



# 2023 Sworn Engagement Session Analysis

MPD Implementation Unit

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# Table of Contents

- 1. INTRODUCTION ..... 3
- 2. METHODOLOGY ..... 3
- 3. KEY FINDINGS..... 4
- 4. LEARNINGS AND ACTIONS TO CONSIDER ..... 7
  - 4.1. POLICY ACCESSIBILITY AND CLARITY .....7
  - 4.2. STREAMLINING PROCESSES AND IMPROVING DEFINITIONS .....7
  - 4.3. FOSTERING EFFECTIVE TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION CHANNELS.....8
- 5. CONCLUSION..... 8
- 6. DISCLAIMER ..... 9

## 1. Introduction

In September and October 2023, the Minneapolis Police Department conducted a series of twenty-seven officer and sergeant/lieutenant specific engagement sessions to receive feedback and guidance on policy changes. These sessions were aimed at fostering a productive dialogue between the Command Staff and officers on the street. The Department utilized the newly created Implementation Unit as facilitators and notetakers for these sessions.

The sessions were broken apart covering multiple topics and focused on reaching sworn individuals at multiple sessions per day to allow each shift to have a voice. Sessions focused on Use of Force policies, Stops, Searches, Citations, and Arrests (SSCA), Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals and Non-Discriminatory/Impartial Policing. These sessions were hosted at multiple precincts and shifts to ensure each officer had an opportunity to ask questions, share grievances, and expand on visions for a stronger Department.

This analysis delves into the wealth of information gathered during these sessions, offering an in-depth examination of the themes, concerns, and aspirations voiced by the sworn members. As we navigate the findings, it becomes evident that these critical pieces of feedback not only unearth challenges for the Department, but also unveil opportunities and moments of greatness that will spur transformative change within law enforcement practices, ensuring a more responsive, and community-centric approach by the MPD.

## 2. Methodology

Utilizing five days of sworn specific engagement sessions at multiple locations, the Minneapolis Police Department worked to ensure a broad spectrum of its members. The sessions were facilitated by the MPD Implementation Unit, comprised of both civilian and sworn members. Typically, three 2-hour periods per day hosted allowed members to ask questions and give feedback at a time and place that was convenient to them.

The MPD broke apart the twenty-seven sessions covering: 1) Use of Force, 2) Stops, Searches, Citations, and Arrests, and 3) Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals and Non-Discriminatory/Impartial Policing. Each of these topic areas were discussed at all sessions; however, the first set focused on Use of Force policies and the second set on the remainder. At the conclusion of these sessions, the MPD notetaker provided the broader Unit with copies of all the notes transcribed during these sessions for analysis.

The MPD utilized its newly formed Implementation Unit, a primarily civilian team, to analyze these notes over the coming weeks. During this time, the Unit members worked tirelessly to catalogue and identify potential action items from over the two hundred pieces of feedback received. At no point was any portion of the feedback notes disregarded, and each piece of feedback was read and reviewed by multiple members of the Unit. The Unit operated on the following timeline to accomplish the large task of entering, cataloging, and analyzing the provided data:

Primary Step	Secondary	Assigned	Reviewed and Entered
Review and Enter Notes	First Four Days	Dec. 11 <sup>th</sup>	Dec. 15 <sup>th</sup>
	Second Four Days	Dec. 18 <sup>th</sup>	Jan. 5 <sup>th</sup>
Data Integrity/Analysis		Dec. 11 <sup>th</sup>	Jan. 10 <sup>th</sup>
Session Analysis Findings White Paper			Jan. 12 <sup>th</sup>

The Unit utilized both qualitative and quantitative measures where possible to guide the findings and potential action items to consider. Regardless, if an action item could be prescribed to a piece of feedback, the Unit made sure all pieces of feedback were read, analyzed, and where possible, incorporated into future policy amendments, and will continue to do so.

To catalogue the pieces of feedback garnered, the Implementation Unit sorted pieces of feedback into the following primary topic areas, allowing each piece of feedback to be tagged into multiple areas:

- **Accountability:** ways to improve officer oversight or holding individuals responsible
- **Collaboration:** focused on ways to solve these problems together through partnerships
- **Community Education:** improving community knowledge around policing, MPD resources, and MPD practices
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** comments focused on improving cultural sensitivity and empathy or general DEI efforts
- **Engagement:** ways MPD can or should engage with the community
- **Facilitator:** comments from the facilitator that were reiterating or asking a clarifying question
- **Mental Health:** feedback around the mental wellbeing of both community members and officers
- **Miscellaneous:** comments that were off topic or unrelated, such as a participant saying “Sorry” to another participant
- **Narrative:** a story or personal experience from a community member
- **Policy:** feedback that contained a policy recommendation or sentiment about an existing policy
- **Recruitment:** ways the Department should consider its recruitment efforts and the types of officers the MPD should be recruiting
- **Technology:** feedback around the use of technology in providing policing services
- **Training:** suggestions or comments about the type and quality of training for officers
- **Union:** commentary about the Police Federation and the impact the Union has on Minneapolis policing
- **Wellness:** feedback focused on improving the officer safety net to ensure they are cared for

