
DELHI POLICE ALL WOMEN POLICE CONTROL ROOM VANS

Audit/Review

Submitted by:
Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative



Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

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Audit Report

Delhi Police Pilot Project All-WOMEN POLICE CONTROL ROOM VANS

Submitted to:

Delhi Police

Submitted on:

15 November 2017

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The successful completion of the audit report is the outcome of assistance and cooperation rendered by the Delhi Police and its staff. CHRI would like to specially thank Mr. Sanjay Beniwal, Special Commissioner, Women's Safety, for approaching us to conduct the audit. Special thanks to Monika Bhardwaj, DCP, PCR unit for providing us with information and data whenever we asked for it and for facilitating all meetings and group discussions requested. We are grateful to all the supervisors of the PCR unit in New Delhi Zone who spoke to us for their time and candid answers to our queries.

Importantly, we express our gratitude to the staff in PCR vans. This audit would not have been possible without their contributions, views, and feedback provided in focus group discussions and one to one interviews. We sincerely thank the women police personnel of the All Women PCR Vans who gave their time to speak honestly and openly with us. We thank all personnel of the five mixed gender PCR vans from New Delhi, Outer and North East Zones, who expressed their views on the AWPCR vans as well as on mixed gender vans.

This report would be incomplete without the public surveys conducted by CHRI staff working in our police reform programme, namely Ankur Otto, Nikita Bhukar, Pavani Nagaraja and Tanya Kak. Special thanks to them for making calls to some complainants to gather and collate their feedback about the AWPCR vans.

Finally, we thank CHRI's Director, Mr. Sanjoy Hazarika, and CHRI's Senior Advisor, Ms. Maja Daruwala, for providing editorial guidance on this report, and their steadfast support throughout the audit process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 9 September 2016, the Delhi Police rolled out a pilot project to operate five All Women Police Control Room (AWPCR) vans in Delhi. To assess their performance and impact, the Delhi Police commissioned the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)¹ to conduct an independent audit of the AWPCR vans. This audit will not only feed into the Delhi Police's internal assessment of the AWPCR initiative, it will also be presented to the High Court of Delhi in response to a writ petition² examining multiple issues on women's safety in Delhi.

The AWPCR vans enjoy the same mandate and duties as the other PCR vans but, as the name suggests, are staffed entirely by women police personnel. This is a first-of-its kind experiment for the capital city. While Delhi Police has been making concerted efforts to increase and ensure the presence of women in all PCR vans,³ the AWPCR vans were conceived *primarily* as a measure to further boost the confidence of policewomen and give them greater opportunities to break the glass ceiling within the police. It was hoped this initiative will give greater visibility to women police personnel, showcase Delhi Police in a positive light, and provide broader operational experience to women. At the same time, it was also envisaged that it would improve women's sense of safety on the streets.

In this pilot, all five vans were placed in the centrally-located New Delhi Zone⁴ in the following specific locations:

- C-Hexagon (Van-26)
- Jesus and Mary and Maitreyi Colleges (Van-41)
- Vijay Chowk/South Block (Van-68)
- Kasturba Gandhi (KG) Marg [American Centre] (Van-75)
- Khan Market (Van-81)

The audit assessed the operational effectiveness of the five AWPCR vans based on the following parameters:

- ✓ performance in terms of volume, types of, and quality of response to public complaints and emergency calls, particularly with regards to women complainants, seen in comparison to other PCRs deployed in the same jurisdiction;
- ✓ general preparedness including personnel knowledge of relevant procedures and processes, understanding of their role, and commitment to their jobs;
- ✓ profiles and experience of the AWPCR van personnel; and
- ✓ feedback from complainants who had placed calls to the AWPCR vans.

¹ CHRI is an independent non-governmental organization headquartered in New Delhi specializing in research and advocacy on key human rights issues. Policing and police reform are among its core areas of expertise. For more information, please visit CHRI's website: <http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org>

² Writ petition no. 7927/2012 in the matter of Court on its Motion vs. Union of India and Ors.

³ Approximately 140 out of 766 PCR vans today have at least one woman personnel.

⁴ There are 13 police zones in Delhi: New Delhi Zone, Central Zone, North Zone, South-West Zone, West Zone, Outer Zone, North-West Zone, North-East Zone, East Zone, South-East Zone, Rohini Zone, Shahdara Zone and South Zone.

CHRI employed a multifaceted approach for the audit. We conducted reviews of internal police documents and various data sets pertaining to the PCR unit. We held interviews and discussions with women personnel deployed in the AWPCR vans, police personnel deployed in mixed (gender) vans, and the key supervisory officers in the PCR unit. We conducted small public surveys in select locations where the AWPCR vans operate. Lastly, CHRI spoke with a small number of complainants who called the police for assistance and intervention of the PCR van.

The main finding of the audit is that the AWPCR vans were ineffective, both in terms of responding to public complaints and as a strategy for mainstreaming women in police. They handled far less number of calls than other PCRs in the same zone, did not receive positive feedback from the public, lacked confidence, and generally kept a low profile with very few proactive interventions. CHRI used this opportunity to also review the functioning of aspects of the PCR unit as a whole, particularly supervision, training and records maintenance which we found affected the performance of the AWPCR vans. In general, we found the unit to be well resourced and fairly systematic in its processes and practices. We did, however, find some gaps and put forward recommendations to improve its overall effectiveness.

Key Findings:

On the AWPCR vans

1. AWPCR vans were underworked

- The five AWPCR vans received the lowest number of calls of all PCR vans in New Delhi zone. Calls received by the AWPCR vans constitute less than 1% (0.55%) of the total calls received from October 2016 to June 2017.
- On average, each PCR van in New Delhi zone received between 65-66 calls per month in this period. In contrast, the five AWPCR vans together received approximately 40 calls per month.
- The duty hours in one week of non-AWPCR vans are double the duty hours of AWPCR vans in one week.
- Of the total calls received by the AWPCR vans from September 2016 to June 2017, 48% of the calls were received by one van.
- The AWPCR vans have limited jurisdiction, which do not require much patrolling.

2. Complainant feedback is not positive

- Out of seven cases in which an AWPCR van responded according to the police documentation, feedback from complainants reveals that an AWPCR van responded in only one case.
- Caller/complainant feedback does not match the police's record of action taken by PCR vans.
- Caller/complainant contact details recorded by the police are incomplete and often incorrect.

- There are lapses in the CPCR's monitoring of PCR response time and reporting back to the DCP/PCR.

