

Oregon OSHA Compliance Officer Performance Survey, March 2000-February 2001

Research & Analysis Section

Department of Consumer & Business Services

November 2001

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The effectiveness of Oregon OSHA's enforcement program in reducing occupational injuries and illnesses depends to a large degree on the performance of its compliance officers inspecting Oregon workplaces. To assess the quality of work done by OR-OSHA compliance officers, an on-going survey is conducted by the department's Information Management Division. The results of the survey are provided to the Legislature and used to help guide the training of compliance officers in order to improve the effectiveness of OR-OSHA inspections.

Methods

Each year the survey is conducted for one-half of the compliance officers for one six-month period, and the rest for the next six-month period. This report covers inspections which took place in both periods, from March of 2000 through February of 2001. A questionnaire and cover letter were mailed following issuance of a citation (or closure, if no citation) for every inspection done by a compliance officer in a six-month period. The form was sent to the employer, or person who took the lead role in interacting with the compliance officer during the inspection. This person also received two reminder postcards, if necessary, to obtain a response.

Results

Of the 2,621 questionnaires mailed out, 1,964 were returned. Of these, 1,846 usable forms were obtained. Overall, responses to questions about the skills, knowledge, and attitude of compliance officers were favorable. As seen in the following tables and charts, over 90 percent of the responses for most questions were in categories such as excellent and good or very clear and fairly clear. Compliance officers were also given high ratings on a five-point scale for various characteristics, including professionalism, respectfulness, responsiveness, and reasonableness.

Question 1. Before the inspection began, was there an opening conference at the inspection location, that is, did the compliance officer take a few minutes to talk to you or an employer representative about the inspection?

Opening conference held

	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,762	96.5
No	55	3.0
By phone only	9	0.5
Total responses	1,826	100%
No answer	20	
Total surveys	1,846	

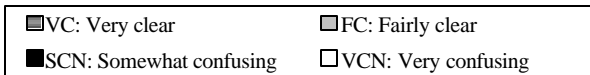
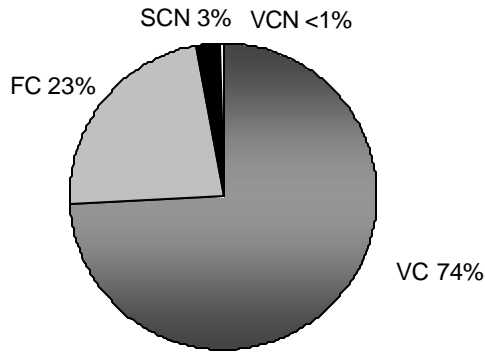
Question 1a. If a conference was held, did the compliance officer explain the reason for the inspection during the opening conference?

Inspection reason explained

	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,747	99.3
No	12	0.7
Total responses	1,759	100%
No opening conference	55	
No answer	32	
Total surveys	1,846	

Question 1b. If yes to question 1a, was the explanation very clear, fairly clear, somewhat confusing or very confusing to you?

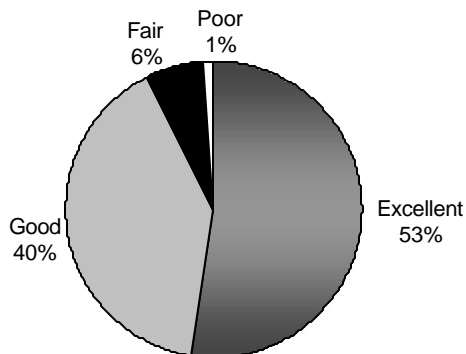
1b. Explanation of inspection



	No. of responses	Percent
Very clear	1,289	74.1
Fairly clear	400	23.0
Somewhat confusing	44	2.5
Very confusing	7	0.4
Total responses	1,740	100%
No opening conference	55	
No explanation	12	
No answer	39	
Total surveys	1,846	

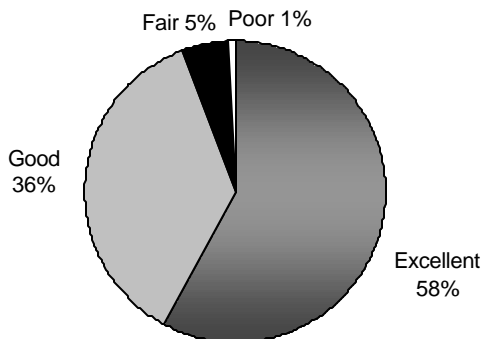
Question 2. Below is a list of statements that describe possible qualities of a compliance officer. Please rate the compliance officer as excellent, good, fair or poor.

