

APPENDIX F

City of Newark Consent Decree Baseline Survey Assessment

Report on Focus Groups of Newark Police Division Officers

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been prepared at the request of the Hon. Peter C. Harvey, Independent Monitor of the Consent Decree and signed by the Newark Police Division (NPD) and the United States Department of Justice. The focus group questions summarized here were designed with input from the Independent Monitoring Team, including the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, Delores Jones-Brown, Ph.D., Rutgers University, and Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP.

Background

During May and June 2017, 42 members of the Newark Police Division (“NPD”) participated in five focus groups. These focus groups consisted of three groups of patrol officers, one group of officers from specialized police units, and one group of NPD supervisors. Through these focus groups the survey team sought to gain further insight into some of the key findings of the previously-administered Officer Survey, which was given to the entire NPD (1,092 sworn personnel and 42 civilians) and surveyed officers’ attitudes, perceptions, and experiences related to their job and the community. The focus group questions concentrated on firearms discharge, attitudes towards the profession and the department, NPD leadership, fear of criticism, community support, police officer training, and residency.

General Observations

Overall, the focus group participants appeared to be truthful and outspoken about all of the questions posed. As can be expected, there were certain officers who dominated the conversation in each group. Newer officers, however, did not actively participate as much as the older officers. When the newer officers were asked for their opinion, they often stated that due to their inexperience they did not have one. One officer voiced that he or she was suspicious of the wording of the questions, stating that the questions were based on perception rather than fact, and even suggesting that the facilitators had an agenda based upon the wording of the questions. Other than this individual, participants were generally receptive to the questions.

Most of the officers appeared to want to engage in community policing (in fact, a number of them said they already were) and wanted to do the right thing for the community. In general, the officers believed that policing in Newark is unique because Newark is the largest city in New Jersey, even if small in comparison to others nationally, with a higher percentage of violence for a city its size. Officers perceived that while the “hardworking” people and older generation of individuals who live in the city support them, they feel often times that their own department and city leadership does not support them. The officers generally stated that they use their firearm as a last result.

Among the officers’ biggest concerns were favoritism and nepotism. These appear to affect Division-wide morale, and may explain the Officer Survey results regarding the

perception of bias within the department by more experienced officers. In fact, the officers seemed to generally understand references to “bias” in the questions as referring to this type of political or in-group bias, rather than racial bias. When prompted to discuss race, the majority of participants stated that racial bias was a problem of the past but not the present, because, they believe, the Division is majority Hispanic and black. Every officer in the groups, by comparison, agreed that success at the department is determined by “hooks” that provide specific officers with preferential treatment, rather than merit.

Other major concerns included lack of support from the Division, including a lack of training, and being treated unfairly when citizens file “bogus” or false complaints. The officers voiced that they do the best that they can with limited resources, but need more training to become more effective police officers.

Summary of Findings

The focus group questions concentrated around eight themes found in the Officer Survey results: department leadership, within-department bias, policing bias, fear of criticism, community support, media scrutiny, citizen complaints, and training. During the focus group, officers were also asked to express their views about whether NPD members should be required to reside within the City of Newark. The questions posed to the focus groups are reproduced below, followed by a summary of the answers provided in response to each.

Question 1: Firearms Discharge: Analysis of the individual officer surveys indicated that nearly 21% of officers reported having fired their service weapon in the line of duty. This focus group question did not specify a time period as to when officers fired their service weapon. The actual data shows that in 2015, eleven officers discharged their firearm. In 2016, seven officers discharged their firearm.

During the focus group interviews, there was a mixed response as to whether this finding means that, as a department, the NPD has an abnormally high occurrence of firearms discharge. Generally, officers agreed that they only fire their service weapon when their life or someone else’s life is at imminent risk. But the officers had different explanations of what constituted “imminent risk.” Some common situations officers agreed put lives at “imminent risk” were: when someone has a gun pointed at an officer or another individual, when a car is coming at an officer, or when a dog is coming at an officer. Officers stated that they use their firearm as a last resort, and that some officers may be hesitant to use their firearm because of the paperwork and increased media scrutiny it generates. Officers in the focus group reported that all officers receive near immediate notification when an officer fires his or her service weapon during an incident, and, that it is mandatory that this action be reported to a supervisor.

Question 2: Attitudes Toward the Profession and the Department: Analysis of the individual Police Survey results suggested that a significant percentage of officers with more years of policing experience held more negative attitudes towards policing and the

department compared to officers who are relatively newer to the force. (Police Survey results, pg. 15).

Most officers in the focus groups thought this finding was accurate that more experienced officers hold more negative feelings about their jobs than newer officers. The officers with fewer years of policing feel that they are being taught to “police the right way”, and that they have been instructed not to listen to the older officers in order to avoid picking up “bad policing habits”, or policing habits that do not follow NPD policy. The junior officers tended to view the Consent Decree as an opportunity to begin their careers “policing correctly”. There was a consensus among the groups that the challenges facing NPD officers include a special population of “bad people” (i.e. the individuals known to be repeatedly involved in criminal activity), negative media portrayal, lack of training, decreased benefits and “internal chaos”¹ in the department, that creates a negative work environment. Also, the officer focus groups felt that the department does not recognize or respect seniority in assignments, tours, or promotions, and that older officers may not be able to do what they did when they were younger. For example, an older officer may not be as fast as they were when they were younger officers and not be able to chase and apprehend a suspect so these officers should not necessarily be assigned to patrol an area with a significant amount of criminal activity.

Question 3: Bias: Survey results suggested that officers with more time on the job reported that there is biased treatment within the department, among department leadership and in police practice on the street.

Focus groups members were most reluctant to discuss this finding, expressed concerns about the anonymity and confidentiality of their response and seemed to choose their words carefully during this discussion. Both supervisors and officers stated that “NPD leadership knows who is in this room” and felt that their statements could be traced back to them. Most officers agreed with this finding because older officers “know how the department works”. The longer that the officers are members of the department, the more they see how favoritism affects them individually in terms of assignments, promotions and discipline. Most of the officers and supervisors agreed more experienced officers perceive a greater bias in the department and described a department that runs on favoritism and nepotism and not on merit. They stated that, to succeed, an officer needs to have a “hook”² or connection to a higher up that gets them special treatment such as less discipline, better assignments and promotions. A couple of officers, while agreeing that the department mostly runs on merit, stated that at times an officer will be promoted because he/she may be a “hard” worker. One officer in each group stated that the best officer in the department might be harshly disciplined or reprimanded for one minor

¹ The “internal chaos” referred to the number of leadership changes in the five years. The NPD has had three directors between 2012 and 2017. In addition, officers stated that the NPD leadership puts officers in jobs who do not have the skill set for that assignments and does not provide training for assignments. As one supervisor stated, “You have to figure it out for yourself.”

² A hook is defined as an individual up in the police department or an individual who is high up in the other political structures of the City.

infraction, while an inferior officer with “hooks” would not be reprimanded for a more serious infraction.

Question 4 also dealt with bias. The survey results revealed that compared to other officers, black officers reported perceiving significantly higher levels of bias within the department and among policing as practiced on the street.