3. Gaps in preparedness of AWPCR staff

- Majority of the AWPCR van women personnel are not familiar with the Standing Order governing the PCR unit.
- Staff of two of the five AWPCR vans mistakenly stated that the duration of the PCR unit training is one month, rather than the correct response of two weeks.
- The majority of the AWPCR van staff are recent recruits with insufficient policing experience.
- AWPCR van staff believe all-women vans cannot work in high population and high crime zones.
- Women drivers are less confident in their abilities and see male drivers as more capable.

4. AWPCR vans were ineffective

- The AWPCR vans have not taken sufficient or proactive steps to spread their visibility in their local areas.
- 60% of the public surveyed had not seen the AWPCR vans in their area.
- PCR unit staff, both men and women, doubt the ability of an AWPCR van to serve in high-crime areas and/or deal with aggressive situations.
- Only 11.25% calls received by the AWPCR vans were "relating to women".

On the PCR unit

1. Supervision

- The frequency and visibility of field-level supervision in the PCR unit, on a daily basis, is consistent and unfailing.
- CHRI was not provided any copies of written daily checking reports or special assessment reports of the AWPCR vans. This fails to give us any material to ascertain the quality or consistency of written feedback by supervisors.
- Overseeing physical conditions and monitoring PCR van response time dominate supervision. There appears to be less emphasis on monitoring the frequency and quality of PCR van staff behavior, communication and interaction with the public, complainants, and the local population.
- There is a severe shortage of checking officers for the total number of PCR vans in New Delhi district. This affects the quality of supervision.
- While there is support for the AWPCR van initiative among supervisors, there is also a lack of confidence in the capacities and potential of women police.

2. Training

- It is of tremendous value that the PCR unit has a dedicated exclusive two-week training induction course for all new entrants.

- AWPCR van staff expressed the need for regular refresher training on diverse topics following the induction training.
- A module explaining the crime trends, statistics, and ‘hotspots’ down to the local level in Delhi is absent from the PCR unit training.
- The absence of a dedicated module, in indoor training, on the use of force including principles, limits, and reporting requirements, is a major and serious gap in the PCR unit training.

3. Records Maintenance

- There is inconsistent and incomplete documentation of types of calls received and action taken on each call.
- There is insufficient disaggregation and details of calls received “relating to women” in terms of both the classification of complaints and action taken.
- There is insufficient disaggregation and details of “self-calls” (suo moto action) in terms of both the classification of what is responded to and action taken.

Recommendations

On AWPCR vans

CHRI recommends that AWPCR vans be discontinued and brought to an early end. Instead, the Delhi Police must strengthen its efforts to ensure the presence of at least one woman in every PCR van across the city.

On the PCR unit

1. On Supervision:

- ✓ Assess the quality and frequency of written feedback by checking officers at the level of the entire PCR unit, with a view to identifying any gaps
- ✓ Strengthen the capacity of checking officers to prepare written feedback through targeted trainings
- ✓ Incorporate assessment of the frequency and quality of PCR van staff behavior, communication and interaction with the public, particularly complainants and the local population in local areas, as part of supervision, through objective indicators
- ✓ Assess the adequacy of the numbers of checking officers in each district and make recommendations for increasing checking officers where needed
- ✓ Make constant efforts to reinforce gender equality at all levels of the PCR unit and ensure that any kind of gender bias is not affecting supervisors’ decisions or feedback

2. On Training:

- ✓ Increase the frequency of refresher training, on diverse topics, in the PCR unit
- ✓ Introduce a module on crime trends and statistics in Delhi, both city-wide and at local levels, into the PCR unit induction training

- ✓ Introduce a module on the principles on the use of force into the PCR unit induction training on serious priority

3. On Records Maintenance:

- ✓ Improve the documentation of call records by streamlining the format and providing training for PCR van staff on how to document accurately, in terms of recording the type of call received, the pertinent details, and action taken
- ✓ Establish a framework to disaggregate calls “relating to women” with a view to holistic documentation of issues relating to women’s safety in Delhi being handled by the PCR unit, both in terms of complaints received and action taken
- ✓ Establish a framework to disaggregate the documentation of “self-calls” with a view towards better assessment of the types of incidents being responded to suo moto by PCR vans and the action taken

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

On 9 September 2016, the Delhi Police rolled out a pilot project to operate five All Women Police Control Room (AWPCR) vans in one police zone. As is obvious, the unique aspect initiated is that these vans are staffed entirely by women personnel. Otherwise, their mandate and duties are exactly the same as all other PCR vans.

In March 2017, the Delhi Police Commissioner constituted a committee, under the chairmanship of the Special Commissioner of Police (Women's Safety, Airport & Modernisation), to "assess and analyse the impact" of the AWPCR vans. The Delhi Police requested the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)⁵ to conduct an independent audit of the performance and impact of the AWPCR vans. This audit will not only feed into the Delhi Police's internal assessment of the AWPCR initiative, it will also be presented to the High Court of Delhi in response to a writ petition⁶ examining multiple issues on women's safety in Delhi.

CHRI began the audit in May 2017. The results of the audit are presented as findings and recommendations in this report. This report is organized into four principal parts: 1) CHRI's findings on the AWPCR vans, 2) responses from public surveys, 3) recommendations to the PCR unit as a whole, and 4) our overall conclusion and recommendations on the AWPCR pilot project.

1.2. Scope and Objectives of the Audit

For both CHRI and the Delhi Police, the purpose of the audit is to provide an independent, unbiased review of the AWPCR van initiative; namely to make recommendations on the performance and impact of the five AWPCR vans, as well as on the feasibility of the entire concept of women only PCR vans.

The audit assessed the operational effectiveness of the five AWPCR vans based on the following parameters:

- ✓ performance in terms of volume, types of, and quality of response to public complaints and emergency calls, particularly with regards to women complainants, seen in comparison to other PCRs deployed in the same jurisdiction;
- ✓ general preparedness including personnel knowledge of relevant procedures and processes, understanding of their role, and commitment to their jobs;
- ✓ profiles and experience of the AWPCR van personnel;
- ✓ feedback from complainants who had placed calls to the AWPCR vans.

⁵ CHRI is an independent non-governmental organization headquartered in New Delhi specializing in research and advocacy on key human rights issues. Policing and police reform are among its core areas of expertise. For more information, please visit CHRI's website: <http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org>

⁶ Writ petition no. 7927/2012 in the matter of Court on its Motion vs. Union of India and Ors.

On a larger level, the audit examines the sustainability of the concept of exclusively AWPCR vans against numerous factors including the general shortage of police personnel amplified by the inadequate numbers of women police in the Delhi Police, the demand for policewomen in police stations for investigative work, the deficiencies of facilities and infrastructure for women in the police, and the continuing challenges to gender equality within the police.

