ODCA Office of the **District of Columbia Auditor**

February 3, 2017

The Hon. Charles Allen, Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
Council of the District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

Acting Chief Peter Newsham
Metropolitan Police Department
300 Indiana Ave., N.W.
Washington DC 20001

Dear Councilmember Allen and Chief Newsham:

I write to share findings from an audit of the Metropolitan Police Department Patrol Services Bureau
that was initiated prior to my assuming this position. I share this information in correspondence rather
than as a report because the data collected in the audit is dated, as will be noted throughout the text,
due primarily to staffing issues in my office. I share a summary of our findings despite the lapse of time
because the issue of police manpower is again an issue before the Council.

With the assistance of the Office of Unified Communications, we did a limited analysis of the average
time patrol officers spend on calls for service. Based on our review of data from one week in August
2015, we found officers spent an average of 22 percent of their time on calls for service, a lower
proportion of time than the amount of time spent by patrol officers in a handful of other studies. This
raises the obvious question of how the remainder of patrol time is spent, and could indicate that the
number of patrol officers now deployed could be reduced without a significant impact on public safety.
We recommend that MPD undertake a comprehensive *time utilization study* to see whether our very
limited review is an accurate picture and a factor that should be taken into account in assessing the
need for additional police officers.

This ODCA review was initiated in November 2014 and covered fiscal year 2015, or October 1, 2014
through September 30, 2015. The objectives were to determine if the MPD Patrol Services Bureau
deployment model aligned with the District's public safety priorities and if the Bureau was adequately
prepared to maintain a fully-staffed work force.

The ODCA team interviewed members of MPD's leadership, visited the seven police districts, and met
with each Commander or second in command to gain an understanding of how the Patrol Services
Bureau operates with regard to deployment, manpower, and scheduling. We also interviewed staff at
the Office of Unified Communications (OUC), which receives and responds to calls for police service.

We reviewed and analyzed the following data:

- Roll call sheets for randomly selected dates between October 2014 and September 2015 to determine how many officers were deployed during each shift.
- MPD calls for service (CFS) data to determine the total number of citizen and officer generated calls for police service responded to in each police district.
- Response time data to determine when officers arrive on scene, as well as data for the average amount of time spent on calls for service to determine how long officers are staying on the scene and the proportion of patrol officer time spent on calls for service.
- Citywide crime statistics to determine violent and property crime statistics for each police district.
- Total number of officers that have resigned from MPD for reasons other than retirement between 2010 and 2015.
- Total number of officers that filed the necessary paperwork to retire during calendar year 2015.
- Data for the number of officers who will become eligible to retire between FY 2015 and FY 2019 to learn how many officers may be leaving the force in the upcoming years.

Staffing and Deployment

We learned that MPD operates on three main shifts across each police district: a midnight, day, and evening shift. There also is an additional shift called the Power shift. The purpose of this fourth shift is to increase manpower during peak hours, especially evening and midnight shifts. At the end of the month, each district generates a manpower report that provides a snapshot of the total number of officers assigned to patrol and special units. The majority of the officers at each police district are patrol officers who are assigned to Police Service Areas (PSAs), and respond to calls for service. Each police district also has special units that cater to the needs of that particular district.

To determine the number of patrol officers available to respond to calls for service and assigned to the special units in the final month of FY 2015, ODCA reviewed each police district's schedule for the period ending September 19, 2015. Figure 1 is a breakdown of the total number of officers available and assigned to special units as of September 19, 2015.[1]

Figure 1: Patrol Officers Available or Assigned to Special Units by District as of Sept. 19, 2015

	First District	Second District	Third District	Fourth District	Fifth District	Sixth District	Seventh District	Total
Available Patrol Officers	246	205	208	260	248	268	258	1,693
Officers Assigned to Special Units	85	72	96	61	58	62	49	483
Total	**331**	**277**	**304**	**321**	**306**	**330**	**307**	**2,176**

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[1] For the purpose of our report, to display the total number of patrol officers available and assigned to special units by each police district, ODCA used the staffing levels as noted on the district's schedule for the period ending September 19, 2015.

According to the last manpower report and schedule for FY 2015, MPD had 2,176 officers available within the Patrol Services Bureau. The First District had the most available officers with a total of 331, followed by the Sixth District. The Second District had the least number of available officers at the end of the fiscal year with 277 officers.

Patrol activity differs across districts due to variations in crime, demand for police services, demographic characteristics of the neighborhoods, and other factors. Since each police district is unique, the Commanders assigned to manage the police districts are given the authority to determine how many officers will be tasked to answer calls for service and how much time those officers will spend answering calls for service apart from community policing, and other discretionary and administrative police activities. Commanders also have the authority to reallocate officers assigned to specific PSAs to other PSAs within the police district based on crime trends and demand for police services. We requested but did not receive written policies and procedures outlining MPD's approach to staffing decisions. We were told that each District has a minimum staffing requirement for each of the main three shifts of at least 25 officers, but again, MPD provided no formal documentation on how they established that standard.

