



Oregon OSHA Compliance Officer Performance Survey, March 1997-February 1998

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 1997 through February of 1998. 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 2,161 questionnaires mailed out, 1,748 were returned. Of these, 1,530 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?

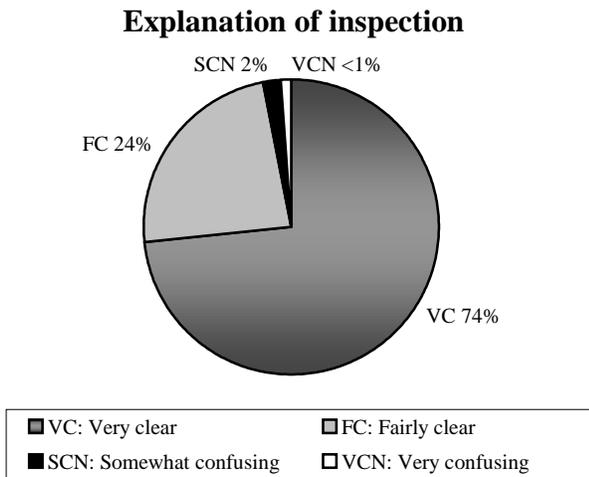
Opening conference held

	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,454	96.4
No	43	2.8
By phone only	12	0.8
Total responses	1,509	100%
No answer	21	
Total surveys	1,530	

Inspection reason explained

	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,427	98.3
No	24	1.7
Total responses	1,451	100%
No opening conference	43	
No answer	36	
Total surveys	1,530	

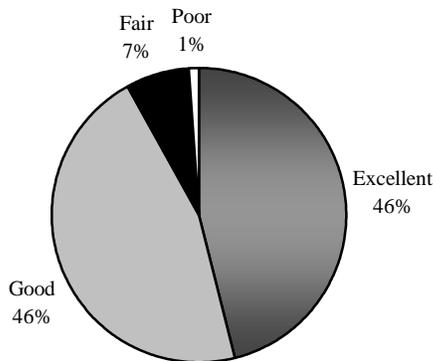
Question 1b. If yes to question 1a, was the explanation very clear, fairly clear, somewhat confusing or very confusing to you?



	No. of responses	Percent
Very clear	1,051	73.7
Fairly clear	346	24.2
Somewhat confusing	27	1.9
Very confusing	3	0.2
Total responses	1,427	100%
No opening conference	43	
No explanation	24	
No answer	36	
Total surveys	1,530	

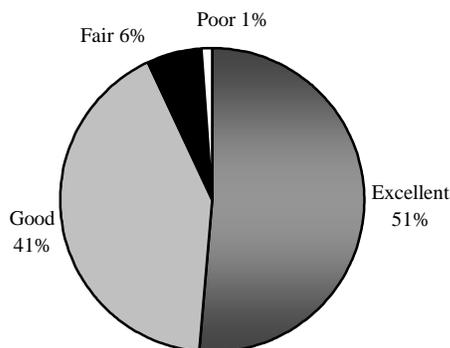
Question 2. Below is a list of statements that describe possible qualities of a compliance officer. Please rate the compliance officer as excellent, good, fair or poor.

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



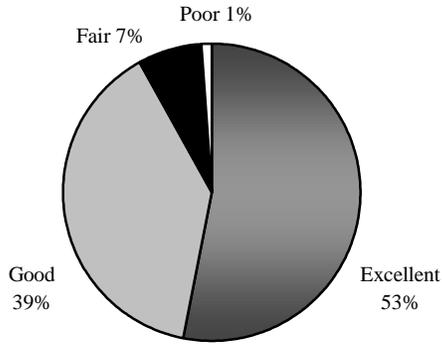
	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	694	45.8
Good	690	45.6
Fair	110	7.3
Poor	20	1.3
Total responses	1,514	100%
No answer	16	
Total surveys	1,530	

2b. Knowledge of applicable regulations



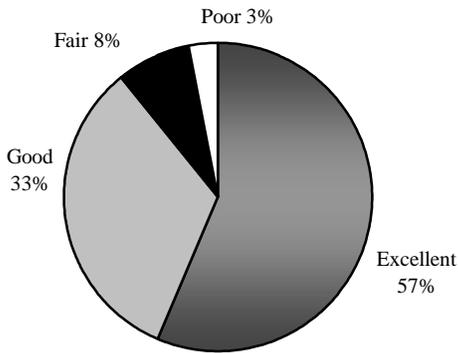
	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	772	51.2
Good	622	41.3
Fair	97	6.4
Poor	16	1.1
Total responses	1,507	100%
No answer	23	
Total surveys	1,530	

