

Oregon OSHA Compliance Officer Performance Survey, March 1999-February 2000

Research & Analysis Section

Department of Consumer & Business Services

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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 1999 through February of 2000. 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 a reminder postcard and phone call, if necessary, to obtain a response.

Results

Of the 2,605 questionnaires mailed out, 1,955 were returned. Of these, 1,864 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

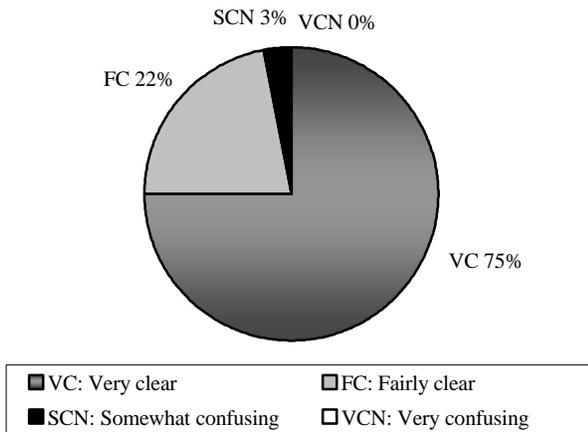
	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,775	96.3
No	54	2.9
By phone only	14	0.8
Total responses	1,843	100%
No answer	21	
Total surveys	1,864	

Inspection reason explained

	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,752	99.0
No	18	1.0
Total responses	1,770	100%
No opening conference	54	
No answer	40	
Total surveys	1,864	

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

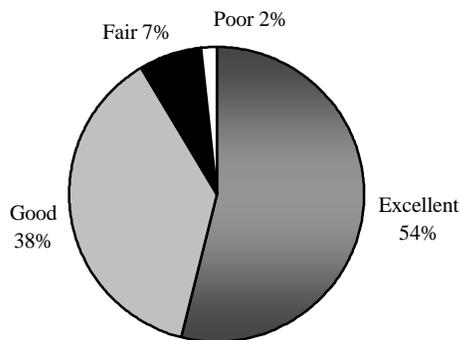
1b. Explanation of inspection



	No. of responses	Percent
Very clear	1,307	75.1
Fairly clear	377	21.7
Somewhat confusing	53	3.0
Very confusing	4	0.2
Total responses	1,741	100%
No opening conference	54	
No explanation	18	
No answer	51	
Total surveys	1,864	

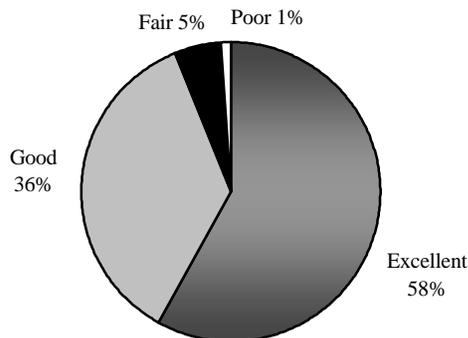
Question 2. Below is a list of statements that describe possible qualities of a compliance officer. Please rate the compliance officer as excellent, good, fair or poor.

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



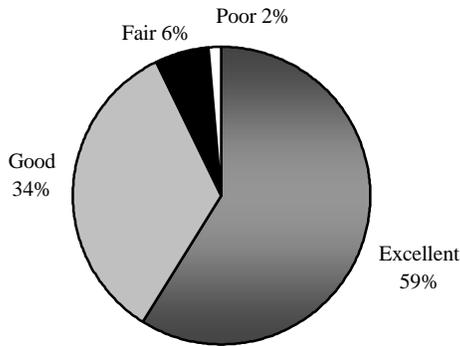
	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	995	53.9
Good	693	37.6
Fair	123	6.7
Poor	34	1.8
Total responses	1,845	100%
No answer	19	
Total surveys	1,864	

2b. Knowledge of applicable regulations



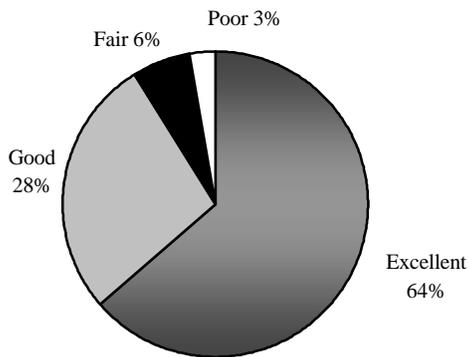
	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,065	57.8
Good	658	35.7
Fair	100	5.4
Poor	21	1.1
Total responses	1,844	100%
No answer	20	
Total surveys	1,864	

2c. Ability to explain rules



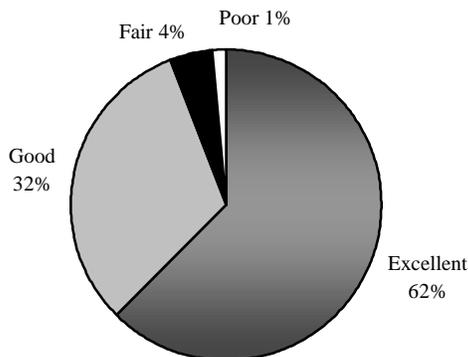
	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,084	58.8
Good	625	33.9
Fair	107	5.8
Poor	28	1.5
Total responses	1,844	100%
No answer	20	
Total surveys	1,864	

