officer Demeanor in Stops by Race* (N = 157)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Very Polite</b>	<b>Somewhat Polite</b>	<b>Somewhat Impolite</b>	<b>Very Impolite</b>
White	42.0%	36.2%	13.0%	8.7%
Black	33.8	31.0	16.9	18.3
Hispanic	0.0	25.0	25.0	50.0
Asian	0.0	50.0	0.0	50.0
Other	45.5	9.1	45.5	0.0

Chi-square = 21.296 *df* = 12 *p* ≤ .05

Additionally, respondents were asked whether they thought that extralegal factors (e.g. type of neighborhood, type of car respondent was driving, race of respondent, and race of the officer) might have played an important role in their being stopped by the officer. The survey

<sup>15</sup> Analyses conducted on whether the officer could be described as very professional, somewhat professional, somewhat unprofessional or very unprofessional revealed no significant differences with respect to the demographics of the respondents.

findings pertaining to the respondents’ assessment of those extralegal factors are discussed in the following section.

Table 42 presents the results by race/ethnicity for whether the type of neighborhood the respondent was driving in played a role in being stopped. As indicated in the table, minority respondents were more likely to feel that the type of neighborhood played an important role—75 percent of Hispanic, 56 percent of black and other race respondents. In contrast, nearly 31 percent of white respondents felt that the type of neighborhood played a role.

Table 42. *Perception that Type of Neighborhood Played a Role in Stop by Race* (N = 148)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	30.8%	69.2%
Black	55.9	44.1
Hispanic	75.0	25.0
Asian	50.0	50.0
Other	55.6	44.4

Chi-square = 10.437 *df* = 4 *p* ≤ .05

These views differed substantially according to the respondents’ age (see Table 43), with younger aged respondents (18 to 34 years old) agreeing that the type of neighborhood played an important role. Moreover, female respondents (54.3 percent) were more likely to view the type of neighborhood as a factor compared to male respondents (38.2 percent).

Survey participants were also asked whether they felt that the type of car they were driving was a contributing factor in them being stopped by the police. Overall, about 79 percent of the respondents felt that the type of car they were driving played no role in being stopped by

Table 43. *Belief that Type of Neighborhood Played a Role in Stop by Age* (N = 139)

<b>Age</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
18-24 years	77.8%	22.2%
25-34 years	53.8	46.2
35-44 years	35.3	64.7
45-54 years	38.5	61.5
55-64 years	50.0	60.0
65-74 years	33.3	66.7
75 years +	0.0	100.0

Chi-square = 14.264 *df* = 6 *p* ≤ .05

the police. However, with respect to the respondents' race/ethnicity—half of Hispanic and almost 31 percent of black respondents indicated that the car they were driving was a contributing factor in being stopped by the police (see Table 44) compared to only 10 percent of

Table 44. *Belief that Type of Car Driven Played Role in Stop by Race* (N = 151)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	10.4%	89.6%
Black	30.9	69.1
Hispanic	50.0	50.0
Asian	0.0	100.0
Other	20.0	80.0

Chi-square = 10.988 *df* = 4 *p* ≤ .05

white respondents. There were sizable disparities between respondents' aged 18 to 34 years old and older respondents who felt the type of car was a factor. For example, 65 percent of

respondents 18 to 34 years agreed that the type of car contributed to their stop compared to 35 percent among older respondents (see Table 45). It should be noted that these findings are difficult to interpret without knowing whether the initial reason for the stop was related to the condition of the car (e.g., equipment violation) or to a specific model of the respondents' car (i.e., luxury car).

*Table 45. Belief that Type of Car Driven Played a Role in Stop by Age (N = 142)*

<b>Age</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
18-24 years	35.3%	64.7%
25-34 years	34.1	65.9
35-44 years	11.4	88.6
45-54 years	8.3	91.7
55-64 years	31.3	68.8
65-74 years	0.0	100.0
75 years +	0.0	100.0

Chi-square = 13.577 *df* = 6 *p* ≤ .05

To examine whether respondents felt the stop might have been a result of racial profiling by the officer, they were asked if their race played an important role in being stopped by the police. Overall, a substantial minority of respondents (26.3 percent) felt that race was a contributing factor in being stopped. Table 46 presents the result by race/ethnicity of respondents stopped by the police. As indicated in the table, 50 percent of Hispanic and 40 percent of black respondents were likely to agree that their race played an important role compared to almost 11 percent of white respondents. The view that race was a factor in being stopped differed

Table 46. *Belief that Race Played a Role in Stop by Race* (N = 152)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	10.8%	89.2%
Black	40.0	60.0
Hispanic	50.0	50.0
Asian	0.0	100.0
Other	27.3	72.7

Chi-square = 16.739 *df* = 4 *p* ≤ .01

substantially according to the age of the respondents (see Table 47), with younger respondents (18 to 34 years old) agreeing that their race was a factor (62 percent). While older respondents were more likely to disagree that race influenced the officers' decision to stop them.

Table 47. *Belief that Race Played Role in Stop by Age* (N = 143)

<b>Age</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
18-24 years	55.6%	44.4%
25-34 years	32.5	67.5
35-44 years	17.6	82.4
45-54 years	11.5	88.5
55-64 years	31.3	68.8
65-74 years	0.0	100.0
75 years +	0.0	100.0

Chi-square = 16.552 *df* = 6 *p* ≤ .01

When asked for their views on whether the race of the officer played an important role in their being stopped, respondents were generally less inclined to believe that the officer's race was a factor (18.1 percent). With respect to the respondents' race/ethnicity, 75 percent of

Hispanic, 27 percent of black, and 18 percent of other race respondents thought that the race of the officer contributed to their being stopped, compared to 6.2 percent of white respondents (see Table 48).

Table 48. *Belief that Officer's Race Played a Role in Stop by Race* (N = 149)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
White	6.2%	93.8%
Black	26.9	73.1
Hispanic	75.0	25.0
Asian	0.0	100.0
Other	18.2	81.8

Chi-square = 18.892 *df* = 4 *p* ≤ .01

There were, once again, substantial disparities between the views of respondents based on age (see Table 49). For example, 65 percent of respondents, who thought the officer's race

Table 49. *Belief that Officer's Race Played a Role by Age* (N = 140)

<b>Age</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
18-24 years	47.1%	52.9%
25-34 years	18.4	81.6
35-44 years	11.4	88.6
45-54 years	8.0	92.0
55-64 years	25.0	75.0
65-74 years	0.0	100.0
75 years +	0.0	100.0

Chi-square = 15.046 *df* = 6 *p* ≤ .01

contributed to the stop were between the ages of 18 and 34 years old compared to almost 45 percent of older respondents.

Finally, respondents were asked whether they were treated fairly by the police as a result of the stop. Overall, less than a quarter (24.2 percent) of the respondents who were stopped believed that the police treated them unfairly. No significant differences were found with respect to the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Such a finding would suggest that respondents overall tended to be satisfied, or at least not dissatisfied, with the contact they had with the MPD police officer(s).

*Stopped While Walking or Standing*

Respondents were asked whether, in the past year, they had been stopped by a MPD officer while standing or walking in a public area within the DC area. Overall, 5.3 percent of all respondents indicated that they had at least one direct encounter with the police in that manner. Over half (51.6 percent) of those respondents reported being stopped by the police one time during the past year, while 21 percent reported being stopped twice and 27.4 percent had been stopped 3 or more times in the past year.

The proportion of respondents stopped while walking or standing differed substantially according to their racial background (see Table 50), with 14.7 percent and 5.6 percent of other

Table 50. *Stops by MPD Officer While Standing/Walking by Race (N = 1,218)*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
White	96.3%	3.7%
Black	94.4	5.6
Hispanic	97.6	2.4
Asian	100.0	0.0

Other	85.3	14.7
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Chi-square = 17.627 *df* = 4 *p* ≤ .001

race and blacks, respectively, having been stopped, compared to 3.7 percent of white and 2.4 percent of Hispanic respondents. Although the majority of the respondents (53.3 percent) indicated that the stop occurred within 5 blocks of their home, there was no significant difference in the percentages with respect to the racial composition of the respondents' neighborhoods.

