City of Long Beach

Citizen Police Complaint Commission

Annual Report for 2001

Prepared for
The Mayor and City Council
City of Long Beach
CITY OF LONG BEACH
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

CITIZEN POLICE COMPLAINT COMMISSION
211 E. Ocean Boulevard, Suite 410, Long Beach, CA 90802  562.570.6891  FAX 562.570.7613

GERALD R. MILLER
City Manager

RONALD C. WAUGH
Executive Director

September 17, 2003

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

It is my pleasure to present you with the 2001 Annual Report for the Citizen Police Complaint Commission (CPCC). Included in the report, are the final statistics for the cases receiving Commission review within the 2001 calendar year.

In the past, only those complaints heard before the Commission have been included in the Annual Report. Beginning with calendar year 2000, to more accurately reflect the Commission's activities, the total number of cases reviewed by the CPCC has been divided into two categories. The first category enumerates those cases investigated by staff and presented to the Commission for their review. There were a total of 68 cases presented to the Commission in 2001. Two of these cases were Officer Involved Shootings (OIS) where excessive force was alleged. The second category consists of those complaints classified by the Police Department as requiring No Further Action (NFA). NFAs are forwarded to CPCC staff for review and evaluation. The criterion for an NFA classification is fully defined in the Annual Report. There were 323 complaints classified as NFA during this reporting period.

In 2001, the Citizen Police Complaint Commission, through public speaking engagements, conference attendance, the City's website and professional consultations, continued to increase its visibility within the City and the national community-policing arena. This ongoing positive recognition speaks highly of the Commission staff, Commissioners and the Commission's policy and procedures. The citizens, businesses and visitors of Long Beach have a valuable resource in the Citizen Police Complaint Commission. The Commission provides an opportunity for the public to voice a complaint concerning alleged police misconduct with the promise of a thorough, impartial and timely investigation.

I would like to acknowledge the Commission's executive staff and City Clerk's commission support staff for their diligence, attentiveness and dedication. On behalf of the Commission, I wish to extend my appreciation to Gerald R. Miller, City Manager and Reginald I. Harrison, Deputy City Manager, for their support, advice and guidance as consultants to the CPCC. To my fellow Commissioners, a special thanks for their enthusiasm, passion and commitment.

Finally, I would like to thank the people of Long Beach for placing their trust in the members of this Commission. I truly believe the City of Long Beach is well-served and a better community because of the efforts of the Citizen Police Complaint Commission and those who support its mission.

Sincerely,

Vivian Tobias, Chair
Citizen Police Complaint Commission
ANNUAL REPORT
2001

Citizen Police Complaint Commission
City of Long Beach

Commissioners

Eleanor Aguilar
Gary J. Cooper, Chair
(Served: July 2000-July 2001)
John Cross, Vice Chair
(Elected July 2001)
Grant Boyer**
Joanne Devere**
Chris Dillon
Judy Everson**
Harvey Keller, Chair*
(Elected July 2001)
Val Lerch
Dan Lowenthal
Liz Miramontes
Patrick O’Donnell
John Rose
Vivian Tobias

Staff

Ronald C. Waugh, Executive Director
William Ward, Investigator
Thomas Gonzales, Investigator
Alida Grace, Executive Secretary
Marcee Siegel, Clerk Typist II

Consultant to Commission

Gerald R. Miller
City Manager

Citizen Police Complaint Commission
211 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 410
Long Beach, California 90802
Office: (562) 570-5891
Facsimile: (562) 570-7613

Internet: www.ci.long-beach.ca.us/cpcc/index.htm
*Vice-chair July 2000-July 2001
**Termed out, or did not seek reappointment
COMPLAINT COMMISSION

ROLE OF THE CITIZEN POLICE COMPLAINT COMMISSION

On April 10, 1990, the voters of the City of Long Beach approved the creation of the Citizen Police Complaint Commission by adding Sections 1150 – 1155 to the City Charter. This Amendment authorized the Commission to receive and investigate complaints of police misconduct with emphasis on allegations of Excessive Force, False Arrest, and Racial and/or Sexual Overtones.