1.3. Methodology

CHRI employed a multifaceted approach for the audit. We conducted reviews of internal police documents and various data sets pertaining to the PCR unit. We held interviews and discussions with women personnel deployed in the AWPCR vans, police personnel deployed in mixed (gender) vans, and the key supervisory officers in the PCR unit. We conducted small public surveys in select locations where the AWPCR vans operate. Lastly, CHRI spoke with a small number of complainants who called the police for assistance and intervention of the PCR van.

Review of Data and Records

CHRI reviewed the following documents pertaining to the PCR unit of Delhi Police:

- Standing Order No. Ops.-13 (Previous Standing Order No.74/2009) on Delhi Police Control Room
- A brief note by the PCR unit on “All Woman Police Vehicles working in New Delhi Zone PCR” along with a study of the pilot project relating to All Women PCR Vans (From September 2016 (9.9.2016) onwards)

Additionally, we requested and reviewed the following data sets:

- Total number of PCR vans in each zone
- Rank and gender-wise PCR strength in each zone
- Total number of complaints/calls received by the five AWPCR Vans from September 2016 to June 2017
- Total number of complaints/calls per van in each zone (October 2016 to June 2017)
- Total number of Sub-Divisional Officers (these are part of the supervising chain in the PCR Unit) in each zone
- Total population in each district of Delhi
- Schedule of indoor and outdoor induction training course for fresh arrival staff in PCR unit

Of the data/information we requested, we did not receive the following from the Delhi Police:

- Copies of daily checking reports and special assessment reports of AWPCR, if any;
- Month-wise breakdown of calls relating to women across New Delhi zone

Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

CHRI conducted 38 interviews in total including:

- Deputy Commissioner of Police, PCR unit

- Assistant Commissioner of Police, PCR unit, New Delhi zone
- Inspector, Administration, PCR unit, New Delhi zone
- 18 AWPCR personnel: the team interacted with each van separately, and with each van, the team interviewed the I/C separately from the remaining staff
- 14 personnel from mixed gender PCRs including 2 women and 3 male personnel from mixed vans in New Delhi zone, and 4 women and 5 male personnel from mixed vans in other zones.
- 3 Sub-Divisional Officers of New Delhi zone, PCR unit

Public feedback

CHRI conducted public surveys in three locations over two days: Jesus and Mary College/Maitreyi College (Van-41), Khan Market (Van-81) and K.G. Marg (Van-75). The team interviewed 131 people in total which included 75 men and 56 women.

	Female	Male	TOTAL
16-25 yrs.	35	10	45
26-35 yrs.	5	14	19
36-45 yrs.	3	15	18
46-55 yrs.	9	23	32
56-65 yrs.	3	12	15
66-75 yrs.	-	1	1
unknown	1	-	1
TOTAL	56	75	131

The profile of the respondents was as follows:

Student	33	College bus driver	1
Auto driver	12	Bookseller	2
Security guard	8	Advocate	2
Shopkeeper	17	Homemaker	2
Vendors	13	Service wo(men)	9
DU administration	6	Photographer	1
Construction	1	Illustrator	1
worker/CNG pump staff			
Gardener	3	Writer	1
Film Director	1	Technical studio head	1

Cleaner	1	Caretaker of masjid	1
Parking Guards	1	Journalist	1
Retired officer	1	Businessmen	1
Professor	8	Cobbler	1
Unknown	2		
TOTAL: 131			

The public survey assessed general awareness about the AWPCR vans, satisfaction with their performance, and preferences between all women vans and mixed gender vans. The CHRI team administered the questionnaire face to face with members of the public.

Complainant Interviews

Finally, CHRI interviewed seven complainants whose complaints were attended to by an AWPCR van. In total, CHRI contacted 13 people but only seven were available and/or willing to speak.

2. About the All Women Police Control Room Vans

2.1. Deployment

All five AWPCR vans are deployed in New Delhi Zone⁷, one each at the following locations:

- C-Hexagon (Van-26)
- Jesus and Mary and Maitreyi Colleges (Van-41)
- Vijay Chowk/South Block (Van-68)
- Kasturba Gandhi (KG) Marg [American Centre] (Van-75)
- Khan Market (Van-81)

About New Delhi zone

New Delhi zone is a largely non-residential area. In fact, it has the lowest (by far) population of all Delhi's police zones at 4.83 lakhs.⁸ It is regarded as a VIP zone containing important offices and institutions such as Parliament, embassies and diplomatic missions, colleges, and tourist spots like India Gate. It is divided into three sub divisions namely Parliament Street, Connaught Place, and Chanakyapuri.

New Delhi zone has 79 PCR vans in total, including the five AWPCRs.⁹

While New Delhi zone has the lowest population, and consistently receives the lowest number of PCR calls of all zones, it has the second highest number of PCR vans in all zones (just one less than South Zone which has 80 vans). There is clearly a privileging of New Delhi zone related to its status as a VIP area.

New Delhi zone and the locations for the AWPCR vans were selected keeping in mind a high footfall of pedestrians including women, easy and safe access to public facilities for the women personnel, and what are seen as 'low-crime' areas.

At present, there are a total of 766 PCR vans in Delhi. Women constitute 6.27% of the total PCR strength spread across approximately 140 vans.¹⁰ New Delhi Zone has the highest deployment of women personnel at 11.01%. This large pool of women personnel was a significant factor in selecting New Delhi Zone for the pilot.

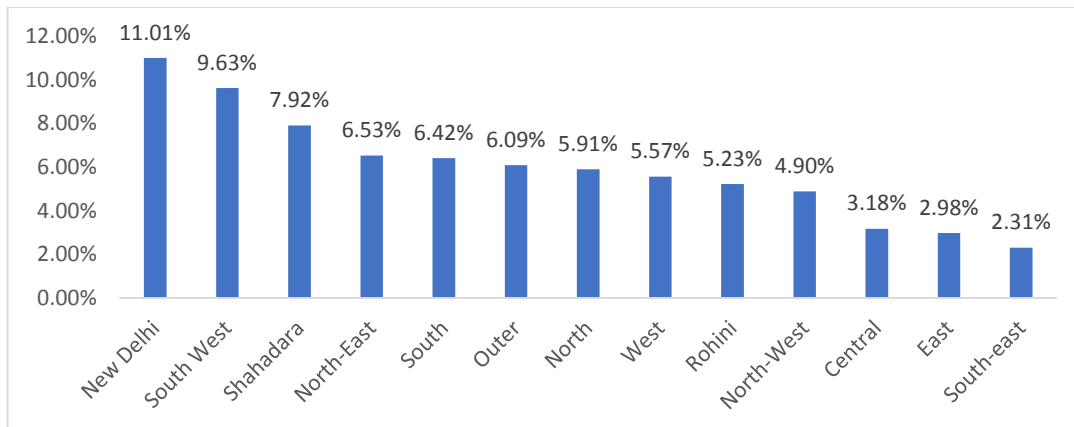
⁷ There are 13 police zones in Delhi: New Delhi Zone, Central Zone, North Zone, South-West Zone, West Zone, Outer Zone, North-West Zone, North-East Zone, East Zone, South-East Zone, Rohini Zone, Shahdara Zone and South Zone.