Sizable disparities were also apparent when examining the gender and age of the respondents. As one might expect, males (9.3 percent) were more likely than females (2.7 percent) to report being stopped by police while walking or standing (see Table 51). Conversely, of those who had been stopped—respondents between the ages of 18 to 44 years old (77 percent) were also more likely to report being stopped by the police than among older respondents. Table 52 reveals that the majority of respondents who were stopped are between the ages of 18 to 24

Table 51. *Stops by MPD Officers While Standing/Walking by Sex (N = 1,216)*

Sex	No	Yes
Male	90.7%	9.3%
Female	97.3	2.7

Chi-square = 25.477 *df* = 1 *p* ≤ .001

Table 52. *Stops by MPD Officers While Standing/Walking by Age (N = 1,156)*

Age	No	Yes
18-24 years	83.8%	16.3%
25-34 years	94.5	5.5
35-44 years	92.8	7.2
45-54 years	95.0	5.0
55-64 years	98.7	1.3
65-74 years	99.0	1.0



75 years +	98.0	2.0
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Chi-square = 32.424  $df = 6$   $p \leq .001$

years old (16.3 percent), 5.5 percent are between 25 to 34 years and 7.2 percent between the ages of 35 to 44 years old.

Regarding the question of whether respondents felt that the officer had a legitimate reason for the stop, 39 percent of respondents who reported being stopped felt that the officer was justified in his/her decision to stop them. There were no significant differences in the percentages among respondents with respect to race/ethnicity or age. An examination by gender, however, revealed a substantial difference—females (72.2 percent) were more likely to feel the officers’ action was justified compared to only 24.4 percent of male respondents sharing the same viewpoint (see Table 53).

Table 53. *Belief that Officer was Justified in Making Stop by Sex (N = 63)*

Sex	No	Yes
Males	75.6%	24.4%
Females	27.8	72.2

Chi-square = 12.445  $df = 1$   $p \leq .001$

Although it cannot be determined whether the officer indeed had a legitimate reason for stopping respondents, it is interesting that such a small minority of them perceived that the stop was legitimate. Perhaps the behavior of the officer during the encounter (i.e., approaching respondent in a professional manner) influenced the perceptions of the respondents who were stopped. As previously discussed in the results relating to being stopped while driving, respondents were also asked to assess the behavior of the officer during the encounter. The findings are presented in the following section.

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Overall, 61.4 percent of the respondents indicated that the officer was “very” or “somewhat” polite when stopping them while walking or standing in a public place. More important, the same proportion (61.4 percent) of respondents felt that the officer acted in a “very” or “somewhat” professional manner during the encounter. Yet, well over half (56.1 percent) of the respondents felt that the officer behaved in an “unfriendly” or “very unfriendly” manner—with males significantly more likely to share this view in comparison to female respondents. Moreover, 51.8 percent of the respondents also felt that the officers’ behavior was, at some point during the encounter, “inappropriate”—again, with males significantly more likely to view the officers’ action as “inappropriate” in comparison to females. A possible explanation for the apparent gender differences in the perceived behavior of the officer may be related to the behavioral patterns exhibited by male respondents. For example, it could be that males are more likely to congregate on streets and in public places or act in a rowdy manner thus raising the suspicion on the part of the police officer. As a consequence, the officers’ behavior may be based on the suspicious nature that initiated the encounter as opposed to actually exhibiting “inappropriate” conduct towards the respondent.

#### *Calling the Police to Report a Problem*

Thus far, the results have described respondents’ experiences and perceptions with MPD officers during encounters that were initiated by the police officer. But contact with the police can also be the result of citizen-initiated contact. Citizens contact the police for a variety of reasons—they call the police for protection, service or assistance. As a consequence, the police may play a more supportive role in citizen-initiated contacts as opposed to police-initiated stops that imply some degree of suspicion on the part of the police. To examine respondents’ experiences and perceptions during citizen-initiated contacts, the survey included a series of

questions regarding whether, within the past year, they had called the police to report a problem in their home or neighborhood. The results are presented below.

The survey revealed that within the past year, 36.2 percent of respondents had called the MPD to report a problem in their home or neighborhood. This is fairly consistent with findings from several years ago in D.C. and in other jurisdictions as shown below.

***Calls for service (LEMAS, 1999)***

<b>City</b>	<b>Ratio of calls for service to population</b>
Washington, D.C.	34%
Baltimore, MD	39%
Cleveland, OH	38%

There were no significant differences in the percentages with respect to respondents' race or sex. However, significant differences were found when examining the racial composition of the respondents' neighborhood, respondents' household income levels and age of respondent. Table 54 shows that respondents living in predominately black or mixed race household neighborhoods were more likely to have called the police (37.9 percent and 41 percent, respectively) than those who live in predominately white neighborhoods (29.3 percent). Moreover, sizable disparities

Table 54. *Called to Report a Problem in Past Year by Neighborhood Type (N = 1,254)*

<b>Neighborhood Race</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Black	62.1%	37.9%
White	70.7	29.3
Mixed	59.0	41.0

Chi-square = 13.277 *df* = 2 *p* ≤ .001

were apparent based on the respondents' reported household income (see Table 55), with those in higher income brackets more likely to have called the police. Almost 42 percent of respondents

Table 55. *Called to Report a Problem in Past Year by Income* (N = 956)

<b>Household Income</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Less than 10K	80.3%	19.7%
10K to 25K	71.0	29.0
25K to 60K	65.0	35.0
Over 60K	58.1	41.9

Chi-square = 18.315  $df = 3$   $p \leq .001$

with household incomes over \$60K and 35 percent of respondents with incomes between \$25K-60K called to report a problem compared to 29 percent of respondents with incomes between \$10K-25K and only 19.7 percent of respondents with incomes less than \$10K. Finally, substantial differences existed with respect to the age of respondents who called the police (see Table 56) with younger respondents being more likely to call in comparison to older respondents.

Table 56. *Called to Report a Problem in Past Year by Age* (N = 1,155)

<b>Age</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
18-24 years	67.1%	32.9%
25-34 years	64.1	35.9
35-44 years	58.0	42.0
45-54 years	58.1	41.9
55-64 years	60.3	39.7

65-74 years	75.0	25.0
75 years +	82.0	18.0

Chi-square = 27.687 *df* = 6 *p* ≤ .001

Respondents who called the police and had an officer actually show up in response to the problem were asked to indicate 1) the amount of time it took for the police to arrive; 2) whether the time of their arrival met their expectations (i.e., faster or slower than expected); and 3) whether the respondent was satisfied with the amount of time the police took to assist them<sup>16</sup>. Nearly 77 percent of respondents indicated that the police arrived either in “less than 15 minutes” or “within 15-30 minutes”. There were significant differences in the percentages between male and female respondents—with females (24.3 percent) more likely to indicate a later arrival of an officer (e.g., 30-45 minutes or longer) in comparison to 21.6 percent of male respondents indicating a late arrival of an officer (see Table 57). When queried as to whether the respondent

Table 57. *Response Time by Sex* (N =249)

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Less 15 min</b>	<b>15-30 min</b>	<b>30-45 min</b>	<b>More 45 min</b>
Males	44.3%	34.0%	4.1%	17.5%
Females	46.1	29.6	13.8	10.5

Chi-square = 8.136 *df* = 3 *p* ≤ .05

expected a faster or slower response from the police, 27 percent felt the police responded faster than expected and 24.2 percent indicated the response was slower than expected.

<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that the interviewer also asked whether an officer came to assist the respondents after calling. An overwhelming majority of the respondents who called the police (60.4 percent) indicated that an officer did show up in response to the call. However, further analyses resulted in no significant difference among the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

With respect to whether the respondent was satisfied with the arrival time of the police, the survey found that the majority of respondents who called the police (81 percent) were either “somewhat satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the police response. However, substantial differences were apparent when examining the neighborhood racial composition of the respondents ( $p \leq .05$ )—with 90.3 percent of respondents living in predominately white neighborhoods, 81 percent in black neighborhoods and 77.2 percent in mixed neighborhoods feeling “somewhat” or “very” satisfied. Nonetheless, this leaves a notable minority of respondents, in particular those living in black (19 percent) and mixed race (22.9 percent) neighborhoods, which were dissatisfied with the time it took for the police to arrive and assist in their problem. Unfortunately, the survey did not provide respondents with the opportunity to either indicate the reason why they called the police or to offer an explanation for why they felt dissatisfied with the police response. Such information would have been useful in providing additional insights with respect to the nature of the problem that initiated the respondents’ call to the police as it related to police response time and respondents’ satisfaction with the that response.

