Compstat and Community Policing: Are They Compatible?

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Research questions on community policing and Compstat

- Extent of implementation?

- Compatibility?

Organizational theories and police reforms

- **Theory X: CS**

  - Top-down control

  - Accountability

- **Theory Y: CP**

  - Bottom-up initiative

  - Creativity

Community policing v. Compstat doctrines

Reform Element	Community Policing	Compstat
Mission	Community is central	Community is peripheral
Policing methods	Community is central	Community is peripheral
Performance accountability	Peripheral or nonexistent	Highest priority
Decentralize decision making	Lowest level in org.	Middle managers
Organizational flexibility	Linked to community	Linked to mission
Data-driven	Valued	Essential
Innovative problem-solving	Valued	Valued

Our prior field work on Compstat and community policing

- Police Foundation study funded by NIJ
- In-depth study of 3 departments in 2000-2001
- All had adopted by CP and CS
- CS in place for at least 2 years

Community policing and Compstat in practice

Reform Element	What we observed	Relationship between CS and CP
Mission	Mission in 2 PDs was vague or unstated 1 PD - focus on CS and CP generated resistance	CS independent of CP or incompatible
Policing methods	CS did not involve community CP structures not incorporated into CS	CS independent of CP
Performance accountability	CS strongly implemented at DC level Little impact on CP	CS independent of CP
Decentralize decision making	Both CS and CP supported, but CS was for DCs and CP for specialists and rank and file	CS and CP somewhat compatible, possibly independent

Community policing and Compstat in practice (cont.)

| Reform Element	What we observed	Relationship between CS and CP
Organizational flexibility	Flexibility limited by bureaucracy & politics CS harnessed to crime; CP harnessed to neighborhood concerns	CS and CP somewhat compatible
Data-driven	Improved data availability and utility CS data of little relevance to CP and vice versa	CS independent of CP
Innovative problem-solving	CS accountability limited innovation	CS independent of CP

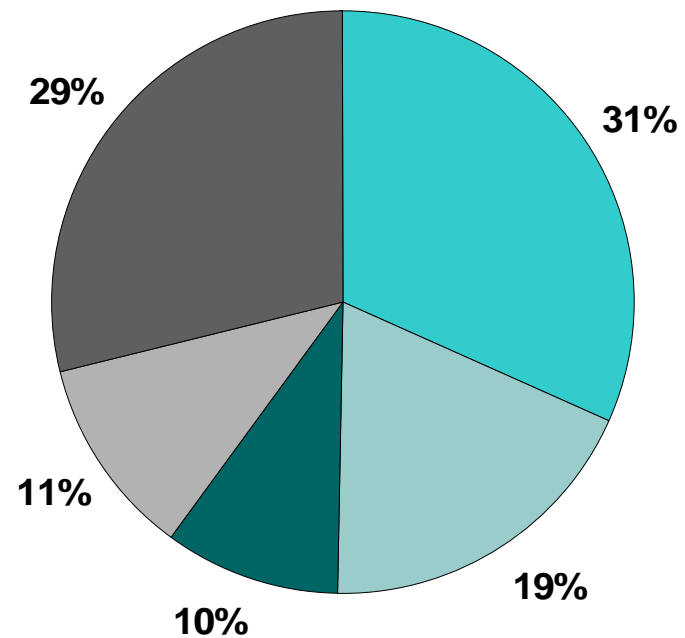# National survey on community policing and Compstat

- Funded by COPS
- Municipal and county departments with 100+ sworn
- Conducted spring/summer 2006
- Sample pool: 566 departments
- Completed surveys to date: 338 (59.7%)

