

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING  
&  
PROBLEM SOLVING

"C.O.P.P.S."

*RICHARD KIRKLAND, CHIEF OF POLICE*

THE RENO POLICE DEPARTMENT



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication is a result of the men and women of the Reno Police Department whose dedicated service during a difficult period of diminishing resources, increased demands for service and a rapidly changing environment, transformed our Community Policing philosophy into a successful and meaningful police service delivery system.

The success of this program cannot be mentioned without including the efforts of our community. In particular, one of our most involved citizens, Dorothy Newberg, whose leadership in the "Safety 88 Campaign" resulted in the voters approval for 88 new officers. Additionally, more than 750 community and business members are actively involved in Neighborhood Advisory Groups in an effort to resolve community concerns.

Any program of this magnitude would not be possible without the substantial support of our City Manager, Clay Holstine and members of the City Council. They have and continue to encourage our efforts to form community partnerships and improve police service throughout the community.

We are additionally grateful to Dr. Ken Peak, Criminal Justice Department Chairman at the University of Nevada-Reno for his enthusiasm, encouragement and assistance in publishing segments of our program. Also, Dr. Rosalee Marinelli, Sandra Neese and Mike Havercamp from the Center for Applied Research at the University of Nevada-Reno for their critical review and contributions to the design and methodology of our survey to ensure its validity and reliability.

The individuals who contributed to the writing of this manual cannot go without mention. Deputy Chief Ron Glensor, who completed the majority of writing for this manual and manages our community survey program, and Steve Bigham, the department's statistician assigned to Quality Assurance, who conducts the surveys, analyzes its results and converts complex statistical information into understandable data to assist my staff with decision-making and problem solving.

Finally, our appreciation is extended to Darrel W. Stephens, Executive Director of the Police Executive Research Forum, for his editorial assistance and encouragement to tell "Reno's Story."

## PREFACE

This manual, "Community Oriented Policing and Problem Solving", describes the Reno Police Department's experience in the transition from a traditional law enforcement design to Community Policing.

Like many other cities, Reno is faced with a complex environment consisting of fiscal constraints, rapid change, high technology, added demands for service, increased litigation and the need for cultural sensitivity. These challenges, and more, have required the police department to reassess its role in the community and its methods of delivering public service.

Our program began on the premise that the community is the key element in our attempt to curb crime and resolve neighborhood problems. This approach resulted in our development of Neighborhood Advisory Groups (NAG's) that work with area commanders and officers at identifying and resolving neighborhood concerns. Our experience with NAG's has proven very successful and has improved the overall satisfaction of both the community and officers.

Problem solving is the backbone of our community policing efforts. All our officers have been trained in the concepts of Problem Oriented Policing (POP) and, as a result, actively work their own projects throughout the city.

In order to properly evaluate our success, we created a major Community Opinion Survey in 1987. We continue to implement this survey every six months. It serves as a "report card" from residents and provides us with information about our performance, image, public fear, concerns about crime and quality of contact department members. The surveys provide valuable information that improves our ability to make decisions of an operational and policy nature. The results of each survey are shared with the community and officers so they better understand their relationship with one another and how effective that relationship is at mutually solving problems.

We believe Community Policing is the future of policing and an evolution of our past "Wisdom." It holds the greatest potential for effectively dealing with our current environment and future challenges.

This document was created to stimulate interest and present our experience in dealing more effectively with the citizens and visitors to Reno. To date, we have answered over 150 written inquiries about our program and entertained over 30 site visits by other agencies. If we can be a resource to any individual, group, police department, or city interested in undertaking such an endeavor, we offer our assistance, experience, and knowledge.



Richard Kirkland  
Chief of Police

# Community Oriented Policing and Problem Solving



by

Deputy Chief Ronald W. Giensor

January 1992

## INTRODUCTION

In June 1987, after the public, for the second time in two years, struck down a tax initiative that would have replenished depleting resources and personnel, a Community Attitude and Public Opinion Survey conducted by the Reno Police Department (RPD) revealed it had a serious image problem. Survey data revealed that citizens were generally pleased with the department's overall performance, but were displeased with its tactics, which they described as "uncaring and heavy handed."

At the time, the Reno Police Department was driven by a Management by Objectives (MBO) philosophy. MBO had provided administrators the capability to track the department's performance through established goals and objectives. Unfortunately, high numbers of arrests and citations were equated to successful productivity. As a consequence, efficiency had replaced effectiveness, standardization took priority over creativity, and performance was based solely on the department's ability to achieve established objectives. Statistics became the driving force and although objectives were accomplished, the department's image suffered in the eyes of the community.

The situation was made worse by the passage of a property tax law in 1980 that was similar to California's Proposition 13. It established a property tax cap allowing only incremental annual increases of four and one-half percent. The City of Reno had relied heavily on property tax revenues and the new legislation resulted in immediate budget reductions and public service cuts. For the next six years, the police department suffered significant personnel and equipment reductions.

At the same time, jurisdiction increased from 38 to 59 square miles, calls for service

(CFS) increased annually by 8 percent, and population continued on a steady rise from 102,000 to 121,000 residents. The situation had deteriorated to a critical state. Police administrators were convinced the solution to the problem rested on the department's ability to reverse its poor image in the community.

In an effort to re-unite the police with the community, a new management philosophy based on close police/community interaction was implemented. During the 1980's, Community Oriented Policing was gaining popularity with many municipalities. Reno P.D.'s model, originally named Community Oriented Policing-Plus (COP+), was designed to improve police service and solve problems through an interactive process with the community. Within a year after community policing was implemented, voters approved a long-sought tax initiative that authorized the hiring of 88 new officers. Subsequent surveys revealed a marked improvement in the department's performance and image in the community.

In January 1992, Richard Kirkland was appointed as Reno's new Chief of Police. Under his direction, the department's program was renamed "Community Oriented Policing and Problem Solving" (COPPS). The name was changed to emphasize the importance of problem solving in the department's community policing philosophy.

This document begins with an explanation of the basic tenants of Community Policing and Problem Solving. It then provides a detailed look at the organization, implementation and distinctive elements of Reno's COPPS program.

## **THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY POLICING AND PROBLEM SOLVING**

For the past three decades our society has fallen victim to a dramatic increase in crime, gangs and drugs. Research on preventive patrol, rapid response, crime prevention and detectives

has questioned the effectiveness of traditional policing strategies. It was learned that 8 of 10 calls for service were related more to quality of life concerns than crime (Johnson, 1981). The myth that the principle police function involved combatting crime and arresting evildoers was quickly fading. These studies convinced police leaders to re-evaluate traditional strategies which had been proven to be ineffective.

The tenets of community policing and problem solving have appeared in the literature for several decades but the terminology and application of these strategies was not commonly known until the mid-1980's. Three benefits are commonly associated with these new theories:

- \* Improved delivery of police service
- \* Improved police/community relations
- \* Mutual resolutions to identifiable problems

Community policing has been referred to as the most significant contribution to policing in this century. As a professor of Michigan State University stated, "This is the cutting edge of policing in America today" (Carter, 1989). It is a "rethinking" of traditional policing strategies which had limited success. It combines efficiency with effectiveness, promotes quality over quantity, and encourages creative approaches to problem resolution. It is a "bottom-up<sup>M</sup>" approach where increased discretion and authority is given to the "beat cop" to solve neighborhood problems. A new partnership emerges between the police and community to combat crime, reduce fear, maintain order, and improve quality of life in the community (Michaelson, 1988). Many believe that community policing will assist police in performing the impossible mandate of "doing more for less."

One of the most common criticisms of policing relates to its basic strategy for providing service. Traditionally, the police have responded to calls for service (CFS) as separate

incidents. This practice is referred to as "incident-driven policing" and was criticized as reactive and resulting in short-term solutions. Problem Oriented Policing (POP) teaches officers how to group incidents and identify the underlying causal factors that are often associated incidents in hopes of providing long-term solutions.

POP is also concerned with the influence of environmental factors on crime. For instance, in the past, the police response to a series of burglaries would focus on apprehension. As a result, a variety of tactics to catch the suspect would be employed such as crime analysis, extra patrols and plain clothes surveillance. Now, consider the same problem in terms of environmental influences. Research reveals that lighting has a direct influence on the reduction of certain crimes. Therefore, in this case, improving or repairing a poor lighting condition may produce better results and may be more cost effective than the man hours it takes to coordinate a surveillance or apprehension program.

The Newport News Police Department developed a model for Problem Oriented Policing that has been replicated by many agencies (Eck, 1987). Its model is most commonly known by the acronym SARA; Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment. This process of problem solving teaches officers how to identify problems, analyze associated factors, develop appropriate responses and evaluate the results. POP encourages officers to be creative and innovative approaches. A main goal of POP is to develop an interactive relationship between the police and community and to combine resources rather than attempt problem solving independently.

POP is an operational strategy that replaces traditional incident-driven practices. As a result, it gives life to the Community Policing philosophy. The relationship between COP and POP was best described by Chris Braiden of the Edmonton Alberta Police Department in Canada

who said, "Problem Oriented Policing walks the talk of Community Policing."

Police departments world-wide have adopted a variety of COP and POP programs. An equal variety of names are ascribed to the various programs implemented. The Houston Police Department refers to its program as Neighborhood Oriented Policing; Newport News Police and San Diego Police call it Problem Oriented Policing (POP); Flint, Michigan adopted Community-based Policing; Baltimore Police call it Citizen Oriented Police Enforcement (COPE); and Reno Police has developed Community Oriented Policing and Problem Solving (COPPS).

The Reno Police Department has adopted Community Policing as a philosophy and POP as a problem solving strategy. The goal of COPPS was to improve police service and police/community relations. This was evidenced by the department's COPPS motto: "YOUR POLICE, OUR COMMUNITY."

#### RENO POLICE DEPARTMENT'S "COPPS" PROGRAM

In its original design, COPPS was implemented as a department-wide philosophy. A complete reorganization and new management style emerged. A 40 hour training program was provided to every employee from police clerk to the Chief of Police.

The financial and political situation in Reno demanded a complete change in policing strategy. It did not allow the designers of COPPS time for incremental implementation. An immediate and department-wide commitment was necessary if the department was to reverse its poor image in the community. In retrospect, the department has learned that a department-wide strategy has many advantages over the specialized team approach. Many agencies that began programs with officers assigned as community policing specialists are struggling with the transition to a department-wide program.

The implementation of COPPS resulted in a major change in organizational structure (Attachment 1). Decentralization of the previous "pyramid structure" brought key units in the department closer together. This improved communication and accelerated the decision making process. Two elements of Reno's COPPS program are unique to the concept of other programs researched. First, Neighborhood Advisory Groups (NAG's). NAG's were developed to enhance police/community relations. Second, a Quality Assurance Bureau (QA). QA was designed to conduct internal and external surveys. These survey's serve as "report cards" on community satisfaction about police service. Both QA and NAG's have contributed immeasurably to the department's success and their ability to measure the community's satisfaction and are later discussed in detail.

#### AREA COMMANDS

Reno was originally reorganized into three geographic operational areas - North, South, and Central. In a recent reorganization, patrol was further streamlined by combining the North-Stead and Central Divisions under one command. The Special Services Division provides administrative support to the two operational areas.

Each area is under the command of a Deputy Chief, who has 24 hour a day responsibility for an area. This departs from the shift commander structure. The area commander spends a majority of their time in the community working with citizens, service groups and business. Lieutenants perform the day to day operations and watch commander functions. Sergeants and officers are assigned as teams to an area for a minimum of 6 months (one shift bid) and have the same days off.

## NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY GROUPS

Originally, COPPS called for the formation of a series of community groups representing neighborhood areas to meet with police officials at organized meetings. The purpose of the meetings was to establish meaningful dialogue between the police and the people to discuss their problems and possible solutions. Supervisors and officers were encouraged to attend and participated in the agenda.

Officials envisioned one NAG group formed in essentially the same fashion for each area. But, as the groups formed and citizens provided input about the unique economic, ethnic and crime concerns of their neighborhoods, three different NAG models emerged. NAGs have been developed to address each area's particular needs.

### North/Stead Model

The North/Stead Area is comprised of the northern portion of the City of Reno beyond the Truckee River, which essentially divides the City in half. Incorporated elements north of the Truckee River are included in this area except downtown, which is the Central Area.

The North/Stead Area contains many diverse and varied neighborhoods, ranging from the predominately lower socio economic section in the Northeast, to the rapidly growing middle income residential projects in the Northwest. An abandoned military facility (Stead) in the northernmost section of the area has a mixture of lower/middle income housing, light industry, and two major retail distribution centers. Several senior citizen housing developments exist within the area, as well as the University of Nevada with its large student residential population. Each population segment of the area represents a different need and demand on police service.

As a result of its demographic diversity, the original plan of one NAG representing the

area quickly fell by the wayside. The North/Stead NAG model developed, focusing on delivering the NAG message to existing organizations within the area, which had been formulated for other purposes. Church groups, PTA groups, neighborhood councils, tenant associations, booster clubs, senior citizen groups, homeowners' associations, landlord groups, etc. all became forums for delivering the North/Stead NAG message. The NAG message is carried to these groups via a newsletter overseen by the Area Commander.

The result has been excellent participation by the citizens. NAG meetings rarely have less than 20 citizens in attendance and have had as many as 75 people attend. The police have been able to involve themselves in a wide variety of community centered issues and problems not previously regarded as needing police attention. Through this model, the North/Stead Area Commander has been able to develop the police department's expanding role as a "good neighbor" in the community.

This NAG model remains significantly different from those employed in the other two areas. Area assigned patrol officers are encouraged to identify groups in the community through their field duties that could host a NAG type meeting. As such, the patrol officers are developing a different sense of policing and are becoming instrumental in the department's ability to service the community from a broader perspective.

#### South Area Model

The South Area is geographically the largest area of the city and continues to grow through building and annexation. The demographic make-up of the South Reno area is primarily upper-middle and upper income residents in the Southwest portion of town. Several exclusive residential areas, with homes valued in the millions of dollars, are growing rapidly. The

Southeast portion of the city is populated primarily with middle income residents moving into newly established residential areas. The Southeast area also contains several densely populated apartment complex areas. One area is heavily populated by minorities, low income residents, and HUD supported housing. The middle portion of the South area, along a main thoroughfare, contains the major portion of Reno's shopping and commercial district. Two major regional shopping malls are also located in this area.

The South Area has essentially remained with the original concept of Neighborhood Advisory Groups. A mailing list of interested citizens began in 1988 and has grown to an active mailing list of over 300 residents. The participating residents are usually from the Southwest portion of town and interested in staying involved in the program. Several members of this large NAG group have assumed leadership roles and have conducted membership drives, organized meetings, and served in a liaison capacity between the NAG and local Neighborhood Watch groups, churches, and other organizations. NAG meetings are organized as social events, church meetings, and luncheons.

In addition to the large core NAG group, several smaller groups have formed to serve business and planning needs in the area. The Neil Road business group includes from 15-20 business and property owners in the Neil Road area. This is predominantly a low income, high minority rental area with increased crime problems. The group meetings focus on problems such as drugs, youth gangs, evictions of undesirable tenants, and the neighborhood foot patrol programs. A Neil Road Planning Committee involves up to 15 residents. The City Planning Department and Police Department are currently involved in a major re-zoning project, the development of an 18 acre park, a police neighborhood service center (sub-station), and noise

abatement from the nearby airport. A South Virginia Street business group includes 15-30 business operators and residents along the South Virginia corridor. This is the large shopping district in Reno. A large hotel/casino sponsors the meetings and issues include area property crimes, transients, and drugs.

One reason for the success of the South Area core NAG appears to be the stability of long time residents living in the Southwest. Another is the free time many of the elderly individuals have to become involved in the program. These people see the NAG as a social function where the police provide education and entertainment. For example, at each NAG meeting, "entertainment" such as police dog demonstrations, drug movies, guest speaker's, etc, are regular agenda items. The level of participation in the lower income Neil Road area is not as high as the Southwest. This could be attributed to the transient population and varied work hours of residents in the Neil Road area.

#### Central Area Model

The Central Area is the smallest geographic area. Approximately eighty percent of casino and hotel capacity is located within the Central Area. In addition, the City's two major hospitals are in the area.

The demographic make-up of the Central Area reflects the City's business/industry base. It can best be described as the downtown area. The population is highly transient. Because of the 24-hour nature of gaming, employees and tourists create an ongoing movement of people through the area. Every day there can be an influx of 10,000 to 60,000 tourists. The Central Area is also where most of the homeless/transients locate. This is due to the "glitter" of casinos and the location of several social service agencies.

A limited number of individuals do live in the area. There are three or four small pockets of single family dwellings. These residences are occupied by either renters or elderly people who have lived there a long time. Many houses are being converted to small professional offices. Apartments are small complexes, either in the form of multi-level single room buildings, or two story, 25-50 unit complexes. Many have a high concentration of Hispanic and Asian families.

During late 1987, a NAG was created for the Central Area. Approximately 25-30 individuals attended the first meeting. The majority of participants were business owners/representatives, with only two or three actual residents. It became very clear during the presentation that the issues facing the downtown area were associated more with business than residential areas. A second meeting was held with the same low number of residents present. After a period of six months, it was recognized that the area commander would have to be involved with representatives of the business community on an almost daily basis. Several business groups were already in existence and the area commander worked closely with those organizations.

The single most important representative organization was the Downtown Renovation Agency (DRA). Membership of the DRA includes most of the downtown properties CEO's, small business owners, and representatives of the Chamber of Commerce. This was an extremely powerful group, both economically and politically. In addition, the area commander was a member of the casinos Security Director's Association.

One of the most serious issues confronting the Central Area, and the entire City, is that of the homeless and transient population. The area commander is a member of the Homeless

Coalition, a task force established to evaluate medical/social treatment of indigents and other committees concerned with the general environment of the area. Many of the groups are temporary and issue driven.

The Central Area is also the primary focal point for special events. Groups or individuals sponsoring a special event must complete an application and meet with the Community Services supervisor to insure public safety issues are addressed. The larger events require the attention of the Area Commander.

The Central NAG model is one of participation with existing professional organizations. This has been successful because the members of existing groups have a vested financial interest in the downtown area. The issues and concerns can be discussed, while insuring that resources are distributed in an equitable fashion.

#### Special Services

Special Services provides administrative and operational support for patrol division. Special Services is concerned with the strategic implementation of programs that support COPPS in the three areas. It manages all administrative and personnel functions within Patrol. These include: development and management of patrols budget, FTO program, shift bid, coordination of grants, traffic division, court liaison program, and SWAT teams.

### CHIEF'S ADVISORY GROUPS

In addition to the single Neighborhood Advisory Groups, designers envisioned the need for several specialized NAG's that would participate directly with the Chief of Police. The Media Advisory Group, Citizen Advisory Group, and Professional Advisory Group were formed to meet this need.

## **MEDIA ADVISORY GROUP**

The Media Advisory Group was developed with the single purpose of improving police/media relations. The media was criticized by citizens in the initial Community Attitude and Confidence survey for "unfair, biased, and sensationalized" reporting of the police in several incidents. Police officials believed this contributed to the department's poor image. This group was made up of news directors, assignment editors or general managers of the three local television stations, news directors from several of the local radio stations and the executive editor of the local newspaper. It was hoped that this group would help establish meaningful communications between the department and the media, and provide an equal exchange of ideas, perceptions, and concerns. Several meetings have taken place and a more cooperative relationship appears to be occurring.

The creation of a public information officer (PIO) shortly after the implementation of COPPS alleviated many of the concerns and problems previously experienced between police and the media. The PIO communicates daily with the media, arranging news conferences and delivering news releases. The PIO also promotes stories on many community projects and functions in which the police department is involved.

## **CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUP**

This group consists of a few select NAG members from each neighborhood and ethnic group. The concept established an executive group that would provide the Chief with an overall perspective on the progress and status of COPPS. It also allowed the Chief access to some of the most influential citizens in the city. In turn, these citizens had direct communication with the Chief of Police.

## **PROFESSIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP**

The aim of this group was to invite professionals in the field of law enforcement throughout the country to Reno, where they could provide technical assistance on the application of COPPS. In the summer of 1989, a representative from Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) in Washington D.C. was invited to Reno and presented a Problem Oriented Policing course to supervisors. Several department members maintain close contact and exchange information and ideas with PERF staff.

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

Quality Assurance (QA) unit was created to conduct community surveys. QA conducts two major Community Attitude and Confidence surveys and 24 mini-surveys a year. It also manages the department's progress toward achieving accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). CALEA was formed in 1979 through the combined efforts of four major law enforcement membership associations. CALEA's goal is to improve law enforcement by establishing standards and evaluate agencies for accreditation.

The QA section conducts two major Community Attitude and Confidence surveys annually that consist of 700-800 randomly selected respondents from households. These surveys were designed to assist the department in understanding the community's attitude toward police service. The first survey revealed the department had a poor image within the community. Subsequent surveys have shown a rapid improvement. Each survey is discussed extensively in Executive Staff and the results are shared with department members, City Council, NAG groups, and the Chiefs media advisory group. The surveys are considered a "report card" on police service. The information is used as a tool to "fine tune" the police response to community

problems.

The 24 annual mini-surveys occur at the direction of command staff or at the request of division heads who want their operation evaluated. As an example: QA conducted a survey of the Detective Division to evaluate customer satisfaction. It revealed the most frequent complaint by citizens was the lack of recontact by detectives. The problem was twofold: Officers taking the original report were advising citizens that detectives would contact them the next day, and many of the reports taken involved misdemeanor crimes, in which case there was no automatic follow-up by a detective.

After discussion of the survey in staff, the following solutions were proposed: First, briefings were used to instruct officers not to tell citizens that detectives would automatically contact them the next day. Officers were reminded that some cases required three days of processing, depending upon its classification or solvability factors. The police report form was changed to a multi-form. Every complainant/victim received a copy of the "facesheet" after reporting an incident. The facesheet contains important crime information and a case number. The back of the form contains phone numbers and information on how to follow-up misdemeanor and other crime cases. A follow-up survey by QA revealed a marked improvement in citizen satisfaction.

The importance of the police understanding community needs cannot be overstated. Surveys provide vital information and insight into the public's perception of officer performance and can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of police-citizen relations. Officers must be careful that "order" does not become an overriding concern to the point where sensible law is ignored. Policing efforts must be consistent with community needs and desires. The surveys conducted

by QA have helped police officials in evaluating their performance, identifying community needs, and establishing long-range planning objectives.

### **PUTTING THE PROBLEM SOLVING THEORY TO PRACTICE**

Problem Oriented Policing puts the Community Policing philosophy to practice. The POP approach offers a new proactive strategy of delivering police service. RPD has experienced many successes since COPPS began. Each of the three areas has different concerns and, as a result, their approaches to problem solving have varied.

#### **NORTH/STEAD AREA**

•**Eviction Program:** Several apartment complexes in Northeast Reno were plagued with tenants trafficking drugs. Many of the tenants were receiving HUD assistance to live in the complex. Previous enforcement efforts had been unsuccessful. Police organized meetings with the representatives of the District Attorney's Office, landlord tenant association and apartment complex owners. It was evident that the landlords did not know their rights and were concerned that any attempts toward eviction would result in law suits and claims of harassment. They were concerned about the deterioration of the properties due to the influx of drugs and prostitution, but did not know how to deal with the problem.

In reviewing the alternatives, participants discovered that HUD had strict regulations for applicants receiving aid. Many of the people suspected of drug sales were in violation of these guidelines. An eviction program was developed and, in a cooperative effort with all concerned, 11 individuals were evicted. Some will not be eligible to reapply for HUD funding. As a result, there was a significant reduction in drug related complaints.

\***Pat Baker Park:** Pat Baker Park is a small neighborhood park that was built in "one

day" in the late 1970's by the community in Northeast Reno. The park is referred to as "instant park" and carries an emotional significance to the citizens who created it. Unfortunately, over the years it has become a place for drug sales and gang related activity.

Residents complained and demanded more police when dealers took over the park. Traditionally, the police would assign officers to the area and slowly increase enforcement in hopes of dispersing the problem. This strategy usually worked for a short time, but the situation would quickly revert to its beginning when the police presence was removed. At that time, complaints would increase and the police would respond with a task force making mass arrests. Even though the police were successful in clearing out drug dealers, arrests usually resulted in complaints from residents that alleged the police were heavy handed or prejudiced.

When COPPS was implemented, several NAG groups were formed in the Northeast area. One group representing local ministries was developed to discuss approaches for alleviating the problem of drugs and gangs. Through a mutual exchange of problem solving ideas, the ministers' NAG supported the department's enforcement efforts. Numerous arrests were made of suspected gang members for drug related activities without a single complaint from citizens. As a result, the community led a "take back the park" march and picnic to celebrate their success. Police continue to work closely with these groups to monitor the park and neighborhood.

The Pat Baker Park program was the department's largest COPPS effort at the early stages of the program's implementation. The Pat Baker Park area had a history of being politically volatile. As stated, past efforts by the police resulted in citizens' complaints. The success of this program led to a foundation of cooperation and mutual efforts to problem solving

that paved the way for several other future programs.

- Trainer Way Drug Sting: As a result of working with neighborhood NAG's, police received numerous complaints of "crack houses" on Trainer Way in Northeast Reno. In the past, cooperation with the police regarding these problems was nonexistent. The NAG groups promoted a close working relationship between police and community that resulted in mutual problem solving efforts.

"Operation House Calls" evolved and an undercover black officer from out-of-state was loaned to the department for assistance. Numerous drug buys were made, as well as arrests. A NAG group was developed and police worked closely with residents toward a solution to the problem. This program would not have been possible without the information and cooperation from NAG members. The success has been enjoyed by all.

- Abandoned Vehicles in Stead: Stead is an abandoned Air Force Base within the City limits approximately 10 miles north of downtown. It's a small, but rapidly growing, community of approximately 5,000 residents.