2c. Ability to explain rules



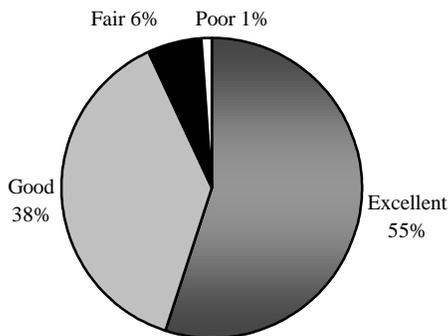
	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	792	52.6
Good	593	39.3
Fair	104	6.9
Poor	18	1.2
Total responses	1,507	100%
No answer	23	
Total surveys	1,530	

2d. Willingness to listen to and consider your concerns



	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	853	56.6
Good	490	32.5
Fair	126	8.4
Poor	39	2.6
Total responses	1,508	100%
No answer	22	
Total surveys	1,530	

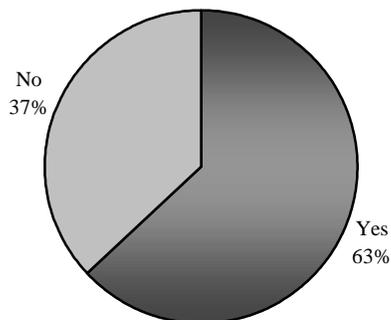
2e. Ability to explain any violations or potential hazards



	No. of responses	Percent
Excellent	828	55.0
Good	578	38.4
Fair	90	6.0
Poor	10	0.7
Total responses	1,506	100%
No answer	24	
Total surveys	1,530	

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

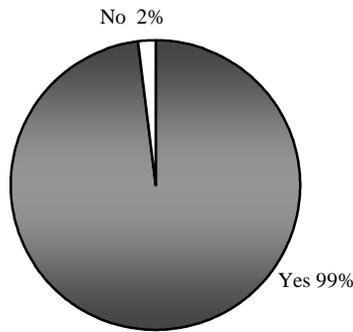
Citation issued



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	950	62.7
No	564	37.3
Total responses	1,514	100%
No answer	16	
Total surveys	1,530	

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

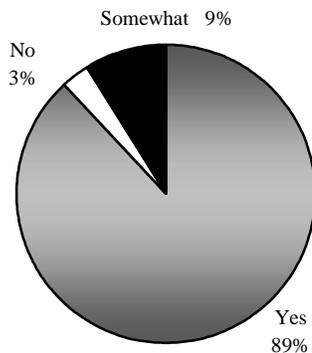
Explanation for each cited violation



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	927	98.5
No	14	1.5
Total responses	941	100%
No citation	564	
No answer	25	
Total surveys	1,530	

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

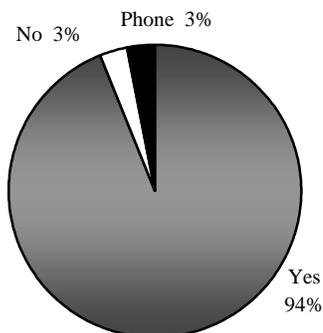
Willingness to offer solutions



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	826	88.5
No	27	2.9
Somewhat	80	8.6
Total responses	933	100%
No citation	564	
No answer	33	
Total surveys	1,530	

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?

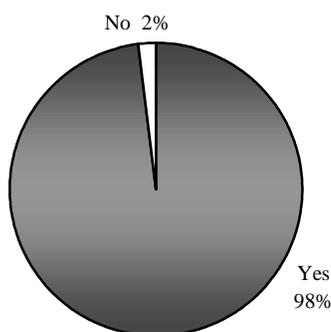
Closing conference held



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,421	94.0
No	47	3.1
Phone conference only	44	2.9
Total responses	1,512	100%
No answer	18	
Total surveys	1,530	

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

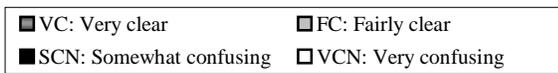
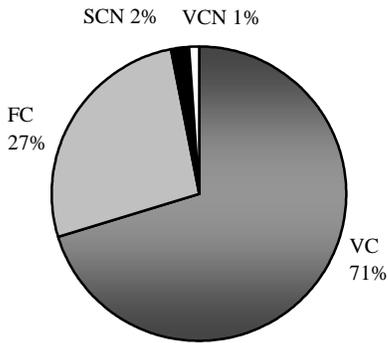
Rights and responsibilities explained



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,394	97.9
No	30	2.1
Total responses	1,424	100%
No closing conference	47	
No answer	59	
Total surveys	1,530	

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

Explanation of rights and responsibilities

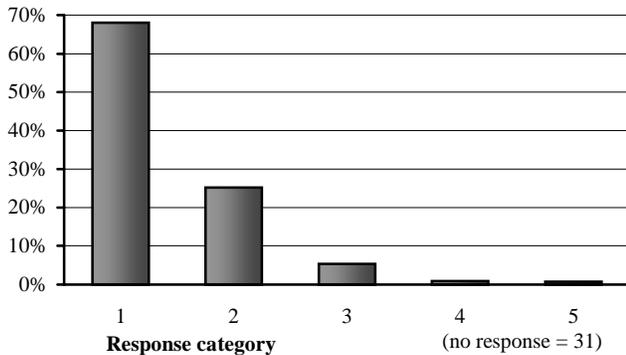


	No. of responses	Percent
Very clear	989	70.9
Fairly clear	370	26.5
Somewhat confusing	28	2.0
Very confusing	7	0.5
Total responses	1,394	100%
No closing conference	47	
No explanation	30	
No answer	59	
Total surveys	1,530	

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.