Officers in each focus group appeared to give much thought to the question of what might explain the Black officers’ response to this question in the Police Survey. It is noted that no particular kind of bias was identified in the original question and that the focus groups included officers from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. All of the officers who voiced an opinion on this issue reported believing that while racism was a problem for the department in the past, and it is not a problem now because the department is majority Hispanic and black. They agreed that within-department bias is a problem, but identified the problem as political bias in favor of those with connections within the department rather than racial bias. Officers also agreed that policing practice depends on an officer’s personality, and how much fear they perceive while policing.

Question 5: Media Scrutiny, Use of Force, Community Support and Response:

Analysis of the individual police officer survey results indicated that compared to other officers, black officers were significantly less likely to think that media scrutiny of police use of force affects officers’ attitudes and behaviors. NPD data reported that in 2015, officers had 254 use of force incidents and in 2016, the officers had 305 use of force incidents.

The focus group responses to this finding are somewhat confusing. Some officers blamed the media for creating that “racial stuff” or racial tension, by focusing on the race of victims without accounting for the race of the officers. Most officers agreed the media no longer differentiates between a black officer and a white officer, but just says police officer when publicizing controversial use of force incidents³. In contrast to the results from Black officers in the individual police surveys, most officers in the focus groups (regardless of race) reported that the media affects all of their decisions and made specific reference to their decisions about use of force. In their view, when officers think about using force, they also are aware of the publicity it may bring or what the community may say about the incident. All of the groups agreed that older civilians and specific neighborhoods are more supportive of the police, whereas younger civilians are less supportive of the police. The officers and supervisors stated that there is more support for the police in the East and North wards of the city, and in the South and West wards, support for police is about 50%. Most of the focus groups stated that officers are often more “vigilant” about their own safety after national incidents in other cities, but that they nonetheless go out and “do their jobs”, which the officers perceive as making the city safer by arresting individuals who are engaged in criminal activity. They do not, however, worry about riots similar to those occurring in other cities because they believe that Newark residents organize and protest peacefully.

³ Officers noted that when describing an incident, the media only reports on the race of the victim and not the race of the police officer. “The media only sees blue,” one officer stated.

Question 6: Citizen Complaints: Compared to officers with no history of citizen complaints, officers who indicated that they have had at least one citizen complaint filed against them had less favorable views of the department and the community. According to the NPD, in 2015, there were 664 complaints filed against officers and supervisors and in 2016, there were 733 complaints filed against officers and supervisors.

The consensus among the officers was that it is too easy for individuals to file false complaints. This is of concern to the officers because all complaints are referred to internal affairs and every complaint stays in an officer's record, whether it is sustained or not. In addition, if an officer receives a specific number of complaints (whether founded or unfounded), a supervisor has to monitor the officer on a monthly basis. Officers also voiced frustration that individuals who file false police complaints do not face any consequences.

Question 7: Training: In the individual officer surveys, nearly half of officers disagreed with the statement that they receive training from the department that helps them do their job.

In the focus group interviews, all of the officers agreed that they do not receive enough introductory training or training that is specific to their assignment. The officers stated that they would like to receive more training specific to their assignments but reported that the department lacks the resources to give them the proper training.

Question 8: Attitudes Towards Leadership and Residency: The individual police survey results showed that officers who live in Newark reported greater confidence in department leadership compared to officers who did not live in the city.

Officers in the focus groups had mixed viewpoints about how long an officer should have to live in Newark and whether officers who live in Newark have greater confidence in department leadership. All officers believed that officers should live in Newark for some period of time in order to learn how the city works and get to know the community.

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I. Background

In May 2016, the City of Newark agreed to enter into a Consent Decree with the Department of Justice in settlement of a lawsuit filed by the United States of America. The purpose of the Consent Decree is to reform the Newark Police Division (“NPD”) so its policing services “delivered to the people of Newark fully comply with the Constitution and the laws of the United States, promote public and officer safety, and increase public confidence in the Newark Department of Public Safety and Newark Police Division...and its officers” (Consent Decree at 1).

As part of the Consent Decree, the monitoring team selected Rutgers University’s School of Criminal Justice as the lead partner to create a department-wide quantitative survey that investigated the experiences, attitudes and perceptions of NPD employees. In an effort to develop a deeper understanding of the Officer Survey results, the survey team drafted eight questions for focus group discussions that would assist the team in developing a deeper understanding of the police-community dynamic and gain insight into the police institution and the culture that exists within it. Two facilitators from Rutgers’ School of Criminal Justice conducted five focus groups with NPD officers. The five focus groups consisted of three groups of patrol officers, one group of specialized police units, and one group of NPD supervisors. By speaking with officers, the survey team sought to further understand some of the key findings revealed during the analysis of the Officer Survey.

NPD officers initially were chosen because they contacted leadership in their department or Dr. Todd Clear (the Principle Investigator for the project) to participate in a focus group. This option was given to each police officer when they completed the Officer Survey. All of the police officers that took the survey were given information on who to contact if they were interested in participating in a focus group. Participation was completely voluntary. However, on the day of the focus groups, some officers who volunteered for the focus groups were not available due to scheduling issues, so NPD leadership randomly chose officers from each precinct to participate in the focus groups. Once police officers arrived at the focus group, each officer was told that they were not required to participate and each signed a consent form. Out of the five focus groups, one officer decided not to participate and left the focus group before it began.

This report summarizes the focus group discussions. It does not analyze or comment on the truth, merit, or validity of any of the views expressed by focus group participants, and nothing in this report should be taken as an endorsement by the Independent Monitoring Team of those views. Rather, the statements and opinions summarized here are entirely and only those of the focus group participants.

II. Methodology for Focus Groups

A. Research Design

Rutgers used a series of focus group containing between 8-10 participants to assess the attitudes, perceptions, and experiences of Newark Police Division officers. A focus group is appropriate for the proposed research because it is able to qualitatively assess the findings of the approved Officer Survey and allows for discussion to take place amongst the officers who may hold different sentiments in regards to the same question. Additionally, due to the flexibility of the design, participants are able to provide detailed responses, and the focus group discussion leader was able follow up on points that are unclear or warrant further discussion.

B. Sample

The research used individuals who volunteered for the focus groups to generate participation in the proposed focus group study. However, some of the officers who volunteered were not available at the time of the focus group, so a supervisor asked other officers to participate in each focus group. All police officers signed a voluntary consent form. We conducted five sessions that contained between 7-10 police officers each, which ensured a positive group dynamic so that officers would feel comfortable speaking about their experiences with other officers and resulted in a total of 42 total participants. Our sample included three focus groups of patrol officers, one focus group of special units/plain-clothes officers, and one focus group of supervisors in the NPD.

C. Measurement / Instrumentation

The key outcomes that were measured in the Officer Survey included officers' attitudes towards their occupation, organizational justice in their department, perceptions of their legitimacy as officers, attitudes towards the community, perceptions of community policing, experiences interacting with citizens, and bias in policing.

The instrument was constructed by analyzing the results of the aforementioned Officer Survey, which guided the selection process of questions to pose during the focus groups. After the survey was completed by all NPD officers, statistical analysis was conducted by the Community Assessment Team to guide the determination of which questions were of interest to both research staff and other subject matter experts (SME's) with regards to the police-community dynamic. Based on those findings, we developed eight questions to be asked of each focus group.