Stead is surrounded by open desert and has always been a favorite dumping ground for abandoned vehicles, creating an eyesore for residents and a danger for children. Many of the vehicles were located in the Counties jurisdiction and both agencies tended to overlook the complaints because they could be blamed on the other. As a result of working with the North/Stead NAG, a senior officer assigned to the area arranged for towing of over 100 vehicles from the area. Several NAG members donated tow vehicles and equipment from their own businesses. The success of this project received positive news coverage and was a positive step toward improving the police image among Stead residents.

•UNR/RPD Jurisdictional Agreement: The University of Nevada, Reno is located at the north edge of the downtown area. UNR has its own police department (UNRPD). They have jurisdiction on campus, at several off campus fraternity/sorority houses, and at Job Corps in Stead. Job Corps is a federal training program for youths. They have security, but use UNRPD to investigate criminal cases.

In the past, there had been little communication between campus police, Job Corps security and RPD, even though many of the problems handled by each crossed jurisdictions. Officers began working with the two other agencies discussing their concerns. Jurisdictional agreements were developed and periodic meetings were scheduled to encourage communication. One result of these meetings was a consolidated dispatch between the Reno PD and UNRPD, For the first time, RPD and UNRPD officers could monitor each other's activity. It's not uncommon now to find officers covering each other on traffic stops or providing cover on a serious call. The relationship between the agencies has improved dramatically.

\*Patton Drive Footbeat Program: Patton Drive is located near Pat Baker Park and has been the scene of "drive by shootings" and gang related activity. The same NAG's dealing with Pat Baker Park's drug and gang problems worked toward a solution on Patton Drive. Footbeats were immediately assigned to the area. Officers began talking with residents and non-residents were singled out and questioned about their business. RPD's gang officer identified known members who were targeted for enforcement action. The shootings and gang activity quickly subsided. This area is being monitored closely by police.

\*Dirt Bike Program: Reno lies at the base of the Sierra Nevada mountains and is surrounded by large areas of open desert. The Stead, Southwest, and Northwest areas were

popular for off-road vehicles and dirt bikes. Noise and dust from the off-road vehicles resulted in complaints from citizens. Many of the popular areas were in County jurisdiction and the lack of four wheeled vehicles limited the police department's response to complaints. After discussing the problem with NAGs from the three areas concerned, the police department purchased two dirt bikes and assigned officers to respond to complaints in problem areas. Recently, police responded to a complaint and the dirtbike officers recovered an All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) that was stolen from a dealership one day earlier and two arrests were made. Residents have been very supportive of the program and complaints were significantly reduced.

•Sierra Nevada Job Corps: Job Corps is a federally sponsored employment training program. Most students are from low-income families and a high proportion of students are from out of state. Job Corps has always had a poor reputation among officers, and students have been the subject of many resident complaints about loitering in neighborhoods. Other than telling the students to "move along" and not loiter, little was done to curb the problem. Police began meeting with Job Corps staff and security, thus discovering there were positive aspects of the program. Job Corps had 600 students attending many different training programs, including law enforcement. The entry requirements for law enforcement students are strict and they can't have a police record.

As a result of working with Job Corps staff, students have recently been involved in construction projects at the police facility. The most significant project was the construction of a Nevada Peace Officers Memorial to honor slain officers. Students have also attended the dispatch academy for work experience and college credits.

\*COMPAS Program: The Comprehensive Mental Health Assessment Program was

developed to deal with the mentally ill. Previously, it would take several hours of a police officer's time to process a mentally ill subject. Now, COMPAS personnel respond to the scene of mentally ill subjects upon the request of officers. COMPAS works directly with the hospitals and state mental health institutions. Upon their arrival, the officer is released from the scene to resume other duties and COMPAS handles all the processing and transportation.

**•Telephone Programming:** A convenience store in the Northeast section of Reno was a popular hangout for drug sellers who used the telephone to receive calls from clients. Enforcement for this type of activity is manpower intensive and time consuming. The store owner and telephone company were contacted in hopes of solving the problem. It was learned telephones can be programmed not to receive incoming calls. The dealers quickly disappeared. Even though the problem was more than likely dispersed to another location, the police accept this short-term solution when compared to the risks associated with drug sales continuing at the convenience store which was frequented by teens and children.

## **SOUTH AREA**

**•Traffic Team:** The most common complaint from citizens throughout the city is attributed to speeding vehicles and other traffic related problems. Traffic enforcement was largely carried out by motorcycle officers assigned to district teams and other interested officers. All officers were trained in use of speed radar guns and relied on this equipment for the majority of traffic violation citations. Upon completion of radar training, the number of tickets issued rose rapidly, as did citizen complaints alleging "speed traps."

In order to respond properly to the mounting requests for enforcement, yet at the same time correct the department's poor image, motors were re-assigned from district teams to a

traffic team supervised by one sergeant. Their shifts were adjusted to cover the peak hours when accidents and violations were occurring. A state funded grant allowed for the purchase of a computer dedicated to track accidents, citations, and DUI information. Motors were assigned to enforcement according to identified problem areas and upon citizen request. Traffic complaints had always been a major complaint of citizens and a frequent topic of discussion at NAG meetings. The new traffic program, which required personal contact with the complainant by the officer assigned to the enforcement, resulted in many positive comments by citizens and NAG members.

Warning citations were also developed as an alternative strategy to enforcement. The citations are used in certain situations where "fair warning" is considered by the supervisor to be the better tactic before an enforcement program is implemented. Warning citations can also be issued at the discretion of an officer in a situation where verbal warning would have resulted.

A radar trailer displaying the speed for the driver of an oncoming vehicle was donated by the Reno Air Race Association. The trailer has become extremely popular and is requested for school zones and neighborhoods throughout the city. Funding is being sought for the purchase of two more trailers in order to meet the demand.

Officers assigned to an area take the additional time necessary to explain to violators the problem and reason why they received the citation. Although the number of citations increased substantially since the reorganization of traffic teams, complaints have nearly been eliminated.

**•Fish Hatchery Property Project:** This property is located in the middle of the Neil Road area. The Neil Road area consists of several multi-unit apartment complexes. Major thoroughfares separate apartment complexes from schools and parks, making it difficult and

dangerous for children to walk to nearby facilities from home. Residents in the area continually expressed the need for a local park for the children. Through working with NAGs and the City Planning Department, a 19-acre abandoned fish hatchery property was located.

City and private entities worked together on the problem. As a result, the Parks Department earmarked 7 million dollars to build a park. The Truckee Meadows Boys Club is considering building a facility on the land. The Zoning Department has begun a revision in the Master Plan to allow the building of a park. The Planning Department has researched a comprehensive proposal to develop a police substation on the site. A possibility exists that Ford Foundation money can be acquired to develop the plan at a minimum cost to the City. This has been one of the most aggressive, positive projects, and one of the best examples of COPPS philosophy and POP at work.

**•Neil Road Foot Patrol:** Neil Road is a high density area consisting of low income apartment and HUD properties. The area has a high ratio of Hispanics and has experienced both Black and Hispanic gang problems. Police began working with business owners and residents in the area to discuss problems. Footbeat patrols, with at least one bi-lingual officer, were assigned to the area. The community support was tremendous. Officers worked closely with residents and business owners to solve gang and theft problems that plagued the area. Immediately after footbeats were implemented, overt gang activity subsided.

**•Truancy Program:** Washoe County has a high rate of dropout among its students. This problem has received much attention and concern from school officials and parents. A variety of agencies, including the police department, handled the dropout and truancy problem independently and with minimal success. The various agencies formed a coalition to resolve the

problem. RPD, working with school officials, assigned officers to truancy enforcement 2-4 days a week. All agencies worked together and developed a new truancy policy that included incentives for good attendance. All truants picked up by police were transported to the Children's Cabinet, a County facility that makes counseling referrals for juveniles with behavior and family problems. They were responsible for providing referral services before the student was returned to school.

A new centralized children's intake center is now under construction. The center was funded by both private and public resources and is designed to integrate all state, county, and private agencies. A truancy center will be attached to the facility but operate independently. The combined efforts of all agencies resulted in a dramatic reduction in truancy.

**\*Mill and Edison Drag Racing:** Mill and Edison are main streets in an industrial area located in the eastern portion of the City. Over the years it has become a popular teenage hangout for drinking and drag racing. Previous attempts to alleviate drag racing resulted in minimal success. The area is remote and any police response was discovered well in advance. Drag racers assigned perimeter guards with walkie talkies to sound an alarm at any police response.

As many as 300 teens would congregate to watch the racing. The location was so popular that temporary stands were erected to sell car parts. Liquor was so prevalent that business owners set out garbage cans in hopes that some of the trash would be discarded properly and reduce their clean-up after the weekend. Regardless of the number of citations written, there was little success in curbing the problem. Police began working with City engineers, business owners, school district officials, and the Reno Citizens Traffic Advisory

Board to resolve the problem. Empty lots were fenced, newly designed "speed bumps" were installed, and "no parking" zones established. Police worked with local schools who printed articles in school papers to discourage drinking and drag racing in the area. A form letter, explaining the problem to parents, was developed and sent to the residence of any juvenile contacted by police. For the first time, the problem was reduced to isolated incidents.

## **CENTRAL AREA**

•**Springtime Enforcement Plan:** Reno's downtown tourist season begins in the spring. As many as 60,000 guests may be present on any weekend. The transient population also increases (there are estimates of between 200-300 hardcore transients) and minor street crimes become a concern. Footbeats, bicycle, and dirtbike patrols are implemented in an effort to maintain order.

•**Court Footbeat Program:** The downtown businesses and casinos continually make demands for a higher police presence and increased footbeats. In order to satisfy the downtown concern and not remove police from the neighborhoods, a program was developed that allows officers to volunteer for overtime pay walking a footbeat while they are on-call for municipal court. Previously, police were paid a nominal standby fee while waiting at home. This program has been very popular with officers and has reduced the complaints by downtown business owners about the lack of officer presence.

•**Special Tax District:** As a result of the success of the court footbeat program, casino and business owners worked with the police department to develop legislation allowing the downtown business owners to create a special tax district. The special tax district allows business owners to pay for new officer positions that would be allocated specifically for the

downtown area. The law was passed in the last legislature and plans for as many as 28 new officer positions are being discussed.

\*Eyes and Ears Program: The downtown casinos Security Officers Association meets periodically to discuss common problems. A communications network was established and provides a direct link between downtown security dispatch and police dispatch. This greatly enhances the delivery of information to downtown security from the police department.

The Central Area Commander is now a member of the Security Officers Association. The police have worked with the Association to streamline the communications network and create a dispatch procedure. Police radios for downtown footbeats have been programmed so officers now have direct contact with the Security Officers Association base station. The new procedure has resulted in a more timely response by the police and improved relations with security personnel.

•Homeless Coalition: Reno has a permanent population estimated at 200-300 "hardcore" transients. Two major social services are located downtown. Daily they draw a large crowd of transient and homeless traffic resulting in complaints from downtown business owners. The police, downtown property owner's association, and social service agencies have dealt with the problem independently in the past.

A Homeless Coalition, consisting of downtown property owners, member of City government, social service agencies, hospitals, and the police, was formed to deal with this concern. A permanent facility outside the downtown area is being planned through contributions from downtown businesses and the combined sale of social service properties in the downtown area.

Police have also networked with the hospitals and DETOX Center to ensure there is a consistent approach to dealing with the problem. Enforcement has taken a back seat to planning and problem solving.

## CONCLUSION

Wilson's theory on "broken windows" applied to Reno P.D. as well. (Wilson: 1982) RPD's "broken window" was their image in the community. Mistakenly, the department equated their success in attaining MBO objectives with public satisfaction. Police often misunderstand the needs of communities and rarely do they properly measure success beyond the simple statistics of an officer's production. RPD's MBO program had degenerated to the point where statistics drove the organization. It took the defeat of two referendums for more personnel and a Community Attitude and Confidence Survey to convince the police their image was poor. The RPD has learned from history they can no longer impose order from the outside. Order maintenance is the shared responsibility of both the police and the community. Communities want the opportunity to participate and, in exchange, will offer their support. The design and implementation of COPPS helped RPD better understand their role in the community. It solicited police/community cooperation and emphasized a mutual identification of problems and combining of resources in problem resolution. Effectiveness took priority over efficiency and improved quality of life was its main goal.

Reno P.D. has embraced its community through the COPPS design. Any initial fear by the police of interference or citizens attempts to take control of the department, have been set aside by two years of cooperative efforts in problem solving. The long-term effects of COPPS are not yet known. Reno P.D. will continue meeting with their NAG groups and conducting

bi-annual and mini-surveys in order to monitor their success. Whatever the future might hold, the department is convinced that COPPS is the most positive and successful approach to policing in Reno's history. An improved image in the community and a successful referendum providing 88 new officers are just two measures of this success.

#### CONCLUSION

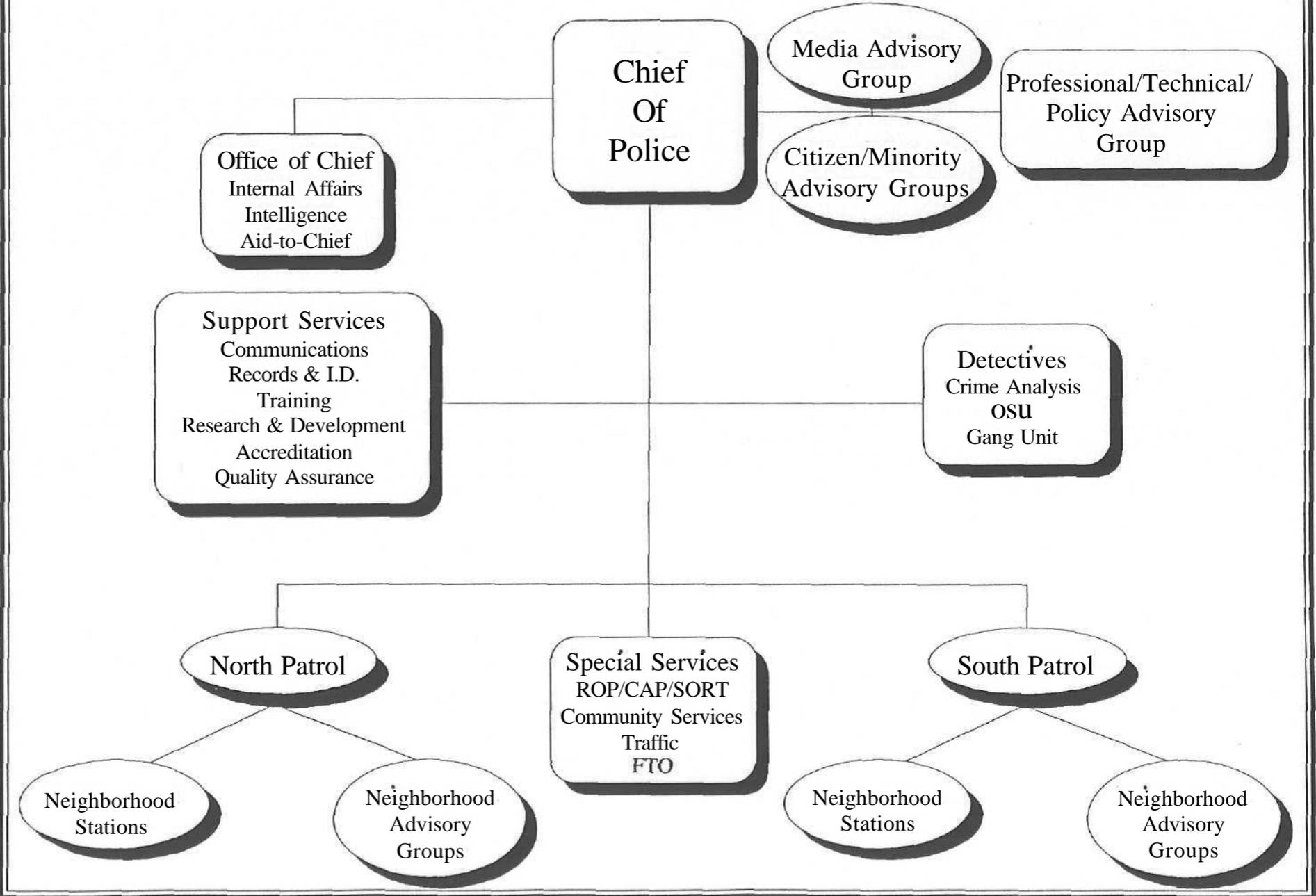
Wilson's theory on "broken windows" applied to Reno P.D. as well. (Wilson, 1982) Reno's "broken window" was their image in the community. Historically, the department equated their success in retaining MBO objectives with public satisfaction. Police often misunderstood the needs of communities and rarely do they properly measure success beyond the simple statistics of an officer's production. Reno's MBO program had degenerated to the point where statistics drove the organization. It took the defeat of two referendums for more personnel and a Community Attitude and Confidence Survey to convince the police their image was poor. The RPD has learned from history they can no longer impose order from the outside. Order maintenance is the shared responsibility of both the police and the community. Communities want the opportunity to participate and, in exchange, will offer their support. The design and implementation of COPPS helped RPD better understand their role in the community. It solicited police-community cooperation and emphasized a mutual identification of problems and combining of resources in problem resolution. Effectiveness took priority over efficiency and improved quality of life was its main goal. Reno P.D. has captured its community through the COPPS design. Any initial fear by the police of interference or citizens attempts to take control of the department, has been set aside by two years of cooperative efforts in problem solving. The long term effects of COPPS are not yet known. Reno P.D. will continue meeting with their MBO groups and evaluating

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# Reno Police Department

## Community Oriented Policing & Problem Solving



RENO POLICE DEPARTMENT  
CITIZEN ATTITUDE AND OPINION SURVEY

November 1991

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## BACKGROUND

In May 1987, the Reno Police Department moved away from a traditional format and adopted a *Community-Oriented Policing* approach. Traditional policing has historically been reactive in the handling of problems, with little emphasis on long term solutions. The goal of this program was to develop a partnership between the police and the community, resulting in the improvement of the quality of life for all of Reno's citizens. The department's goal is exemplified by its motto, "*Your Police, Our Community.*" Community policing orientations commonly achieve three benefits, improved delivery of police services, improved community relations and mutual resolutions of identifiable problems. The Community policing philosophy combined with the department's *Problem-Oriented Policing* approach, allows the Reno Police Department to not only handle problems, but solve long term issues.

In order to measure the effectiveness of the program an attitude and public opinion survey was developed. This program was initiated in June 1987, with the purpose of providing the department with information about the public's attitude toward the department and specific issues within the community. To assure both the validity and reliability of the survey, assistance was obtained from the University of Michigan and the University of Nevada, Reno. The demographic criteria for the survey was established by the University of Michigan. The external review has been accomplished with the assistance of the University of Nevada, Reno. The Political Science Department, Dr. Alan Wilcox, The Center for Applied Research, Dr. Sandra Neese, Community Health Sciences, Dr. Rosalie Marinelli, and Dr. Mike Havercamp and Criminal Justice Department, Dr. Ken Peak have all contributed and reviewed the survey. The importance of question construction and design, demands both internal and external reviews.

The analysis and interpretation of the data has been accomplished with the assistance of Dr. Koh, University of Nevada, Reno, Computer Science Department. Dr. Koh established the computer analysis system for processing the data. This enabled additional computations to be preformed and helped increase the accuracy of the data.

The survey is now recognized as the model program in the United States, by the Police Executive Research Forum. Other publications and requests include:

- A. Published by *Police Chief Magazine*, November 1991.
- B. Accepted for publication by Police Executive Research Forum, "Methods, A Primer for Law Enforcement."
- C. Accepted for publication by the *Journal of Criminal Justice*.
- D. The Reno Police Department has been Invited to speak at the last two national conferences on Problem-Oriented policing.

- E. Requested by the Christopher Commission for implementation by the Los Angeles Police Department as a result of the Rodney King incident.
- F. Requested by the John F. Kennedy school of Government, Harvard University.
- G. Requested by New York City Police Department.
- H. On site visits and request from over 150 agencies across the United States, Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom.

In the four plus years that the Reno Police Department has been involved in Community-Oriented Policing dramatic improvement has been obtained. The department's performance has improved almost 20 percentage points, city wide. The Reno Police Department's image within the community is up over 45 points. In numerical terms, this represents an definite improvement in the positive opinions of over 57,000 citizens. The leaders in law enforcement make it clear that Community-Oriented Policing is the future of policing. The successes of the Reno Police Department appear to support that conclusion.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The results from the eighth attitude and public opinion survey indicate a continued increase in the Reno Police Department's performance and image within the community. Of the citizens expressing an opinion of the department's performance, 93% rated the Reno Police Department's performance as good or very good.

The department's rating in dealing with law breakers continues to increase. Out of every 15 citizens, 14 gave a positive response towards the Reno Police Department's dealing with lawbreakers.

One of the biggest improvements occurred in the department's image. Of Reno's population, 87%, had a positive opinion of the department's image. This represents an increase of 7% in six months, and over 40% since the community oriented policing program was implemented. The citizens clearly approve of the Reno Police Department's image and the current direction that it is taking, by an overwhelming majority.

The overall feeling of safety in Reno has been affected by the increase in community gang awareness. Other factors that influenced this rating continue to be an increase in population, and the UCR statistics that were released during the survey. There is a direct correlation between safety and police visibility.

The perceived number one problem in Reno was the gang problem. The number of concerned citizens citing this issue tripled from previous surveys. Of the citizens expressing an opinion, 78%, are pleased with the department's approach to the gang dilemma. The overwhelming suggestion to improve this issue is to increase the penalties for gang offenses, which of course is not a police issue, but a legislative and judicial issue. An additional third of the population requested increases in educational and community programs to combat the problem.

Several programs have been initiated, since the survey, to combat gangs. These include:

1. Community Action Team
2. Youth Gang Task force
3. Specialized gang training
4. Graffiti Removal
5. Increase Neighborhood Advisory Group awareness

As in past surveys, the importance of police/citizen interaction continues to be a focal point. This interaction not only influences the citizen on performance and image issues, but also on fiscal issues. A citizen with a positive contact is more likely to vote for an increase in taxes for police services.

The majority of citizens, 93%, were willing to increase taxes, when

1  
faced with the choice of either reducing police services or  
increasing their taxes. The citizens would support an additional  
tax increase of up to 12 dollars annually for police services.  
Many specifically stated they would support the increase, only if  
the taxes are guaranteed to be used for police services.

2  
The Reno Police Department's performance as good or very good.

3  
The department's rating in dealing with law breakers continues to  
increase. Out of every 10 citizens, 8 gave a positive response  
towards the Reno Police Department's dealing with lawbreakers.

4  
One of the biggest improvements occurred in the department's rating.  
Of Reno's population, 87% had a positive opinion of the  
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The overall feeling of safety in Reno has been affected by the  
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and the UCR statistics that were released during the survey. There  
is a direct correlation between safety and police visibility.

6  
The perceived number one problem in Reno was the drug problem. The  
number of concerned citizens citing this issue tripled from  
previous surveys. Of the citizens expressing an opinion, 75% are  
pleased with the department's approach to the gang dilemma. The  
overwhelming suggestion to improve this issue is to increase the  
penalties for gang offenses, which of course is not a police issue,  
but a legislative and judicial issue. An additional third of the  
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vote for an increase in taxes for police services.

9  
The majority of citizens, 63%, were willing to increase taxes, when

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A survey which represents all of Reno's citizens, as this one does, reflects considerable effort and cooperation by many people. Without their help, it would not be possible for a project of this size to be undertaken.

Special thanks to Dr. Sandra Neese and Dr. Rosalie Marinelli of the University of Nevada, Reno. Dr. Neese and Marinelli evaluated the survey's content and impartiality. In addition, they provided priceless time to help formulate several additional questions that provided valuable insight. Their help and assistance provide credibility and improve the accuracy of the results.

The success of a survey revolves around the people who talk to the respondents and record their answers. Our survey takers were recruited from the University of Nevada, Reno, and the Reno Police Department's Reserve Officer and Explorer Programs. The University of Nevada, Reno's Criminal Justice Department is owed special thanks for their continuing assistance in recruiting volunteers from classes to act as survey takers, and for giving us the opportunity to intrude on their precious class time in the process.

A special recognition goes to the volunteers who donated their valuable time to conduct the survey. The department wishes to personally thank each of these volunteers: John Frey, Kathy Caramella, Jose Rivera, Charlotte Garber, Robin Larsen, Carol Doyle, Michele Williams, Raquel Sandoval, Christina Turner, Barbara Armitage, Chris Harris, Dan Davis, Nancy Jo Weld, Stephanie Davidson, Stefanie Powell, Jaime Mantz, James Coffindaffer, Thomas Ryan, Kelli Twiddy, Sandra Greenlee, Michelle Duke, Christine O'Donnel, Holly Coffill, Stephanie Foss, Lance Newlin, Jody Rice, Tanya Folgate, Geoff Davis, Ben Willock, Tina McCarthy, Jack Reed, Roya Ebrahimi, Anne Schebler, Willette Forrester, Therese Ciofalo O'Sullivan, Paul Gibson, John Vialpando, Kelli Richards, Gregory McGee, Kimberly Coveri, Tara Anderson, Ralph Hawkins, Tami Pirkle, George Summerhill III, Robert Shigeta, Michael McDade, Karen Fish, Murray Stravers, Ginger Graves, Norah Dunbar, Michael Zerby, Peter Crofut, Christine O'Flaherty, Natalie Brignand, Kathy Schwebie, Keri Weyl and Ryan Herrick.

No survey can be completed without the many people who were willing to take time out of their busy day to answer the questions put to them. Those answers were almost always thoughtful and were given with the intent of aiding the Reno Police Department. There were 709 respondents who took their time to assist the department, and we give them our most sincere thanks.

Finally, several of the department's employees who spent their evenings coordinating the survey effort: Kevin Foley, Wally Wolfe, and Steve Bigham. Our appreciation is given to Captain Glensor's Criminal Justice class at Truckee Meadows Community College which

also assisted with the surveys. Lieutenant Bill Bowen and Cadet Justine Marketti coordinated the Explorers that assisted in the survey. Cadet Marketti is owed special recognition for also assisting in the interview process. Sergeant Roger Clark and Officer Bruce Mathai coordinated the Reserves that assisted in the survey. Without Cadet Marketti, the Reserves and Explorers, this survey would not have been a success.