2a. Level of familiarity with potential hazards in your workplace



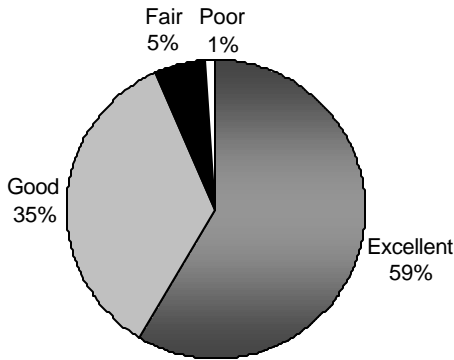
	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	961	52.5
Good	732	40.0
Fair	114	6.2
Poor	22	1.2
Total responses	1,829	100%
No answer	17	
Total surveys	1,846	

2b. Knowledge of applicable regulations



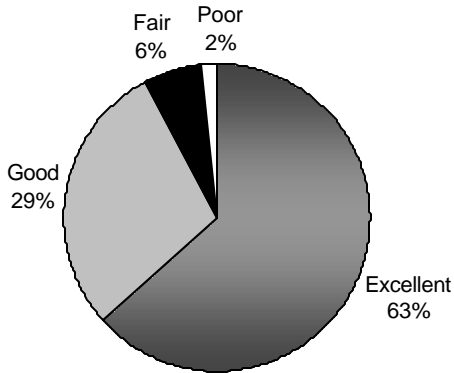
	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,054	57.7
Good	665	36.4
Fair	91	5.0
Poor	17	0.9
Total responses	1,827	100%
No answer	19	
Total surveys	1,846	

2c. Ability to explain rules



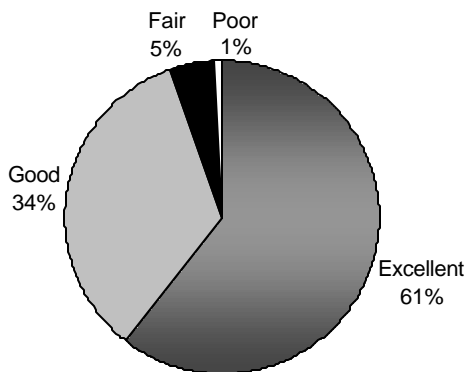
	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,072	58.7
Good	635	34.8
Fair	98	5.4
Poor	21	1.2
Total responses	1,826	100%
No answer	20	
Total surveys	1,846	

2d. Willingness to listen to and consider your concerns



	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,153	63.4
Good	527	29.0
Fair	108	5.9
Poor	32	1.8
Total responses	1,820	100%
No answer	26	
Total surveys	1,846	

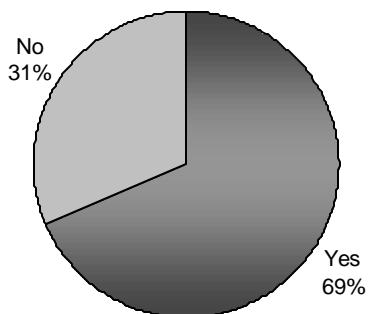
2e. Ability to explain any violations or potential hazards



	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,099	60.6
Good	616	34.0
Fair	82	4.5
Poor	17	0.9
Total responses	1,814	100%
No answer	32	
Total surveys	1,846	

Question 3. Did the compliance officer issue a citation for any violation(s) during this inspection?

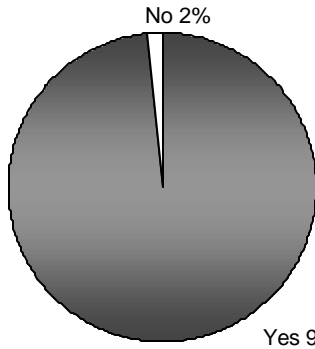
3. Citation issued



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,256	68.7
No	573	31.3
Total responses	1,829	100%
No answer	17	
Total surveys	1,846	

Question 3a. If yes to question 3, did the compliance officer explain each violation to you?

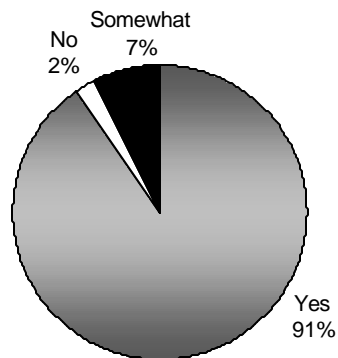
3a. Explanation for each cited violation



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,225	98.2
No	23	1.8
Total responses	1,248	100%
No citation	573	
No answer	25	
Total surveys	1,846	

Question 3b. If yes to question 3, was the compliance officer willing to work with you in seeking solutions to the problem?