Adoption of reforms

Community Policing

6% 0% 3%

31%

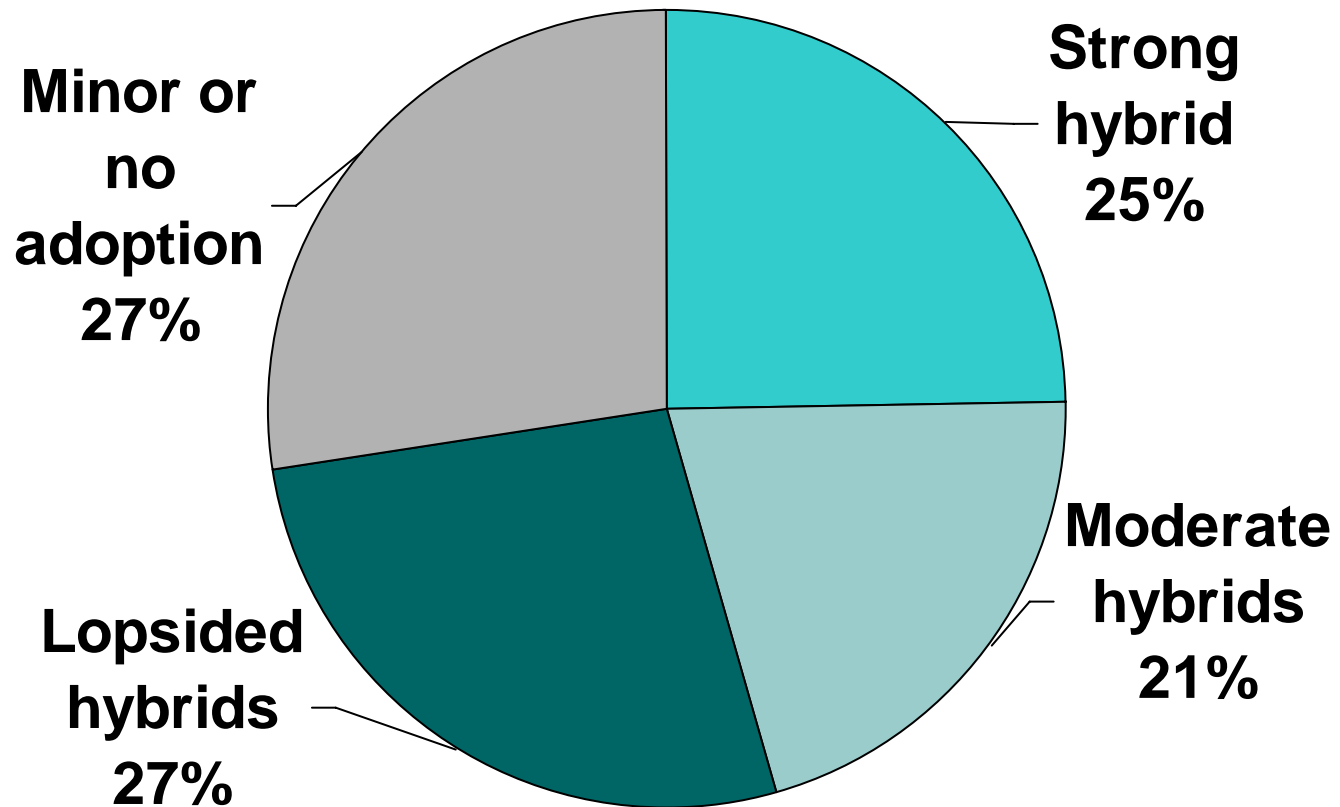60%

Compstat

29%

31%

11%

10%

19%
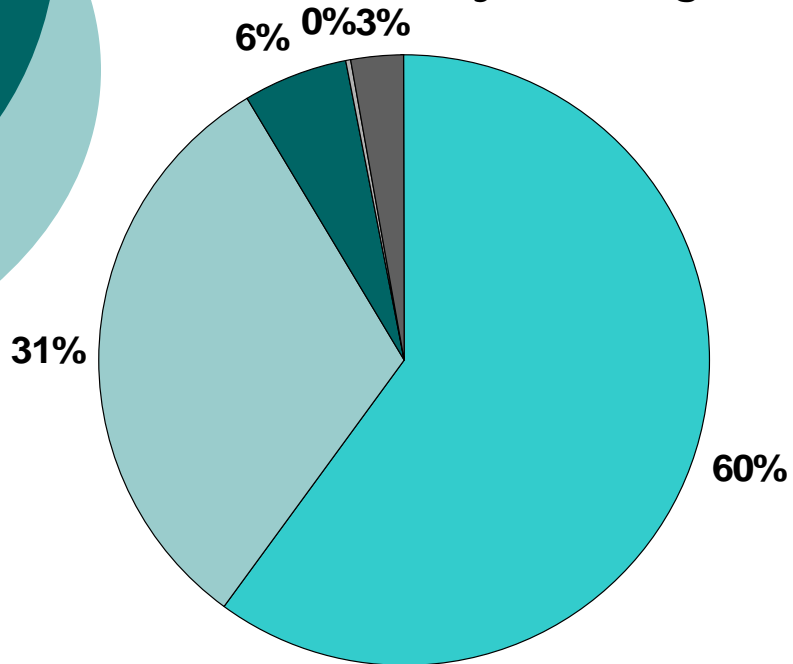