We requested roll call sheets for 17 randomly selected days between October 2014 and September 2015. With three shifts per day and seven Districts, our review encompassed 357 total shifts. Roll call sheets include the number of officers available for patrol on each shift and the PSA to which they were assigned. We received documentation for 329 of the 357 requested shifts. We cannot fully rely on the accuracy of the roll call sheets due to the manner in which they were obtained — not directly from police districts in their original format as requested but, instead, through the audit liaison. We nevertheless conducted a review of the information received and identified several shifts during which MPD did not have the minimum of 25 officers assigned. In addition, we identified a number of instances in which no officer or only one officer was assigned to a PSA during either the midnight or evening shifts. The apparent lack of written policy and procedures on minimum staffing as well as the absence of a detailed analysis to determine minimum staffing levels raised questions for us about the basis for personnel decisions within the Patrol Services Bureau.

Calls for Service, Response Time, Time on Scene

According to MPD officials, the number of officers assigned to each police district depends upon both crime and calls for service. According to data provided by MPD, officers responded to 660,995 calls for service during FY 2015. Of those calls, MPD identified 2,523 events as "unknown" which means they did not identify the police district where the event occurred. Figures 2(a) and 2(b) show the calls for service by district in comparison to the total available officers as of September 15, 2015.

Figure 2(a): Calls for Service Compared to Total Available Patrol Officers

	First District	Second District	Third District	Fourth District	Fifth District	Sixth District	Seventh District
Total Calls for Service	107,140	83,313	78,055	87,659	100,716	101,901	99,688
Total Available Patrol Officers	246	205	208	260	248	268	258

Figure 2(b): Percentage of Calls for Service and Total Available Patrol Officers by Police District

	First District	Second District	Third District	Fourth District	Fifth District	Sixth District	Seventh District
Percentage of Calls for Service	16%	13%	12%	13%	15%	14%	15%
Percentage of Available Patrol Officers	15%	12%	12%	15%	15%	16%	15%

Response time is the amount of time it takes police officers to respond to emergency calls for service. Figure 3 highlights the police districts' average response times during FY 2015, as recorded by OUC.

Figure 3: Average Response Times for FY 2015

	First District	Second District	Third District	Fourth District	Fifth District	Sixth District	Seventh District
Average Response Times	00:14:41	00:14:36	00:13:35	00:14:46	00:13:45	00:15:51	00:16:20

The average response time within the Seventh District for all events was **00:16:20**, the slowest within the District. The average response time within the Third District for all events was **00:13:35**, the quickest within the District.

Our research indicates that the law enforcement community has not established "best practices" standards for response, although timely response is obviously a priority. MPD reports on response times in its Annual Report, but does not set specific goals for reducing response time, focusing instead on successfully implementing community-oriented policing strategies and reducing crime.

"Time on scene" is the amount of time it takes officers, once they have responded to a call for service, to conduct preliminary investigations and close the event before becoming available for another call for service. Figure 4 highlights the police districts with the shortest and longest amount of time spent on scene during FY 2015.

Figure 4: Average Time on Scene by Day of Week/Hour of Day for FY 2015

	First District	Second District	Third District	Fourth District	Fifth District	Sixth District	Seventh District
Average Time Spent on Scene	00:52:13	00:48:03	00:59:40	00:56:33	00:56:53	00:57:38	00:62:13

The average time on scene within the Second District for all events was **00:48:03**, the shortest within the District. The average time on scene within the Seventh District for all events was **00:62:13**, the longest within the District.

We also took a detailed look at the average time spent on scene for a particular week during FY 2015, August 9, 2015 to August 15, 2015. We compared the average time on scene as provided by OUC to the total number of officers assigned within each police district[2]. The calculation below factors in a "show-up rate" of 75 percent consistent with other police department workload studies reviewed in our research.

Figure 5: Time Spent on Calls for Service, Week of August 9-15, 2015

Police District	Average Number of Officers Scheduled	Average Weekly Hours at 75% Show-Up Rate	Average Weekly Time on Scene (in minutes)	Actual Officer Time Consumed by CFS
1D	153	4,586	966.27	21%
2D	136	4,071	730.16	18%
3D	139	4,183	845.63	20%
4D	156	4,689	858.08	18%
5D	145	4,359	1,021.37	23%
6D	131	3,917	909.51	23%
7D	140	4,196	1,368.55	33%

During the week of August 9, 2015, an average of 22 percent of the officers scheduled-for-duty time was consumed by calls for service. In the seventh district, the busiest district, 33 percent of the officers' time was consumed by calls for service.