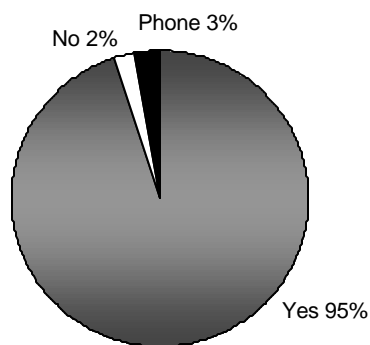
3b. Willingness to offer solutions



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,129	90.5
No	27	2.2
Somewhat	92	7.4
Total responses	1,248	100%
No citation	573	
No answer	25	
Total surveys	1,846	

Question 4. At the end of the inspection, was there a closing conference, that is, did the compliance officer take a few minutes to talk to you or an employer representative about the results of the inspection?

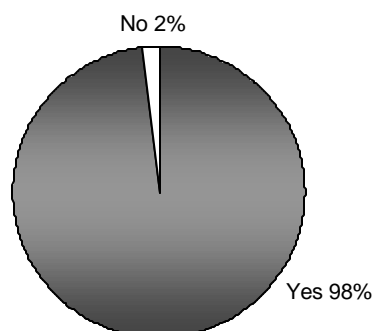
4. Closing conference held



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,735	95.0
No	39	2.1
Phone conference only	53	2.9
Total responses	1,827	100%
No answer	19	
Total surveys	1,846	

Question 4a. If a conference was held, were your rights and responsibilities explained during the closing conference?

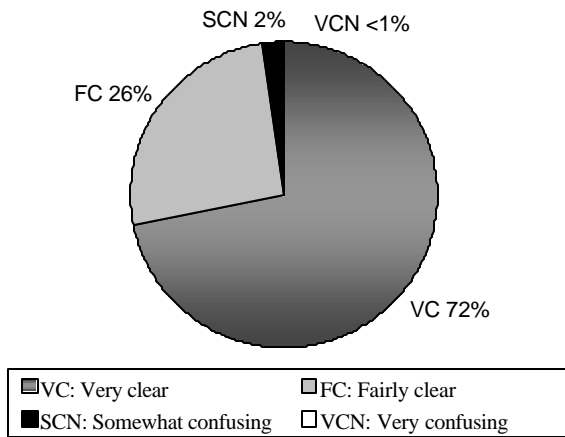
4a. Rights and responsibilities explained



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,711	98.1
No	34	1.9
Total responses	1,745	100%
No closing conference	39	
No answer	62	
Total surveys	1,846	

Question 4b. If yes to question 4a, was the explanation very clear, fairly clear, somewhat confusing, or very confusing to you?

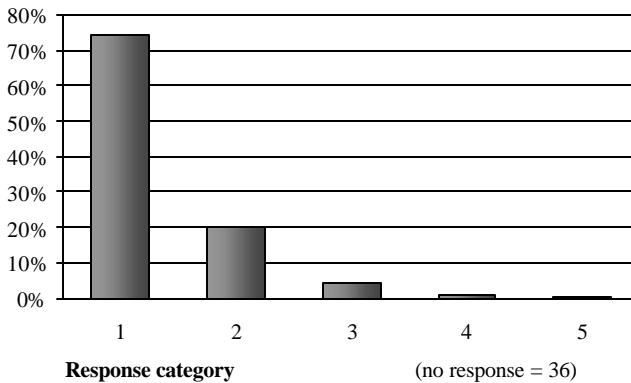
4b. Explanation of rights and responsibilities



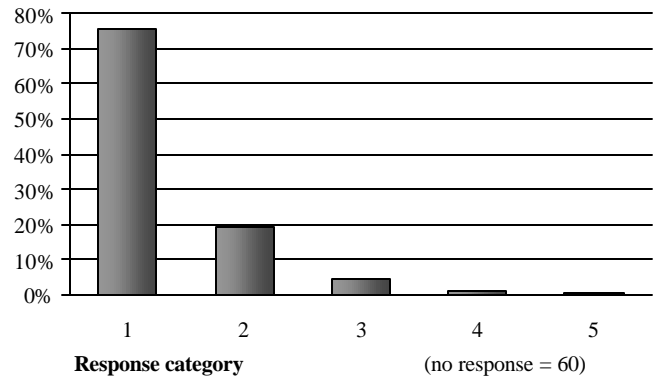
	No. of responses	Percent
Very clear	1,227	71.9
Fairly clear	439	25.7
Somewhat confusing	36	2.1
Very confusing	4	0.2
Total responses	1,706	100%
No closing conference	39	
No explanation	34	
No answer	67	
Total surveys	1,846	

Question 5. Below is a list of words which might describe the qualities found in compliance officers. Please rate the compliance officer using the scale provided. For example, if you think the compliance officer was professional, check box 1 in item 5a below. If you think the compliance officer was unprofessional, check box 5. If you think her/his behavior was somewhere in between, check 2, 3 or 4, remembering that 1 and 5 represent the extremes. Please repeat this process for items 5b through 5d.