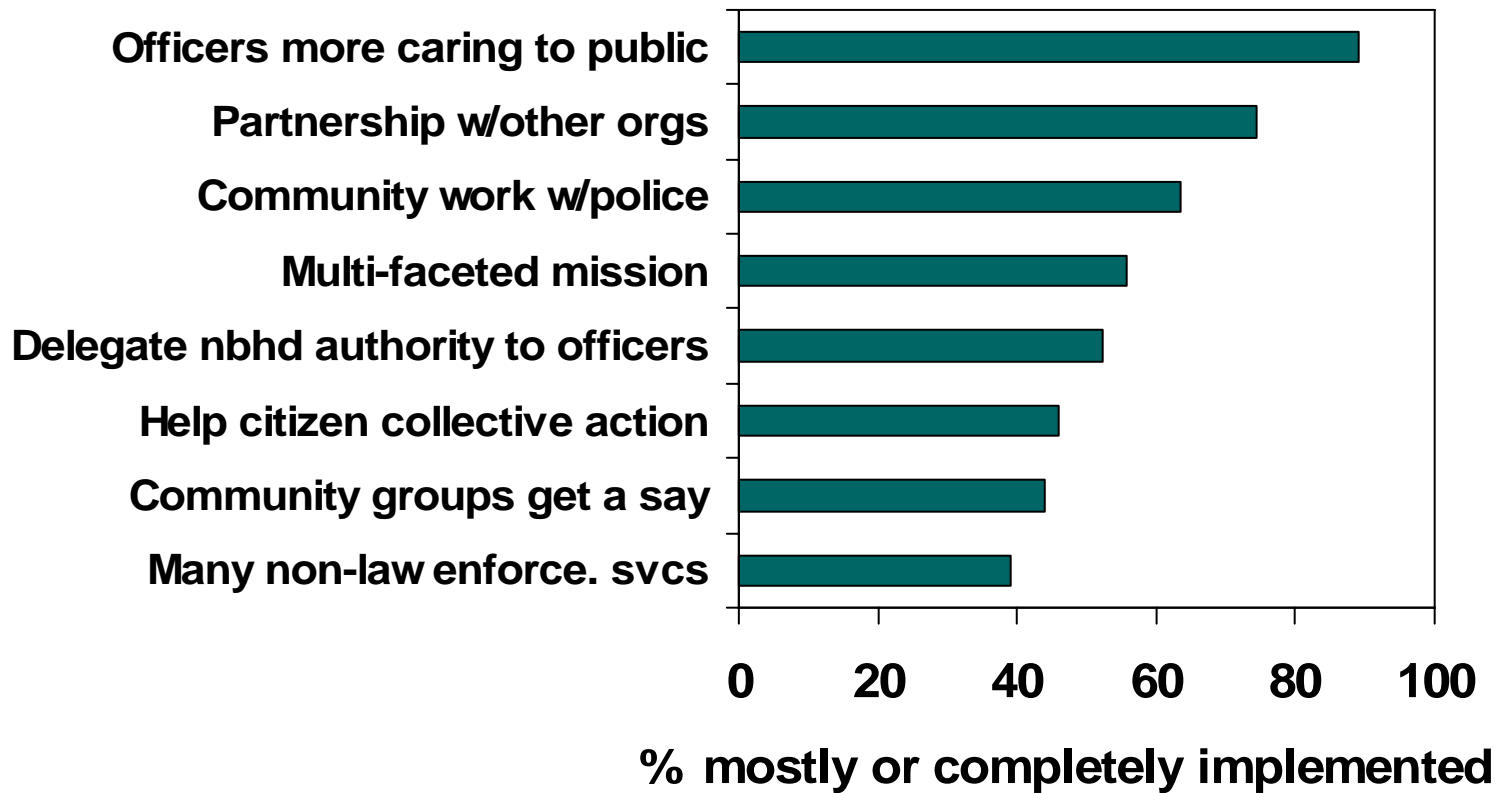■ Major ■ Moderate ■ Minor ■ Planning ■ No part

Question: How much is this reform a part of the agency's organization and operations?