Among the respondents who indicated that a MPD officer came in response to the call, additional survey items asked about their specific perceptions of officer behavior during the encounter. The majority of respondents (91.7 percent) indicated that the officer was either “polite” or “very polite” to the respondent during the encounter. There were, however, significant differences in the percentages when examining the race/ethnicity of respondents (see Table 58)—with 28.6 percent of other race respondents indicating that the officer was “very”

Table 58. *Officer Politeness During Call Response by Race* (N = 252)

Race/Ethnicity	Very Polite	Somewhat Polite	Somewhat Impolite	Very Impolite
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White	71.2%	22.1%	4.8%	1.9%
Black	59.1	31.8	6.1	3.0
Hispanic	42.9	57.1	0.0	0.0
Asian	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Other	71.4	0.0	0.0	28.6

Chi-square = 28.957  $df = 12$   $p \leq .01$

impolite in contrast to 9.1 percent black and 6.7 percent white respondents who perceived the officer as being either “somewhat” or “very” impolite. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by the Institute for Policy Research Report in 1998 (Skogan, 1999) in which the researcher found that 91% of those contacting the police thought the police were at least somewhat polite.

In terms of whether the respondents felt that the officer behaved in a friendly manner during the encounter, almost 90 percent of the respondents indicated that the officer behaved in a “somewhat” or “very” friendly manner during the encounter. Again, there were disparities in the percentages with respect to race/ethnicity of the respondents (see Table 59). Hispanic (28.6 percent) and other race (28.6 percent) respondents were more likely to perceive the behavior of the officer as being either “somewhat” or “very” unfriendly in comparison to white and black respondents.

Table 59. *Officer Friendliness During Call Response by Race* (N = 247)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Very Friendly</b>	<b>Somewhat Friendly</b>	<b>Somewhat Unfriendly</b>	<b>Very Unfriendly</b>
White	38.0%	53.0%	7.0%	2.0%
Black	42.7	48.1	5.3	3.8

Hispanic	14.3	57.1	28.6	0.0
Asian	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Other	71.4	0.0	0.0	28.6

Chi-square = 28.036  $df = 12$   $p \leq .01$

Thus far, the results seem to suggest that respondents, in general, felt that the responding MPD officer behaved in a polite and friendly manner during the encounter. Politeness and friendliness are important attributes for an officer to display towards citizens when called to assist them with a problem in their home or neighborhood. Equally important is whether the officer performs in a professional manner when interacting with citizens who call the police.

When asked about the professionalism of the officer during the encounter, an overwhelming majority (90.1 percent) of the respondents indicated that they felt the officer behaved in a “somewhat” or “very” professional manner. Again, the perception of professionalism differed substantially according to the race/ethnicity of respondents. Table 60 shows that half of the other race respondents thought the officer behaved in a “somewhat” or “very” unprofessional manner compared to 14.3 percent of Hispanic, 8.8 percent of white and 8.3 percent of black respondents sharing similar perceptions. Moreover, substantial difference existed with respect to the gender of respondents—males (13.6 percent) were more likely to perceive the officer as unprofessional compared to only 7.2 percent of female respondents.

Table 60. *Officer Professionalism During Call Response by Race* (N = 253)

Race/Ethnicity	Very Professional	Somewhat Professional	Somewhat Unprofessional	Very Unprofessional
White	64.1%	27.2%	7.8%	1.0%
Black	63.2	28.6	4.5	3.8
Hispanic	57.1	28.6	14.3	0.0



Asian	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
Other	50.0	0.0	25.0	25.0

Chi-square = 22.880  $df = 12$   $p \leq .05$

Next, respondents were asked whether, at any time during the encounter, they thought the officer’s behavior was inappropriate. Overall, 90.6 percent of the respondents thought the officer acted in an appropriate manner during the course of the encounter. Nonetheless, there were substantial differences of opinion concerning the officers’ behavior with respect to race/ethnicity (see Table 61)—other race (37.5 percent) and black (11.3 percent) respondents were more likely to perceive the behavior as inappropriate compared to 5.8 percent of white respondents.

Table 61. *Officer’s Behavior was Inappropriate During Response by Race* (N = 254)

Race/Ethnicity	No	Yes
White	94.2%	5.8%
Black	88.7	11.3
Hispanic	100.0	0.0
Asian	100.0	0.0
Other	62.5	37.5

Chi-square = 10.462  $df = 4$   $p \leq .05$

An interesting pattern also emerged when examining the respondents’ neighborhood racial composition—all respondents in predominately white neighborhoods felt that the officer acted appropriately, while respondents residing in predominately black or mixed race neighborhoods (14.4 percent and 11 percent, respectively) were more inclined to view the officer’s behavior as inappropriate (See Table 62). Whether this finding is related to differential

Table 62. *Officer's Behavior was Inappropriate During Response by Neighborhood Race (N = 261)*

<b>Neighborhood Race</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Black	85.9%	14.1%
White	100.0	0.0
Mixed	89.0	11.0

Chi-square = 9.181 *df* = 2 *p* ≤ .01

policing practices (i.e., better police services in predominately white areas) is difficult to ascertain without specific information on the nature of the problem(s) that prompted respondents to call the police for assistance.

Finally, in regard to respondents' perceptions of whether the police officer treated them fairly during the course of the encounter, 87.6 percent of all respondents answered in the affirmative. There were no significant differences in the percentages with respect to any of the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

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## *Section 5*

# *Conclusions*

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This study of biased policing in the Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, D.C. attempted to address the issue of bias by looking at perceptions within and outside the police department. While the original study proposed would have more comprehensively addressed the issue of bias by including a stop data collection and analysis program, the data generated from the consumer survey, internal and external focus groups, and analysis of other related data allowed the Police Foundation to objectively address the bias from different perspectives.

It is important to note that the conclusions drawn in this section are based on the data collected in this project during the period of 2002 and 2003, and do not specifically address the historical issues associated with bias in the MPD. The MPD took a proactive stance in attempting to address this issue by establishing a Community-Police Task Force and Employee Committee to help guide the process. Our experience in conducting this study showed a willingness on the part of MPD to examine these critical concerns, and openness toward addressing issues that have been identified.

There are limitations associated with this process that should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results or drawing firm conclusions. First and foremost, there are some groups for which little or no information was obtained, although it was sought. These include the Asian community, business owners, Muslim men, at-risk youth (African American males aged 18-25), and Latino youth. Due to limited resources, not every under-represented group in the city was considered in this process. Additionally, the lack of participation in the focus groups makes it difficult to draw firm conclusions. Also, the elimination of the stop data

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collection and analysis program limited our ability to thoroughly address the issue of disproportionate police stops and searches.

Nevertheless, this study resulted in broad-based input and considerable data and information related to the issues of bias. The results of this work can help to shape policy, inform the development and enhancement of the department's early warning system, identify strategies for improving community outreach and community-police collaboration and trust, and to serve as a benchmark against which to measure subsequent initiatives.

While there is much good news to report from this project, there are some areas that warrant further attention, clarification, and/or improvement. In general, ratings of police services, police honesty, and respect for the police were very high, although ratings did vary somewhat by race. Residents tended to be satisfied with the response time to calls for service and the demeanor of the responding officer.

However, there were a number of differences in perceptions of police and the delivery of services based on race. Indeed, race is one of the strongest predictors of attitudes toward the police (Weitzer, 1999; Weitzer and Tuch, 1999). Overall, the conclusions that can be confidently drawn from this project include:

- Over half of African Americans surveyed and to a lesser extent, Hispanics (40%) felt that there are too few officers working in their neighborhoods. Some community members who participated in focus groups mentioned their desire to see officers in their neighborhoods on foot or bike patrol, and not just in vehicles, as well as more involved with the youth in the community. They feel that this level of interaction will help to improve the relationship and help to better inform the police about the culture, concerns, and issues associated with these communities and/or groups.
- Most survey respondents (71%) felt that the police do a good job preventing crime in their neighborhoods, however, the rating was lowest for Blacks (63%). At the same time, almost half of Blacks and Hispanics reported that police are ineffective in controlling drug activity in their neighborhoods.

