



PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE POLICE, DPPs AND THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

REPORT BASED ON THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD MODULE OF THE JANUARY 2012 OMNIBUS SURVEY

PUBLISHED BY THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

Public Perceptions of the Police, DPPs and the Northern Ireland Policing Board

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THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD: WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Northern Ireland Policing Board is an independent public body whose job it is oversee policing in Northern Ireland. It was set up on 4 November 2001 as a result of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. The Policing Board consists of 19 Members and comprises Political Members and Independent Members who have been appointed by the Justice Minister.

The main role of the Policing Board is to ensure that the Police Service of Northern Ireland is effective and efficient. The Policing Board holds the Chief Constable to account for all his actions and those of his staff. This means that the Chief Constable must answer to the Policing Board on any aspect of policing in Northern Ireland. However, the Policing Board cannot, and does not, direct or control the Chief Constable. He has the right to take independent policing decisions based only on the need to uphold law and order. This is called operational responsibility. But he must in turn answer for his actions to the Policing Board. This process is what effective accountability is all about.

The Board must also keep itself informed as to:

- Trends and patterns in recruitment to the police and the police support staff; and
- The extent to which membership of the police and support staff is representative of the community in Northern Ireland;

and assess:

- The effectiveness of measures taken to secure that the membership of the police service is representative of the community; and
- The level of public satisfaction with the performance of the police and the District Policing Partnerships (DPPs)*.

In order to gauge public satisfaction and consider the views of the public on policing, the Policing Board conducts a programme of consultation and research of activities involving a range of groups and organisations. The results of this consultation and research are published by the Policing Board to ensure openness and transparency, and to advise the public of its findings.

^{*} Policing and Community Safety Partnerships were established on 1 April 2012 and will integrate the role of DPPs.

January 2012 Omnibus Survey

The Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey is conducted several times each year by the Central Survey Unit of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) and is designed to provide a snapshot of the behaviour, lifestyle and views of a representative sample of people in Northern Ireland. The survey comprises two distinct parts: core questions about the respondents and their individual circumstances, and a variety of mainly attitudinal questions commissioned by clients, which seek the views of the public on a range of issues, including policing.

The sample for this survey consisted of a random sample of addresses selected from the Land and Property Services Agency list of private addresses, the most up-to-date listing of private households in Northern Ireland. At each address, one person aged 16 or over was selected to participate in the survey. From an eligible sample of 1,919 households, 1,141 interviews were achieved, giving a response rate of 59%. Interviews were conducted between 2 January and 4 February 2012. Analyses by religion are based only on those 1,033 respondents who said they were either Catholic or Protestant. Respondents who refused to answer the religion question or who said they were a religion other than Catholic or Protestant are excluded from these analyses.

The Northern Ireland Policing Board uses Omnibus Survey results to fulfil its responsibilities under Section 3 (3) (d) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 to *"assess the level of public satisfaction with the performance of the police and of district policing partnerships"*.

The following symbols are used in the accompanying results tables:

Category not applicable	_	Cell is empty
Category result less than 0.5%	_	Cell contains a zero ("0")

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Statistical significance

Statistical significance tests have been carried out on the findings between the September 2010 and January 2012 Northern Ireland Omnibus Surveys. These tests are used to establish the degree of confidence with which we can infer the observed findings as an accurate reflection of the views of the population. In this publication,

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where differences have emerged as being statistically significant, this has been reported at the 5% (p<0.05) level of probability (two-tailed). This means that, for any observed result that is found to be statistically significant, one can be 95% confident that this has not happened by chance. Such statistically significant results are clearly noted in the text above each table.

PERFORMANCE OF THE POLICE

Q1. How do you rate the job the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) do in your area?