Community policing and Compstat adoption profile for U.S.A.

Percent of Departments

Strong hybrid 25%

Moderate hybrids 21%

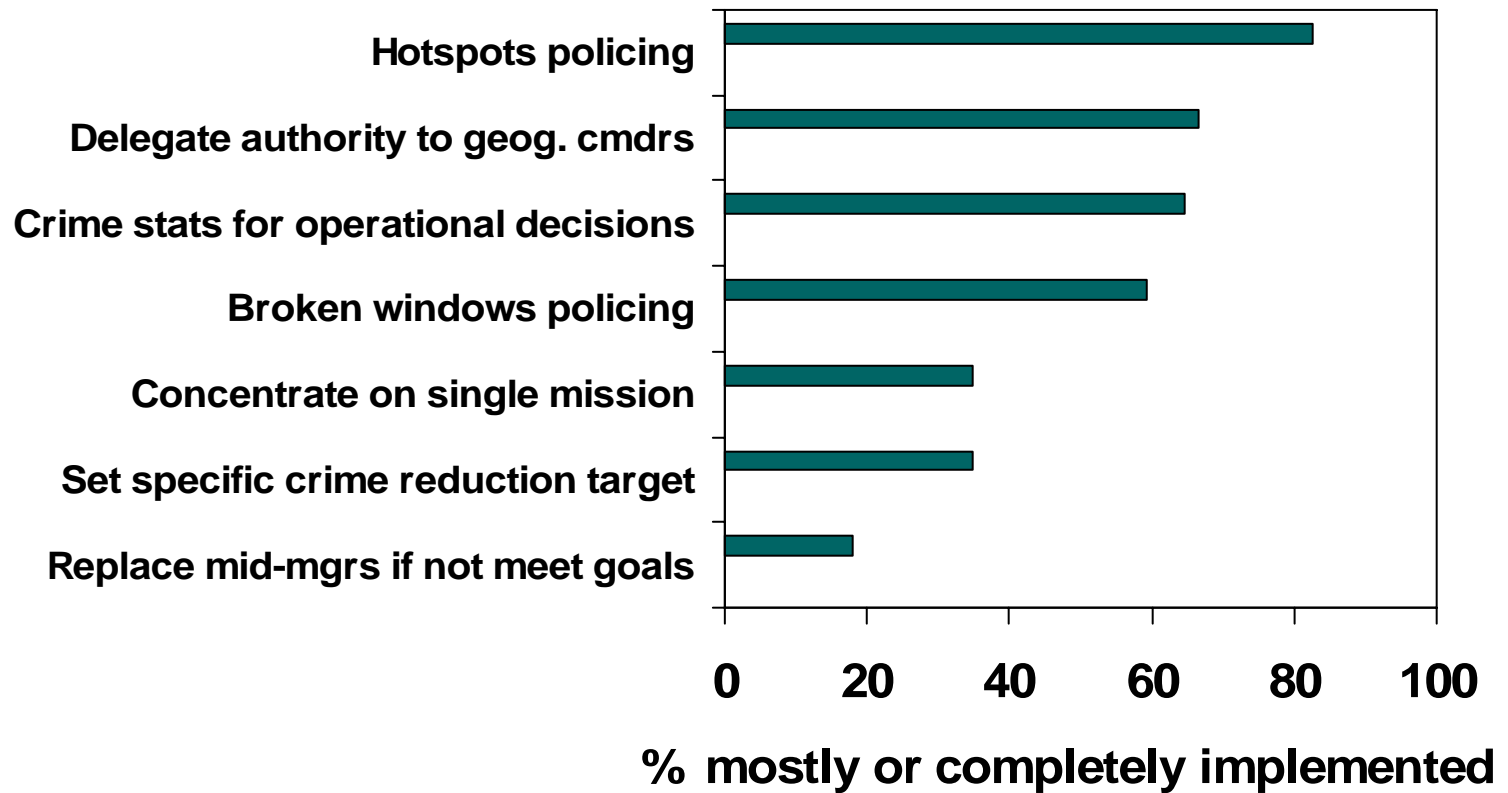Lopsided hybrids 27%