D. Study Procedures

There were a total of five sessions that took approximately 90 minutes to complete. There were between 7 and 10 officers in each of the focus groups. The facilitators attempted to ensure that there was a representative grouping of participants in each focus group based upon individual-level characteristics such as rank, race, gender, and years of experience; however, the pool of potential participants was limited due to the voluntary nature of the study.

E. Consent Procedures

The proposed research utilized a standard informed consent procedure for confidential data collection being that there will be no definite linkage between the officers' identity and the responses collected. Each respondent was given a pseudonym to protect his or her

identity and notes takers used the pseudonyms instead of the participants' real names. Additionally, the focus group team made sure there were no linkages between a given pseudonym and the participant's actual name that would allow for the respondent to be identified.

Importantly, this research did not attempt to mislead participants in any way. At least two representatives from the Rutgers University-School of Criminal Justice ("SCJ") team were present to conduct each focus group. When administering the survey, the SCJ representative read instructions for participating in the focus group and answered the questions officers had prior to beginning.

F. Participant Selection – Participants volunteered for the focus groups, either by emailing the project's Principle Investigator, Dr. Todd Clear, or informing an NPD supervisor.

Participant Profile

Group	Total No. of Officers	Total No. of Males	Total No. of Females	Race of the Police Officer	No. of years as a police officer	Police Officer's Rank	Unit
1	9	7	2	3 Hispanic; 6 black		All Patrol Officers	Patrol
2	10	9	1	4 Hispanic; 5 black; 1 white		All Patrol Officers	Patrol
3	8	6	2	3 Hispanic; 4 black; 1 white		All Patrol Officers	Patrol
4	8	8	0	4 Hispanic, 2 black; 2 white		All Patrol Officers	Narcotics
5	7	6	1	3 Hispanic, 4 white		4 Lieutenants; 3 Sergeants	Supervisors

III. Detailed Findings

A. Use of Firearm Discharge.

Question 1: Survey results indicated that nearly 21% of officers have fired their service weapon in the line of duty. What situations do you believe best describe the circumstances that lead officers to fire their weapons in Newark? What are the most common situations that lead officers to discharge their firearm?

1. Patrol Officers

Most of the officers agreed that they may fire their weapon when there is a suspect shooting at police, officers have a vehicle coming at them, a suspect has a weapon and is not compliant with an officer's instructions to put the weapon down, or when a dog is used as a weapon against an officer. When an officer or other individual is in imminent danger, the officers respond with justifiable force. Some of the officers in focus group one reported that they thought that 21% was a low percentage in a city as large as Newark with a lot of violence. All of the patrol officers agreed that the percentage of officers who use deadly force in Newark is low and that deadly force is only used as a last resort because it can end an officer's career.⁴ Officers stated that the use of deadly force is often related to the lack of respect that many people have for the police. The officers also stated that NPD officers in general use restraint before they consider firing their weapon. As described in the quotation below, one officer describes a suspect pointing a gun at he or she and then turning around to run with the gun. The officer chased the armed suspect into the projects. The suspect stopped at the front door of the projects and gave up. In the quotation below, the officer is referring to the chase from the street to the door of the projects.

Officer 1: Yeah, at the time we could've shot him when he had the gun in his hand and drawn. We could've shot him. And we chose not to. Newark is a different type of police department. In most cases here, we do choose not to [shoot].

Officer 2: Exactly. Newark is different. We chose not to. It is different than any other police department, down South. We're different.

2. Specialized Units

Officers in this group stated that the reasons that an officer would fire their service weapon would be for self-defense, such as when they are being shot at, when dogs are used to attack them, or when they otherwise fear for their life. The majority of the officers in this group felt that the 21% rate of discharge sounded high and the number may be skewed because Newark has an older department. Now, because of technology, officers are afraid to use their weapons because of the repercussions that come after an officer uses his/her weapon. The quotation below quotes an officer's opinion as to why he/she feels the 21% number is higher than the actual number of officers who discharge their weapon. One officer stated:

It's probably that high because I'd say for the large percentage of the department, it's an older department right now. You got guys that have been here a long time.

3. Supervisors

⁴ After an incident where an officer fires his service weapon, the NPD conducts an investigation and the officer can be subject to discipline including being fired.

The supervisors thought that the 21% number was high and police officers may fire their weapons when their life is in danger, when a dog is biting an individual, or when the officer has a perception of fear of harm. They agreed that everyone has their own threshold, but if someone points a knife or a weapon at an officer, that would be a universal reason to fire a service weapon.

Follow-up Question: How well known is it among people in the department when an officer is involved in a shooting?

All of the individuals in the focus groups stated that everyone knows instantaneously when a shooting occurs because of the police grapevine (*i.e.*, one person tells five people), social media including Facebook, a private police union Facebook page, texting, emails (there are approximately 300 individuals on an email that goes out within an hour after the incident), or from academy classmates or family members. Focus groups 3 and 5 compared word getting around the NPD to “high school” gossip. Interestingly, focus group 3 stated that they often play “Monday morning quarterback” in that they ask one another if the officer is okay, whether the shooting was good or bad, and whether the shooting will put pressure on the department as a whole. Due to the second-hand nature of these retellings, the story of a shooting may not be told the right way. Media coverage contributes to this effect; usually, there is one media member who comes around to all of the scenes and broadcasts it to other media outlets. The quotation below quotes an officer speaking about the repercussions on the NPD as a whole when there is an officer-involved shooting. One officer stated:

Now in the department we have to look at if it's a bad shooting. Jesus Christ, now we're all going to be focused on what's going on. Believe it or not, it builds pressure on all of us. (Agreement)

Follow-up Question: Is there a requirement that this action be reported to supervisors?

All of the individuals in the focus groups stated that when an officer fires their service weapon, they must immediately report the event to a supervisor, a supervisor must immediately report to the scene, the report immediately goes up the chain of command, and the incident is referred to Internal Affairs (“IA”). Next, the officer involved is evaluated and removed from duty for 48 hours after the “critical incident.” The officer will continue the report when he or she returns. Another interesting point the officers in focus group 3 brought up was that the fact that a shooting is investigated by the chain of command in the department makes them not want to use their gun, so they do not have to go through all of the paperwork.

B. Attitudes Toward the Profession, Division, and Leadership.

Question 2: Survey results suggested that officers with more years of policing experience often held more negative attitudes towards policing and the department compared to officers who are relatively newer to the force. Do you find this to be accurate? Why or why not?