In January 2012, less than three out of five respondents (59%) thought that the police were doing a very/fairly good job in their area, similar to the September 2010 finding (Table 1). One in six respondents (16%) rated the performance of their local police as very/fairly poor, a decrease from 18% in September 2010. More Protestant respondents (64%) thought that the PSNI does a very/fairly good job in their area than Catholic respondents (54%). The proportion of Protestant respondents who stated that the PSNI does a very/fairly poor job in their area fell from 16% in September 2010 to 14% in January 2012.

Table 1: Performanc	e of lo	cal po	lice									
					Percer	ntage of	f respo	ndents				
	20	09 (Ap	ril)	2009	(Septer	mber)	2010	(Septer	nber)	201	2 (Janu	ary)
Rating	С	Ρ	All	С	Ρ	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All
Very/fairly good	59	69	64	55	57	56	57	61	58	54	64	59
Neither good nor poor	24	14	18	19	18	19	21	21	21	26	22	24
Very/fairly poor	16	15	16	24	23	23	20	16	18	19	14	16
Don't know/refusal	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	0	1

Q2. Do you think that the PSNI does a good job or a poor job in Northern Ireland as a whole?

In January 2012, over two out of three respondents (69%) thought that the PSNI was doing a very/fairly good job in Northern Ireland as a whole, an increase from 67% in September 2010 (Table 2). One in nine respondents (11%) thought that the PSNI was doing a very/fairly poor job in Northern Ireland as a whole, a decrease from 13% in September 2010. More Protestant respondents (73%) thought that the PSNI was doing a very/fairly good job in Northern Ireland as a whole than Catholic respondents (63%).

Table 2: Performanc	e of po	olice in	North	ern Ire	land a	s a wh	ole						
					Percer	ntage of	f respo	ndents					
	20	2009 (April) 2009 (September) 2010 (September) 2012 (January)											
Rating	С	Ρ	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	
Very/fairly good	67	79	73	61	65	63	62	73	67	63	73	69	
Neither good nor poor	18	11	14	19	16	17	22	15	18	23	16	19	
Very/fairly poor	13	10	11	21	17	19	14	12	13	12	11	11	
Don't know/refusal	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	

Q3. How satisfied are you that the PSNI treat members of the public fairly in Northern Ireland as a whole?

In January 2012, over two out of three respondents (68%) were very/fairly satisfied that the PSNI treat members of the public fairly in Northern Ireland as a whole, while one in eight respondents (12%) were very/fairly dissatisfied (Table 3). More Protestant respondents (74%) thought that the PSNI treat members of the public fairly in Northern Ireland as a whole than Catholic respondents (62%). One in six Catholic respondents (15%) were very/fairly dissatisfied that the PSNI treat members of the public fairly in Northern Ireland as a whole, compared with one in twelve Protestant respondents (8%).

Table 3: Satisfaction that PS	NI tre	eat m	embe	rs of th	ne pub	lic fair	ly in l	Northe	ern Irela	nd as	s a wh	ole
					Perce	ntage o						
	20	09 (Aj	oril)	2009 (Septer	nber)	2010) (Sept	ember)	201	2 (Janı	uary)
Rating	С	Ρ	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All
Very/fairly satisfied	64	78	71	66	75	71	62	74	68	62	74	68
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	22	11	16	19	14	16	20	14	17	21	17	19
Fairly/very dissatisfied	13	10	12	13	9	11	16	10	12	15	8	12
Don't know/refusal	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	1

Q4. How much confidence do you have in the PSNI's ability to provide an ordinary day-to-day policing service for all the people of Northern Ireland?

In January 2012, over four out of five respondents (84%) had some, a lot, or total confidence in the police's ability to provide a day-to-day policing service for everyone in Northern Ireland, a statistically significant increase from 80% in September 2010 (Table 4). The percentage of Protestant respondents who had some, a lot, or total confidence in the police's ability to provide a day-to-day policing service for everyone in Northern Ireland rose from 83% in September 2010 to 88% in January 2012, a statistically significant increase. One in six respondents (17%) had little or no confidence at all.