Special thanks to Dr. Sandra Nease and Dr. Rebecca Hartzel of the University of Nevada, Reno. Dr. Nease and Hartzel assisted in the survey's content and impartiality. In addition, they provided graciously time to help formulate several additional questions that provided valuable insight. Their help and assistance provided credibility and improve the accuracy of the results.

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## DEMOGRAPHICS

This is the eighth in the series of major surveys. The first survey consisted of 503 respondents and was concluded in June 1987. The second survey was finished in March 1988 and consisted of 703 respondents. The third survey consisted of 884 observations and was concluded on November 1988. The fourth survey was concluded in June 1989 and consisted of 720 observations. The fifth survey consisted of 701 observations and was completed in April 1990. The sixth survey was completed in October 1990 and consisted of 731 observations. The seventh survey was completed in March 1991 and consisted of 828 observations. This survey consisted of 708 observations and was completed in November 1991. The sample size was set at a minimum level to achieve our goal of surveying 1% of Reno's population annually.

The demographics for this survey are very similar to that of past surveys. Residents living in the central district represented 7% of the survey, the remaining 93%, were equally divided between the north and south areas of town.

The surveys racial breakdown reflects the 1990 census data for Reno. The only difference between the census data and this survey is in the Hispanic population. This was the second survey in which several interviews were conducted in Spanish, to increase the number of Hispanic residents surveyed. The Hispanic population is also the youngest of all the ethnic backgrounds.

Ranges were again used for age and income. This has dramatically reduced the number of refusals. The employment category was again expanded to include students. The voter question measured registered voters rather than "did you vote in a specific election."

## Survey Design and Methodology

This is one of the most important aspects of the survey. Several questions have remained constant throughout all eight surveys. These questions provide the department with data that is used for trend and time series analysis. In addition, new questions are introduced periodically. When a question is developed several steps are undertaken. These steps include:

- A. In house review
- B. External review
- C. Pre test the questionnaire

The external review has been accomplished with the assistance of the University of Nevada, Reno. The Center for Applied Research, Dr. Sandra Neese, Community Health Sciences, Dr. Rosalie Marinelli, and Dr. Mike Havercamp and Criminal Justice Department, Dr. Ken Peak have all reviewed the survey. The importance of the question construction and design, demands both internal and external reviews.

Every effort is made to assure each area is proportionately represented. This is accomplished with the assistance of Nevada Bell. They provide a list of telephone prefixes that cover the Reno area, and the number of residents who are issued each specific prefix. A proportion of residents for each prefix is calculated and this proportion is applied to the sample population. Random phone numbers are generated for each prefix. Since more numbers are generated than called, phone numbers within a prefix are distributed to survey takers randomly. Random calling will minimize the number of residents excluded from the possibility of being selected.

To eliminate a potential bias resulting from interviewing whoever answers the telephone the *Troldahl and Carter Selection table* is applied to the survey. This table is designed to keep the survey's population consistent with Reno's population in regards to both age and gender.

Volunteers are used from the Criminal Justice classes at the University of Nevada, Reno. Students are used to reduce any police threat or interviewer bias in the survey. The interviewer is introduced to the respondent only as a volunteer from the City of Reno.

Volunteers are provided training before they conduct a survey. The survey questions, respondent selection process, phone lists and system hardware are explained thoroughly to each student. Mock phone calls are undertaken to eliminate the possibility of data contamination because of interviewer bias or confusion.

The actual interviews are observed continuously by the same

monitors. This provides consistency and confidence in the process. The monitor not only provides technical assistance to the survey taker but corrects any possible bias before it can prejudice the data. Common corrections include reminding the interviewer to read all the verbiage, maintaining the proper order of the questions and completely filling out the survey. The surveys were conducted at 704 Mill Street. This location was chosen to minimize possible distractions.

Data is coded into a *DBASE XV* program immediately after the completion of an interview. This method helps assure that the responses are correctly coded. The same coders are used throughout the survey to assure consistency.

Data is then evaluated using the *SPSS-PC* statistical program. A confidence level of 95% is used when analyzing results. This analysis enables data to be evaluated by demographic groups, geographic area, time frame and additional subgroups.

The first step in the analysis is to error check the data. The evaluation is only as accurate as the data. The first statistical test undertaken is a simple frequency distribution. Cross-tabulations and proportions help evaluate and classify the data. Various other tests are then undertaken to provide measures of central tendency, dispersion, distribution and analysis of variance.

A sample size of 400 is needed to achieve a 95% confidence level. This assures that independent samples will differ no more than 5% from the general population. Additional surveys are taken to reduce the error margin in the various components and subsets of the survey.

Several questions were added to this survey or modified since the last survey. Contact was broken down into two categories, sworn and civilian. This will allow the measurement of civilian contact also. The word crime was taken out of the number one "crime" problem. This will measure the concerns of the citizen on both police and non-police issues. Several additional questions were added to quantify fiscal issues, the gang problem and neighborhood watch. The follow-up question on community involvement was changed from COP+ to any departmental program.

## ANALYSIS

The Support Services Division of the Reno Police Department recently completed the eighth in a continuing series of citizen attitude and opinion surveys. The perceptions the citizens of Reno have about their police department have improved in almost all categories. This survey, as in past surveys, has stressed both design and methodology. A survey will only provide valid information when structured and implemented carefully.

The public's opinion of the department's performance increased. The ratio of positive to negative responses was 14.2:1. This represents an improvement from the last survey of over 4%, and almost 15% in the past year. This is the second highest score ever received by the department. Only survey five, April 1990, received a higher score.

Of citizens that had an opinion, excluding fair responses, over 93% of the population rated the department's performance as good or very good. This proportion has continually improved since the original survey rating of 75%. The improvement is statistically significant, which documents the department's advancement. When looking at the mean score of each survey, the current survey demonstrated the best results. This survey yielded an average score of 3.99. This is on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest possible.

One of the major influencing factors in determining the citizens' perception of performance was contact by a departmental employee. When the contact with a citizen is viewed as positive the department's performance is almost always rated positive. The number of citizens contacted continues to increase. Over 58% of the population is contacted within a two year period, an increase of over 6%. The results of officer and civilian contact are as follows:

Contact with an officer		
	Pos/Neg ratio	% Satisfaction
Positive contact	66.7:1	98.5%
No contact	18.6:1	94.9%
Neutral contact	12.1:1	92.3%
Negative contact	1.4:1	57.5%

Contact with a civilian		
	Pos/Neg ratio	% Satisfaction
Positive contact	30.0:1	96.8%
No contact	14.2:1	93.4%
Neutral contact	8.0:1	88.9%
Negative contact	2.7:1	72.7%

Several other factors influenced the performance rating. Generally speaking, the older a citizen is, the better the rating. There was

a statistical difference between citizens over fifty-five and those under thirty-five. The younger residents were influenced by *unsatisfactory* officer attitudes and performance. In addition, this age group would like to see more police officers. The older residents were pleased with the management change. Citizens over seventy-five requested less traffic enforcement.

Female residents rated the department's performance higher than did their male counterparts. The biggest difference displayed between men and women was in their perception of response time. The scores were higher from registered voters than citizens not registered to vote. Citizens who could name a departmental program gave the department a higher performance rating. Those who named a program used the program to evaluate the department, while those who could not relied more on the media for their opinions.

All of the areas ranked the department the same with the exception of Stead. This area had an 86% satisfaction rate compared to the remainder of the city/ 92% to 95%. The one noticeable difference in the Stead area was an increase in the respondents citing a slow response time.

The departmental rating on dealing with lawbreakers continues to improve. This ratio, 14.4:1, is at an all time high. Of those who expressed an opinion, excluding fair responses, over 93% were satisfied. Events during the survey period magnified the number of positive responses to this question.

Again, contact with a departmental employee continues to influence this question. Citizens with a positive contact rate the department positively 97% of the time, while a negative contact reduces this to under 73%. The lowest assessment comes from citizens involved in an accident, who were concerned about response time. Their ranking was even lower than those arrested or ticketed. In fact the citizens who received a ticket rated this question positive over 92% of the time. Contact with civilian employees duplicated officer contact.

One of the more surprising correlations occurs between the department's dealing with lawbreakers and whether the citizen could name a specific departmental program. Those that could, rated the department higher. This reiterates the premise that an informed citizen is also a supportive citizen. School programs, i.e. DARE, tend to influence the citizen more than enforcement programs, i.e. CAP.

Several other demographic characteristics also correlate to this question. Education level influences the citizens' rating of the department on this question. The ratings peak with high school graduates and then decline as the respondents' level of education increases. The assessment was highest from unemployed residents and lowest from full time homemakers. Those residents over the age

of seventy-five gave the department its lowest rating. Ratings generally increase with age until the respondent reaches seventy-five. The older the citizen the tougher they want the laws and department to be.

The department's image within the community continues to rebound since the sixth survey. The ratio of positive to negative responses was 6.9:1. This figure translates into over an 87% satisfaction level. Quite a dramatic improvement since the original survey, which had only a 41% satisfaction rate. The first survey coincided with the inception of the COP+ philosophy.

Contact was again one of the most important components in determining the citizens' perception of the department's image.

	Mean score
Positive contact	3.82
No contact	3.79
Neutral contact	3.32
Negative contact	2.89

The major difference occurs not with or without contact but between positive and negative contact. This survey produced the first difference between the type of contact. Those arrested or cited feel that the department's image is low, when compared to residents who were contacted for other reasons. Contact by civilian employees also influences the department's image but not to the same degree.

Women rated the department's image higher than men. The one exception was full time homemakers. The older a respondent, the better their rating was of the department's image. The department is held in higher esteem by older residents. In general, the department receives a benefit when a citizen can name a specific departmental program. One exception to this was the Explorer program, although only five residents knew of this program.

The majority of the negative responses can be attributed to ingrained citizen attitudes and perceived negative officer attitude and performance. The biggest improvement in image can be attributed to the change in the Reno Police Department's management and positive media coverage during the past six months.

The image rating was essentially the same in all areas. There were some differences in the reason for the specific rating. The northeast area tended to be more aware of programs and pleased with response time and patrolling efforts. The major concern of this area deals with brutality. The northwest area was concerned about officer attitudes but pleased with management. Stead area was pleased with officer attitudes but not pleased with response times. The southeast was influenced by both media coverage and response time. The southwest called the response time poor and was pleased

with the new management. The central area was satisfied with the officer's attitude.

There were some differences between the various races. Black residents were the lowest at 75% positive. This compares to white residents, 87%, and Hispanic residents at 90%.

The majority of the citizens, 73%, feel that Reno is a safe place to live. This is a decrease since the last survey, and represents the lowest score in survey annals. A large majority of this can be attributed to an increase in gang activity and publicity. In addition, a larger percentage of residents feel that Reno is becoming a less safe place to live, than in the last survey.

Several of the demographic characteristics yield differences on safety. The differences follow:

	Percentage that feel Reno is safe?	Percentage that feel Reno is becoming less safe
Men	76.5%	66.3%
Women	69.3%	69.0%
Lived in Reno (years)		
Less than 1	88.8%	53.6%
More than 10	68.4%	73.5%
Age		
Under 25	78.0%	57.0%
Over 65	64.7%	71.6%
Rent or Own		
Owners	71.7%	72.1%
Renters	75.0%	62.2%
Employment		
Employed	75.1%	68.6%
Unemployed	80.0%	57.1%
Retired	61.8%	72.5%
Homemaker	56.0%	76.9%
Student	89.4%	45.5%

The older residents tend to feel that crime is increasing, while younger residents are more concerned about gangs. Residents who have lived in Reno more than fifteen years feel that both the increases in the number of transients and the city's population have contributed to Reno becoming less safe. Residents who reside in houses noticed the population increase, while mobile home and condo residents attribute the reduction of safety to gangs, transients and an increase in the crime rate.

Citizens who reside in northwest Reno feel the safest among all the

areas of Reno. The southeast residents had the lowest feeling of safety. Southwest residents recorded the largest decrease in their feeling of safety, compared to the previous year. Over 67% of the population feel that Reno is becoming a less safe place to live. Central and Stead observed the smallest amount of change during the past year.

The number one problem in Reno was gang activity. The past two surveys have indicated drugs as the number one problem. The number of residents stating gangs were the number one problem, more than tripled since the last survey. Both theft and narcotics responses proportionally decreased. Also decreasing was murder, violent crimes and driving under the influence. The only other category showing an increase was the homeless/transient issue.

Each area of town cited gangs as the number one problem. However there was less emphasis on gangs in the more affluent districts compared to apartment/higher crime areas. The Asian community was the most concerned about gangs, while the black and Indian population were equally concerned about drug issues. There was no statistical difference between men and women on this point. Property owners were more concerned about both gangs and theft while renters were also distressed about narcotic criminal activity. As income increases, the respondent's priorities shift from gangs to theft and traffic issues. The more educated the respondent the more likely they will indicate drugs as the number one problem rather than gangs or theft.

The older the respondent the more concerned about drugs and the less concerned about gang issues. Residents under twenty-five, declared gangs as the number one problem one-half of the time. This compares to retired residents who designated gangs the number one problem one-quarter of the time. Newer Reno residents are more concerned about gangs than older residents. This would seem to indicate that Reno's gang problem is less than other cities.

Citizens were given the opportunity to evaluate the department's handling of the gang situation. Of citizens expressing an opinion, excluding fair responses, 79%, voiced a positive response. This is outstanding considering that 86% feel Reno has a gang problem. The citizens were given an opportunity to state how they would solve the gang problem. The results follow:

Tougher penalties	157	39.7%
More educational programs	88	22.2%
More community involvement	58	14.7%
More police enforcement	55	13.9%
Gang task force	15	3.8%
Parental responsibility	15	3.8%
Reduce media coverage	8	2.0%

The majority, 82%, feel the best approach to solve this problem is

to pursue a community wide approach to the gang problem.

The higher the respondents<sup>1</sup> level of education, the more likely they were to feel that Reno has a gang problem. A larger percentage of residents residing in mobile homes, regard Reno as having a gang problem, compared to all other housing accommodations. Gangs are more of a concern with women. The older the respondent the better they felt the department was handling the current gang crisis.

Citizens were asked whether they would like increased police services even if it means an increase in taxes. The majority of the respondents, eighty-four percent, were in favor of increased police services. The following question attempted to quantify this by asking how much they would be willing to pay for increased police services. The pass/fail mark appears to be around twelve dollars annually. Numerous citizens indicated their support was contingent with the money being specifically earmarked for the police department. Several citizens expressed concerns about the "safety 88" money not going to the department as promised. The chance of passing a tax increase would be improved by guaranteeing that the new tax money goes to the police department and not the general fund.

Several factors positively correlated to this question. Respondents were more likely to vote for additional taxes if they knew of a departmental program, are female, employed, and have finished high school or attended college but not post-graduate school. A citizen is more likely to support the tax increase and at a higher level if they have had positive contact with an officer or civilian employee. This supports the conclusion of previous surveys that positive contact translates to tax dollars. The department has more support from both white and Hispanic citizens and has the least support from Asian residents. The department has more support in the middle ranges for both age and income.

The final fiscal question forced respondents to make a choice between increased taxes or reduced services. Clearly the citizens of Reno do not want police services reduced. Almost 93% preferred an increase in their taxes over reduced police services.

Once again residents were asked if the department was community oriented. The department was considered community oriented by 87% of the citizenry. This is an increase of almost 3% since the last survey. Two factors correlated with this question. Those who knew of a departmental sponsored program felt the department was community oriented. By far the most popular program was DARE. More people, 169, have heard of DARE than all the other programs combined. Respondents were more likely to know of a program when, they are in a higher income bracket. Also, the younger they are, the higher level of education and not living in an apartment contribute to program awareness. Contact with a civilian employee

also influenced this answer.

Only 8% of the population have attended a neighborhood advisory group meeting. Almost half of the respondents indicated a willingness to attend a gathering. Of those that have attended, 93%, felt it was worth their time. Neighborhood advisory participants tend to be older, higher educated and a registered voter.

The last question gave respondents an opportunity to comment on anything else concerning the Reno Police Department. Most of these comments echoed previously discussed answers. Specific issue and performance accolades dominated the comments. No one requested fewer police officers or less patrolling, but 35 respondents expressed a desire for more police and increased visibility. The new management team and current direction that the department is taking, continues to receive a positive response from the community. Finally, 12 respondents were pleased with the opportunity to express themselves via the survey.

FREQUENCIES

1. How long have you lived in Reno?
 

Less than one year	43
One to five years	194
Six to ten years	105
Eleven to fifteen years	83
More than fifteen years	282
  
2. What area of Reno do you reside in?
 

Northeast	73
Northwest	199
North Sub.	40
Southeast	121
Southwest	220
Central	54
  
3. How would you rate the Reno Police Department's performance overall?
 

Very Poor	12
Poor	25
Fair	112
Good	337
Very Good	189
  
4. What is it that caused you to give this evaluation of the Police Department?
 

Personal experience	109
Good officer performance issues	78
Good response time	83
media issues	53
Positive officer attitude	40
Poor response time	26
Neighborhood patrols and visibility	25
Poor officer performance issues	24
Poor officer attitudes	24
Issues relating to other agencies	19
  
5. How would you rate the Police Department in dealing with those who break the law?
 

Very poor	4
Poor	27
Fair	128
Good	298
Very Good	148

6. What is it about how the Police Department deals with those who break the law that caused you to give that rating?

Good officer performance issues	128
Media coverage	86
Personal experience	40
Good officer attitude	33
Poor officer performance issues	23
Need to get tougher	23
Issues relating to other agencies	19
Good response time	18

7. How would you rate the Reno Police Department's image within the community?

Very poor	10
Poor	54
Fair	168
Good	338
Very Good	106

8. What is it about the Department's image that has caused you to give that response?

Media coverage	138
Citizen's attitude towards police	72
Good officer performance issues	53
Personal experience	45
Good officer attitude	40
Positive management	39
Poor officer attitude	31
Good response time	22
Community involvement	21
Neighborhood patrols	15
Poor officer performance issues	15

9. Within the past two years, have you come into direct personal contact with an officer of the Reno Police Department?

Yes	413
No	295

10. How did your last contact occur?
- |                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| Social                    | 97 |
| Given a citation/arrested | 64 |
| Given assistance          | 62 |
| Complainant               | 55 |
| Other                     | 44 |
| Reported incident         | 31 |
| Involved in an accident   | 24 |
| Interviewed               | 24 |
| Arrested                  | 13 |
11. How would you evaluate the quality of that last contact?
- |          |     |
|----------|-----|
| Positive | 235 |
| Neutral  | 37  |
| Negative | 57  |
12. Is there something specific about that contact that influenced your opinion?
- |     |     |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | 238 |
| No  | 82  |
13. If yes, please explain?
- |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Good officer attitude    | 108 |
| Poor officer attitude    | 35  |
| Good officer performance | 28  |
| Good response time       | 25  |
| Poor officer performance | 15  |
14. Within the past two years, have you come into direct personal contact with a member of the Reno Police Department, who is not an officer?
- |     |     |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | 176 |
| No  | 531 |
15. With whom was your last contact?
- |                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Front desk        | 45 |
| Social            | 34 |
| Other             | 28 |
| Dispatch          | 26 |
| Animal control    | 25 |
| Work cards        | 11 |
| Parking attendant | 6  |

16. How would you evaluate the quality of that last contact?

Positive	109
Neutral	19
Negative	19

17. Is there something specific about that contact that influenced your opinion?

Yes	86
No	53

18. If yes, please explain?

Good employee attitude	40
Good job performance	17
Poor employee attitude	8
Poor job performance	7
Good response time	5

19. Do you feel that Reno is a safe place to live?

Yes	493
No	182

20. In the past year has Reno become a more safe or a less safe place to live?

More safe	52
Stayed the same	166
Less safe	455

21. Why is that?

Gangs	186
Crime is increasing	83
Increased population growth	76
No change	37
Increasing murder and violent crimes	36
Transients	23
Good officer job performance	17
Media coverage	16
Police visibility	13

22. In your opinion, what is the number one problem in Reno?

Gangs	257
Drugs	88
Homeless	60
Growth	46
Theft	33
Other agency issues	28
Murder and violent crimes	21
DUI/traffic	21
Gambling	16
City council	13
Fiscal issues	10

23. How effective has the Reno Police Department been in dealing with gang issues in the Reno area?

very Poor	31
Poor	56
Fair	158
Good	251
Very Good	73

24. Do you feel that Reno has a gang problem?

Yes	560
NO	89

25. How would you deal with gangs and gang issues in Reno?

Tougher penalties	157
More educational programs	88
More community involvement	58
More police enforcement	55
Gang task force	15
Parental responsibility	15
Reduce media coverage	8

26. Do you support expanded police service to meet community demand even if it means increased taxes?

Yes	558
No	105

27. What is the most you would be willing to spend on additional taxes?

None	167
5 to 8 dollars	126
9 to 12 dollars	136
13 to 16 dollars	280

28. It is unlikely that the present level of police services can be maintained by the current tax rate. Would you rather have reduced police services or an increase in taxes?

Reduced services	44
Increased taxes	571

29. Do you feel that the Reno Police Department is community oriented?

Yes	547
No	85

30. Can you name a specific community program sponsored by the Reno Police Department?

Yes	322
No	367

31. Which program?

DARE	169
PAL	31
COP+	27
Neighborhood Watch	25
Other	70

32. Have you ever been involved with one of the Department's neighborhood advisory groups?

Yes	57
No	641

33. Was the meeting worth your time?

Yes	53
No	4

34. Would you be interested in attending a meeting?

Yes	266
No	329

35. Do you live in a house, apartment, motfile home, or condo?

House	392
Apartment	206
Mobile Home	40
Condo	59

36. Do you rent or own?

Rent	332
Own	363

37. Are you currently employed?

Employed	472
Unemployed	32
Retired	116
Homemaker	26
Student	49

38. Which of the following categories best describe your total family income during the past year?

Under \$20,000	185
\$20,000 - \$29,999	129
\$30,000 - \$39,999	109
\$40,000 - \$49,999	75
\$50,000 - \$59,999	50
\$60,000 - \$69,999	19
\$70,000 & Higher	55
Refused	87

39. What is the highest level of formal education you have received?

Less than high school	49
High school graduate	204
Some college	251
College graduate	144
Post graduate college	47

40. Which one of the following ranges best describes your age?

18 - 25	125
26 - 35	162
36 - 45	149
46 - 55	93
56 - 65	72
66 - 75	63
76 & older	22

41. What was the respondents' gender?

Male	363
Female	344

42. What is your race?

White	606
Black	17
Hispanic	31
Asian	19
American Indian	11
Other	11

43. Are you a registered voter?

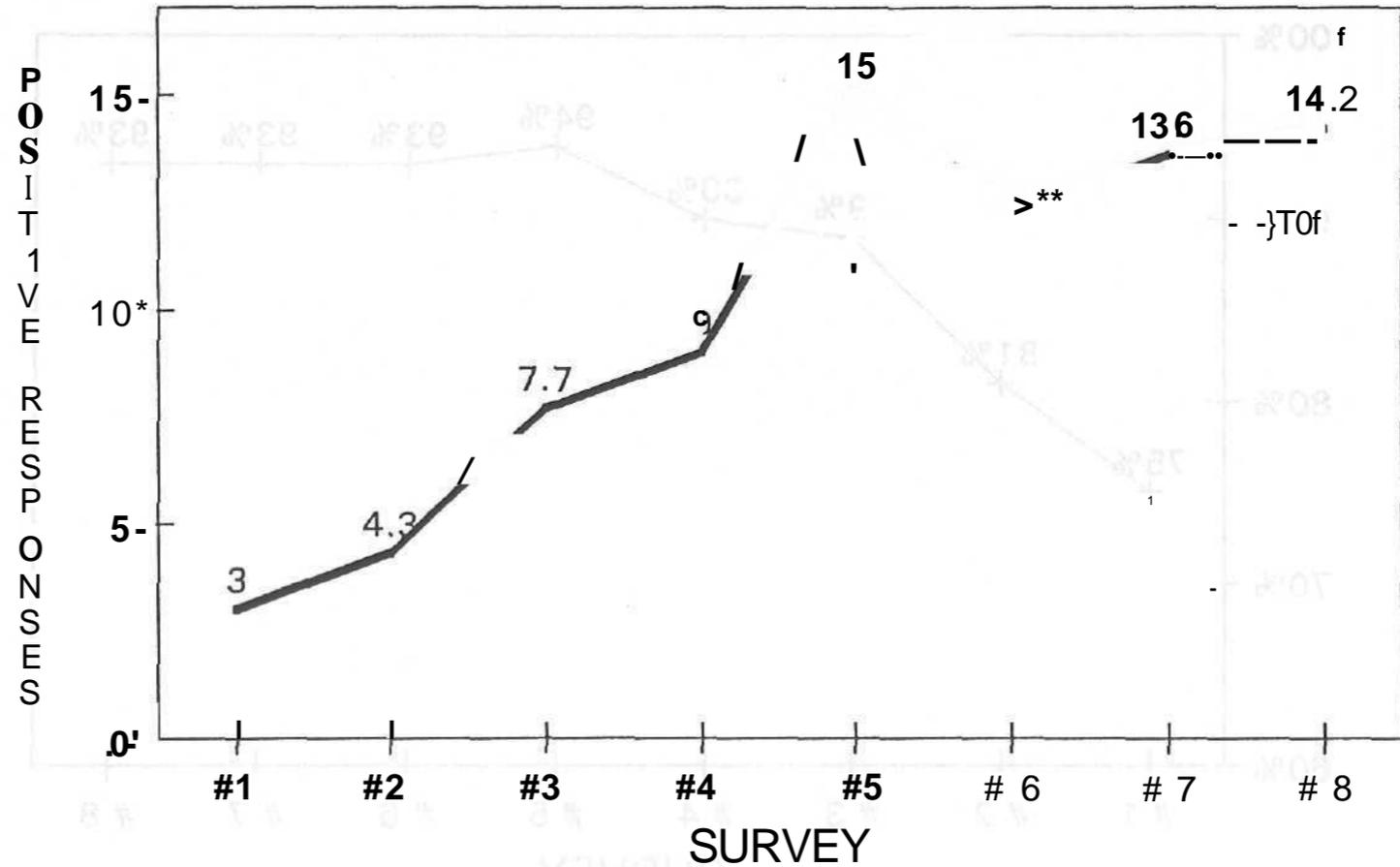
Yes	493
No	203

44. Do you have any additional comments or concerns regarding the Reno Police Department?

Good officer performance	41
Good RPD management	27
Need more patrolling	18
Need more police	15
Like the surveys	12
Fiscal issues	10
Get tougher	10
Specific issue	10