1. Patrol Officers

These officers agreed with the statement posed in question two. The older officers stated that by seeing the same people and doing the same job over a long period of time, they could build a negative attitude about the job and people in general and become cynical. One officer thought that the negativity comes from management, because management treats the new officers differently than the older officers and wants the newer officers to police the “right way” or the way that the consent decree or the academy is going to train them to police. The older officers felt that the new guys do not know about this negativity yet because they are new to the job. Another officer thought that older officers have become smarter about policing and figure out how to police effectively from trial and error. The newer officers did not offer a lot of input to this question but one newer officers felt that they are being taught to do things the right way (according to the Consent Decree), new officer stated that he did not want to pick up “bad habits” and that the department had a chance to start fresh with the Consent Decree. Another newer officer stated that the older officers are losing benefits, policing is changing and things that they counted on are being taken away from them, so he could understand why they had a negative attitude toward policing. The older officers in the room agreed. Officers started out wanting to make a difference but then, somewhere along the line, they made all the change they could and it was over. Another officer stated the layoffs from 2010 contributed to the negative attitude. According to this officer going to another police department is not a good option for NPD officers because officers in other police departments do not see in a lifetime what a Newark officer sees in a year, and NPD officers who go to other departments experience discrimination for being from the NPD. Officers also stated that policies and memos, difference in policing, and lack of training contribute to a negative attitude towards policing and the department and result in confusion about what are the proper procedures to follow. One officer stated that officers are being sent to housing projects without a partner or backup, which the officer considered dangerous. This officer felt that management is putting officer lives at risk by sending them to dangerous areas alone. One officer stated:

The negative attitude actually comes from policies and memos. (Agreement) I personally call it “stupidvisors.” Just statistically and book smart and all that stuff, and all that stuff in a book, but they’ve never seen the people in the projects. Spoke to him and ask why he’s a drug dealer.

2. Specialized Units

The officers agreed with the statement in the question because officers’ benefits have been flipped halfway through their career, medical insurance and pension contributions are decreased, and officers’ pay is maxed out at ten years instead of five years. There is also no longer a cost of living increase for officers who have retired. There is no security in the department in being a senior person, except for vacation. Shifts and assignments are not based on seniority and can be used as punishment or a way to produce more arrests and summonses. Older officers cannot do what they did when they were younger but the administration/leadership does not respect that. Although the NPD is becoming a new department because of all of the new hiring; the officer stated that the administration should be hiring approximately 500 new police officers in the next 2-3 years.

3. Supervisors

The supervisors agreed with the statement in the question. They believed that older officers are jaded and new officers are motivated. They stated that police officers are always dealing with people's problems and after 25 years it takes a toll. One supervisor stated that some of the new officers develop negative attitudes because they do not like their walking posts; they listen to the negative attitude of the training officers, and talk to officers from other places. Officers can also develop negative attitudes when they feel that they are disciplined too harshly for minor infractions, such as not having his or her hat on while patrolling or at a crime scene. Some supervisors try to overlook small rules that the supervisors themselves do not follow because it lowers officer morale. The supervisors felt that between 6-9 years into the job, officers can develop negative attitudes because officers learn that there is favoritism and politics in the department that allow some officers to receive a better assignment because of who they know. Officers also have negative attitudes because benefits have changed. For example, max pay has gone from five years on the job to ten years on the job. So, an officer must now work for ten years to obtain their maximum pay on their pay scale instead of five years, which prior union contracts stipulated. This means that an officer can be partnered with someone who obtained their maximum pay five years into the job, while that officer has to wait double the time in order to obtain their maximum pay. There is also a feeling that the union sold out the newer officers. The supervisors also noted that the Newark police deal with a special population of "bad people" (individuals who are repeatedly engaged in illegal behavior and violence), the negative media portrayal, and "internal chaos" in the department, which creates a negative environment on all sides. They stated that officers can just read the comments on nj.com about them to know about the negativity surrounding NPD. One officer stated about the new officers:

They're all gung-ho. They watch all of these cops shows and think it's going to be like TV but it's not. I worked closely with them last year and they have a very different perspective. They all come out and they want to go to gangs or plainclothes or narcotics. I don't know how you guys feel, but I don't want to do any of that. With all of the negativity in the media and stuff, I know I don't want to do any of that stuff like that. But they come thinking a different perspective because of what they watch on TV. Every 4 out of 5 shows is cop show.

Question 3: Survey results suggested that officers with more time on the job reported that there is biased treatment within the department, among department leadership and in police practice on the street. Does this finding surprise you? Why or Why not?

1. Patrol Officers

Some officers were initially quiet while considering their answers to this question. The theme of this group's answers seemed to be that newer officers see things differently than the older officers. Officers agreed that there is biased treatment in the NPD, but that bias occurs in all police departments and in all types of jobs. They stated that success at NPD is all about who you know and with what group you are aligned. In other words, the bias they perceive is about politics and cliques. Veteran officers have more bias because they know the way the department works (that promotions do not depend on the best officer but who has the political connections to obtain a promotion) and the new guys do not know yet. The officers stated that there are newer officers with "hooks", or means of receiving preferential treatment, while officers without "hooks" are treated more harshly.

The officers without “hooks” are reprimanded for actions, while officers with “hooks” are not reprimanded for the same or more serious action. For example, supervisors without “hooks” may be reprimanded for an officer’s action while that particular officer, if he or she has a “hook”, is not reprimanded. One officer spoke about the “golden hook” where one officer is fired for something petty while another officer with a “hook” is not fired for a more serious infraction. The officers stated that every time there is a change in department leadership, that person is going to have “their people with them and their people are going to get better treatment than others”. They said that sometimes this has to do with politics, and sometimes officers pay for special treatment. In their view, the officer who has the “hook” is going to get the better shift, regardless of seniority.

2. Specialized Units

These officers stated that it does not matter how many years of experience an individual may have because individuals get an assignment or tour because of who they know. Officers stated that positions that are posted as open are often pre-assigned because of politics. These officers also referred to a “hook” as a political affiliation an officer has with someone that gets him or her a better assignment within the department. They stated that officers with “hooks” receive the most desirable assignments, for example, mail delivery, alarm maintenance, the motorcycle unit, or the watershed (which are all desirable assignments). One officer stated:

It’s usually some kind of political affiliation you have with somebody that gets you a better assignment here in the department.

3. Supervisors

Several supervisors declined to comment on this question. One supervisor stated that there are police officers that can get away with anything and avoid discipline, while others have a minor incident and are disciplined harshly. The supervisors all agreed that bias on the basis of race is rare.

Follow- up Question: Why might more experienced officers have less favorable views toward department leadership?

1. Patrol Officers

Officers stated that more senior officers have less favorable views because of favoritism and lack of discipline for officers who have “hooks”. They said that an officer without “hooks” can be the best officer in the world, but if he or she makes one mistake, they are sent to an undesirable assignment. As a result, they said, it does not pay to go above and beyond their duty. Another officer thought that corruption, rather than favoritism, was the cause. There was agreement that hard workers are promoted, but they are promoted more quickly if they have a “hook”. All of the officers agree that the problem is political. They stated that this is the norm and officers get used to it. One officer stated:

If they have “hooks” here and there, and they’re not being disciplined for whatever they are doing, of course other officers are going to look at them a funny way because I have to work hard, I have to do everything by the book to make sure I don’t get in trouble.

One officer stated that there are some officers who have never been let into the political crowd and they are being let in now. These officers do not reach out and help anyone. The officers believed that in the few classes of officers who have recently been hired, everyone knows someone and are given special treatment. They believe that management creates special spots for special people. One officer stated that it took him 20 years to get on days, which is a preferential shift. Officers stated that NPD should determine vacations, and assignments by seniority, but it does not.

2. Specialized Units

These officers stated that some officers who are promoted have no idea what they are doing. For example, an individual is promoted to sergeant and the officers below him have to instruct the sergeant on how to write a report. According to these officers, there is a perception that position postings are only a formality because the department already knows whom they are going to choose. Also, the department did not promote before because of a manpower shortage and because the department did not have money, but now the department has to because of the Consent Decree. Experienced officers already know all of this and that is why they are more cynical. There has always been community policing, but that officers that get to know residents where they patrol are transferred and have to start all over again.