Table 4: Confidence for all the people of				ity to p	orovide	e an or	dinary	day to	o day p	olicing	g servi	се	
					Percer	ntage of	f respo	ndents					
	20	09 (Api	ril)	2009	(Septer	nber)	2010	(Septer	nber)	201	2 (Janu	ary)	
Rating	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	
Total confidence	6	6 12 10 7 10 8 5 9 7 7 11 9											
A lot of confidence	30	39	34	26	32	29	34	37	35	31	37	35	
Some confidence	48	38	43	48	39	43	39	37	38	41	40	40	
Little confidence	12	8	10	14	13	13	17	14	15	15	9	12	
No confidence at all	4	2	3	5	6	6	4	2	3	6	3	5	
Don't know/refusal	0												

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Q5. How satisfied are you with the levels of police patrols in your area?

In January 2012, just over two out of five respondents (41%) were very/fairly satisfied with the levels of police patrols in their area, similar to the September 2010 finding. Three in ten respondents (30%) were very/fairly dissatisfied, which again was similar to the September 2010 finding (Table 5). Slightly more Protestant respondents (42%) than Catholic respondents (41%) were very/fairly satisfied.

Table 5: Satisfaction with the	e leve	els of	polic	e patro	ols							
					Perc	entage o	of resp	ondent	s			
	20	2009 (April) 2009 (September) 2010 (September) 2012 (January)										uary)
Rating	С	Ρ	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All
Very/fairly satisfied	41	43	42	40	34	37	45	38	41	41	42	41
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	27	22	24	20	22	21	26	28	27	27	28	28
Very/fairly dissatisfied	32	35	33	39	43	41	28	34	32	31	29	30
Don't know/refusal	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1

Q6. Over the last year, has the overall standard of policing in your area...?

In January 2012, seven out of ten respondents (71%) thought that the overall standard of policing in their area had remained the same over the last year. One in nine respondents (11%) thought that it had got better and one in six (16%) thought that it had got worse, which is a statistically significant increase from 13% in September 2010 (Table 6). Protestant respondents (18%) were more likely to think that the overall standard of policing in their area had got worse than Catholic respondents (15%), although the Catholic respondents finding is a statistically significant increase on the September 2010 finding of 10%.

Table 6: Perception of the overall standard of policing over the last year												
					Percer	ntage of	f respo	ndents				
	20	09 (Ap	ril)	2009	(Septer	mber)	2010	(Septer	mber)	201	2 (Janu	ary)
Rating	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All
Got better	15	10	12	14	8	11	13	9	11	14	8	11
Remained the same	71	72	72	71	67	69	72	70	71	69	71	71
Got worse	12	14	13	12	21	17	10	16	13	15	18	16
Don't know/refusal	2	4	3	2	4	3	5	4	5	2	2	2

Q7. Do you know the names of or recognise the police officers policing your local area?

In January 2012, one in seven respondents (14%) knew the names of or recognised the police officers policing their local area (Table 7). Protestant respondents (17%) were more likely to know the names of or recognise the police officers policing their local area than Catholic respondents (11%). The finding for Protestant respondents is a statistically significant increase.

Table 7: Recognition	n of po	lice of	ficers p	oolicin	g your	local a	irea					
Percentage of respondents												
	20	2009 (April) 2009 (September) 2010 (September) 2012 (January)										
Rating	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All
Yes	11	16	13	13	12	12	11	12	12	11	17	14
No	88	83	86	87	86	86	89	88	88	89	83	86
Don't know	1	1	1	1	2	1	0		0		0	0

Q8. Have you been in contact with the PSNI over the past 12 months?

In January 2012, over one quarter of respondents (26%) had been in contact with the PSNI over the past 12 months, which is similar to the September 2010 finding (Table 8).

