

Office of Professional Accountability

2013 Annual Report

Complaint Statistics



Issued by

Director Pierce Murphy

February 23, 2015

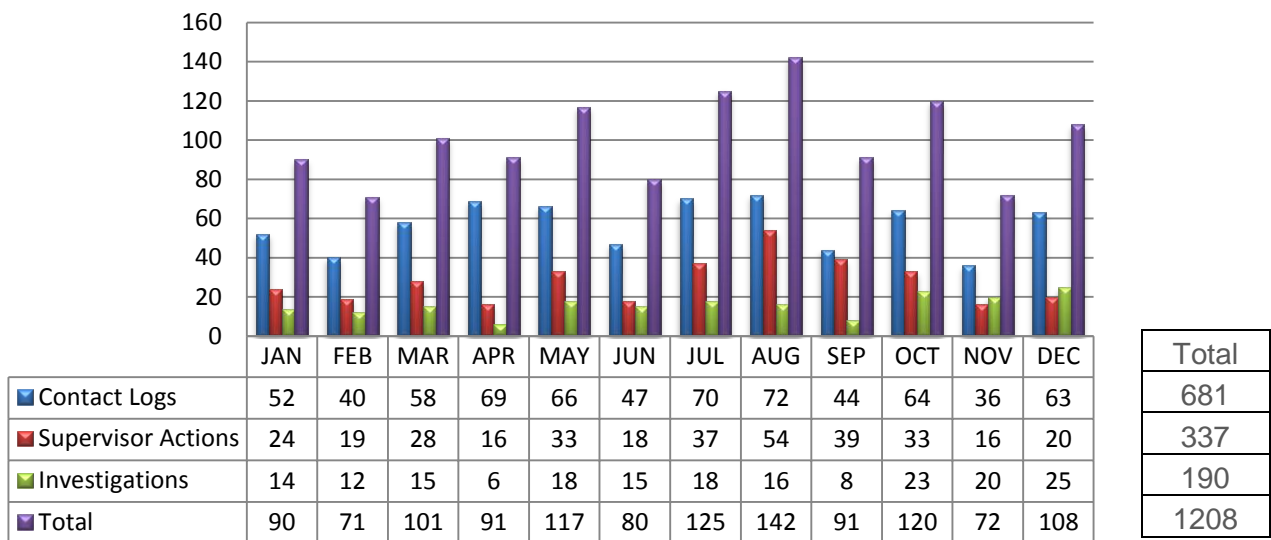
MESSAGE FROM OPA DIRECTOR PIERCE MURPHY

It has been my pleasure to serve as the OPA Director since I was appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council on July 1, 2013. My goals for the Office of Professional Accountability are for it to be accessible, transparent and trusted. Nothing is more important than building trust. OPA will gain your trust by giving public complaints and internal referrals full, fair and complete consideration.

The following pages contain data for the year 2013 for cases handled by OPA.

BY THE NUMBERS

OPA Cases Opened in 2013



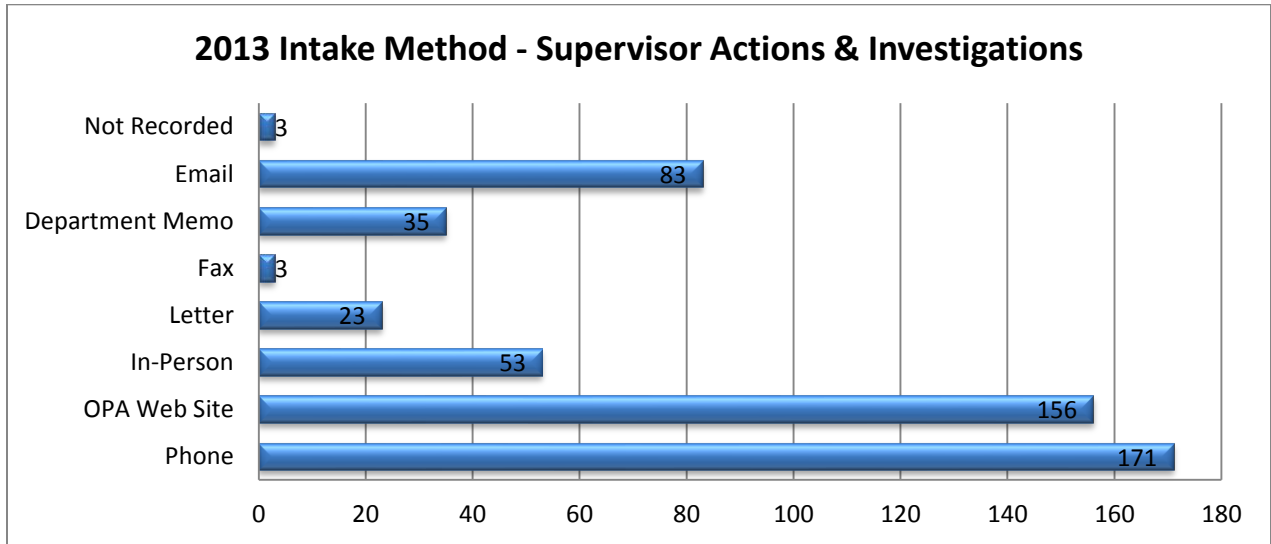
The Office of Professional Accountability (OPA) records every contact made to the office and in 2013, OPA received a total of 1208 contacts from the community. The OPA Director reviews every contact made to the office to ensure that each is handled properly. Contacts that are not complaints or that do not fall within the jurisdiction of OPA are considered “Contact Logs”. There were 681 such Contact Logs in 2013.