⁸ Data provided by PCR unit, Delhi Police

⁹ Data provided by PCR unit, Delhi Police

¹⁰ Data received from PCR Unit, Delhi Police

Graph 1: Zone-wise percentage of women in the PCR unit



2.2. Mandate

Like other PCR vans, the AWPCR vans' mandate includes the following:

- provide immediate assistance to anyone in need;
- respond to emergency calls made to helpline numbers including 100, 1091 (women and child helpline) and 1291 (senior citizen and student);
- VIP security (when needed; in New Delhi zone, this is a significant part of the PCR van workload);
- patrolling.

Notably, as seen above, their duty is not limited to women-related complaints. All PCR vans are empowered to take suo moto action in response to any situation that arises where the van itself places a call to the Central Police Control Room - in police parlance, these are called "self-calls".

In other words, the AWPCR vans function like any other PCR van in their respective jurisdictions and are governed by the same operating procedure (SOP).

Standing Order (No. Ops. -13) states the framework and standard operating procedure for the PCR unit. The following provisions describe the response role of a PCR van:

"Whenever any information is received, the vehicle will rush to the spot immediately and intervene in the situation effectively. Under no circumstances the staff will be a mute spectator to the happenings. The staff will try to contain the situation till the arrival of the local police. They may also use force in the event of any incident having communal overtones to contain situation from being flared up. In case of an accident, the victim would immediately be removed to the nearest hospital. They cannot decide if the injured is dead or alive".¹¹

¹¹ Standing Order No. Ops.-13, page 120

In conversations with police leadership, CHRI learned that the primary motivation of senior leadership in conceiving of this pilot project was to boost the confidence of policewomen and give them greater opportunities to break the glass ceiling within the police. They wanted to create roles that would give greater visibility to policewomen and encourage them to take on more public handling/public order work. In parallel, they sought to send a message to the rank and file that women are up to any kind of police-work with the clear signal that the leadership supports mainstreaming of women in the police. While one objective of the AWPCR vans was to instill confidence in women on the streets with some PCR vans exclusively staffed by women, the overarching objective according to police leadership is confidence building and greater opportunity for women in the Delhi Police.¹²

2.3. Staff

Only women personnel staff all three positions in the vans (the staffing positions are common to all PCR vans): Van In-Charge (I/C), Driver and the “gunman” (gunwoman more appropriately). 88% of the AWPCR van personnel are Constables, making up the drivers and gunwomen in the vans. Only a Head Constable and above is eligible to serve as a Van I/C.

The entire PCR unit is headed by a Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP). The DCP/PCR initially selected the women staff for the AWPCR vans from among those already posted in New Delhi Zone. Subsequently, a woman Sub-Inspector was deputed for looking after the duty roster and grievances of policewomen specifically in New Delhi zone. PCR staff are required to be rotated every 3 months between different vans, a process that is managed centrally through the DCP office. This is done to ensure van staff themselves are kept away from staff rotation decisions to prevent any malpractices or corruption from creeping in. Each police zone is to maintain a reserve pool to fill shortages at any given point.¹³

¹² Discussion with Special Commissioner of Police (Women’s Safety, Airport and Modernisation) on 4 May 2017 and interview with Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), PCR unit, on 30 May 2017.

¹³ Standing Order No. Ops. 13, Delhi Police Control Room, page 130.

3. FINDINGS ON THE AWPCR

3.1. The AWPCR vans are underworked

The five AWPCR vans are underworked when seen against their PCR van counterparts. This is evidenced by several factors, explained below.

3.1.1 Relaxed working conditions

Compared to all other PCR vans, the working conditions of the AWPCR vans are significantly relaxed:

- They serve only a seven-hour day shift, from 9am to 4pm. They do not do a night shift unlike other PCRs who have daily 12-hour shifts, alternating between day and night (8 am to 8 pm followed by 8 pm to 8 am).
- Each AWPCR van gets one day off in the week, which means it is off the road that day. Other PCR vans do not get a day off.
- The jurisdiction of each AWPCR van is contained. Their patrolling is very limited. They are mainly static PCRs and remain stationed at single points for most of their duty hours.

Considering the above, in terms of duty hours alone, AWPCR vans are on duty for a total of 42 hours in a week, while non-AWPCR vans are on duty for a total of 84 hours in a week. Non-AWPCR vans are working double the hours of AWPCR vans.

3.1.2. Low volume of calls received

Considering the AWPCR vans' shorter duty hours, it is little surprise that the volume of calls received by the AWPCR vans is extremely low when compared to calls received by the other vans in the same zone. From October 2016 to June 2017, the five AWPCR vans received 355 calls combined. The other 74 PCR vans in New Delhi zone received 64446 calls combined. The calls received by the AWPCR vans constitute a mere 0.55% (not even 1%) of the total calls received in New Delhi Zone during this period.¹⁴ Each non-AWPCR van received between 65-66 calls per month (with the exception of December 2016, see Table 1). This stands in stark contrast to the workload of the AWPCR where the five vans together received approximately 40 calls per month. Moreover, with time, there has been no significant increase or decrease in the calls received by each AWPCR van. When they started out in September 2016, they received a total of 36 calls, which have remained more or less consistent over the months with 40 calls received in June 2017.

To note, we do not have the total number of 'self-calls' (suo moto calls) made by any of the PCR vans (including the AWPCR vans) as the data provided by the PCR unit clubbed 'Other/Self calls' together rather than disaggregating them.

¹⁴ We received data on calls received by the AWPCR vans for September 2016 to June 2017, but for the remaining PCR vans in New Delhi zone, we received the calls data for October 2016 to June 2017. Our analysis looks at the comparative trends over October to June to maintain uniformity.