The Commission's primary role is that of fact-finding and making recommendations relative to reported police misconduct to the City Manager. The Commission is neither an advocate for the complainant(s) nor police officer(s). The Citizen Police Complaint Commission is empowered to conduct hearings and, through the City Attorney's Office, may subpoena witnesses and records when necessary to facilitate the fact-finding process.

The Citizen Police Complaint Commission plays a vital role in representing the people of Long Beach. Individuals who prefer not to complain directly to the Police Department have the option to file their complaint with the Commission, which is a completely civilian organization. However, citizen complaints received directly by the Police Department are copied and sent to the Commission for preliminary review. At its discretion, the Commission may exercise its authority to request further investigation on behalf of the complainant.

The investigative process is aimed at capturing all allegation-related facts. Although Commission investigators review allegations independent of the Police Department, the Commissioners or the Executive Director will order further investigation only when the Police Department has not conducted a comprehensive case study.

The Commission Staff accepts the Police Department's investigation as a basis for their independent review and evaluation. As part of this process, additional interviews of witnesses and complainants, as well as site visits are routinely conducted by Commission staff. Whenever staff discovers new facts or data, the pertinent information is shared with the Police Department.

The Citizen Police Complaint Commission serves the community by providing an impartial viewpoint of alleged incidents and applying the "reasonable person's" standard in addressing complaints of police misconduct. The Commission makes findings-of-fact on cases brought before it and submits those findings to the City Manager. Cases heard by the Commission also receive formal review by the Police Chief's senior staff. The Police Chief's disposition of allegations, along with the Commission's findings, are presented to the City Manager for final case determination.

The Commission's findings and recommendations often provide valuable insight into the community's perception of the Police Department. This insight can assist with police personnel training and public relations. It should be noted that the intent and limitations of the Commission prevent the recommendation of discipline or penalty.
MISSION STATEMENT
Citizen Police Complaint Commission
City of Long Beach

The mission of the Citizen Police Complaint Commission is to provide independent, impartial, and objective civilian oversight of the Long Beach Police Department under the authority of Sections 1150-1155 of the City Charter. Special emphasis is placed on those complaints from the public involving allegations of excessive force, false arrest, and racial and/or sexual overtones. Civilian oversight is provided by qualified members of the community who are appointed to the Commission by the Mayor and the City Council. The Commission is a fact-finding body, supported by an administrative and investigative staff that relays the Commission’s findings and recommendations to the City Manager who, by Charter, makes the final determination in matters of alleged police misconduct.

The goals of the Commission include, but are not limited to, improving the demeanor of the officers toward the public and restoring community trust in the local law enforcement agency. The Commission endeavors to accomplish these goals by maintaining an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding between the community, the Police Department, and the Citizen Police Complaint Commission.

HEARINGS AND INVESTIGATIONS

To date, the Commission has not found it necessary to hold a formal hearing where the subpoena or testimony of witnesses was required. The current review process made formal hearings unnecessary at this time. However, hearings may be held if an incident having significant public impact occurs. The effectiveness of the hearing process in obtaining facts will remain unknown until such an incident occurs. The police action review process has been cost-effective in obtaining the facts regarding allegations brought before the Commission.

During this reporting calendar year, the staff investigated and/or thoroughly reviewed 391 complaints containing a total of 1013 allegations of police misconduct. A total of 68 cases containing 183 allegations were forwarded to the Commission for its consideration. Of the 391 total complaints 323 were classified by the police department as No Further Action (NFA) and received concurrence by the Commission’s Executive Director. This is the second year that the CPCC staff included complaints determined to be NFA in the tracking system. Complaints are classified as NFA for a variety of reasons. A complaint may be classified as NFA if it can immediately be disproved via witnesses’ statements, physical evidence, or if the Complainant admits to making a false allegation. A complaint may also be classified as NFA if it does not involve a police department employee or it simply does not rise to the level of misconduct. Additionally, at the discretion of the Executive Director or after an appeal to the full Commission by the Complainant, NFA’s may be reopened.

