

Quarterly Report – Q4 2020

New contacts and investigations level out after summer spike

In the final quarter of 2020, new community contacts and IPR investigations returned to lower and more manageable levels. After the second quarter spike in community contacts that led to a third quarter spike in new investigations conducted by IPR, contacts fell to 91 in the fourth quarter and new investigations decreased to nine. The number of complaints about police response to protests also decreased to five in the fourth quarter compared to 45 in the third.

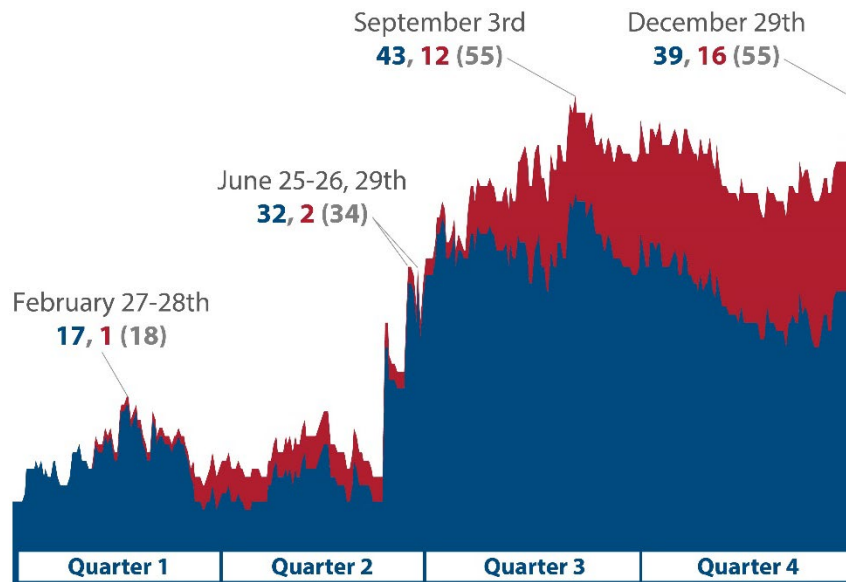
New **independent investigations** and **community contacts** return to normal levels



Workload remains abnormally high

IPR investigators conduct two types of investigations: intake investigations and full independent investigations. Community contacts that allege misconduct are opened as intake investigations to gather more facts and determine the best way to handle the complaint. Investigators have 14 days to gather evidence, request and review reports, interview witnesses, draft allegations, and write a report on their findings. If an intake investigation does not conclusively determine that no misconduct occurred, a full independent investigation is opened and assigned to an investigator for 70 days.

Independent and intake investigations increase workload



The workloads of IPR investigators remained high in the fourth quarter despite the decrease in new contacts and investigations. The average number of active intake investigations per day decreased slightly from 36 in the third quarter to 30 in the fourth, but active independent investigations nearly doubled from nine to 16. These numbers, combined with understaffing, have resulted in multiple investigators continually exceeding their full workload capacity.

Spike in cases exposes insufficiencies

The influx of complaints and increase in investigations in quarters two and three led to an unsustainable workload for IPR. The workload, combined with the unique nature of protest related complaints, helped us learn that the current system is poorly equipped to handle this kind of surge. Sustained community interest in police response to protests led to many complaints about unidentifiable officers and complainants that didn't respond to our contact attempts.

IPR made many adaptations to respond to the increased workload. One investigator was assigned the permanent role of receiving and logging community contacts, instead of the normal process where investigators rotate this duty. Another investigator was put in charge of collecting relevant reports, making records requests, and following up with the Bureau to ensure requests were filled. Changes were also made to how cases are assigned to investigators and methods were streamlined for responding to contacts that didn't include allegations of misconduct.

The barriers involved in these types of cases point to the need for a different function of oversight that would make evidence collection more efficient and reliable, such as body cameras for officers responding to protests and direct access to Bureau reports for IPR investigators.