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- Most residents surveyed appear to be at least somewhat satisfied with the response time of MPD. More than three-fourths of respondents indicated that police responded to their call in less than 50 minutes and over 75% of the respondents from all neighborhood types (predominantly white, Black, or mixed race) were “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the response time.
  - While 85% of survey respondents felt that MPD officers were “somewhat” or “very honest,” Hispanic (22%) and Black (18%) residents were slightly more likely to have a negative view of officers compared to whites.
  - Most survey respondents also felt that police are more likely to use force against those who are not white or who are poor. Again, these ratings were highest for Blacks (74% and 73%), and Hispanics (71% and 64%). The rates for whites were under 60%.
  - Hispanic drivers were most likely (75%) to find officers who stopped them to be somewhat or very impolite. For those individuals calling the police to report a problem, again Hispanics were significantly more likely (29%) to find officers to be unfriendly as compared to just 9% for white and black residents.
  - Furthermore, there were significant race differences with regard to perceptions about the type of neighborhood playing a role in one’s being stopped by police. 75% of Hispanics felt that the type of neighborhood they were driving in played a role in their being stopped. To a lesser extent, 56% of Blacks also felt this way compared to just 31% of whites. Females also were more likely (54%) to hold this belief than were males (38%).

Some issues were identified that warrant further clarification. While there was some evidence to indicate the following potential issues were of concern, the limited amount of supporting data available in this review suggests the need for further examination.

- The strategies used by MPD to accomplish the goals of community policing and rapid call response may be somewhat unbalanced and not fully integrated. Some officers felt conflicted between their desire to work more in the community and the demand that they focus on responding to calls for service.
- According to information obtained in the employee focus groups, some officers felt that not all community members are fully informed as to what they can expect from the MPD. They currently expect rapid response to calls for service, but also greater involvement in and knowledge about the community and its members.
- Some community members and employees who participated in the focus groups believed that there was not enough positive recognition of officers who demonstrate good performance.

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- Many community members who participated in focus groups felt there is a need for additional training in communication, particularly in working within diverse communities. This includes expanding the department's language capacity as well. However, the majority of officers who participated in employee focus groups indicated that there is not enough supplemental training provided, and access to it is based on favoritism.
  - Those participating in the employee focus groups did not express an overwhelming sense of any systematic race or sex bias. However, there was a solid consensus that favoritism plays a strong role in personnel decisions. Given its consistency with prior research conducted in MPD, it probably has some merit.
  - According to those individuals participating in employee focus groups, the strongest bias appears to be toward civilian (non-sworn) employees.
  - The existence of racial profiling could not be established as outlined below.
    - On the one hand, there were no race differences in whether or not one was stopped, got a ticket during a stop, or was asked to step out of the car during a stop. On the other hand, for those who were stopped, stop frequency did substantially vary by race. For example, 75% of Hispanic residents who reported being stopped by MPD claimed that they had been stopped three or more times during the past year as compared to just 17% of Blacks and 4% of whites.
    - While 64% of those surveyed believed that the police are more prone to stop persons who are not white, overall only 26% of those individuals stopped during the past year felt that their race played a role in their being stopped. However, there were substantial differences in these views based on race as shown below:
      - Black residents felt most strongly that police are more likely to stop non-whites (72%), followed by Hispanics (68%), as compared to just 55% of white residents.
      - Hispanics felt most strongly that their race played a role in being stopped (50%), followed by Blacks (40%), as compared to just 11% of whites. Furthermore, Hispanics are significantly more likely to feel that the officer's race played a role in their being stopped (75%) compared to all other groups (Blacks = 27%, Whites = 6%).
    - Younger respondents (aged 18-34) were more likely to believe that race was a factor in their being stopped (62%).

Given these inconsistencies and the fact that the stop data collection and analysis program was not conducted, it is difficult to draw specific conclusions about the existence or

extent of racial profiling by MPD officers. In any event, the findings do raise additional questions that should be addressed at some point.

The issue of community trust and confidence is critical to successful policing. The post 9/11 environment has given rise to new concerns about racial, ethnic, and even religious profiling. The examination of bias on the part of the MPD demonstrated a willingness to begin to address historical events and concerns in the District of Columbia. It is clear that while many residents have favorable views of the police in the MPD, much work is still necessary to examine the degree to which MPD officers may engage in racial and ethnic profiling and minimize the extent to which bias plays a role within and outside the department. The process of communication and education internally and externally is necessary if the MPD is to fully ensure adherence to civil rights and work to improve the quality of life for all residents of the District of Columbia. The following section details some recommendations for achieving these aims.

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## *Section 6*

# *Recommendations*

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This report of the biased policing project within the Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, D.C. highlighted some of the strengths of the department, as well as some of the areas where improvements are needed. The approach taken by MPD demonstrated a sincere interest in identifying potential biases and coming up with strategies to address them. The establishment of a Community-Police Task Force and Employee Committee was a process of inclusion intended to tap into some of the concerns and issues both within and outside the department. This internal and external analysis resulted in a number of findings that can serve as a benchmark for the MPD in assessing progress over time.

As a result of the broad-based study, a number of recommendations are suggested for continued progress toward achieving the goal of eliminating biased policing in Washington, D.C. These recommendations are outlined below.

### Community Interaction and Outreach

1. Provide additional support to the existing community liaison programs and units for Deaf/Hard of Hearing residents, Hispanics/Latinos, Asians, and Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender communities, and establish a Muslim liaison unit/program as well.
2. Conduct regular meetings within the Asian community (using translators) to identify their concerns and how the MPD could be more effective in addressing their needs and issues.
3. Examine strategies to more effectively balance the demands for responding to calls for service and community policing. Such strategies should focus on the need to be more engaged with the community in order to ensure better community cooperation, support, and understanding of police activities.



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4. Increase the number of officers assigned to bike and foot patrol in African American, Asian, and Hispanic/Latino neighborhoods.
  5. Examine ways in which youth outreach programs and activities could be initiated by MPD and its officers particularly in African American, Asian, and Hispanic/Latino neighborhoods or areas where there are limited youth facilities.
  6. Establish a community drug reduction committee in which neighborhood residents can participate in developing strategies and information geared toward controlling the drug problem in various neighborhoods.
  7. Continue to address issues and implement recommendations associated with Chapter 7 (Police-Community Relations) of the 2002 report entitled “The State of Latinos in the District of Columbia: Trends, Consequences and Recommendations.”

### Employee Development

8. Continue to monitor the effectiveness and sufficiency of the existing diversity training (both academy and in-service) to better address the issues of multiculturalism, cultural differences and representation in Washington and be responsive to the findings of the report on the state of Latinos in the District of Columbia (2002). This training should include more information about the characteristics of under-represented groups such as deaf/hard of hearing; gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals; the mentally ill; the homeless; Muslims and people of Arabic descent; Hispanics and Latinos<sup>17</sup>; and the distinct Asian cultures including Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, Thai, etc.
9. Provide access to team-building skills training for sworn and civilian supervisors so that they can better mediate disputes and foster better working relationships between sworn and civilian personnel. Primarily this should focus on the communications center, but could be expanded to include other units as well.
10. Contract a consultant to examine personnel procedures and practices to ensure greater objectivity and less perceived favoritism in personnel actions such as assignments, promotions (particularly for positions above the Captain level), disciplinary procedures, and access and approval of supplemental training.

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<sup>17</sup> According to the report on the State of Latinos in the District of Columbia (Council of Latino Agencies, 2002), numerous changes have been made to the diversity program in MPD, originally contracted to UDC. In agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, a mandatory Workplace Environment and Diversity Training Program was implemented in 1999 also by UDC, but DOJ demanded a redesigned course. Since that time a one-day course is being conducted by a consulting firm, but there are no other requirements for in-service diversity training. Some criticisms have also been leveled with regard to the training.

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11. Develop a more comprehensive employee recognition program. Community input should be included in this program, and more attention should be paid to outreach efforts made by officers.
  12. Continue to actively recruit Latino and Asian officers and provide support for their career development opportunities in the department.<sup>18</sup>

### Monitoring of Agency Performance

13. Establish a stop data collection program for officers so that the department can monitor patterns of profiling among various units or by individual officers.
14. Incorporate data on stops into the Personnel Performance Management System in order to assess racial profiling of individuals or units.
15. Establish a protocol for conducting a similar study (both consumer survey and focus groups) periodically. We suggest every five years, but no longer than every seven years.
16. Conduct an analysis of adverse impact of the physical abilities test for the years 2001 through 2004 to determine if the prima facie case of adverse impact demonstrated from 1999 and 2000 still exists. If so, contract an expert on physical abilities and test validation to determine whether the physical abilities test is a valid predictor of job performance.
17. Contract an objective review, validation, and possible updating<sup>19</sup> of the Personal History Statement for MPD uniformed positions. The purpose for this review is to determine whether various questions about financial data, arrest (without conviction) history, and other personal information have the potential to be used to discriminate against particular groups of individuals, whether the types of questions have an inherent bias, and how the data is used in decision making.

