

CITY OF OAKLAND
AGENDA REPORT

To: Office of the City Administrator
Attn: Deborah Edgerly
From: Police Department
Date: April 4, 2006

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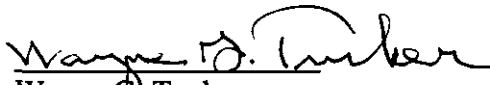
Re: A Supplemental Report to the Survey Findings: City of Oakland/People United for a Better Oakland (PUEBLO) on Police Services and the Filing of Complaints

The attached report is a follow-up to the Survey Findings: City of Oakland/People United for a Better Oakland (PUEBLO) agenda report that was presented to the Public Safety Committee on February 14, 2006. Provided within the attached document is a more detailed analysis of:

1. Contact with police by those under the age of 25
2. Contact with police when police were called to a residence
3. Negative experience with police after contact was initiated by the citizen

Mr. Dave Metz of Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates will attend the April 4, 2006 City Council meeting to present this information.

Respectfully submitted,


Wayne G. Tucker
Chief of Police

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO
THE CITY COUNCIL:


Office of the City Administrator

Item: 16
City Council
April 4, 2006

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates

*Opinion Research &
Public Policy Analysis*

TO: The City of Oakland

FROM: Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates

RE: Additional Analysis of City of Oakland/PUEBLO Survey on Police Services and the Filing of Complaints

DATE: March 14, 2006

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates (FMM&A) was commissioned to analyze results from a survey of 1,000 Oakland residents who have had contact with an Oakland police officer in the past five years. The survey was jointly designed by the City of Oakland, People United for a Better Oakland (PUEBLO), and Dr. Samuel Walker. Interviewing for the survey was carried out between September 11 and 29, 2005 by McGuire Research Services. A full analysis of the survey results has been submitted to the City under separate cover.

At the Public Safety Committee meeting of February 14, 2006, Committee members asked for further analysis of several other subgroups of survey respondents: 1) those age 25 and under; 2) those whose contact with the police came when the police were called to a home; and 3) those who initiated contact with the police themselves, and then reported a negative experience. This memo provides an analysis of key distinctions within the survey data that may be drawn for these subgroups.

1) Residents Age 25 and Under

Residents age 25 and younger made up 15% of all survey respondents. Demographically, those under age 25 who had contact with the police were more likely than others to be male (49% of survey respondents age 25 and under were male, as opposed to 42% of all survey respondents); Latino (34% of those under age 25 versus 17% of all respondents);

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to speak a language other than English at home (25% of those age 25 and under versus 11% of all respondents); and to have incomes of under \$20,000 per year (47% of those age 25 and under versus 29% of all respondents.)

Those age 25 and under were somewhat less likely to have initiated contact with the police themselves (which was the case 51% of the time, as opposed to 59% among all respondents). They were also somewhat more likely than other respondents to say that their contact with police came in the context of police being called to a home (34%) or a traffic stop (22%).

Those age 25 and under were somewhat more likely than other residents to say that their experience with the police was “negative.” More than one third (38%) said they had a negative experience, while among the general population, only 32 percent offered this response. At the same time, a clear majority of those age 25 and under (61 percent) said that their experience with the police was “positive.”

When those who had a negative experience were asked to explain, in their own words, the reasons why, most of those age 25 and under cited rude or discourteous behavior (54%), a failure of the officer to act (28 %), or the officer’s apparent disinterest in the issue (28%). The proportion citing rude or discourteous behavior was notably higher among those age 25 and under (where it was named by 54% of those who had a negative experience) than among the overall pool of respondents (42%).

Those age 25 and under were significantly less likely than other respondents to understand the difference between filing a lawsuit and filing a complaint with the Citizens’ Police Review Board or the Internal Affairs Division. Only 28 percent of those age 25 and under said that they understood the distinction, versus 44 percent of all survey respondents.

2) Residents Whose Contact With the Police Came When They Were Called to a Home

A total of 27% of survey respondents said that their contact with police came when the police were called to a home. This group was significantly more female (67 percent) than the general population of survey respondents (59 percent). In nearly every other respect, they were demographically very similar to other survey respondents.

Nearly three quarters of this group said that they contacted the police themselves, which was the case for only 59 percent of all survey respondents. Respondents who were present when the police were called to a home were more likely than others to report that the outcome of the contact was that they were “given advice,” which happened in one out of three cases (37%).

This group was more likely to report a positive experience with the police (75%) than was the pool of respondents as a whole (67%). The most commonly-cited reasons for having a positive experience included the officer being courteous and polite (83% of those who had a positive experience), professional (81%), or respectful (78%). Those who had a negative experience when the police were called to a home were far more likely than other respondents to point to inaction on the part of the officer: 43 percent of those who had a negative experience said that the officer did not solve the problem he or she was called for, and 36 percent said that the officer “failed to act.”

Those whose contact with the police came when the police were called to a home were no more likely than others to have filed a complaint, or to understand the different types of complaints that residents may file.

3) Residents Who Initiated Contact with the Police and Had a Negative Experience

A total of 15% of those interviewed in the survey reported that they had personally initiated their contact with the police, and that their experience was a negative one. This group tended to be more female than other respondents (65% versus 59%), but in other respects was demographically very similar to the rest of the survey population.

Much of this group’s dissatisfaction with the police may have stemmed from a belief that the police did not take appropriate action to resolve the respondent’s concerns. Fully 42 percent of this group reported that “no action was taken” as a result of their contact with police, nearly twice the proportion that cited this outcome among the survey population as a whole (23 percent). When asked the reasons why their experience with the police was negative, fully 53 percent stated that the officer did not solve the problem they were called for, while 48 percent said that the officer “failed to act.” Among the general survey population, both responses were offered much less frequently (31% and 29% respectively).

In contrast, this group was less focused on rude and discourteous behavior (cited as a problem by 27%) than was the case with the broader population of those who had a negative experience with police (where 42 percent cited their rude or discourteous behavior).

Those who had initiated contact with the police and had a negative experience were no more likely than others to have filed a complaint, but were somewhat more likely than other respondents to understand the distinctions in the different types of complaints a resident may file. A 52% majority said that they understood the difference between filing a complaint for a lawsuit and filing one with the Citizens’ Police Review Board or Internal Affairs Division, while only 44% of the general population of survey respondents said that they understood.