2d. Willingness to listen to and consider your concerns



	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,174	63.6
Good	508	27.5
Fair	114	6.2
Poor	49	2.7
Total responses	1,845	100%
No answer	19	
Total surveys	1,864	

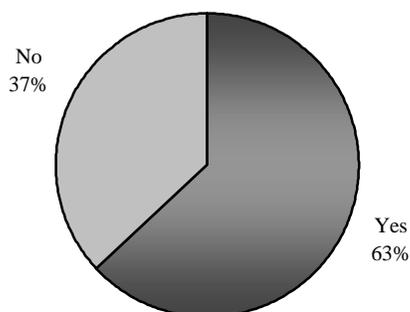
2e. Ability to explain any violations or potential hazards



	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,149	62.4
Good	585	31.8
Fair	81	4.4
Poor	26	1.4
Total responses	1,841	100%
No answer	23	
Total surveys	1,864	

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

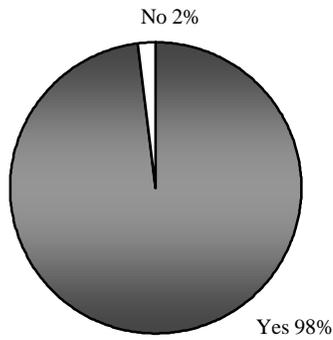
3. Citation issued



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,174	63.5
No	675	36.5
Total responses	1,849	100%
No answer	15	
Total surveys	1,864	

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

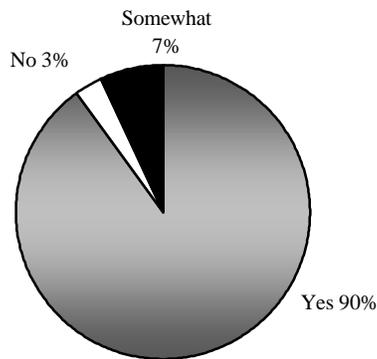
3a. Explanation for each cited violation



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,141	98.2
No	21	1.8
Total responses	1,162	100%
No citation	675	
No answer	27	
Total surveys	1,864	

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

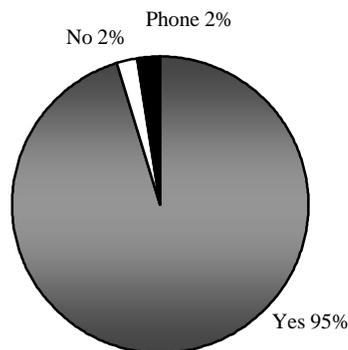
3b. Willingness to offer solutions



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,031	89.8
No	31	2.7
Somewhat	86	7.5
Total responses	1,148	100%
No citation	675	
No answer	41	
Total surveys	1,864	

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?

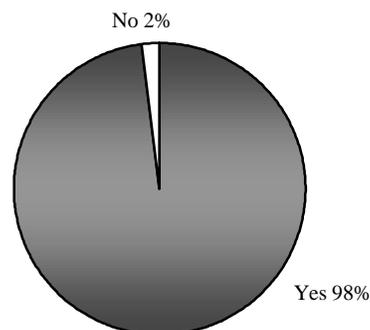
4. Closing conference held



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,764	95.4
No	39	2.1
Phone conference only	46	2.5
Total responses	1,849	100%
No answer	15	
Total surveys	1,864	

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

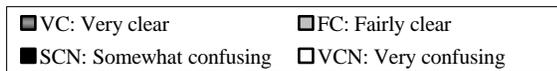
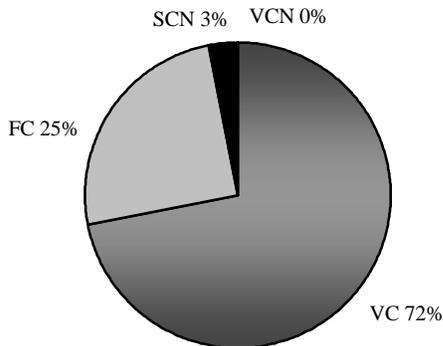
4a. Rights and responsibilities explained



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,723	97.8
No	38	2.2
Total responses	1,761	100%
No closing conference	39	
No answer	64	
Total surveys	1,864	

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

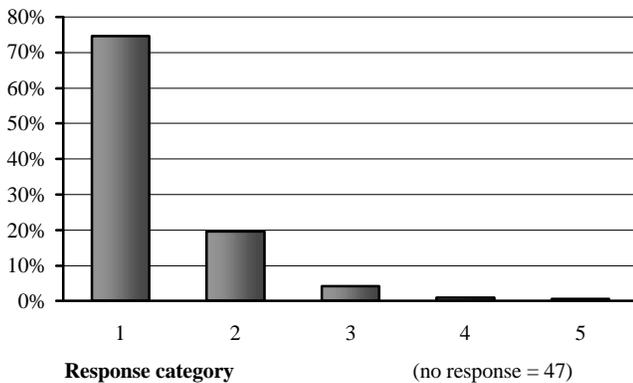


	No. of responses	Percent
Very clear	1,236	71.9
Fairly clear	434	25.2
Somewhat confusing	43	2.5
Very confusing	7	0.4
Total responses	1,720	100%
No closing conference	39	
No explanation	38	
No answer	67	
Total surveys	1,864	

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.