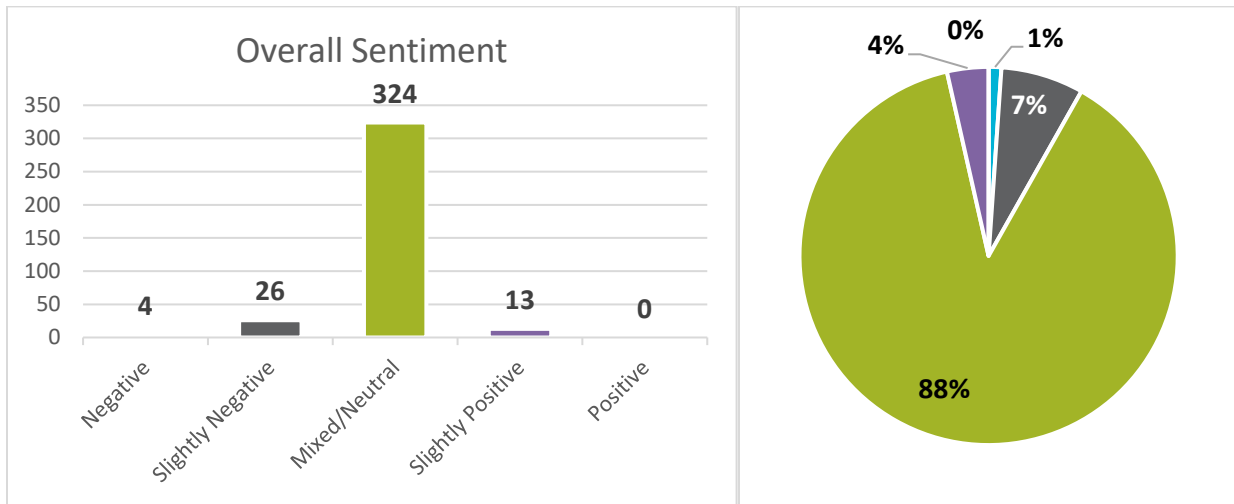
### 3. Key Findings

Utilizing these definitions, in the below table, “Feedback Category”, the Unit found the sessions were well focused on the policy discussion overall with training, accountability, and engagement following. We notice that the use of stories to communicate the community members’ sentiment about policing was also used to a great extent.



It is important to notice that central to improving the Department is the support and engagement with the community to allow their guidance in becoming one they deserve and can be proud of. During these sessions, the sworn members provided over two hundred twenty five pieces of feedback that could lead to an action item for the Department to consider.

These sessions had an overwhelmingly negative tone highlighting the skepticism of sworn members about this process and what it means for their careers. The Department has in rebuilding trust within its ranks as it handles this extremely sensitive and polarizing agreement.



These sessions had a resounding focus on improving and clarifying policy, providing guidance and information about the document, and clarification and guidance on important trainings.

An overarching concern highlighted the lack of clarity between Chief Memos and Policy updates, which led to questions about how sworn members would be held accountable to conflicting language. As part of this, they are looking for a more accessible policy document with a better search system. The current lengthy PDF methods were found to be too wordy and difficult to navigate.

Sworn staff also expressed confusion about specific terms, such as “body weight to pin” and sought clearer definitions of various types of force. They emphasized that there is a risk to both the officer and general public safety posed by ambiguous verbiage. Another unclear term was the “striking near a hard surface,” and requested for refined definitions to better determine the thresholds for use of force.

Members also called for enhanced training strategies, advocating for more in-person sessions rather than solely relying on digital dissemination. Officers emphasized the need for supervisors to be trained ahead of their teams, followed by officer’s training, with a clear confirmation of policy acknowledgment by each officer.

The feedback also shows a light on logistical challenges, including difficulties meeting all the existing and incoming requirements with limited staff, redundancy in data entry, and the necessity for streamlined information channels during emergency situations. Officers expressed concerns about the policy’s practicality in the field, particularly its impact on tactical decisions and the potential consequences of policy modifications on officer’s safety and job effectiveness. There were also calls for clearer guidelines for reporting and more effective communication channels within the department.

Overall, the feedback emphasized the importance of transparent and coherent policies, easily accessible training, and streamlined communication channels which would help drive both public and officer safety.

