

## Chicago Police Officer Survey 2013

This evaluation focuses on the Chicago Police Department's efforts to reshape its relationship with minority communities in Chicago and reset the character of its internal supervisory and decision-making processes. In both instances they plan to do so by adopting a procedural justice framework, externally for guiding how Chicago police deal with the public, and internally for guiding how police deal with one another. The 2013 officer survey examined officers' views of the department's plans for both internal and external change.

The survey was conducted independently of the Chicago Police Department, but with the endorsement of the agency. The CPD played no role in determining the content of the survey. It was supported by the John D. And Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Joyce Foundation. During the course of the study (which involves other evaluation activities), stakeholders have been provided with feedback based on its findings. A formal report on the findings will be submitted to all stakeholders at the end of the project, and scholarly materials will be prepared for publication.

### Survey Procedures



**QforU**  
*Quality in Chicago Policing*

**What is QforU?**  
QforU is a research study of line officers working in the districts. It is a chance to speak directly to quality issues in policing, reporting how it is working where you are.

**What topics does the survey cover?**  
Promotions, assignments, morale, discipline, your supervisors, CompStat, public support, risks of the job...and more!

**Can anyone participate?**  
Officers and sergeants will be selected at random to represent each district. Only those who are sampled are eligible, so that we get a fair picture of opinion. If you are selected, you will be notified by your district liaison. You are not required to participate if you are sampled; it is your choice.

**Can I be identified?**  
No! Your answers will be completely anonymous and confidential! The selection of officers is being done using anonymous, random numbers. Officers will be invited to participate with an unidentified postcard that proposes an interview day when project staff are scheduled to be in your district. There is no link whatsoever between you, the random number, the postcard, or the results of the survey.

**Why should I participate?**  
This is an opportunity for you to give your views on topics that are important to Chicago police officers today. Coffee and donuts will be served, too!

Interviews were conducted in each of the city's 22 police district stations. Roll call presentations, flyers and wall posters were used to promote participation in the survey. At each station we randomly selected officers and sergeants in fixed proportions from the current duty roster. Sampled employees were notified of their opportunity to participate in the survey, and interviews were conducted during their regular tour of duty. The survey was presented on laptop computers, with a capacity to accommodate up to eight respondents at any point in time. We made repeat visits to each district, balanced across all three daily shifts, until the targeted number of interviews with randomly selected respondents was completed. The response rate was about 30 percent. In total, 714 officers (619 Police Officers and 95 Sergeants) were interviewed. Field work for the survey was managed by the Survey Research Laboratory of the University of Illinois-Chicago.

## Survey Topics

The survey included 120 questions addressing the following issues:

1. *Job satisfaction.* In research, job satisfaction is strongly correlated with a long list of important organizational factors, ranging from attendance to productivity and employee retention. The survey examines about satisfaction with their job assignment, pay, benefits, and career prospects.
2. *Organizational initiatives.* These include CompStat, training in procedural justice and legitimacy issues, and community policing.
3. *Fairness in organizational processes.* The survey addresses the perceived fairness and effectiveness of the department's disciplinary process, promotions, and the allocation of job assignments.
4. *Organizational Justice.* The survey addresses agency-employee issues using the multiple dimensions that constitute procedural justice.

*Participation* addresses giving employees the opportunity to express opinions about a problem or situation while supervisors are making a decision.

*Neutrality* calls for consistency and even-handedness in decision-making across persons (equal treatment for all) and across time (the same procedures are followed every time).

*Accountability* requires that supervisors are transparent regarding their motives and give a reasoned basis for their decisions and behavior.

*Respect* encompasses being treated with dignity and respect, concern about individual rights, and politeness and other routine interactional signs of respect.

*Trust* is evidenced when supervisors treat employees as if they can be trusted to "do the right thing."

5. *Compliance with department policies and the instructions of supervisors.* In principle, in procedurally just organizations employees should feel responsible for obeying the organization's rules and supporting its policies.

6. *Support for the current strategic direction of the department.*

7. *Procedural Justice.* They survey also addresses officer's views of their relationship with the public in light of procedural justice theory.

*Voice* addresses giving citizens an opportunity to express opinions about a problem or situation while officers are making a decision.

*Neutrality* calls for consistency and even-handedness in decision-making across persons (equal treatment for all) and across time (the same procedures are followed every time).

*Accountability* requires that officers are clear regarding their motives and give citizens a reasoned basis for their decisions and behavior.

*Respect* encompasses treating citizens with dignity and respect, concern about respecting their, and politeness and other routine interactional signs of respect.