These officers also stated that officers know what they have to do in order to “keep people off of your back”. They stated there is always pressure to produce or their job will be eliminated. Plain-clothes officers may have less favorable views because they receive pressure to arrest and issue quality of life summonses; they call it “head hunting” and “looking for bodies” just to make their numbers. The officers gave the following examples of favoritism: 1) The Detective position is appointed and can be taken away as punishment or politics; 2) There are police officers on the beat who are like Deputy Chiefs because of how big their “hook” is and they cannot be touched. Also, officers stated that patrolling was difficult because the new officers that have been hired are assigned to walking patrols and cannot answer calls. This leads to police officers who are burnt out because there are no police officers in cars to help and so police go from call to call every shift. These officers were concerned that there would be no officers to quell people if a riot broke out.

3. Supervisors—The supervisors stated that there is nepotism and favoritism in the department. They said that newly hired officers act like they can do what they want and are rewarded. Although one officer stated that supervisors may also want to bring officers they know that work well with them, which this is not favoritism. They stated that some supervisors reward bad or lazy behavior by sending such officers to the hospital to guard prisoners. They also stated that certain officers receive special treatment, for example, some new police officers are given favorable tours and assignments because they have family members and feel as if they are entitled; some police officers come with special instructions. Officers perceive that seniority rules are not followed, so veteran officers with no “hook” may be more cynical. One officer stated:

I think the word bias is the wrong word. I think it is more favoritism, nepotism. Looking out for your boys or whoever is doing you favors. Stuff like that. I don't think it's a bias.

Question 4: The survey results revealed that compared to other officers, black officers reported perceiving significantly higher levels of bias within the department and among policing as practiced on the street. What do you think accounts for these reported differences about the existence of bias?

1. Patrol Officers

There was a long silence during this focus group after the facilitator asked this question. One officer stated that there used to be bias based on race, but that it was tied to the race of the Police Director. The officers all agreed that political bias is part of Newark police culture. One officer spoke about how being a police officer is difficult for black individuals because police officers have historically suppressed black people. The officer acknowledged that there are still some officers in the NPD that feel that way, however, times are changing and the officer believed that he is here now to make a difference. Another officer stated that race does not matter, but respect does; he or she will respect you if you respect him or her. One officer stated that as a black officer who is stationed in a primarily Portuguese neighborhood he or she is treated “fine”. Another officer stated that he or she has never heard anything about race and that in Newark the officers are “all blue.” The officer stated that NPD supervisors are all different races, and that while older people might have racist views, the younger generation does not. Another officer felt that bias is often personal and not racial. One officer stated:

How far back in time you trying to go? (Laughter) Inside and outside, I mean, for a black individual to be on this job is not recommended to anybody. And for the simple fact that officers were originally meant to suppress black people so when it come to that, we're not really favored for this job. We're pretty much just catering to the white man or white woman, anybody else. Looking at it from that aspect. Times are changed. Times are changing, but you still have some people out there that feel the same way. At this day in age, we are living with it, but the reason why we are here now is to make a difference. So of course there's going to be a lot of bias. Right now there's really not too much we can do about it, but eventually we can do something. Change it.

2. Specialized Units

This group believed that race was not a major issue within NPD. They explained the Officer Survey results as coming primarily from older officers, but that the majority of the department is black or Hispanic. These officers saw bias in NPD as a matter of people taking care of their own, which they believed to be a matter of who you know, or having “hooks,” rather than a matter of race. One officer stated that the Officer Survey results were probably misleading because the survey did not give officers the chance to explain their answers.

3. Supervisors

The supervisors stated that black officers might perceive more bias, but that a lot of officers feel they have a skill set that they do not have. Making rank is lucky sometimes, and it is not a racial issue, but politics. One supervisor stated that he or she held officers for overtime based on seniority or which officer did overtime last but an officer may perceive it as being a racial issue.

C. Media Scrutiny, Fear of Criticism, and Community Support.

Question 5: The survey results indicated that compared to other officers, black officers were significantly less likely to think that media scrutiny of police use of force affects officers' attitudes and behaviors. What do you think accounts for these reported differences in how officers see the impact of media coverage on police use of force?

1. Patrol Officers

This group of officers did not think that the media distinguishes between black and white police officers; rather, it just describes them as police officers. They believed that media coverage affects decision-making at NPD and how they carry out their own day-to-day duties. For example, an officer may not want to use force because he or she does not want the publicity and is afraid of what the community may say. They also worry about the potential internal affairs response to media coverage, which could cause them to lose their jobs.

This focus group felt that the media does not depict use-of-force encounters accurately in that it only shows the part of the encounter that the officer is doing wrong. One officer stated when an incident occurs, people take out their phones instead of helping the officer subdue the suspect, and that the police officer does everything in this power not to shoot.

The group generally believed that the media creates "racial stuff," or racial tension where it does not really exist and that the media has a racial agenda. Another officer stated that policing was different in the northeast as compared to the southern United States because racial tension between blacks and whites was higher in the South.

2. Specialized Units

These officers stated that officers feel that they are under a microscope, causing officers to question if using force is worth the consequences. They believed that the media's portrayal causes them to be reprimanded for small mistakes, which makes them too self-aware and hesitant while on duty. These officers also stated that policing in the Northeast is different than in the Midwest or the South, but that media coverage affects police all over the country. One officer stated that due to Newark's size and crime rate, officers in Newark are exposed to more violence in one week than a small town officer may see in ten years. These officers also stated that propensity to use a firearm as opposed to other types of force depends on the upbringing and characteristics of individual officers.

3. Supervisors

In response to this question, one supervisor stated that there are individuals who are police officers and individuals who are employed as police officers. The supervisor went on to state that there is a "criminal element" and "politicians that are against the police officers", but "police officers are all blue and on one team when everyone is standing against them". Another officer stated that black officers grow up differently and may perceive things differently because of how they were affected by racism growing up and these officers are going to be more empathic than other officers may be. This officer stated:

When you say significantly less likely, so there's a gap there, to me the reason that there may be a gap in the perception of it is because if you are an African American, you're in an environment or you grow up in a surrounding that...in our town here, you grow up in a black neighborhood let's say. You're going to be on the receiving end of a lot of things that where I come from, not in the inner city, I'm not subject to that. And a lot of times, we as white or Hispanic males or whatever the differentiation is these days, don't have to deal with some of the things that black or African Americans will have to deal with. The perceptions are different. You grow up with that. You have family members subject to that. In a way, to be significantly less likely to think that the media's spotlight is not hurtful, would come maybe the fact that you think there's a need for a media spotlight to be there because there are wrongs that are being done. I'm not saying the perception is right or wrong, but that may be the perception.

1. Patrol Officers

Officers in this group generally believed that people in Newark care more about what happens in Newark than in other cities. They stated that within Newark, community support depends on the area where an incident happens. In some areas people are glad to see officers and in other areas people curse at officers. For the most part, the officers stated that civilians are glad to see them and have them present during the walking patrols. The police officers perceive a lot of positive feedback from the community, including that the community feels safer with police officers around. Some officers viewed the community as less supportive, citing community members who attend City Hall meetings, who these officers believed have a political agenda. One officer stated that the more time an officer spends in the community, the more comfortable and familiar the community members become with the officer. This leads to greater cooperation.