The Commission staff presented two officer-involved shooting cases to the Commission for its review. These were the first shooting cases to be heard by the Commission since its inception in 1991. The Commission does not routinely hear shooting cases, unless there is a specific complaint from a citizen. The Commission’s investigative staff received full cooperation from the Long Beach Police Department, and in particular, the homicide investigators assigned to the case. While neither of these cases were reviewed by Internal Affairs they nonetheless provided
support throughout the process. Once the shooting cases were completed and presented to the Commission, both the Homicide investigators and representatives from Internal Affairs made themselves available to answer questions during the Commission’s executive session.

THE LONG BEACH MODEL

Since 1990, a greater nationwide emphasis has been placed on the value of providing civilian oversight to the various law enforcement agencies. As a result, professional, non-profit organizations have been instituted to provide support to newly formed, evolving and established civilian oversight/review boards. The National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) is one of these organizations. The September 2000 NACOLE Convention, hosted in Hawaii, included an open forum and provided the practitioners of civilian oversight with the opportunity to dialog and exchange information.

During the conference, various civilian oversight/review systems were discussed. Three distinct models were identified as those being used most frequently by the various boards. The first system was described as an Independent, Investigative model. This style investigates complaints and, based on the findings, makes recommendations regarding discipline and policy. The second system is identified as being a Monitoring model. This process reviews the investigations completed by the police department’s Internal Affairs Division and simply makes findings based on agreement or disagreement with the Internal Affairs investigation. This model may ask for further investigation. The third system was described as an Auditor/Ombudsman model, having the power to compel evidence. This process reviews Internal Affairs investigations, conducts its own investigations, and conducts investigations not generated by complaints. The model used by the City of Long Beach varies from the three basic models and was specifically identified as being a Hybrid model. The Long Beach Hybrid process reviews investigations completed by the Long Beach Police Department’s Internal Affairs Division, and when the need arises, initiates audits, and may conduct additional investigations. The Long Beach CPCC determines findings based on the results of the investigation, but does not recommend discipline.

As the Citizen Police Complaint Commission’s system evolves, many community-policing agencies recognize Long Beach as the best combination of all working models. Two California communities, Riverside and Claremont, have recently adapted the Long Beach model for their review board. Mr. Waugh, Executive Director of the CPCC, assisted Riverside’s Community Police Review Commission executive staff with their complaint processing procedure, standard of operations, tracking system and coordination with the City’s police department.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

From its inception, the long-range goal of the Citizen Police Complaint Commission has been the restoration of public trust in their community law enforcement agency. Additionally, the improvement in the demeanor of police officers, and in their interactions with the public is also an important goal of the CPCC. The Commission believes that if it can assure that police officers take appropriate action while interacting with the public, the community will more readily support the police. When the public supports the police, they become personally involved in the law enforcement effort and contribute to crime reduction within the City. A proven benefit of
both goals is that cities with low crime rates attract new businesses, encourage tourism, improve the quality of community life and retain long-term residents.

The Commissioners and staff believe the “reasonable person’s standard,” by which the Commission operates, is helping police employees and complainants have a more favorable understanding of police department actions. Additionally, this standard is used to ensure that police conduct is appropriate and acceptable—diminishing the public’s need to file complaints of misconduct. The desired result is to encourage understanding and harmony between the community and law enforcement. The CPCC has and will continue to strive for preservation of community trust in its law enforcement agency by assuring fairness and accountability.

The major objective for the future is to establish, preserve and encourage an atmosphere of positive police community relations that will promise fair treatment in all aspects of law enforcement within Long Beach. Maintaining this standard will provide the ideal environment for increased tourism and improved quality of life.