Minor or no adoption 27%

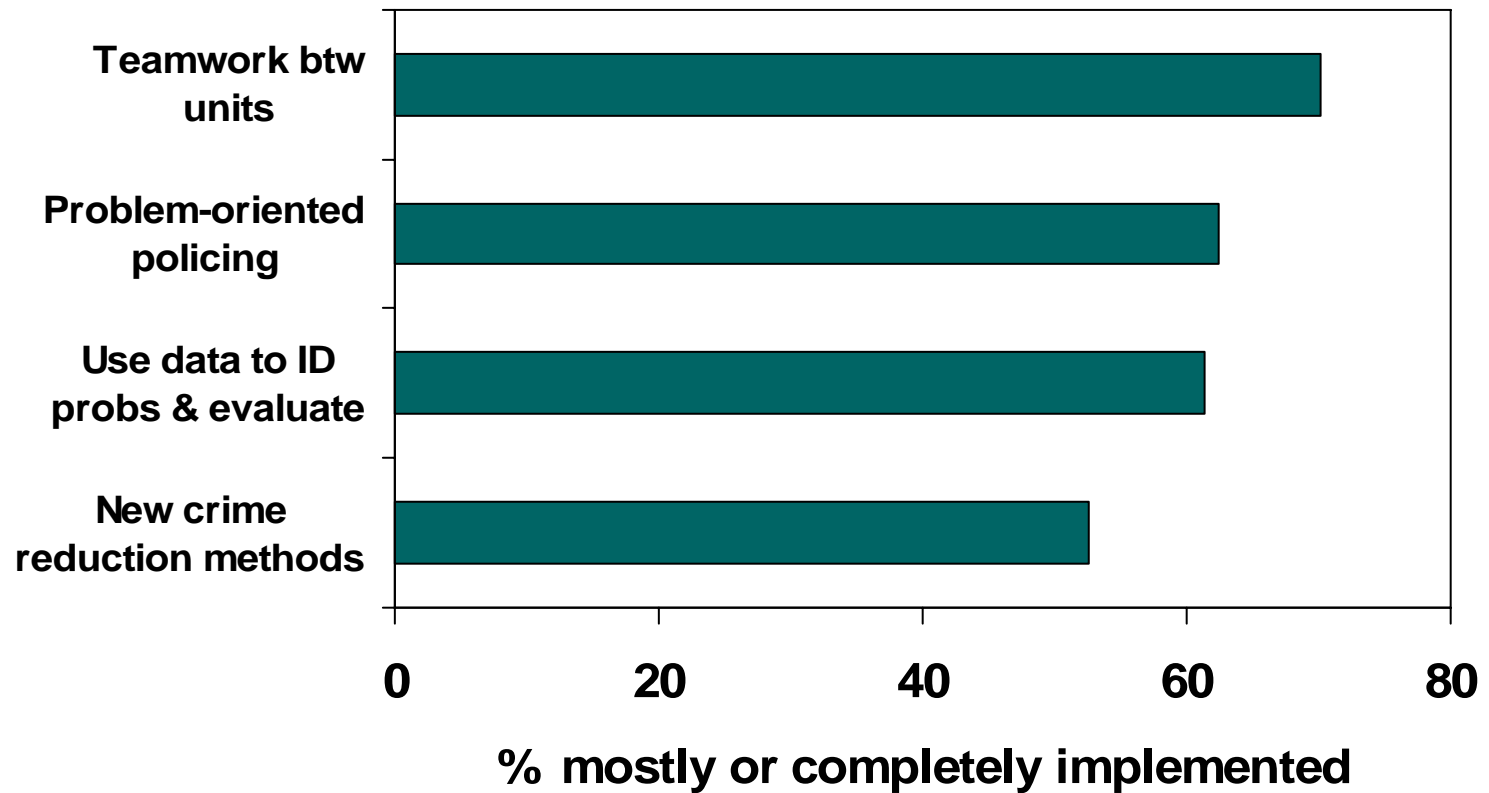# Implementation of community policing elements

Question: To what extent has your agency implemented this approach?

