

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL**

**REVIEW OF HOMICIDE CLOSURE RATES
WITHIN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE
DEPARTMENT**



**CHARLES J. WILLOUGHBY
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of the Inspector General

Inspector General



June 26, 2007

Cathy A. Lanier
Chief of Police
D.C. Metropolitan Police Department
300 Indiana Avenue N.W., Room 5080
Washington, D.C. 20001

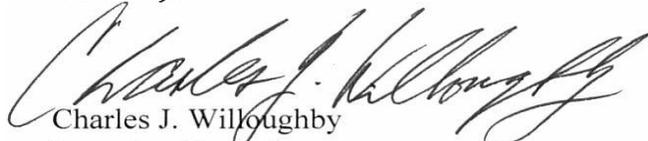
Dear Chief Lanier:

Enclosed is the final report summarizing the results of the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) *Audit of Homicide Closure Rates within the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) (OIG No. 07-2-02FA)*. The audit was initiated in response to concerns raised by the former Council Chairperson for the Committee on Education, Libraries, and Recreation and other District stakeholders.

As a result of our audit, we directed 10 recommendations to the MPD for necessary actions to correct the described deficiencies. We received a response to the draft audit report from the Chief of Police on June 15, 2007. In general, MPD's response meets the intent of the recommendations. However, we ask that MPD provide additional information regarding recommendations 3, 6, and 10. The full text of MPD's response is included at Exhibit E.

If you have questions, please contact William J. DiVello, Assistant Inspector General for Audits, at (202) 727-2540.

Sincerely,



Charles J. Willoughby
Inspector General

Enclosure

CJW/cf

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ACRONYMS

CAD	Call Automated Dispatch
FES	Firearms and Tool Mark Examination Section
MCL	Mobile Crime Lab
MPD	Metropolitan Police Department
OCME	Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
PSA	Police Service Areas
ROC	Regional Operations Commands
SPU	Strategic Planning Unit
USAO	United States Attorney's Office
VCB	Violent Crimes Branch

EXECUTIVE DIGEST

OVERVIEW

The District of Columbia Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has completed an audit of homicide closure rates within the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). The audit was initiated in response to concerns raised by the former Council Chairperson for the Committee on Education, Libraries, and Recreation and other District stakeholders. Specifically, these stakeholders expressed their concerns regarding the number of open homicide cases within the MPD and whether homicide investigations are consistently thorough and effective throughout the Police Districts/Wards. Additionally, concerns about homicide detectives' experience and education - as well as the quality of coordination with agencies that assist in the gathering and processing of information necessary to solve open homicide cases - were brought to the OIG's attention.

The initial objectives of the review were to compile data on: (1) MPD's response to homicides in all areas of the city; (2) standard operating procedures MPD follows in attempting to solve open homicide cases; and (3) results from other jurisdictions on homicide case closures. Additionally, our objectives included a verification of the physical existence of case files and selected documents and the validation of benchmarking data reported by the MPD.

The audit focuses on data related to homicides that occurred between January 1, 2001, and December 31, 2006. As part of our review, we attempted to identify and describe homicide prevention methods as well as the responsibility of other agencies/offices that play a vital role in gathering and processing homicide evidence and prosecuting offenders.

Certain information, data arrays, and analyses contained in this report are for information and comparison purposes only, which may be useful to MPD, District leaders, and other stakeholders. The data portrays significant variables among the Police Districts/Wards, not only in the number of homicides but also in the closure rates. Overall, homicide closure rates, in general, compare favorably to the national closure rates. This report is not intended to assess the quality of MPD homicide investigations or homicide closure rates in other jurisdictions contacted.

CONCLUSIONS

This report contains four findings that detail the conditions we documented during the audit. The audit details the dates and location of homicides along with various demographic characteristics of the victims and offenders. Further, the audit verified and validated benchmarking data, the existence and completeness of homicide case files, and presented the results of a survey of homicide detectives.

The audit identified that MPD needs to implement recommendations to improve controls to ensure that required documents are obtained and maintained in all homicide case files; ensuring that basic supplies and tools are available to the detectives to perform their job duties; providing training that is necessary to maintain the level of skill and expertise to solve

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homicide cases; and implementing a computer system that is integrated with all of the agencies responsible for providing data analysis of evidence, witnesses, and other pertinent data.

Presentation of Homicide Data

For 2005, the MPD homicide closure rate of 61% compared favorably with the national homicide closure rate of 62%. We obtained and arrayed data for 1,308 homicides (603 closed cases and 705 unsolved/open cases) that occurred between January 1, 2001, and December 31, 2006. This data was provided by MPD on January 20, 2007, and reflects homicides and closures entered into its electronic database, as of that date. Specifically, we obtained and arrayed data on various demographics related to homicide victims in the District and the offenders, such as age, race, and gender. We also arrayed homicide occurrences related to time (month and year) and location (police district and ward). Finally, we obtained economic and education variables, including income, unemployment rates, and school absentee rates in the District and neighboring counties. The data portrays demographic differences in the Police Districts/Wards, not only in the number of homicides but also in the closure rates. Examples of our comparative analysis (see page 28 for details) show that for 2005, the Seventh Police District had the highest number of homicides (64), while the Second Police District had the lowest number (0); the Third Police District had the highest percentage of closed cases (56.5%) while the Fourth Police District had the lowest percentage (21.4%). Regarding unemployment rates, for 2005, Ward 8 had the highest rate (15.4%) while Ward 3 had the lowest rate (1.4%). We did not draw conclusions as to cause and effect of the data, how homicide rates can be reduced, or the quality of a homicide investigation.

Review of Homicide Case Files

The physical count was conducted on December 1, 2006, and covered the entire population (1,287 homicide cases) for the period from January 1, 2001, to November 11, 2006. All 1,287 case files were located.

From the universe of 1,287 homicide case files, we selected a random sample of 156 open case files and tested for the existence of 8 documents in each case file. We found that, in total, 201 documents were missing. Our test results found that for the years, 2001-2006, MPD did not have an effective internal control system to obtain and maintain the following documents in the homicide investigation files: Autopsy Report; Call Automated Dispatch (CAD) Printout; and Mobile Crime Lab (MCL) Report. MPD officials stated that missing documents may not have been obtained and placed in the homicide files for many reasons, including: 1) there was difficulty obtaining these documents from third parties; 2) there was a low priority placed on the document as a resource to solve the homicide; or 3) a copy was maintained in the detective's "working file" but not in the "master file" that we reviewed (although the Violent Crimes Branch (VCB) Captain agreed it should be obtained and maintained there).

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Lastly, our observations, as they relate to the maintenance and storage of homicide case files, found that the cold case file room, which houses approximately 3,800 homicide files, did not have secured access. Unsecured access to the cold case file room could compromise the contents of these homicide files. Additionally, adequate precautions had not been made for electronic retrieval or storage to preserve the contents of the files in case of possible damage from age, fire, or water. The possibility of loss or absence of the entire homicide case file, or any of its contents, through intentional or unintentional means, reduces the likelihood of identifying and following up on all possible leads that may aid in solving the homicide.

Comparison of Homicide Closure Rates for the District of Columbia MPD and Other Cities

Our review of the benchmarking data prepared and reported by MPD found that improvements can be made in the following areas: 1) updating the cities used for comparison on a more frequent basis; and 2) selecting cities based on other available demographic data. MPD officials identified cities for benchmarking comparisons for 2003 - 2005 based on U.S. Census data published in 2000. Additionally, MPD relies primarily on factors such as population density, income, and education, rather than total population and other factors that bear on income (telephone and automobile). Using these other factors, the OIG identified other cities that we believe have better attributes for benchmarking homicide closure rates.

Observations and Conditions Reported in Survey and Interviews

Finally, the results of our survey and interviews of MPD's VCB members revealed areas where opportunities for improvement in operations may exist. These areas include: 1) training; 2) resources (personnel and non-personnel); and 3) improved communication between and among coordinating agencies. Of particular concern was the lack of responses received to our request to complete a brief survey. MPD VCB personnel completed only 11 of the 104 surveys. We also randomly contacted 16 members (15 percent) of the MPD VCB soliciting their opinions as to actions that could be taken to improve homicide closure rates in the District. Only two detectives accepted our offer for an interview. Lastly, 16 of the 104 VCB member surveys mailed to the members' official address of record were returned by the U.S. Postal Service as undeliverable.

A low response rate may indicate that the participants surveyed were not comfortable answering questions, did not take the questionnaire seriously, or may have otherwise been inclined not to participate. Regardless, we believe that such a low response rate is cause for concern, especially in light of the opportunity to provide input that could contribute to improved operations.

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OBJECTIVES

The initial objectives of the review were to compile data on: (1) MPD's response to homicides in all areas of the city; (2) standard operating procedures MPD follows in attempting to solve open homicide cases; and (3) results from other jurisdictions on homicide case closures. Additional objectives included verification of the physical existence of case files, selected documents, and validation of benchmarking data reported by the MPD.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Our review provides data arrays of homicides that occurred between January 1, 2001, and December 31, 2006. We performed audit tests over the physical existence of 1,287 homicide case files and their contents.

We verified and validated MPD's benchmarking results reported for 2001 through 2005. This entailed independently contacting cities MPD used for benchmarking purposes and requesting data on the number of homicides reported and closure rates for the years under review. We compared this data with that maintained by MPD to verify the accuracy of the results reported. Additionally, we analyzed nine cities in an attempt to identify demographics and other comparable data to validate that the cities MPD used were "best comparables."

To obtain information relating to MPD VCB program operations, we interviewed detectives, lieutenants, and the Captain of the VCB. To gain an understanding of the inner-workings of other agencies that play a role in the review and prosecution of a homicide case, we interviewed officials from the following entities and prepared a diagram of the role of each unit. The entities are as follows:

- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
- U.S. Attorney's Office
- Crime Scene Investigation Branch
- Firearms and Tool Mark Examination Section
- Fingerprint Examination Unit
- FBI Forensic Lab

While we did not audit the processes followed at these entities, our primary objective was to show the importance of communication and working relations between and among these entities. We also spoke with other stakeholders who expressed concerns regarding the conditions within the VCB and the timeliness of solving homicide cases.

On November 15, 2006, OIG auditors attended a "Next of Kin" meeting hosted jointly by the MPD's VCB and the United States Attorney's Office (USAO). At the meeting, immediate family members of victims in open homicide cases that occurred prior to 2002 were invited

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to meet with a homicide detective to discuss the status of the investigation and share any information that may be relevant to solving the case.

We sent a survey questionnaire to all members of the VCB to solicit information related to their education, experience, and workload. Additionally, we asked the participants to identify underlying factors that could assist in closing homicide cases more timely. We also solicited their opinions as to the effectiveness of the agencies who work to provide data on evidence, witnesses, and those who prosecute offenders; as well as their opinions as to MPD homicide preventive measures.

We relied on computer-processed data provided to us, which detailed information on homicides occurring during the scope of our review and the classification and demographics for each homicide reported. Although we did not perform a formal reliability assessment of the computer-processed data, we determined that the hard copy documents we reviewed were reasonable and generally agreed with the information contained in the computer-processed data. We did not find errors that would preclude use of the computer-processed data to meet the audit objectives or that would change the conclusions in this report.

This final report contains certain revisions to the draft report that the OIG circulated for comment on May 9, 2007. Below is a summary of these changes.

- The OIG deleted a recommendation originally made to the City Administrator related to identifying a central agency to record and track deaths by cause of death (i.e., homicide, accidental, natural, undetermined, etc.). Comments provided by the Office of the City Administrator included information that affirmed that the Research and Analysis Division of the Department of Health maintained a comprehensive death database using software that tracks specific causes of death for District residents.
- The OIG updated the table on page 36 of the final report to include statistics of the number of homicides closed by arrest and administratively for years 2001 – 2003. Originally, MPD only provided this data for FY's 2004 – 2006.
- The OIG added a reference on page 14 of the final report noting that in a previous audit conducted by the OIG, it was reported that the OIG was unable to locate MPD homicide case files.

In addition, certain factual clarifications provided by MPD are included in the final report.

Our review was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards and included such tests as deemed necessary.

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

We made recommendations to the Chief of Police that we believe are necessary to correct the deficiencies noted in this report. The recommendations, in part, center on:

- Implementing controls to ensure that required documents are obtained and maintained in all homicide case files.
- Ensuring that basic supplies and tools such as cell phones, cars, operable copy machines, are available to detectives to perform their job duties.
- Providing training necessary to maintain the level of skill and expertise to solve homicide cases.
- Implementing a computer system that is integrated with all of the agencies responsible for providing data analysis of evidence, witnesses, and other pertinent data.
- Keeping records of all deaths occurring in the District by category (accidental, suicide, homicide, natural, etc.).
- Maintaining records of homicide cases closed by arrest or administratively and tracking the status of those presented to the grand jury and prosecuted.
- Implementing another means for storage of homicide investigation files (e.g., microfilm).

We received a response to the draft audit report from the Chief of Police on June 15, 2007. In general, MPD's response meets the intent of the recommendations. However, we ask that MPD provide additional information regarding recommendations 3, 6, and 10. The full text of MPD's response is included at Exhibit E.

PRIOR REVIEWS AND REPORTED RESULTS OF HOMICIDE DATA

MPD prepares statistical data on homicides in its annual reports and, since 2003, has published benchmarking results related to homicides and homicide clearances as part of MPD's Key Results Measures, also known as the Mayor's Scorecard. Statistical data on homicides are also annually furnished to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Department of Justice. Additionally, data are contained on MPD's website relating to crime, homicides, and a description of crime prevention methods.

In February 2001, the Council of the District of Columbia issued a report,¹ which concluded that the basic elements of high-quality homicide investigations were lacking at the MPD. The report cited a lack of:

rigorous standards for detective selection, retention, and promotion; extensive and continuous training; detailed standard operating procedures that outline the essential steps in an investigation; regular and thorough case reviews by supervisors experienced in investigations; and an objective performance

¹ KATHY PATTERSON, D.C. COUNCILMEMBER, OVERSIGHT REPORT ON THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT'S HOMICIDE INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICES AND CASE CLOSURE RATE (2001).

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evaluation system that identifies and removes poor performers and identifies and rewards strong performers.²

The report also noted that MPD's homicide data appear to reflect a number of anomalies or unexplained patterns. Additionally, the report found that issues of data collection, recording, and review require much greater attention.³

The leader of the Black Church Initiative issued a report⁴ concluding that the homicide rates could be reduced by creation of comprehensive, conflict resolution centers in the three Regional Operational Commands (ROCs) of the District. These centers would afford young people an opportunity to come in and resolve their conflicts without resorting to lethal force.⁵ Second, the report recommends offering ongoing education and counseling for anger and depression. The final component recommended to reduce the homicide rate is community service which would allow "young participants in the program to contribute to the good of the community after they have successfully resolved their conflicts."⁶

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE MPD

As part of MPD's outreach and communication with the families of homicide victims, the MPD's Family Liaison Specialist Unit conducts, on a quarterly basis, "Next of Kin" meetings for survivors of homicide victims. These meetings, hosted jointly by the MPD and the USAO, are noteworthy for several reasons. At these meetings, MPD officials encourage persons to report any information related to homicide cases to MPD and USAO officials. MPD detectives also meet individually with victims' families to discuss their loved-ones' case, obtain any new leads or information that may aid in solving the crime, provide the case status, and answer any questions the family may have. Additionally, mental health agency representatives, clergy members, and others offer counseling and other related services to the families.

OTHER MATTERS OF INTEREST

While one of the objectives of this audit was to compile data on MPD's response to homicides in all areas of the city; the result of this compilation disclosed wide fluctuations in the occurrences and closures of homicides among the Police Districts/Wards. We discussed these fluctuations with responsible MPD officials. MPD Officials stated that while crime prevention efforts include increased police presence in higher-risk Police District/Wards, police deployment is primarily driven by the response to calls for service in a particular area of the city rather than the history of where crimes/homicides were committed. In regard to

² *Id.* at 1.

³ *Id.* at 3.

⁴ REV. ANTHONY EVANS, PRESIDENT, D.C. BLACK CHURCH INITIATIVE HOMICIDE PROPOSAL TO REDUCE THE MURDER RATE IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

⁵ *Id.* at 31.

⁶ *Id.* at 32.

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the investigation and subsequent closure of a homicide, officials stated that all homicides are assigned and investigated in a consistent manner. Further, MPD officials cited that homicide cases are more often solved in cases where there are credible witnesses and those who are willing to provide statements and testify. Additional factors provided by MPD officials which may impact homicide closure rates include the lack of their own forensic lab and the quality and type of physical evidence found at the scene of a homicide.

The factors provided by MPD officials, may account, in part, for the differences among the Police Districts/Wards in homicides and closure rates. However, because our analysis may heighten concerns about the varying homicide closure rates, we believe that District management may be able to address these concerns by follow-up actions that continually assess and monitor the conditions contributing to the varied homicide closure rates.

INTRODUCTION

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Homicide: The FBI defines a homicide as murder or the willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another. For the purpose of this report, we exclude deaths caused by suicide, accident, or by natural causes.

Open (Active) Cases: Homicide cases in which a suspect has not been arrested or exceptionally cleared⁷ and there are viable leads to pursue.

Cleared Cases: Homicide cases in which a suspect has been arrested or exceptionally cleared, but further investigation is necessary for the arrest or exceptional clearance of additional suspect(s).

Closed (Inactive) Cases: Homicide cases in which all suspects have been arrested or exceptionally cleared.

Cases Closed Administratively: Homicide cases closed for the following reasons:

1. The killing was in self-defense.
2. The suspect is dead.
3. The suspect is imprisoned in another jurisdiction for many years in the future (for example, 30 years).
4. The suspect fled to another country, and there is no treaty between the United States and that country for extradition back to the United States.

Cold Cases: Typically, all cases are worked by the original case detective for a period of up to 3 years. At that time, if all reasonable leads have been exhausted, the case is transferred to the Major Case/Cold Case Unit. However, this is not a hard and fast rule. If the original detective, or his or her replacement, has active leads, the detective may choose to keep the case active until those leads are exhausted before transferring the file(s) to the Major Case Unit.

⁷ Exceptionally cleared refers to homicide cases closed administratively.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

According to MPD’s website, its mission “is to prevent crime and the fear of crime, including terrorism, as we work with our partners to build safe, healthy, and prepared neighborhoods throughout the District of Columbia.”⁸ MPD has reported that serious crime in the District of Columbia has decreased over the last several years and, in fact, D.C.’s crime rate is currently the lowest it has been in over a decade.

In March of 2005, MPD – in conjunction with its law enforcement partners (the USAO, D.C. Office of the Attorney General, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, and the U.S. Marshal’s Service) – described the following five components to its homicide reduction strategy:

- **Suppression:** The strategy commits the law enforcement partners to a quarterly schedule by which we identify a neighborhood, target its violent offenders, assign a federal agency to undertake investigations with the [MPD], and then conduct a “take-down” involving the arrest of numerous violent offenders in that neighborhood.
- **Deterrence:** It adopts a deterrence program that markets the example established by our take-downs of targeted violent groups to deter members of other groups from engaging in similar violence.
- **Intervention:** It expands on a number of violence intervention programs that have proven effective here and in other cities.
- **Investigation:** It takes steps to enhance the capabilities of the MPD to investigate homicides aggressively and effectively.
- **Prosecution:** It aligns the organizational structures of the MPD and U.S Attorney’s Office to enhance its prosecutors’ ability to prosecute homicide cases to conviction.⁹

⁸ [Http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1230,q,537827,mpdcNav_GID,1529,mpdcNav,1.asp](http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1230,q,537827,mpdcNav_GID,1529,mpdcNav,1.asp).