*Trust* is evidenced when officers treat citizens as if they can be trusted to “do the right thing.”

*Moral solidarity with the public* is expressed when officers believe the community generally shares their values, and that they are representing the public in their policing efforts.

8. *Responsiveness to citizens.* Among the issues are officer support for involving the public in setting priorities and responding to the public’s priority problems.

9. *Employee representation.* Questions assess the extent to which officers value union representation and feel that the union represents their interests effectively.

10. *Workload pressure.* In this study the issue is the extent to which workload-related pressure (answering calls, meeting quotas) interferes with efforts to act in accord with procedural justice concerns.

11. *Risks of the job.* Danger is always present in law enforcement, and where it is high the attitudes of police towards citizens can feature suspicion and distrust. The research question is the extent to which perceptions of risk interfere with efforts to act in accord with procedural justice principles.

12. *Tolerance for use of force.* The survey assesses officer’s views of the extent to which the department’s use of force policies are appropriately restrictive.

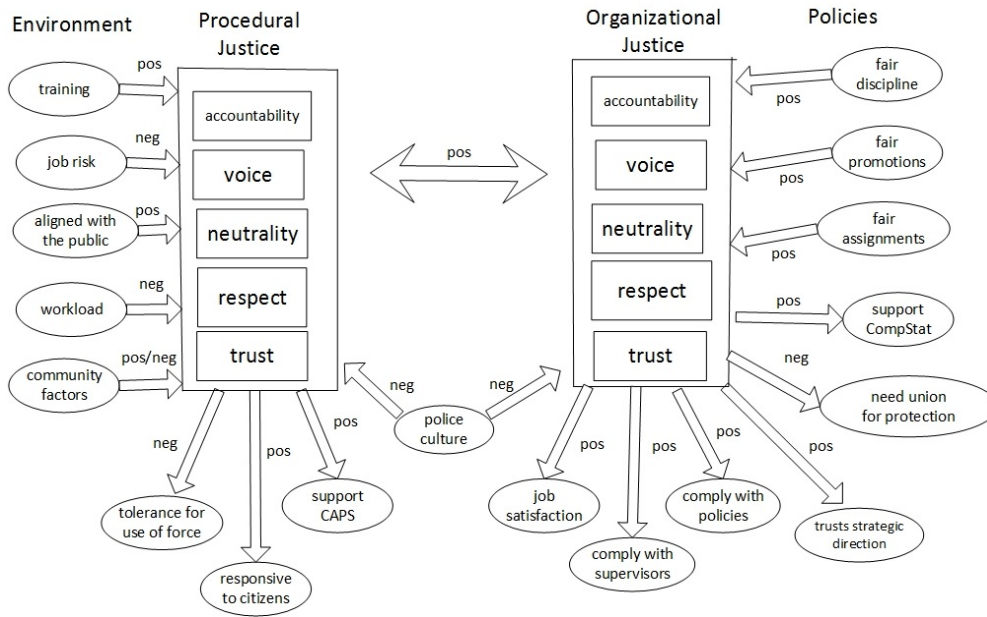
13. *Organizational culture.* Among the dimensions of police culture measured in this survey are solidarity, out-group status, isolation from the community, cynicism with regard to the organization and their superiors, and glorification of their crime fighting role (in contrast to the mundane duties that take up much of their time).

## **Analysis**

Analytically, the concepts measured in the officer survey should be linked as depicted in the diagram below.

The stance of officers on the core dimensions of internal procedural justice should reflect their perceptions of department policies and procedures, and the effectiveness of union representation. Internal legitimacy should in turn be linked to job satisfaction and compliance with department policies and supervisors.

Officer’s views of external legitimacy should reflect their workload, perceived support by the public, procedural justice training, perceived job risks, and features of their work environment (“context” in the diagram). External legitimacy should in turn be linked to reduced tolerance for use of force, responsiveness to citizens, and support for community policing. The five elements of police culture could effect perceptions of both internal and external procedural justice concerns.



Finally, the data will be used to test a “grand hypothesis” of procedural justice theory – that internal, organizational justice is required before external, procedural justice can be assured (as one police chief put it, “we can’t kick their asses until they are nice to people”)

**Note**

Important aspects of this survey are being replicated in a parallel study of policing in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This study is directed by Dr. Nicole Haas of Erasmus University, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Justice and Security of the City of Buenos Aires. The Ministry is extremely interested in forming cooperative links with the Chicago police through this kind of evaluation research.