

# Oregon OSHA Compliance Officer Performance Survey, March 2002-February 2003

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 while inspecting Oregon workplaces. To assess the quality of work done by OR-OSHA compliance officers, an ongoing 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

The survey year is divided in two, with half of Oregon OSHA's compliance officers assigned to each six-month period. A questionnaire and cover letter are mailed to every employer inspected by compliance officers following issuance of a citation or case closure, if there was no citation. The employer or person who took the lead role in interacting with the compliance officer during the inspection is asked to complete the survey. Reminder postcards are sent, if necessary, to obtain a response.

## Results

This report covers inspections that took place in both periods, from March 2002 through February 2003. Of the 2,885 questionnaires mailed, 2,145 were returned (74-percent response rate). From these, 1,972 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 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

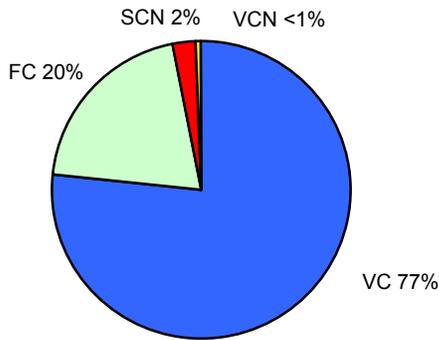
	Number of responses	Percent
Yes	1,895	96.5
No	58	3.0
By phone only	11	0.6
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,964</b>	<b>100%</b>
No answer	8	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

### Inspection reason explained

	Number of responses	Percent
Yes	1,874	99.3
No	13	0.7
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,887</b>	<b>100%</b>
No opening conference	58	
No answer	27	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

**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**

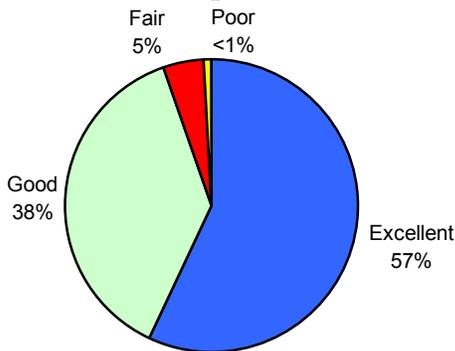


■ VC: Very clear      ■ FC: Fairly clear  
■ SCN: Somewhat confusing      ■ VCN: Very confusing

	Number of responses	Percent
Very clear	1,430	76.8
Fairly clear	380	20.4
Somewhat confusing	45	2.4
Very confusing	7	0.4
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,862</b>	<b>100%</b>
No opening conference	58	
No explanation	13	
No answer	39	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

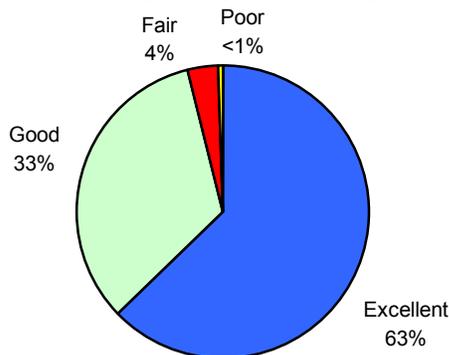
**Question 2.** Below is a list of statements that describe possible qualities of a compliance officer. Please rate the compliance officer as excellent, good, fair, or poor.

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



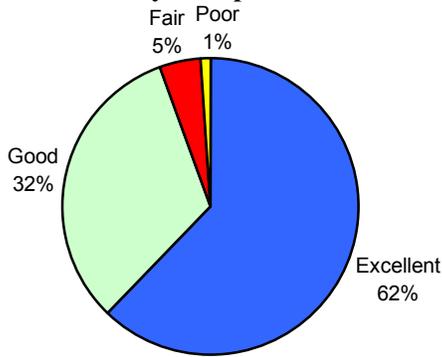
	Number of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,116	57.0
Good	736	37.6
Fair	91	4.6
Poor	16	0.8
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,959</b>	<b>100%</b>
No answer	13	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

**2b. Knowledge of applicable regulations**



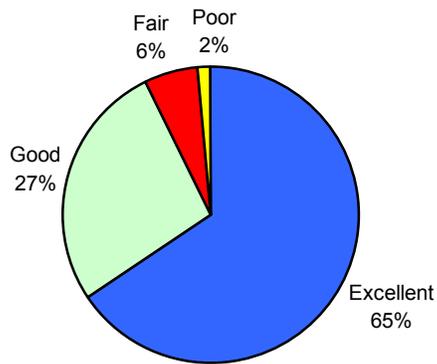
	Number of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,227	62.8
Good	649	33.2
Fair	68	3.5
Poor	20	0.5
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,954</b>	<b>100%</b>
No answer	18	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