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<sup>18</sup> It should also be noted that numerous efforts have been made by the department according to the report on the State of Latinos in the District of Columbia (Council of Latino Agencies, 2002). However, that same report indicated that these efforts have been ineffective.

<sup>19</sup> It appears that the MPD continues to use the Personal History Statement developed in 1988. It is unclear whether issues associated with the Americans with Disabilities Act need to be addressed in this document, along with issues related to potential bias against under-represented groups.

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## *Section 7*

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# *Section 8*

# *Appendixes*

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## Employee Committee Criteria

In putting together an employee committee, there are several considerations that must be weighed as follow:

**Resource limitations** -- time is money, and time away from regular police duties puts an undue burden on the department as a whole.

**Time** -- the amount of time spent should be kept to a minimum so as not to unduly effect the deployment of personnel in the field.

**Role** -- each individual must be there for a particular reason. Often times, agencies bring too many people to the table who do not facilitate the accomplishment of project goals.

**Number of staff** -- again, efficiency is the key. While a broad range of input should be solicited and represented, including too many individuals can limit the ability of the group to make decisions and move toward task completion.

**Group composition** – it is extremely important that the group be constructed in such a way as to accomplish its goals, bring credibility and reputability to the work of the group, and to facilitate professional working relationships. At a minimum, the following criteria should be considered:

- ✓ Diversity. The group should be representative in terms of race, ethnicity, sex, age/years of service, education, and rank.
- ✓ Quality of personnel. Only individuals with solid performance records, that have not had disciplinary actions, and are not currently under investigation should be considered. Also, the level of commitment to organizational goals should be assessed where possible.
- ✓ Representative of department. The group should also represent the various areas of the department, either by assignment, geographic area served, or both.

Therefore, in the MPD, we would recommend a group size of 10-12 to possibly include:

- a member of the upper command staff (Deputy Chief, Captain, etc.);
- two sergeants (one administrative and one field);
- a representative from the chief's office (extremely important);
- an internal affairs representative (could be one of the sergeant or upper command persons);
- an Organizational Development representative;
- three to four officers (from various districts);
- someone in the investigative area (major crimes, vice, etc.)
- a non-sworn member.

Once we form the employee-citizen committee, that group should probably include the media/communications director, legal counsel, union representative/leader, neighborhood policing/community policing representative, and others to be jointly determined.



**D.C. METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT  
BIASED POLICING PROJECT**

**SURVEY INSTRUMENT  
DO NOT CIRCULATE**



The Police Foundation is a non-profit research organization based in Washington, D.C. dedicated to improving police services through practical research and technical support. Our address is 1201 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20036. This survey instrument was developed by the Police Foundation in collaboration with the Metropolitan Police Department and a working group of city agencies and civil rights groups in Washington, D.C.

Version 10 (07.07.02)

Hi, my name is [INTERVIEWER NAME]. I'm a researcher calling from a non-profit organization in Washington, D.C. We're interviewing residents in your neighborhood about their opinions and experiences with the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department. It only takes about ten minutes to complete. Your answers would be kept strictly confidential and used only for research purposes. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and would be greatly appreciated. Could I please speak with someone in this household who is at least 18 years old?

**INTERVIEWER: IF NO ONE 18 YEARS OR OLDER IS AVAILABLE, ASK WHEN TO CALL BACK.**

- CONTINUE WITH SURVEY.....(GO TO Q1).....1
- HUNG UP DURING INTRODUCTION.....2
- CALLBACK.....3
- PROBLEMS—LANGUAGE.....4
- REFUSED.....-8

There are many different police agencies working in Washington, D.C., including the Metro Transit, Capitol, and U.S. Park Police. We only want to ask you about your opinions and experiences with the D.C. police, or the MPD. MPD officers usually drive white patrol cars with a red and blue design.

1. How certain are you that you can tell the difference between MPD officers and other types of police officers?

- Very certain.....(GO TO Q2).....1
- Somewhat certain,.....(GO TO Q2).....2
- Somewhat uncertain, or.....3
- Very uncertain?.....4
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

INTERVIEWER: Thank you for your time. This concludes the survey.

2. How often do you see MPD officers in your neighborhood? Would you say you see them...  
**PROBE:** Either in a car or on foot...

- A few times a year,.....(GO TO Q4).....1
- About once a month,.....(GO TO Q4).....2
- About once a week,.....(GO TO Q4).....3
- A few times a week,.....(GO TO Q4).....4
- Every day, or.....5
- Not at all?.....(GO TO Q4).....6
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q4).....-9
- REFUSED.....(GO TO Q4).....-8

3. On a normal day, how many MPD officers do you see in your neighborhood?

- NUMBER OF OFFICERS.....|\_|\_|\_|
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

4. Would you best describe the MPD officers in your neighborhood as... **PROBE:** If you had to choose one, which one would it be?

- Mostly white,.....1
- Mostly black,.....2
- Mostly Hispanic, or.....3
- Mostly Asian?.....4
- OTHER.....5
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

5. In your neighborhood, do you think there are...

- Too many police officers,.....1
- About the right number of police officers, or.....2
- Too few police officers?.....3
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

6. I'm going to read a number of statements. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements about the police in your neighborhood.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
A. The police do a good job preventing crime in your neighborhood.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
B. The police do a good job controlling drug activity in your neighborhood.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
C. The police care about problems in your neighborhood.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
D. The police do a good job enforcing traffic laws in your neighborhood.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
E. The police are good at communicating with residents in your neighborhood.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8

7. Now I'm going to ask you a few general questions about the MPD. Do you think their police officers are...

- Very honest,.....1
- Somewhat honest,.....2
- Somewhat dishonest, or.....3
- Very dishonest?.....4
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

8. Would you say you have...

- A lot of respect for MPD officers,.....1
- Some respect for them,.....2
- Some disrespect for them, or.....3
- A lot of disrespect for them?.....4
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

9. I'm going to read a number of statements. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
A. There are enough officers of different races working for the MPD.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
B. In similar situations, the police are more likely to stop people who are not white for a traffic violation than people who are white.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
C. In similar situations, the police are more likely to use force against people who are poor than against people who are not poor.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
D. In similar situations, the police are more likely to use force against people who are not white than against people who are white.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
E. Investigations of police misconduct are biased in favor of the police.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8

10. Have you ever felt unfairly treated by an MPD officer?

- YES.....1
- NO.....(GO TO Q12).....0
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q12).....-9
- REFUSED.....(GO TO Q12).....-8

11. Do you think this was because of... (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- Your age,.....1
- Gender,.....2
- Race,.....3
- Sexual orientation, or.....4
- Something else? \_\_\_\_\_.....5
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

12. In the past year, since (PRESENT MONTH) of 2001, have you been stopped by an MPD officer while driving in the District of Columbia?

- YES.....1
- NO.....(GO TO Q42).....0
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q42).....-9
- REFUSED. ....(GO TO Q42).....-8

13. In the past year, how many times have you been stopped by an MPD officer while driving in the District of Columbia?

- NUMBER OF STOPS.....|\_|\_|
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

14. Think of the last time you were stopped by an MPD officer while driving in the District of Columbia. What reason did the officer give for stopping you?

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15. Did you think the officer was justified in stopping you?

- YES.....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

16. Where were you stopped? To the best of your knowledge, what was the closest intersection?

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17. Were you stopped within five blocks of your home?