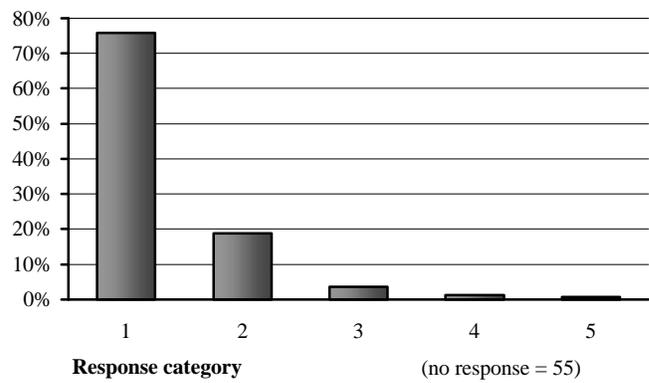
Question 5a

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

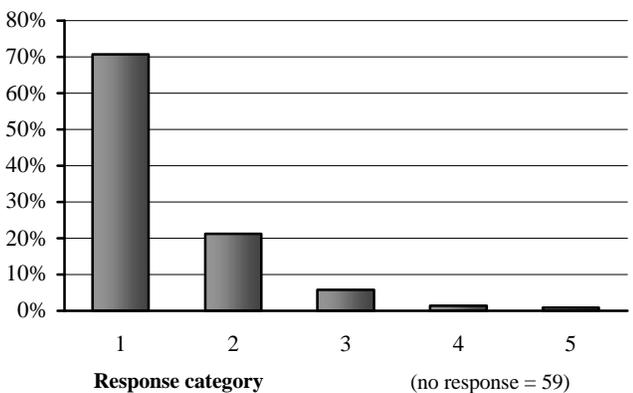


Question 5b

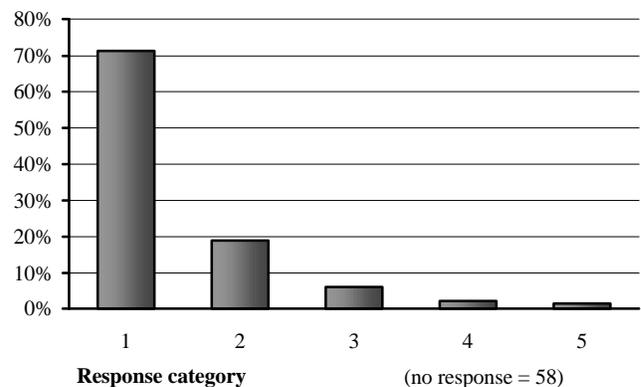
Respectful...1...2...3...4...5...Disrespectful



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

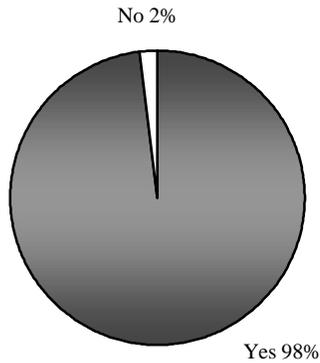


Question 5d Reasonable...1...2...3...4...5...Unreasonable



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

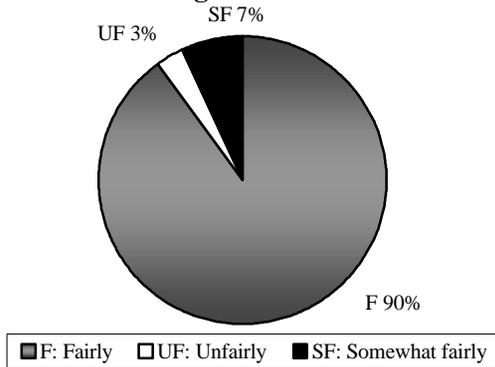
6. Dressed appropriately



	No. of Responses	Percent
Yes	1,779	98.5
No	28	1.5
Total responses	1,807	100%
No answer	57	
Total surveys	1,864	

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?

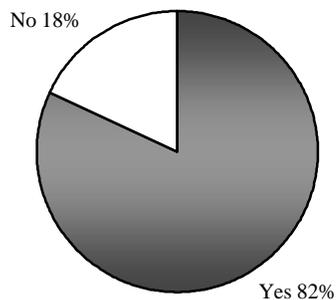
7. Application of rules and regulations



	No. of Responses	Percent
Fairly	1,629	89.6
Somewhat fairly	134	7.4
Unfairly	55	3.0
Total responses	1,818	100%
No answer	46	
Total surveys	1,864	

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	1,457	81.9
No	323	18.1
Total responses	1,780	100%
No answer	84	
Total surveys	1,864	

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

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