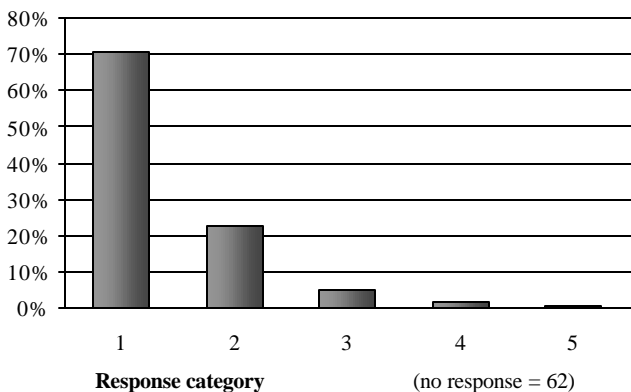
Question 5a
Professional...1...2...3...4...5...Unprofessional



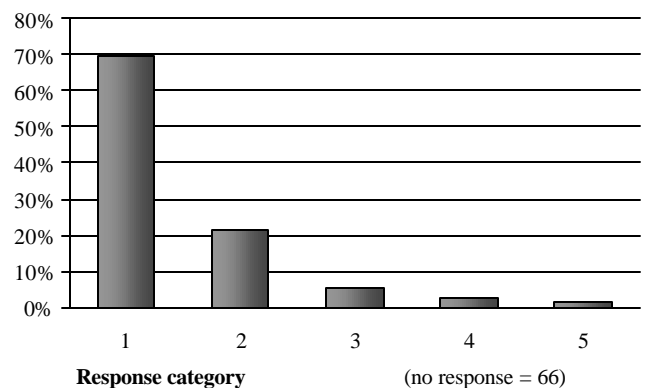
Question 5b
Respectful...1...2...3...4...5...Disrespectful



Question 5c Responsive...1...2...3...4...5...Unresponsive

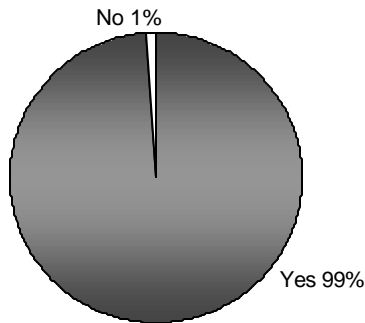


Question 5d Reasonable...1...2...3...4...5...Unreasonable



Question 6. Was the compliance officer dressed appropriately for your type of business?

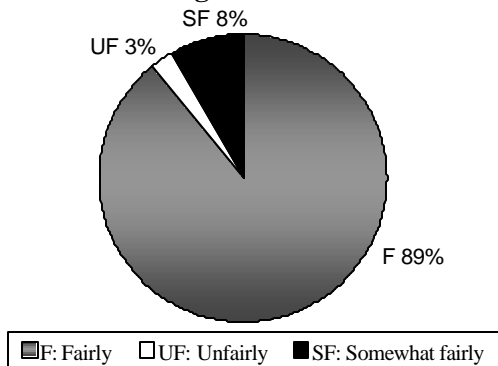
6. Dressed appropriately



	No. of Responses	Percent
Yes	1,768	98.8
No	21	1.2
Total responses	1,789	100%
No answer	57	
Total surveys	1,846	

Question 7. Regardless of whether or not you agree with the outcome of the inspection, do you think the compliance officer applied OR-OSHA rules and regulations fairly or unfairly?

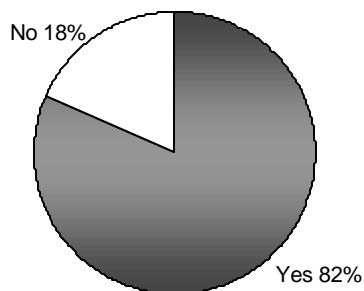
7. Application of rules and regulations



	No. of Responses	Percent
Fairly	1,607	89.1
Somewhat fairly	148	8.2
Unfairly	48	2.7
Total responses	1,803	100%
No answer	43	
Total surveys	1,846	

Question 8. Is it your belief that the inspection will result, or has resulted in any reduction in exposure to workplace hazards?

8. Impact of inspection on future hazards



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,436	81.6
No	324	18.4
Total responses	1,760	100%
No answer	86	
Total surveys	1,846	

Note: Percents may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

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