- YES.....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

18. Did you receive...

- A warning.....1
- A ticket, or.....2
- Did something else happen? \_\_\_\_\_3
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

19. How many people were in the car with you when you were stopped?

- NUMBER OF PEOPLE.....|\_|\_|
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

20. How many police officers were present when you were stopped?

- NUMBER OF OFFICERS.....|\_|\_|
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

21. How many police cars showed up?

- CARS.....\_|\_|\_|\_||
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

22. Was the officer you had the most contact with...

- Male, or.....1
- Female?.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

23. Would you say the officer was...
- 20 to 29 years old,.....1
  - 30 to 39,.....2
  - 40 to 49, or.....3
  - Over 49 years old?.....4
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8
24. Would you say the officer was...
- White,.....1
  - Black,.....2
  - Hispanic, or.....3
  - Asian?.....4
  - OTHER \_\_\_\_\_.....5
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8
25. Would you describe this officer as...
- Very polite,.....1
  - Somewhat polite,.....2
  - Somewhat impolite, or.....3
  - Very impolite?.....4
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8



26. Would you describe the officer as...

- Very friendly,.....1
- Somewhat friendly,.....2
- Somewhat unfriendly, or.....3
- Very unfriendly?.....4
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

27. Would you describe the officer as...

- Very professional,.....1
- Somewhat professional,.....2
- Somewhat unprofessional, or.....3
- Very unprofessional?.....4
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

28. At any time did you think the officer's behavior was inappropriate?

- YES.....1
- NO.....(GO TO Q30).....0
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q30).....-9
- REFUSED.....(GO TO Q30).....-8

29. Which of the following did you think were inappropriate...

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
A. The officer's tone of voice?	1	0	-9	-8
B. The officer's comments or remarks?	1	0	-9	-8
C. The officer's facial expressions?	1	0	-9	-8

30. Did you think the officer stood...
- Too close.....1
  - At a comfortable distance, or.....2
  - Too far away from you?.....3
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8
31. Did the officer touch his/her gun at any time?
- YES.....1
  - NO.....0
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8
32. Did the officer touch you at any time?
- YES.....1
  - NO.....(GO TO Q35).....0
  - DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q35).....-9
  - REFUSED.....(GO TO Q35).....-8
33. In what manner, and where on your person, did the officer touch you?
- 
- 
- 
34. Did you think the officer used too much physical force?
- YES.....1
  - NO.....0
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8

35. Did the officer ask you to get out of the car?
- YES.....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
36. Did the officer ask to search the car?
- YES.....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
37. Was the car actually searched?
- YES.....1
- NO.....(GO TO Q39).....0
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q39).....-9
- REFUSED.....(GO TO Q39).....-8
38. Did you think the officer had a legitimate reason to search the car?
- YES.....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

39. I'm going to read a number of statements. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
A. The type of neighborhood you were driving in played an important role in you being stopped.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
B. The type of car you were driving played an important role in you being stopped.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
C. Your race played an important role in you being stopped.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
D. The officer's race played an important role in you being stopped.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8

40. Do you think you were treated fairly by the police?

- YES.....(GO TO Q42).....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

41. Do you think this was because of... (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- Your age,.....1
- Gender,.....2
- Race,.....3
- Sexual orientation, or.....4
- Something else? \_\_\_\_\_.....5
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

42. In the past year, since (PRESENT MONTH) of 2001, have you called the MPD to report a problem in your home or neighborhood?

- YES.....1
- NO.....(GO TO Q68).....0
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q68).....-9

- REFUSED.....(GO TO Q68).....-8
43. How many times have you called the MPD in the past year?
- NUMBER OF TIMES.....|\_|\_|
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
44. Think of the last time you called the MPD. Did an officer show up to assist you? In other words, did you talk to an officer in person?
- YES.....(GO TO Q48).....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
45. Did you call them back?
- YES.....(GO TO Q47).....1
- NO.....(GO TO Q46).....0
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q46).....-9
- REFUSED.....(GO TO Q46).....-8
46. Why didn't you call them back? (GO TO Q68)
- 
- 
- 
47. How many times did you call them back?
- NUMBER OF TIMES...(GO TO Q68).....|\_|\_|
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q68).....-9
- REFUSED.....(GO TO Q68).....-8
48. About how many MPD officers showed up?
- NUMBER OF OFFICERS.....|\_|\_|
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

49.	How long did it take the police to show up?	
	Less than 15 minutes,.....	1
	Between 15 minutes and a half hour,.....	2
	Between a half hour and 45 minutes, or.....	3
	More than 45 minutes?.....	4
	DON'T KNOW.....	-9
	REFUSED.....	-8
50.	Would you say the police showed up...	
	Faster than you expected,.....	1
	About when you expected, or.....	2
	Slower than you expected?.....	3
	DON'T KNOW.....	-9
	REFUSED.....	-8
51.	Overall, how satisfied were you with the police response?	
	Very satisfied,.....	1
	Somewhat satisfied,.....	2
	Somewhat dissatisfied, or.....	3
	Very dissatisfied?.....	4
	DON'T KNOW.....	-9
	REFUSED.....	-8
52.	Was the officer you had the most contact with...	
	Male, or.....	1
	Female?.....	0
	DON'T KNOW.....	-9
	REFUSED.....	-8

53. Would you say the officer was...
- 20 to 29 years old,.....1
  - 30 to 39,.....2
  - 40 to 49, or.....3
  - Over 49 years old?.....4
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8
54. Would you say the officer was...
- White,.....1
  - Black,.....2
  - Hispanic, or.....3
  - Asian?.....4
  - OTHER.....5
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8
55. Would you describe this officer as...
- Very polite,.....1
  - Somewhat polite,.....2
  - Somewhat impolite, or.....3
  - Very impolite?.....4
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8

56. Would you describe the officer as...

- Very friendly,.....1
- Somewhat friendly,.....2
- Somewhat unfriendly, or.....3
- Very unfriendly?.....4
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

57. Would you describe the officer as...

- Very professional,.....1
- Somewhat professional,.....2
- Somewhat unprofessional, or.....3
- Very unprofessional?.....4
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

58. At any time did you think the officer's behavior was inappropriate?

- YES.....1
- NO.....(GO TO Q60).....0
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q60).....-9
- REFUSED.....(GO TO Q60).....-8

59. Which of the following did you think were inappropriate...

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
A. The officer's tone of voice?	1	0	-9	-8
B. The officer's comments or remarks?	1	0	-9	-8
C. The officer's facial expressions?	1	0	-9	-8



60. Did you think the officer stood...
- Too close.....1
  - At a comfortable distance, or.....2
  - Too far away from you?.....3
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8
61. Did the officer touch his/her gun at any time?
- YES.....1
  - NO.....0
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8
62. Did the officer touch you at any time?
- YES.....1
  - NO.....(GO TO Q65).....0
  - DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q65).....-9
  - REFUSED.....(GO TO Q65).....-8
63. In what manner, and where on your person, did the officer touch you?
- 
- 
- 
64. Did you think the officer used too much physical force?
- YES.....1
  - NO.....0
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8

65. I'm going to read a number of statements. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
A. The type of neighborhood you live in played an important role in how the police handled the situation	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
B. Your race played an important role in how the police handled the situation.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
C. The officer's race played an important role in how the police handled the situation.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8

66. Do you think you were treated fairly by the police?

- YES.....(GO TO Q68).....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q68).....-9
- REFUSED..... (GO TO Q68).....-8

67. Do you think this was because of... (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- Your age,.....1
- Gender,.....2
- Race,.....3
- Sexual orientation, or.....4
- Something else? \_\_\_\_\_.....5
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

68. In the past year, since (PRESENT MONTH) of 2001, have you been stopped by an MPD officer while standing or walking in a public area in DC?

- YES.....1
- NO.....(GO TO Q94).....0
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q94).....-9
- REFUSED.....(GO TO Q94).....-8

69. In the past year, how many times have you been stopped by an MPD officer while standing or walking in a public area?
- NUMBER OF TIMES.....|\_\_|\_\_|
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
70. Think of the last time you were stopped by an MPD officer. What reason did the officer give for stopping you?
- 
- 
- 
71. Did you think the officer was justified in stopping you?
- YES.....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
72. Where were you stopped? **PROBE:** To the best of your knowledge, what was the closest intersection?
- 
- 
- 
73. Was it within five blocks of your home?
- YES.....1
- NO.....2
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
74. How many people were with you when you were stopped?
- NUMBER OF PEOPLE.....|\_\_|\_\_|
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

75. How many police officers were present when you were stopped?
- NUMBER OF OFFICERS.....|\_|\_|
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
76. Was the officer you had the most contact with...
- Male, or.....1
- Female?.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
77. Would you say the officer was...
- 20 to 29 years old,.....1
- 30 to 39,.....2
- 40 to 49, or.....3
- Over 49 years old?.....4
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
78. Would you say the officer was...
- White,.....1
- Black,.....2
- Hispanic, or.....3
- Asian?.....4
- OTHER \_\_\_\_\_.....5
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

79. Would you describe this officer as...
- Very polite,.....1
  - Somewhat polite,.....2
  - Somewhat impolite, or.....3
  - Very impolite?.....4
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8
80. Would you describe the officer as...
- Very friendly,.....1
  - Somewhat friendly,.....2
  - Somewhat unfriendly, or.....3
  - Very unfriendly?.....4
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8
81. Would you describe the officer as...
- Very professional,.....1
  - Somewhat professional,.....2
  - Somewhat unprofessional, or.....3
  - Very unprofessional?.....4
  - DON'T KNOW.....-9
  - REFUSED.....-8
82. At any time did you think the officer's behavior was inappropriate?
- YES.....1
  - NO.....(GO TO Q84).....0
  - DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q84).....-9
  - REFUSED.....(GO TO Q84).....-8

83. Which of the following did you think were inappropriate...

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
A. The officer's tone of voice?	1	0	-9	-8
B. The officer's comments or remarks?	1	0	-9	-8
C. The officer's facial expressions?	1	0	-9	-8

84. Did you think the officer stood...

- Too close.....1
- At a comfortable distance, or.....2
- Too far away from you?.....3
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

85. Did the officer touch his/her gun at any time?

- YES.....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

86. Did the officer touch you at any time?

- YES.....1
- NO.....(GO TO Q89).....0
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q89).....-9
- REFUSED.....(GO TO Q89).....-8

87. In what manner, and where on your person, did the officer touch you?

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88. Do you think the officer used too much physical force?