**2c. Ability to explain rules**



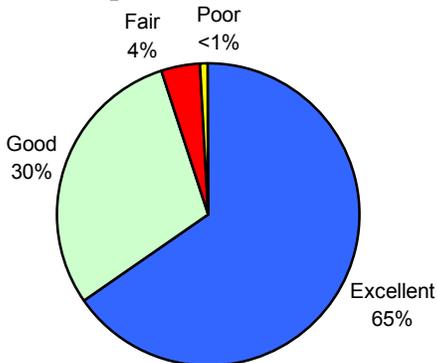
	Number of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,215	62.1
Good	633	32.3
Fair	91	4.6
Poor	19	1.0
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,958</b>	<b>100%</b>
No answer	14	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

**2d. Willingness to listen to and consider your concerns**



	Number of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,281	65.4
Good	533	27.2
Fair	114	5.8
Poor	30	1.5
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,958</b>	<b>100%</b>
No answer	14	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

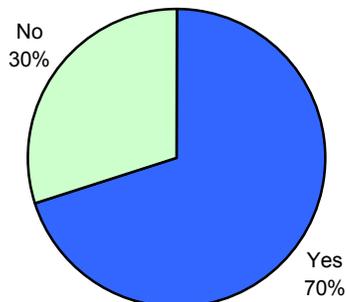
**2e. Ability to explain any violations or potential hazards**



	Number of responses	Percent
Excellent	1,278	65.4
Good	580	29.7
Fair	81	4.1
Poor	16	0.8
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,955</b>	<b>100%</b>
No answer	17	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

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

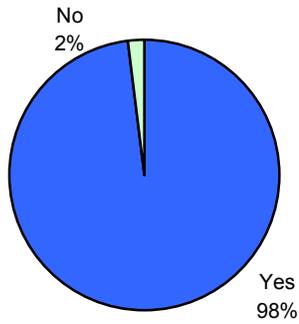
**3. Citation issued**



	Number of responses	Percent
Yes	1,376	70.0
No	591	30.0
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,967</b>	<b>100%</b>
No answer	5	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

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

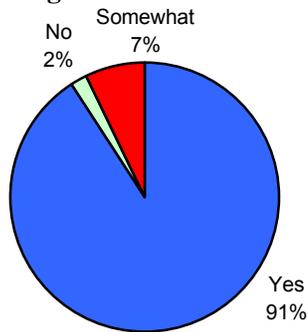
**3a. Explanation for each cited violation**



	Number of responses	Percent
Yes	1,341	98.1
No	26	1.9
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,367</b>	<b>100%</b>
No citation	591	
No answer	14	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

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

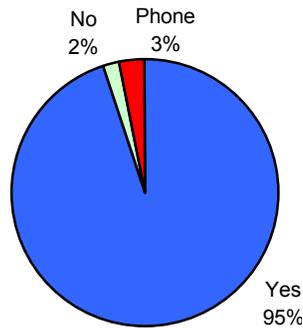
**3b. Willingness to offer solutions**



	Number of responses	Percent
Yes	1,237	90.8
No	27	2.0
Somewhat	98	7.2
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,362</b>	<b>100%</b>
No citation	591	
No answer	19	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

**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?

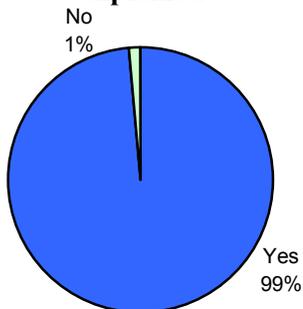
**4. Closing conference held**



	Number of responses	Percent
Yes	1,863	94.9
No	42	2.1
Phone conference only	58	3.0
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,963</b>	<b>100%</b>
No answer	9	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

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

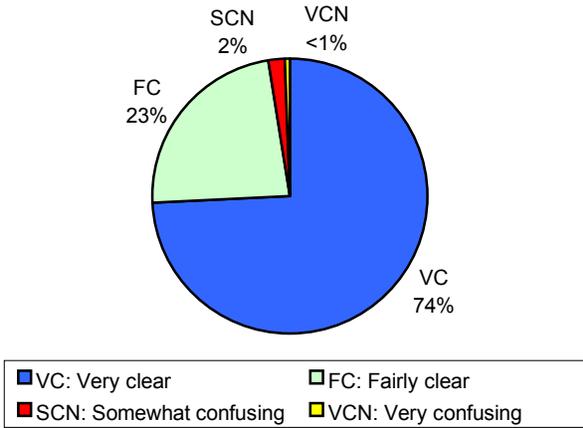
**4a. Rights and responsibilities explained**



	Number of responses	Percent
Yes	1,836	98.7
No	25	1.3
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,861</b>	<b>100%</b>
No closing conference	42	
No answer	69	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

**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**

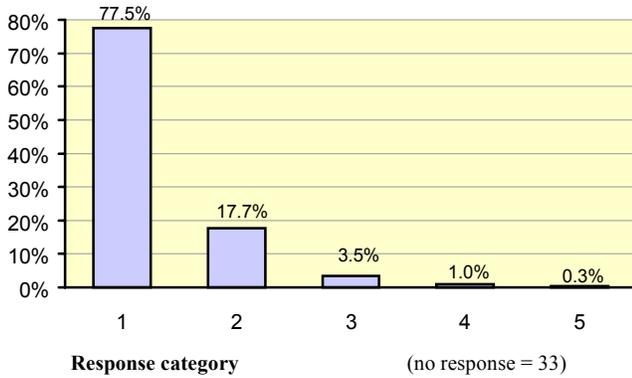


	Number of responses	Percent
Very clear	1,363	74.4
Fairly clear	426	23.3
Somewhat confusing	36	2.0
Very confusing	7	0.4
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,832</b>	<b>100%</b>
No closing conference	42	
No explanation	25	
No answer	73	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