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[2] The total number of officers assigned within each police district were calculated using the total number of officers assigned to the midnight, second watch, third watch and power shifts.

In 2012 the Police Executive Research Forum conducted a comprehensive study of patrol staffing in Austin, Texas, following similar studies in San Francisco and Memphis. That study found that in Austin the time spent on calls for service averaged 57 percent of available patrol officer time per week, higher than in other cities studied. The study suggested moving to a staffing level that would permit the department to lower that time allocation to 45 percent to "allow officers time for community engagement and problem-solving, and would still allow for substantial proactive, self-initiated work."

By way of background, PERF explains:

> There are no universally accepted standards for how much patrol time should be consumed by calls for service. One department may set an informal target at 30% to 40%....An old rule of thumb, recognized before community policing became prevalent, was that one-third of an officer's time should be spend on calls for service, one-third on self-initiated activity and one-third on uncommitted patrol time. A desire for some of an officer's time to be devoted to community policing activities altered that old rule and led to many variations dependent on local considerations.

PERF notes these average time allocations to calls for service: Kansas City, Mo., 35 percent; San Francisco, 30 percent to 50 percent; Tallahassee has sought to lower its actual 67 percent to a goal of 50 percent; Memphis has a target of 42 percent. That all of these numbers are larger than the MPD average found in our one sample week – 22 percent – raises the question of whether patrol staffing has been determined based on the most appropriate factors, or whether the sample time ODCA analyzed was somehow an outlier and other weeks in other months require a greater expenditure of patrol officer time on calls for service. A detailed time study as recommended above would permit MPD to analyze how officers spend their time while on duty. This analysis will help MPD leadership effectively deploy officers throughout the District and fully utilize the officers time during their assigned shift. The analysis above does not account for the time police officers spend on police-related activities outside of the time spent on a scene but a more detailed analysis could usefully disclose such information.[3] Using the call for service information provided by MPD we identified the most frequent types of calls for service for each police district.

Figure 6: Most Frequent Type of Calls for Service by Police District, Fiscal Year 2015

First District	Number	Second District	Number	Third District	Number
Disorderly Conduct	13,523	Disorderly Conduct	9,270	Disorderly Conduct	11,872
Accident Property Damage Only	5,202	Business/Alarm	5,886	Traffic Complaint	4,113
Business/Alarm	4,430	Burglar Alarm	5,817	Traffic Stop	2,903
Other	4,242	Accident Property Damage Only	5,211	Other	2,861
Traffic Complaint	3,880	Traffic Complaint	4,529	Theft from Auto	2,847

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[3] *Such a time study was recommended in the 2012 One City Performance Review undertaken at the request of former Mayor Gray and suggested that right-sizing the department based on benchmarking and a time study could lead to significant cost savings.*

Fourth District	Number	Fifth District	Number	Sixth District	Number
Disorderly Conduct	11,850	Disorderly Conduct	15,388	Disorderly Conduct	13,082
Burglar Alarm	5,739	Burglar Alarm	4,708	Family Disturbance	5,843
Traffic Complaint	3,214	Traffic Stop	4,061	Burglar Alarm	4,206
Accident Property Damage Only	3,022	Other	3,814	Other	3,908
Other	2,996	Family Disturbance	3,747	Placement Violation	3,490

Seventh District	Number
Disorderly Conduct	15,094
Family Disturbance	7,620
Other	4,187
Assault/Simple	3,556
Burglar Alarm	3,262

Overall disorderly conduct was the most frequent call for service for each District. To gain a better understanding of the type of crime within each district we reviewed violent and property crime data provided by MPD.

Violent crimes consist of Homicide, Sexual Assault, Assault with a Dangerous Weapon, and Robbery. During FY 2015, 6,215 violent crimes were reported. Figure 7 is a breakdown of FY 2015 violent crime statistics across the seven police districts.

Figure 7: FY 2015 Violent Crime Statistics by Police District

District	Homicide	Sexual Assault	Assault with a Dangerous Weapon	Robbery	Total
First	6	29	242	465	**742**
Second	5	31	112	190	**338**
Third	14	30	209	473	**726**
Fourth	15	55	256	552	**878**

District					
Fifth	27	42	407	576	**1,052**
Sixth	23	44	610	647	**1,324**
Seventh	53	54	548	500	**1,155**
Total	**143**	**285**	**2,384**	**3,403**	**6,215**

At the end of FY 2015, the Sixth District had the highest total for violent crime, with a total of 21 percent of violent crime in the District. The Seventh and Fifth Districts followed with 19 percent and 17 percent. The Second District ended the year with the least amount of violent crimes reported.

Property crimes consist of Burlary, Stolen Auto, Theft from Vehicle, Theft Other, and Arson. Figure 8 is a breakdown of FY 2015 property crime statistics within each police district.