Table 1: Total Calls received by AWPCR Vans as percentage of total calls in New Delhi Zone

Month	Total calls received by 5 AWPCR Vans	Total calls by 74 general PCR Vans in New Delhi Zone	Avg call per AW van per month (Column A/5)	Avg call per general Van per month (Column B/74)	% of AWPCR calls against total calls in ND Zone (A/B*100)
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	
September 16	36		7.2		
October 16	41	4390	8.2	59.32	0.93%
November 16	52	6168	10.4	83.35	0.84%
December 16	23	25622	4.6	346.24	0.09%
January 17	34	4779	6.8	64.58	0.71%
February 17	32	4547	6.4	61.45	0.70%
March 17	38	4969	7.6	67.15	0.76%
April 17	63	4895	12.6	66.15	1.29%
May 17	32	4872	6.4	65.84	0.66%
June 17	40	4204	8	56.81	0.95%
Total	391	64446		-	

New Delhi zone receives the lowest number of calls overall

New Delhi zone consistently receives the lowest number of calls of all police zones in Delhi – this is the case from October 2016 to June 2017 with the sole exception of December 2016. This factors into the low number of calls received by the AWPCR vans. For instance, in October 2016, New Delhi zone as a whole received 4431 calls total, while North zone received the second lowest calls at 15035 and South zone received the highest number of calls at 36685. In June 2017, New Delhi zone received the lowest number of calls at 4244 while South East zone came in highest at 24779 - the gulf between lowest and highest is a whopping 20535.

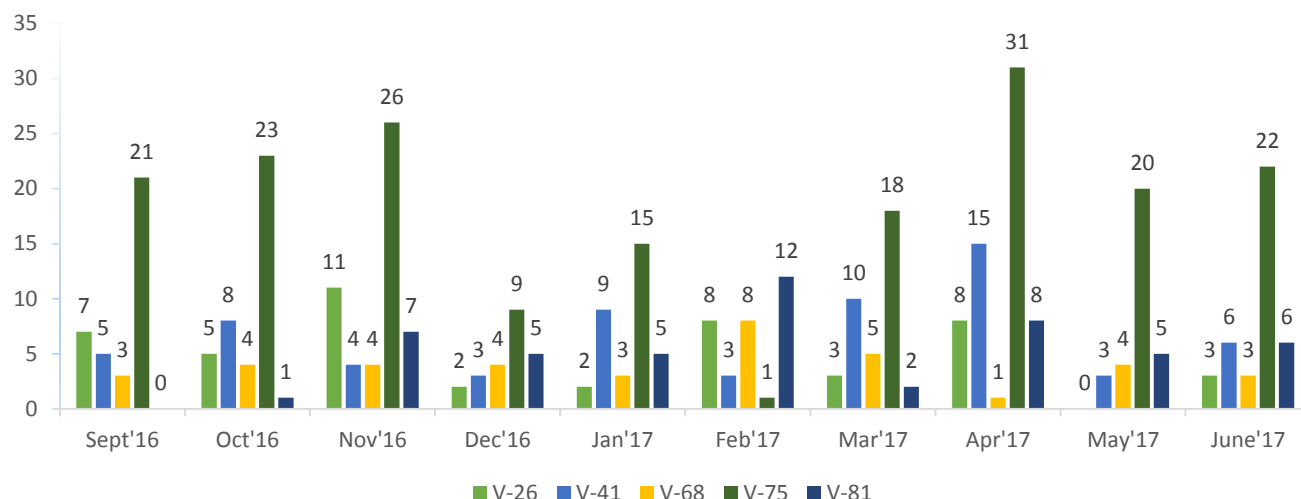
Variation between AWPCR Vans

It also must be factored in that there is major variation in calls received between the five AWPCR Vans. Van 75 located at K.G Marg (American Centre) received by far the highest number of calls at 186 over September 2016 to June 2017. This constitutes 48% of the total calls received by the AWPCR vans. In other words, virtually half of the calls received by the five AWPCR vans over these months were concentrated in just one van.

Table 2: Total calls received by AWPCR Vans from September 2016 to June 2017

	Total calls received in 10 months
V-26 (Rajpath)	49
V-41 (JMC College)	66
V-68 (South Block)	39
V-75 (KG Marg)	186
V-81 (Khan Market)	51
Total	391

Graph 2: Van-wise number of calls from September 2016 to June 2017



Van 75: Three-month dip in calls

The average calls received by each AWPCR van per month remained more or less stable without any significant increase or decrease (see Table 3). The only exception is Van-75 which saw a major dip in the calls from an average 25 calls per month to 9, 15 and only 1 call in December, January and February respectively. March onwards, the calls pick up again. Considering Van-75 consistently received the highest number of calls, the reasons behind such a drastic dip over a three month period should be examined by the PCR Unit.

Calls not given to AWPCR vans initially

In a brief note by the Delhi Police on “All Woman Police Vehicles working in New Delhi Zone PCR”, it states “at the initial stage, they have not been entrusted with PCR calls. Slowly they were trained and gain confidence”. No further details are provided and there is no indication of the duration of the “initial stage”. Nevertheless, this is clearly a factor in the smaller number of calls received by them.

Summary of Key Findings:

- The five AWPCR vans received the lowest number of calls of all PCR vans in New Delhi zone. Calls received by the AWPCR vans constitute less than 1% (0.55%) of the total calls received from October 2016 to June 2017.
- On average, each PCR van in New Delhi zone received between 65-66 calls per month in this period. In contrast, the five AWPCR vans together received approximately 40 calls per month.

- The duty hours in one week of non-AWPCR vans are double the duty hours of AWPCR vans in one week.
- Of the total calls received by the AWPCR vans from September 2016 to June 2017, 48% of the calls were received by one van.
- The AWPCR vans have limited jurisdictions which do not require much patrolling.

On further examination, many factors contribute to the low number of calls received by the AWPCR vans - their limited duty hours, the areas selected for their deployment, and the decision to not give them calls initially.

Nevertheless in terms of operational performance, our finding is that the AWPCR vans are significantly underworked compared to the other PCR vans in the same zone. From the perspective of operational need and efficiency, it needs to be questioned whether the PCR unit can support such limited duty hours and jurisdictions for a greater number of its vans, particularly if the AWPCR initiative is ever expanded.

We recognise the Delhi Police deliberately put relaxed conditions in place to ease women into the AWPCR initiative and appreciate the police leadership's good intentions. But from the audit perspective, considering the extent to which the AWPCR vans are underworked, the fallout at the operational level is the prime factor and in CHRI's view presents the most significant consequence. The low use of the AWPCR vans, their short hours, and the fact that they are barely missed when off-duty indicates they have not impacted larger public or women's safety significantly and are an inefficient use of police resources and manpower. This also leads us to conclude that the full operational potential of an AWPCR van initiative has not been properly tested through this pilot.