REPORTS

By monitoring complaints and allegations the Executive Director reports obvious and developing trends related to police misconduct and public perception to the City Manager. As they emerge, these trends also are shared with the Chief of Police. The Commission has found that certain patterns may indicate an increase in specific allegations based on public perception, media attention and/or incidents occurring locally or nationally. This reporting procedure is necessary to assist with police officer review and to assess individual and department training needs. The Long Beach Police Department employs the Early Warning System, which is a computerized method of identifying problematic officers who deviate or stray from Department policy.

Commission meetings are conducted monthly during the calendar year. The frequency with which the Citizen Police Complaint Commission meets adds to its ability to receive, investigate, deliberate, and make findings regarding a public complaint of police misconduct in a timely manner.

TECHNOLOGY ALLOWS BETTER TRACKING

The Citizen Police Complaint Commission maintains an ever-evolving database dating back to 1996. The database stores case information on complainants and involved Police Department personnel. The tracking system also includes details of alleged incidents, the nature of the allegations and the basic types of activities the officers were engaged in at the time the incidents/allegations occurred. Initial incident information is updated as cases progress through the complaint process to their conclusion.

RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFF

The Commissioners enjoy an excellent relationship with Commission staff and the City Manager. The CPCC staff is a dedicated, well-organized team committed to supporting the Commissioners in every aspect of their responsibilities. Staff provides insight and background to assist the Commissioners in reaching fair and impartial case findings. The staff does not make recommendations of findings or exercise influence over the Commissioners.
COOPERATION STARTS AT THE TOP

Under Chief Lance’s leadership, the Long Beach Police Department continued to work closely with the CPCC. Chief Lance continued to foster better understanding between the CPCC and the Long Beach Police Department by permitting ride-alongs for the Commissioners and Commission staff, encouraging open communication with the Police Department’s Internal Affairs Division and developing training, relative to police procedures and policy. Chief Lance also started meeting commission members on an informal basis over brunch to discuss issues of mutual concern. These meetings were limited in number so as not to establish a quorum. This spirit of cooperation has continued to help improve police community relations and allowed the CPCC to process their cases in a more efficient and expedient manner.

INTERACTION WITH POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Commission, and/or its staff, has met with the Chief of Police and Internal Affairs offering suggestions on specific complaints while reviewing police tactics and patterns of misconduct. The Chief has openly accepted the good-faith suggestions and issues raised by the Commissioners. Following review of this information, the Chief provided feedback to the Commission on how the Department received and addressed their comments.

The Commissioners commend the Chief for allowing them the opportunity to suggest recommendations, which may be in conflict with current policy, and for accepting that information in good faith. The Commissioners are fully aware that they do not have the authority to formulate or dictate police department policy. However, the Commissioners would be remiss if they did not inform the Chief of observations they have made which could assist the Chief in improving the performance of the Department while enhancing the philosophy and concept of community policing.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LONG BEACH POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

The Commission and staff have developed and maintain a cooperative relationship with the Long Beach Police Officers Association. The present and past Police Officers Association presidents have all addressed the Commission and attended meetings. Their dialogue has been very positive and the Commission makes every effort to continue that open and positive relationship.

INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

Although the Commission officially implemented its operational system in 1991, it was not until 1992 that a consistent method of collecting and analyzing data was put into practice. In 1994, the Commission refined its policy to exclude complaints that were invalid on their face and/or were complaints of police service, which were not violations of Police Department policy. These complaints collectively, are classified as No Further Action (NFA).

As a part of the policy change, the Commission delegated authority to the Executive Director to initially screen new complaints. This expedited the preliminary review process and reduced time spent on frivolous and intentionally misleading complaints of misconduct. The need to
redefine the policy was based on a number of complaints that had no foundation in fact to suggest a complaint.