Figure 8: FY 2015 Property Crime Statistics by Police District

District	Burglary	Stolen Auto	Theft from Vechicle	Theft Other	Arson	Total
First	252	412	1,881	2,893	3	**5,441**
Second	298	256	1,553	3,215	0	**5,322**
Third	246	275	2,548	2,256	2	**5,327**
Fourth	436	395	2,218	1,466	2	**4,517**
Fifth	515	518	1,595	1,762	2	**4,392**
Sixth	458	720	1,017	1,273	2	**3,470**
Seventh	467	480	657	1,047	6	**2,657**
Total	**2,672**	**3,056**	**11,469**	**13,912**	**17**	**31,126**

At the end of fiscal year 2015, the First, Second, and Third Districts had the highest totals for property crime, 52 percent of property crime in the District. The Fourth and Fifth Districts followed with 15 percent and 14 percent, respectively. The Seventh District ended the year with the least amount of property crimes reported. During our review of the crime data we did not identify a correlation between crime levels and calls for police service and the actual number of staff assigned to each police district.

Retirement and Retention

Officers are eligible to retire after reaching 25 years of service.[4] MPD is facing a 'retirement bubble' that poses a significant staffing challenge to MPD and had been the subject of Council discussion and consideration of additional policies to retain senior officers and officials.

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[4] Officers hired on or after November 10, 1996 (Tier 3) may retire at any age as long as they have at least 25 years of police officer service. Officers hired on or after February 15, 1980, but before November 10, 1996 (Tier 2) may retire at any time upon reaching age 50 as long as you have at least 25 years of police officer or firefighter service.

ODCA requested documentation from MPD for the total number of officers that filled out the necessary paperwork to retire during calendar year 2015. As a result, ODCA learned that 131 officers retired between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015. Based on additional documentation provided by MPD, they are expected to lose another 400+ due to retirement between calendar year 2016 and 2019.

In an effort to address this 'retirement bubble', MPD has recruited 592 officers between 2013 and 2015. Figure 9 is a breakdown of where these officers have been placed.

Figure 9: 2013-2015 Police Recruits by District

	First District	Second District	Third District	Fourth District	Fifth District	Sixth District	Seventh District	Total
Police Recruits by District	83	64	83	69	91	101	101	592

During this two-year span, the Sixth and Seventh Districts tied for the most new recruits with 101 each. The Second and Fourth Districts had the least number of recruits with 64 and 69, respectively. We were informed that new recruits are placed based on the current need of each police district as expressed by the District Commander. When requested, MPD did not provide documentation to support the rationale for placing officers in specific districts. We could not determine whether MPD is actually assigning new officers to districts based on need.

While MPD does not appear to have a problem in recruitment, it does have a challenge with retention, particularly with officers in their first five years of service. In reviewing the files of the 294 officers who separated from the Patrol Services Bureau between October 1, 2010 and March 31, 2015 for reasons other than retirement, we learned that 177 (60 percent) were on the force for 5 years or fewer, 76 (26 percent) were on the force between 6 and 10 years, 22 (7 percent) were on the force between 11 and 15 years and 19 (7 percent) left after 16 or more years of service.

There are significant incentives for longer-serving officers including longevity pay, a 5 percent salary increase for continuous service at 15, 20, 25, and 30 years of service, and Base Retention Differential, a one-time incentive of 5 percent at 20 years of service on top of longevity pay. But, until FY 2016, there were no incentives specifically targeted at those who leave the force after less than 15 years of service. Starting this past year, MPD is offering sworn members with from three to eight years of service these two options:

- **FY 2016 Loan Forgiveness Program**, providing eligible and qualified sworn employees or their dependent children loan repayment assistance of up to $12,500 for debt accrued from accredited colleges and universities in return for signing an obligated service agreement.

- **FY 2016 Tuition Reimbursement Program,** providing eligible and qualified sworn employees or their dependent children tuition re-imbursement of up to $12,500 for coursework toward a bachelor's or a master's degree in any field from an accredited college or university in return for signing an obligated service agreement .

This year the Council is again considering legislation to increase MPD's sworn manpower. Given our findings, we believe that a comprehensive time utilization study of the Patrol Services Bureau would greatly assist the department and policymakers in their deliberations. The Office of the D.C. Auditor is prepared to partner with MPD on contracting for such a study.

I appreciate the assistance of the MPD senior staff, the Patrol Services Bureau, and the Office of Unified Communications, and all the personnel who assisted us during our review. Acknowledging the limitations on the data, we nevertheless hope the information is useful as you assess the important work force and deployment policies.

Sincerely yours,

Kathleen Patterson
District of Columbia Auditor

cc: D.C. Councilmembers
        Kevin Donohue, Deputy Mayor
        Betsy Cavendish, General Counsel

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