**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.

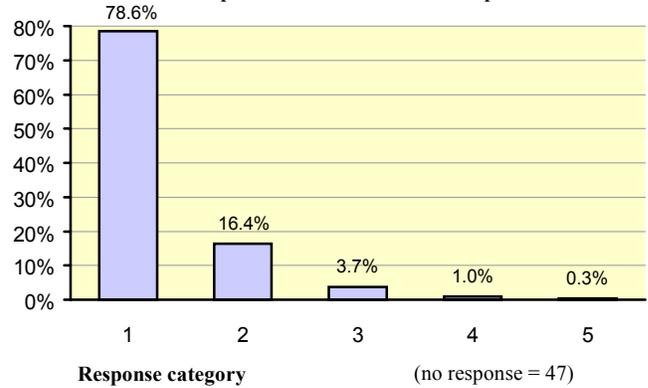
**Question 5a**

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



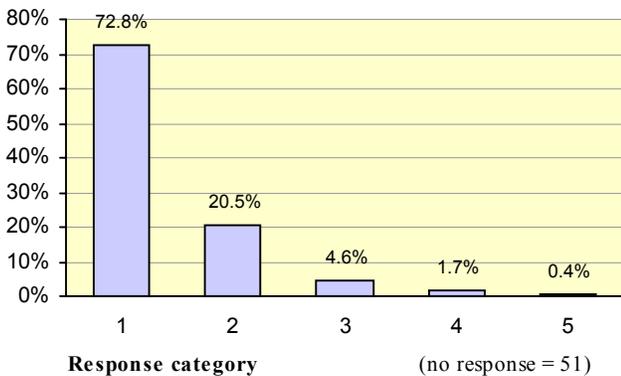
**Question 5b**

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



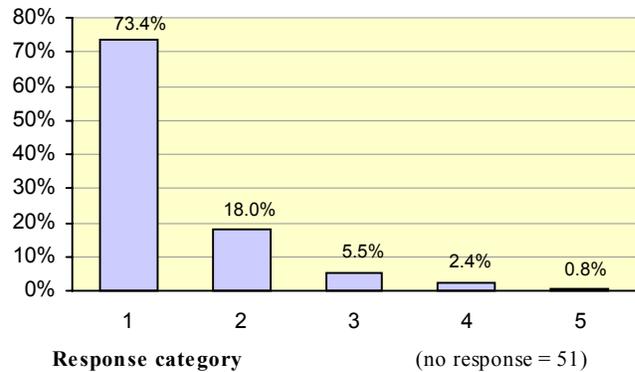
**Question 5c**

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



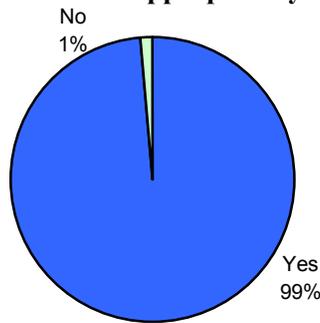
**Question 5d**

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



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

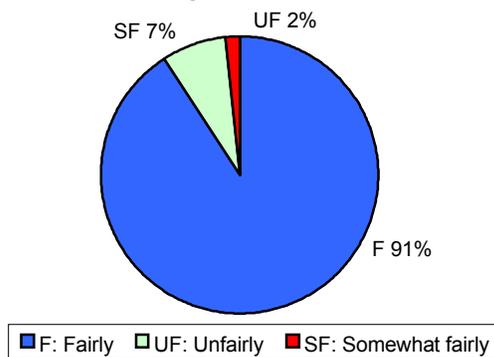
**6. Dressed appropriately**



	Number of responses	Percent
Yes	1,889	98.7
No	25	1.3
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,914</b>	<b>100%</b>
No answer	58	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

**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?

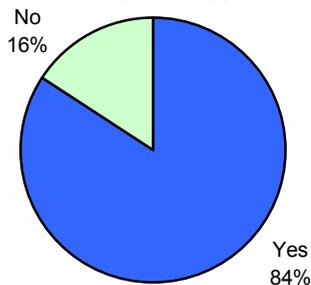
**7. Application of rules and regulations**



	Number of responses	Percent
Fairly	1,755	90.9
Somewhat fairly	140	7.3
Unfairly	35	1.8
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,960</b>	<b>100%</b>
No answer	42	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

**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**



	Number of responses	Percent
Yes	1,610	84.3
No	300	15.7
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>1,910</b>	<b>100%</b>
No answer	62	
<b>Total surveys</b>	<b>1,972</b>	

Note: Percents may not total 100 due to rounding.

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