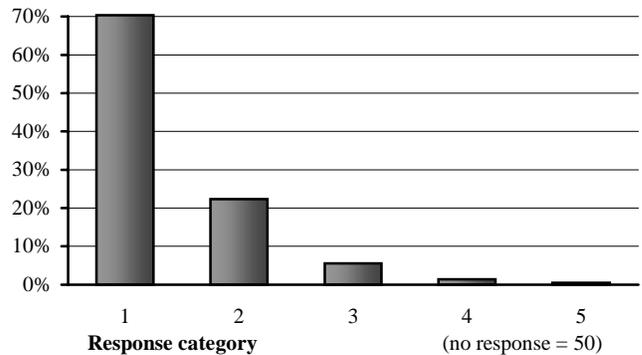
Question 5a

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



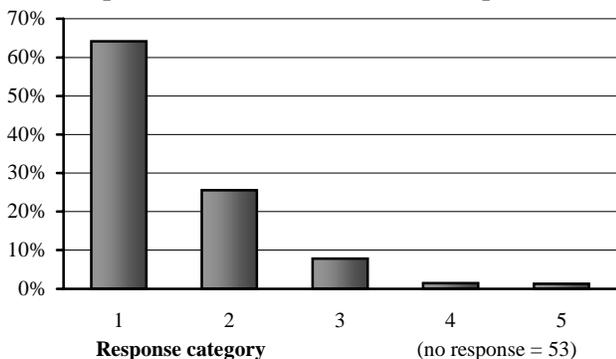
Question 5b

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



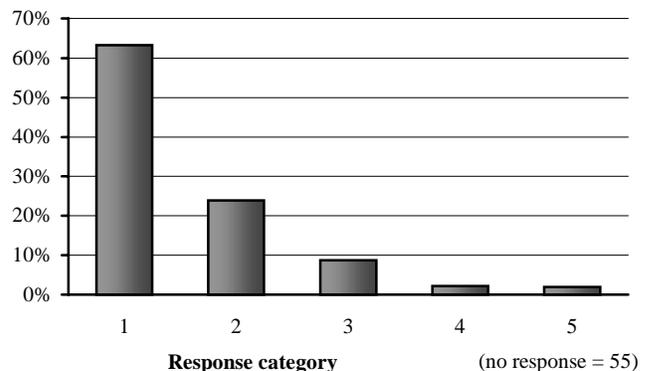
Question 5c

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



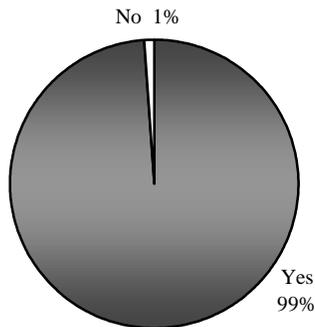
Question 5d

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



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

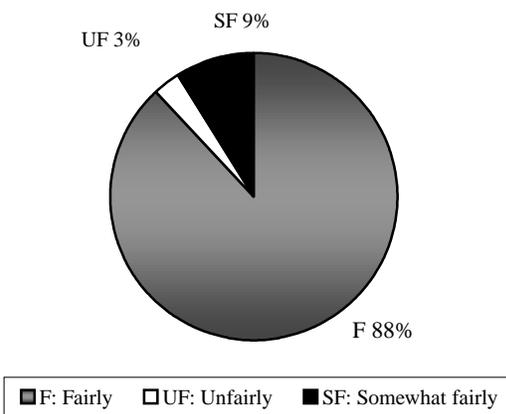
Dressed appropriately



	No. of Responses	Percent
Yes	1,464	98.6
No	21	1.4
Total responses	1,485	100%
No answer	45	
Total surveys	1,530	

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?

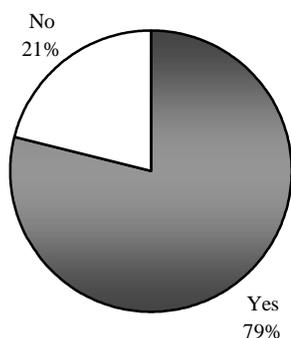
Application of rules and regulations



	No. of Responses	Percent
Fairly	1,310	87.7
Somewhat fairly	135	9.0
Unfairly	49	3.3
Total responses	1,494	100%
No answer	36	
Total surveys	1,530	

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

Impact of inspection on future hazards



	No. of responses	Percent
Yes	1,162	78.7
No	315	21.3
Total responses	1,477	100%
No answer	53	
Total surveys	1,530	

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

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