Table 8: Contact wit	h the F	SNI ov	ver the	past 1	2 mon	ths							
	Percentage of respondents												
	20	2009 (April) 2009 (September) 2010 (September) 2012 (January)											
Rating	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	
Yes	22	27	25	24	24	24	25	29	27	25	25	26	
No	78	73	75	76	76	76	75	71	73	75	75	74	
Don't know		0	0						0		0	0	

Q9. How satisfied were you with the PSNI during this contact?

In January 2012, almost two out of three respondents (65%) were very/fairly satisfied with the PSNI during their contact (Table 9). More Catholic respondents (68%) than Protestant respondents (63%) were satisfied.

Table 9: Satisfaction with PSNI co	ontact		
Respondents who had contact with	Percent	age of resp	ondents
PSNI	2	012 (Januar	y)
Rating	С	Р	All
Very/fairly satisfied	68	63	65
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	7	12	10
Very/fairly dissatisfied	25	24	26

Q10. How safe do you feel in your local community?

In January 2012, almost nine out of ten respondents (88%) felt very/fairly safe in their local community, a statistically significant decrease from 91% in September 2010 (Table 10). Slightly more Catholic respondents (89%) than Protestant respondents (87%) felt safer in their local community. The Protestant finding was a statistically significant decrease from the September 2010 finding of 92%.

Table 10: How safe de	o you [.]	feel in	your	local co	mmur	nity?						
					Percer	ntage o	f respon	dents				
	20	09 (Ap	ril)	2009 (Septen	nber)	2010 (Septen	nber)	201	2 (Janu	ary)
Rating	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All
Very safe	38	30	33	38	36	36	46	42	44	34	32	33
Fairly safe	48	60	55	51	53	52	44	50	47	55	55	55
Neither safe nor unsafe	5	6	6	7	5	6	3	4	4	6	8	7
Fairly unsafe	6	3	4	3	6	4	4	3	3	4	4	4
Very Unsafe	3	1	1	1	0	1	2	2	2	2	1	1
Don't know/refusal									0			

2: PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF DPPs

Q11. Have you heard of District Policing Partnerships (DPPs)?

In January 2012, over two out of three respondents (68%) had heard of DPPs, statistically significant increase from 63% in September 2010 (Table 11). More Protestant respondents (70%) had heard of DPPs than Catholic respondents (68%) although the Catholic finding was a statistically significant increase from the September 2010 finding of 61%.

Table 11: Have you I	Table 11: Have you heard of District Policing Partnerships (DPPs)?													
					Percer	ntage of	f respo	ndents						
	20	09 (Ap	ril)	2009	(Septer	mber)	2010	(Septer	mber)	201	2 (Janu	ary)		
Rating	С	C P All C P All C P All C P All												
Yes	58	63	60	58	66	62	61	66	63	68	70	68		
No	42	37	40	42	34	38	39	34	37	32	30	32		
Don't know/refusal				0		0			0					

Q12. How much confidence do you have that DPPs help address local policing problems?

In January 2012, almost three out of four respondents (73%) who had heard of DPPs had some, a lot or total confidence that DPPs help address local policing problems which is similar to the September 2010 finding (Table 12). One in five respondents (20%) had little or no confidence at all that DPPs help address local policing problems.

All those who have					Percen	tage of	f respo	ndents	;			
heard of DPPs	20	09 (Ap	ril)	2009	(Septe	mber)	2010	(Septe	mber)	201	2 (Janu	iary)
Rating	С	P	All	С	P	P	All	С	P	All		
Total confidence	2	4	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	4	3
A lot of confidence	21	16	18	18	16	17	22	19	20	20	21	20
Some confidence	48	56	53	52	54	53	52	53	52	51	50	50
Little confidence	15	15	15	15	17	17	13	15	15	18	14	16
No confidence at all	4	3	3	5	5	5	3	4	4	3	4	4
Don't know/refusal	10	7	8	6	5	6	7	7	7	4	8	7

Q13. Are you prepared to contact your local DPP to raise issues/ask questions about local policing?