Officers in this group believed that the older generation seems to support the police officers more than younger people, who they perceive as having negative attitudes toward officers. They said that this causes even younger victims not to cooperate with the police. The younger generation also does not follow the news, and so only knows what is going on in Newark.

2. Specialized Units

The officers stated that some people appreciate them and others do not. They believed that Newark residents have never been entirely opposed to or in favor of the police. The officers all believed that people who live in public housing projects want them to be more aggressive, stating that in those areas “good, hard-working residents become hostages in their own neighborhoods”. The officers stated that they believe that most of the people who do not support the police are those likely involved in criminal activity. The officers also believed that older residents want officers to be more aggressive. The officers perceive younger residents as having no respect. They said that one “bad” house can ruin a three-block radius and individuals are not “doing dirt” in their own neighborhoods. One officer stated:

The ones basically doing dirt. They don't want you to be there because they're doing some kind of dirt. The old people love us and want us to do something. They want us to kick their ass but we can't do it now. It's against the law to put your hands on somebody. You live in the projects and this drug dealer is sitting in your car. I had a job last night and this lady got slapped because she told this drug dealer to not sit on her car. So he got up and slapped the piss out of her. You don't do that. These young kids

don't have respect for nobody. Not even themselves. They will pull out a gun or a knife and stab you and get away with it. They know the law more than we do.

3. Supervisors

The supervisors stated that attitudes vary in different parts of the city. In their view, residents of the North and East Wards seem to support officers a more than those in the West and the South Wards. Another supervisor stated that there is a “criminal culture,” which results in a fascination of crime that leads to overexposure of criminal incidents. As a result, this supervisor stated, ordinary residents are “hiding in their houses” and do not want the police to have cameras. The other officers, however, did not seem to agree with the criminal culture comment. Other supervisors stated that the community seems to be supportive, citing the lack of riots or other violent demonstrations. One supervisor offered an example; after a fatal use of force by an NPD officer, a Newark resident who was a gang member tried, but failed to start a protest. The residents of this block, the supervisor stated, called the police to say that they were “being held hostage in their own homes”, rather than joining in the protest.

Follow-up Question: Do you notice any changes in how your fellow officers perceive the community after these events?

1. Patrol Officers

Some of the officers stated that these events do not affect them, while others stated that they are more vigilant after such events. They stated that residents tend to peacefully organize against shootings. They believed that most officers are good officers and understand the city from a psychological perspective.

The officers stated that, if anything, officers want to change how the community perceives them in a positive way and explain why officers respond to certain situations in certain ways. They said that officers are apprehensive, however, because they feel that they are portrayed as the “bad guys,” and when an officer makes a mistake, it affects the entire department. After that mistake, officers feel that they have to prove that they are there to help people, and begin building relationships with the community all over again.

2. Specialized Units

These officers stated that the majority of the residents in the city are trying to “do the right thing”. They felt that officers are tired of being told to “get their numbers,” or to issue a certain number of tickets and make a certain number of arrests. They believed that officers “try to do things the right way” but that their job is difficult and they want the Division and city to understand that, to support them, and to consider their perspective before jumping to conclusions.

3. Supervisors

One supervisor stated that there is a “criminal culture that supports criminals and their rights” and that is part of the problem. The criminal culture included individuals who committed crimes, who knew about individuals who committed crimes, yet would not

assist the police with solving the crime, protestors, and organizations who file lawsuits on behalf of the criminals.

Follow-up Question: Do you notice that your fellow officers behave differently toward citizens in Newark after protests and riots in other cities? If yes, in what ways?

1. Patrol Officers

Officers are trying to listen more to youth and their needs and understand where the youth are coming from in order to establish a common ground and avoid miscommunications. Officers considered themselves on higher alert during these situations because an individual may want to do something to an officer just to get media attention. Newark is a different type of police department. Newark's protests are peaceful and just talk and individuals are not throwing objects or breaking anything.

2. Specialized Units

These officers did not perceive any issues related to these events, but expressed frustration when the "mayor marched against them". They suggested that there will be a shift in attitude towards police officers because it is an election year. They also stated that civilians have "hooks" as well, and that officers often feel pressured to not punish some well-known or well-connected citizens. The officers felt that they are always being watched, and that this hampers their ability to do their jobs.

3. Supervisors

The supervisors all agreed that they did not see any difference in officers' behavior after such events.

Follow-up Question: For example, do you see your own community as more or less

Question 6: Compared to officers with no history of citizen complaints, officers who indicated that they have had at least one citizen complaint filed against them had less favorable views of the department and the community. In your opinion, what could explain this?

Follow-up Questions: Could this be influenced by how citizen complaints are handled by the department?

- If yes, in what ways?
- Have you ever had a citizen complaint filed against you?
- How did that make you feel?
- Did you think it was a legitimate complaint? Why or Why not?
- Were you satisfied with how the department handled the complaint? Why or Why not?

1. Patrol Officers

This group did not feel that officers with complaints viewed the department more negatively than those without complaints. The group generally believed that an officer

with excessive complaints should be disciplined, although one officer stated, "If you are not getting a complaint, then you are not working." Many officers agreed that complaints are upsetting because, most of the time, they feel that they are not doing anything wrong, and are getting complaints for just doing their job. The officers believed that NPD Internal Affairs unit ("IA") does a good job following up on complaints, but that it should not make officers go through unnecessary steps to pursue complaints that IA knows are bogus. The officers were particularly concerned that complaints, even those that are unfounded, stay on their records and can affect their chances of promotion.

One officer felt that IA pursues complaints until they find something incriminating. This officer also voiced concern that an individual who files a false complaint faces no consequences, while the consequences for officers can be severe. One officer stated that he or she received an unfounded complaint on his or her first day on the job, and nearly received a suspension because he or she was on probation. Another officer stated that if an officer reports a dent in a police car to IA, and is found at fault, that officer will have to pay to fix the car. The officer also believed that NPD uses a mechanic who unfairly inflates the prices of such repairs. Issues like these seemed unfair to the officers.

Another officer offered a similar example. According to this individual, IA suspended an officer for crashing a car while attempting to provide backup to his or her partner. This policy, the individual stated, incentivizes officers to proceed overly slowly and cautiously to situations requiring backup. This jeopardizes the officer who needs backup. Officers also do not want to crash cars because it is too much hassle and paperwork, even if the chase is justified.

There was agreement within this group that veteran officers have more support from supervisors. Officers feel that they get IOP'd (IA investigation) for any perceived infraction and they are not given a verbal reprimand the first time they commit an infraction. The officers stated that if an officer will be investigated if that officer commits a minor infraction such as not wearing their hat at all times, they will be investigated by IA. Sometimes they will IOP everyone on the scene, even if an officer wasn't involved. The officers felt that if they "mess up one little thing," even if they are an exceptional officer, NPD leadership will not support them. One officer stated:

That's the negative part of that. That's why I can see an officer thinking that they don't want to do this if they keep on getting complaints. If they're not going to be taken off my jacket when they're found false, and the person isn't being fined anything for false accusations or false reports, what's the point of it? That's basically saying I could walk down the street and someone could read my name and say this person did this, this officer did this to me, and they're going to entertain it. (Agreement) I don't even know this person from a can of paint and I'm still going to get charge with whatever the person accused me of. That's the only negative part of that.