YES.....1  
 NO.....0  
 DON'T KNOW.....-9  
 REFUSED.....-8

89. Did the officer search you?

YES.....1  
 NO.....(GO TO Q91).....0  
 DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q91).....-9  
 REFUSED.....(GO TO Q91).....-8

90. Did you think the officer had a legitimate reason to search you?

YES.....1  
 NO.....0  
 DON'T KNOW.....-9  
 REFUSED.....-8

91. I'm going to read a number of statements. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
A. The type of neighborhood you were in played an important role in you being stopped.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
B. The clothes you were wearing played an important role in you being stopped.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
C. Your race played an important role in you being stopped.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
D. The officer's race played an important role in you being stopped.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8

92. Do you think you were treated fairly by the police?
- YES.....(GO TO Q94).....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
93. Do you think this was because of... (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)
- Your age,.....1
- Gender,.....2
- Race,.....3
- Sexual orientation, or.....4
- Something else? \_\_\_\_\_.....5
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
94. In the past year, has anyone you live with had an unpleasant experience with the MPD?
- YES.....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
95. Have you ever filed a complaint against an MPD officer?
- YES.....1
- NO.....(GO TO Q97).....0
- DON'T KNOW.....(GO TO Q97).....-9
- REFUSED.....(GO TO Q97).....-8



96. How satisfied were you with how the MPD handled your complaint?

- Very satisfied.....1
- Satisfied.....2
- Dissatisfied, or.....3
- Very dissatisfied?.....4
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

97. Besides personal experience, what is your main source of information about the MPD?

**PROBE:** If you had to pick one, which one would it be?

- Family and friends.....1
- TV.....2
- Radio.....3
- The newspaper, or.....4
- The Internet?.....5
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8

98. I'm going to read a number of statements. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
A. News stories portray the MPD fairly.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
B. News stories pay too much attention to the race of people who commit crimes.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
C. News stories about the MPD cause you to have less trust in the police.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8
D. News stories about the MPD hurt relations between the community and the police.	1	2	3	4	-9	-8

99. Do you watch TV shows about the police, like Cops or America's Most Wanted?
- YES.....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
100. Okay, I'd like to finish up by asking you a few questions about yourself. Have you attended a community meeting with the MPD at any time during the past year, since (PRESENT MONTH) of 2001?
- YES.....1
- NO.....0
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
101. About how often do you attend religious services...
- A few times a year,.....1
- About once a month,.....2
- About once a week,.....3
- A few times a week, or.....4
- Not at all?.....5
- DON'T KNOW.....-9
- REFUSED.....-8
102. In terms of religion, would you describe yourself as...
- Christian,.....1
- Jewish,.....2
- Islamic,.....3
- Hindu,.....4
- Buddhist, or .....5
- Something else? \_\_\_\_\_.....6
- DON'T KNOW.....-9

REFUSED.....-8

103. About how many hours do you drive in a normal week?

NUMBER OF HOURS.....|\_\_|\_\_|

DON'T KNOW.....-9

REFUSED.....-8

104. Do you own or lease a vehicle?

YES.....1

NO.....0

DON'T KNOW.....-9

REFUSED.....-8

105. How long have you lived at your current address?

|\_\_|\_\_| YEARS |\_\_|\_\_| MONTHS

DON'T KNOW.....-9

REFUSED.....-8

106. Do you own or rent your home?

OWN.....1

RENT.....2

OTHER.....3

DON'T KNOW.....-9

REFUSED.....-8

107. Including you, how many people live at your address?

NUMBER OF PEOPLE.....(IF 1 GO TO Q109).....|\_\_|\_\_|

DON'T KNOW.....-9

REFUSED.....-8

108. Does anyone under 18 live at your address?

YES.....1

NO.....0

DON'T KNOW.....-9

	REFUSED.....	-8
109.	Are you or any of your family or close friends police officers?	
	YES.....	1
	NO.....	0
	DON'T KNOW.....	-9
	REFUSED.....	-8
110.	In what year were you born?	
	YEAR OF BIRTH.....19   ____   ____	
	DON'T KNOW.....	-9
	REFUSED.....	-8
111.	Would you describe yourself as...	
	White,.....	1
	Black,.....	2
	Hispanic,.....	3
	Asian, or .....	4
	Something else? .....	5
	DON'T KNOW.....	-9
	REFUSED.....	-8
112.	Would you describe your self as...	
	Working Full-time,.....	1
	Part-time,.....	2
	Not working,.....	3
	Retired, or.....	4
	Or something else? .....	5
	DON'T KNOW.....	-9
	REFUSED.....	-8

113. Was your 2001 household income from all sources and before taxes...

Less than \$10,000,.....	1
\$10,001 to \$25,000,.....	2
\$25,001 to \$60,000, or.....	3
More than \$60,000?.....	4
DON'T KNOW.....	-9
REFUSED.....	-8

**This is the end of the survey. Thank you very much for your time and cooperation. Your participation was greatly appreciated!**

114. WAS THE RESPONDENT...

MALE, OR.....	1
FEMALE?.....	0
DON'T KNOW.....	-9

## Focus Group Plan (REVISED August 2, 2002)

### Internal Focus Groups

**Location:** To be determined by Organizational Development based on availability and convenience for staff.

**Total Groups:** 8

**Maximum Group Size:** 5

**Group Composition:** To the extent possible, attempt to obtain diversity in terms of race/ethnicity, gender, and years of service.

1. Non Sworn/Civilian Employee Group (ensure union and non-union participation)

***Individuals to consider:***

Dispatcher

9-1-1 call taker

Administrative/clerical staff

Technical staff (computer specialist, etc.)

Cell block representative

Crime analyst, budget analyst, human resources representative

2. Non Sworn/Civilian Employee Group (mid-level managers)

Information technology

Crime analysis

Budget analysts

Human resources

3. Sworn Officers—Sergeant Group

3 patrol (across districts)

1 administrative

Possibly training or IA if he/she has a management role

4. Sworn Officers—Lieutenants, Captains, Inspector

1 from training

1 from IA/professional standards

2 from districts

5-8. Sworn Officers

\*Four separate groups of 4-5, preferably those without recent disciplinary history (include those from all districts and include at least 1-2 MPOs)

\* One focus group will deal with police perceptions of community bias toward police.

## **Focus Group Plan**

### **Community Focus Groups**

In order to set up these groups, we will first need to work with the department to identify representatives of the following:

- faith community,
- groups like NAACP, ACLU, or other special interest groups,
- schools and youth organizations
- neighborhood organizations,
- social service organizations,
- business community,
- other municipal agencies, and
- others as deemed necessary

We will likely want to hold about 4-5 community focus groups and potentially more as deemed necessary or appropriate.



**METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON D.C.  
EMPLOYEE FOCUS GROUPS**

**-COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS-**

**SWORN OFFICERS below rank of Sergeant**

**Purpose:** To examine your beliefs about how the community sees you, and how department personnel view community.

**INTRODUCTION—(5 minutes)**

Good evening, I am (STATE NAME and ROLE, e.g. Consultant, etc.) with the Police Foundation and this is (INTRODUCE OTHER STAFF MEMBER and ROLE). Do any of you have some idea of why you are here? (**WAIT FOR RESPONSE**)

Last year, the MPD put out a request for proposal to conduct a biased policing project. The project includes four major phases: the first includes assisting the department in establishing an employee committee and police-community task force to examine bias or perceived bias both internally and externally. The second phase is a scientific survey of *community perceptions* of The Metropolitan Police and their *experiences* (if any) with the Metropolitan Police.