⁹ HOMICIDE REDUCTION STRATEGY FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA 1 (2005).

INTRODUCTION

MPD REPORTING STRUCTURE

The MPD includes more than 4,400 members, approximately 3,800 sworn police officers and more than 600 civilian employees. MPD's website states that the agency "is committed to the same proud ideals and traditions of the department in its earlier years . . . [and that] while serving and protecting the community remains central to the [MPD's] mission, the department is also committed to building safer neighborhoods in partnership with the community."¹⁰

MPD's website further states that:

On May 2, 2004, the Metropolitan Police Department implemented a major restructuring of its Police Service Areas (PSAs), a basic building block of community policing in the District of Columbia. The goal of the restructuring was to ensure better police services for DC neighborhoods by providing greater flexibility in neighborhood patrols and by aligning PSAs more closely with natural neighborhood boundaries. The restructuring plan reduced the number of PSAs from 83 to 46, thus creating new boundaries for all of the PSAs, as well as new boundaries for some police districts.¹¹

To support community policing in the MPD, the District of Columbia is divided into three regions, known as Regional Operations Commands (ROCs), containing a total of seven police districts. Each district is further divided into 5-8 Police Service Areas (PSAs), ROC Central, ROC East, and ROC North, for 46 PSAs citywide. The PSA is the basic building block of community policing in the District. Most uniformed officers are assigned to police patrols in one of the PSAs, and police-community partnerships and problem solving take place in the PSAs as well.

MPD's Violent Crimes Branch/Homicide Division

In December of 2001, the MPD removed its homicide investigators from each of the seven police district stations and re-consolidated them into a centralized Violent Crimes Branch (VCB). The VCB is comprised of a complement of 104 FTEs, headed by a captain and 4 lieutenants. The captain sets policy and, through the lieutenants, provides leadership and direction for the branch. The lieutenants manage sergeants, who in turn, manage a team of six detectives, each assigned homicide cases.

¹⁰ [Http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1230,q,540333,mpdcNav_GID,129,mpdc,Nav,|3145](http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1230,q,540333,mpdcNav_GID,129,mpdc,Nav,|3145).

¹¹ [Http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1239,Q,543336,mpdcNav_GID,1523,.asp](http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1239,Q,543336,mpdcNav_GID,1523,.asp).

INTRODUCTION

Homicide Assignment and Review Process

While each homicide is treated on an individual basis, and at the discretion of the Chief of Police and the VCB captain, many factors can influence the investigation of a homicide. These factors include the circumstances of the homicide and any media or other pressures placed on the homicide. Irrespective of these factors, the VCB captain has repeatedly stated that all homicides are treated with the utmost care and compassion regardless of the victim or offender. VCB Standard Operating Policies and Procedures outline the steps to be followed in the aftermath of a reported homicide. See Appendix I for Initial Response to Reported Homicide – Work Flow Process.

Homicide cases are assigned on a rotating basis. For example, when a homicide occurs on a designated shift, the sergeant assigned to the shift and the detectives reporting to the sergeant are assigned to the homicide. See Appendix II for MPD's VCB Case File Monitoring Summary.

Major Case/Cold Case Unit

The MPD's Major Case/Cold Case Unit is composed of eight detectives. They work closely with crime and intelligence analysts as well as homicide prosecutors from the USAO. Additionally, the Major Case/Cold Case Unit detectives receive assistance as needed from the Special Victims Unit (which handles all child deaths), as well as other specialized units.

Assignment of Unsolved Homicides in the Major Case/Cold Case Unit

MPD had over 3,800 open/unsolved cold cases. When a case is first transferred to the Major Case/Cold Case Unit, it is not assigned to any individual detective or team. Cases are assigned for additional investigation when, during the review process, unresolved leads are identified or new information becomes available.

OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT PRESENCE IN THE DISTRICT

As the nation's capital, the District of Columbia is a unique city having many law enforcement agencies working to prevent, detect, and solve crimes. These agencies include the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U. S. Secret Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, the U.S. Mint Police, and the Pentagon Police Department.

In addition to these federal agencies, police presence on the streets of the District of Columbia include the U.S. Capitol Police, U.S. Park Police, and the Metro Transit Police Department. The following paragraphs briefly describe the missions and objectives of these other policing efforts.

INTRODUCTION

United States Capitol Police Department

The main responsibility of the U.S. Capitol Police Department lies in protecting life and property; preventing, detecting, and investigating criminal acts; and enforcing traffic regulations throughout a large complex of congressional buildings, parks, and thoroughfares. Additionally, the U.S. Capitol Police are responsible for protecting members of Congress, officers of the U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, and their families. During 2006, the U.S. Capitol Police Department consisted of 1,800 sworn officers and 250 civilian personnel.

United States Park Police

The U.S. Park Police supports and furthers the mission and goals of the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service by providing law enforcement to safeguard lives, protect national treasures and symbols of democracy, and preserve the natural and cultural resources. For 2006, the U.S. Park Police in the District of Columbia consisted of 191 assigned officers and 16 security officers.

Metro Transit Police Department

The Metro Transit Police Department provides a variety of law enforcement and public safety services on the Metro rail and Metro bus systems in the Washington metropolitan area. Metro transit police officers have jurisdiction and arrest powers throughout the 1,500 square mile Transit Zone that includes Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia for crimes that occur on or against Metro facilities. The Metro Transit Police Department is the only tri-jurisdictional police agency in the country and serves a population of 3.2 million. For 2006, the Metro Transit Police Department consisted of 423 sworn officers, 106 security special police, and 24 civilian personnel.

COORDINATING OFFICES AND UNITS

In performing their job to prevent and solve homicides, the homicide detectives at the MPD work with various offices and units in the District, including the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, the USAO, the Mobile Crime Lab, the Firearms and Tool Mark Examination Unit, the Fingerprint Examination Unit, and the FBI Forensic Lab.

We interviewed officials from the following agencies to gain an understanding of their respective missions and to show the importance of communication and working relations between and among these agencies. The following paragraphs present a summary of the mission and operating procedures for each of these offices and units.

INTRODUCTION

Role of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

The mission of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) is to investigate and certify all deaths in the District of Columbia that occur by means of violence [injury] and those that occur unexpectedly, without medical attention, in custody, or which pose a threat to the public health.

OCME receives notification of deaths from different sources, including: MPD, hospitals, nursing homes, or other medical provider organizations. Upon receiving the call, a determination is made as to whether an official from OCME will immediately go to the scene of the death or where the body was discovered. An investigative report will be prepared based on information gathered over the phone or at the scene. Investigative reports are used internally by the OCME to make determinations regarding whether to accept or decline a case.

Generally, all cases are accepted unless they are deemed to be out of OCME's jurisdiction. If the case is accepted, an autopsy will be performed. There are two types of autopsies: the external exam and a full autopsy. At the completion of either type, an autopsy report is completed. The OCME must receive a formal request to submit the autopsy reports to the Mayor's office, the homicide unit at the MPD, the victim's family, or insurance companies. See Appendix III for the OCME workflow process.

Role of the U.S. Attorneys' Office

The Homicide Section at the USAO is responsible for the investigation and prosecution of homicides committed in the District of Columbia. Homicide prosecutors are assigned to a particular geographic district, which corresponds to MPD Districts 1 through 7, to maximize the benefit of gathering and utilizing criminal intelligence about a particular area or offender. Additionally, recent efforts of investigators within the USAO have focused on leads obtained in cold cases. See Appendix IV for a flowchart of the prosecution process.

Role of the Crime Scene Investigation Branch

The Mobile Crime Lab (MCL) responds to the scene of field investigations to perform the technical investigation of criminal and non-criminal scenes related to physical evidence collection, evaluation, and utilization for analysis and testing by other units (the fingerprint unit, the firearms and tool marks examination unit, and the FBI forensic lab). Additionally, MCL personnel may obtain non-testimonial evidence, including hairs, fibers, saliva, blood, and other body fluids from victims and suspects. The MCL prepares a report describing the crime scene and evidence collected. See Appendix V for a flowchart of the process followed by the MCL in response to a homicide.

INTRODUCTION

Role of the Firearms and Tool Mark Examination Section

The mission of the Firearms and Tool Mark Examination Section (FES) is to provide forensic support to the members of MPD and other law enforcement agencies by performing chemical, functional, and microscopic analysis on tools, tools marks, firearms, and firearm-related evidence. The FES receives the evidence from the MCL and performs the following crime case analysis:

- Firearm-to-bullet
- Firearm-to-cartridge case
- Bullet-to-bullet
- Cartridge case-to-cartridge case

The FES has six examiners who perform the crime case analysis and prepare reports with conclusions. See Appendix VI for a flowchart the role of the FES with regard to processing evidence related to a homicide.

Role of the Fingerprint Examination Unit

The fingerprint evidence collected by the MCL is sent to the Fingerprint Examination Unit for testing and analysis. Once the analysis is complete, an examination report is prepared and sent to the MCL and the Homicide Unit at the MPD. See Appendix VII for a flowchart of the process followed by the Fingerprint Examination Unit.

Role of the FBI Forensic Lab

The investigation and prosecution of crimes require, in most cases, the collection, preservation, and forensic analysis of evidence. Forensic analysis of evidence is often crucial to determinations of guilt or innocence. The FBI Laboratory Division and the Investigative Technology Division are available to state, county, and municipal law enforcement agencies in the United States. All forensic services, including expert witness testimony, is rendered free of cost. The FBI Forensic Lab performs different examinations on the evidence. See Appendix VIII for a flowchart of the process followed by the FBI Forensic Lab once a request for fingerprint analysis is received related to a homicide and a list of the examinations performed.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

SECTION 1: PRESENTATION OF HOMICIDE DATA

SYNOPSIS

For 2005, the homicide closure rate of 61% compared favorably with the national homicide closure rate of 62%. We obtained and arrayed data for 1,308 homicides (603 closed cases and 705 unsolved/open cases) that occurred between January 1, 2001, and December 31, 2006. This data was provided by MPD on January 20, 2007, and reflects homicides and closures entered into its electronic database, as of that date. Specifically, we obtained and arrayed data on various demographics related to homicide victims in the District and the offenders, such as age, race, and gender. We also arrayed homicide occurrences related to time (month and year) and location (police district and ward). Finally, we obtained economic and education variables to include income, unemployment rates, and school absentee rates in the District and neighboring counties. The data portrays significant variables among the Police Districts/Wards, not only in the number of homicides but also in the closure rates. The data are presented for informational purposes and for use by District leaders and stakeholders in the decision-making process, relative to District governance. We did not draw conclusions as to cause and effect of the data, how homicide rates can be reduced, or the quality of a homicide investigation.

AUDIT RESULTS

The following subsections provide details of our audit concerning 1,308 homicides (603 closed cases and 705 unsolved/open cases) that occurred between January 1, 2001, and December 31, 2006. Prior to the data arrays, we have included overall homicide data by police district and ward along with MPD's area of responsibility (policing jurisdictions), MPD's VCB staffing, and MPD's homicide closure rate accomplishments.

Homicide Statistics by Police District

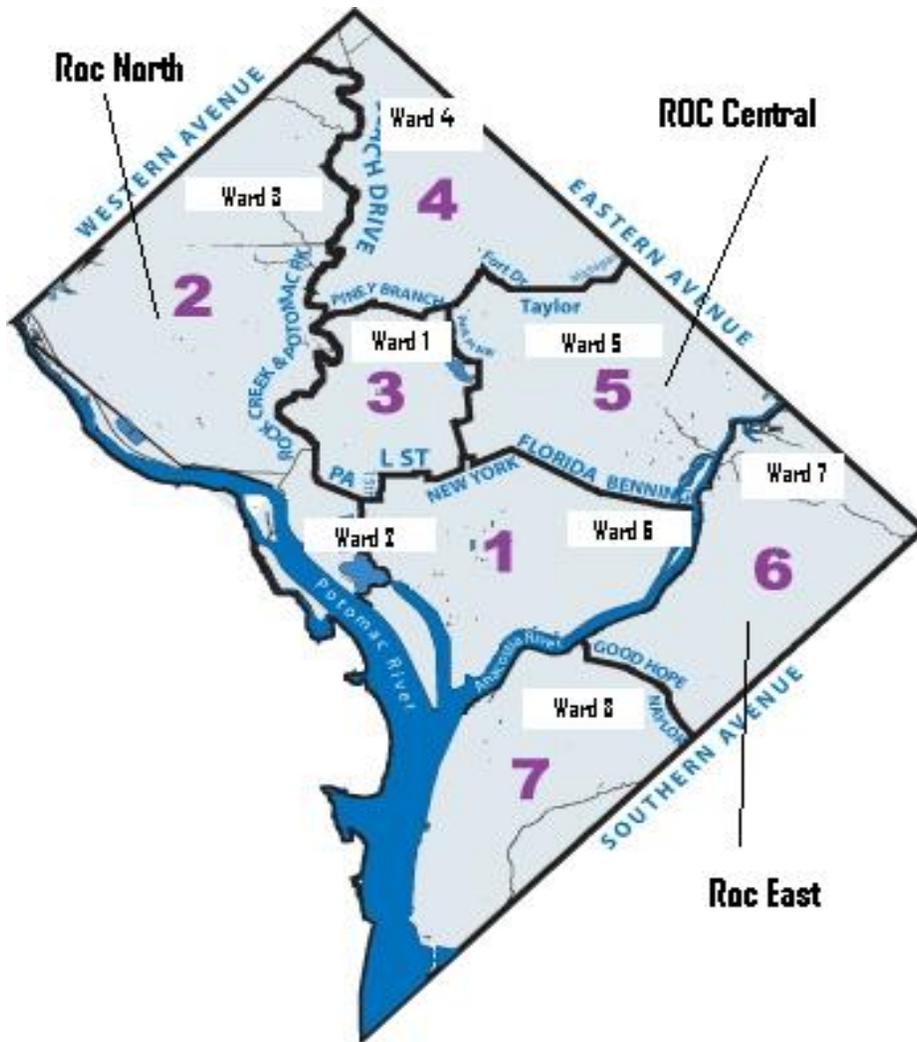
For the last 6 years, the homicide numbers generally decreased from 1 year to another. The highest number was in year 2002 (262 cases), and the lowest number was in year 2006 (169 cases).

Years	First District	Second District	Third District	Fourth District	Fifth District	Sixth District	Seventh District	Citywide
2001	9	0	30	29	55	51	61	235
2002	22	3	17	41	56	65	58	262
2003	16	2	16	31	53	66	64	248
2004	19	3	13	17	38	54	54	198
2005	21	0	23	14	36	38	64	196
2006	20	3	25	9	26	42	44	169
Total	107	11	124	141	264	316	345	1,308

RESULTS OF AUDIT

District of Columbia Boundaries

To support community policing in the MPD, the District of Columbia is divided into three regions, known as Regional Operations Commands (ROCs), containing a total of seven police districts. Each district is further divided into 5-8 Police Service Areas (PSAs), ROC Central, ROC East, and ROC North, for a total of 46 PSAs citywide. The PSA is the basic building block of community policing in the District. Most uniformed officers are assigned to police patrols in one of the PSAs. Further, police-community partnerships and problem solving take place in the PSAs.



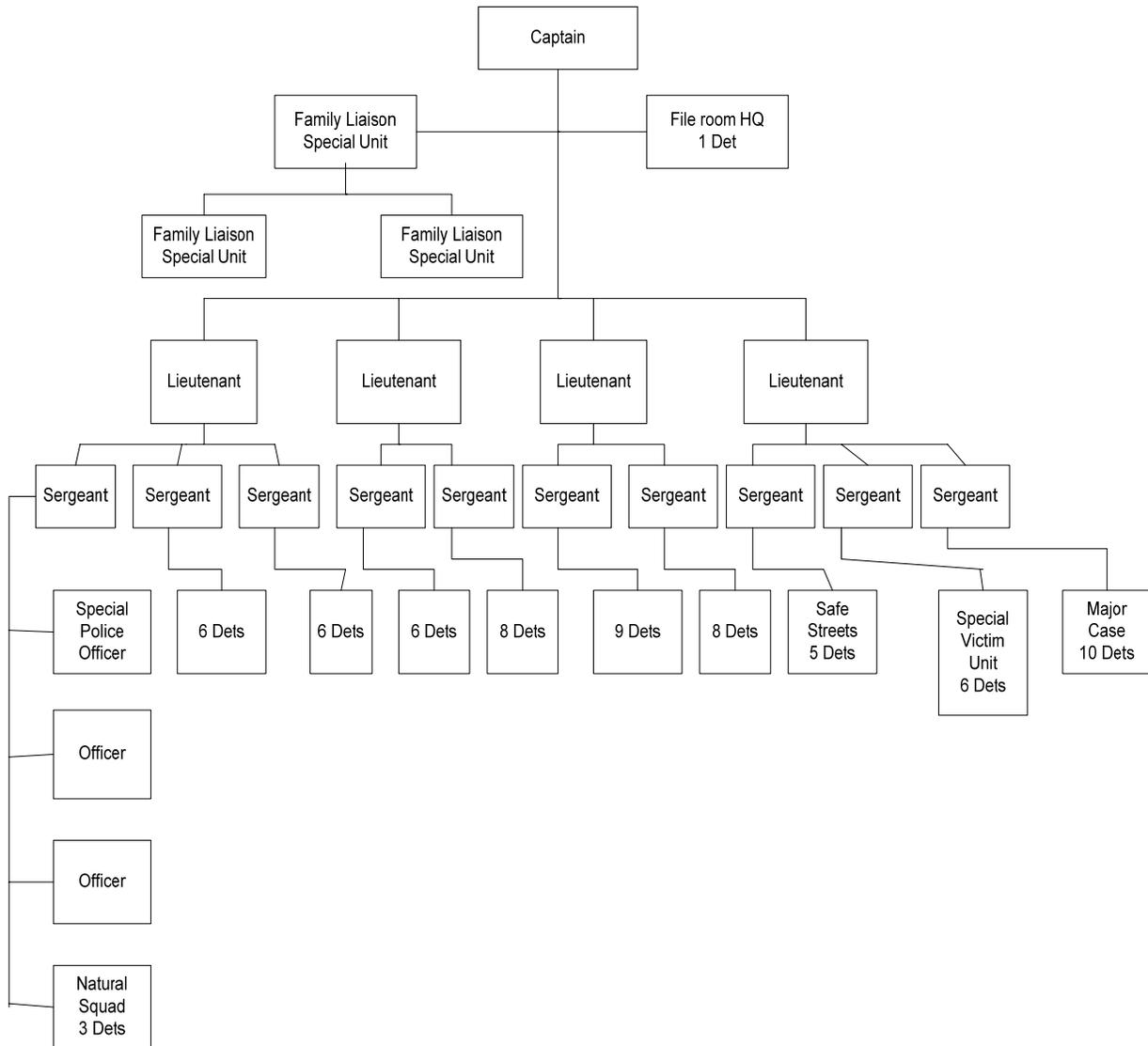
(Source: MPD, BUILDING A SAFER D.C., METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT STATISTICAL REPORT 2001-2005 19 (2006).)