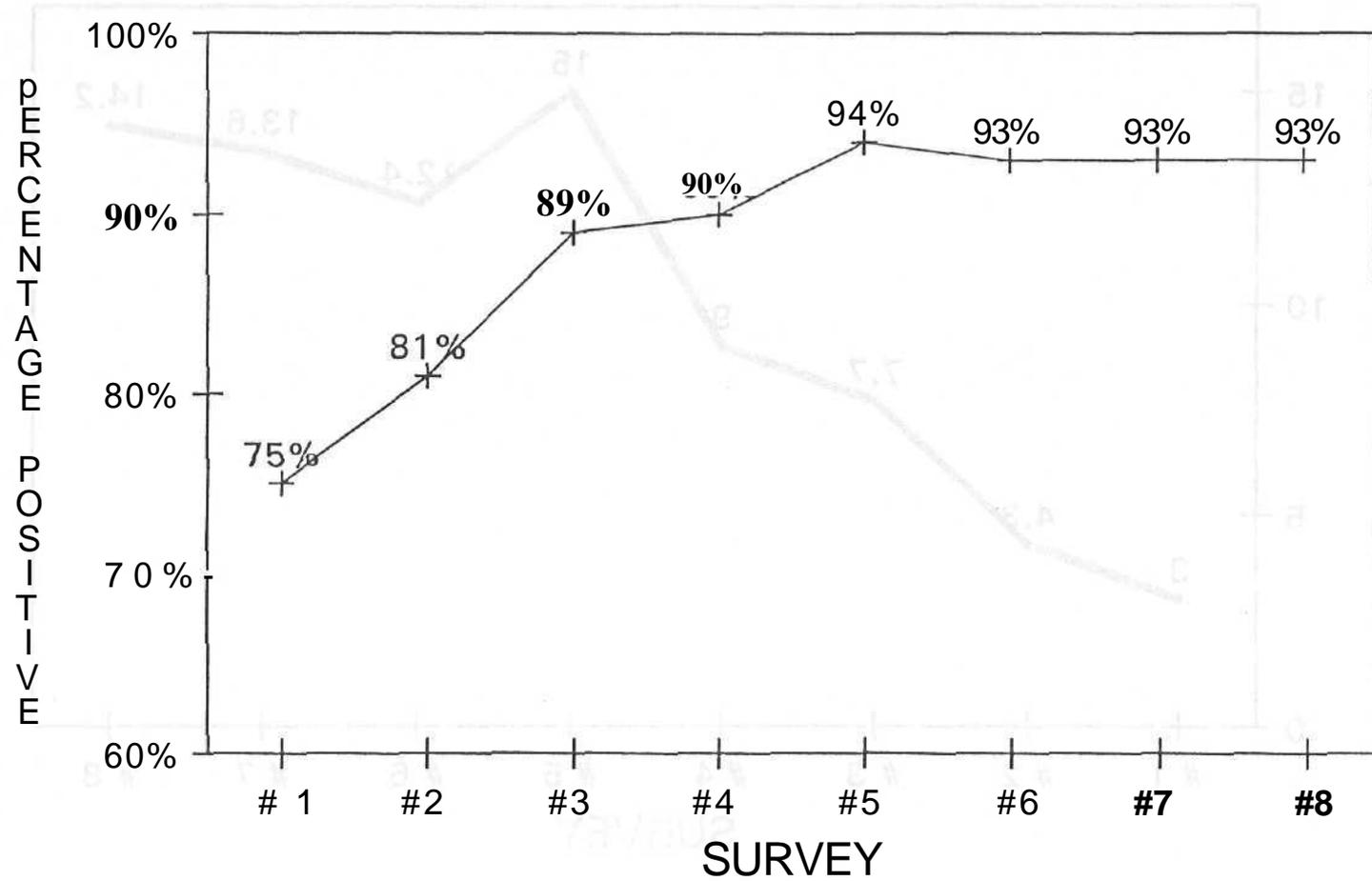
# CITIZEN'S OPINION OF PERFORMANCE

RATIO OF POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE RESPONSES



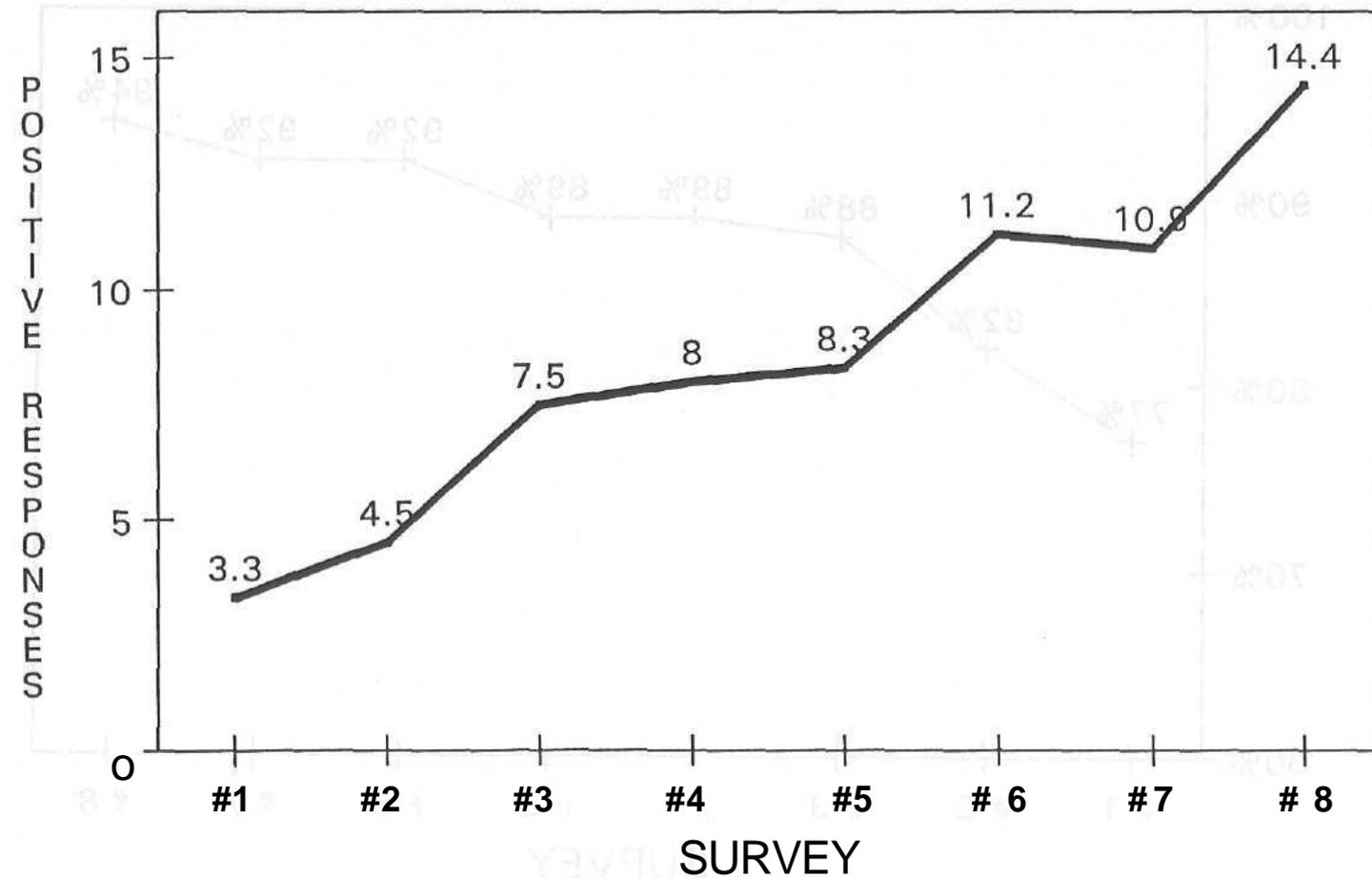
# CITIZEN'S OPINION OF PERFORMANCE

PERCENTAGE WITH A POSITIVE OPINION

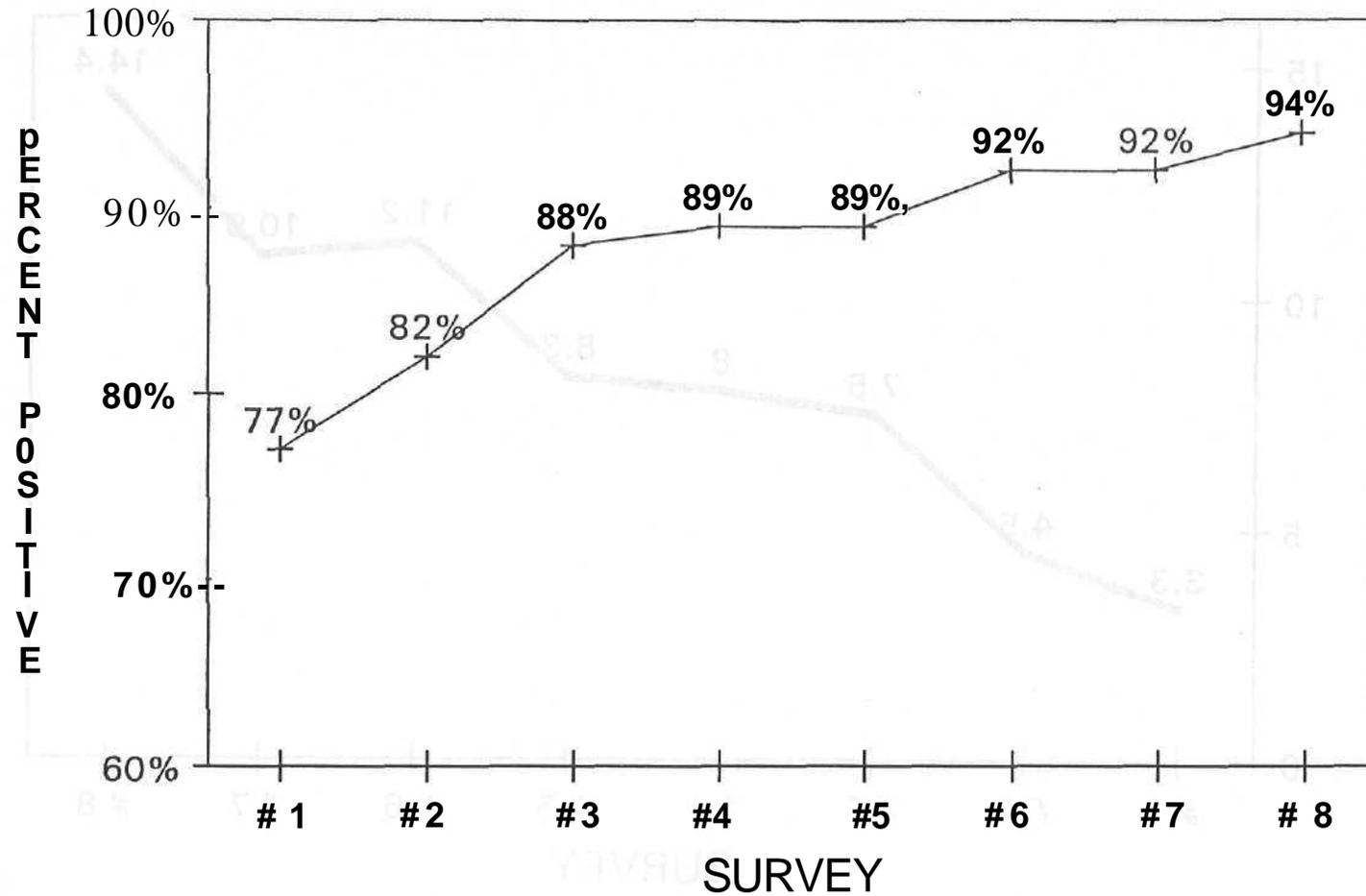


# DEALING WITH THOSE WHO BREAK THE LAW

*RATIO OF POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE RESPONSES*

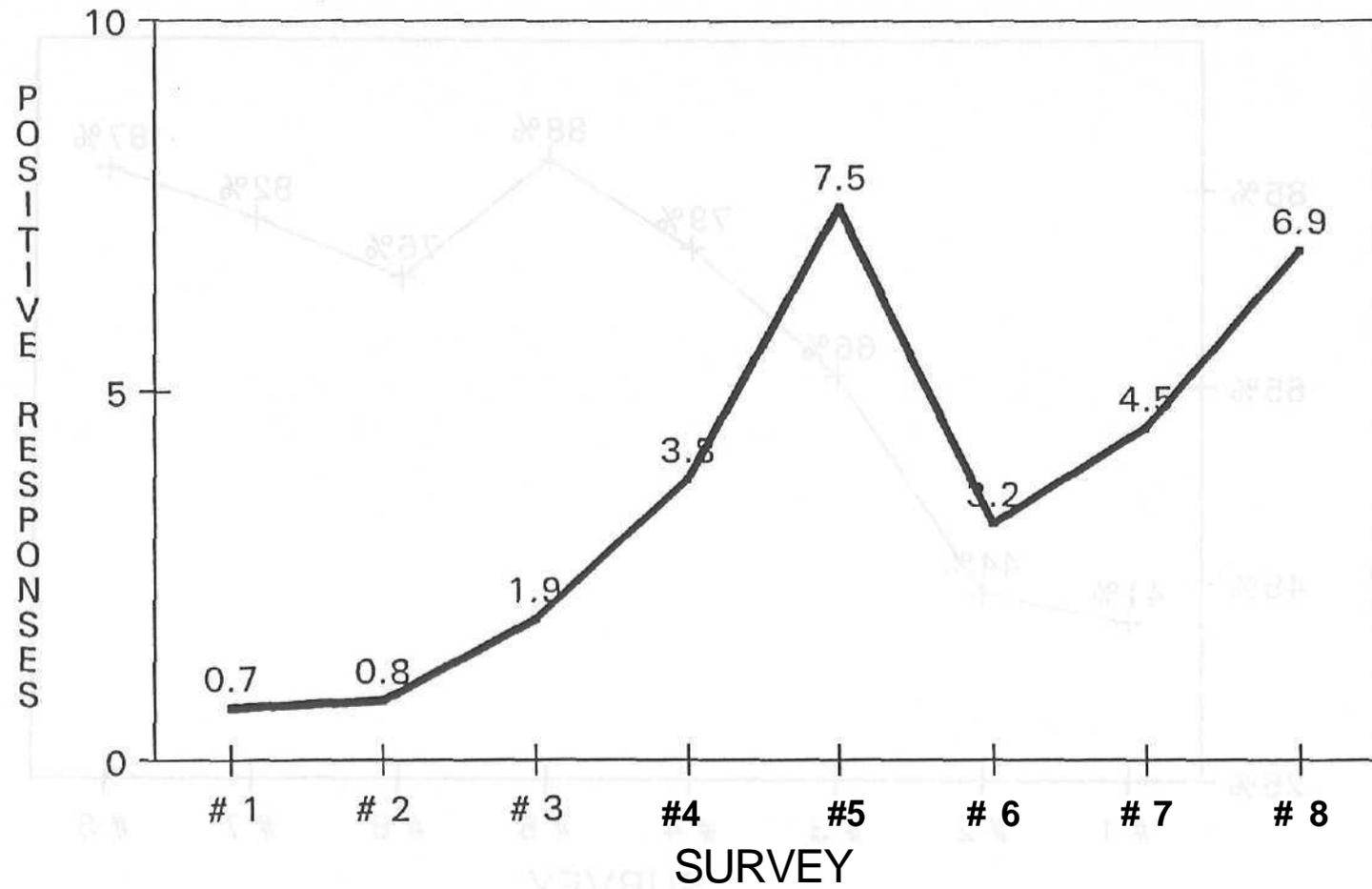


# DEALING WITH THOSE WHO BREAK THE LAW PERCENTAGE WITH A POSITIVE OPINION



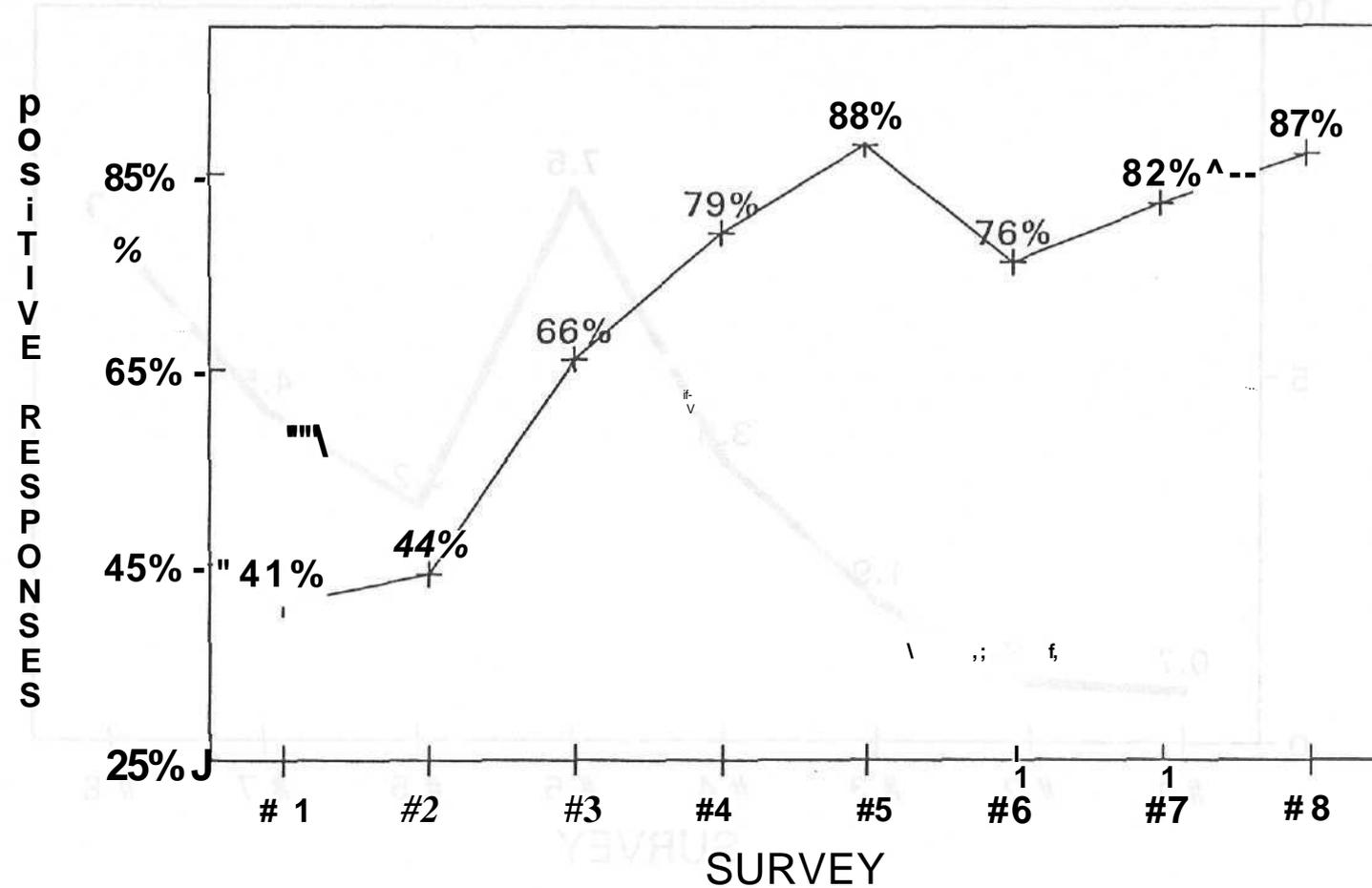
# CITIZEN'S OPINION OF THE POLICE IMAGE

*RATIO OF POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE RESPONSES*



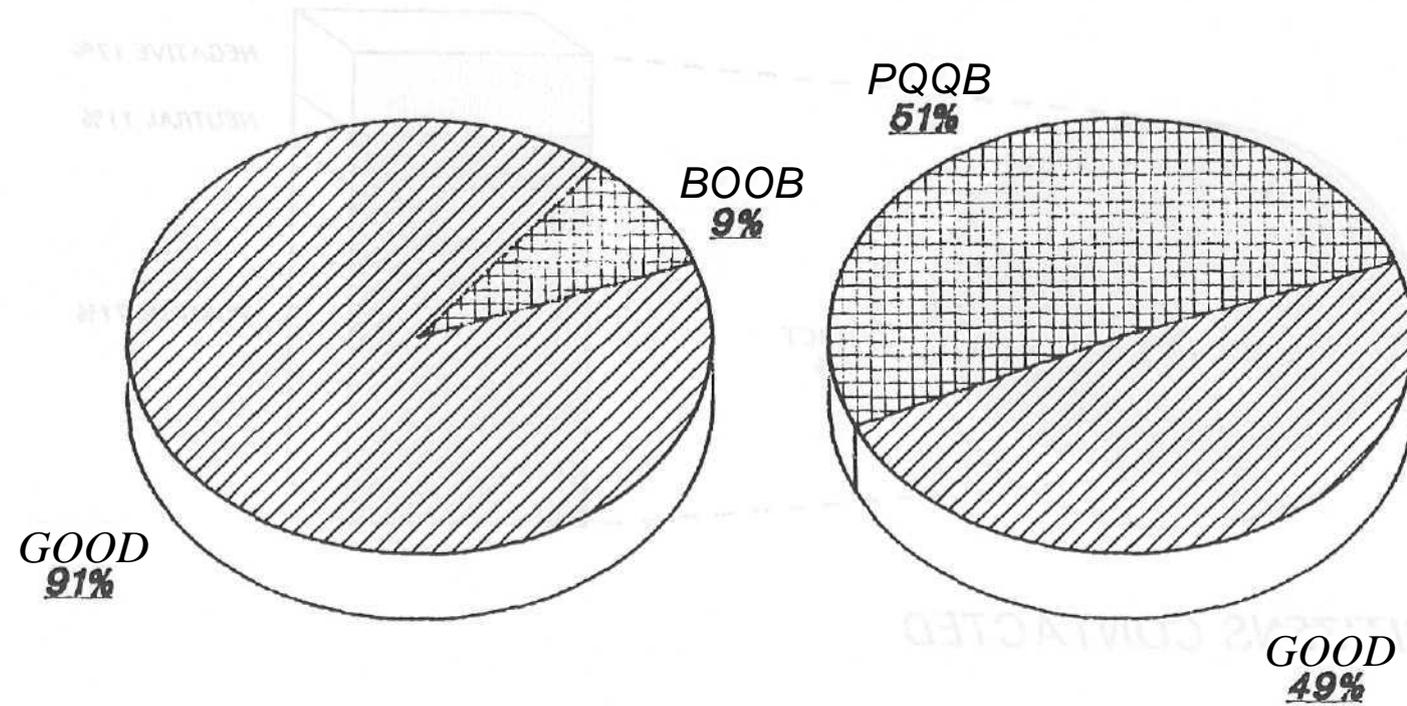
# CITIZEN'S OPINION OF THE POLICE IMAGE

PERCENTAGE WITH A POSITIVE OPINION



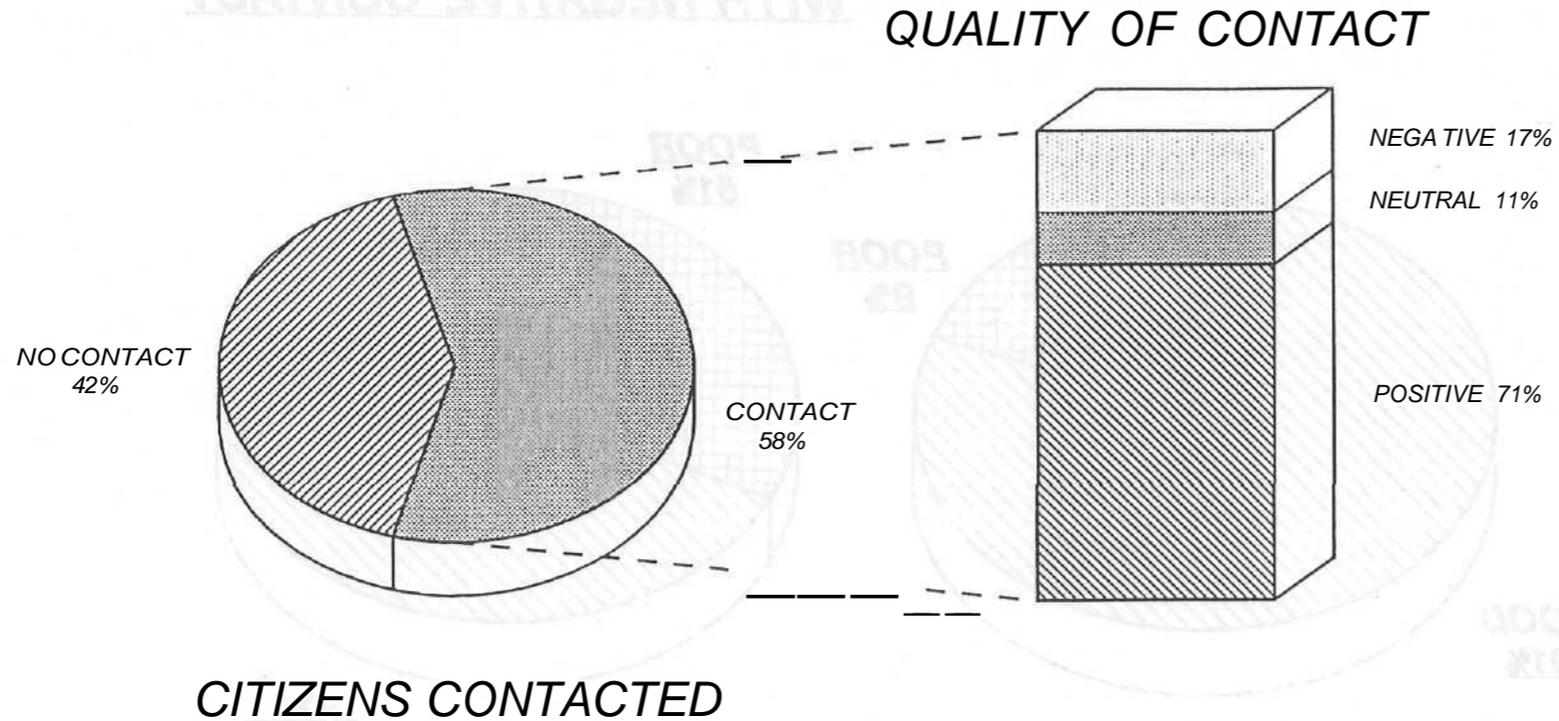
# CITIZEN'S OPINION OF IMAGE OFFICER CONTACT