In January 2012, almost three out of five respondents (58%) who had heard of DPPs were prepared to contact their local DPP regarding local policing issues (Table 13). Protestant respondents (60%) were more willing to contact their local DPP than Catholic respondents (54%). The proportion of Protestant respondents prepared to contact their local DPP decreased from 62% in September 2010.

All those who have					Perce	ntage o	of resp	ondent	S			
heard of DPPs	20	09 (Ap	ril)	2009 (Septen	nber)	2010	(Septe	ember)	201	2 (Janua	ary)
Rating	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All
Yes	50	55	54	55	54	54	52	62	57	54	60	58
No	48	43	45	42	45	44	46	38	41	45	39	41
Don't know/refusal	2	1	1	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	1

Q14. Do you feel that your local DPP has helped to improve policing in your local area?

In January 2012, over one out of three respondents (36%) who had heard of DPPs felt that their local DPP has helped to improve policing in their local area. This is 3% points higher than the September 2010 finding but is not a statistically significant increase (Table 14). More Catholic (40%) than Protestant (34%) respondents thought that their local DPP has helped to improve policing in their local area even though the Protestant finding was a statistically significant increase on the September 2010 finding of 27%.

Table 14: Has your lo	Table 14: Has your local DPP helped to improve local policing?														
All those who have					Percen	tage of	f respoi	ndents							
heard of DPPs	20	09 (Ap	ril)	2009	(Septe	mber)	2010	(Septe	mber)	2012	2 (Janua	ary)			
Rating	C P AII C P AII C P AII C P AII											All			
Yes	31	35	33	38	28	32	38	27	33	40	34	36			
No	43	39	41	42	48	46	36	46	42	41	41	42			
Don't know/refusal	26	27	26	20	23	22	25	26	26	18	24	22			

3. PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

Q15. Have you heard of the Northern Ireland Policing Board (Policing Board)?

In January 2012, five out of six respondents (84%) had heard of the Policing Board (Table 15). More Protestant respondents (87%) had heard of the Policing Board than Catholic respondents (83%).

Table 15: Heard of t	able 15: Heard of the Policing Board?												
					Percer	ntage of	ⁱ respo	ndents					
	20	09 (Apı	ril)	2009	(Septer	nber)	2010	(Septer	nber)	201	2 (Janu	ary)	
Rating	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	
Yes	86	86	86	84	90	87	83	90	86	83	87	84	
No	13	14	14	16	10	13	17	10	13	16	13	15	
Don't know/refusal	0	0	0		0	0		0	0	0	0	0	

Q16. Do you think that the Policing Board helps ensure that the PSNI do a good job? Two out of three respondents (69%) who had heard of the Policing Board thought that

the Board helps ensure that the PSNI do a good job similar to the September 2010 finding (Table 16).

All those who have					Percen	tage of	f respo	ndents				
heard of the Policing Board	20	09 (Ap	ril)	2009 (Septen	nber)	2010	(Septer	nber)	2012	2 (Janu	ary)
Rating	С	Р	All	С	Ρ	All	С	Ρ	All	С	Ρ	All
Yes	72	71	71	68	67	67	67	68	67	70	69	69
No	19	19	20	21	23	22	17	19	18	18	16	17
		10	9		10	11	16	13	14	12	14	14

Q17. Do you think that the Policing Board is part of the police or independent of the police?

As in September 2010, over seven out of ten respondents (71%) who had heard of the Policing Board correctly thought that the Board is independent of the police (Table 17). More Protestant respondents (73%) correctly thought that the Policing Board is independent of the police than Catholic respondents (66%).