RESULTS OF AUDIT

MPD VCB Reporting Structure

The VCB is comprised of a staff complement of 104; 64 of which are detectives assigned to solve homicide cases. It is headed by a captain and 4 lieutenants. The captain sets policy and, through the lieutenants, provides leadership and direction for the branch. The lieutenants manage sergeants, who in turn, manage a team of detectives each assigned homicide cases.

***VCB Organizational Chart
 As of December 2006***



RESULTS OF AUDIT

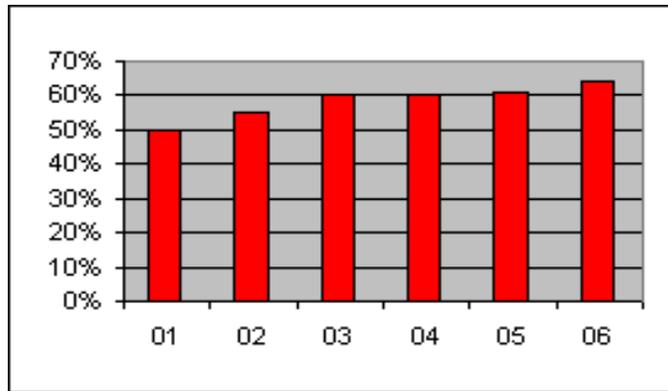
MPD Homicide Closure Statistics

For 2005, the MPD homicide closure rate of 61% compared favorably with the national homicide closure rate of 62%. The homicide closure rate is calculated using the FBI formula as follows.

$$\text{Homicide closure rate} = \frac{\text{Number of homicides cleared in a calendar year}^{12}}{\text{Number of homicides that occurred during the same year}}$$

Homicide Closure Rate (2001-2006)

Years	Closure Rate
2001	50%
2002	55.30%
2003	60.30%
2004	60.60%
2005	61%
2006	64%



¹² The number of homicides cleared in a calendar year (the numerator) is comprised of all homicides closed that occurred in the current and prior years. Additionally, within the FBI Uniform Crime Report, law enforcement agencies can clear offenses by arrest or by exceptional means. See www.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/offenses/clearances.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

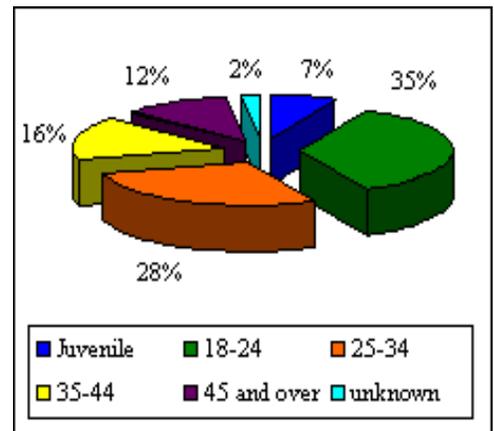
DATA ARRAYS

We arrayed various demographics (age, race, gender) related to homicide victims and offenders in the District. We also arrayed homicide occurrences related to time (month and year) and location (police District and Ward). Finally, we obtained economic and social demographics to include income, unemployment rates, and school absentee rates in the District and neighboring counties.

Age of the Victims

The homicide data show that for the years 2001-2006, 18-24 year olds were most at risk (35%) of becoming victims of homicide. The next largest group was 25-34 year-olds (28%).

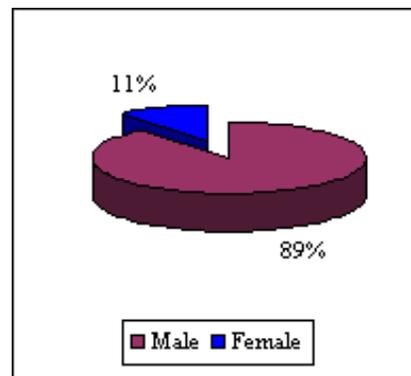
Years	Juvenile	18-24	25-34	35-44	45 and over	Unknown	Total
2001	10	83	68	35	24	15	235
2002	18	102	72	38	30	2	262
2003	13	98	65	39	31	2	248
2004	24	63	47	32	29	3	198
2005	11	69	59	30	23	4	196
2006	15	52	52	35	15	--	169
Total	91	467	363	209	152	26	1308



Gender of the Victims

For the years 2001-2006, there were more males (89%) killed in the District than females (11%).

Years	Male	Female	Total
2001	208	27	235
2002	225	37	262
2003	228	20	248
2004	175	23	198
2005	175	21	196
2006	156	13	169
Total	1167	141	1308

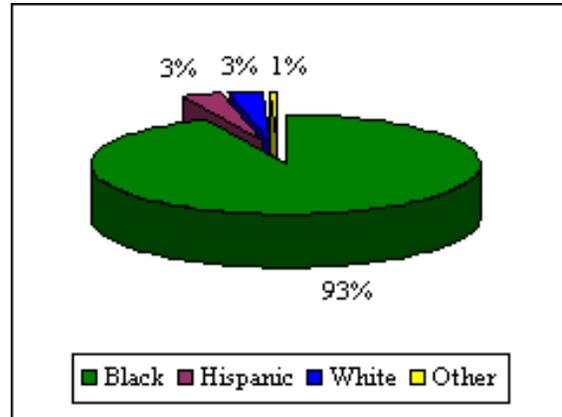


RESULTS OF AUDIT

Race of the Victims

More than 9 out of 10 homicide victims (93%) during the last 6 years were black; 3% of victims were Hispanic; 3% were white; and the remaining 1% included other minorities.

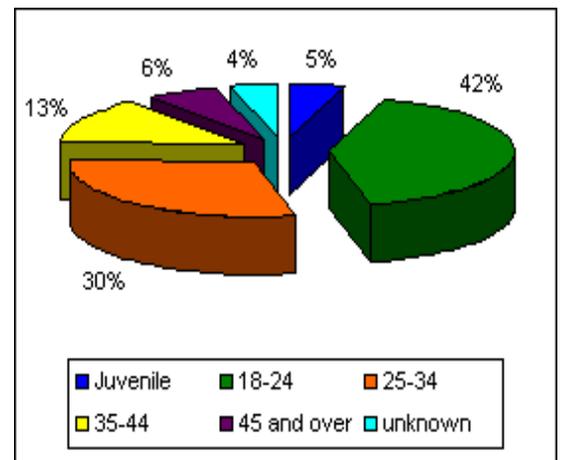
Years	Black	Hispanic	White	Other	Total
2001	214	13	7	1	235
2002	242	10	8	2	262
2003	230	10	6	2	248
2004	190	2	6	---	198
2005	184	4	6	2	196
2006	160	4	4	1	169
Total	1220	43	37	8	1308



Age of the Offenders

For the homicides committed between 2001 and 2006, 42% of known offenders were between 18 and 24 years of age. Approximately 30% of known offenders were between 25 and 34 years of age.

Years	Juvenile	18-24	25-34	35-44	45 and over	Unknown	Total
2001	2	50	31	15	6	8	112
2002	6	73	40	14	7	4	144
2003	5	39	36	17	9	5	111
2004	8	33	33	15	5	5	99
2005	3	30	24	14	6	3	80
2006	5	25	15	6	6	--	57
Total	29	250	179	81	39	25	603

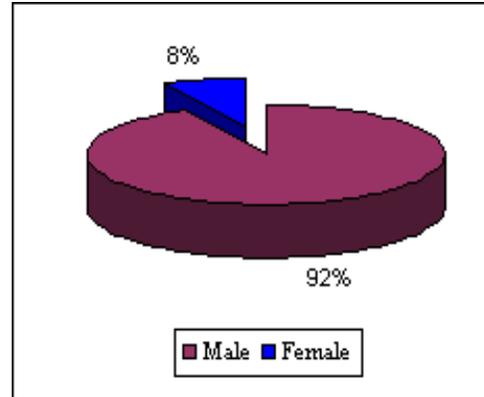


RESULTS OF AUDIT

Gender of the Offenders

An overwhelming majority of known homicide offenders were male (92%). Only 8% of offenders were female.

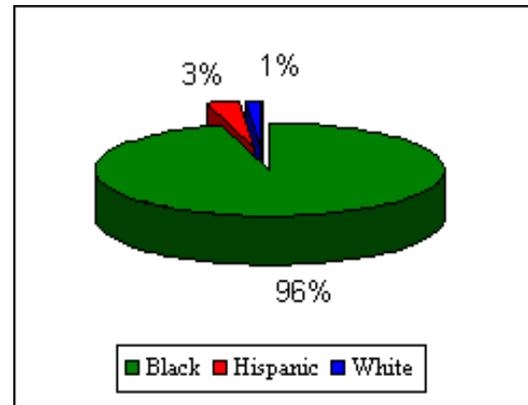
Years	Male	Female	Total
2001	100	12	112
2002	140	4	144
2003	102	9	111
2004	89	10	99
2005	74	6	80
2006	52	5	57
Total	557	46	603



Race of the Offenders

The majority of known homicide offenders for the period 2001-2006 were black (96%). Hispanic offenders accounted for 3% of known offenders, and whites accounted for 1%.

Years	Black	Hispanic	White	Other	Total
2001	107	1	3	1	112
2002	135	7	2	--	144
2003	103	6	1	1	111
2004	98	--	1	--	99
2005	76	3	1	--	80
2006	56	--	1	--	57
Total	575	17	9	2	603



RESULTS OF AUDIT

Homicide Crime by Month

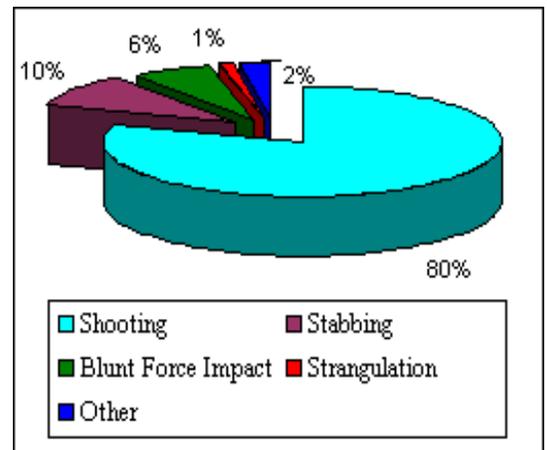
Generally, homicide crimes increased in the second half of the year (July through December) and peaked during the months of July, October, and November.

Years	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
2001	17	19	14	11	9	18	20	20	27	32	26	22	235
2002	16	16	22	13	24	18	33	23	16	30	31	20	262
2003	17	18	21	28	16	22	26	25	14	21	17	23	248
2004	23	10	13	18	16	11	20	18	22	16	16	15	198
2005	14	7	23	13	9	21	20	20	18	14	20	17	196
2006	15	14	10	8	15	19	24	13	13	13	11	14	169
Total	102	84	103	91	89	109	143	119	110	126	121	111	1,308

Homicide Methods

Over the last 6 years, 80% of homicides were committed by shooting and 10% by stabbing.

Years	Shooting	Stabbing	Blunt Force Impact	Strangulation	Other	Total
2001	183	26	13	2	11	235
2002	207	27	14	3	11	262
2003	199	30	12	3	4	248
2004	162	17	15	1	3	198
2005	161	12	15	5	3	196
2006	138	17	12	---	2	169
Total	1050	129	81	14	34	1308

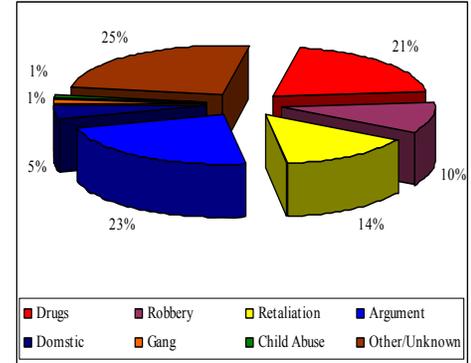


RESULTS OF AUDIT

Homicide Motives

Over the last 6 years, the motive for 25% of homicides were unknown and 23% resulted from an argument. Drug-related homicides reached their highest number in 2003 (63 cases), but decreased in 2006 (21 cases).

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Drug	45	91	63	34	16	21	270
Robbery	19	22	29	21	20	20	131
Retaliation	29	26	29	39	36	27	186
Argument	42	49	63	51	56	39	300
Domestic	8	16	10	9	15	3	61
Gang	1	8	4	1	3	0	17
Child Abuse	1	3	1	4	3	2	14
Other/Unknown	90	47	49	39	47	57	329
Total	235	262	248	198	196	169	1308



Homicide Cases: Closed/Open

For the years 2001-2006, there were 603 closed cases and 705 open cases. In the following table, we have identified the number of homicide cases closed in the year in which the homicide occurred, regardless of the year in which it was solved. For instance, a homicide occurs in 2004, and it was solved in 2006. The case would be included in the total closed cases for 2004, not in the total for 2006, because it is related to the 2004 homicide.

Years	Closed Cases						Open Cases	
	10 days or less	11-31 days	32 days to less than 6 months	6 months to one year	More than one year	Total closed cases	Less than 3 year	3 years or more (cold cases)
2001	45	11	18	18	20	112	---	123
2002	46	16	42	19	21	144	--	118
2003	34	18	39	9	11	111	---	137
2004	42	21	18	16	2	99	99	----
2005	33	4	32	10	1	80	116	----
2006	29	6	19	3	---	57	112	----
Total	229	76	168	75	55	603	327	378

Numbers reported in the above table were provided by MPD. Numbers are presented differently from those calculated by MPD in accordance with Uniform Crime Reporting requirements set by the Department of Justice.

Of the closed cases, nearly 38% were closed within 10 days or less from the date of the crime, and 28% were closed within 32 days to less than 6 months from the date of the crime. Of the open cases, there are 378 cold cases (54%) and 327 current open cases (46%).

RESULTS OF AUDIT

Homicide Cases: Closed/Open by Police District

For the years 2001-2006, the Sixth District had the highest number of open cases (194), and the Seventh District had the second highest number of open cases (172). For closed cases, the Seventh District has the highest number (173), and the Sixth District had the second highest number with 122 closed cases.

Years	First District		Second District		Third District		Fourth District		Fifth District		Sixth District		Seventh District		Total
	Closed	Open	Closed	Open	Closed	Open	Closed	Open	Closed	Open	Closed	Open	Closed	Open	
2001	5	4	--	--	16	14	15	14	22	33	25	26	29	32	235
2002	14	8	2	1	11	6	24	17	27	29	31	34	35	23	262
2003	9	7	1	1	11	5	12	19	23	30	22	44	33	31	248
2004	16	3	3	--	6	7	11	6	15	23	18	36	30	24	198
2005	11	10	--	--	13	10	3	11	12	24	16	22	25	39	196
2006	11	9	2	1	6	19	1	8	6	20	10	32	21	23	169
Total	66	41	8	3	63	61	66	75	105	159	122	194	173	172	1308

Percentage of Closed Homicide Cases by Police District

The percentage of closed homicide cases by police district is calculated by dividing the number of closed cases in 1 year for a police district by the total number of homicide cases occurring in the same year. The Second District had the highest average percentage of closed cases (72.90%). Both the Fifth and Sixth Districts had the lowest average percentage of closed cases (38%).

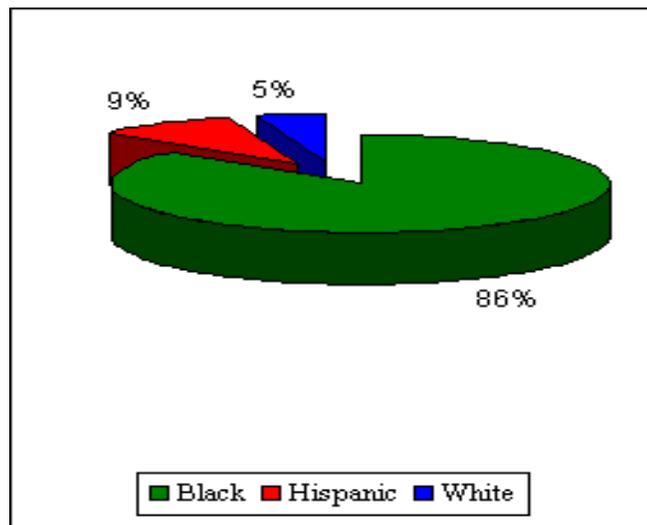
Year	First District	Second District	Third District	Fourth District	Fifth District	Sixth District	Seventh District
2001	55.50%	--	53.30%	51.70%	40.00%	49.00%	47.50%
2002	63.60%	66.60%	64.70%	58.50%	48.20%	47.60%	60.30%
2003	56.30%	50.00%	68.70%	38.70%	43.30%	33.30%	51.50%
2004	54.20%	100%	46.10%	64.70%	39.40%	33.30%	55.50%
2005	52.30%	--	56.50%	21.40%	33.30%	42.10%	39.00%
2006	55.00%	75.00%	21.00%	11.11%	23.00%	23.00%	47.70%
Average	56.15%	72.90%	51.68%	41.02%	38.00%	38.00%	50.25%

RESULTS OF AUDIT

Homicide Cases by Law Enforcement Personnel

For the years 2001-2006, there were 22 homicide cases involving law enforcement personnel (killed in the line of duty). The majority of the victims were black (86%) and male (91%). Nearly one-third of the cases occurred in the Seventh District. These cases are not tracked by the VCB. They are investigated by MPD's Force Investigation Team under the direction of the Office of Personal Responsibility.

Years	# of cases	Age		Gender		Race				PSA "District"						
		Less than 40	40 and over	Male	Female	Black	Hispanic	White	Other	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh
2001	3	3	--	3	--	2	1	-	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	2
2002	4	3	1	3	1	3	1	-	--	1	--	3	--	--	1	--
2003	5	5	--	4	1	5	-	-	--	--	--	1	--	1	2	1
2004	2	2	--	2	--	1	-	1	--	2	--	--	--	--	--	--
2005	6	4	2	6	--	6	-	-	--	1	--	--	--	1	--	4
2006	2	1	1	2	--	2	-	-	--	--	--	--	1	1	--	--
Total	22	18	4	20	2	19	2	1	--	4	--	4	2	3	3	7



RESULTS OF AUDIT

ECONOMIC AND EDUCATION VARIABLES

The following subsections provide data on unemployment rates and education levels in the District. Additionally, we have included an analysis of high school absentee rates for the District and neighboring counties.

Unemployment

As shown in the table below, for the years 2001 – 2005, the District of Columbia had higher unemployment rates than the average nationwide rates. This data was obtained from the US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service and is not currently available for 2006.

	Unemployment Rates				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
District of Columbia	6.3%	6.7%	7%	7.5%	6.5%
USA	4.7%	5.8%	6%	5.5%	5.1%

The following table presents the unemployment rates by ward for the years 2001-2005. This data was obtained from the Labor Market Trends, Department of Employment Services, D.C. and is not currently available for 2006. As previously shown, the wards that had the highest homicide numbers (Wards 7 and 8), also had the highest unemployment rates.

Years	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	Ward 7	Ward 8	Citywide
2001	4.7%	2.9%	1.4%	4.3%	8.3%	6.5%	9.2%	15.4%	6.3%
2002	5.6%	3.4%	1.7%	5.2%	9.9%	7.8%	10.9%	18.0%	6.7%
2003	5.4%	3.3%	1.6%	5.0%	9.5%	7.5%	10.6%	17.4%	7%
2004	7.3%	4.5%	2.2%	6.8%	12.7%	10%	14%	22.5%	7.5%
2005	4.7%	2.9%	1.4%	4.3%	8.3%	6.5%	9.2%	15.4%	6.5%

RESULTS OF AUDIT

Education

The following table presents information for 2004 about the percentage of persons 25 years or older that have a college degree and the percentage of population below the poverty level. The information was obtained from a report entitled: Establishing a Baseline Report 2004, issued by the State of Education, DC. This data is not available other years.