## 4. Learnings and Actions to Consider

In this learning endeavor, the Department has numerous potential actions it can consider helping it in its improvement process. The sworn members are providing the Department clear direction that the way it is currently operating is not sufficiently meeting expectations and should focus its efforts in three key improvement areas: Policy Accessibility and Clarity, Streamlining Process and Definitions, and Effective Training and Communication Channels. Note this feedback section did not dive deep into facility concerns that have been present in other conversations because the conversations were more focused on the policy changes within the Settlement Agreement versus general feedback for the command staff.

### 4.1. Policy Accessibility and Clarity

Officers urgently emphasize the need for increased accessibility and clarity in departmental policies. They propose integrating updated information alongside the Chiefs' memos for better context, ensuring easier access and comprehension for all officers. Clear, understandable policies are demanded, with a specific focus on explaining verbiage levels and detailing incidents involving near hard surfaces. For example, members requested these potential considerations:

- Integrate updated information with Chief's memos
- Ensure accessibility for all officers
- Create clear and understandable policies
- Define use of force levels for practical understanding
- Detail incidents involving near hard surfaces for clarity
- Clarification on pat-frisk policy as it relates to transportation

However, policy is not the be all and end all in improving the Department, but rather the starting point.

### 4.2. Streamlining Processes and Improving Definitions

Officers advocate for streamlined processes and clearer definitions in policies for practical application. They highlight the importance of concise initial policy drafts for smoother introduction and better comprehension. Enhanced explanations for new policies and improved recruitment strategies are crucial. Additionally, officers aim for smoother data input, updated information systems, and centralized notifications for all stakeholders. As examples, attendees found these potential actions to consider:

- Develop concise initial policy drafts
- Provide comprehensive explanations for new policies with real world examples
- Enhance recruitment strategies
- Simplify reporting/data input processes
- Update and centralize information systems and notifications

Streamlining process is just one component that helps build a data driven department that balances the needs for data capture but also the highly demanding situations the city needs them to.

### 4.3. Fostering Effective Training and Communication Channels

Officers stress the need for effective training and communication channels to ensure policy understanding and compliance. In-person training sessions on high-risk policies are essential, along with consistent, clear communication channels between the Chief, federation, and union. They highlight the importance of defining terms within policies and educating officers on government levels that impact their work. From the feedback notes, the MPD should consider the following actions:

- Conduct regular in-person trainings on high-risk policies
- Establish clear communication channels from leadership and various stakeholders such as:
  - Command Staff
  - Federation
  - Officers
- Define terms within policies for better comprehension
- Educate officers on government levels impacting their work
- Ensure timely and effective communication regarding policy changes

Training with proper communication is just one component that helps build a resilient department of employees that are equipped to handle the highly demanding situations the city needs them to.

## 5. Conclusion

The officers' perspectives offer invaluable insights into crucial improvements necessary within the department's policies and training procedures. The unanimous call for enhanced accessibility and clarity in policies reflects a shared need for updated, clearer guidelines. Integrating current information alongside the Chiefs' memos stands as a practical suggestion to provide context and relevance, ensuring officers understand the implications of policy changes. The demand for comprehensible policies and elucidating verbiage levels highlights the urgency of simplifying complex language for practical application in the field, aiming to prevent misinterpretation and confusion.

Streamlining processes emerges as another critical aspect requiring immediate attention. Officers advocate for concise initial drafts to facilitate smoother policy introductions and comprehension. Additionally, their call for streamlined data input, updated information systems, and centralized notifications underscores the necessity of efficient, user-friendly procedures for accessing and disseminating crucial information. These proposed changes could vastly improve workflow efficiency and reduce potential misunderstandings caused by scattered or complex data systems.

Furthermore, the officers' emphasis on fostering effective training methodologies and robust communication channels reflects their dedication to understanding and implementing policy changes accurately. In-person training sessions on high-risk policies, coupled with transparent communication channels between key stakeholders, highlight the need for continuous education and collaboration. Defining terms within policies and educating officers on governmental impacts showcases the officers' desire for a deeper comprehension of the operational context and the broader implications of their actions.

In conclusion, officers' insights underscore the urgent need for comprehensive reforms to enhance policy accessibility, streamline processes, and foster effective training and communication. The shared goal is to create a more coherent, accessible, and practical policy framework that aligns with operational needs while ensuring clarity



and compliance. Implementing these recommendations could significantly enhance the department's effectiveness, efficiency, and officer preparedness in executing their duties while fostering a culture of transparency and clarity.

## 6. Disclaimer

While transparency and access to data is important, we are limited in our ability to publish all the actual comments we received to preserve the privacy of those people who comment.