All of the officers believed that the Division unfairly "entertains" false complaints. One officer stated:

Personally, my thing with the department was, "How could you even entertain this bullshit?" You really took the time to entertain this bullshit. (Agreement) Especially with mine at the time. 2006, I was out and pregnant at the time and I get a call to come in to I.A.. I'm out of work, I'm pregnant. I'm huge. As big

as a house. I get to Internal Affairs and see "Criminal Complaint." Not just a regular demeanor. Criminal. Guy says that I came to his auto body shop in Irvington and took \$750 from the guy. Said I was a sergeant. I said, "You guys know I'm out and fucking huge as a house. Did you ask him if the officer was pregnant?" (Laughter) You took the time to take this. Yeah, I went into somebody's auto shop and said give \$750. (Joking) I'm pregnant. And you took the time to take this complaint knowing what you know.

2. Specialized Units

These officers stated that they get many false complaints, which make them feel less favorable toward the community. The officers expressed frustration that all complaints go to IA and stay in the officer's file, even if they are false. This invites repeated false complaints, they said, which can cause NPD leadership to think there is a problem when there really is none. The officers felt that if a citizen perceives that an NPD officer is disturbing their "illegal" business, they will retaliate by filing a complaint against the officer. They said that the narcotics division gets a lot of complaints, which no one wants to deal with. One officer stated:

My first complaint came from a guy who said I had an attitude problem. I was upset when I pulled him over but he failed to mention that he ran a stop sign and almost hit a little girl crossing the street. He didn't have a valid license.

3. Supervisors

The supervisors stated that officers are fed up and do not feel that it is fair that IA entertains bogus or nonsense complaints and this sours police officers on the process. They also stated that officers in general are frustrated that unsustained complaints stay on their records.

The supervisors also stated that officers believe that the people they arrest will try to discredit the officer by filing a false complaint, in hopes that the officer will not testify in his or her criminal case. They believed that it is too easy for civilians to file false complaints on NPD's website and smartphone application, and in particular that Millennials who "live on their phones and did not get what they wanted," will file such complaints. They also expressed frustration that there are no consequences for filing false complaints. For this reason, the supervisors want more cameras and technology in order to disprove false complaints. One officer stated:

Personally, my thing with the department was, "How could you even entertain this bullshit?" You really took the time to entertain this bullshit. (Agreement) Especially with mine at the time. 2006, I was out and pregnant at the time and I get a call to come in to I.A.. I'm out of work, I'm pregnant. I'm huge. As big as a house. I get to Internal Affairs and see "Criminal Complaint." Not just a regular demeanor. Criminal. Guy says that I came to his auto body shop in Irvington and took \$750 from the guy. Said I was a sergeant. I said, "You guys know I'm out and fucking huge as a house. Did you ask him if the officer was pregnant?" (Laughter) You took the time to take this. Yeah, I went into somebody's auto shop and said give \$750. (Joking) I'm pregnant. And you took the time to take this complaint knowing what you know.

2. Specialized Units

The officers stated that they get a lot of complaints that are false and it makes you less favorable toward the community because people file complaints to get out of what they

did wrong. All complaints go to IA and some individuals will keep complaining and it is a lie but the leadership thinks that there is something wrong with the officer and IA flags the situation and it stays in an officer's file. Officers are disturbing someone's illegal business and, in turn, individuals will do the same to the officer. Narcotics get a lot of complaints and no police officer wants to deal with that. One officer stated:

My first complaint came from a guy who said I had an attitude problem. I was upset when I pulled him over but he failed to mention that he ran a stop sign and almost hit a little girl crossing the street. He didn't have a valid license.

3. Supervisors

The supervisors stated that officers are fed up and do not feel that it is fair that IA entertains bogus or nonsense complaints and this sours police officers on the process because when they lock up an individual, that individual will go to IA and try to discredit the officer so the officer cannot testify. There is also a less favorable view of IA because non-sense complaints do not come off your record. The officers can have a less favorable view with the department because officers can be subjected to police trials and suspensions and have a less favorable view of IA because they entertain "bogus" complaints. There are a lot of complaints that cannot be proven or disproved so the complaint is unsustainable. It is easy for an individual to file a bogus complaint because it is on the police website and there is an app and Millennials who live on their phones and did not get what they wanted, will file a complaint. Also officers felt that residents lie and there are no consequences and are not charged with filing a false complaint. If an officer receives three complaints in six months, the supervisor has to monitor that officer on a monthly basis. Cameras and technology are actually good because they can disprove some complaints. A supervisor can also file bogus complaints against an officer and it goes to IA. One officer stated:

I think it is a less favorable view of IA. (Agreement) I don't think of the department as a whole, I think it's more Internal Affairs. Just the other day they generated a complaint against an officer because two people are involved in a fight and they're both at the scene. We don't arrest here for simple assault. So the person working in IA, that was the complaint. They complained that the officer didn't lock up the other person in a fight. We don't lock anyone up here. That's policy for simple assault.

D. Training

Question 7: Nearly half of officers disagreed with the statement that they receive training from the department that helps them do their job. What are your thoughts on this?

Follow-up included:

- What about the amount of training?
- What about the quality of the training?
- What about the relevance of the training?
- What about officer training would you like to see changed to make it effective?
- Does the department explain why they are giving you a particular form of training?
- And does the department give officers a voice in the training that they receive?

1. Patrol Officers

This focus group stated that officers are sent to academies that do not help train officers for Newark. Newark does not operate its own academy. Most of the information does not apply to the officers (ex. cat in the tree, electricity is out). Officers learn the most amount of training on the job from their partners. When officers attend other academies, these academies often talk down to Newark officers and say, "Well, you're from Newark, so your stuff is all messed up." The officers agreed that they need Newark specific training. Also, instead of walking, officers should be inside the radio car and they can learn the car and provide faster backup if necessary. Walking officers also have to wear green vests, which some officers feel makes them targets. Although some officers did acknowledge that walking tours help those officers who do not know Newark, get to know Newark.

In order to receive training, an officer has to pay for it himself and request days off to attend the training. Smaller towns in New Jersey get more training than the NPD. There is no ESR training (how to arrest an individual). Some departments spend anywhere from 8 hours to two weeks with this training and in Newark, officers are told to watch a YouTube training and some are not even given the passcode. These officers requested defensive tactic training, how to disarm individuals, and would like to have a K-9 unit so that they do not have to wait for the Essex County canine unit to arrive. Other cities have three or four weeks of training and the officers would like the training the ESU and SWAT receive (they receive training on a monthly basis). The only training officers receive after the academy is qualifying their gun twice per year. These officers would like to see training at least twice per month for 1-2 days. Officers also feel that they do not receive explanations about the training that they are attending. They are told at roll call to report to a site and if they are late, they will be charged. The officers think there is no training because of lack of funds and resources. The department's training is to learn as you go and hands-on and the officers are frustrated because they want to refresh on certain topics but they cannot do this.