Ward	Percentage of persons 25 years and over who have a college degree	Percentage of population below poverty level
1	39%	22%
2	64%	19%
3	79%	7%
4	33%	12%
5	21%	20%
6	44%	21%
7	13%	25%
8	8%	36%

School Absentee Rate

The following table presents the public high school daily absentee rates and the homicide numbers for the District and selected counties for the years 2003-2005. This data was obtained from the county's and was not available for 2006.

Years	District of Columbia		Prince George's County		Baltimore City		Montgomery County		Fairfax County	
	Absent %*	Homicide Number	Absent %	Homicide Number	Absent %	Homicide Number	Absent %	Homicide Number	Absent %*	Homicide number
2003	12.11%	248	9%	118	19.6%	270	8%	21	4%	9
2004	13.14%	198	10.5%	134	20.1%	276	4.9%	18	4%	9
2005	12.8%	196	10.2%	152	17.7%	269	4.8%	19	4%	20

* The percentage is estimated from the total absentees in the entire public school district.

Converting the percentages shown in the table above for the District, every day during academic years 2003 – 2005, there were about 2,000 students absent from school. We were unable to obtain information on whether student absences were excused or unexcused. Comparing the absenteeism rate to the homicide rate shows an apparent correlation in the relationship of jurisdictions with high absenteeism to homicides and vice versa.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

COMPARATIVE ANALYSES OF VARIOUS INTRA-DISTRICT STATISTICS

The following table shows for 2001 – 2005, the range (from highest to lowest), of the number of homicides, number of open cases, and percentage of closed cases for each Police District. We have also shown employment, education, and poverty level data by Ward.

Years	No. of Homicide Range		Range of Open Cases		Range of Percentage of Closed Cases		Range of Unemployment Rate	
	The highest	The lowest	The highest	The lowest	The highest	The lowest	The highest	The lowest
2001	The Seventh District (61)	The Second District (0)	The Fifth District (33)	The Second District (*)	The First District (55.5%)	The Fifth District (40%)	Ward 8 (15.4%)	Ward 3 (1.4%)
2002	The Sixth District (65)	The Second District (3)	The Sixth District (34)	The Second District (1)	The Second District (66.6%)	The Sixth District (47.6%)	Ward 8 (18%)	Ward 3 (1.7%)
2003	The Sixth District (66)	The Second District (2)	The Sixth District (44)	The Second District (1)	The Third District (68.7%)	The Sixth District (33.3%)	Ward 8 (17.4%)	Ward 3 (1.6%)
2004	The Seventh and the Sixth Districts (54)	The Second District (3)	The Sixth District (36)	The Second District (0)	The Second District (100%)	The Sixth District (33.3%)	Ward 8 (22.5%)	Ward 3 (2.2%)
2005	The Seventh District (64)	The Second District (0)	The Seventh District (39)	The Second District (*)	The Third District (56.5%)	The Fourth District (21.4%)	Ward 8 (15.4%)	Ward 3 (1.4%)

As shown in the table, for 2005, the Seventh Police District had the highest number of homicides (64), while the Second Police District had the lowest number (0); the Third Police District had the highest percentage of closed cases (56.5%) while the Fourth Police District had the lowest percentage (21.4%). Regarding unemployment rates, for 2005, Ward 8 had the highest rate (15.4%) while Ward 3 had the lowest rate (1.4%).

* For 2001 and 2005, there were no homicides in the Second Police District. Therefore, no cases would be reported as open.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

The following table presents a comparative analysis for economic and education factors for 2004.

Percentage of persons 25 years and over who have a college degree		Percentage of population below poverty level	
The Highest	The Lowest	The Highest	The Lowest
Ward 3 (79%)	Ward 8 (8%)	Ward 8 (36%)	Ward 3 (7%)

Closure Rate Variables

We did not draw conclusions in our audit as to cause and effect of the data, how homicide rates can be reduced, or the quality of homicide investigations. Further, many factors contribute to the clearance of a homicide¹³. Such factors include the following:

- The lapse between the time when the homicide occurs and when police/detectives arrive at the scene.
- The time it takes for the first officer to arrive on the scene and subsequently to notify the homicide unit, the MCL, and the OCME.
- The ability of the first officer on the scene to secure the area and attempt to locate witnesses.
- The number of detectives assigned to the case.
- The ability of the detectives to follow up on all witness information obtained.
- Whether an eyewitness observed the homicide and the willingness of witnesses to cooperate.
- Whether a weapon or other key evidence is found at the crime scene.
- Whether the homicide was a random killing, drug-related, or the result of retaliation.
- Caseloads of detectives assigned.
- Linkage of traceable property such as credit cards, to the homicide.
- Training and experience of detectives.

We discussed these fluctuations with responsible MPD officials. MPD Officials stated that while crime prevention efforts include increased police presence in higher-risk Police District/Wards, police patrol deployment is based on various factors. These are: 1) homicides, 2) other violent crimes, 3) property crimes; 4) priority calls for service; and 5) other calls for service. In regard to the investigation and subsequent closure of a homicide, officials stated that all homicides are assigned and investigated in a consistent manner. Further, MPD officials cited that homicide cases are more often solved in cases where there are credible witnesses and those that are willing to provide statements and testify. Additional factors provided by MPD officials which may impact homicide closure rates include the lack of their own forensic lab and the quality and type of physical evidence found at the scene of a homicide.

¹³ Charles Wellford and James Cronin, "Clearing up Homicide Clearance Rates," National Institute of Justice Journal, April 2000.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

The factors provided by MPD officials, may account, in part, for the differences among the Police Districts/Wards in homicides and closure rates. However, because our analysis may heighten concerns about the varying homicide closure rates, we believe that District management may be able to address these concerns by follow-up actions that continually assess and monitor the conditions contributing to the varied homicide closure rates.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

SECTION 2: CASE FILE EXISTENCE AND DOCUMENTATION

SYNOPSIS

We performed audit tests over the physical existence of homicide case files and their contents. With regard to the physical existence of homicide case files, we were able to locate all of the 1,287 case files. From the universe of 1,287 homicide case files, we selected a random sample of 156 open cases and tested for the existence of 8 documents in each case file. We found that 201 documents were missing. Our test results found that for the years, 2001-2006, MPD did not have an effective internal control system to obtain and keep the following documents in the homicide investigation files: Autopsy Report; CAD Printout; and MCL Report.

MPD officials stated that the missing documents may not have been obtained and placed in the homicide files for many reasons: 1) there was difficulty in obtaining these documents from third parties; 2) a low priority was placed on the document as a resource to solve the homicide; or 3) a copy was maintained in the detective's "working file" but not in the "master file" that we reviewed (although the VCB captain agreed it should be obtained and maintained there).

Lastly, we found that the cold case file room did not have secured access, which could compromise the contents of the homicide files. Additionally, no precautions had been made for electronic retrieval or storage to preserve the contents of the files in case of possible damage from age, fire, or water. The possibility of loss or absence of the entire homicide case file, or any of its contents, through intentional or unintentional means, reduces the likelihood of identifying and following up on all possible leads that may aid in solving the homicide.

DETAILS

We performed audit tests over the physical existence of homicide case files and their contents. We were able to locate all of the 1,287 case files. We did note that 15 (8 closed and 7 open) were not readily available due to ongoing moving and storage of cold case files or those assigned out to detectives. In a previous audit of Overtime at the MPD,¹⁴ the OIG reported that case files were unable to be located.

¹⁴ *Audit of Overtime within the Metropolitan Police Department* (OIG No. 01-2-17FA), issued March 20, 2002.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

Test Results - Homicide Case File Identification

The purpose of the physical count of the homicide investigation files was to test for the existence of these files. The physical count was conducted on December 1, 2006, and covered the entire population (1,287 homicide cases) for the period from January 1, 2001, to November 11, 2006.

The following files were not readily available.

Year	#	HO #	Date Homicide Occurred	Case Status
2001	1	01-423	06/09/01	Closed
	2	01-535	06/10/01	Closed
	3	01-618	08/16/01	Open
	4	01-655	09/01/01	Closed
	5	01-801	10/14/01	Open
	6	01-963	12/14/01	Open
2002	7	02-491	09/18/02	Open
2003	8	03-136	03/24/03	Open
	9	03-270	05/10/03	Closed
	10	03-310	06/19/03	Open
	11	03-431	07/16/03	closed
	12	03-465	08/02/03	Closed
	13	03-545	09/21/03	Closed
	14	03-637	07/06/03	Open
	15	03-650	11/22/03	Closed

On December 2, 2006, we were notified that the files were located and could be viewed at the MPD Cold Case File Storage Room. We verified these files on December 7, 2006. No exceptions were noted. However, we did note weakness with regard to the storage and maintenance of the files, as discussed below.

Test Results - Homicide Case File Content

From the universe of 1,287 homicide case files, we selected a random sample of 156 open case files. We tested for the physical existence of eight documents in each of the 156 case files. We did not assess the quality or completeness of these documents.

We selected documents based on those required by MPD standard operating procedures, best practices from other law enforcement agencies, and those that the detectives and the VCB captain agreed should be maintained in every case file. (See Exhibit B for the title and a description of these documents.)

RESULTS OF AUDIT

We found, in total, 201 documents that were missing. Of particular note, we found that 55 case files did not contain MCL Reports or Autopsy Reports. Additionally, 75 files did not contain a Call Automated Dispatch (CAD) printout. A CAD report identifies the 911 and other calls received relating to the homicide and is used to generate leads and potential witnesses. Without pertinent documents available to the detectives, the likelihood of identifying and following up on all possible leads may be diminished and may reduce the solvability of the homicide.

The following table identifies the number of missing documents in the sample tested.

Years	Missing Documents							
	Document 1 PD 120 Death Report	Document 2 Autopsy Report	Document 3 WALES/III of Victim	Document 4 Initial Invest. Report	Document 5 PD251 Incident Report	Document 6 PD252 Supp. Report	Document 7 CAD Printout	Document 8 MCL Report
2001	0	19	1	0	0	0	19	15
2002	2	5	1	0	0	0	9	4
2003	2	13	2	0	1	1	9	14
2004	1	8	1	0	0	0	15	9
2005	0	2	1	0	0	0	12	6
2006	1	8	1	1	0	0	11	7
Total	6	55	7	1	1	1	75	55

Because we were able to statistically select the case files for review, we were able to make assumptions on the effectiveness of MPD's internal control system. Our test results found that for all years (2001-2006), MPD did not have an effective internal control system to obtain and keep the following documents in the homicide investigation files: Autopsy Report; CAD Printout; and MCL Report. See Exhibit C for the full results of our statistical sample evaluation.

Homicide Case File and Storage Observations

Homicide case files are maintained at two locations: 1) current case files (those less than 3 years old) are maintained at MPD's VCB Branch office located at 3244 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E.; and 2) cold case files are maintained at MPD headquarters at 300 Indiana Avenue, N.W. Current case files are maintained in a locked storage room. Access to this file room is available to the VCB captain and the lieutenants. We observed that files are maintained numerically and logged out on a sign-out sheet when being reviewed by a detective or other VCB member. With regard to the cold case file room, we found that the room did not have secured access; files were contained on open shelves (many still in boxes

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and in transition from other locations); the access database system used to record the location of the file was not always accurate or current; and select information from many files had been separated by consultants and stored separately with no reference or mechanism to readily tie the data to the original file. Further, a senior detective has been assigned to manage the cold case file room. In this capacity, this person has designed a basic system to account for homicide case files and is responsible for the upkeep of all homicide records.

In regard to arrangements at either location for electronic retrieval or storage to preserve the contents of the files in case of loss or damage due to age, fire, water, or other causes, we were told that beginning in the mid-1990's MPD began using the WACIIS case management system. This system was the beginning of the electronic storage of case file information, as it allowed detectives to enter case data and reports into a server. While a beginning, this did not solve the entire problem. Cases files created pre,-and even post-WACIIS, contain vast amounts of information on paper. One of the purposes of the Violent Crime Case Review Project is to review these old cases, summarize the information, and enter it into both WACIIS and ViCAP.

We believe the actions taken by MPD over the past several years are necessary first steps toward a fully functioning disaster recovery system. However, these actions should be expedited to prevent future delay. We have included recommendations to address this area.

Homicide Case Status Determinations

Each year in the District of Columbia, more than 5,000 persons die. In an attempt to ensure that we had identified and accounted for all the homicide cases, we attempted to reconcile the number of deaths occurring in the District to records as to the cause of death (i.e., homicide, accidental, natural, undetermined, etc.). We found that the Office on Vital Records maintained data representing the number of deaths in the District. Additionally, we found that the Research and Analysis Division of the Department of Health (DOH) maintains a comprehensive death database using software that tracks specific cause of death. The Research and Analysis Division, using information filed with the Vital Records Division, produces statistical analyses and reports on causes of death. However, this data only includes deaths of District residents only. The data reported by MPD includes all deaths, regardless of the victims residence. Therefore, we could not identify an independent source to validate that MPD has properly identified and recorded its homicide numbers.

Homicide Closed Case Determinations

In reporting homicide closure rates, there is an inference that once a case is closed, the offender has been identified and there is a reasonable belief that they are no longer a threat to society. During our audit it was brought to our attention that MPD has two closed categories: homicides closed (by arrest) and those closed administratively (the suspect has been identified but circumstances exist that prevent the successful prosecution of the offender and he/she is released). While these methods of reporting and closing cases are consistent

RESULTS OF AUDIT

with how other jurisdictions categorize closed homicide cases, we wanted to bring to the reader's attention that there is not always a direct relationship between the number of closed cases and the number of identified offenders who have been convicted or are otherwise off the streets.

MPD officials stated they make the determination to close a case administratively, but they often do so in conjunction with input from the USAO. For instance, if MPD identifies and arrests a homicide suspect who is subsequently released prior to grand jury or trial and the charges are dropped, no further investigation is conducted.

In an attempt to identify the total number of closed cases that resulted in an arrest of the offender and subsequent imprisonment, we asked to obtain statistical data for the number of cases closed administratively for each of the years of our review. MPD VCB officials began maintaining this data in 2002. Below are the numbers for 2002 - 2006.

Years	Total No. of closed cases*	Closed by arrest		Closed Administratively	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2002	145	111	76.5%	34	23.5%
2003	150	107	71.3%	43	28.7%
2004	120	98	81.7%	22	18.3%
2005	119	83	69.7%	36	30.3%
2006	109	91	83.5%	18	16.5%

* Includes the total number of cases closed in the identified year, regardless of when the homicide occurred.

We then asked MPD and USAO officials for statistical data related to the number of offenders arrested for a homicide in which the offender was released prior to presentment before the grand jury, and also the number of cases that never went to trial. We were told that this data was not available.

At a minimum, we believe that statistics should be maintained to identify homicide cases closed by arrest and those closed administratively. Further, documentation of all closures should be readily available to provide confidence that the offender has been identified, but was unable to be brought to justice. This will help ensure the proper categorization of the homicide and also provide assurance that the identified suspect was the believed offender in instances in which evidence is not sufficient to bring the case before a grand jury. See Appendix IX for a Case Status Decision Tree.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommended that the Chief, MPD:

1. Establish internal controls to ensure that all required documents are maintained in the homicide case files as required by MPD Standard Operating Procedures.

MPD RESPONSE

MPD officials stated that they have internal controls that address this recommendation. Specifically, MPD stated that they issued Standard Operating Procedures in December of 2006, which include stronger internal controls for homicide case files. Additionally, MPD reported that they conduct case audits to ensure that all documentation is contained in the case jackets. Further, MPD reported that prior to being sent to the cold case file room an audit of the case file is conducted to ensure that all documents are included.

OIG COMMENT

MPD's response meets the intent of the recommendation.

2. Establish controls to ensure secure access to homicide cold case files.

MPD RESPONSE

MPD officials stated that these controls are already in place. Specifically, MPD reported that the cold case file room is located in a section of police headquarters that is not accessible to the general public. Further, the room is secured by two sets of doors, the outer being locked by a combination lock. Lastly, the cold case file room is monitored by a file room manager (or designee).

OIG COMMENT

MPD's comments are noted.

3. Identify funding for the storage, or at a minimum, the backup of homicide case files, to allow electronic access to files and provide for disaster recovery in unforeseen damage or loss of case files due to fire, flood, or other occurrences. This funding should include an administrative position that would be responsible for electronic imaging and other homicide case file maintenance and storage requirements.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

MPD RESPONSE

MPD officials agreed with the recommendation and further stated that updating basic technology for the Department is a top goal of the Chief of Police. Further, MPD has an initiative underway to address this recommendation and is currently exploring grant funding to enhance electronic storage of homicide case files.

OIG COMMENT

Due to the importance of this issue, and the fact that MPD has been struggling with implementation of a fully operational system to store data since 1992, we ask that MPD report back to the OIG within 60 days of the date of the issuance of this report with a timeline for completion of actions that will fully address this recommendation.

4. Require separate statistical records for the homicide cases closed administratively and by arrest. Further, once an arrest is made, continue to track the case to determine if the offender was released prior to the case being presented to the grand jury or going to trial. If evidence is not sufficient to adequately bring the offender to justice, provide a means to reopen or otherwise continue to investigate the homicide.

MPD RESPONSE

MPD officials stated that most of the Department's exceptional cases, in which witnesses come forward to identify homicide offenders, occur only after the death of the perpetrator. MPD further stated that the Department continues to investigate cases in which the arrestee is not brought to Grand Jury, or if evidence indicates that the wrong person was arrested.

OIG COMMENT

MPD's comments are noted. However, during fieldwork for the audit, we were informed by responsible MPD officials that there is no mechanism to re-open or further investigate a case once it is closed.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

SECTION 3: BENCHMARKING

SYNOPSIS

Our review of the benchmarking data prepared and reported by MPD found that improvements could be made in the following areas: 1) updating the cities used for comparison purposes on a more frequent basis; and 2) selecting cities based on other demographic data available that may improve upon comparisons to the District of Columbia. MPD officials identified the cities it used for benchmarking comparisons for 2001 - 2005 based on U.S. Census data published in 2000. Additionally, MPD relies primarily on factors such as population density, income, and education in selecting benchmarked cities, rather than total population and physical composite characteristics of the population. Using total population and physical composite characteristics, we identified other cities as comparables to use in reporting how well the District compares with regard to homicide closure rates.

DETAILS

The MPD Strategic Planning Unit (SPU) developed a methodology to select cities against which to benchmark MPD's performance with regard to homicide closure rates. The SPU started with a list of cities similar in size to Washington D.C. (cities over 250,000 residents), then narrowed down the list based on several crime-related variables:

1. Percent of households with female householder, no husband present
2. Housing unit density per square mile of land area
3. Percent of occupied housing units that are renter-occupied
4. Percent of individuals below poverty level
5. Percent of civilian labor force unemployed
6. Economic inequality of racial groups
7. Percent of population 25 years-old and over with a high school degree or higher
8. Percent of population in 15 to 24 year-old cohort
9. Number of sworn personnel per 1,000 Part I crimes¹⁵

The SPU selected the following cities for benchmarking MPD's homicide closure rates for 2001 - 2005:

- | | |
|------------|-----------------|
| 1. Oakland | 5. Philadelphia |
| 2. Buffalo | 6. Baltimore |
| 3. Chicago | 7. Boston |
| 4. Newark | |

¹⁵ Part I crimes include murder, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, and theft.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

Results of Verification Tests

We contacted the seven cities the SPU used for benchmarking to verify the accuracy of the data regarding the homicide numbers and the homicide closure rates used to calculate and report the results of benchmarking for the years 2001 – 2005. We identified 17 discrepancies in the data reported by MPD. These errors were immaterial and did not affect the ranking of MPD in relation to the other cities.