In 1996, the Commission staff computerized the complaint tracking process to accurately reflect data available for analysis. The CPCC database provides the statistics and information used for annual analysis and year-to-year comparisons. The stored data is consistent with Commission findings. While data can be tracked back to 1996, only the most current five-year period of statistics are reflected in the charts and graphs of this annual report.

MEETINGS

The Commission met ten times in public session during 2001. By Commission policy, these meetings were convened in the City Council Chambers at 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. The public was welcome to participate in these sessions. As a matter of routine, the complaining person or persons are notified approximately one week in advance by mail, phone or both of the date, time and location their case is to be heard by the Commission. This gives the complaining party an opportunity to present their case in person and to answer whatever questions the Commissioners might have.

Each month after general business was completed, the Commission entered into closed session to discuss specific details of allegations appearing on that meeting’s agenda. Following discussion, the Commissioners voted to determine appropriate findings for each case. Executive session is confidential and the public cannot attend or participate.

DELAY IN SUBMITTING THE 2001 CPCC ANNUAL REPORT

To accurately calculate the number of incidents and types of misconduct allegations received within the annual reporting period, final computing must be delayed to optimize the number of completed investigations received from Internal Affairs. There are a number of reasons why investigations may be delayed. Case research may be extremely complex, involve multiple witnesses, and/or accuse more than one officer of misconduct. Upon the completion of an investigation, the police review process may demand scrutiny and formal review at numerous levels within the Police Department. Finally, allegations of police misconduct are accepted up to one year from the date of the alleged occurrence and may not be reported by the complainant in a timely manner. For these reasons accuracy dictates formal reporting occur after the end of the year following the reporting period.
FINDINGS and ALLEGATIONS

During this reporting period the classification of “INCONCLUSIVE” was eliminated and replaced by “NOT SUSTAINED.” The classification of “NOT SUSTAINED” is now being used in order to be consistent with the classification used by the police department during their administrative review process.

The Commission heard 50% fewer complaints and 52.7% fewer allegations in 2001 compared to 2000. While the number of complaints decreased the number of Use of Force complaints remained about the same, increasing by 1.0%. There was a substantial decrease in the number of allegations involving Improper Arrests and Detentions. There were 121 such allegations in 2000 and only 35 in 2001, representing a decrease of 71%. The number of allegations involving Improper Racial Remarks remained unchanged at 11. Those allegations involving Improper Sexual Remarks/Misconduct went from 2 in 2000 to 1 in 2001, representing a 50% decrease. The total number of allegations in these categories decreased from 456 in 2000 to 372 in 2001, a decrease of 18.4%. The majorities of the total 372 allegations, some 57.1%, were deemed by both the Police Department and the Commission to require No Further Action and therefore were not presented to the full Commission.

The Commission reviewed a total of 68 complaints containing 183 specific allegations of misconduct. Of the total Use of Force allegations, 43% were classified as Exonerated, 22% were Not Sustained, 2.7% were Sustained and 32% were Unfounded. Of the Improper Arrest/Improper Detention allegations, 66% were classified as Exonerated and 33% were Unfounded. Of the Improper Racial Remark allegations, 68.9% were classified as Unfounded and 11.1% were classified as Sustained. The one allegation of Sexual Remark/Misconduct was determined to require No Further Action and was therefore not presented to the Commission.