3.2. Complainant feedback is not positive and does not match the department's documentation

Of equal concern is complainants' feedback. CHRI conducted phone interviews with seven complainants whose complaints were reportedly attended to by an AWPCR van. Unfortunately, the feedback received reflects poorly on the PCR response and also raises serious concerns about gaps and inconsistencies in the documentation/record keeping of the PCR unit.¹⁵

3.2.1 Low response rate

The PCR unit provided some information, month-wise, on the nature of calls received, brief details of the caller and/or complainant, and the action taken by each AWPCR van in the period from September 2016 to June 2017. Information for 30 calls was provided. Of these, the phone numbers of 13 callers were given. CHRI contacted the 13 individuals, but only seven were available and/or willing to speak. Of these, five complainants gave feedback on Van-75 located

¹⁵ We include a more detailed section on gaps in record keeping below, pertaining to the entire PCR unit. Since this data reportedly relates specifically to the AWPCR vans, it is most appropriate in this section of the report.

in K.G. Marg at different points of time, 1 spoke about V-81 located at Khan Market, and 1 person spoke about V-68 located at South Block.

In the table below, we present the information on each incident/call and the action taken by the PCR as documented by the PCR unit **(verbatim)** next to the responses we received from the complainants, for the 13 calls for which caller/complainant phone numbers were provided.

Table 3: Details of Caller Response

AWPCR van	Information provided by Delhi Police (verbatim)	Caller Response
V-68	<p>SOUTH BLOCK Date: 16/12/2016</p> <p>Brief of contents of call: Lady needs help at D-47, office mess.</p> <p>Facts of call: Quarrelled with her son</p> <p>Action taken by PCR: The matter solved after talking to both mother and son.</p>	<p>Incident: A woman called the police helpline due to a heated altercation between her neighbor's son with another neighbor.</p> <p>Arrival time of PCR: The AWPCR arrived within 15 to 20 minutes.</p> <p>Response: The AWPCR resolved the situation and called the beat officer of Tilak Marg police station.</p> <p>Behaviour of the van staff: Satisfactory.</p> <p>Feedback register: The caller was neither informed about the feedback register nor made to fill it.</p>
V-75	<p>K.G. MARG Date: 6/10/2016</p> <p>Brief of contents of call: Janpath Road, Tolstoy Marg, a [missing word] without no. plate vehicle snatched caller's phone and ran away.</p> <p>Facts of call: Caller Rudrakshi told that a boy and a girl in a car asked for phone to call and then they went with caller's phone.</p> <p>Action taken by PCR: The caller was traced and called and talked to. The local police was called.</p>	<p>Incident: Phone snatching</p> <p>Arrival time of PCR: A mixed PCR arrived in 5 minutes. An AWPCR van did not arrive.</p> <p>Response: The van staff behaved normally. The matter was resolved.</p> <p>Feedback register: The caller was neither informed about the register nor asked to fill it.</p>
V-75	<p>K.G. MARG Date: 18/10/2016</p> <p>Brief of contents of call: Quarrel with lady in Janpath market</p> <p>Facts of call: Normal argument on exchange the things</p> <p>Action taken by PCR: Caller talked assistance provided.</p>	<p>Incident: The caller, accompanied by his wife, attempted to return some clothes at a shop in Janpath Market they had bought previously. The shopkeeper refused to exchange the merchandise despite their persistent efforts. The caller and his wife were leaving the premises of the shop when a helper at the shop abused them. The caller dialled 100.</p> <p>Arrival time of PCR: A PCR van arrived in 10 to 15 minutes, but it was not an AWPCR. Beat officers present at the spot noticed the commotion and intervened</p>

		before the arrival of the PCR. The caller did not interact with any woman police officer.
V-75	<p>K.G. MARG Date: 22/09/2016</p> <p>Brief of contents of call: Near Hindustan Times building, a cab driver harassing the lady caller.</p> <p>Facts of call: Caller Rashmi told that she took a cab near Hindustan Times after few minutes the cab driver started misbehaving with her and she got down from the cab. Lady caller wanted action against cab.</p> <p>Action taken by PCR: The caller was traced, called and talked. Local police called and handed over for further action.</p>	<p>Incident: The caller had an altercation with an abusive cab driver. She called the Delhi Police and interacted with a male police officer.</p> <p>Response: The complainant waited for half an hour but the PCR van did not arrive. The police constantly called her for a few hours and requested her to 'close the matter' and report it as 'resolved'. They also did not provide immediate relief because they were unsure of the jurisdiction.</p>
V-75	<p>K.G. MARG Date: 10/10/2016</p> <p>Brief of contents of call: B.K Road, N-block, Room no. 27, took Rs. 1500 and not giving the job.</p> <p>Facts of call: Call is true. Lady caller Ashumita, age 35 years.</p> <p>Action taken by PCR: The police van reached the spot and met the complainant. The local police also reached.</p>	<p>Incident: A broker promised the caller a job on payment of Rs. 1500, but did not provide a job.</p> <p>Response: The caller approached a male police officer after which she filed an FIR at the police station. No action was taken in this matter despite the complainant pursuing the status of the complaint with the police station. No PCR van arrived.</p> <p>The caller has sought action against the Delhi Police for the inaction.</p>
V-75	<p>K.G. MARG Date: 21/11/16</p> <p>Brief of contents of call: Super Bazar, quarrel husband and son.</p> <p>Facts of call: Caller Neelam told that quarrel between her husband and her step son.</p> <p>Action taken by PCR: The matter solved amicably.</p>	<p>Incident: The caller called the police after a heated quarrel between family members broke out.</p> <p>Arrival of the PCR: The PCR arrived in 30 minutes but it was not an AWPCR. There were no women police officers in the PCR.</p>
V-81	<p>KHAN MARKET Date: 23/11/16</p> <p>Brief of contents of call: A swift car accident and ran away from red light near Tuglak Road.</p> <p>Facts of call: Caller Kriti Handa advocate, told that she wanted action against the car (she had noted the license plate number).</p> <p>Action taken by PCR: The PV reached the spot and talked politely. Called the local police and handed over for further action.</p>	<p>Incident: A vehicle barged into the caller's car.</p> <p>Response: The PCR van did not arrive at the spot but the police called her a few times to repeat the incident several times.</p> <p>Feedback: The caller is unaware of the action taken against the perpetrators. She finds the Delhi Police unreliable.</p>
V-81	<p>KHAN MARKET Date: 24/11/16</p>	The contact number provided did not belong to the complainant. On calling the number, a male Head Constable