The SPU maintained copies of the data obtained from the cities when its original analysis was performed. Hence, based on a reliable audit trail, we believed the errors were the result of changes made by the cities after the data were originally reported to MPD.

Results of Comparability Test

We added new variables to the analysis to describe the social and economic dimensions of the cities the SPU used for benchmarking. These variables are:

- Percent of households without telephone service;
- Percent of households without a car, truck, or a van for private use; and
- Race composition of each city (this variable was selected based on published academic research supporting the relationship between homicide numbers and the race composition of a city).

Next, we selected nine cities that were similar in size to Washington D.C. (Denver, El Paso, Milwaukee, Seattle, Las Vegas, Atlanta, Charlotte, Tucson, and St. Louis). From these nine cities, we further narrowed our list to the four we gauged were most comparable to Washington D.C. Those four cities were: Atlanta, St. Louis, Milwaukee, and Charlotte. We then prepared a comparison between the homicide closure rate rank for the District using the MPD benchmarking cities and the OIG suggested cities.

The seven cities the SPU used for benchmarking in year 2000 were relatively comparable to Washington D.C. based on geographic measures and population density. However, we believe that based on total population, which MPD does not consider, there are four cities that are not relatively comparable to Washington DC (Buffalo, Chicago, Newark, and Philadelphia). Two of these cities are much smaller in total population than Washington D.C. (Buffalo and Newark), and the other two cities are much larger (Chicago and Philadelphia). Below we have identified the population for these cities reported by the Census Bureau for 2005.

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Factors	District of Columbia	Oakland	Buffalo	Chicago	Newark	Philadelphia	Baltimore	Boston
Total Population	555,118	373,910	256,492	2,701,926	254,217	1,406,415	608,481	520,702
Population Density	9,015	7,125	6,333	12,604	10,681	10,882	7,871	11,543

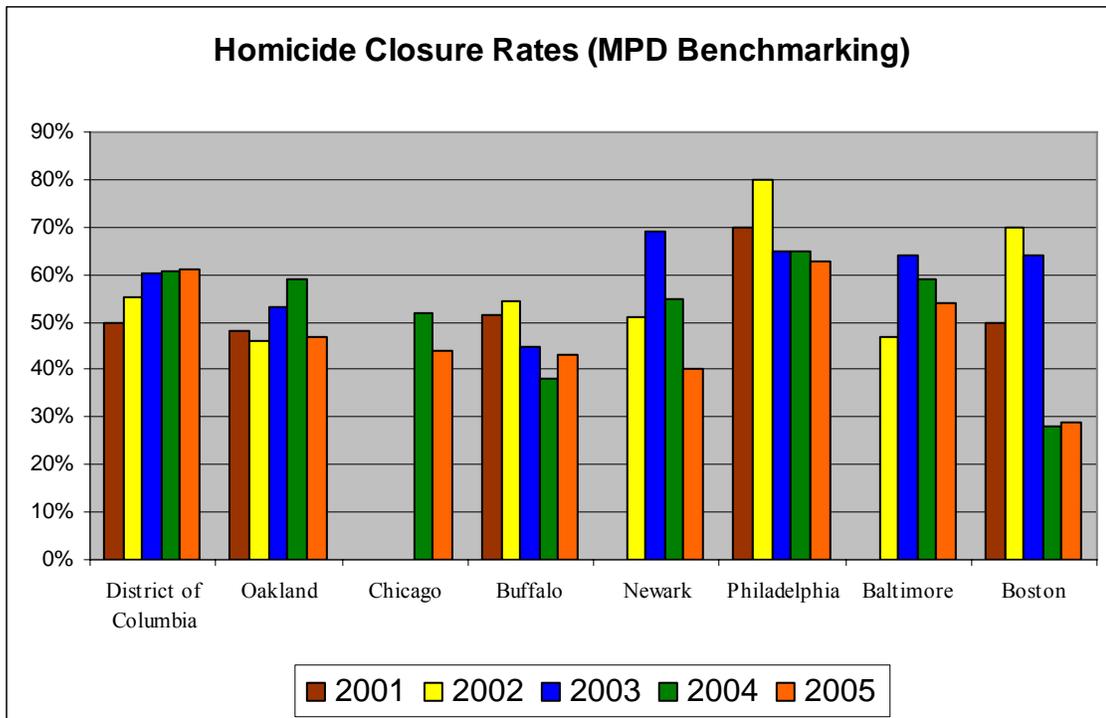
The following table presents the benchmarking analysis for the four cities selected by the OIG. We believe the four cities we identified (Atlanta, St. Louis, Milwaukee, and Charlotte) are better comparables and consideration should be made to replace the four cities (identified in red above) used by the SPU in its benchmarking analysis.

Factors		District of Columbia	Atlanta	St. Louis	Milwaukee	Charlotte
Total Population		555,118	394,929	333,730	556,948	601,598
Population Density		9,015	3,162	5,692	6,213	2,241
Percentage of population in 15 to 24 year-old cohort		9.1%	12%	13%	8.2%	13%
Race Percentage	Black	56.8%	58.6%	50.6%	40%	34%
	White	32.4%	36.2%	44%	44%	57%
	Other	10.8%	5.2%	5.4%	16%	9%
Percentage of households who do not have automobile		37%	19%	21%	18%	7%
Percentage of households who do not have telephone service		5%	10%	8%	4%	6%

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The following table presents the District's rank among the cities the SPU used for benchmarking regarding homicide closure rates for 2001-2005.

Years	District of Columbia	Oakland	Chicago	Buffalo	Newark	Philadelphia	Baltimore	Boston
2001	50%	48%	NA	51.5%	NA	70%	NA	50%
Rank	3	4	--	2	--	1	--	3
2002	55.3%	46%	NA	54.5%	51%	80%	47%	70%
Rank	3	7	--	4	5	1	6	2
2003	60.3%	53%	NA	45%	69%	65%	64%	64%
Rank	4	5	--	6	1	2	3	3
2004	60.6%	59%	52%	38%	55%	65%	59%	28%
Rank	2	3	5	6	4	1	3	7
2005	61%	47%	44%	43%	40%	63%	54%	29%
Rank	2	4	5	6	7	1	3	8

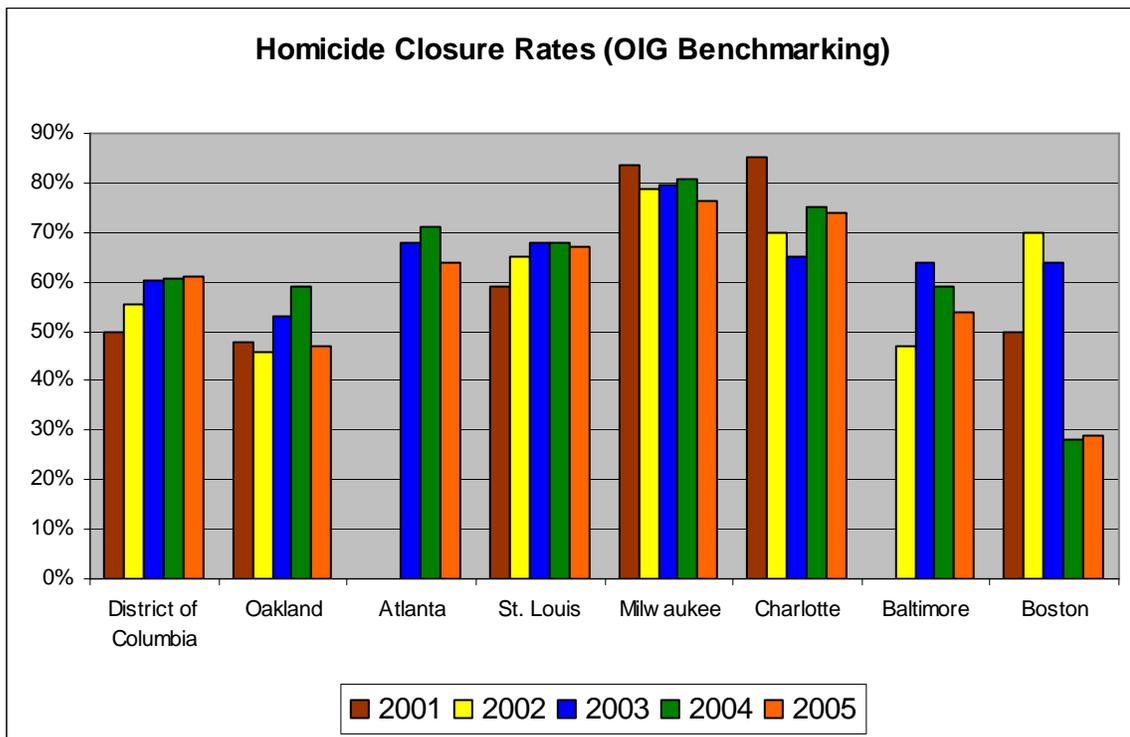


As shown in the chart and table above, according to MPD benchmarking, out of seven comparison cities, the District ranked fourth in 2003, and second in both 2004 and 2005.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

The following table presents the District's rank when substituting only those four cities suggested by the OIG (and leaving the remaining three already identified by the SPU) for benchmarking regarding the homicide closure rates for 2001-2005.

Years	District of Columbia	Oakland	Atlanta	St. Louis	Milwaukee	Charlotte	Baltimore	Boston
2001	50%	48%	NA	59%	83.4%	85%	NA	50%
Rank	4	5	--	3	2	1	--	4
2002	55.3%	46%	NA	65%	78.7%	70%	47%	70%
Rank	4	6	--	3	1	2	5	2
2003	60.3%	53%	68%	68%	79.4%	65%	64%	64%
Rank	5	6	2	2	1	3	4	4
2004	60.6%	59%	71%	68%	80.6%	75%	59%	28%
Rank	5	6	3	4	1	2	6	7
2005	61%	47%	64%	67%	76.2%	74%	54%	29%
Rank	5	7	4	3	1	2	6	8



As shown in the table and chart above, according to the OIG benchmarking, out of the seven comparison cities identified, the District ranked fifth in years 2003, 2004, and 2005.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

Other Benchmarking Data Obtained

We contacted the 12 cities including, Washington D.C., to obtain information relating to the number of homicide detectives within their homicide division, and whether the city had its own forensic lab and maintained electronic storage of homicide investigation files.

The following table depicts the information obtained for 2006 only and compares it to the respective city's 2005 homicide closure rate.

#	Cities	Homicide Closure Rates for 2005	Homicide numbers for 2005	No. of Detectives	Forensic Lab	Electronic Storage of Case Files
1	District of Columbia	61%	196	64	no	no
2	Milwaukee	76%	122	34	yes	no
3	Charlotte	74%	85	26	yes	no
4	St. Louis	67%	131	21	yes	no
5	Atlanta	64%	90	17	no	no
6	Philadelphia	63%	377	86	yes	no
7	Baltimore	54%	269	78	yes	no
8	Oakland	47%	94	10	no	no
9	Buffalo	44%	56	18	yes	no
10	Chicago	43%	449	1,129*	no	no
11	Newark	40%	98	14	yes	no
12	Boston	29%	73	23	yes	no

** Total number of detectives for the entire Chicago Police Department*

As shown in the table, except for Chicago, the District of Columbia has the highest number of homicide detectives (87), and Oakland has the lowest number of detectives (10). All the cities store homicide investigation files manually. In addition, the table shows that eight cities have their own forensic lab.

RECOMMENDATION

- We recommended that the Chief, MPD update benchmarking comparison cities on a more frequent basis and consider cities based on characteristics identified by the OIG to use in reporting how well the District compares with regard to homicide closure rates.

MPD RESPONSE

MPD agreed to update its benchmarking and stated that it is open to modifying its methodology. Additionally, for future benchmarking efforts, MPD plans to include a new

RESULTS OF AUDIT

variable to reflect the significant impact of concentrated poverty. Lastly, MPD agreed to look at the cities recommended by the OIG during its revision for 2008.

OIG COMMENT

The OIG finds that these actions meet the intent of the recommendation.

RESULTS OF AUDIT

SECTION 4: SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESULTS

SYNOPSIS

The results of our survey and interviews of MPD's VCB members revealed areas where opportunities for improvement in operations can be made. These areas include: 1) training; 2) resources (personnel and non-personnel); and 3) improved communication between and among coordinating agencies. Of particular concern was the lack of responses received for our request to complete a blind survey. Only 11 out of 104 MPD VCB personnel responded. We also contacted 16 MPD VCB members (15 percent) to ask them to provide their opinions as to what actions can be taken, or what improvements can be made to increase homicide closure rates in the District. Only two detectives accepted our offer for an interview. Lastly, 16 of the 104 VCB member surveys mailed to the members' official address of record were returned by the U.S. Postal Service as undeliverable.

A low response rate may indicate that the participants surveyed were not comfortable answering questions, did not take the questionnaire seriously, or may have otherwise been inclined not to participate. Regardless, we believe that such a low response rate is cause for concern, especially in light of the opportunity to provide input that could contribute to improved operations.

DETAILS

We received responses from 11 of the 104 (10.5 percent) of MPD VCB personnel. The survey questionnaire had 11 questions. The questions pertained to the following 3 areas: 1) education, experience, and training; 2) workload/resources; and 3) ranking of effectiveness of coordinating units and homicide prevention methods. See Exhibit D for a copy of the Homicide Survey.

Below we have highlighted responses to the survey questions that pertain to each of these areas where improvements may be needed.

Education, Experience, and Training

At the onset of our review, stakeholders raised concerns related to MPD VCB members' education and experience. While formal education and training may be valued differently from person-to-person, most people agree that direct experience is an invaluable trait. From the responses received, almost half reported that they completed some college and almost half held an advanced degree or certification. Further, the average number of years working in law enforcement or a related field was reported at over 17 years, with the average number of years working with MPD at almost 15. However, the average number of years individuals worked in the VCB was approximately 5 years.

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Workload/Resources

MPD VCB members worked an average of 12 cases concurrently, spent 21 percent of their time in court, and worked on average 77 hours per month in overtime. Seven of the 11 respondents rated the amount of personnel resources available to conduct homicide investigations as average to poor.

With regard to resources, there was a pervasive belief that improved technology related to electronic case files, document access, retrieval (within MPD and coordinating units), and storage could significantly reduce the time required to solve a homicide. Lastly, specific concerns related to the lack of basic supplies (working copy machines, paper, cell phones, or access to cars and available parking) were expressed.

Effectiveness of Coordinating Units and Homicide Prevention Methods

In regard to the effectiveness of coordinating offices and homicide prevention methods, the services provided by different agencies/units were rated as average or above average, and the effectiveness of the methods employed by MPD to prevent homicides were rated as average or below average. Better coordination with the Firearms and Toolmark Examination Section and the Fingerprint Examination Unit as well as improved working relations with USAO were specifically identified.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommended that Chief, MPD:

6. Evaluate the results of the OIG survey and, as appropriate, pursue areas that may warrant management's attention.

MPD RESPONSE

MPD officials stated that they will evaluate the OIG survey responses.

OIG COMMENT

The OIG will provide this data to the MPD as part of the issuance of the report in final. We ask that the MPD provide our Office with a description of any actions taken as a result of their analysis of the data provided within 60 days of the issuance of the report. Actions cited meet the intent of the recommendation.

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7. Provide training to MPD VCB members to stay abreast of investigative methods and techniques.

MPD RESPONSE

MPD officials stated that they provide various levels of training to their homicide detectives. Specifically, the Chief stated that she was committed to high quality training and ongoing professional development for all members. Specific courses attended by members was also cited in MPD's response.

OIG COMMENT

MPD's actions meet the intent of the recommendation.

8. Make sufficient supplies, equipment, vehicles, and other resources available to the detectives to perform their job duties.

MPD RESPONSE

MPD officials stated that they have internal controls that address this recommendation. Specifically, MPD stated that they have initiated a review of vehicles and cell phone distribution and use so that these key resources can be allocated to meet top agency priorities.

OIG COMMENT

We believe these actions address the intent of the recommendation. It is our hope this information is shared with staff so that the concerns reported during our audit are addressed.

9. Establish a task force to identify and coordinate the electronic sharing of data and reports among all coordinating agencies.

MPD RESPONSE

MPD disagreed with this recommendation based on their position that this is the responsibility of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC).

OIG COMMENT

In discussions with members of the CJCC, we were informed that while it is true that they have looked into modernizing and otherwise improving communication and sharing of data between the various law enforcement agencies, there is no plan to implement a system in which all related data for a homicides will be contained in a single system. Accordingly, we ask that MPD address this issue, (see page 47 of this report) internally

RESULTS OF AUDIT

within MPD and also take a proactive role in its involvement with the CJCC to aid in moving this issue forward.

10. Review and update, as necessary, the mailing addresses of all MPD employees to ensure that they are current.

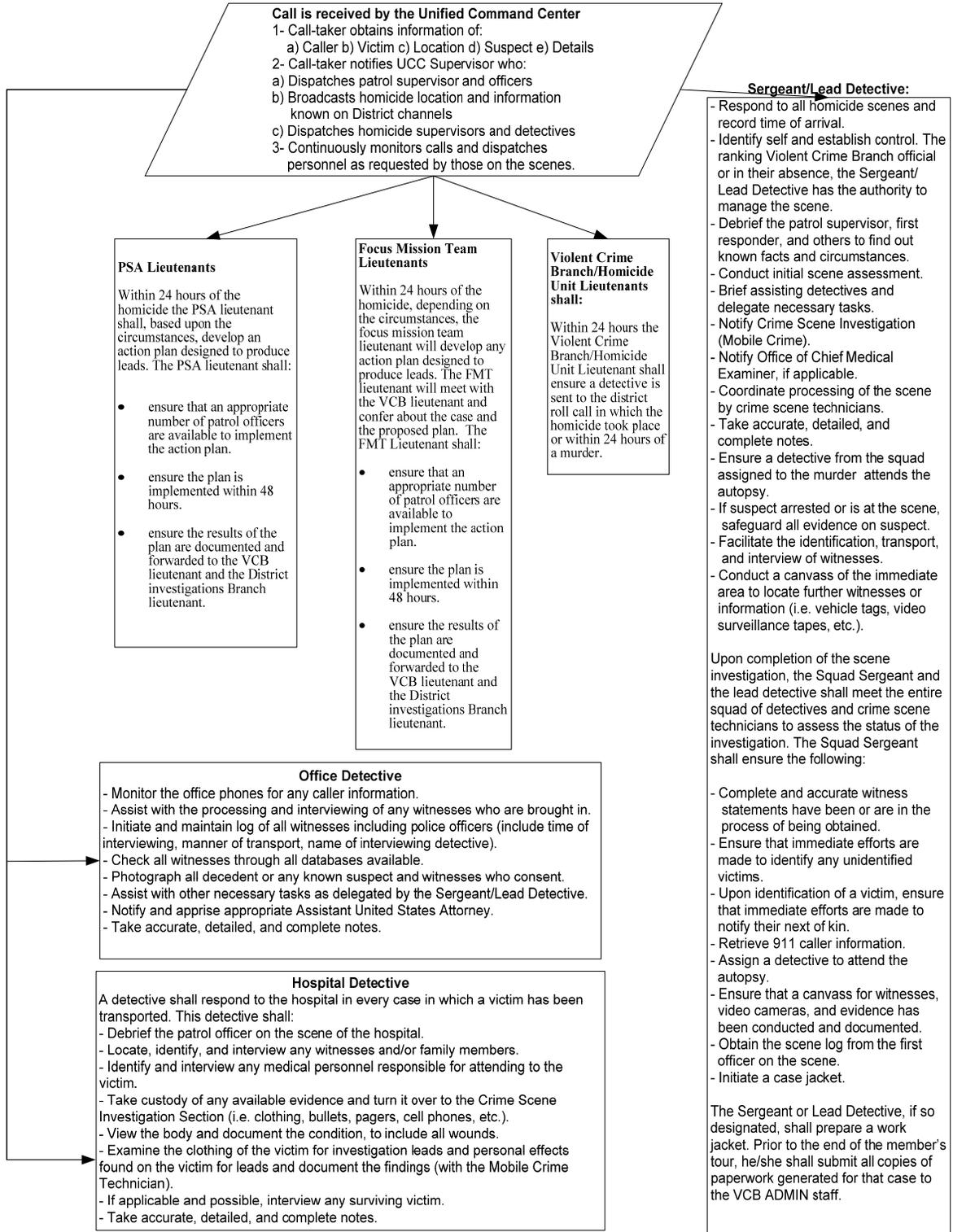
MPD RESPONSE

MPD officials stated that they have a process in place to meet the intent of this recommendation.