The Commissioners noted that for the first time in four years the percentage of complaints from the African American community increased by approximately seven percent, reversing a downward trend. The Commissioners have noted that a disproportionate number of complaints were from African Americans. While African Americans represent only 15% of the Long Beach population the total percentage of complaints by this group amounts to 44.7% of the all the complaints received. While complaints from the African American community increased, complaints from Whites declined by approximately 9%. There were no unusual situations or incidents to explain why there was a trend reversal with regard to there being more complaints by African Americans and fewer by the White population. Complaints by other represented groups remained relatively unchanged with regard to percentages. The following represents a five-year complaint trend from 1997 to 2001.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting Year</th>
<th>Number of Investigated Complaints</th>
<th>+/- to Prior Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>-15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>-35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>+68.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>+88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>+3.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The increase of approximately 4% from 2000 to 2001 includes those cases received, but later classified as No Further Action. Including the total number of cases reviewed by the Commission provides a better prospective of the Commissions caseload and functions. The actual number of cases heard by the Commission dropped from 137 in 2000 to 68 in 2001 representing a decrease of approximately 50%.
The Commission has no control over the number of complaints it receives during a reporting period. Since complaints can be received by phone, mail, in-person visits, the City’s web site or submitted by Internal Affairs, the Commission staff acts on the complaints as they are received. A number of factors contribute to the increase/decrease in the number of citizens complaints which include public awareness of the Commission and its function, popular perception of police conduct toward the public, media focus and current community issues within the annual reporting period. The intent of this report is not to make hypothetical conclusions, but to present the statistics as they are compiled and supported by available facts. Therefore, the fluctuation for year-to-year actual total caseload is a result of many factors, none of which are supported by information calculated and tracked by the Commission.

In 2001, the Commission classified the majority of the allegations, some 28.2%, as “Unfounded” meaning the Commissioners found no basis or foundation in fact and there was no information or evidence to support the allegation. Allegations classified as Not Sustained represented 4.3% of the total number of the allegations heard by the Commission. The finding of Not Sustained simply meant there was no evidence to support or refute the allegations. A total of .3% of the allegations were classified as Sustained. This represents a substantial decrease from the previous year.

The Early Warning System of the Long Beach Police Department tracks those officers receiving a high number of misconduct complaints to determine if the officers are “off track.” Retraining and counseling are tailored to meet the personal needs of the individual officers. The Department closely monitors their progress and evaluates the results.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>*NOA</th>
<th>Percentage of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discourtesy</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourteous Remark</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishonesty</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to Investigate</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to Care for Property</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to Take Action</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to Take Report</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Bias</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment/ Physical</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment/Verbal</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper Arrests</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper Detention</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper Entry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper Search / Personal</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper Search / Residential</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper Search / Vehicle</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improper Remark</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper Use of Force</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>NOA</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimidation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misuse of Authority</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misappropriation of Property</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Bias</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Profiling</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profanity</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Remark</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Misconduct</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unbecoming Conduct</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unauthorized Tactics</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NOA = Number of allegations filed
OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The appropriate and timely acceptance and recording of public complaints against law enforcement officers is such a significant issue that the State Legislator has promulgated State law to address and ensure that policing agencies establish and maintain a complaint process which is readily available to the community. This process must be credible and have the confidence of the citizenry. The Long Beach Police Department has such a process. Once a complaint is filed with the Police Department or the Citizen Police Complaint Commission, the Long Beach Police Department initiates investigation of the complaint.

Complaints assigned to Internal Affairs investigators are generally more comprehensive and detailed than those assigned to field supervisors or non-specialists in personnel investigations. Because of limited resources, only very sensitive or serious complaints of misconduct are assigned to Internal Affairs investigators. The investigations completed by non-Internal Affairs personnel are not always comprehensive and may lack needed information or require re-investigation.

Commission staff has received complaints from some citizens concerned that the system is skewed against them. Some complainants state that a few complaint intake officers discourage a filing and are argumentative with the complainant. This type of activity certainly taints the process. When the public identifies these officers to the CPCC staff, the Police Department is immediately notified. It appears that the majority of these types of complaints arise because of a 1996 California State Law, 148.6 PC. This law mandates that officers “shall” inform complainants that it is a crime to file a false complaint against a peace officer and that they may be subject to arrest and/or civil action for filing a false report. The California Supreme Court recently ruled on this admonition and found that it was in fact constitutional. The admonition regarding false complaints now appears on the complaint form used by the Long Beach Police Department and the Citizen Police Complaint Commission.