The group was surprised that 100% did not say they needed more training. These officers felt that they needed a lot of training post academy. Some of the trainings include a defensive driving course and CPR (certifications have expired) and the officers cannot assist a victim once they reach the scene. These officers would like real training, not just a piece of paper that they have to sign. There is plenty of training available but the department does not have the funds for it. The training that officers receive from other instructors from other departments has been good (ex. the report writing training with the officer from Jersey City).

2. Specialized Units

This group felt that the training they receive as officers is not adequate. One officer stated that he or she had 23 years on the job and he or she could count how many times he or she has been trained on one hand. In order to go to trainings and obtain certifications, officers have to pay for it themselves. An officer gave an example of how narcotic units are being put in all precincts and the majority of officers assigned to these units have no

time on the job and supervisors that have never worked in narcotics. The department is putting people in a spot and there is pressure to bring in numbers. Plain-clothes officers have unmarked cars that are not working so they are in a marked car with plain clothes. How are they supposed to do their jobs effectively? The academy (academies outside of Newark) also taught officers one way and an officer comes to Newark and has to do it the Newark way. Officers do the best they can with what they have. These police officers feel that they are doing the best they can with what they have. The department also relies on individuals who show promise in a certain task but that individual will still need training. The officers stated that they need more training on narcotics, record checks and fingerprints, crime scene reconstruction and how to use radar. Officers also agreed that they should be made aware of training that exists via email. These officers agreed that some officers also get all of the training and the officers who would benefit from it the most, do not get any training because often times the department does not want to take officers off of patrol.

3. Supervisors

One supervisor stated that he or she got promoted to supervisor and received no training. The person who occupied that position previously was around for two days and that was it. Supervisors stated that they have requested to go to specific trainings and have received no response from the leadership; they have to learn on the job and that is not right. The supervisors agree that even the training received goes back to favoritism and politics because officers that are sent to trainings and obtain certifications are special. One supervisor stated that he or she had a "hook" at one time and was able to go to whatever training she wanted to go to but he or she always took his or her partner. Individuals also go to training and it has nothing to do with their assignment. These officers obtain certifications that allow them to train at any academy in the state. Most of the supervisors stated that officers receive on the job training and have no idea what to do their first day. These officers should receive training before being put into a specialized unit. For new equipment, one person is trained and then has to train everyone else (train the trainer). This group stated that patrol officers do not receive enough training and should receive training on how to do a motor vehicle stop, move prisoners from one spot to another, how to do a pat down (the supervisors stated that they have found a lot of guns in cars, which means that the officer did not pat down the suspect effectively), firearms training, arrest and control tactics, policies, procedures, laws, report writing, etc. Also when officers are trained at academies in the suburbs they do not receive Newark specific training and NPD should have a field-training program. Some officers do not know how to fill out the correct paperwork on a scene or even an overtime slip. The department does not effectively communicate how the training will help an officer. Officers will get roll call trainings but the NPD needs to invest in its officers. The leadership only cares about how many calls for service and there is also no training for patrol because the leadership does not want to have to cover a patrol officer's spot while that officer is in training because it costs too much. However, a highly trained officer is more effective in the long run because it can save a police officer or citizen's life or make the officer happier or better at his/her job. One supervisor stated that since 1997, there have been approximately 2000 director memos and chief memos that often contradict one another. One officer stated:

They're going to these college campuses for academies now that are in the suburbs so they're not exposed to the stuff that you see even if you go to the Essex County Police Department. It's in Cedar Grove. People that are teaching them don't come from Newark. You don't know what we experience here. When I was training somebody, the way he was standing...I was like, "You can't talk to people like that. That's not realistic. All your asking is your back turned this way and you're going to get shot from this way." And he said, "In the academy they taught you that they'll shoot you this way." No. You can't turn your back to certain people even when you're going in certain places. They don't know how to teach them the way people from here. We know because we are exposed to it and we live it. It should be training so that when you get out of the academy you're trained for here.

E. Officer Residency

Question 8: The survey results showed that officers who live in Newark reported greater confidence in department leadership compared to officers who did not live in the city. What do you believe accounts for this difference?

1. Patrol Officers

Some of the officers in this group did not agree with the statement made in the question above. One officer felt that the statement should be reversed because if officers live here then they know what is going on or the politics that go with leadership. Another officer thought that if he or she chose to live here then he or she should receive a better position within the NPD. The leadership should say, "Hey, I want you to be one of my community guys," because you know the city. He or she also saw a lot of officers move out of the city because there is a big difference between going home at night to Newark with the sirens and someone else going home to Woodbury. This group of officers had a mixed reaction to the question as well. One officer stated that when an officer moves out of the city, he or she is not thinking about the city anymore because if the officer lives here, he or she sees what is going on every day and he or she sees the neighbor selling drugs and the officer tells the neighbor not to sell drugs. A new officer saw a leadership that wanted to transform the department and stated that the leadership was trying to build morale. Other officers felt that it was too much for an officer to live in the city that he or she works in and an officer grew up in Newark but as time goes by officers need to relocate because it may not be safe to live in Newark. Officers lock up a lot of people and those individuals get out and an officer never knows if he or his family will be retaliated against. Another officer expressed that he or she needed to get away and relax from the job and have peace of mind. The officer does not want to hear the sirens 24/7 or want your children to be influenced by some youth in Newark. Some of the officers still live here, some in the hood and some in nice places, but some officers choose to move for family or school reasons. One officer who was a correctional officer before he became a Newark police officer, worked with juveniles and now the youth are older and he or she sees that they are doing the same things. Most of the officers in this group did not agree with the statement in the question. One officer expressed that if you are born and raised here and live here, it is easier for an officer because he or she is from the streets and get acclimated to them. They know the ins and outs but that can be dangerous as well.

2. Specialized Units

These officers stated that officers tend to move out of Newark when they have a family and that officers have greater confidence because they have experience. Often times officers are playing verbal judo with residents and residents can smell if you do not know the streets from a block away. The officers suggested that if you are not from the city, you should move here and get acclimated to how things work.

3. Supervisors

One supervisor stated that officers have a bias because they live in Newark. The supervisors stated that officers were not truthful on the surveys because they are scared of repercussions and believed that the leadership can figure out who said it.

Follow up Question: Do you feel that it is important that NPD officers live in the city? Why or why not?

Officers thought that it was important to at least know the city and that at some point officers should live in Newark but then they move out because of their safety and that if you receive the proper tools and training to police in Newark, it should not make a difference. Another officer stated that he/she was born here, so he or she knows the struggles and another officer understood the struggles because he or she is a minority. The officers agreed that there are some officers who do not identify with the issues in Newark and it is a culture shock to them when they start to police here. One officer stated:

It's kind of on that level. I always thought that if you live here and you were police, you should be able to get better positions within the police department. And the reason I say that is because you're here, you walk home, you see what's going on, you see the bullets firing, you see the fire trucks, you're here. You don't escape it, you know what I'm saying? You're here. Those are the guys that you should reach out and say, "Hey, I want you to be one of my community guys." But it's been the other way around.

The supervisor group stated that officers tend to move out of Newark when they have a family, kids and want a change of scenery. They want their kids to experience life in the suburbs. One supervisor stated that officers who stay can become victims of violence have to send their kids to private schools. Officers are going to leave when they can because a lot of stuff gets stolen in Newark and there are forces larger than the average Joe that decides when Newark will experience redevelopment.