



Oregon OSHA Compliance Officer Performance Survey, March 2001-February 2002

Research & Analysis Section

Department of Consumer & Business Services

March 2003

By [Lori Miller](#)

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 2001 through February of 2002. 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 3,131 questionnaires mailed out, 2,292 were returned. Of these, 2,104 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?

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

Opening conference held

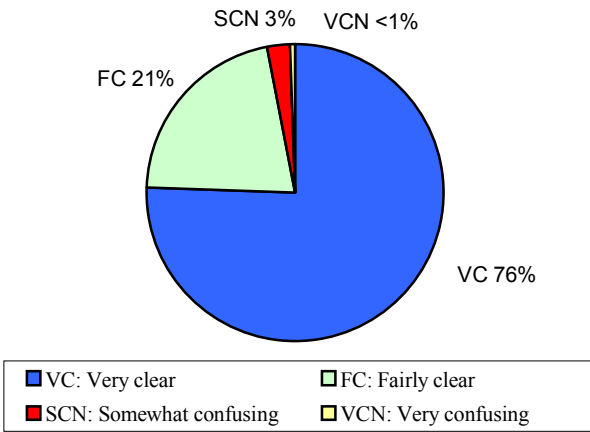
	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	2,021	97.1
No	45	2.2
By phone only	16	0.8
Total responses	2,082	100%
No answer	22	
Total surveys	2,104	

Inspection reason explained

	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	2,008	99.1
No	18	0.9
Total responses	2,026	100%
No opening conference	45	
No answer	33	
Total surveys	2,104	

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

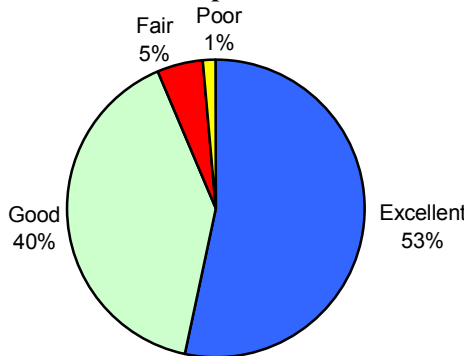
1b. Explanation of inspection



	No. of responses	Percent
Very clear	1,517	75.9
Fairly clear	424	21.2
Somewhat confusing	51	2.6
Very confusing	7	0.4
Total responses	1,999	100%
No opening conference	45	
No explanation	18	
No answer	42	
Total surveys	2,104	

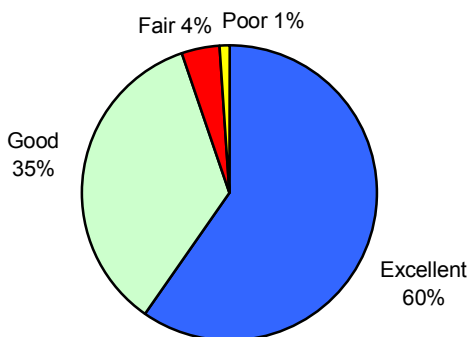
Question 2. Below is a list of statements that describe possible qualities of a compliance officer. Please rate the compliance officer as excellent, good, fair or poor.

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



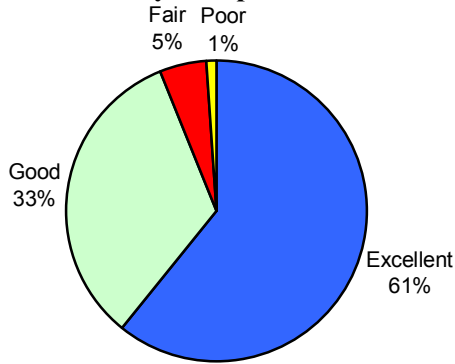
	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,104	53.3
Good	833	40.2
Fair	104	5.0
Poor	30	1.4
Total responses	2,071	100%
No answer	33	
Total surveys	2,104	

2b. Knowledge of applicable regulations



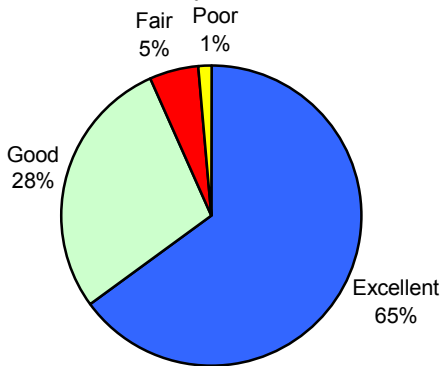
	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,234	59.6
Good	727	35.1
Fair	87	4.2
Poor	21	1.0
Total responses	2,069	100%
No answer	35	
Total surveys	2,104	

2c. Ability to explain rules



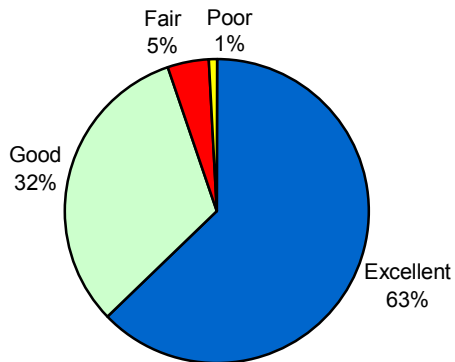
	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,256	60.9
Good	685	33.2
Fair	103	5.0
Poor	20	1.0
Total responses	2,064	100%
No answer	40	
Total surveys	2,104	