Complaints that do not allege serious misconduct are referred to the employee’s supervisor as a “Supervisor Action.” The supervisor has 60 days to address the issue with the employee and respond to the complainant. This turn-around time has since been shortened to 30 days. OPA then reviews the actions taken by the supervisor to ensure the complaint was addressed properly. In 2013, there were 337 contacts handled as “Supervisor Action.”

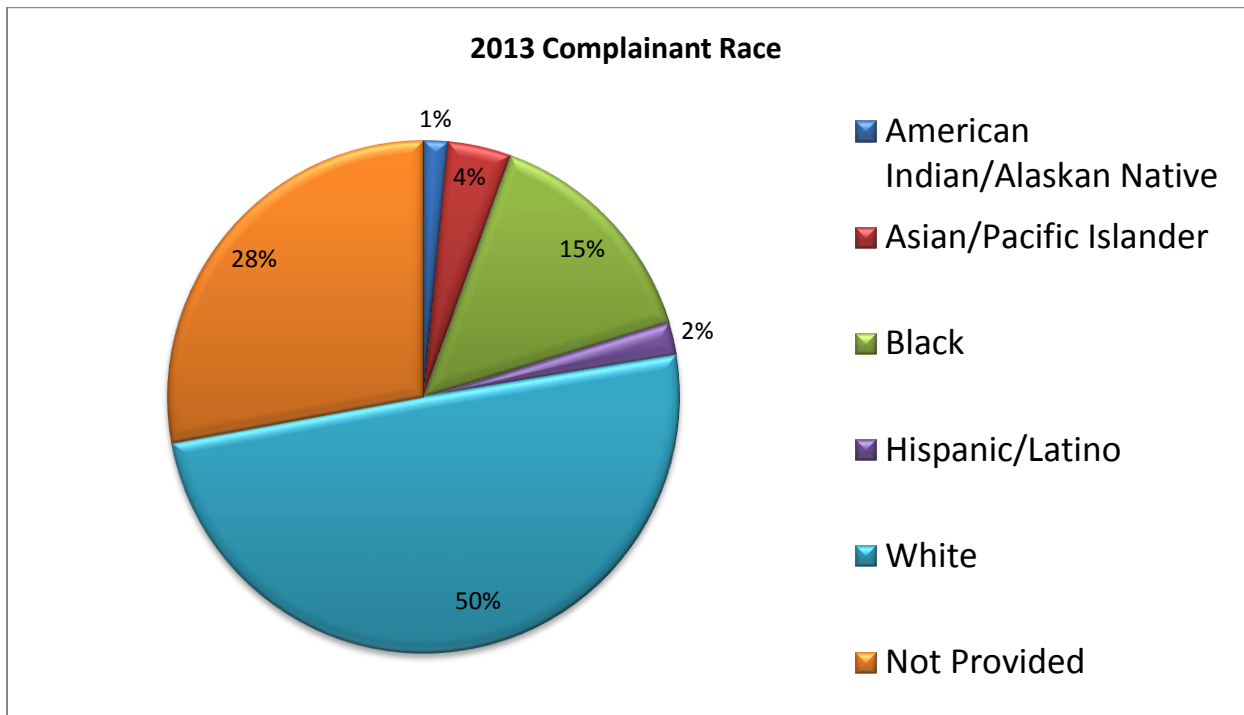
Complaints that are of greater severity are taken as an “Investigation.” In 2013, 190 complaints were fully investigated. OPA works to complete the investigation of the allegations of misconduct within 180 days. All investigations in 2013 resulting in a sustained finding were completed within the 180 day deadline specified by the Seattle Police Officers Guild (SPOG) contract for cases where discipline is to be imposed. Included in this 180 day period are the