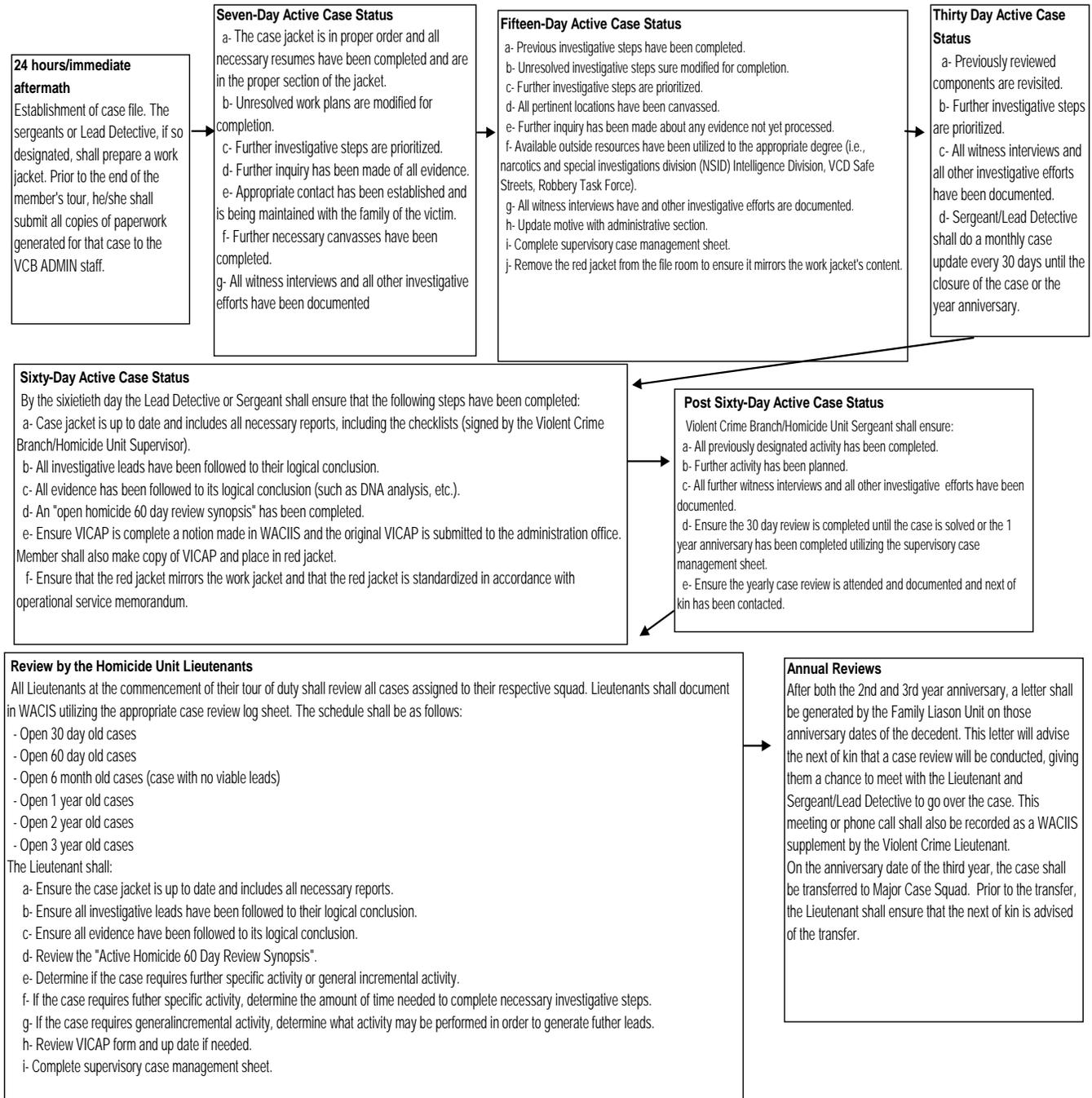
OIG COMMENT

MPD's comments are noted. We ask that MPD provide the OIG assurance related to the payroll exceptions identified during our audit, previously provided to MPD, within 60 days from the date of this report.

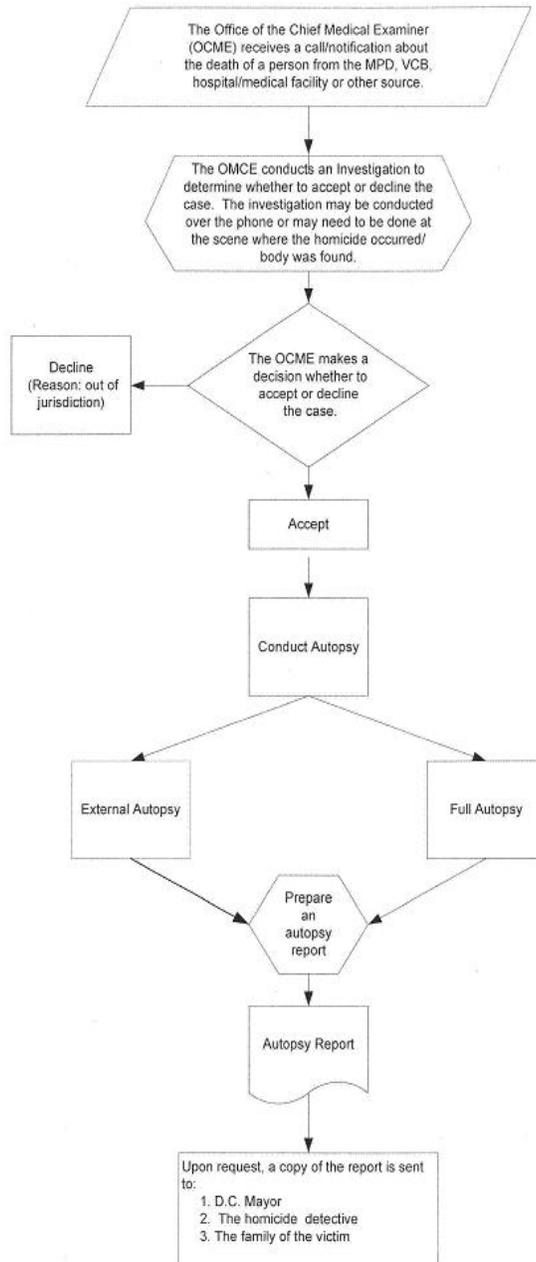
APPENDIX I: INITIAL RESPONSE TO REPORTED HOMICIDE - WORK FLOW PROCESS



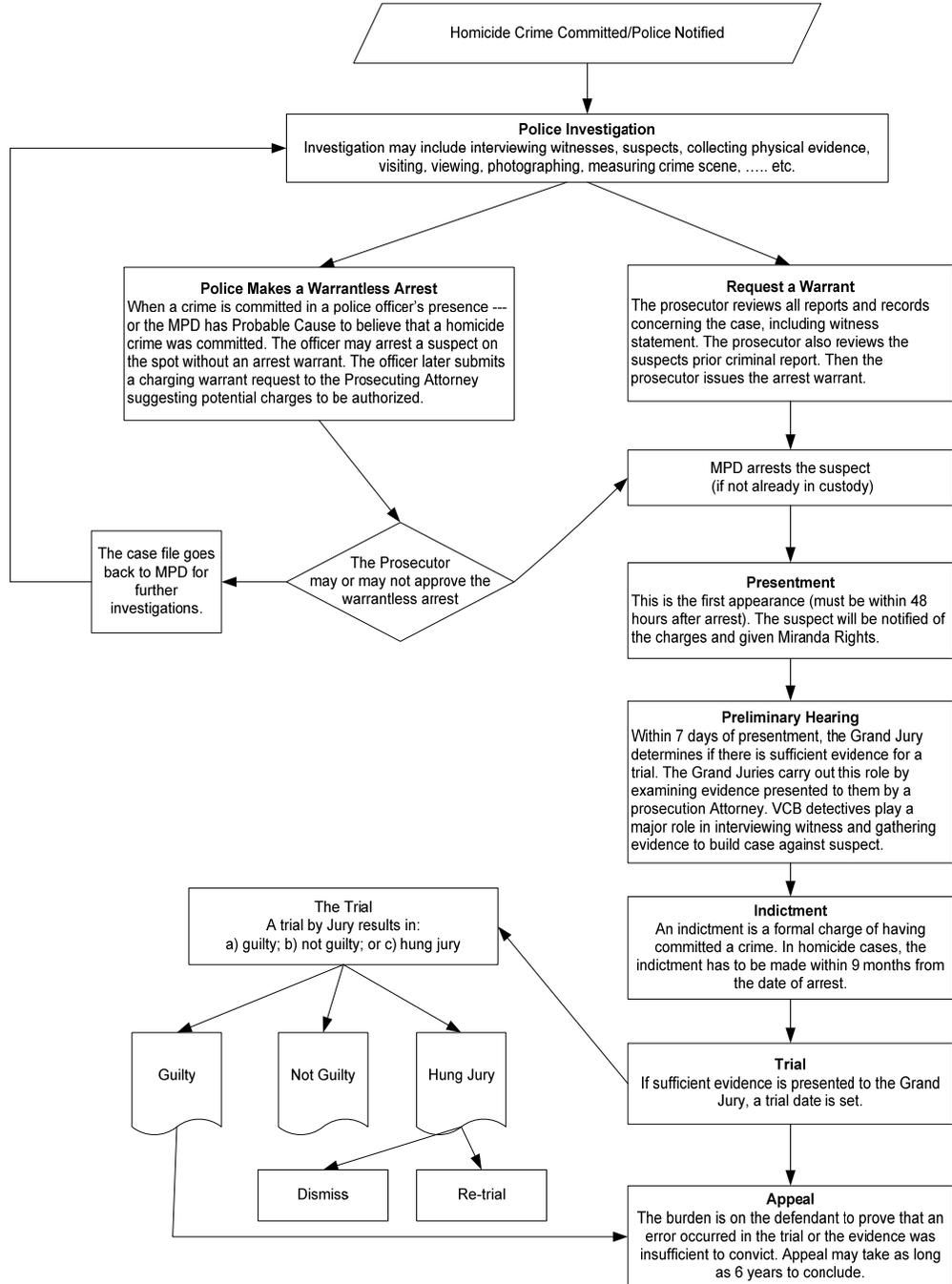
APPENDIX II: CASE FILE MONITORING SUMMARY



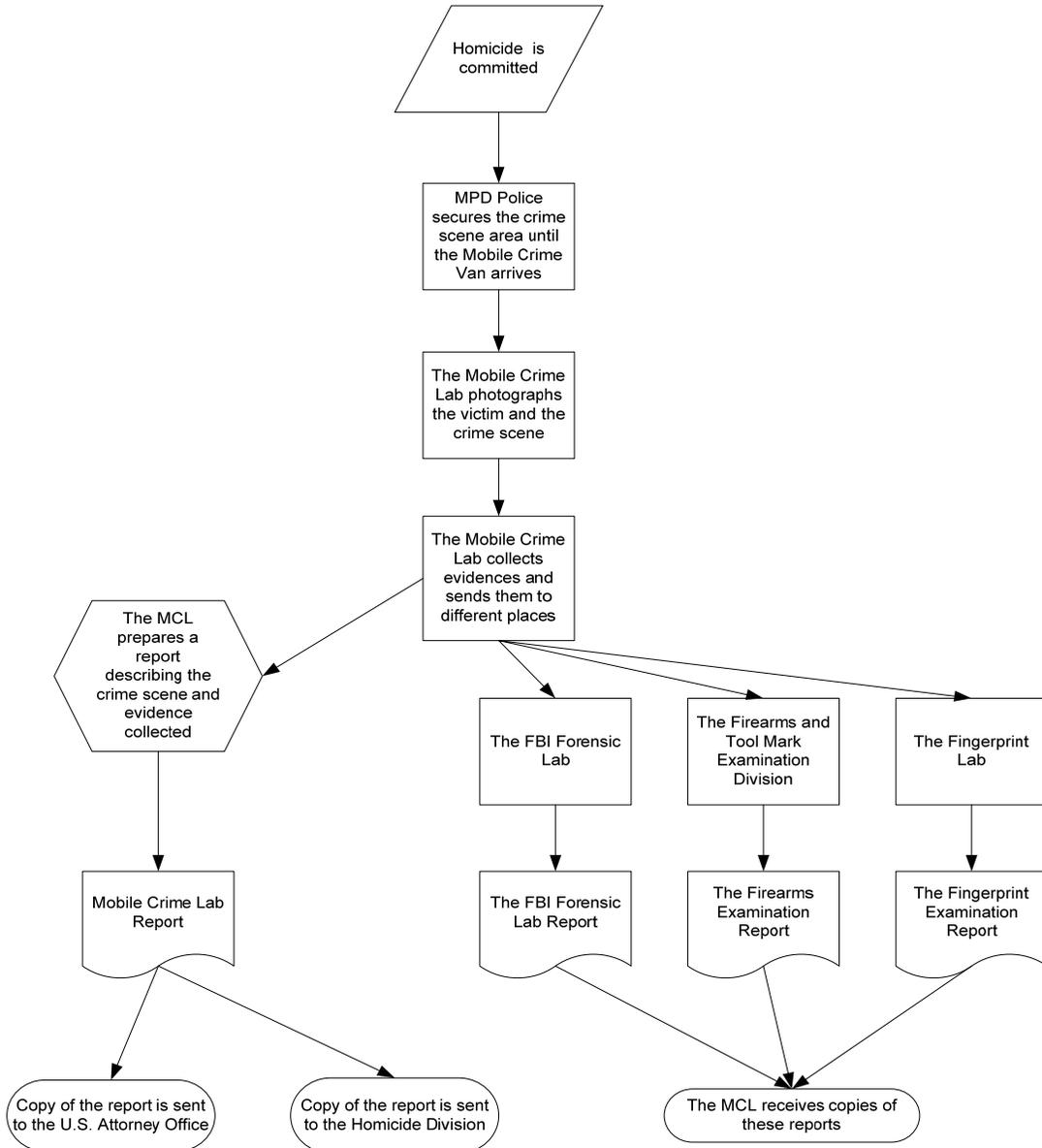
APPENDIX III: OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER - WORK FLOW PROCESS



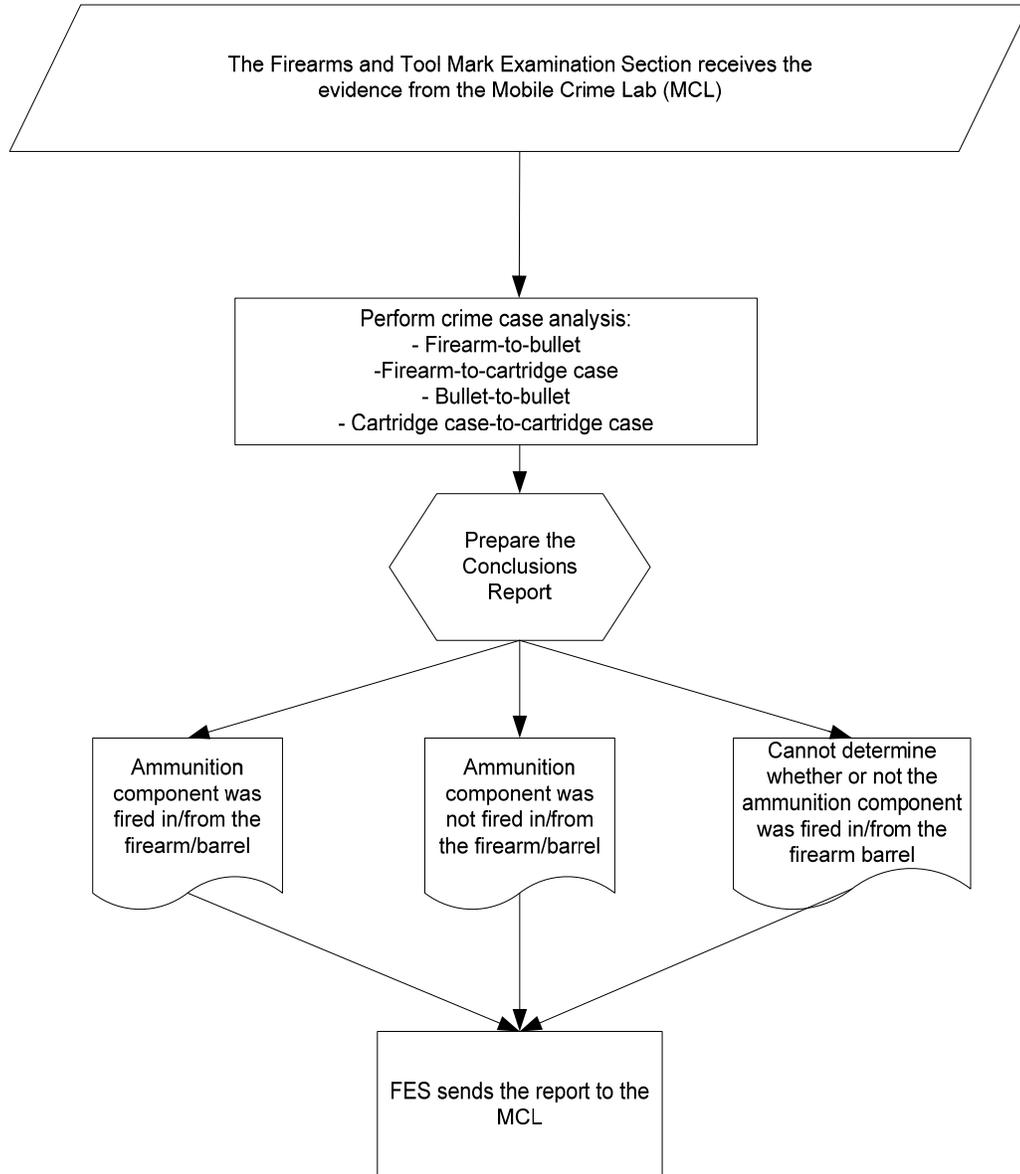
APPENDIX IV: UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE – WORK FLOW PROCESS



