

Biased Policing Task Force

Data Analysis Sub-Committee Recommendations

DENVER POLICE DEPARTMENT DATA ANALYSIS STANDARDS

1) Data Analysis Committee Representation

- a) Metropolitan State College
- b) University of Colorado
- c) Colorado School of Mines
- d) Colorado Civil Rights Commission
- e) Colorado Coalition for Youth
- f) Colorado Progressive Coalition
- g) Denver Human Rights Commission
- h) Manager of Safety's Office
- i) Neighborhood organizations
- j) Mental Health Services
- k) Metro Gang Coalition
- l) Public Safety Review Commission
- m) Denver Police Officers
- n) U.S. Department of Justice
- o) Youth Biz

2) Baseline assumptions

- a) Data collection may not reveal the existence or non-existence of biased policing and in either case will not prove causation.
- b) Data collection is not the solution to the problem of biased policing.
 - i) Training, providing good customer service, and enforcing the laws in a fair and equitable manner is the answer.
- c) The deployment of police officers is based upon calls for service and the community's demand for addressing specific crime and quality of life issues.
 - i) Police activity will be higher in those areas where demand (calls for service from the community) is greatest.
 - ii) Often those areas are more economically challenged and consist of a more diverse population.
 - iii) Therefore, the selection of comparison baseline data should account for the community's request for service.
 - iv) Further, baseline information should be derived from sources where police discretion was not a component; examples could include victim reported data, traffic accident/hit and run data, non-discretionary arrests (burglary, robbery, sex assaults, domestic violence), and citizen reports of narcotic activity or traffic complaints.
- d) Because data will be collected at the precinct level, analytical comparison should be based on a number of different measures at the precinct, district and city-wide levels.

3) Mission Driven Data Comparison

- a) The activity of the agency and the analysis of citizen contact data should be compared to its mission of:
 - i) Promoting public safety
 - ii) Reducing crime
 - iii) Addressing quality of life issues
 - iv) Equitable enforcement of the law
- b) This approach requires addressing traffic and suspicious person/vehicle contacts separately because of the difference in the mission of these policing activities.

DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

4) Time frame for collection and analysis

- a) A meaningful analysis of contact data will require the collection of information for no less than one year.
- b) This will allow for an adequate amount of contact data to be collected as well as the comparative measures.
- c) This time frame will also average out the effects of special events (Cinco de Mayo, Juneteenth, etc.) or directed patrol activities (DUI enforcement campaigns).
- d) It also takes into consideration seasonal variations in crime and enforcement activities.

5) Comparative measures

- a) Traffic related contacts
 - i) Contacts that are traffic related should be compared to the mission of promoting the motoring public's safety. These contacts should be compared to those who are committing traffic violations collected from the demographics and locations as reported in:
 - 1. Accident reports
 - 2. Hit and run reports
 - 3. DUI Accidents / Arrests
 - 4. Citizen traffic complaints
- b) Suspicious activity (crime-related) contacts
 - i) Contacts that are initiated to address crime and quality of life issues should be compared to:
 - 1. Victimization data
 - a. Reports by the crime victims as to the location and race/ethnicity of the suspects
 - 2. Gang related incidents
 - 3. Citizen complaints of narcotics activity
 - 4. Recovery of illegal weapons data
 - 5. Non-discretionary arrest and summons data
 - a. Those arrests upon which the officer has little or no discretion, such as:
 - i. Domestic violence
 - ii. Assault / Sexual assault
 - iii. Robbery / Theft
 - iv. Burglary
 - v. Criminal mischief / Vandalism / Graffiti

6) Auditing

- a) Teams should be formed to perform random audits to insure the integrity of the data collection effort.
- b) Team members would be pairs of officers and citizens.

7) Information availability

- a) Full reporting of the analyzed information would be posted on a non-police internet web site (possibly a university web site).

PROBLEMS WITH NATIONAL DATA ANALYSIS EFFORTS

8) Demographic (Census Data) Comparisons

- a) Comparison of police contact activity against census data is based on the assumption that police departments should be contacting citizens in near proportion to the census demographics.
- b) This assumption is problematic because:
 - i) Census data is reflective of who resides in a particular area, not who may be present in that neighborhood at a given point in time. An example of this would be downtown areas or business districts in which few people reside, but are heavily populated during business hours.
 - ii) This standard is based on the premise that citizens reside in the same area in which they are contacted by police and does not take into account the mobile nature of today's society, particularly in the case of traffic stops. For example, the driving population on a major thoroughfare is very a different demographic than that of the surrounding neighborhood which is derived from census information.
 - iii) There is no nationally accepted percentage of difference between the number of police contacts and census population that will give rise to the conclusion of the existence or non-existence of *Biased Policing*?
 - iv) This standard is based on the presumption that police agencies **should** be contacting citizens in direct proportion to their residential demographics. But, that presumption is seriously flawed as it doesn't take into account the police mission or the demands of the community.