2d. Willingness to listen to and consider your concerns



	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,345	64.9
Good	590	28.4
Fair	110	5.3
Poor	29	1.4
Total responses	2,074	100%
No answer	30	
Total surveys	2,104	

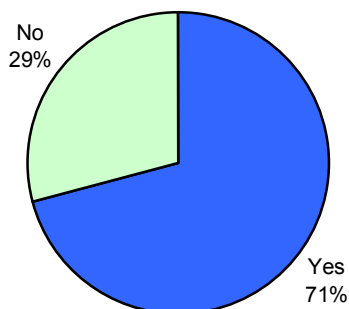
2e. Ability to explain any violations or potential hazards



	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,297	62.8
Good	661	32.0
Fair	92	4.5
Poor	15	0.7
Total responses	2,065	100%
No answer	39	
Total surveys	2,104	

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

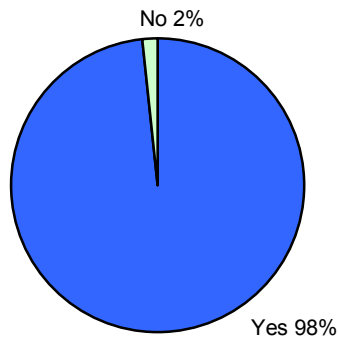
3. Citation issued



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,469	70.8
No	606	29.2
Total responses	2,075	100%
No answer	29	
Total surveys	2,104	

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

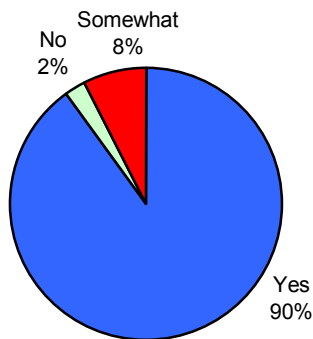
3a. Explanation for each cited violation



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,441	98.4
No	24	1.6
Total responses	1,465	100%
No citation	606	
No answer	33	
Total surveys	2,104	

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

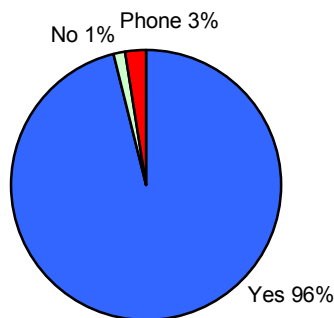
3b. Willingness to offer solutions



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,319	90.0
No	34	2.3
Somewhat	112	7.6
Total responses	1,465	100%
No citation	606	
No answer	33	
Total surveys	2,104	

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?

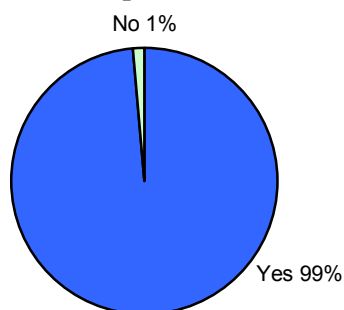
4. Closing conference held



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,997	95.9
No	30	1.4
Phone conference only	55	2.6
Total responses	2,082	100%
No answer	22	
Total surveys	2,104	

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

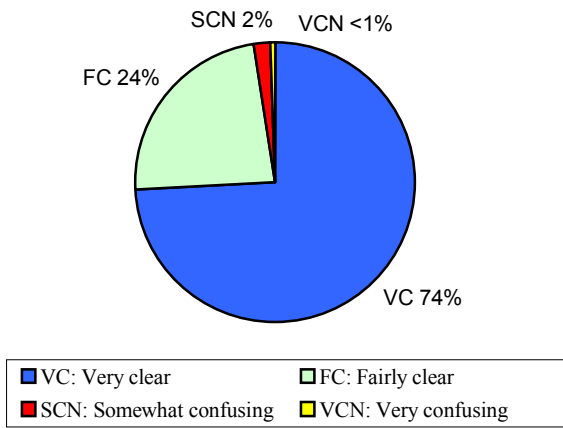
4a. Rights and responsibilities explained



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,983	98.6
No	28	1.4
Total responses	2,011	100%
No closing conference	30	
No answer	63	
Total surveys	2,104	

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

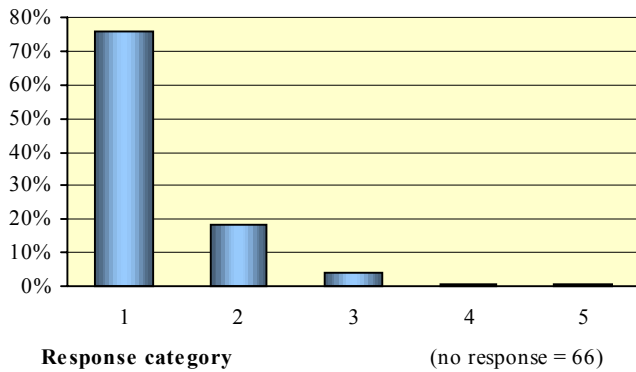


	No. of responses	Percent
Very clear	1,474	74.4
Fairly clear	468	23.6
Somewhat confusing	36	1.8
Very confusing	3	0.2
Total responses	1,981	100%
No closing conference	30	
No explanation	28	
No answer	65	
Total surveys	2,104	

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.

