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## 2009-2011

# Summary of Police Services Survey

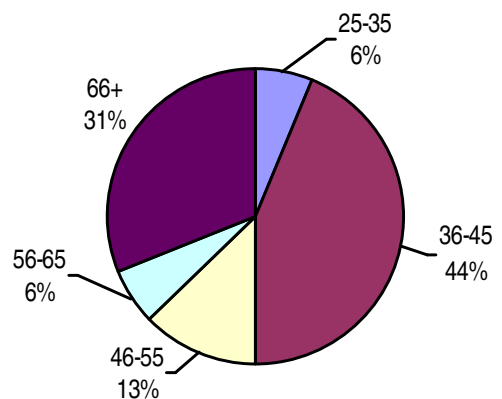
During January 2006, the Carroll County Sheriff's Office began accepting random surveys of residents from our web page, during public meetings and from our lobby. The survey allows residents and guests to provide a report card on how deputies interact with the public in the performance of duties. Second, it allows individuals who live, work or travel through Carroll County to voice concerns about the Sheriff's Office or quality of life issues in the community. The following report contains an overview of the past three (3) years of survey information, providing a limited perspective of how the Office, employees and local quality of life are perceived by the public.

### Demographic Information

Since January 2009, the Carroll County Sheriff's Office has received sixteen (16) completed questionnaires, this is six (6) less than submitted during the previous three year cycle when twenty-two (22) were received. Further, only two (2) were submitted without solicitation, one by postal mail during January 2009 and the second by email during April 2009. The remaining fourteen (14) were solicited during community meetings; six (6) were returned after the Freedom Area Citizens Council Meeting during September 2009 and, eight (8) were returned following the South Carroll Crime Prevention Symposium during April 2010. No questionnaire's have been received since 2010.

Each of the survey's submitted were completed by county residents – none were received by persons living outside of Carroll County. With the exception of a single survey submitted by a Taneytown resident, all of the surveys were submitted by residents from Southeast Carroll County. Once again, South Carroll residents submitted the greatest number of questionnaires, fifteen (15). Those persons aged 36-45 and aged 66+ represented the largest number of survey participants, thirteen (13) in total. Just one resident aged 24-35, two aged 46-55, submitted surveys.

Age of Survey Participants



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## Nature & Quality of Contact

Survey participants are asked what event initiated their contact with the Sheriff's Office. During this summary period three (3) were crime victims, one (1) spoke with staff by telephone, one (1) was stopped by a deputy for a traffic violation and the remaining thirteen (13) had non-service related contact with a deputy during a community meeting. Survey participants rated the Sheriff's Office overall performance as "Good to Excellent"; one rating of "Poor" was submitted by the participant stopped for a traffic violation.

With the exception of one participant, Sheriff's personnel were given high marks in "Attitude, Competence, Appearance, Performance and Response Time", One (1) participant rated the deputy they contacted as having a "Poor" attitude toward the public, further details described the deputy as "arrogant" and a poor listener. This survey was submitted through email by the participant stopped for a traffic violation. Further inquiry was attempted by email, but no reply was received by the participant. However, the participant did indicate in the survey that the Sheriff's Office should increase its traffic enforcement efforts. No further information is available.

## Perceptions of Public Safety

Thirteen (13) persons submitting surveys had no contact with the Sheriff's Office prior to the survey, but still decided to express their concerns about public safety and quality of life. All of the participants felt "Safe to Very Safe" in their home at night, and walking through their neighborhood during the day. Only one (1) participant felt unsafe in their neighborhood at night. This represents a 22% increase in feelings of safety over the previous three year cycle.

When asked what the greatest threat to local public safety and quality of life was, participants overwhelmingly cited drugs and drug related crime committed by strangers or loitering juveniles. While half of participants felt that crime had increased in Carroll County from the previous year, all participants felt that Carroll County was safe overall. Traffic congestion was also a concern, with two (2) participants listing this as an area for improved performance. This is a 60% decrease over the previous three (3) year survey cycle.

## Summary

Overwhelmingly participants felt safe in their neighborhood and throughout the county. Likewise, participants again rated the attitude, competence and responsiveness of Sheriff's Office personnel as good or excellent. In fact, when asked what they liked best about the Carroll County Sheriff's Office, participants complimented staff as being "friendly, flexible, easily reached and for community involvement and, fast response." Several participants requested the Sheriff's Office provide additional deputies to patrol neighborhoods and schools, and to increase coverage of Office activities and programs. While the information this information is a useful performance measure, use of the Police Services Survey continues to be limited. Unfortunately the sixteen survey's evaluated herein is not a representative sampling of our 169,000 residents. Of greater concern is that no completed surveys were received during 2011. A test of the web site was conducted and the on line submittal process found to be working. It is recommended that consideration be given to funding a representative mailing, providing the survey to complainants following a deputy response, or at minimum conducting a media outreach campaign regarding the survey's availability on the Office web site.