Implementation of Compstat elements

Implementation of shared CP and CS elements

Horizontal bar chart showing "% mostly or completely implemented" for four elements:
- Teamwork btw units: ~70
- Problem-oriented policing: ~62
- Use data to ID probs & evaluate: ~61
- New crime reduction methods: ~52

X-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80 — "% mostly or completely implemented"

Most popular reasons to adopt community policing and Compstat

- **Community policing**
  - Increase citizen satisfaction
  - *Responsive to neighborhoods
  - *Reduce fear of crime
  - *Reduce serious crime
  - Increase citizen participation

- **Compstat**
  - *Reduce serious crime
  - *Responsive to neighborhoods
  - Increase service efficiency
  - *Reduce fear of crime
  - Reduce minor offenses

High intensity challenges to implementation

- How challenging is this feature of community policing/Compstat?
  - Not at all
  - Somewhat
  - Moderately
  - **Very**
  - **Extremely**

Community policing's most widespread challenges

- **Organization culture**
  - Officers' support
  - Officers accept greater community role
  - Officers try innovative prob-solving
  - Support of mid managers
  - Mid managers take prob-solving initiative
  - Officers accept community priorities
- **Technology**
  - Data on officer CP performance
- **Resources**
  - Sufficient resources to do CP right
  - Doing CP and meeting CFS and CID demands

>30% of departments experienced these as very or extremely challenging.

Compstat's most widespread challenges

- Conflicting Demands
  - Thorough crime analysis **&** rapid problem response
  - Reduce crime **&** be innovative
  - Cmdrs help each other **but** individually accountable
  - Respond to community priorities **&** focus on mission
  - Being innovative **but** risking failure
- Technology
  - Compatible data systems
  - Timely crime analysis reports
  - Managers w/ability & desire to do Compstat
  - Hire well-trained crime analysis staff
- Organization culture
  - Getting police to use crime maps

>30% of departments experienced these as very or extremely challenging.

Success in overcoming community policing's most widespread challenges

- **Organization culture**
  - Officers' support (45)
  - Officers accept greater community role (38)
  - Officers try innovative prob-solving (40)
  - Support of mid managers (52)
  - Mid managers take prob-solving initiative (40)
  - Officers accept community priorities (41)
- **Technology**
  - Data on officer CP performance (28)
- **Resources**
  - Sufficient resources to do CP right (30)
  - Doing CP and meeting CFS and CID demands (39)

(% of departments very or extremely successful in overcoming the challenge)
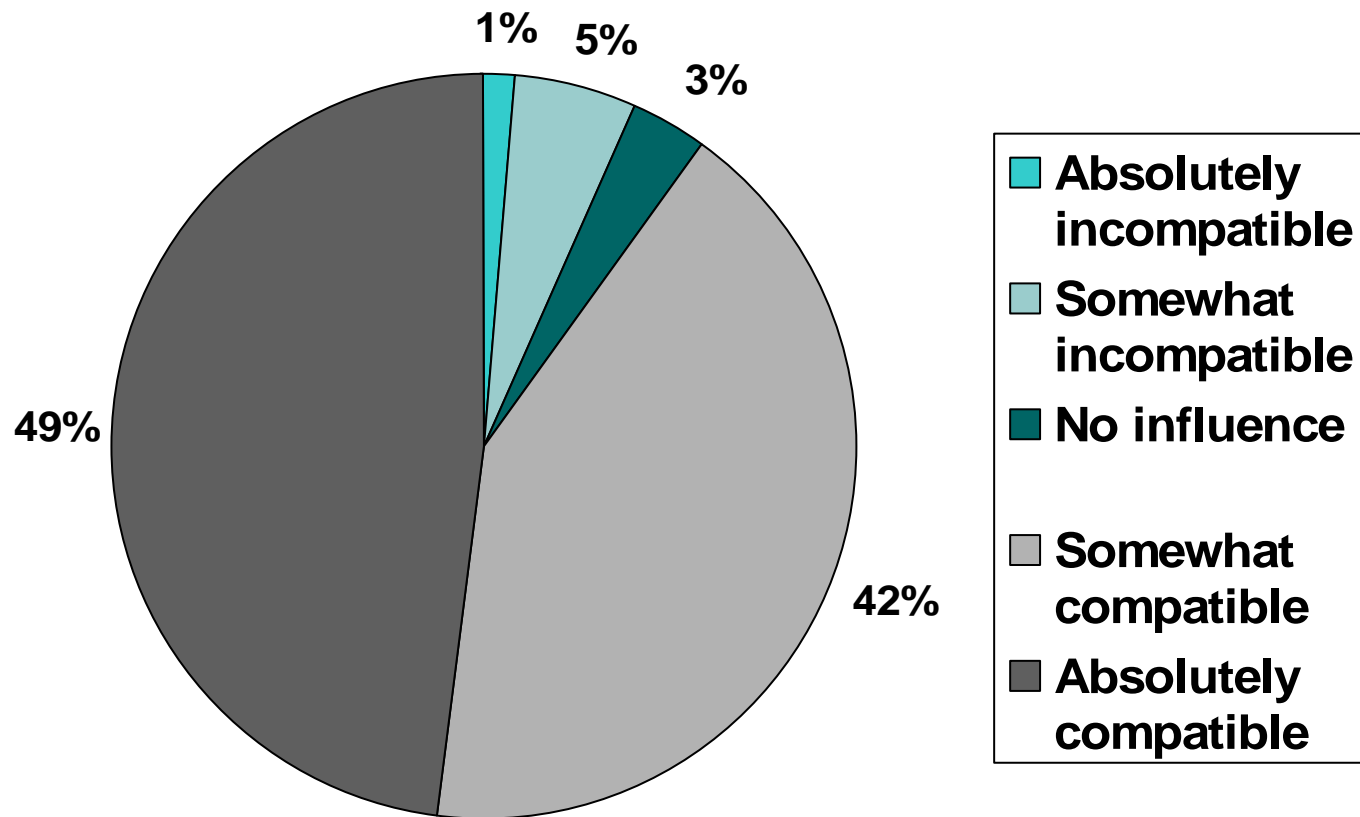
Success in overcoming Compstat's most widespread challenges