The Commission has continued to notice a marked improvement in the quality of the investigations completed by Internal Affairs investigators since the 1999 Annual Report was completed. In the past, only basic information was taken from a complainant when he or she wished to file a personnel complaint in the field. Often times, the names and addresses of witnesses would be included in the initial investigation, however the witnesses were not necessarily formally interviewed. As a result, many witnesses could not be located at a later date creating additional work for the Internal Affairs investigator while causing delays in case preparation and completion.

Through the ongoing training provided by Internal Affairs supervision to field supervisors, the intake process is much more thorough, including detailed statements and photographs of alleged injuries and/or scenes when appropriate. This initial extra effort has allowed the CPCC investigators to prepare a more detailed case for Commission review. Another concern, that has since been remedied, was the lack of specific responses by officers to specific allegations. The Commission staff has noticed a marked improvement in this area. Because the intake process has been more thorough the percentage of cases deemed to require No Further Action (NFA) has increased dramatically. The Commission staff will continue to monitor cases in this category to insure the appropriate cases are still reviewed by the full Commission.
The Commission has also recognized that the quality of the arrest and related reports have also improved thus making the review process more comprehensive. The Commission routinely recognizes quality work by the officers and, through its support staff, prepares formal commendations to be presented to the officers by Police Department supervision. This kind of recognition serves two purposes. The recognition lets the officers know their work is being reviewed by individuals outside the Police Department while at the same time serving to encourage good police work and reporting. This interaction between Internal Affairs, the police rank and file and the CPCC all contributes to a better relationship between the Police Department and the community it serves.

The Commissioners find their challenges and responsibilities very rewarding and are pleased to be of service to the elected officials, the Administration, and, most importantly, to the residents and visitors of the City of Long Beach.

BUDGETED EXPENDITURES

The Fiscal Year Adopted Budget for the CPCC was $350,836. The Actual Expenses for Personnel, Non-Personnel and Inter-Department items was under the Adopted Budget or approximately $349,000. The CPCC strives to remain within the Adopter Budget; however, high priority cases such as Officer Involved Shootings (OIS’s) are cause for extra expenditures for investigations. To the CPCC staff’s credit, even though they worked on two OIS’s, managed their time well and still remained within budget.
CPCC FINDINGS
AS DEFINED BY THE COMMISSION

RECEIVE & FILE

When information is received which does not, on its face, establish misconduct or failure to act has occurred, that information is received and filed for possible reopening of the case if further information or evidence is submitted. If additional information is received within a year, an investigation may be opened.

UNFOUNDED

When an allegation clearly has no basis or foundation in fact and there is no information or evidence that supports the allegation(s) and/or the Complainant has been found to be untruthful based on the facts of the investigation.

EXONERATED

When the act complained of did occur, but in the judgment of the Commissioners, the actions taken were justified, lawful and proper.

NOT SUSTAINED

When the allegations cannot be verified by evidence, information, or independent witnesses, the officers deny the allegation(s) and there are no independent, or unbiased witnesses, to support the Complainant's allegation(s).

SUSTAINED

When the act, or failure to act, is established and is rendered misconduct and that act, or failure to act, is supported by evidence, information or unbiased independent witnesses.

OTHER/TRAINING

When the alleged act, or failure to act, is established yet, in the judgment of the Commissioners, fails to rise to the level of misconduct and would be most appropriately adjudicated by training or other means.
# Attendance Record for 2001
## Citizen Police Complaint Commission

Meetings: 2nd Thursday of every month, beginning at 6:30 P.M.
Council Chambers, 333 West Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, CA

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<tr>
<th>Commissioner</th>
<th>Jan</th>
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**CHAIR:** Gary Cooper
**Vice-chair:** Harvey Keller (Term: 7/00 thru 7/01)
**CHAIR:** Harvey Keller
**Vice-chair:** John Cross (Term: 7/01 thru 7/02)

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