



## Public Opinion Survey

As established in the Business Plan, Durham Regional Police endeavours to consult, on a regular basis, with the citizens it serves. We ask our customers about their perceptions of safety, the quality of service they receive and other important community safety questions.

Our public opinion survey in late 2007 came up with very similar results to our Region-wide surveys in 2004 and 2002:

- 93 per cent of citizens feel safe always or most of the time
- 86 per cent were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the quality of police service they receive
- 79 per cent thought police were approachable always or most of the time
- 79 per cent felt police were fair always or most of the time
- 69 per cent said police were available when needed always or most of the time





## Public Complaints

The rate of public complaints received in 2008 remained at historically low levels considering the nature of the business and the volume of calls every year.

In 2008, there were 108 public complaints received, nine more than the year before. This represents one public complaint for every 1,125 Calls for Service. Each complaint is taken seriously and is investigated either by the supervisor on duty or the Professional Standards Unit.

The majority of complaints are quickly resolved after an initial discussion with supervisors. Many complaints are found to be unsubstantiated or unfounded after initial investigation. In some instances, further follow up is required. If the complaint is found to have merit, the consequence for an Officer can range from a verbal reprimand to outright dismissal.

In most police services, the most frequent public complaints involve allegations of improper language, rudeness or poor attitude amongst police officers. Of the 108 complaints received in 2008, 16 involved allegations of Excessive Use of Force, 49 involved allegations of Discreditable Conduct and 33 involved allegations of Neglect of Duty. By the end of the year, 42 of the complaints were withdrawn by the citizen and 39 were determined to be either unsubstantiated or deemed vexatious or made in bad faith.

## The Special Investigations Unit

Every year, police officers across Ontario inevitably find themselves in life-threatening or dangerous situations while on duty. From Emotionally Disturbed Person calls to domestic incidents, police officers are trained to use various levels of force and how much force is appropriate.

In Ontario, when a person is seriously injured or killed during any police call, the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) must be notified.

In 2008, the SIU were called to Durham Region 10 times and invoked their mandate eight times. The officer's actions were justified in every investigation and no charges were laid. In fact, the SIU commented several times about the high level of cooperation and professionalism their investigators received from our police officers.