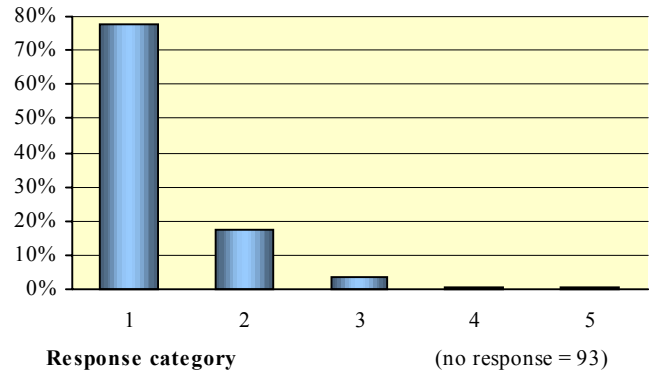
Question 5a

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



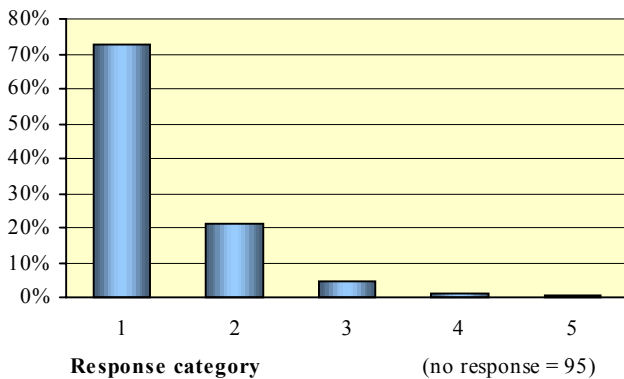
Question 5b

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



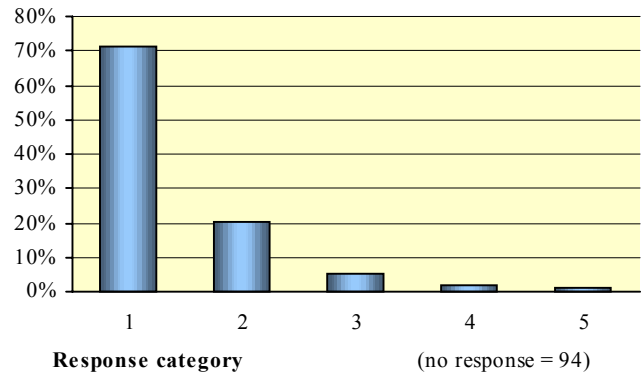
Question 5c

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



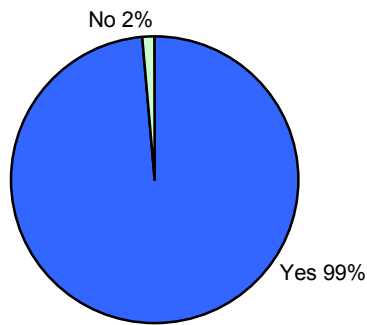
Question 5d

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



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

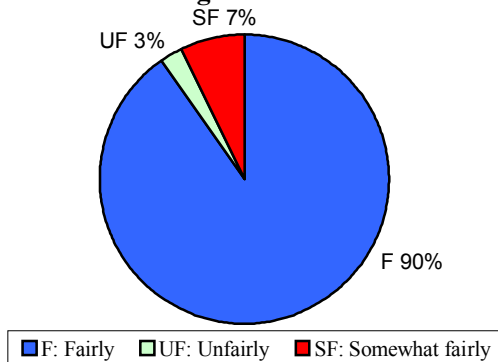
6. Dressed appropriately



	No. of Responses	Percent
Yes	1,997	98.5
No	30	1.5
Total responses	2,027	100%
No answer	77	
Total surveys	2,104	

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?

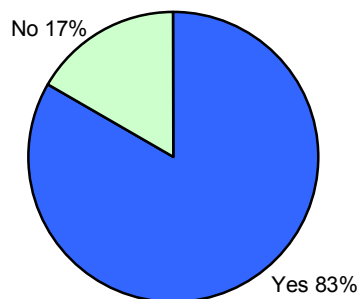
7. Application of rules and regulations



	No. of Responses	Percent
Fairly	1,834	90.2
Somewhat fairly	147	7.2
Unfairly	53	2.6
Total responses	2,034	100%
No answer	70	
Total surveys	2,104	

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	1,667	83.3
No	334	16.7
Total responses	2,001	100%
No answer	103	
Total surveys	2,104	

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

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Information Management Division
 350 Winter St. NE, Room 300
 Salem, OR 97301-3880
 (503) 378-8254

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