Table 17: Is the Policin	g Bo	ard pa	rt of th	ne poli	ce or i	ndepe	ndent	of the	police	?		
All those who have					Perce	ntage c	of respo					
heard of the Policing	20	0 <mark>09 (</mark> Ap	oril)	2009	(Septe	mber)	2010	(Septer	mber)	201	2 (Janu	lary)
Board Rating	С	C P AII C P AII C P AII C P AII										All
Part of the police	23	17	20	27	16	21	24	19	22	29	21	24
Independent of the police	71	78	75	66	77	73	69	74	72	66	73	71
Don't know/refusal	6	5	5	6	7	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

Northern Ireland Policing Board Module of the January 2012 Omnibus Survey

Q18. What do you think is the primary role of the Policing Board?

In January 2012, over four out of five respondents (81%) who had heard of the Policing Board correctly thought that the Board's primary role is "to oversee policing and hold the Chief Constable and the PSNI publicly to account". This was a statistically significant increase from 77% in September 2010 (Table 18). More Catholic respondents (82%) than Protestant respondents (81%) correctly knew the Board's role. The finding for Catholic respondents is a statistically significant increase on the 75% finding in September 2010.

All those who have heard of					Perce	entage of	f respon	dents				
the Policing Board	200)9 (Ap	oril)	2009	(Septe	ember)	2010 (Septen	nber)	2012 (January)		
Rating	С	P	Áll	С	P	All	С	P	AÍ	С	P	All
To actively direct police operations	12	9	10	11	10	10	14	13	14	11	10	10
To oversee policing and hold the Chief Constable and the PSNI publicly to account	78	85	82	80	82	82	75	79	77	82	81	81
To tell the Chief Constable what to do	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	4	4
Other	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Don't know/refusal	5	3	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	4	4	4

Q19. Do you think the Policing Board is made up of ...?

In January 2012, almost three out of four respondents (73%) who had heard of the Policing Board correctly thought that the Board is made up of "a mix of politicians and independently appointed members", similar to the September 2010 finding (Table 19). More Protestant respondents (74%) correctly knew the Board's composition than Catholic respondents (72%).

All those who have heard of					Perce	entage of	f respo	ndents	5				
the Policing Board	20	009 (Ap	oril)	2009	(Septe	ember)	2010	(Septe	ember)	201	2012 (January)		
Rating	С	Р	ÂII	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	С	Р	All	
Politicians	4	3	4	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Independently appointed members	20	17	18	15	18	17	17	22	19	20	19	20	
A mix of politicians and independently appointed members	70	74	72	76	75	75	74	71	73	72	74	73	
Other	1	1	1	0	0	0		0	0	1	0	1	
Don't know/refusal	5	5	5	7	4	5	7	5	6	5	5	5	

Q20. Overall, how well do you think the Policing Board is working?

In January 2012, four out of five respondents (77%) who had heard of the Policing Board thought that the Board is working at least adequately, similar to the September 2010 finding (Table 20). Almost one out of three respondents (32%) who had heard of the Policing Board thought that the Board is working well/very well, a statistically significant decrease from the September 2010 finding of 37%. More Catholic respondents (36%) than Protestant respondents (31%) thought that the Board is working well/very well.

Table 20: Overall, how we	ell do y	/ou th i	ell do you think the Policing Board is working?													
All those who have heard					Percen	itage o	-									
of the Policing Board	20	09 (Ap	ril)	2009	(Septe	mber)	2010	(Septe	mber)	2012	2 (Janu	ary)				
Rating	С															
Very well	5	5	5	7	7	7	5	3	4	7	5	5				
Well	35	36	35	36	26	30	34	32	33	29	26	27				
Adequately	42	43	43	39	48	44	39	46	42	43	46	45				
Poorly	9	7	8	10	9	9	10	12	11	10	9	9				
Very poorly	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	0	2	3	3	3				
Don't know/refusal	5	7	6	7	7	7	10	7	8	9	11	11				







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DOCUMENT TITLE

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE POLICE, DPPs AND THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD JANUARY 2012 OMNIBUS SURVEY

PUBLISHED MAY 2012

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