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City Services Benchmarking: Police Staffing

CITY & COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Office of the Controller
City Services Auditor, City Performance

June 10, 2015



**CONTROLLER'S OFFICE
CITY SERVICES AUDITOR**

The City Services Auditor was created within the Controller's Office through an amendment to the City Charter that was approved by voters in November 2003. Under Appendix F to the City Charter, the City Services Auditor has broad authority for:

- Reporting on the level and effectiveness of San Francisco's public services and benchmarking the city to other public agencies and jurisdictions.
- Conducting financial and performance audits of city departments, contractors, and functions to assess efficiency and effectiveness of processes and services.
- Operating a whistleblower hotline and website and investigating reports of waste, fraud, and abuse of city resources.
- Ensuring the financial integrity and improving the overall performance and efficiency of city government.

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Summary

The City and County of San Francisco Charter requires the City Services Auditor (CSA) to monitor the level and effectiveness of City services. Specifically, CSA shall review performance and cost benchmarks and conduct comparisons of the cost and performance of San Francisco City government with other cities, counties, and public agencies performing similar functions.

This report compares police staffing of San Francisco to that of nine other peer city's police departments. We developed and sent surveys to 15 identified peers and received responses from the following police departments:

- Austin, TX
- Chicago, IL
- Dallas, TX
- Denver, CO
- Minneapolis, MN
- Oakland, CA
- Portland, OR
- San Diego, CA
- Seattle, WA

The analysis in this report is based on survey responses from peer police departments, U.S. Census data, and federally-reported crime data.

Population and Crime

From 2004 to 2014, the resident population of San Francisco increased almost 12 percent. During the same time period the number of San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) sworn officers decreased three percent. The rate of sworn officers per 100,000 residents declined 13 percent from 265 sworn officers per 100,000 residents in 2004 to 230 sworn officers in 2014.

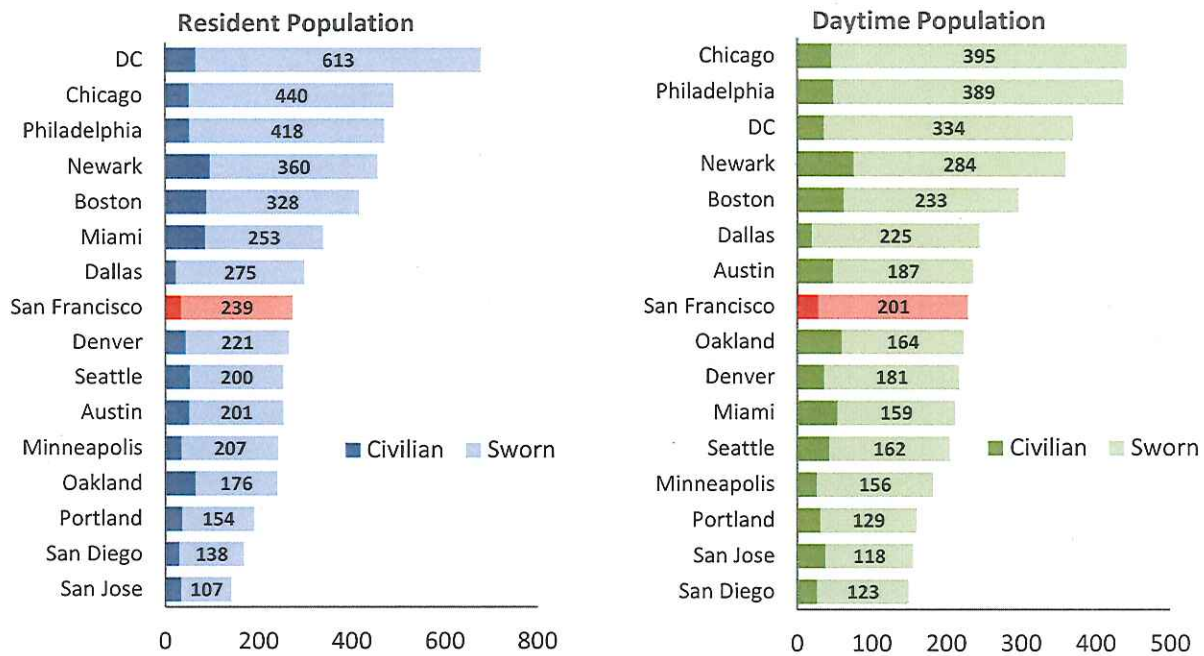
San Francisco's total crime rate (violent and property) per resident and daytime population in 2013 was second highest among its survey peers. While San Francisco's violent crime rate falls in the middle of its peers and is only slightly above the national average for cities with populations over 350,000, its property crime rate is second highest, only lower than Oakland, in the survey group.

Police Staffing Levels

San Francisco's sworn staffing levels per 100,000 residents (239 officers) and daytime population (201 officers) are lower than the peer group averages (271 and 215 officers, respectively). San Francisco is the most densely populated city within the peer group and is relatively densely staffed by sworn officers per square mile. Compared to peers, however, San Francisco falls below the peer trend line for number of sworn officers per square mile.

However, as seen in the chart on the next page, there is a wide range of staffing levels per 100,000 residents and daytime population in the peer survey group. Chicago, Philadelphia, and Washington DC have significantly higher sworn staffing levels than most other peers and San Francisco; San Jose, San Diego, and Portland have the lowest staffing levels in the peer survey group.

San Francisco's Sworn Staffing Levels per 100,000 Resident and Daytime Population fall in the middle of the peer group but below the peer average



Source: FBI UCR, U.S. Census Bureau, Peer Survey

Police departments utilize civilian staff for non-policing, technical, and administrative functions. San Francisco has 0.14 civilians for every one sworn officer, lower than most peers as well as the national average for cities with populations over 350,000 (0.29 civilians per one sworn officer.)

Police Staffing Spending

While San Francisco has the highest average salary and benefits per sworn officer, \$174,799, it is only third highest when this average is adjusted by the Cost of Living Index. San Francisco's overtime spending for civilian and sworn staffing falls in the middle of the peer group. SFPD's worker's compensation spending per civilian and sworn staff is higher than its peers, though its workers' compensation spending as a percent of salary spending is third highest.

Other Police Staffing Metrics

San Francisco is among the middle number of Priority A and Priority B calls per resident and has a slightly lower number of Priority A calls per sworn officer compared to peers. San Francisco is the only police department in the peer group that responded to the survey who employs relatively more Hispanic or Latino staff than there are Hispanic or Latino residents in the City (+.04 percent difference). Though San Francisco has a proportionally larger Asian or Pacific Islander resident population than other peer cities, SFPD's largest differential of police race to resident race is in this category (-11.6 percent difference).