WITH NEGATIVE CONTACT



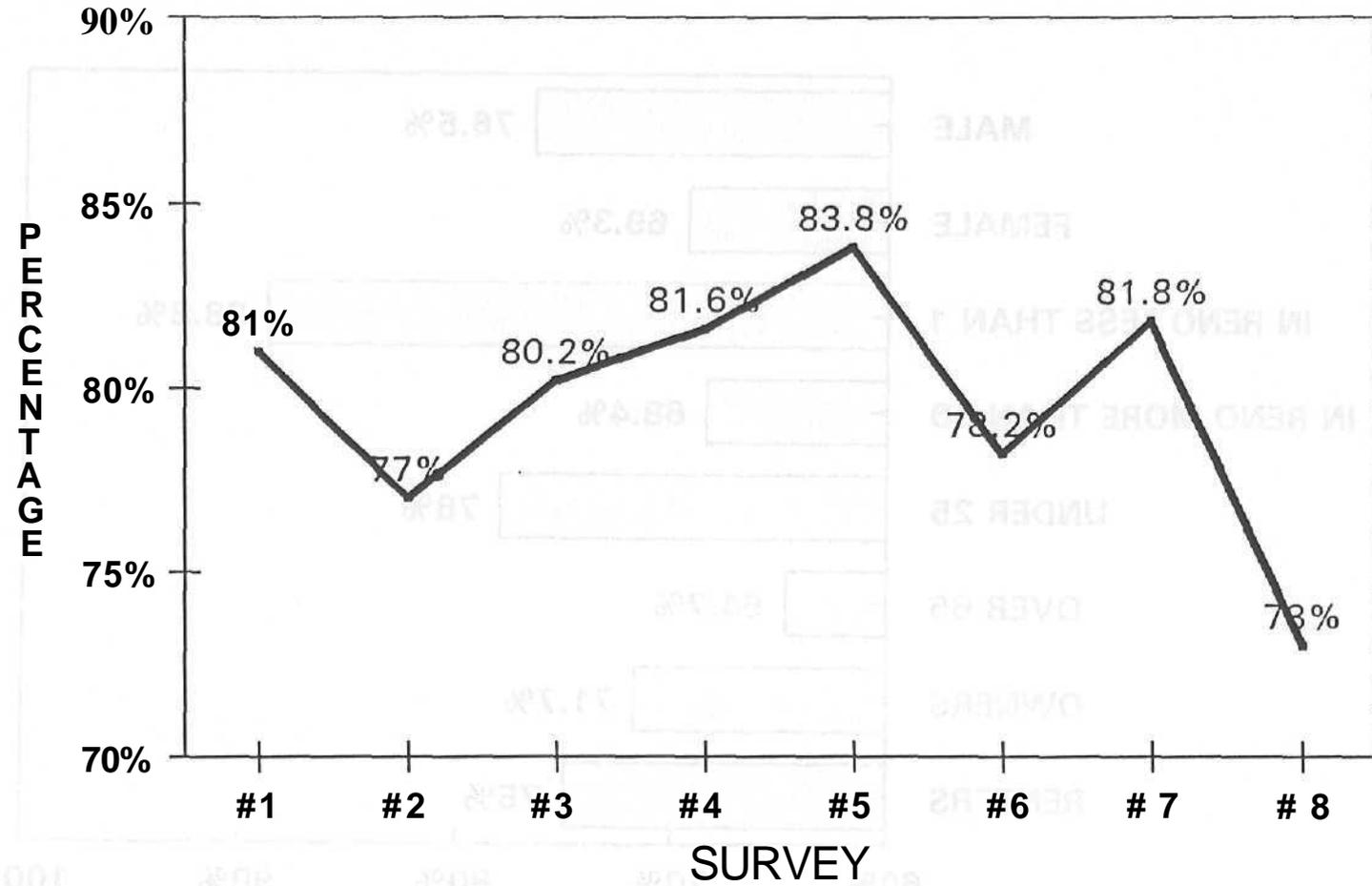
WITH POSITIVE CONTACT

# CONTACT BREAKDOWN



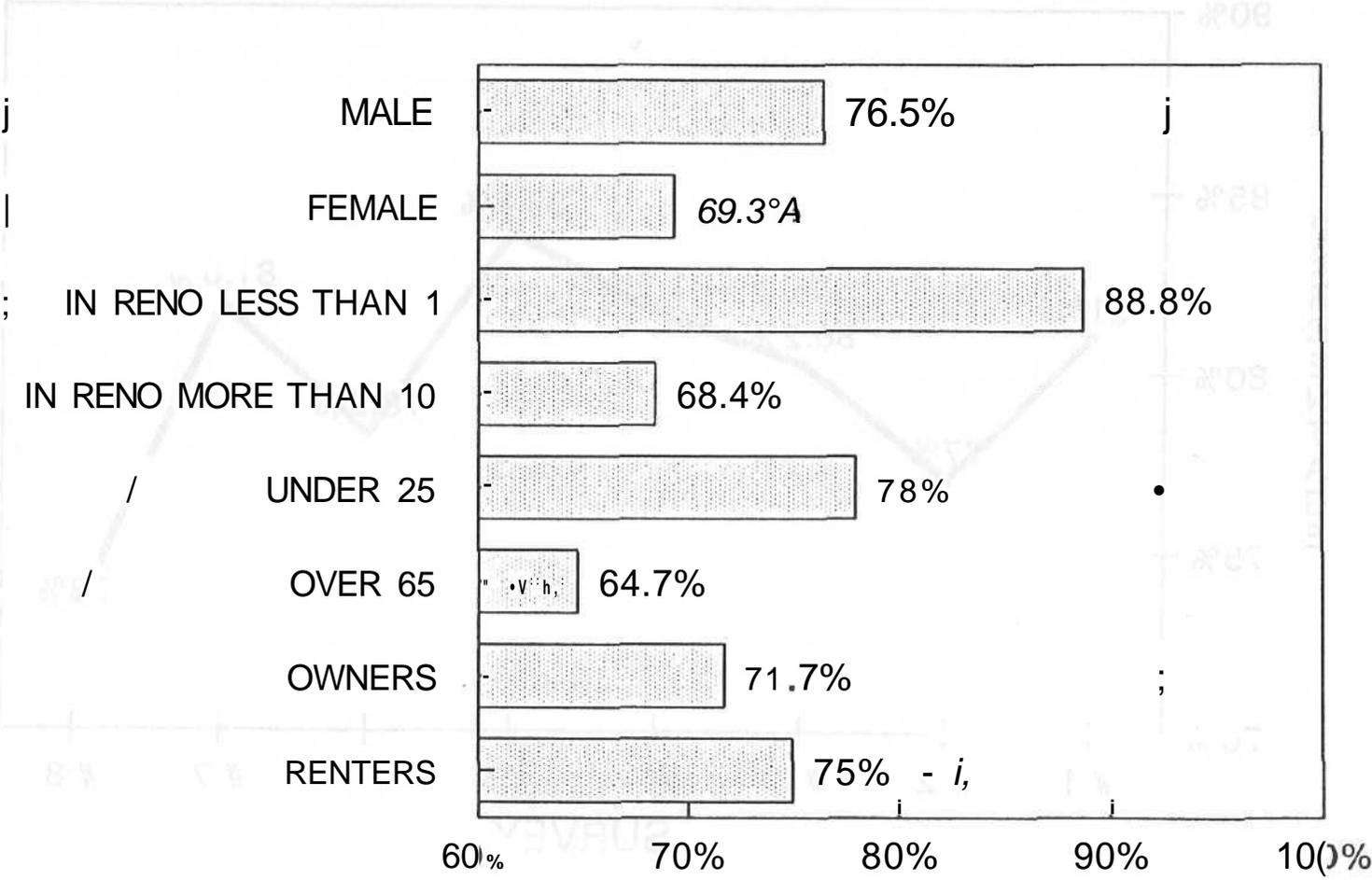
# IS RENO SAFE?

PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES

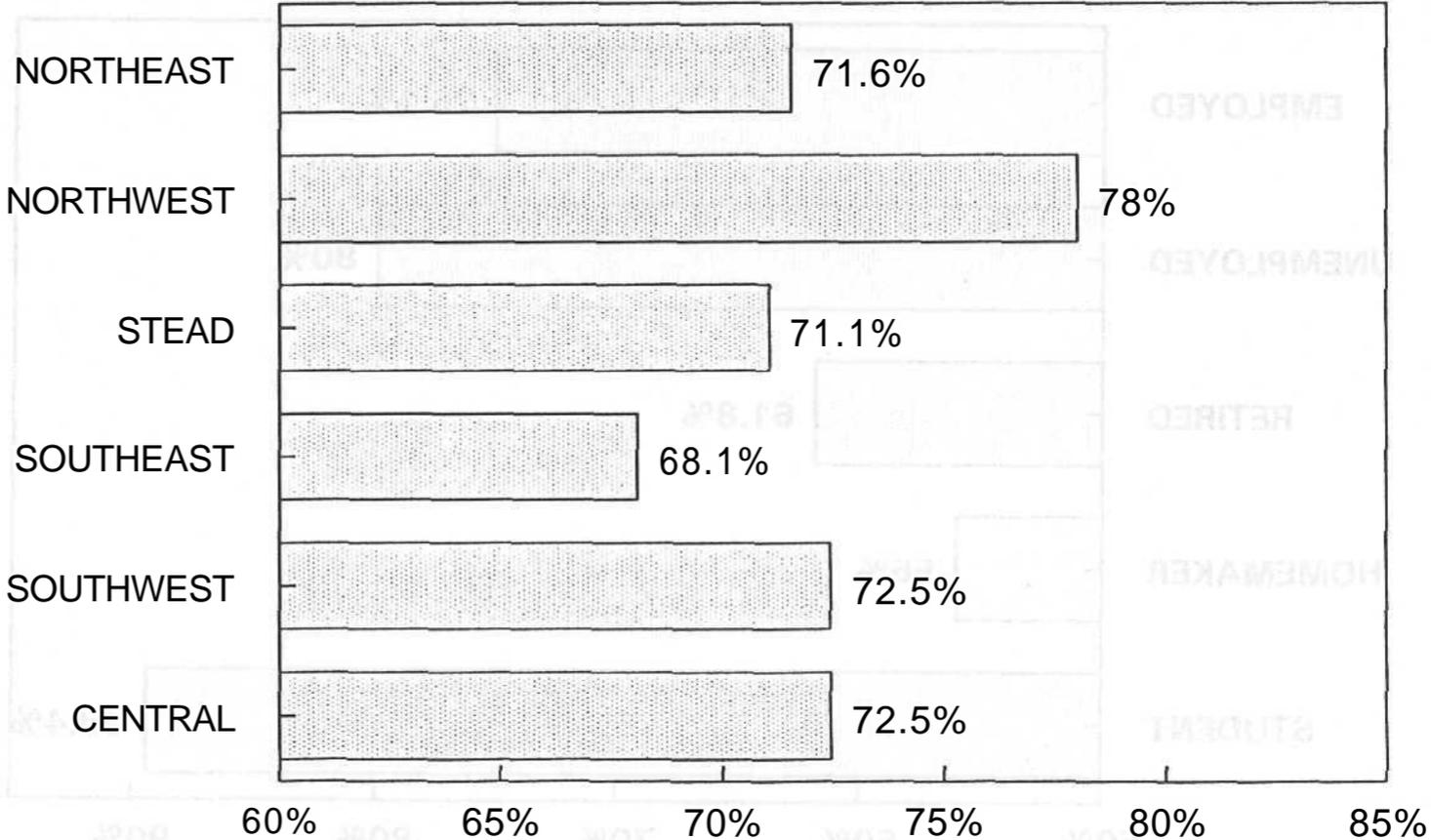


# IS RENO SAFE

## BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS



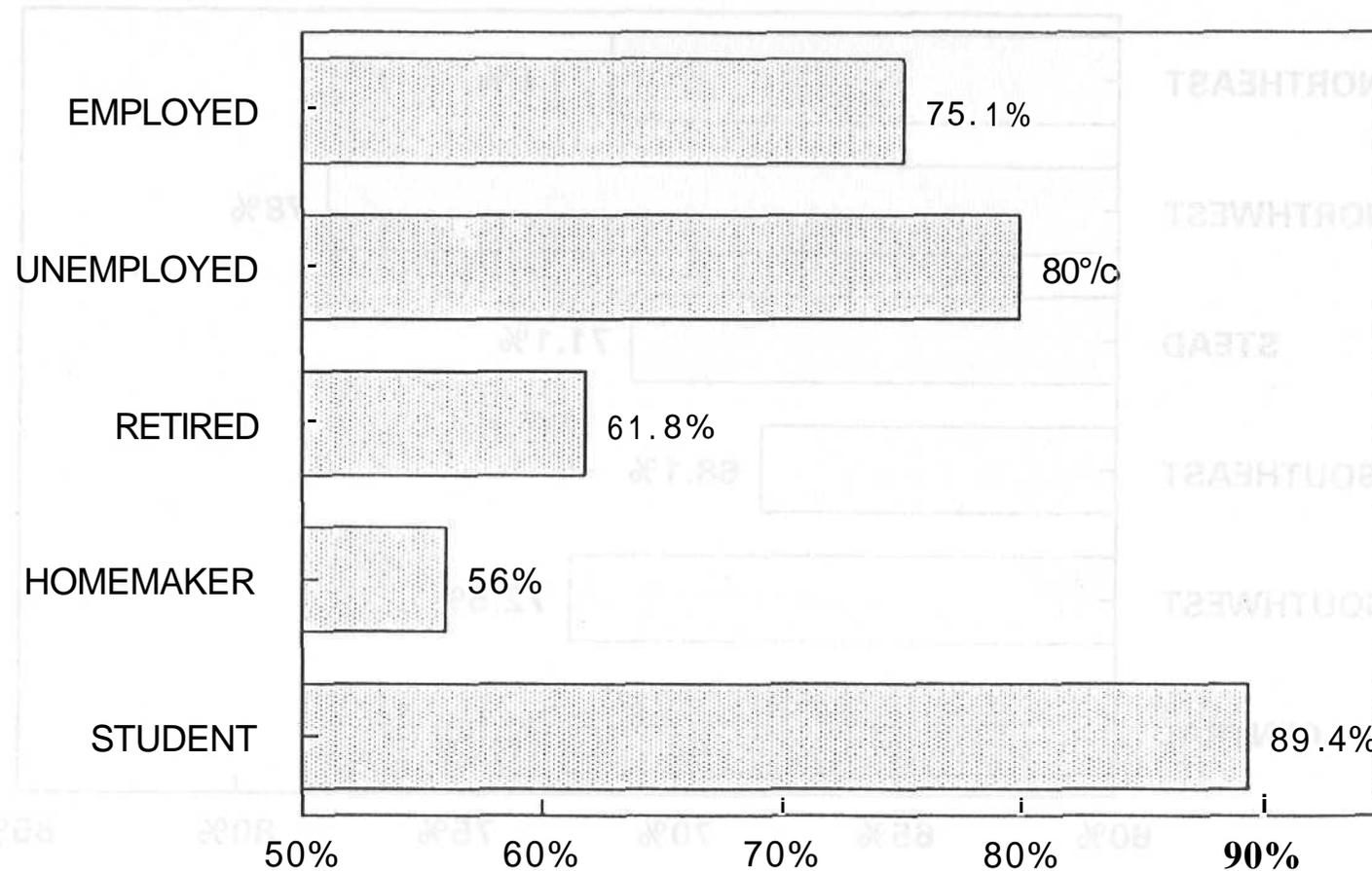
# IS RENO SAFE BY AREA OF TOWN



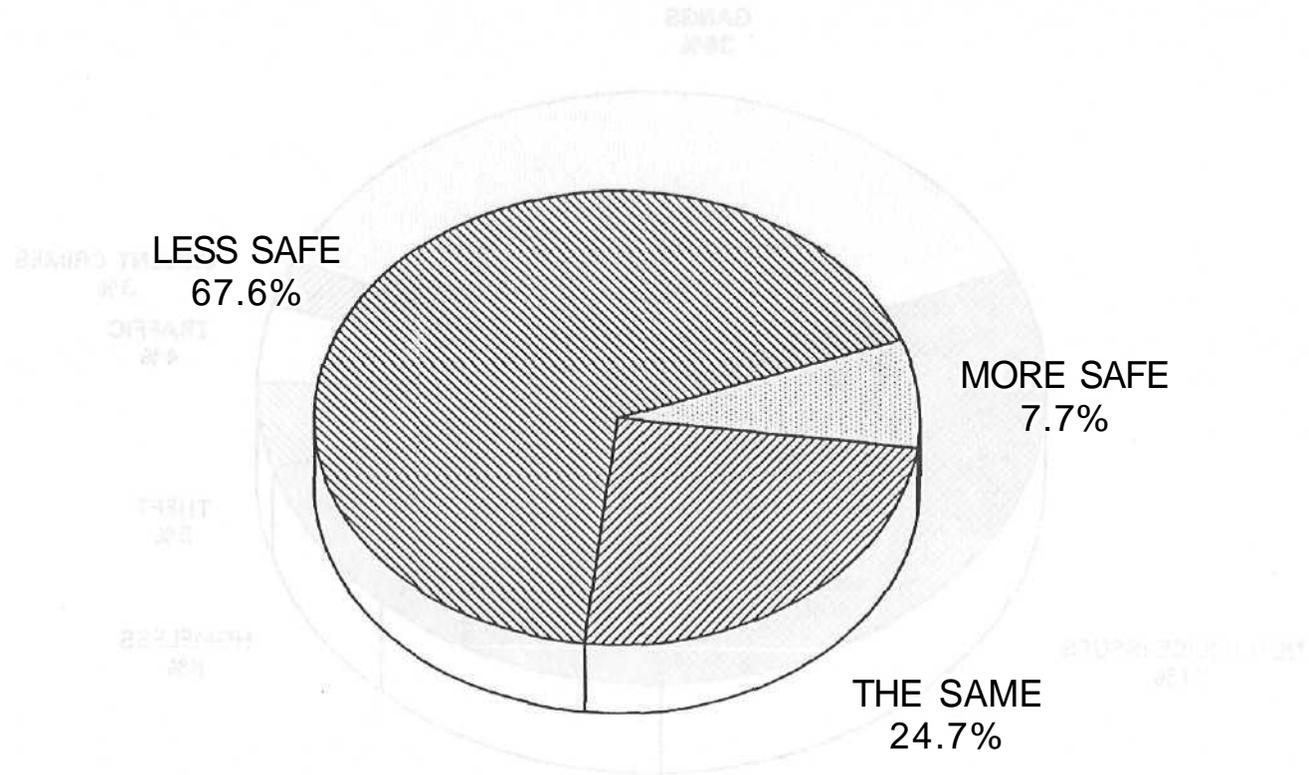
SURVEY 8

# IS RENO SAFE

## BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS



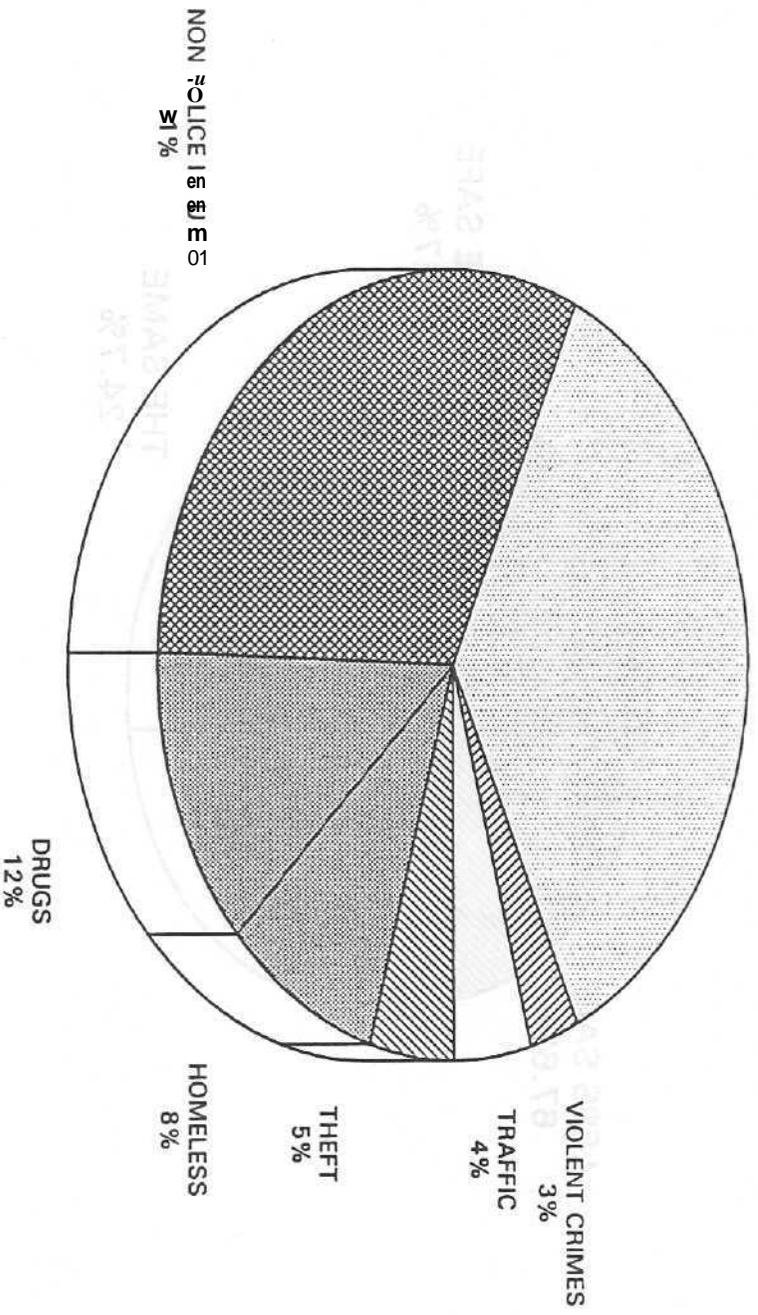
# IS RENO MORE OR LESS SAFE IN THE PAST YEAR



SURVEY 7

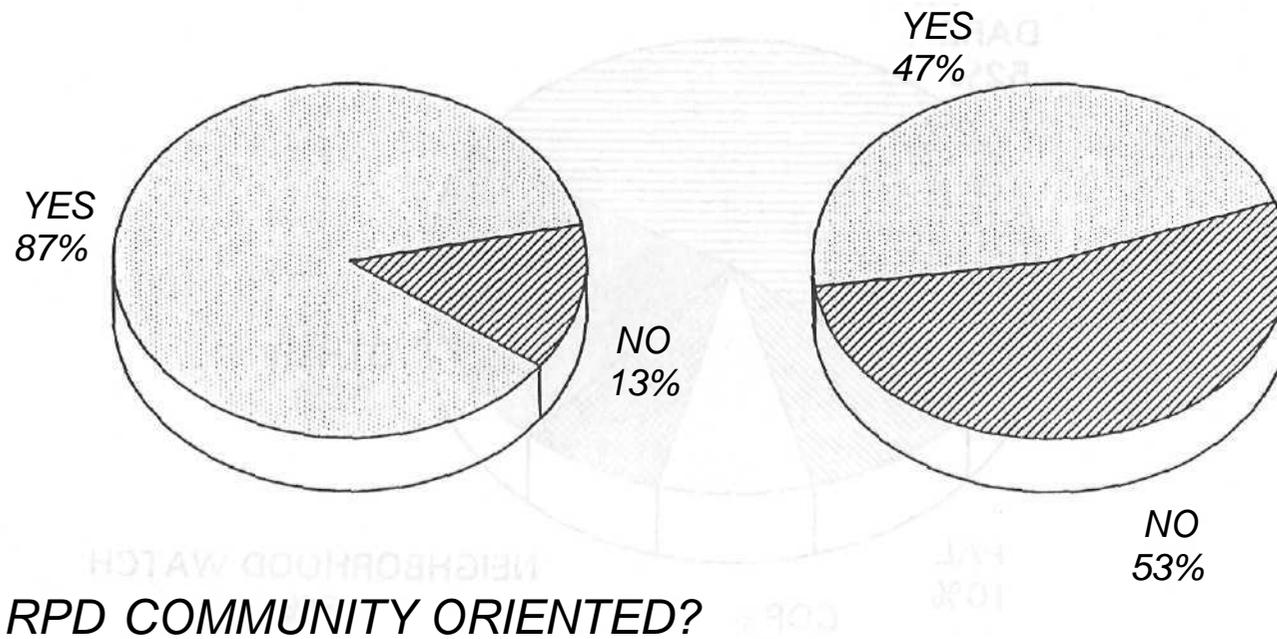
# NUMBER ONE PROBLEM IN SENO POLICE ISSUES

FIGURE 9



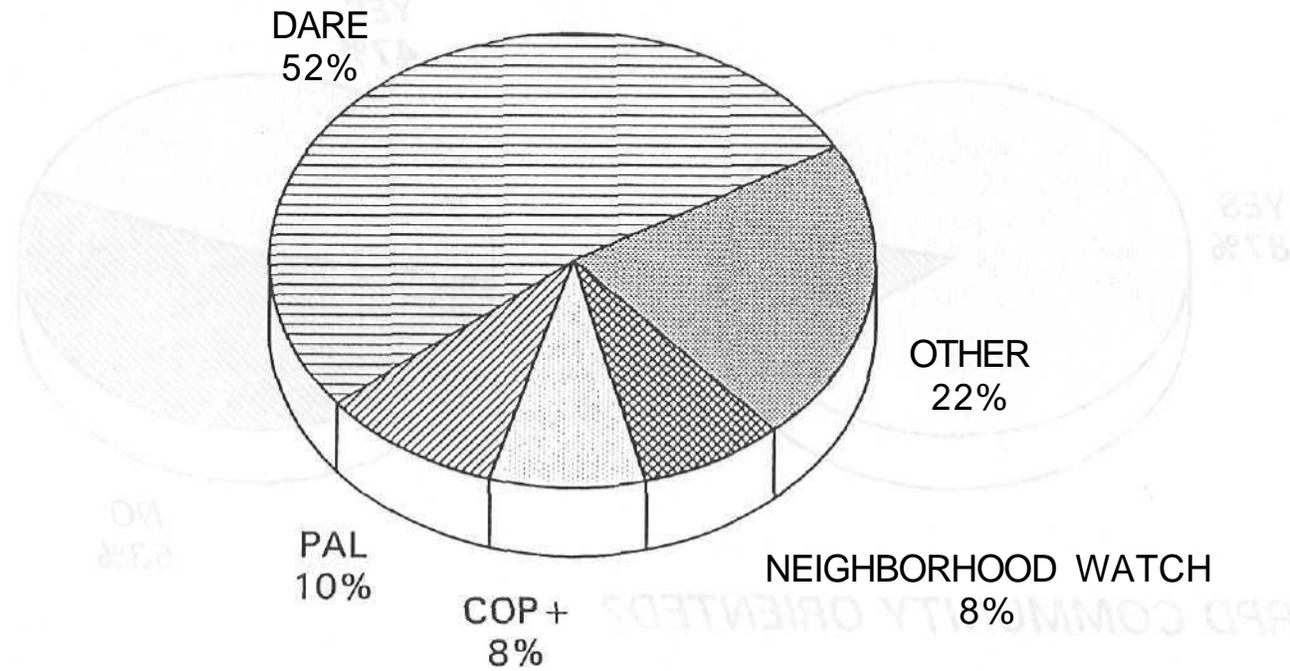
# DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAMS

NAME A SPECIFIC PROGRAM?