	<p>Brief of contents of call: Lady purse stolen in DTC bus near Zakir Hussain Marg.</p> <p>Facts of call: Call is true. Three ladies apprehended and purse found.</p> <p>Action taken by PCR: The lady complainant appreciated the police assistance.</p>	answered the phone.
V-75	<p>K.G. MARG Date: 21/11/2016</p> <p>Brief of contents of call: Janpath market, Bank of Baroda, quarrel</p> <p>Facts of call: Quarrel between Usha and Arifa Begum. Usha was injured and admitted in RML hospital.</p> <p>Action taken by PCR: The matter was solved amicably.</p>	The number provided was switched off.
V-75	<p>K.G. MARG Date: 06/11/2016</p> <p>Brief of contents of call: 605, B-block, M.S Appt, Curzon Road. Dr. Anamika received her husband suicide message on her phone.</p> <p>Facts of call: No one found on the spot. House gate was locked. No one came in front of PCR staff.</p> <p>Action taken by PCR: The PV reached the spot, verified nothing found objectionable.</p>	The number provided was of a colleague of Dr. Anamika. On subsequently calling her, her phone was switched off.
V-75	<p>K.G. MARG Date: 18/10/2016</p> <p>Brief of contents of call: Quarrel with lady in Janpath market.</p> <p>Facts of call: Normal argument on exchange the things.</p> <p>Action taken by PCR: Caller talked assistance provided.</p>	The caller was occupied and did not respond.
V-41	<p>JESUS AND MARY COLLEGE Date: 22/10/2016</p> <p>Brief of contents of call: Accident at Taj Palace Hotel near CNG station.</p> <p>Facts of call: Caller Neha told that her car was touched by driver Ravi and no injured.</p> <p>Action taken by PCR: The matter was solved amicably. The lady was talked to by women police and appreciated the assistance.</p>	The number provided is incomplete.
V-75	<p>K.G. MARG Date: 05/11/2016</p>	The caller did not respond to our call.

	<p>Brief of contents of call: B.K. Road, Ranjeet Singh flyover red light. Lady injured.</p> <p>Facts of call: Normal touching two vehicles. Got normal injury and not want to go to hospital.</p> <p>Action by PCR: The PV reached and talked to the caller politely and provided assistance.</p>	
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To sum up, according to the seven callers whom we could contact and talk to:

- An AWPCR van reached the spot only in one incident;
- A non-AWPCR van reached the spot in three cases out of the seven;
- No PCR van arrived or reached the spot in the remaining three cases.

CHRI could not arrive at findings on the AWPCR vans' response time and record of action taken, due to lack, and inaccuracy, of the information provided.

3.2.2 Poor documentation of public feedback

The complainant feedback signals major data and information gaps in the official documentation. We were under the impression that we had information on calls received and handled by the AWPCR vans. It turns out we have information to assess the AWPCR vans' performance only in one case (notably, where the feedback on the AWPCR's response was positive). This fails to give us adequate material or information to make an assessment of the AWPCR vans' performance in terms of response time, quality of response, and levels of satisfaction of callers/complainants.

These inaccuracies give rise to other larger concerns:

In the three cases in which no PCR van arrived, each caller stated that no action was taken by the Delhi Police; or s/he is unaware of any action taken. It is of serious concern that the official documentation of the PCR unit in these three cases diverges entirely from what the callers stated. It records action taken in all three cases, including reaching the spot, talking to the complainant, and handing over to the local police for further action. On priority, the PCR Unit must examine why there are such major inconsistencies in its documentation of cases and action taken and the caller/complainant version, and take measures to repair its documentation's accuracy.

We note that all these incidents took place in the very early days of the AWPCR initiative (September, October, November, December 2016) when the department admits that the AWPCR vans were not given PCR calls. This may be a reason for the absence of intervention of the AWPCR vans in these specific incidents, but again, the official record should reflect this reality.

It should also be noted that the police's record of callers/complainants' contact numbers is incomplete and largely incorrect. This obviously impedes the Delhi Police from collecting caller/complainant feedback which should become a regular practice as a monitoring/evaluation mechanism for the PCR unit. We urge this is rectified on priority, with clear instructions issued on how best to accurately record caller/complainant contact details.

These gaps in documentation of the PCR unit indicate there may be lapses at the central level as well. The Standing Order (No. Ops. -13) mandates supervising officers in the Central Police Control Room to monitor and analyse the response time of PCR vans daily:

- The Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP)/Central Police Control Room is to conduct "an analysis of the response time" of PCR vans on a daily basis "in order to detect instances of undue delay" in their response. If the ACP finds delay, s/he must submit a report to the DCP/PCR¹⁶
- The Inspector/Command Room is to closely monitor the time taken by PCR vans to reach the spot/scene of incidents and bring any "inordinate" delay to the notice of the ACP above¹⁷

Both the ACP/CPCR and the Inspector/Command Room are to be actively checking the response time of PCR vans and reporting on any delay. In complete contrast to the official record, complainants state that no PCR vans arrived in their cases. This amounts to non-response - even more serious than delay. It is expected that the ACP/CPCR and Inspector/Command Room would report all such instances back to the PCR unit, but this is not the case here. We urge that the quality of the monitoring and reporting of PCR van response time at the central level is thoroughly examined on priority.

Summary of Findings:

- Out of seven cases in which an AWPCR van responded according to the police documentation, feedback from complainants reveals that an AWPCR van responded in only one case.
- Caller/complainant feedback does not match the police's record of action taken by PCR vans.
- Caller/complainant contact details recorded by the police are incomplete and often incorrect.
- There are lapses in the CPCR's monitoring of PCR response time and reporting back to the DCP/PCR.

¹⁶ Standing Order No. Ops. -13, page 109

¹⁷ Standing Order No. Ops. -13, page 109

3.3. There are gaps in the preparedness of the AWPCR van staff

CHRI found several factors pointing to a lack of preparedness of the AWPCR van staff. These include gaps in operational knowledge and capacity and lack of policing experience.

3.3.1. Gaps in basic knowledge

The majority of the AWPCR van staff could not reply affirmatively that they had read the Delhi Police Standing Order on the PCR unit (No. Ops.-13, previous Standing Order No.74/2009). We asked this both collectively and individually and did not get clear affirmative answers either way. The Standing Order is the primary operational guiding document of the PCR unit. It is expected that all PCR staff are well acquainted with it, especially as the two-week training of the PCR unit includes a lecture on S.O No. Ops.-13.

Surprisingly, we got mixed responses from AWPCR van staff on the duration of the two week training for the PCR unit. Personnel from two of the five AWPCR vans said the training was for one month. This signals either tremendous confusion or a major lack of understanding.