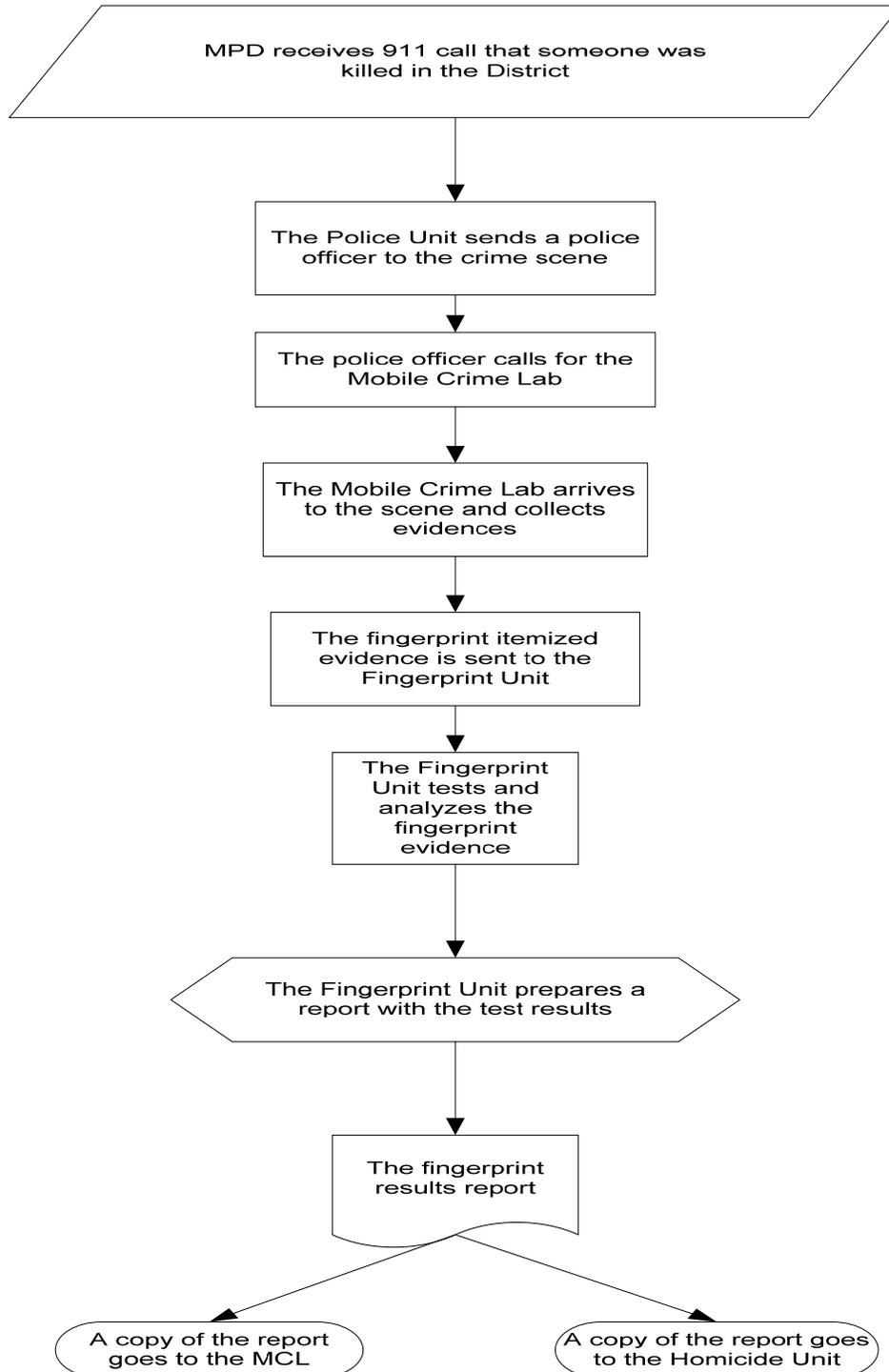
APPENDIX V: CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION BRANCH – WORK FLOW PROCESS



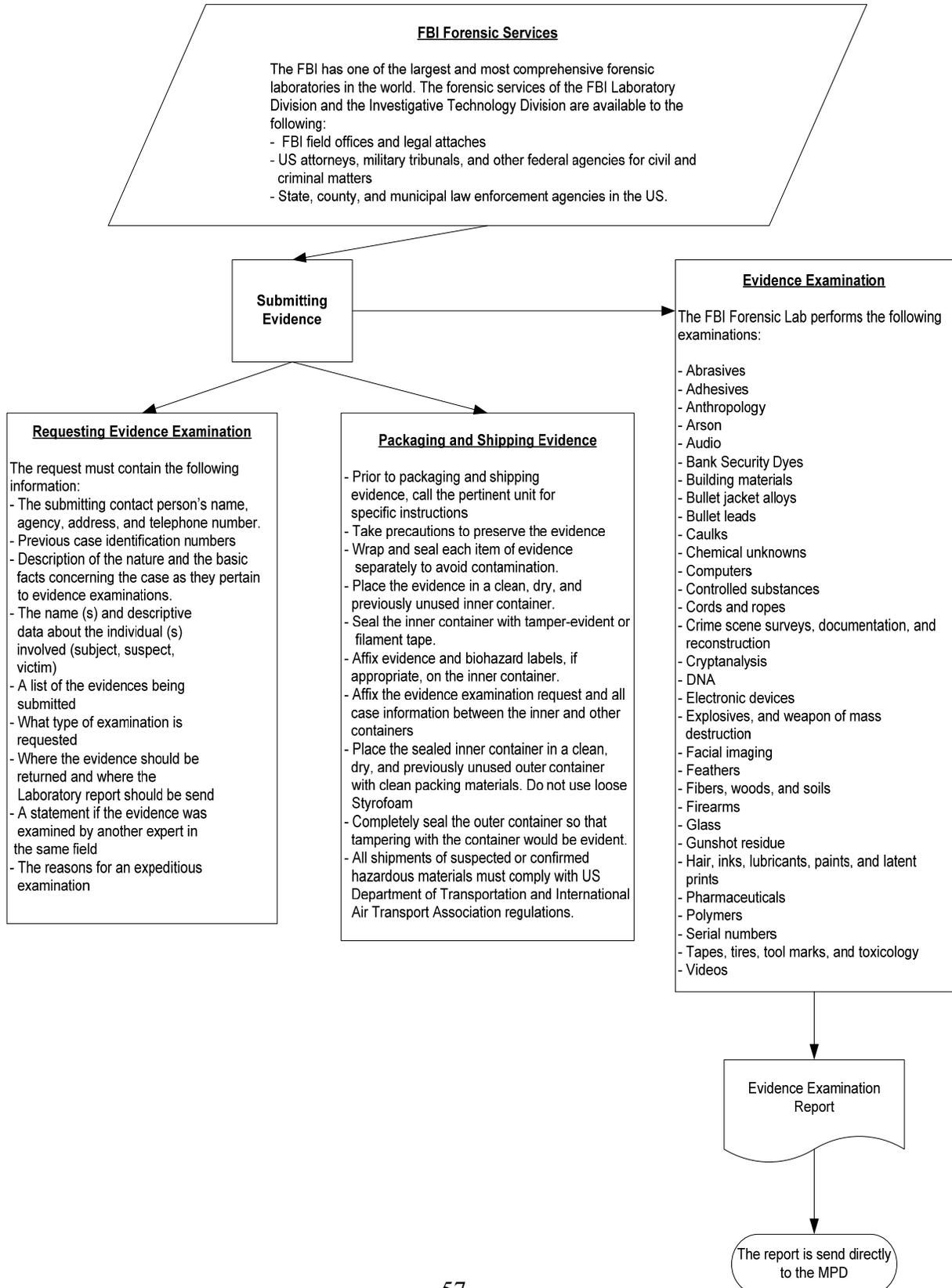
APPENDIX VI: FIREARMS AND TOOL MARK EXAMINATION SECTION - WORK FLOW PROCESS –



APPENDIX VII: FINGERPRINT EXAMINATION UNIT – WORK FLOW PROCESS



APPENDIX VIII: FBI FORENSIC LAB - WORK FLOW PROCESS



APPENDIX IX: CASE STATUS DECISION TREE



The green color refers to the availability of data while the red color refers to the non-availability of data.

EXHIBIT A: SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL BENEFITS RESULTING FROM AUDIT

Recommendation	Description of Benefit	Amount and Type of Benefit	Agency Reported Estimated Completion Date¹³	Status
1	Internal Control. Ensure that all required documents are maintained in the homicide case files as required by MPD Standard Operating Procedures.	Non Monetary	December 2006	Closed
2	Internal Control. Secure access to homicide cold case files.	Non Monetary	June 15, 2006	Closed
3	Internal Control. Identify funding for the storage, or at a minimum, the backup of homicide case files, to allow electronic access to files and provide for disaster recovery in the unforeseen event of a fire, flood, or other occurrence.	Non Monetary	TBD	Open
4	Program Results. Require statistical records for homicide cases closed administratively or by arrest. Provide a means to reopen or otherwise continue to investigate the homicide if deemed necessary.	Non Monetary	June 15, 2006	Closed

¹³ This column provides the status of a recommendation as of the report date. For final reports, “Open” means management and the OIG are in agreement on the action to be taken, but action is not complete. “Closed” means management has advised that the action necessary to correct the condition is complete. If a completion date was not provided, the date of management’s response is used. “Unresolved” means that management has neither agreed to take the recommended action nor proposed satisfactory alternative actions to correct the condition.

EXHIBIT A: SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL BENEFITS RESULTING FROM AUDIT

Recommen- dation	Description of Benefit	Amount and Type of Benefit	Agency Reported Estimated Completion Date	Status
5	Program Results. Update benchmarking comparison cities.	Non Monetary	FY 2008	Closed
6	Economy and Efficiency. Evaluate the results of the OIG survey and, as appropriate, pursue areas that may warrant management's attention.	Non Monetary	TBD	Open
7	Program Results. Provide training to stay abreast of investigative methods and techniques.	Non Monetary	June 15, 2006	Closed
8	Program Results. Ensure that basic supplies and tools are available to the detectives to perform their job duties.	Non Monetary	June 15, 2006	Closed
9	Economy and Efficiency. Establish a task force to identify and coordinate the electronic sharing of data and reports among all coordinating entities.	Non Monetary	June 15, 2006	Closed
10	Program Results. Ensure that mailing addresses of all MPD employees are current.	Non Monetary	TBD	Open

**EXHIBIT B: DESCRIPTION OF THE HOMICIDE CASE FILE
DOCUMENTS**

Documents	Description
PD 120 Death Report	The death report includes the name of the victim, gender, date of birth, date of death, and the location of death.
Autopsy Report	An autopsy is the examination of the decedent and is performed primarily to determine if the death was an accident, homicide, suicide, or a natural event. Autopsies are performed by pathologists, medical doctors who have received training in the diagnosis of diseases by the examination of body fluids and tissues.
WALES/III of Victim	The Washington Area Law Enforcement System (WALES) report of a victim includes all the information saved in the computer system related to the victim, for example, the social security number, driver's license, and criminal history.
Initial Investigation Report	This is the first 24-hour report, including victim information, date, time, and location of crime, as well as a description of the weather, crime scene, and the body of the victim.
PD 251 – Incident Report	This report is created initially by the first officer to arrive at the crime scene and includes information about date, time, and location of the crime, and a brief description of the crime scene along with crime classification.
PD 252 – Supplement Report	This report is a supplement to the PD 251, including more information about the crime scene and the victim.
CAD Printout (Call Automated Dispatch)	This print out includes information about when and who reported the crime, what he/she said, what units dispatched, when they arrived, and when they left the crime scene.
MCL Report (Mobile Crime Lab)	This report documents all evidence gathered at the crime scene and where evidence has been sent for testing and analysis.

EXHIBIT C: STATISTICAL SAMPLE EVALUATION

Years	Sample Evaluation	Missing Documents							
		Document 1 PD 120 Death Report	Document 2 Autopsy Report	Document 3 WALLES/III of Victim	Document 4 Initial Invest. Report	Document 5 PD 251 Incident Report	Document 6 PD 252 Supp. Report	Document 7 CAD Printout	Document 8 MCL Report
2001	Error in the sample	0	19	1	0	0	0	19	15
	% of error in the sample	0	73%	3.8%	0	0	0	73%	57%
	The upper error limit frequency	8.88%	Error is too high	14.96%	8.88%	8.88%	8.88%	Error is too high	Error is too high
	Decision	Accept	Reject	Accept	Accept	Accept	Accept	Reject	Reject
2002	Error in the sample	2	5	1	0	0	0	9	4
	% of error in the sample	7.6%	19.2%	3.8%	0	0	0	34.6%	15.3%
	The upper error limit frequency	20.5%	35.6%	14.96%	8.88%	8.88%	8.88%	Error is too high	30.7%
	Decision	Reject	Reject	Accept	Accept	Accept	Accept	Reject	Reject
2003	Error in the sample	2	13	2	0	1	1	9	14
	% of error in the sample	7.6%	50%	7.6%	0	3.8%	3.8%	34.6%	53.8%
	The upper error limit frequency	20.5%	Error is too high	20.5%	8.88%	14.96%	14.96%	Error is too high	Error is too high
	Decision	Reject	Reject	Reject	Accept	Accept	Accept	Reject	Reject
2004	Error in the sample	1	8	1	0	0	0	15	9
	% of error in the sample	3.8%	30.7%	3.8%	0	0	0	57%	34.6%
	The upper error limit frequency	14.96%	Error is too high	14.96%	8.88%	8.88%	8.88%	Error is too high	Error is too high
	Decision	Accept	Reject	Accept	Accept	Accept	Accept	Reject	Reject
2005	Error in the sample	0	2	1	0	0	0	12	6
	% of error in the sample	0	7.6%	3.8%	0	0	0	46.1%	23%
	The upper error limit frequency	8.88%	20.5%	14.96%	8.88%	8.88%	8.88%	Error is too high	40.5%
	Decision	Accept	Reject	Accept	Accept	Accept	Accept	Reject	Reject
2006	Error in the sample	1	8	1	1	0	0	11	7
	% of error in the sample	3.8%	30.7%	3.8%	3.8%	0	0	42.3%	26.9%
	The upper error limit frequency	14.96%	Error is too high	14.96%	14.96%	8.88%	8.88%	Error is too high	Error is too high
	Decision	Accept	Reject	Accept	Accept	Accept	Accept	Reject	Reject

- The upper error limit frequency is the estimated error in the entire population based on the statistical sample.
- Accept → if the upper error limit frequency is less than the tolerable level (15%).
- Reject → if the upper error limit is higher than the tolerable level (15%).
- Error is too high → when the error in the sample is too high to predict errors in the entire population.
- Accept decision → means that MPD has an effective internal control system to obtain and keep a required document in the homicide investigation file.
- Reject decision – means that MPD did not have an effective internal control system to obtain and keep a required document in the homicide investigation file.

EXHIBIT D: HOMICIDE SURVEY

**Review of Homicide Closure Rates
at the Metropolitan Police Department
Project Code OIG No. 07-2-02FA
Homicide Detective Questionnaire**

For each question, provide your response in the space provided or circle the one answer that best fits your situation.

-
- 1.** a. How many years have you worked in law enforcement or a related field? _____
b. Of the number of years identified in question 1a, how many of those years were at the MPD? _____
c. Of the numbers of years identified in question 1b, how many were in the Homicide Branch? _____

-
- 2.** a. How many years of education have you completed?
High School only Some college undergraduate degree graduate degree
b. Do you hold any advanced or specialized degrees/certificates?
Yes No
If yes, please identify: _____

-
- 3.** What percentage of your time is spent in court? _____

-
- 4.** What is your caseload? (only identify those in which you are ACTIVELY WORKING)
_____ (Number of cases less than 3 years old)
_____ (Number of cold case files)

-
- 5.** Are you required to work overtime? Yes No

On average, how many hours of overtime would you say you worked in a month? _____

Describe the frequency of overtime worked:
Rarely Occasionally Frequently
-

EXHIBIT D: HOMICIDE SURVEY

**Review of Homicide Closure Rates
at the Metropolitan Police Department
Project Code OIG No. 07-2-02FA**

Homicide Detective Questionnaire

6. Please rank the following factors, in order of importance, (1 being most important) which you believe would be most beneficial in solving homicides:

- More detectives
- Improved working relations with U.S. Attorney's Office
- District-based forensic lab
- Improved technology related to electronic case files, document access, retrieval, and storage
- Other: Please specify: _____

7. For the closed cases, please rank, in order of importance, (1 being most important) how often you rely on information provided by the following sources:

- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
- Mobile Crime Lab
- Other forensic evidence
- 911 calls (CAD Printout)
- Interviews conducted
- Witness statements
- Other: _____

EXHIBIT D: HOMICIDE SURVEY

**Review of Homicide Closure Rates
at the Metropolitan Police Department
Project Code OIG No. 07-2-02FA
Homicide Detective Questionnaire**

The following questions ask you to rate various means to obtain evidence or prevent homicides. Using the following scale, please respond to the following questions. Provide any comments below your score.

1 (POOR) 2 (BELOW AVERAGE) 3 (AVERAGE) 4 (ABOVE AVERAGE) 5 (GOOD)

8. Rate the services provided by the following agencies.

a. Mobile Crime Lab:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

b. Office of the Chief Medical Examiner:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

c. Office of the U.S. Attorney:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

9. Using the same scale, please rate the effectiveness of the methods employed by MPD to prevent homicides:

a. MPD's Neighborhood Partnerships:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

EXHIBIT D: HOMICIDE SURVEY

**Review of Homicide Closure Rates
at the Metropolitan Police Department
Project Code OIG No. 07-2-02FA
Homicide Detective Questionnaire**

b. MPD's Crime Solvers:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

c. MPD's Special Reward Program – Payments for information leading to an arrest and conviction in any unsolved homicide:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

d. MPD's Focused Law Enforcement approach for prevention of homicides:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

e. The amount of resources (time and detectives) available to solve homicide cases:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

f. Overall support provided by higher ranking officials (or supervisors):

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

EXHIBIT D: HOMICIDE SURVEY

**Review of Homicide Closure Rates
at the Metropolitan Police Department
Project Code OIG No. 07-2-02FA
Homicide Detective Questionnaire**

g. The amount of annual training directly related to your duties as they relate to solving homicides:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

h. The quality of the training you have received and how it aides in solving homicides:

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

10. What, in your opinion, is the leading factor in the reduction of homicides experienced by MPD in recent years?

11. What actions or changes would you advise that the District or MPD undertake to help solve homicides or otherwise prevent homicides?

EXHIBIT E – MPD MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT REPORT



**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Charles J. Willoughby
Inspector General
Office of the Inspector General
717 14th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

JUN 15 2007

Dear Mr. Willoughby:

This letter is in response to the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) *Review of Homicide Closure Rates Within the Metropolitan Police Department* (OIG No. 07-2-02FA). I appreciate this opportunity to comment on the report in advance of its publication.