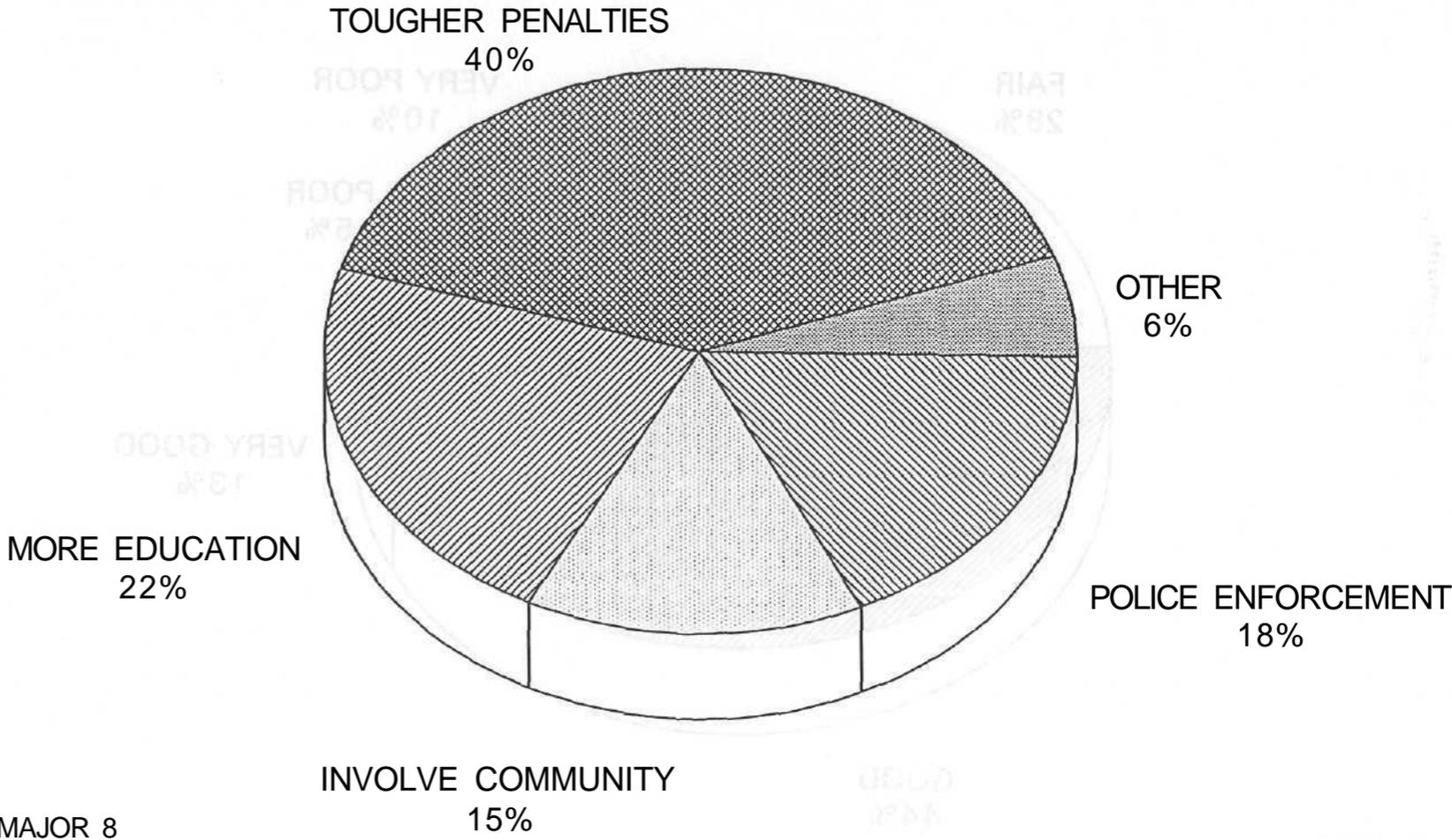
# WHICH PROGRAM WAS NAMED

NAME A SPECIFIC PROGRAM



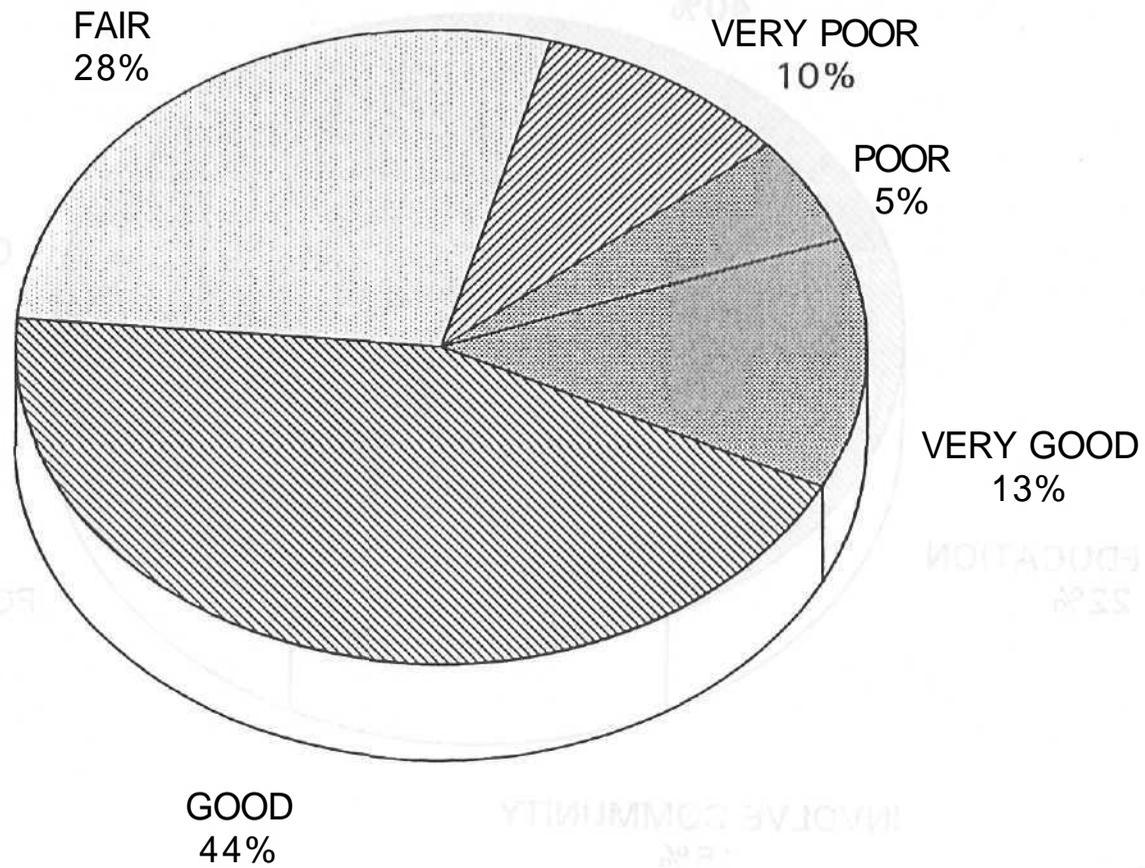
# CITIZEN'S VIEWS ON THE GANG PROBLEM

## HOW TO SOLVE IT



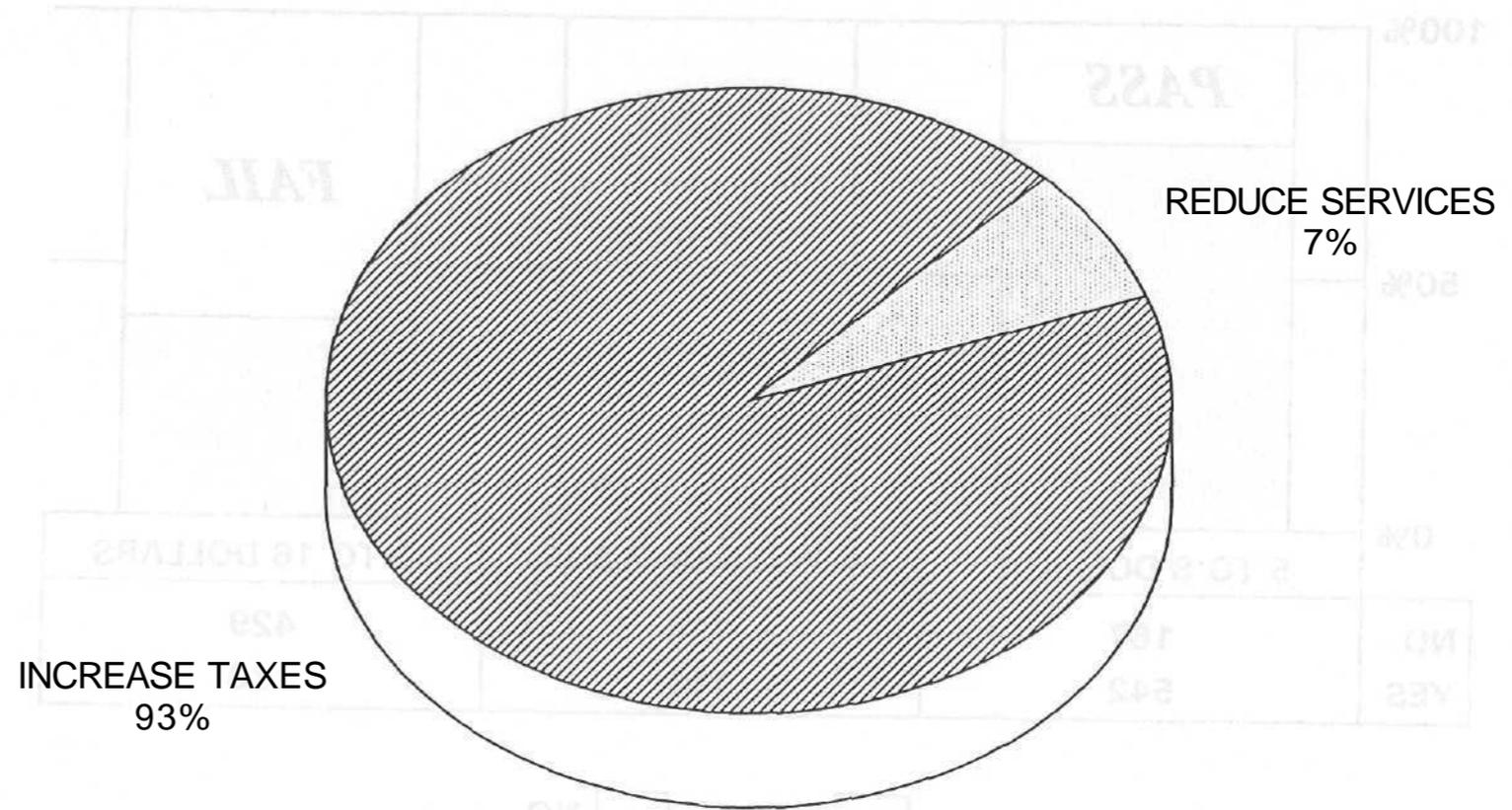
MAJOR 8

# RENO POLICE DEALING WITH GANGS OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS



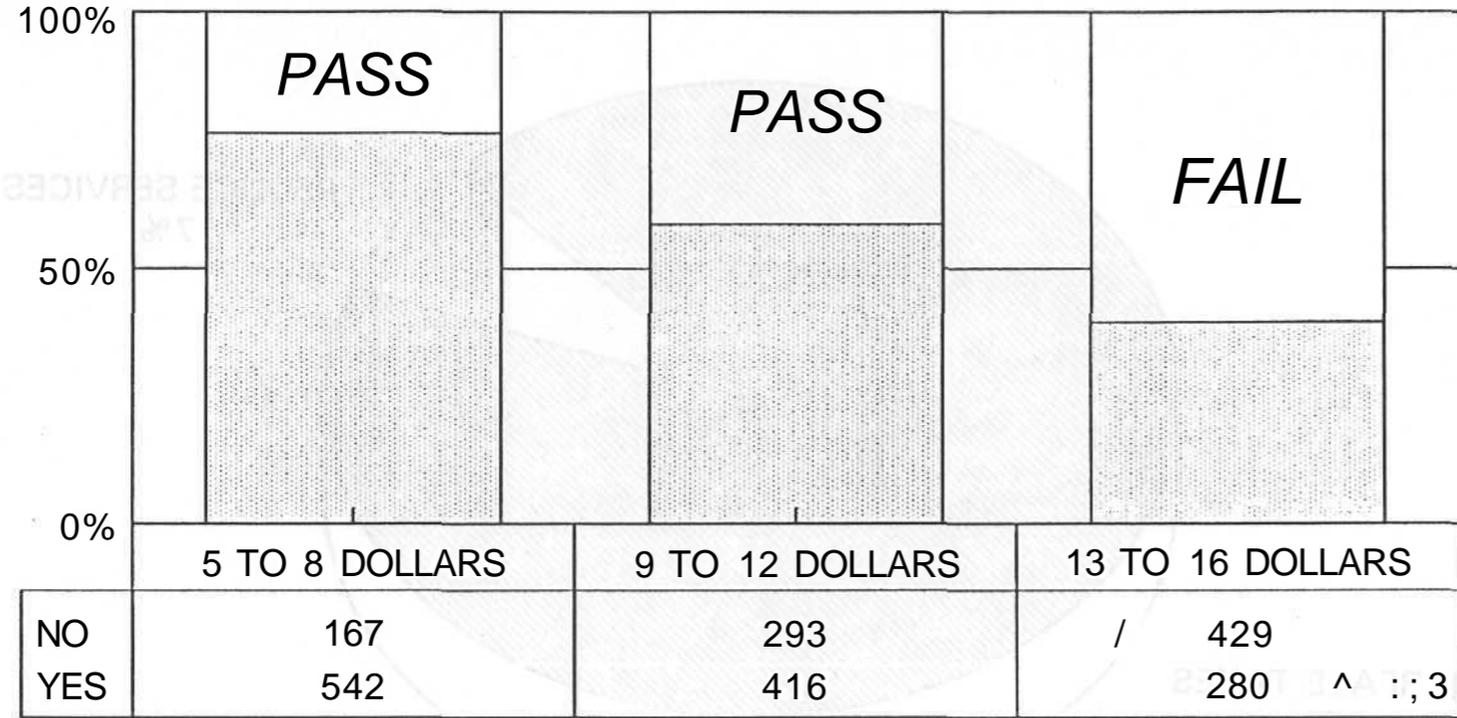
MAJOR 8

# POLICE SERVICES REDUCE SERVICES OR INCREASE TAXES



MAJOR 8-FISCAL ISSUES

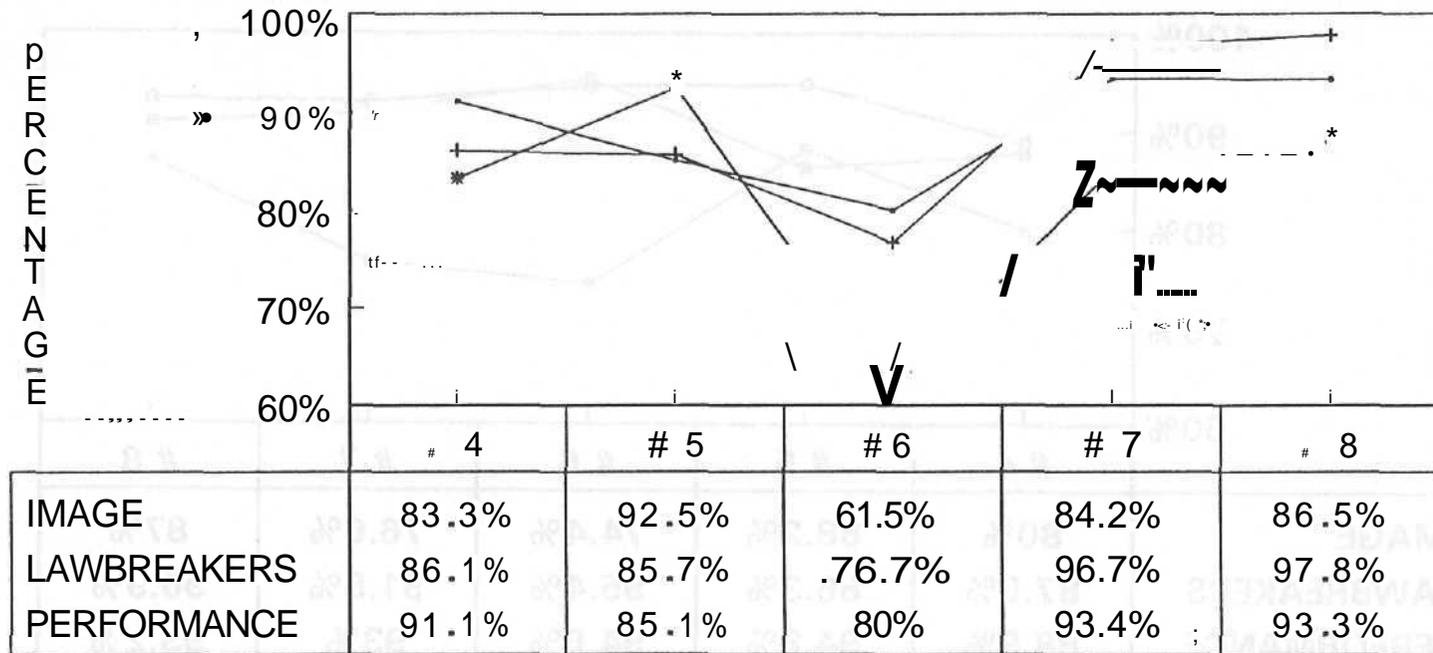
# ADDITIONAL TAXES TO EXPAND POLICE SERVICES



YES
  NO

# NORTHEAST RENO

## PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES



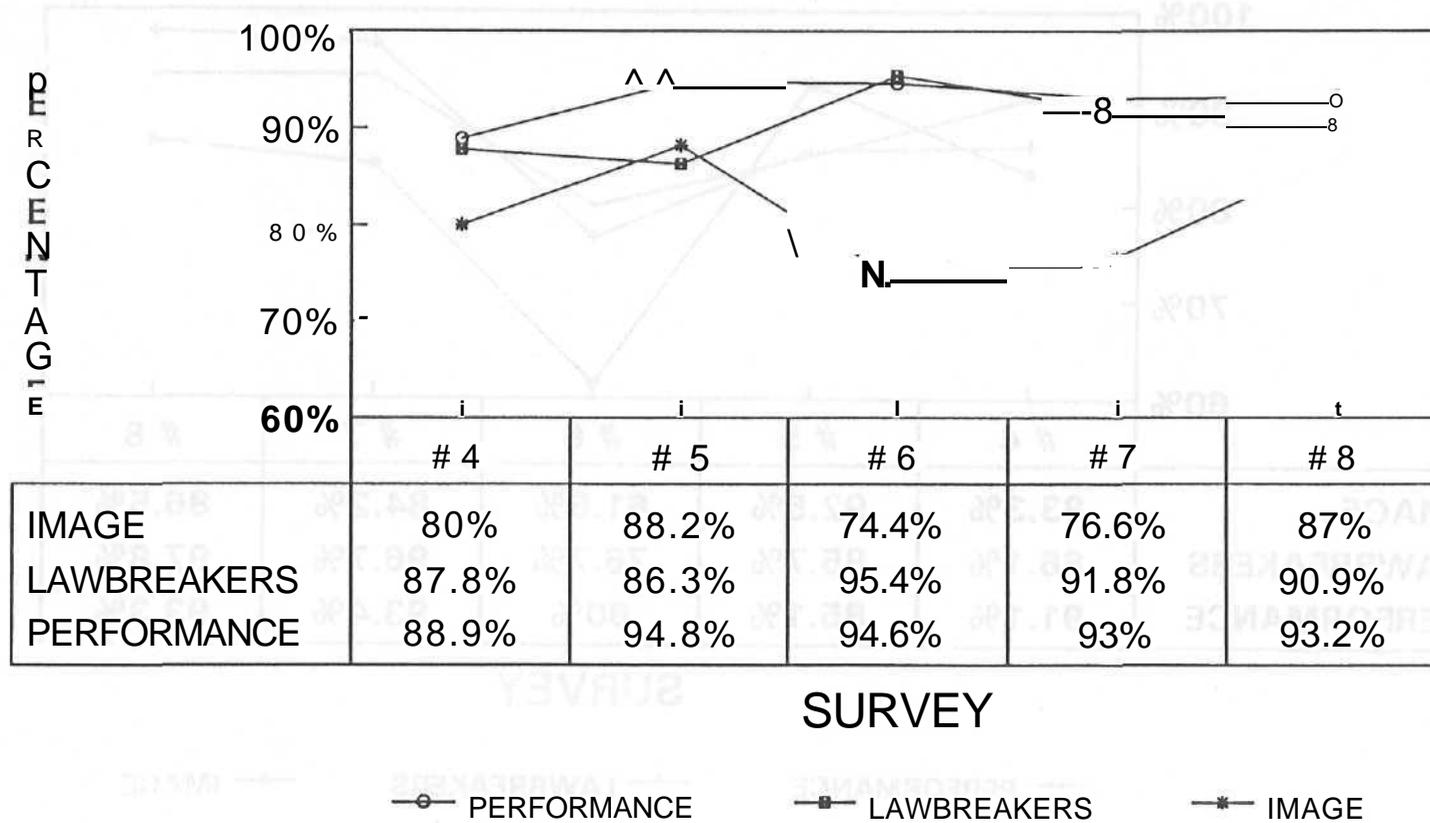
SURVEY

—●— PERFORMANCE      —+— LAWBREAKERS      —\*— IMAGE

THREE KEY QUESTIONS

# NORTHWEST RENO

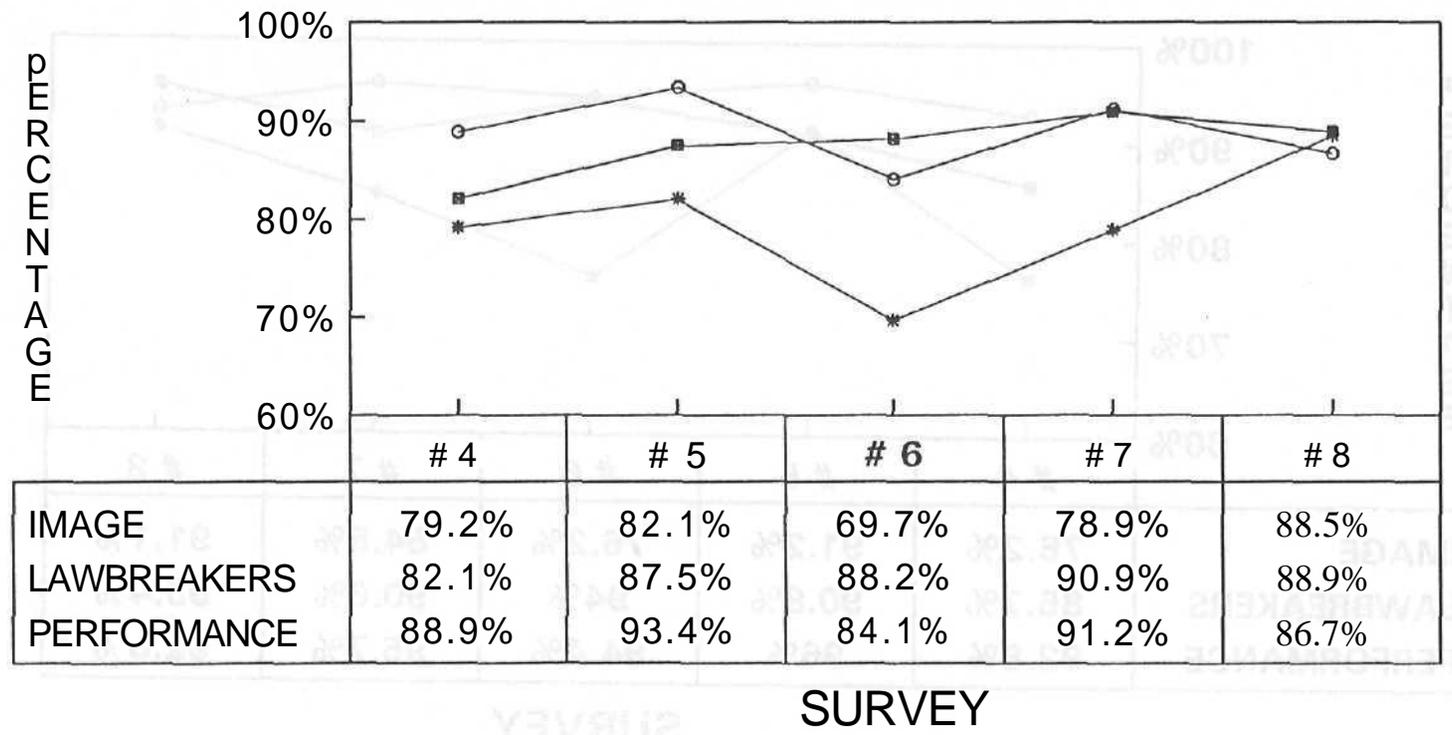
## PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES



THREE KEY QUESTIONS

# STEAD

## PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES

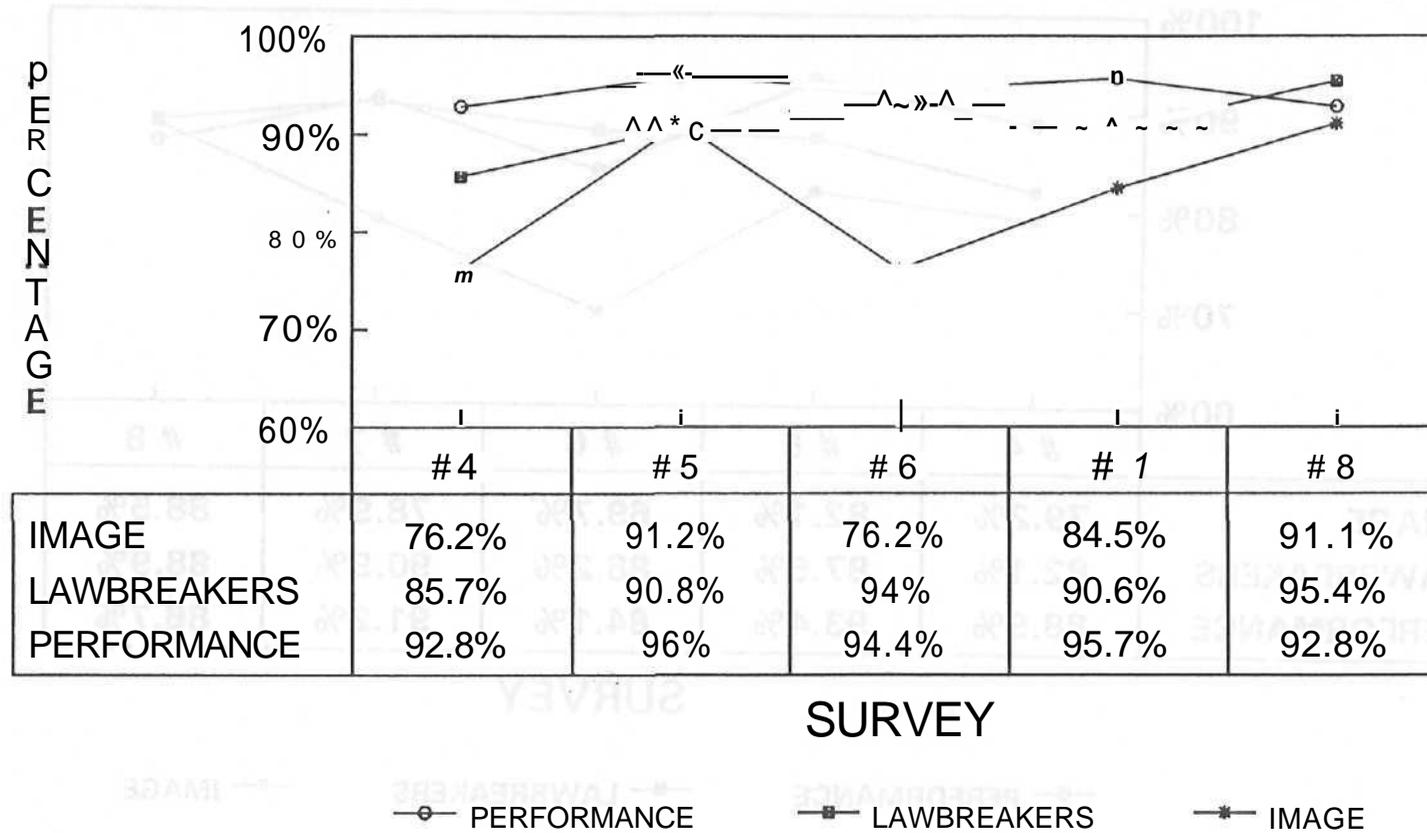


THREE KEY QUESTIONS

○ - PERFORMANCE      ■ - LAWBREAKERS      \* - IMAGE

# SOUTHEAST RENO

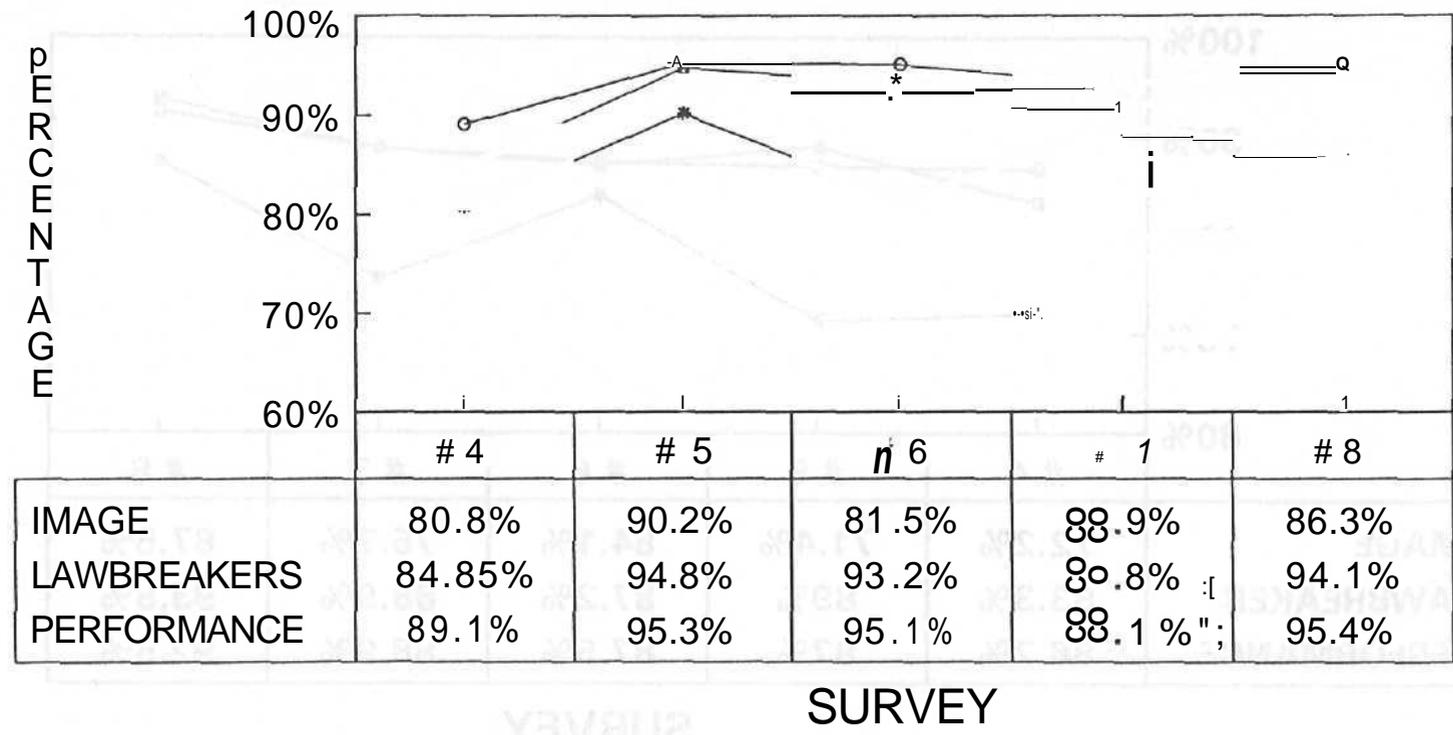
## PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES



THREE KEY QUESTIONS

# SOUTHWEST RENO

## PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES

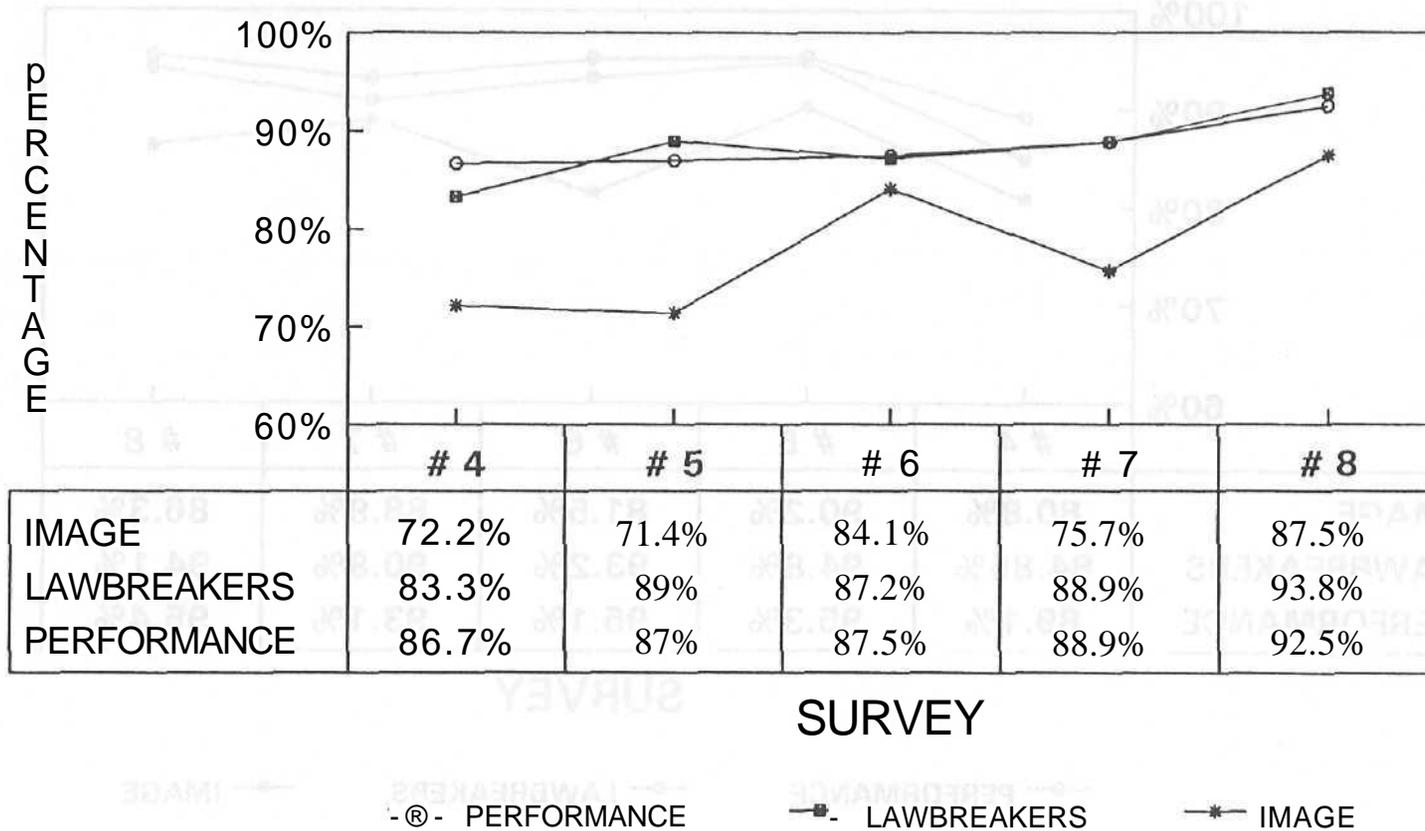


○— PERFORMANCE     
 ■— LAWBREAKERS     
 \*— IMAGE

THREE KEY QUESTIONS

# CENTRAL RENO

## PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES



THREE KEY QUESTIONS



**QUALITY ASSURANCE UNIT  
MINI-SURVEYS**

Central Area Day Shift  
Traffic Citations  
Work Cards  
Animal Control

**Reno Police Department**  
**Quality Assurance Unit Survey**  
**February 9, 1990**

**Department-Citizen Interaction Survey/Central Area - Day Shift**

The Quality Assurance Bureau recently conducted the second survey in the Central area of command and this completed survey represents the second of Day shift.

The data used for this survey was obtained from the Department's PLIMS system, using the week of January 14,1990 through January 20,1990. This survey was completed by the Quality Assurance staff by use of the telephone.

The survey consisted of twenty completed questionnaires. Following are the results of the survey:

1) **Total completed questionnaires**

**20**

2) **Sex**

Male: 10

Female: 10

3) **Ethnicity**

White: 19

Indian: 01

4) **Age**

21-30: 05

31-40: 06

41-50: 02

51-60: 04

61-70: 02

5) **Results**

Refer to attached questionnaire for totals and results.

6) Summary

The question of a lengthy delay before the arrival of an officer was answered "affirmative"<sup>11</sup> by six (6) respondents. These responses are listed below:

4) 29 minute delay, held 29 minutes by dispatch. The call was a panhandler in front of the business. The panhandler had been in the business and had obtained money from an employee. The officer arrived and cleared with solved at scene. Apparently no crime was committed.

6) 28 minute delay, held 24 minutes by dispatch. The call was a vehicle burglary which had just occurred. As it turned out, it was a GTA and the officers recovered the vehicle at 9th/Sutro less than an hour after the call was received. The officer cleared with a recovered stolen vehicle.

7) 20 minute delay, held 19 minutes by dispatch. The call was a disturbance of a loud party in one of the rooms at the Lido Motel. The officer arrived and cleared with a gone on arrival disposition.

12) 22 minute delay, held 16 minutes by dispatch. The call was a CPC requesting to go to Detox. Negative disturbance.

14) 43 minute delay, held 39 minutes by dispatch. The call was two transients sleeping in the dumpster. Negative disturbance.

15) 8 minute delay, held 3 minutes by dispatch. The call was an unoccupied, recovered stolen vehicle.

With the above listed calls, we feel that Respondent #15 did not have a legitimate complaint about the length of time before the arrival of an officer. Respondents #4, #6, #7, #12 and #14 had legitimate complaints. Their calls were held for excessive lengths of time by dispatch. It can not be determined if the delay by dispatch was due to a lack of available units.

Three of the respondents indicated that their call was answered by a recording. Respondent #7 related that the dispatcher interrupted the recording after approximately 4 minutes. Respondent #14 related that the dispatcher came on the line after approximately 2 minutes. Respondent #17 related that the dispatcher came on the line after approximately 1 minute.

Out of the twenty respondents, seven had some sort of comment concerning the service of attitude of either the officer or the dispatcher. The comments are listed below:

Respondent #12 stated that she would like to see the officers arrive on scene faster. This call was a CPC.

Respondent #14 answered "no" to the question of "Are you satisfied with the way that your call was handled?"<sup>11</sup> This respondent was displeased because the officer never made contact with her. This call was a CPC.

Respondent #15 answered "no" to the question of "Did the officer convey an impression that there was concern for you?" The respondent stated that the officer conveyed the impression of: No big deal—just another call?" This respondent was not satisfied with the way the call was handled, because of the officers attitude. Also, this respondent would like to see a faster response time.

This call was researched and it was found to be a recovered stolen vehicle. The Complainant found her own vehicle and was disappointed when the officer did not attempt to obtain fingerprints.

Overall this survey had several complaints, but there were also many good comments. The seven respondents which voiced complaints were either that of not having an officer respond quick enough, or that of the attitude of either the officer or the dispatcher. The most apparent negative aspect of this survey, other than response time, was the poor attitude of either the officer or the dispatcher. In regards to the complaints of response time, it cannot be determined if these delays were due to the lack of available units at the time of the calls. The majority of the respondents were very pleased with the contact which was made by the Quality Assurance staff and were happy with the service they received from the field units and dispatchers. Listed below are several of the good comments which were received by the Quality Assurance staff during the survey:

- Good service from everyone involved.
- Very efficient—helpful officer.
- Good service.
- Very nice dispatcher.
- I appreciate having a police department like RPD.
- The officers were very concerned.
- I never have any problems with RPD. I appreciate the service.
- We have a good working relationship with RPD.

Respondent #01:	—
Respondent #02:	06, 07, 12
Respondent #03:	—
Respondent #04:	03, 12
Respondent #05:	—
Respondent #06:	12
Respondent #07:	10, 12
Respondent #08:	—
Respondent #09:	—
Respondent #10:	—
Respondent #11:	—

Respondent #12: 12  
 Respondent #13: -  
 Respondent #14: 10  
 Respondent #15: 07, 10, 12  
 Respondent #16: —  
 Respondent #17: —  
 Respondent #18: —  
 Respondent #19: —  
 Respondent #20: --

Respondent #2 answered "no" under the question of "Did the officer handle your call in a businesslike manner?" The respondent stated that the officer had an attitude that the respondent was "trash." Also, the officer acted as if he did not believe the respondents story. The respondent would like to see a change in the attitude of police officers.

This call was researched and found to be a GTA. The officer arrived on scene and a report was taken.

Respondent #4 answered "no" under the question of "Did the dispatcher convey the impression that there was concern for you?" The respondent stated that the dispatcher said, "There is probably nothing that the police can do; but if you insist, we will send an officer." The respondent felt that this was a very poor attitude for the dispatcher to have. Also, the respondent would like to see a faster response time.

This call was a possible fraud or obtaining money under false pretenses at the Palace Jewelry and Loan. The suspect had extracted money from an employee by relating a "sad story." The officer arrived on scene and did not locate the suspect.

Respondent #6 stated that he would like to see the officers arrived on scene faster. This call was a GTA.

Respondent #7 answered "no" to the question, "Are you satisfied with the way your call was handled?" The respondent stated that the officers took sides with the suspects. Also, the respondent would like to see the officer listen more to the complainant. This call was a party in a motel, involving 13 college students.

Reno Police Department  
Quality Assurance Unit Survey  
July 1, 1990

Traffic Citation Survey

The Quality Assurance Bureau recently completed a survey of Reno residents who have received a traffic citation recently. This survey was conducted over the phone during the period of May 7, 1990 through June 12, 1990. The survey consisted of 203 observations with 103 defendants receiving their citations from motor units and the remaining 99 received their citations from patrol units.

The results of this survey were very positive for the Department. In the area of officer professionalism, the Department received an 87.2% positive rating. The predominate reason for a negative score, 68%, was a poor officer attitude.

These results were reinforced by the question on officer courtesy. Again, the positive rating was 87.2%, with officer attitude the main reason for a negative response. Additionally, three people felt that the officer should have better listening skills. This was further emphasized by the fact that only 70% of the citizens with questions felt they were sufficiently answered.

The questions dealing specifically with understanding the citation, and having the citation sufficiently explained, registered 92.1% and 94.1% respectively. Finally, 80.3% of the citizenry were satisfied with their citation. The three most common reasons stated from dissatisfied citizens were:

1. The officer's attitude;
2. They were not guilty;
3. The ticket took too much time.

A wide variety of changes were suggested by the public. The most popular included:

1. Improving the officer's attitude and courtesy;
2. Increasing traffic enforcement;
3. Issuing more warnings;
4. Spending more time on serious crimes;
5. Specific street enforcement changes.

Results for increased enforcement outnumbered requests for reduced enforcement by a margin of 2:1.

There was a significant difference in the public's acceptance of speeding tickets compared to other tickets. Speeding tickets received higher marks in all categories. The level of satisfaction in speeding tickets, when issued by a motor unit, was 93.3%. When issued by a patrol unit, the satisfaction level was only 54.5%. There was no significant difference in the satisfaction level for tickets issued for reasons other than speed. It appears the public views the motorcycle traffic enforcement program as an effective means of speed zone enforcement. When issuing a ticket for any reason other than speed, the officer should be prepared to explain the ticket and answer questions. There were many more positive than negative comments during this survey.

One potential problem area is the apparent inconsistency when issuing radar tickets. Tickets that were issued for five miles over the limit had an average actual clocked speed of 14.5 miles over the limit. Tickets written at ten miles over the limit had an average actual clocked speed of 14.2 miles over the posted limit. As an example, six people were stopped for going seventeen miles over the speed limit. One was cited for fifteen miles over, two were cited for ten over and the remaining three were cited for five miles over the speed limit.

The first in the series of graphs highlights the Department's overall performance for the survey in the following six areas:

- A. Officer professionalism;
- B. Officer courtesy;
- C. Defendant satisfaction;
- D. If the defendant's questions were answered;
- E. If the defendant understood the ticket;
- F. Was the citation explained.

The next four graphs compare the results between speeding tickets, non-speeding tickets, motor and patrol units. The final graph compares actual speed to the speed for which the defendant was cited.