The Police Foundation was awarded the contract to complete phases I and II, and both have been underway since June. (HANDOUT ABOUT THE POLICE FOUNDATION DOCUMENT) The Police Foundation was founded in 1970 and is a non-profit, non-partisan organization whose mission is to improve policing. Because we are not a membership organization, we are uniquely qualified to be an objective voice regarding critical policing issues that is untainted by political influence. We have conducted some of the most widely-cited research including the Kansas City foot patrol studies, the fear reduction studies in Newark and Houston, a national study of use of force, and done work in the area of women in policing, diversity, and community policing. We are currently completing a scientific study of racial and ethnic profiling for the State of Kansas.

Your participation is associated with Phase I of this project. We are attempting to get a cross section of individuals from the department; sworn and civilian, across districts, diverse in terms of race, sex, ethnicity, and years of service, and of course, at all ranks. The purpose of this focus group is to have you help us examine how you are perceived by the community and your perceptions of the community.

Input you provide or specific comments you make will not be linked with your name or identity, instead it will be combined with the results across all groups. We are meeting with you to examine how you feel you are viewed by the community and to get an understanding of how you view the community. In addition, *we are meeting with seven other groups (sworn and civilian) to identify perceptions about biases within the department.* This will help us gain some perspective on what you see as issues, problems, or concerns that may limit your ability to be fully effective in carrying out the department's mission of unbiased services. By the end of this

month, we will have completed our focus groups within the department and will have begun meeting with community members regarding their perceptions of bias in police services.

While we are interested in your concerns, we are not looking to investigate specific cases, but rather to gain the broadest picture possible of the areas in which bias or perceived bias may be apparent. All of the results will be combined together in our analysis and reporting.

We would like to start by getting just a little background on your role within the department.

### Officer Role

What are the mission, vision, and values of the MPD?

What do you see as your role as a police officer in the D.C. Metro Police Department?

How does your role fit in with the Department's mission, vision, values, and goals?

Do you consider yourself a community policing officer? Why or why not?

### Community Cooperation and Perceptions

How do you think the community views your role?

How do you feel you are viewed by the community in general?

Do you think there are differences in the way different communities in D.C. view you? If so, where do these differences occur? What is the basis for these differences?

What do you perceive as the differences of needs in various sub-groups or areas of the community?

Do you feel there are differences in the level or quality of services provided by the department in various areas of the community? What is the basis for these differences, if any?

How well does the community cooperate with you and support you in solving and preventing crime and improving public safety? (For example, do citizens cooperate in the investigations of crimes? Is it possible to recruit informants in the community?) Are there differences based on various groups? What are the differences and the basis for them?

Do you feel that community members are willing to contribute to public safety and quality of life issues in the community? Why or why not?

Can you describe some examples of MPD-community collaboration that have been successful?

What steps could be taken to improve community cooperation and support?

## WASHINGTON D.C., BIASED POLICING PROJECT COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUPS

**Purpose:** To identify potential or existing biases of the Metropolitan Police Department.

### **INTRODUCTION—(5 minutes)**

Good evening, I am (STATE NAME and ROLE, e.g. Consultant, etc.) with the Police Foundation and this is (INTRODUCE OTHER STAFF MEMBER and ROLE). We wanted to thank you all for agreeing to participate in this important meeting.

Last year, the Metropolitan Police Department, Washington D.C. asked for proposals to conduct a biased policing project. The project includes four major phases: the first includes assisting the department in establishing an employee committee and police-community task force to examine bias or perceived bias both internally and externally. The second phase is a scientific survey of *community perceptions* of The Metropolitan Police and their *experiences* (if any) with the Metropolitan Police that is being conducted over the phone. Some of you may have been contacted as part of that survey.

The Police Foundation was awarded the contract to complete phases I and II, and both have been underway since June. (HANDOUT ABOUT THE POLICE FOUNDATION DOCUMENT) The Police Foundation was founded in 1970 and is a non-profit, non-partisan organization whose mission is to improve policing. Because we are not a membership organization, we are uniquely qualified to be an objective voice regarding critical policing issues that is untainted by political influence. We have conducted some of the most widely-cited research in criminal justice and have worked with all of the major police departments in the U.S. We have conducted studies on police use of force, racial profiling, police abuse of authority, and community policing, to name a few.

Your participation here today/tonight is part of Phase I of this project. We are attempting to get more detailed information on perceptions of the MPD from various groups in the city. A Police Community Task Force identified 13 different groups that we should meet with including religious leaders, residents, business owners, young people, and others from various parts of the city. The purpose of this focus group is to have you help us identify concerns or issues in your community about police bias. One of the goals of the project is for us to help identify these issues, underlying causes, and stressors that may contribute to the biases or perceived biases. This will help us gain some perspective on what you see as issues, problems, or concerns that you may have. Input you provide or specific comments you make will not be linked with your name or identity, instead it will be combined with the results across all groups.

While we are interested in your concerns, we are not looking to investigate specific cases, but rather to gain the broadest picture possible of the areas in which bias or perceived bias may be apparent. We expect that some of the things you tell us will also be mentioned by other groups. There may, however, be unique issues raised in only one group. All of the results will be combined together in our analysis and reporting.

**Questions for Community Focus Groups  
Metropolitan Police Department  
Biased Policing Project**

**Facilitated by Police Foundation**

- 1. Can you tell the difference between an MPD officer and other law enforcement officers working in the city (e.g. Capitol Police, Metro Police, etc.)?**
- 2. What do you see as the greatest strengths of the MPD currently?**
- 3. Do you feel the police are tolerant of the community and its needs? Are they responsive to residents' needs/concerns? Explain.**
- 4. Are the Metropolitan police in D.C. appropriately visible in your neighborhood? Explain**
- 5. Do you know the police working in your area? Do the police know the residents?**
- 6. Do you feel the MPD police treat all citizens fairly with regard to race, sex, age, income status, neighborhood, religion, sexual orientation, or other defining characteristics? Please explain.**
- 7. In your particular community/neighborhood, how is the MPD or its officers viewed?**
- 8. Do you feel there are enough officers of different races and backgrounds working in your neighborhoods? How does their presence or lack thereof, impact on police services?**
- 9. Are the police able to communicate with non-English speaking residents in your neighborhoods? If not, are translators accessible when requested?**
- 10. Do you feel the police know enough about your community in order to be effective in interacting with you? Explain.**
- 11. Do MPD officers and community members work together in D.C.? Why or why not?**
- 12. Do you think the police are portrayed fairly in the media? Explain.**
- 13. In what ways could the police work to improve their relationship with the community?**
- 14. How could members of your community help the police to make them more efficient or effective in working in your neighborhood?**

- 15. What suggestions do you have for minimizing bias or perceived bias in police services?**
- 16. If you were the Chief of Police and had the ability to make any change in the department you saw fit, what would you change, if anything?**

**Questions for Youth Focus Groups  
Metropolitan Police Department  
Biased Policing Project**

**Facilitated by the Police Foundation**

1. Can you tell the difference between an MPD officer, and other types of police officers (for example, Capital Police Officers, Metro Police Officers, etc.)?
2. What do you see as the good things about the police?
3. Do you feel the police are open-minded about young people and their needs? Do they listen to you and answer your questions?
4. Do you see police in your neighborhoods? At your schools? On bicycles? In patrol cars? On foot?
5. Do you know the police officers who work in your neighborhood? Do the police know the kids in your neighborhood?
6. Do you feel that the police treat everyone fairly, regardless of their race or age?
7. In your neighborhood, how do kids feel about the police?
8. Do you feel there are enough police officers of different races and backgrounds working in your neighborhood?
9. Do you feel that the police know enough about your schools, hangouts, and youth activities? How does this affect how they interact with youth?
10. Do police officers work together with youth or youth groups? Why or why not? Do you think they should? How?
11. Do you think the police stories on the news or in newspapers are fair?
12. In what ways can the police work to improve their relationship with young people living in D.C.?
13. How could young people help the police do their jobs better and be more helpful?
14. If you were the Chief of Police and could change anything in the police department, what would it be?
15. Do you have any questions for us?

