

SEATTLE POLICE DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

TO: Police Accountability Review Panel

DATE: November 1, 2007

FROM: Kathryn Olson

Director, Office of Professional Accountability

SUBJECT: Investigation Tenure and Average Investigation Time Comparisons

During the October 22, 2007 meeting of the Police Accountability Review Board, a question was asked about the assignment tenure of internal affairs investigators and the average timeline for case resolution in Seattle as compared to other jurisdictions. A review of comparable law enforcement agencies on the West Coast resulted in the information provided below.

Determining comparable time lines is difficult at best. Agencies use different variables for jurisdiction specific reasons when computing times such as intake, investigation, review time, etc. OPA has reported "investigative time" as the time between the point the case is assigned to an investigator until the time the investigator completes the investigation. In seeking information from the other jurisdictions, OPA asked about "investigative time," but cannot be sure other variables were not included.¹

Investigator Tenure and Average Investigation Time Comparisons

Agency	Investigator Status	Time-on Station	Average Investigation Length
Seattle PD	Rotational	Up to 5 years	Approx. 62 days ²
Long Beach PD	Rotational	2 years	Approx. 90 days
Portland PB	Permanent	None. Can request reassignment or be involuntarily reassigned. Current tenure approximately 2 years. Was 6-7 years with the previous commander.	Approx. 200 days (was at 270, goal is 180).
San Jose PD	Rotational	2 yrs	Approx. 180 days for Force cases and 300 days for "other."
San Francisco PD	Permanent	Officers are on a 2-yr loan and are held/released based on performance.	Approx. 180 days
Sacramento PD	Rotational	Sergeants assigned for 2 years and Officers for 1 year.	Approx. 180-240 days

¹ OPA currently is setting up a system to track complaints from time of receipt through investigation, review and, as applies, discipline.

² The current average investigation time in OPA is 62 days for 2007. However, this figure has ranged from 119 days in 2005 to 99 days in 2006.