#### FREQUENCIES

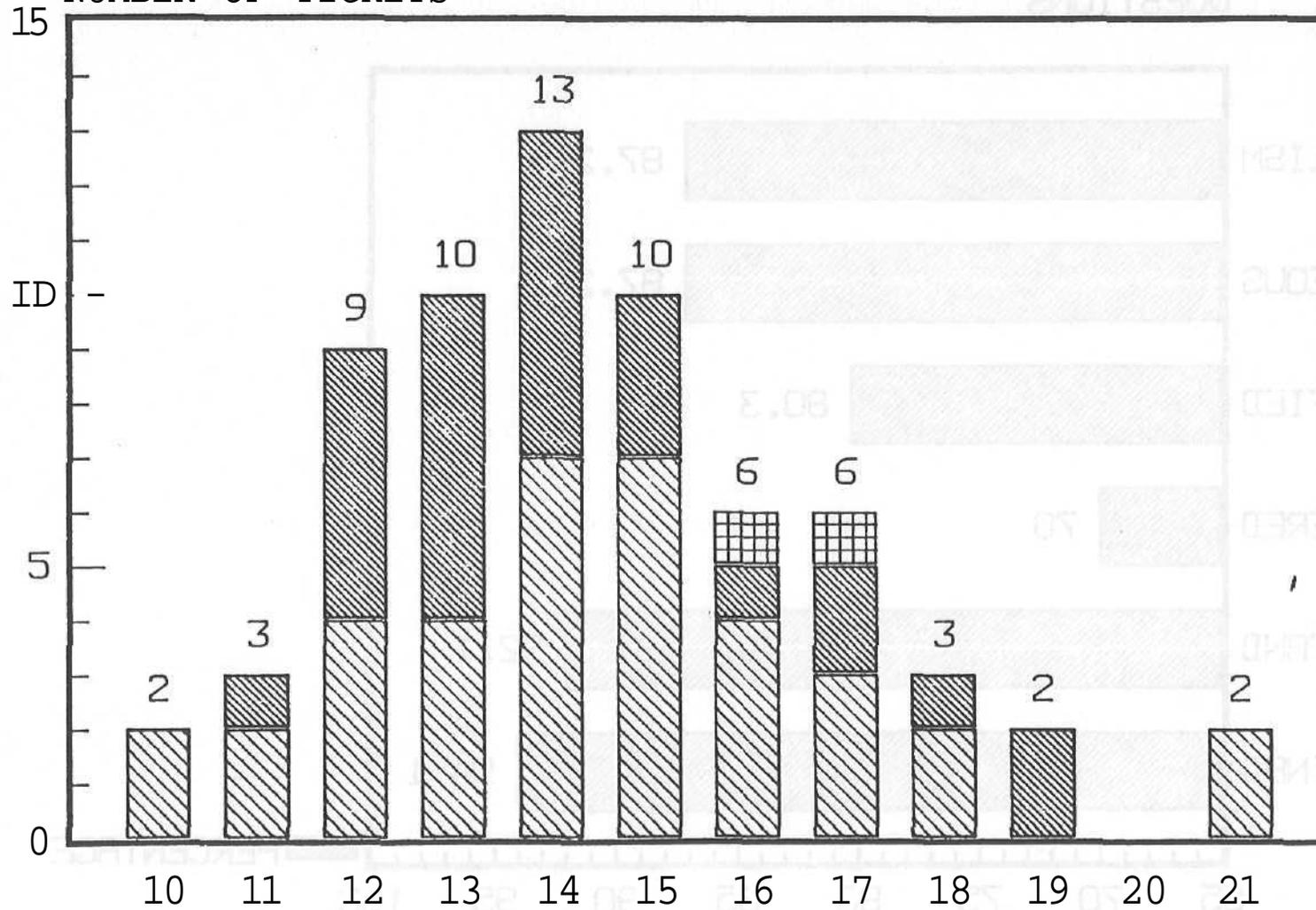
1.	Type of unit making stop.	
	Motorcycle	104
	Patrol	99
2.	Type of ticket issued.	
	Speeding	82
	Speeding and additional	19
	Equipment, insurance, etc.	38
	Careless driving	11
	Failure to stop	12
	D.U.L	2
	Following too close	8

	Illegal turn	10
	Multiple citations w/o speed	21
3.	Was the officer professional?	
	Yes	177
	No	25
4.	Why was the officer not professional?	
	Rude, poor officer attitude	17
	Took too much time	1
	Officer didn't know laws	2
	Poor safety in stop	1
	Shouldn't have been stopped	2
	Officer didn't listen	1
	Ticket too severe	1
	Should not have been searched	1
5.	Was the officer courteous?	
	Yes	177
	No	25
6.	Why was the officer not courteous:	
	Rude, poor officer attitude	19
	Could have been friendlier	1
	Officer did not listen	3
	Should not have been searched	1
7.	Did the officer explain the citation to you?	
	Yes	191
	No	12
8.	Did you understand the citation?	
	Yes	187
	No	16
9.	Did the officer answer your questions?	
	Yes	35
	No	15
	No questions	153

10.	Were you satisfied with the incident?		
	Yes	163	
	No	39	
11.	What dissatisfied you?		
	Just do selective enforcement	1	
	Took too much time	5	
	Not guilty	10	
	Poor officer attitude	17	
	Did not understand ticket	3	
	Too much traffic enforcement	1	
	Response time too slow	1	
	Too many officers on scene	1	
	Should not be searched	2	
12.	What changes would you like to see made?		
	None	147	
	Don't just do selective enforcement	1	
	Stop hiding motor units	2	
	More school zone enforcement	2	
	More enforcement	9	
	Issue warnings	6	
	Raise the speed limits	1	
	Use less radar	1	
	Increase speed on Lakeside Drive	1	
	Speed more time on serious crimes	6	
	More consistency in speed limit on 7th St.	2	
	Improve officer attitude	12	
	More enforcement on Keystone	3	
	Fewer school zones on Vassar	1	
	Be quicker when issuing a ticket	1	
	Officers should learn the laws	2	
	Don't search everyone	1	
	2nd officer shouldn't approach side of car	1	
	Too many officers at scene	1	
	Use better judgement	1	
	Don't pick on kids	1	
	Review the Right Away law	1	
	Don't be racist	1	

CITATIONS  
 RCTURL SPEED RND CITED SPEED

NUMBER OF TICKETS

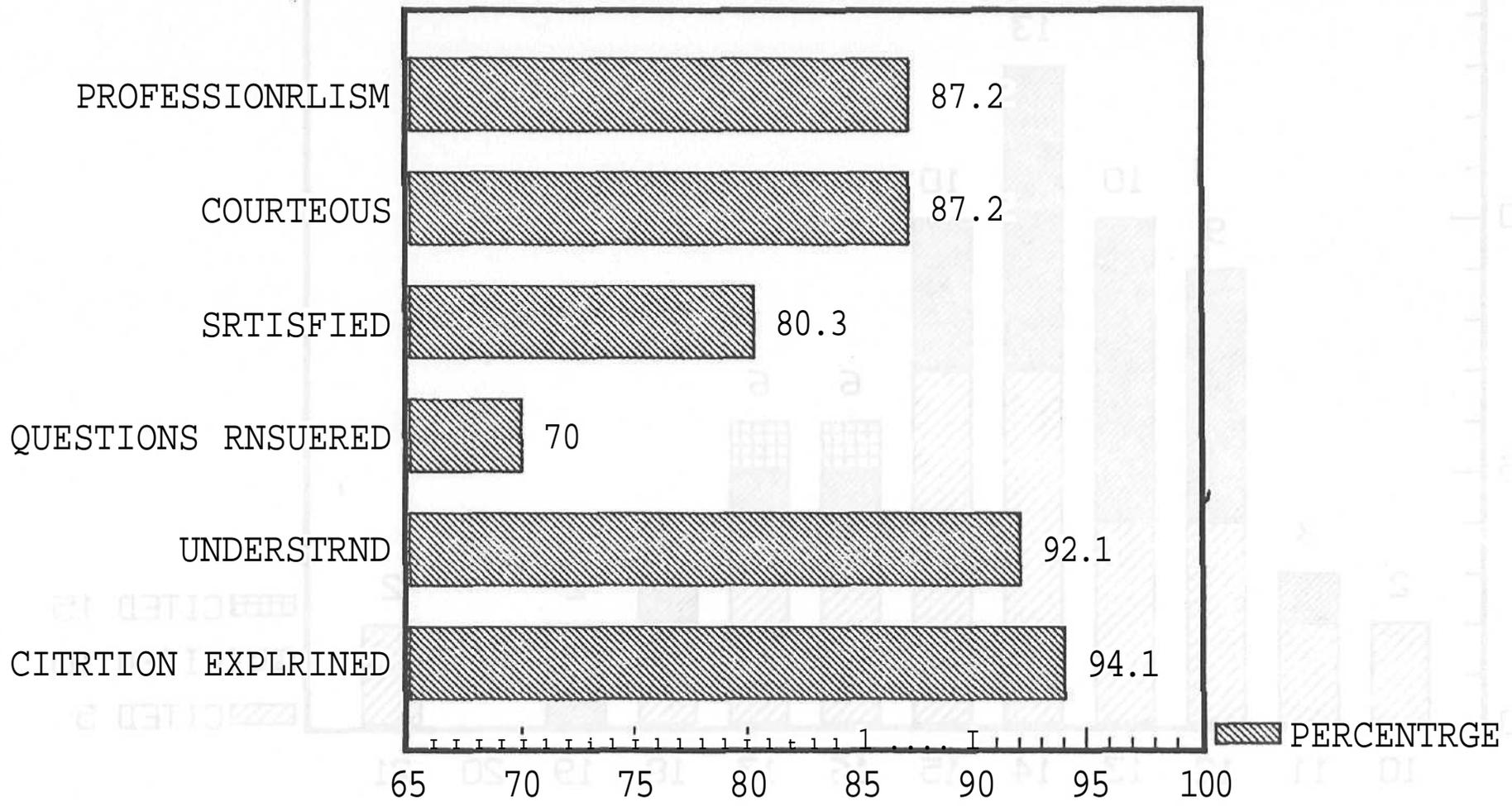


EfflHCITED 15  
 ^^CITED 10  
 ES3CITED 5

RCTURL SPEED OVER POSTED LIMIT

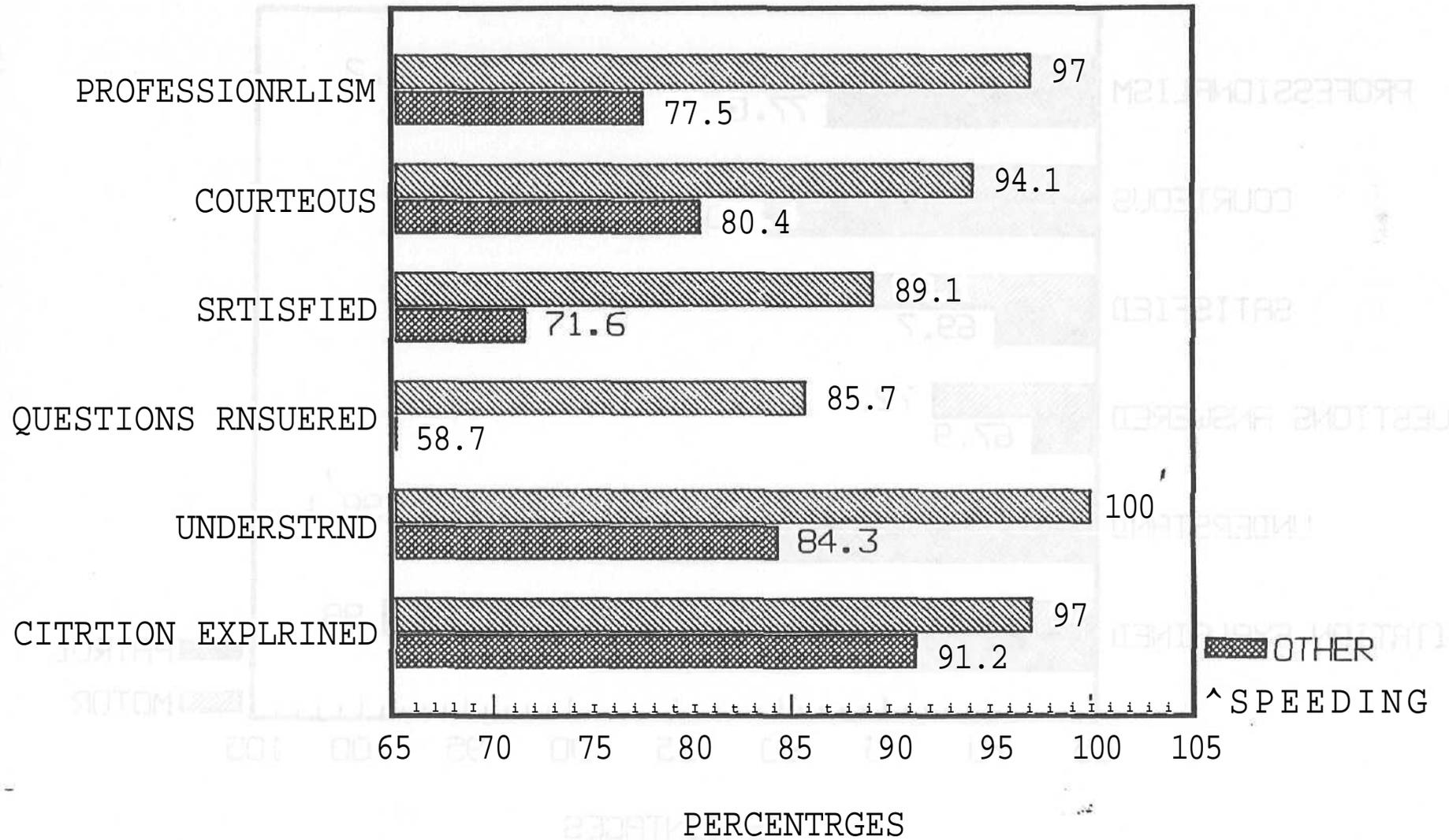
TRRRFFIC CITRTIONS

QUESTIONS



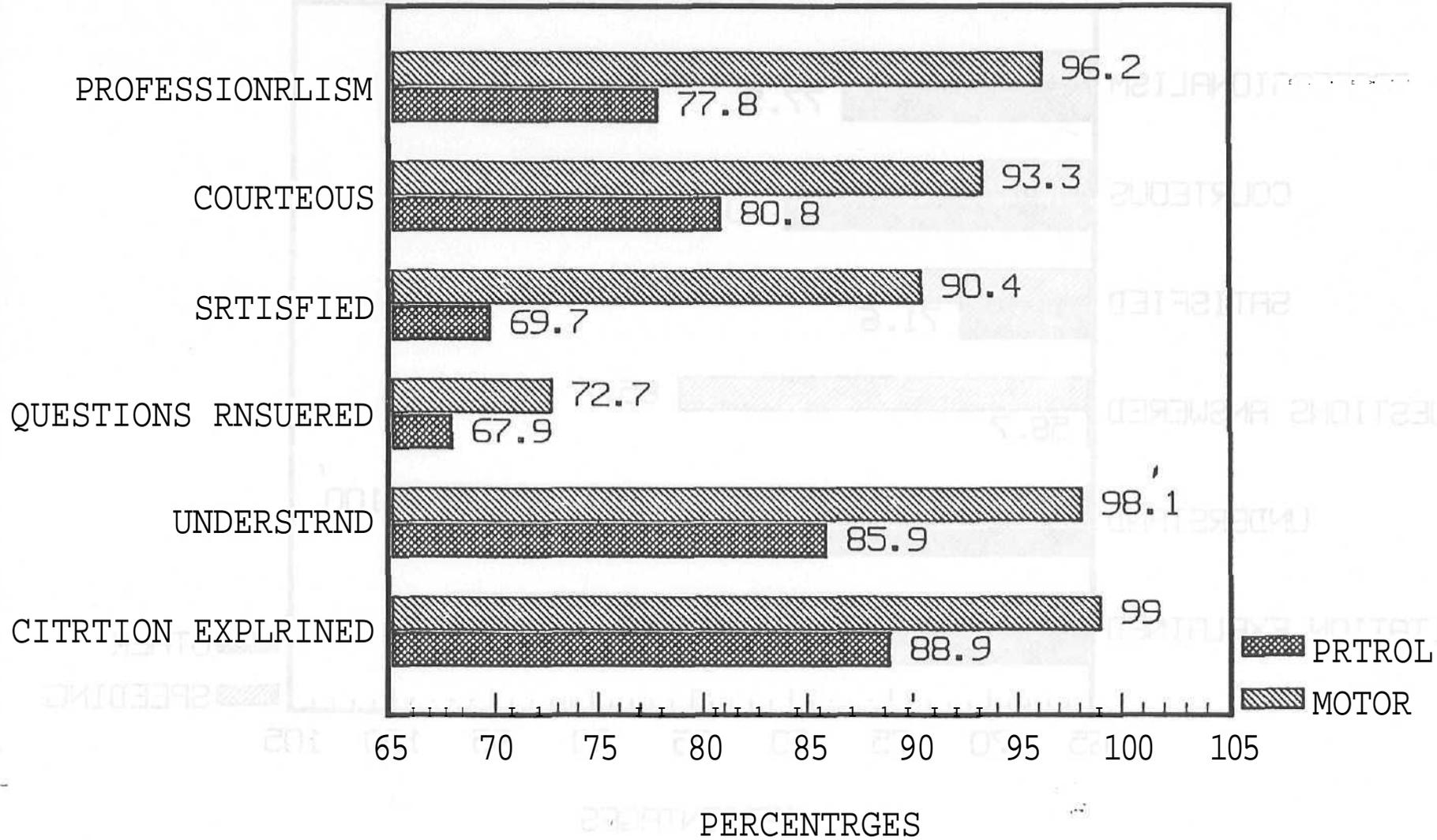
PERCENTRGES

TRRRFFIC CITRRTIONS  
 SPEEDING RND OTHER TICKETS  
 QUESTIONS



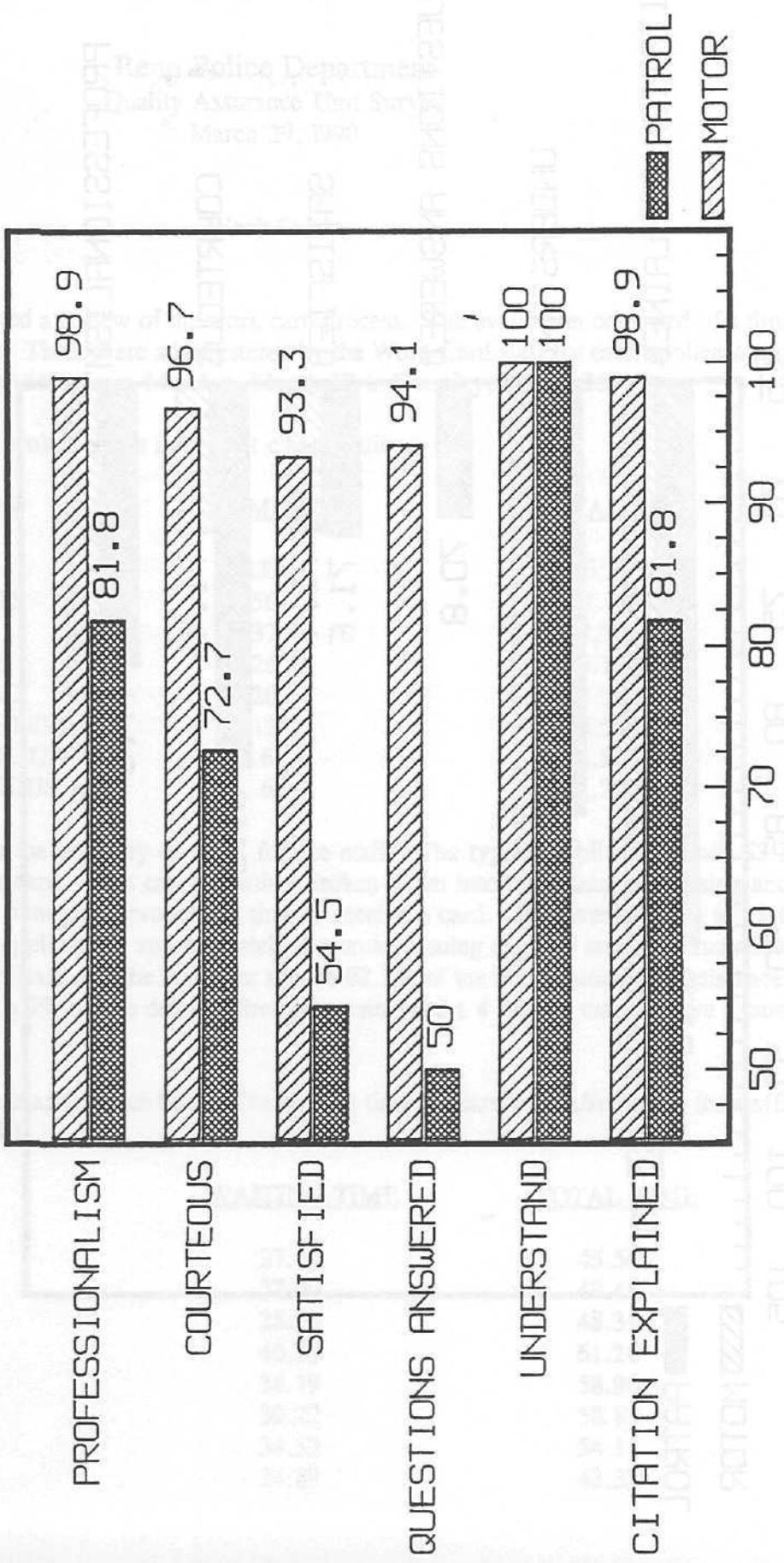
TRFFIC CITIFITIONS  
MOTOR fIND PRTOL UNITS

QUESTIONS



TRAFFIC CONTROL  
MOTOR AND SPEEDING TICKETS

ISSUES



PERCENTAGE

## SOLUTIONS

1. Package all gaming and liquor forms with a cover sheet, sample attached, and make them accessible without employee assistance. Only the gaming/liquor form need be done. When an application is required, this form is used 9 out of 10 times.

This would reduce the pressure on the center desk and enable applicants to get started immediately.

2. Replace the reception desk with a second work station, diagram attached. An applicant spends a majority of his time waiting for his application to be processed. This includes running through NCIC, CJIS, updating PLIMS, collecting fees, fingerprinting and photographing. With 11 applicants per hour, 66 minutes of processing time is required to avoid delays. Waiting time cannot be eliminated, by the current system, without a second work station.

This can be accomplished at a reasonable cost. A PLIMS terminal currently costs \$1,595, the Sperry unit, for NCIC and CJIS, runs approximately \$1,400. Other equipment required should be nominal. This new unit should handle the process from approved application to issuing the card. This will insure delays are reduced and not just shifted.

3. A part-time employee should be added four days a week. This person would cover lunches, 11:00-2:00, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. This will keep staffing at full strength throughout the day. Waiting time increases over 41 % when the staff starts their lunch hour.

The application of these recommendations should significantly reduce the time it takes to receive a work card. It is estimated that these changes will reduce the total time to receive a card to approximately 35 minutes. This reduces the waiting time of the applicant by 54%.

TIME	WAITING TIME	TOTAL TIME
8:00 - 9:00	37.11	42.78
9:00 - 10:00	37.00	48.42
10:00 - 11:00	38.20	48.31
11:00 - 12:00	40.25	61.31
12:00 - 13:00	38.19	38.80
13:00 - 14:00	39.22	38.83
14:00 - 15:00	34.22	34.11
15:00 - 16:00	34.89	42.32

**Reno Police Department**  
**Quality Assurance Unit Survey**  
**March 8, 1990**

**Department-Citizen Interaction Survey/Animal Control Division**

The Quality Assurance Bureau recently conducted a survey of the Animal Control Division.

The data used for this survey was obtained from the Department's PLIMS system, using the dates of February 4, 1990 through February 25, 1990. This survey was completed by the Quality Assurance staff by use of the telephone.

The survey consisted of one-hundred completed questionnaires. Following are the results of the survey:

1) Total Completed Questionnaires

100

2) Sex

Male:	36
Female:	64

3) Ethnicity

White:	97
Indian:	2
Hispanic:	1

4) Age

17-20:	9
21-30:	24
31-40:	25
41-50:	23
51-60:	11
61-70:	5
71-80:	3

5) Results

Refer to the attached questionnaire for totals and results.

6) Summary

The question of a lengthy delay before the arrival of an Animal Control officer was answered "affirmative" by two of the respondents. Those responses are listed below:

- 1) 189 minute delay, held 177 minutes at dispatch. The call was two dogs running loose in the area. The call was received by dispatch at 1101 hours, but at that time there were not any officers available. One officer became available at 1249 hours. That officer went from call to call until the end of the shift, attempting to catch up on back-logged calls. There were five officers scheduled for that day, but only one was available until after 1600 hours. Four of the officers were on assignments all day.
- 2) 213 minute delay, held 188 minutes at dispatch, 36 minute travel time by the officer. The call was a dog under a mobile home. The call was received by dispatch at 0709 hours. Officers were not available until 0930 hours. Two officers then spent about two hours catching up on back-logged calls.

With the above listed calls, the delays appear to be from a lack of available Animal Control personnel.

Out of the one-hundred respondents, ten had some sort of comment concerning the service and/or attitude of the officer.

The comments are listed below:

Respondent #04	05
Respondent #09	04,05, 07
Respondent #16	05
Respondent #36	05
Respondent #45	05
Respondent #48	05
Respondent #53	05
Respondent #60	05
Respondent #61	05
Respondent #89	05,07

Respondent #04 answered "negative" on the question of, "Did the Animal Control officer resolve the problem that you reported?" The call was a loose dog in the area. The officer responded but was unable to locate the animal.

**Respondent #09** answered "negative" on the question of, "Did the Animal Control officer resolve the problem that you reported?" The call was a chronic problem of a barking dog. The officer responded, made contact with the owner of the dog and then cleared with a disposition of advised and complied. The respondent also answered "negative" on the question of, "Did the Animal Control officer convey the impression

that there was concern for your problem?" The respondent stated that after the officer contacted the owner of the dog and learned that the dog was deaf, the officer sided with dog owner. The officer left the impression that the respondent should take care of the problem and not bother Animal Control. The respondent also stated "affirmative" to the question of, "would you change anything about the way your call was handled?" The respondent would like to see a change in the officer's attitude.

Respondent #16 answered "negative" on the question of, "Did the Animal Control officer resolve the problem that you reported?" The call was a barking dog in the area. The officer responded but was unable to locate the animal. The respondent did not have any other complaints.

Respondent #36 answered "negative" on the question of, "Did the Animal Control officer resolve the problem that you reported?" The call was a contained cat. The officer responded and while attempting to place the cat in the truck, the cat got away. The respondent was displeased that the cat escaped. The respondent did not have any other complaints.

Respondent #45 answered "negative" on the question of, "Did the Animal Control officer resolve the problem that you reported?" The call was a dog running loose in the area. The officer responded but was unable to locate the animal. The respondent did not have any other complaints.

Respondent #48 answered "negative" on the question of, "Did the Animal Control officer resolve the problem that you reported?" The call was a dog running loose in the area. The officer responded but was unable to locate the animal. The respondent did not have any other complaints.

Respondent #53 answered "negative" on the question of, "Did the Animal Control officer resolve the problem that you reported?" The call was several dogs running loose in the area. The officer responded but was unable to locate the animals. The respondent did not have any other complaints.

Respondent #60 answered "negative" on the question of, "Did the Animal Control officer resolve the problem that you reported?" The call was a rooster flying loose in the area. The officer responded but was unable to locate the animal. The respondent did not have any other complaints.

Respondent #61 answered "negative" on the question of, "Did the Animal Control officer resolve the problem that you reported?" This call was a dog running loose in the area. The officer responded but was unable to locate the animal. The respondent did not have any other complaints.

Respondent #89 answered "negative" on the question of, "Did the Animal Control officer resolve the problem that you reported?" This call was several dogs running loose in the area. The officer responded to the area, located the animals and their owners.

The officer cleared with a notice of violation, advised and complied disposition. The respondent also answered "affirmative" to the question of, "Would you change anything about the way your call was handled?" The respondent stated that the officer did not handle the problem and that the dogs are still running loose. The officer should make sure that the problem gets resolved.

Overall, this survey had many good comments compared with the few complaints. The twelve respondents who voiced complaints were displeased with the response times of the officers, or displeased with the attitude of the officer, or displeased with the fact that the problem was not resolved. The most apparent negative aspect of this survey was that the problems that were reported were not being resolved by the actions of the officers. The majority of the respondents were very pleased with the contact which was made by the Quality Assurance staff. They were pleased with the service that they received by the field officers and the dispatchers. Listed below are some of the good comments which were received by the Quality Assurance staff during the survey:

Very understanding officer.

Very smoothly handled.

Very professional.

Good service.

Very prompt service.

The call was handled very professionally.

Always prompt and courteous service.

They really know how to handle animals.

A super job.

Prompt, courteous service.

The call was handled promptly.

Handled very well.

The Animal Control officer was great.

Animal Control is wonderful.

Very satisfied.

Everything was fine.

Excellent service.

Fast, courteous service.

Nice officer.

Very impressed.

Delighted with the service.

Very courteous officers.

Satisfactory service.

Very pleased.