As an initial matter, I would like to thank the men and women of MPD who investigate and support the investigations of homicides in the District of Columbia. Their hard work contributed to a 64 percent homicide closure rate in 2006, the highest rate since 1998. MPD's homicide closure rate has been bucking the national trend of declining closure rates. According to the FBI, MPD's rate was higher than the average of comparable cities in 2004 and 2005. Although 2006 data has not yet been released by the FBI, anecdotal information indicates that the downward trend has continued in other cities.

Since becoming Chief of Police of the Metropolitan Police Department in January of this year, I have established several priorities that I believe will help build upon these successes. The Department is now conducting Community Based Homicide Investigations to help detectives develop the police-citizen contacts that are key to obtaining the witnesses and evidence needed to solve homicide cases. I have identified improvements to basic technology as one of my top priorities to help move the entire department forward. The most wide-reaching of these technology projects is a comprehensive Records Management System that will, among other things, establish comprehensive electronic case management files that will directly benefit homicide detectives. In addition, I am strongly supporting the city's effort to build a dedicated forensic lab that will enable MPD to close even more homicides, and get violent offenders off the street.

1. Establish internal controls to ensure that all required documents are maintained in the homicide case files as required by MPD Standard Operating Procedures.

This is already underway. The Standard Operating Procedures was reissued in December 2006 to include stronger internal controls for homicide files. Case audits are conducted to ensure that all documentation is placed in case jackets. Prior to a file being sent to cold case, an audit of the case file is conducted to ensure all relevant documents are included. Finally, during the review of cold cases, a second document audit is completed to ensure all documents are in any case files that were moved to cold case before the SOP was put in place.

P.O. Box 1606, Washington, D.C. 20013-1606

EXHIBIT E – MPD MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT REPORT

2. *Establish controls to ensure secure access to homicide cold case files.*

These controls are already in place. The cold case file room is located in a section of police headquarters not accessible to the general public. The room is secured by two sets of doors, the outer door locked by a combination lock. The cold case file room is monitored by a file room manager or his or her designee. Access to files is permitted only with the permission of the file room manager. In order to sign out case jackets, detectives must have the approval of a homicide sergeant. The file room manager then signs out all case jackets.

3. *Identify funding for storage, or at a minimum, the backup of homicide case files, to allow electronic access to files and provide for disaster recovery in unforeseen damage or loss of case files due to fire, flood, or other occurrences. This funding should include an administrative position that would be responsible for electronic imaging and other homicide case file maintenance and storage requirements.*

I agree with this recommendation. Updating basic technology for the Department is one of my top goals as Chief of Police, and the Record Management System project will address many of these concerns. A significant amount of information from homicide case files is already kept in a WACIIS and VICAP database that is electronically maintained and can be accessed by terminals throughout MPD. However, MPD agrees that there is still much information that is not electronically stored and is vulnerable. The Department is exploring grant funding to enhance electronic storage of homicide files.

4. *Require separate statistical records for the homicide cases closed administratively and by arrest. Further, once an arrest record is made, continue to track the case to determine if the offender was released prior to the case being presented to the grand jury or going to trial. If evidence is not sufficient to adequately bring the offender to justice, provide a means to reopen or otherwise to investigate the homicide.*

Administrative Closures

Since 2002, MPD has maintained records and statistics on cases closed by arrest and those closed administratively. The Violent Crimes Branch closes homicides cases administratively in accordance with FBI guidelines. Any cases proposed for administrative closure (also called exceptional closures) are reviewed by the Office of Professional Responsibility for adherence to the FBI guidelines and MPD policy. The case is not considered closed unless it has been approved by the Assistant Chief for Professional Responsibility.

To be considered “exceptionally closed,” the following criteria must be met:

1. The investigation established the identity of the offender.
2. There is enough information to support an arrest charge and turn the case over to the court for prosecution.
3. The exact location of the offender is known so that he/she could be taken into custody.
4. There is some reason outside law enforcement control that precludes the arrest, charge and prosecution of the offender. Examples of reasons include:
 - o Death of the offender
 - o Deathbed confession by the offender
 - o Confession by an offender already in custody or serving a sentence

EXHIBIT E – MPD MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT REPORT

- Offender is prosecuted by state or local authorities in another city for a different offense, or prosecuted in another city or state by the Federal Government for an offense that may be the same, but the other jurisdiction will not allow the release when the MPD makes an attempt to return him/her for prosecution.
- Extradition is denied.
- Victim refused to cooperate in the prosecution (only if the first three criteria are met).
- Offender is a juvenile eligible for diversion.

Most of the Department's exceptional closures are cases in which witnesses come forward to identify homicide offenders only after the perpetrator was killed. Certainly we hope to reach a point when there will be fewer murders in the city and when one is committed, community members will want to come forward to identify the offender, and will feel safe in doing so.

Ongoing Investigations

The Department continues to investigate cases in which the arrestee is not brought to Grand Jury, or if evidence indicates that the wrong person was arrested. The Department also continues to investigate cases in which only one of multiple suspects is arrested. These cases are either classified as "closed-active" or are reopened.

5. Update benchmarking comparison cities on a more frequent basis and consider cities based on characteristics identified by the OIG to use in reporting how well the District compares with regard to homicide closure rates.

MPD agrees with this recommendation in part. As background, in 2003, MPD developed a comprehensive methodology (see attached) to select cities in the United States most comparable to Washington, DC, based on factors that have been found to correlate with crime. A list of the 66 U.S. cities with a population over 250,000 was narrowed to the 16 cities closest to DC (eight above and eight below) in population density. (Washington, DC, has the ninth greatest population density in the nation, based on the 2000 Census.) Then, based on an extensive literature review, MPD selected variables that have been found to correlate with crime and clearance rates, MPD's most important performance indicators. The factors in the secondary analysis included socio-economic variables (e.g., poverty, unemployment, family structure, education, etc.), demographic variables (age composition of population), and law enforcement agency characteristics (officers per crime). Baltimore, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Newark, Oakland, and Philadelphia were found to be most similar to DC.

The Department is planning to update the analysis for selecting the benchmark cities in 2008 based on changing population trends and other factors. However, data availability is a concern. The initial analysis was based on Census data, which is only available every 10 years. In the meantime, the Census also provides data through the American Community Survey (ACS). In using the ACS data, researchers must weigh the relative value of timeliness versus accuracy. ACS data are available for most cities annually; the 2005 data was just released in November 2006. Beginning in 2008, the Census will release 3-year averages of the ACS data, and in 2010, 5-year averages will be released. These averages are very important as there are significant concerns about the accuracy of the annual ACS data. According to a 2002 report by the Government Accounting Office, "the annual ACS data and

EXHIBIT E – MPD MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT REPORT

3-year averages would be significantly less accurate than data for 2010 from the decennial census long form; 5-year averages . . . would be about as accurate as the long-form.”¹ Then Secretary of Commerce Don Evans acknowledged that there would be greater sampling error in the annual estimates, but noted that “the Census Bureau designed the ACS so that five years of aggregated data from ACS would replace the long form sample estimates.”² In weighing these data quality concerns against the value of revising the benchmarking and the resources necessary to conduct the analysis, it seemed a prudent decision to schedule this analysis for 2008, when at least the 3-year averages will be available.

The Department does not agree, however, with the recommended changes to the methodology. The OIG suggested a greater weighting of city population as well three new variables for the analysis – percent of households who do not have automobiles, percent of households without telephone service, and race. For one, the OIG’s assertion that MPD did not consider total population as a factor is not accurate. Indeed, total population was the first variable considered in selecting the initial cities to evaluate. However, MPD’s analysis did not limit the analysis solely to cities with a similar total population because patterns of settlement, e.g., population density, are more closely linked to crime rates than total population size. Secondly, while economic and social conditions are significant factors related to crime, MPD does not agree that the percent of households without telephone service or a vehicle for private use are more appropriate indicators of economic and social conditions than poverty and unemployment rates, family structure, and educational levels. Lastly, numerous studies have found that when other variables are held constant, race is not strongly correlated with crime.³ For instance, levels of concentrated poverty have been found to be an intervening variable that limits the correlation between crime and race.

The purpose of benchmarking is to find comparable situations, in this case cities, that have a majority of intervening factors in common (control for other independent variables) to determine if the treatment (the way we do policing compared to the way they do policing) makes a difference in the dependent variable (crime and closure rates). It is not the size that matters but the composition of the factors that contribute or mitigate crime that matters. Therefore the benchmark methodology should include variables found to correlate with

¹ Letter to Representatives Dave Weldon and Dan Miller, House of Representatives (September 30, 2002), from the General Accounting Office, on The American Community Survey: Accuracy and Timeliness Issues, page 2.

² IBID, page 31.

³ See also:

Avakame, Edem F. “Urban Homicide: A Multilevel Analysis Across Chicago’s Census Tracts,” *Homicide Studies*, November 1, 1997; 1(4): 338 - 358.

Krivo, Lauren J., and Ruth D. Peterson. “Extremely Disadvantaged Neighborhoods and Urban Crime,” *Social Forces*, Vol. 75, No. 2 (Dec., 1996), pp. 619-648.

Lee, Matthew R. “Concentrated Poverty, Race, and Homicide,” *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (2000), pp. 189-206.

Sampson, Robert J., and William Julius Wilson. “Toward a Theory of Race, Crime and Urban Inequality,” *Crime and Inequality*, edited by John Hagan and Ruth Petersen. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. 1995.

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crime. The variables selected for MPD's analysis were supported by the references listed in the attached methodology and other significant research. The Department is certainly open to modifying its methodology. Indeed, in the next analysis, we hope to include a new variable to reflect the significant impact of concentrated poverty. The Department will also look at the cities recommended by the OIG when the analysis is revised in 2008.

6. Evaluate the results of the OIG survey and, as appropriate, pursue areas that may warrant management's attention.

I agree with this recommendation. The Department is certainly interested in evaluating the responses to the survey. The Department's Research and Analysis Division will contact your staff about receiving all non-personal data collected as part of the survey.

7. Provide training to MPD VCB members to stay abreast of investigative methods and techniques.

I agree with this recommendation, and am committed to high quality training and on-going professional development for members. All homicide detectives attend a three week "homicide school" prior to becoming a homicide detective or an official assigned to homicide. Homicide detectives also attend an annual 40-hour training class that includes new procedures and methods. Additionally, MPD is working to develop an advanced homicide training class.

8. Make sufficient supplies, equipment, vehicles, and other resources available to the detectives to do their jobs.

I agree with this recommendation. Ensuring that MPD's members have the tools to provide high quality police service to the city is a top priority. Immediately upon becoming Chief of Police, I initiated a review of vehicle and cell phone distribution and use so that these key resources can be allocated to help meet top agency priorities. Reallocations are under way. In addition, I established *Chief Concerns*, an anonymous e-mail account opened only in my office. This direct means of communication allows me to keep a finger on the pulse of the Department, and to monitor issues that are of concern to our department's members. Many of the thousands of comments and suggestions I have received address issues that impede better customer service, including supply and equipment availability. My staff and I have read all of the thousands of emails I have received through this tool, and I have responded to several topics that emerged as themes. My responses are regularly published in MPD's daily *Dispatch* newsletter. Feedback from the department's members about this venue has been extremely positive as they see their concerns being addressed.

9. Establish a task force to identify and coordinate the electronic sharing of data and reports among all coordinating agencies.

I disagree with this recommendation as a coordinating body to accomplish this already exists. In 2001, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) was established in the District of Columbia. The CJCC serves as the forum for DC's criminal justice partners for identifying issues and their solutions, proposing actions, and facilitating cooperation that will improve public safety and the related criminal and juvenile justice services for District of Columbia residents, visitors, victims, and offenders. The members include the Chief of Police, the

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Chief Judge of the Superior Court, the Attorney General and US Attorney for the District of Columbia, and other agency directors. The CJCC draws upon local and federal agencies and individuals to develop recommendations and strategies for accomplishing this mission. Improving information sharing across the criminal justice system is one of the top priorities for the CJCC. For more information on the CJCC and its work, please visit its website at www.cjcc.dc.gov.

10. Review and update, as necessary, the mailing addresses of all MPD employees to ensure they are current.

I agree with this recommendation, however a sufficient process is already in place to accomplish it. The Department's Office of Human Services maintains the official personnel folders (OPFs) for all employees, as well as the two databases containing personnel information, the city's Human Resource Information System (HRIS) in PeopleSoft, and MPD's internal database. The residential addresses of members are maintained in both the PeopleSoft and internal OHS database. Although it would be preferable to maintain only one system, the citywide system does not accommodate unique MPD fields, such as duty status. All MPD members are required to update their residential addresses within 24 hours of a change of address by filing a Police Department Form 73 with their administrative personnel office. The form is forwarded to OHS for entry into PeopleSoft and the OHS database. In addition, all MPD employees are required to file a PD 73 each December to confirm their address and phone information. There may be a delay in updates to the system because parts of the process are still paper-driven. However, I believe the process is sufficient for the time being until more critical technology improvements are made.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Cathy L. Lanier
Chief of Police

Attachment

cc: The Honorable Adrian Fenty, Mayor
Dan Tangherlini, City Administrator

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Metropolitan Police Department Benchmarking Methodology

Overview

The Strategic Planning Unit of the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia (MPDC) developed a comprehensive methodology to select cities against which to benchmark MPDC performance. The methodology consists of two analyses and the results of the two analyses were combined into the final list of so-called “benchmark cities.”

Based on an extensive literature review, we first selected variables that have been found to correlate with crime, our most important performance indicator. We started with the list of cities similar in size to Washington, D.C. (cities over 250,000 population), and then narrowed down the list to a manageable number (14 in the first analysis and 16 in the second analysis) by using a second variable (ratio of officers to residents in the first analysis and population density in the second analysis). A full analysis of the narrowed list of cities was conducted using the remaining variables for which data was readily available. Cities received one point for each variable for which the value of the variable was among the six closest to that of Washington, D.C. The cities with the highest scores went into the pool of candidates for D.C.’s final benchmark cities.

The two analyses differed largely in the weight given to the “department strength” factor. In the first analysis, the ratio of officers to residents was used as the variable used to narrow the list of cities from 66 to 14 for the full analysis. In addition, ratio of officers to Part 1 crimes was a factor in the full analysis. The weight given to department strength in the first analysis reflected what might be considered an East Coast and Midwest bias. Residents demand a uniformed police presence in the neighborhoods and local governments respond by budgeting to maintain and sometimes increase sworn strength. Recognizing department strength as a policy choice that not all cities make, in particular West Coast cities, we decided to do a second analysis. The second analysis reduced the weight given to department strength; only one department strength variable was used—ratio of officers to Part 1 crimes—and population density—an important, though neutral, characteristic of an urban city—replaced ratio of officers to residents as the variable used to narrow down the original list of 66 cities.

The first analysis resulted in the following six cities, in descending order of number of factors similar to D.C.:

1. Philadelphia
2. Baltimore
3. Newark
4. Boston
5. Milwaukee
6. Buffalo

The second analysis resulted in a slightly different list of six cities:

1. Chicago
2. Boston
3. Oakland
4. Baltimore
5. Buffalo
6. Philadelphia

The two lists were combined into the final list of benchmark cities:

1. Chicago

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2. Boston
3. Oakland
4. Baltimore
5. Buffalo
6. Philadelphia
7. Newark

Milwaukee was omitted because it did not rank in the 16 cities most similar to D.C. in terms of population density and therefore was not a subject of the second analysis, the methodology of which was ultimately thought to be more objective.

Initial City Selection

First Analysis. The cities included in the first analysis were selected based on their population and number of officers per 100,000 population. Of the 66 U.S. cities with a population over 250,000, we selected the 14 cities that had the highest ratio of officers to residents:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Washington, DC | 9. New Orleans, LA |
| 2. Philadelphia, PA | 10. Atlanta, GA |
| 3. Buffalo, NY | 11. Cleveland, OH |
| 4. Baltimore, MD | 12. Detroit, MI |
| 5. New York, NY | 13. Chicago, IL |
| 6. Newark, NJ | 14. Cincinnati, OH |
| 7. St. Louis, MO | 15. Milwaukee, WI |
| 8. Boston, MA | |

Second Analysis. The cities included in the second analysis were selected based on their population and population density. Of the 66 U.S. cities with a population over 250,000, Washington, DC, has the ninth greatest population density. We selected the cities that were closest to (eight above and eight below) the District of Columbia in population density (in order of descending population density):

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. New York City, NY | 10. Long Beach, CA |
| 2. San Francisco, CA | 11. Baltimore, MD |
| 3. Chicago, IL | 12. Los Angeles, CA |
| 4. Santa Ana, CA | 13. Buffalo, NY |
| 5. Boston, MA | 14. Oakland, CA |
| 6. Newark, NJ | 15. Minneapolis, MN |
| 7. Philadelphia, PA | 16. Detroit, MI |
| 8. Miami, FL | 17. Seattle, WA |
| 9. Washington, DC | |

Part I Crime Variables

After an extensive literature review, we identified several variables that are widely acknowledged to have an impact on Part I crime rates (FBI 2000). These variables combine concepts from both *social disorganization* or *external control* theories (Agnew, 1999; Krivo and Peterson, 1996; Miethe, Hughes, and McDowell, 1991; Sampson, 1995; Sampson and Groves, 1989; and Shaw and McKay, 1969) and *motivation* or *internal control* theories (Agnew 1999;

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Blau and Blau, 1982; Freeman, 1995; and Merton, 1938). We also included a variable of age composition (Blumstein 2001; and Steffensmeier and Harer, 1999) to address offender patterns. Lastly, we included a variable related to the relative strength of the police department. In addition to providing a measure of a city's *ability to respond to crime*, this also serves as an indicator of the city's *willingness to fund* crime control.

Social Disorganization

1. Family Structure: Percent of households with female householder, no husband present (2000 Census)
2. Urbanization: Housing unit density per square mile of land area (2000 Census)
3. Population Mobility: Percent of occupied housing units that are renter-occupied (2000 Census)
4. Economic Status: Percent of individuals below poverty level (2000 Census)

Motivation

5. Economic/Job Adversity: Percent of civilian labor force unemployed (2000 Census)
6. Economic Inequality of Racial Groups: Percentage of the income of the racial subgroup with the highest median income earned by the racial subgroup with the lowest median [% = lowest median income / highest median income] (2000 Census)
7. Education: percent of population 25 years old and over with a high school degree or higher (2000 Census)

Other

8. Age Composition: Percent of population in 15 to 24 year old cohort (2000 Census)
9. Department Strength: Number of full-time sworn personnel per 1,000 Part I crimes (2000 Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics, and 2000 Crime in the United States, FBI)

A Note on Clearance Rates

The MPD attempted to conduct a different analysis to independently identify a list of cities for the purpose of benchmarking clearance rates, because the factors that impact clearance rates are different than the factors that impact crime. The obstacles to this analysis were too great, however. Ultimately we decided to use the same benchmark cities for clearance rates as we used for crime.

Selecting variables for clearance rate benchmarking was far more challenging than for Part I crime. There is little research in general on clearance rates, and most of it relates specifically to homicides. Secondly, finding reliable indicators for those variables was also challenging. The literature generally concluded that clearance rates correlate with the characteristics of the jurisdiction, law enforcement agency, and crime (type, location, victim and offender traits, etc.). For instance, research found that a homicide was less likely to be cleared if the offender was a drug dealer. However, there is little reliable data on offenders, only on arrestees, and that which is available is generally not reported by city. Also, most police departments do not have a

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consistent method for collecting data on the agency characteristics that were found to correlate with clearance rates, such as the methods of the criminal investigation.

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