

Is there any real civilian review in Minneapolis?

Response of the OPCR to Civilian Complaints of Police Misconduct

The statistics below give a look at the performance of the Minneapolis Office of Police Conduct Review (OPCR) in its handling of civilian allegations of police misconduct. The purpose of the OPCR is to investigate complaints and determine which have merit. Their recommendations go to the Police Chief, who has full authority to determine the level of discipline, if any. The OPCR cannot provide any benefit to the complainant other than the hoped-for closure and validation, and the expectation that discipline will deter future abuse such as that which they have experienced.

Is this working? Is it effective? The answer, based on the statistics below, is clearly NO!

The OPCR was formed in September 2012, and replaced the former CRA (Civilian Police Review Authority). The CRA had been weak, largely due to underfunding and lack of authority over discipline. The OPCR is much worse, by design. The OPCR is jointly supervised by the Civil Rights Department and the Police Department itself, greatly weakening civilian control. There are two civilian investigators and seven police investigators. The panels which review the facts determined by the investigators consist of two civilians and two high-ranking police officers, with the Police Chief essentially acting as tie-breaker.

The figures below are derived from the official reports of the OPCR for their first 21 months of operation, from October 2012 through June 2014:

Total complaints submitted: **664**

Number of allegations contained in those complaints: 731

Number of excessive force allegations: 141

Number of cases closed during the 21 months: 574

Disposition of cases:

- Dismissed: 290
- Submitted to precinct supervisors for coaching: 177 (coaching is not considered a form of discipline)
 - Number of cases actually resulting in coaching: 54
 - Number of those cases where the supervisor determined that there was a violation of policy: 11
- Submitted for mediation: 25 (no statistics on outcomes, or whether officers even cooperated)
- Submitted to investigators for at least a preliminary investigation: 143
 - Number of cases receiving a full investigation leading to the convening of a panel: 36
 - Number of allegations in those 36 cases: 128
 - Number of allegations found to have merit: 26 (number of cases, and number of officers involved is not reported)
 - Number of allegations of excessive force found to have merit: 3
 - Number of allegations found not to have merit: 102

Discipline issued by Police Chief: **2 officers each received 10 hours of unpaid suspension**
3 officers received letters of reprimand in their files

Number of grievances pending as of June 30, 2014: 6 (presumably includes all cases of discipline above)

So what have we achieved through 21 months of full-time work by two department heads, nine investigators, and several support staff, as well as volunteer civilian panelists, not to mention the time, efforts and hopes of 574 complainants? **Essentially nothing!** Possibly some minor discipline for 5 officers, but only if those cases survive the grievance process. One major purpose of discipline is to deter future misconduct. This is a joke; in fact, officers will often laugh at those who threaten to file a complaint!

The OPCR must be scrapped!

(see notes on other side)

The statistics on the other side were tallied from five reports published by the OPCR, all available at:
<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/civilrights/police/ocrreview/archive/index.htm>

First year report, October 1, 2012 through July 31, 2013

3rd Quarter report, July 1, 2013 through Sept 30, 2013 ← note 1 month overlap with previous report

4th Quarter report, 2013

1st Quarter report, 2014

2nd Quarter report, 2014 through June 30, 2014

Some figures may not be exact, due to the difficulty of sorting out which were duplicated during the July 2013 overlap between the 2 reports. Also, a few numbers had to be interpolated from graphs. Some figures may not add up properly; ask the OPCR why.

These represent our best efforts to report accurately on the performance of the OPCR; we are open to comments and corrections.

None of the above is intended to comment one way or the other about the activities of the Police Conduct Oversight Commission (PCOC), an independent volunteer board which meets publicly and researches policy, audits cases, and conducts outreach.

This information compiled by Communities United Against Police Brutality. Join us! We meet at 1:30 every Saturday at 4200 Cedar Avenue South in Minneapolis. For more information or for help with a police brutality incident, call our 24-hour hotline: **612-874-STOP** or website: **www.CUAPB.org**.