- Conflicting Demands
  - Thorough crime analysis **&** rapid problem response (38)
  - Reduce crime **&** be innovative (42)
  - Cmdrs help each other **but** individually accountable (52)
  - Respond to community priorities **&** focus on mission (48)
  - Being innovative **but** risking failure (48)
- Technology
  - Compatible data systems (41)
  - Timely crime analysis reports (58)
  - Managers w/ability & desire to do Compstat (54)
  - Hire well-trained crime analysis staff (54)
- Organization culture
  - Getting police to use crime maps (56)

(% of departments very or extremely successful in overcoming the challenge)

Leader views on CP and CS compatibility in general

1% 5% 3%

49%

42%

Legend:
- Absolutely incompatible
- Somewhat incompatible
- No influence
- Somewhat compatible
- Absolutely compatible

Self-reported challenges of CP and CS implementation in same agency

- Resource demands
- Getting acceptance from officers, supervisors, & middle-managers
- Missions conflict
  - Community priorities v. crime stats
  - Employees perceive mission conflicts
  - Satisfy community v. crime stat reduction

Sample quotes on CP/CS conflict

- "Coordinating COP and CS goals. Officers who work COP resist merging with CS."
- "Fear that the agency will become stat-driven, as quality of life issues don't always create big numbers."
- "Getting everyone to understand that data produced through CS cannot alter partnerships developed through CP"
- "With CS an emphasis is placed more on officer accountability to serious crime v. neighborhood problems."
- "CS emphasizes management from above, while CP seems to be the opposite direction."

Self-reported benefits of CP and CS together

- CS shows what & where problems are; CP provides effective strategies
- Increased community satisfaction/support/engagement
- Reduced crime, neighborhood problems
- Greater internal & external accountability and communications
- CP & CS provide complementary information to the department

Effect of department features on overcoming CP implementation challenges

Department Feature	Effect
Number sworn	None
CP model department	None
PERF membership	None
No. professional meetings in last 3 years	None
Pre-COPS adoption of CP	None
Strong hybrid department	None
CALEA-accredited	Positive

N=252 departments adopting CP

Effect of department features on overcoming CS implementation challenges

Department Feature	Effect
Number sworn	None
CS model department	None
PERF membership	None
No. professional meetings in last 3 years	None
No. of years since CS implemented	Positive
Strong hybrid department	Positive
CALEA-accredited	Positive

N=168 departments adopting CS

Conclusions about community policing and Compstat

- Widespread dual implementation
- Some shared goals, some unique
- Both are unevenly implemented
- Evidence of conflict
- Need to acknowledge challenges of dual implementation and focus on them
- Reason for optimism, but requires hard work