various layers of review and decision making that must take place from the initiation of the complaint, through the completion of the actual investigation, and the notice of pending discipline to the named employee. There are no contractual requirements with respect to completion of cases with no sustained findings. The average time that OPA took to complete its investigations in 2013 was 185 days. All cases that took longer than 180 days did not have sustained findings. During 2013, OPA’s timeliness notifying employees and complainants regarding the outcome of OPA investigations fell below expectations. Clearly, we need to do better.

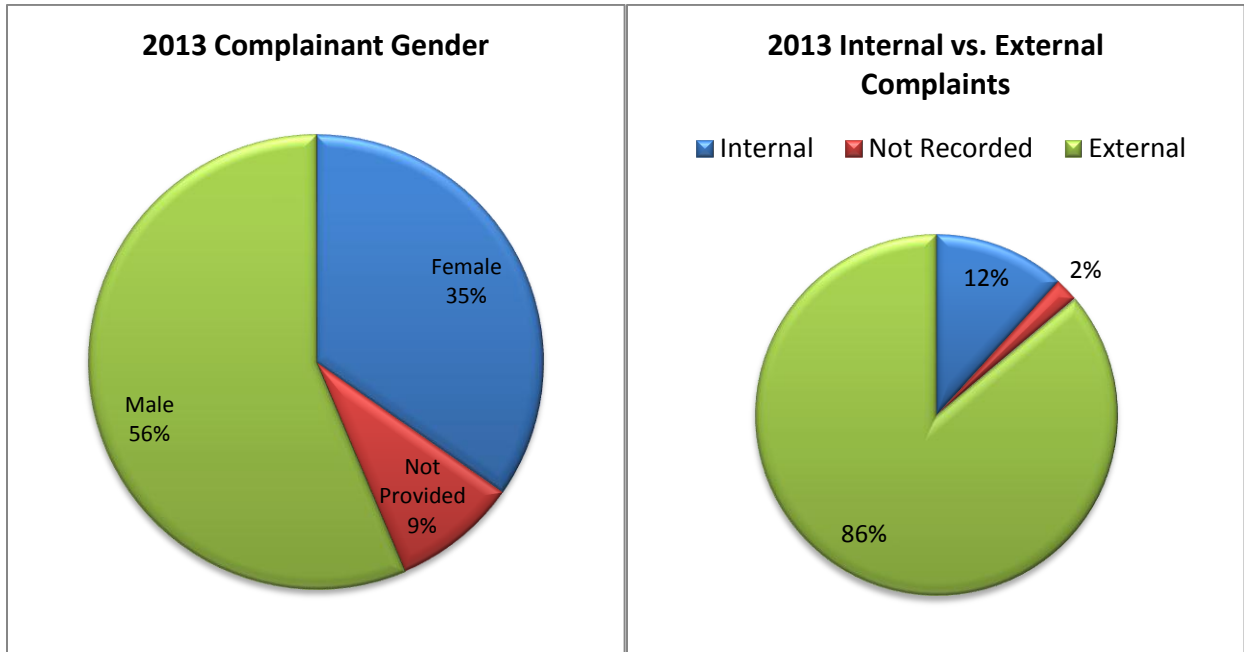
HOW THE CASES WERE RECEIVED



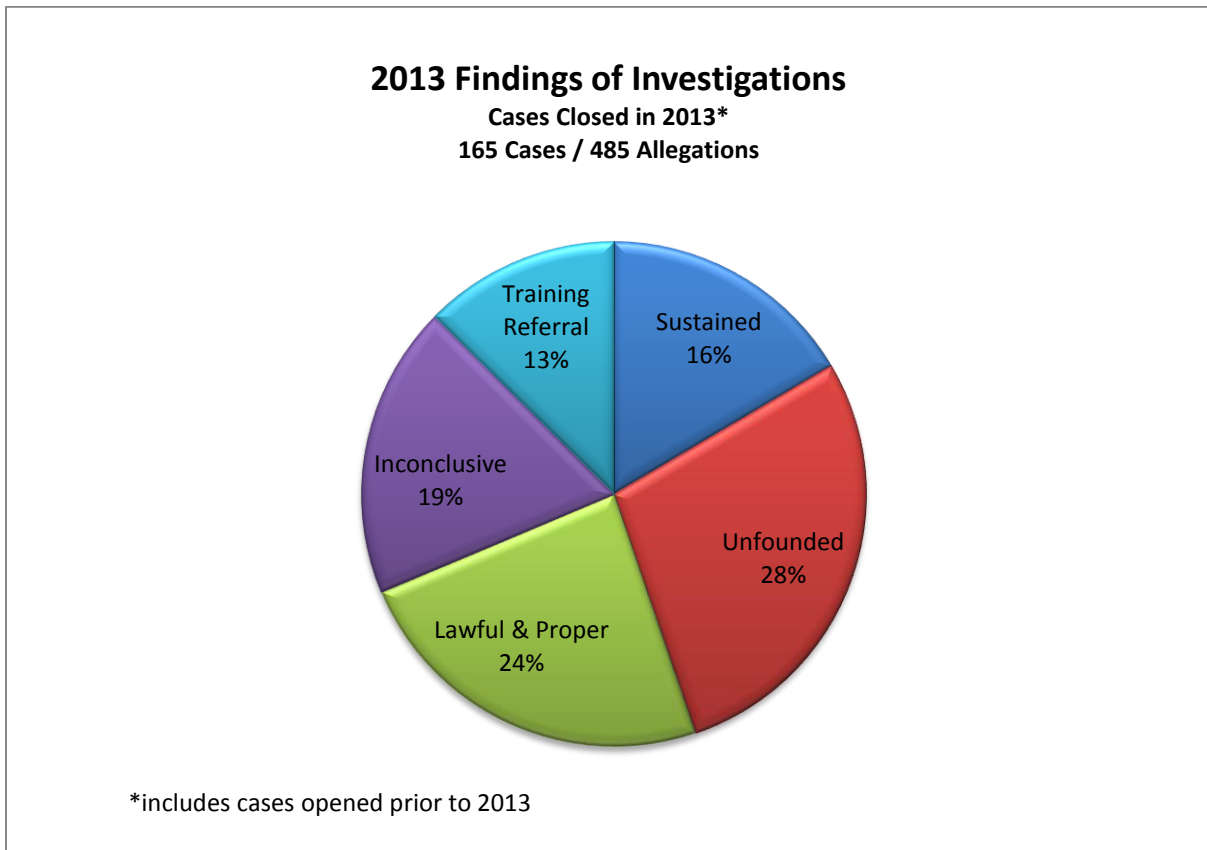
SUPERVISOR ACTION AND INVESTIGATION COMPLAINTS



SUPERVISOR ACTION AND INVESTIGATION COMPLAINTS



HOW THE CASES WERE CLOSED



WHAT DO THE FINDINGS MEAN?

“**Inconclusive**” means the allegation of misconduct was neither proved nor disproved by a preponderance of the evidence.

“**Lawful and Proper**” means a preponderance of evidence indicates the conduct alleged did occur, but that the conduct was justified, lawful and proper.

“**Sustained**” means the allegation of misconduct is supported by a preponderance of the evidence.

“**Training Referral**” means while there may have been a violation of policy, it was not a willful violation, and/or the violation did not amount to misconduct. The employee’s chain of command is to provide appropriate training, counseling and/or to review for deficient policies or inadequate training.

“**Unfounded**” means a preponderance of evidence indicates the alleged act did not occur as reported or classified, or is false.

Note: These findings categories have since been consolidated into two primary findings of “sustained” and “not sustained.” This change was approved in August of 2014 by the Monitor and Federal Judge overseeing the Settlement Agreement between the City and the U.S. Department of Justice.

FINAL THOUGHTS

There was a great amount of transition for OPA in 2013, including a change in leadership. As I began to chart my own course, I spent a significant amount of time working with the Police Department, the U.S. Department of Justice, the Monitor, the OPA Auditor, and the Community Police Commission formulating SPD’s new Use-of-Force policies, force investigations protocols, and the creation of a first draft of OPA’s Internal Training and Operations Manual. I look forward to many more advancements to be made in the future.