3.3.2. Limited Experience

CHRI found that the majority of policewomen deployed in the AWPCR vans joined the Delhi Police as recently as 2014. As mentioned, there are three positions in every PCR van including the AWPCR vans – the Van In-Charge (I/C), driver and the “gunman” (in some vans there are two gunmen). In total, CHRI interacted with 18 women personnel of the AWPCR vans. Out of these 18 women:

- Two joined the Delhi Police in 1989 (both Assistant Sub Inspectors)
- One joined in 2000 (Head Constable)
- 14 joined in 2014 (Constables) – this is 50% of the 18 AWPCR van personnel CHRI interacted with
- One joined in 2009 (Constable)

This indicates that the AWPCR van initiative is being driven largely by women police personnel with just two years of policing experience.¹⁸ Our intent is not to present this as a critical finding, but to call attention to the limited policing experience, overall, of the AWPCR van staff.¹⁹ This also points to the realities of decisions on deployment. A supervising officer told us candidly, “all our best staff are in the thanas. Post Nirbhaya, handling of rape and crimes against women cases are priority. PCR is not a priority”. With limited numbers of women police, and especially of experienced women police, we recognize that the police has to prioritise where to place its experienced personnel and the needs at the police station level may dominate over the PCR vans. However, given the small number of women police involved in this pilot, the low levels of their preparedness is disappointing.

¹⁸ Every new recruit into the police spends close to a year in training before starting in an operational position.

¹⁹ CHRI recognizes depending on recent inexperienced recruits is linked to the shortage of women in the PCR unit and in Delhi Police generally. We discuss the impact of the shortage of women in a later section of the report.

3.3.3. Lack of knowledge about geography

In addition, all of these young women come from other states - Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, a common trend across Delhi Police and not just limited to the AWPCR staff. By no means is this an inherent disadvantage; however, it does have a bearing vis-à-vis policing functions that require deployment on the street, such as the PCR unit. Important operational aspects of working in a PCR van, particularly as staff is rotated between vans with different jurisdictions, is knowing the geography of Delhi, down to local areas; as well as the population and crime profiles of local areas. While all the AWPCR vans have global positioning system (GPS) devices, these are not always accurate. For many of the newly recruited AWPCR staff, joining the Delhi Police is their first independent experience outside of their village/district. Only two of the 18 women we interviewed are long-term residents of Delhi. How this affects and/or limits their confidence and understanding of their own role requires close attention and careful guidance from the seniors. CHRI was encouraged to see that the current PCR unit leadership appeared mindful of these factors and repeatedly emphasized the importance of mentoring. We urge that the same approach be applied for women deployed in all PCR vans and not just the AWPCR van.

3.3.4. Lack of Confidence

Lastly, the women personnel in AWPCR vans themselves expressed a lack of confidence in the capacities of all-women vans. By their own admission, the AWPCR van staff unanimously prefer mixed gender PCR vans to AWPCR vans. Across the board, they said AWPCR vans can work in New Delhi zone where crime and complaints are low, but they do not feel prepared to run all-women vans in high population and high crime areas, both in terms of mobility and being able to deal with violent incidents. Women drivers said that men are better equipped to drive in narrow and/or crowded roads/lanes. Similarly, they stated that night duty for all-women vans is possible in New Delhi zone but not in other zones. While examining the reasons behind this lack of confidence is beyond the scope of this audit, it indicates that the AWPCR van staff themselves do not feel fit to meet all the demands of their job.

At the same time, all of the male PCR van staff we spoke to repeatedly said they are handicapped without their women colleagues as they cannot deal with women complainants/victims/suspects the way their women colleagues can. This is true for both our social context, and in terms of legal limits placed on the extent to which policemen can physically handle women they have to respond to. From the lens of operational need and efficiency, there is no doubt that both genders are required to do the police work mandated by the PCR unit. A woman Van In-Charge, while stating her preference for mixed vans, stated her reasoning, “When we talk of equality, we should not ask for special units”. This was a uniquely feminist perspective. It brings to light the distinction between truly mainstreaming women into policing and relegating them into limited gender-based silos.

Summary of Key Findings:

- Majority of the AWPCR van women personnel are not familiar with the Standing Order governing the PCR unit.
- Staff of two of the five AWPCR vans mistakenly stated that the duration of the PCR unit training is one month, rather than the correct response of two weeks.
- The majority of the AWPCR van staff are recent recruits with insufficient policing experience
- AWPCR van staff believe all-women vans cannot work in high population and high crime zones
- Women drivers are less confident in their abilities and see male drivers as more able

3.4. AWPCR vans have been ineffective

Apart from handling very low number of calls as compared to other vans, the AWPCR vans generally kept a low profile.

3.4.1. Low visibility

None of the AWPCR vans recorded a single incident of a member of the public approaching them directly with a complaint. Even the van located outside JMC and Maitrayi colleges, both all-women, did not record any such incident. CHRI found that there is very little public awareness about these vans. 60% of the public respondents surveyed had not seen the AWPCR in their area.²⁰ The only students who reported seeing the van said they did when the women personnel went to use the washroom in the college. This indicates that the AWPCR vans have not taken adequate steps to make themselves visible. Being proactive to ensure visibility and public awareness will not only convey a sense of security, particularly for the students and women; it will also encourage better reporting.

Typically, the suo-moto action taken by these vans (such actions get recorded as self-calls) were confined to responding to accidents, taking injured persons to the hospital, attending to fallen trees, or flagging a traffic violation.²¹ It is worth noting that in 10 months, none of the AWPCR vans gave examples of responding to more serious incidents involving physical assault. In fact, the majority of the PCR personnel interviewed, both women and men, felt that an all-women van is not fit to respond to complaints such as fights between unruly men or abusive and/or drunken behavior. Despite being in the police, police personnel themselves expressed that the safety of policewomen would be under threat in such situations. If challenging such mindsets and creating opportunities for women to perform all policing tasks was part of the motivation behind the AWPCRs, the department needs to gear its training and policies towards ensuring women feel confident in dealing with any kind of public order emergency.

²⁰ As mentioned, CHRI conducted public surveys in Khan market, JMC and Maitrayi colleges, and KG Marg. The full results are reported in a later section of the report.

²¹ Based on interviews with the AWPCR personnel.

3.4.2 Very Little impact with regards to women's safety concerns

The AWPCR vans received only 11.25% calls in what is categorized as 'relating to women'. The remaining calls are clubbed under the head 'Other/Self-calls' which includes any suo moto action taken by a van. Among the 5 vans, Van-41 posted at JMC College recorded the highest percentage of calls relating to women at nearly 20%. Calls involving women received by the vans include parking quarrels, sexual harassment, misbehavior by taxi drivers and chain snatching.²² The low number of calls relating to women's safety received and acted upon signals a negligible impact on strengthening women's safety by these vans.

Table 4: Type of calls received by the AWPCR Vans

	Relating to women	Other/self-calls	Total
V-26 (Rajpath)	4 (8.16%)	45	49
V-41 (JMC College)	13 (19.6%)	53	66
V-68 (South Block)	5 (12.8%)	34	39
V-75 (KG Marg)	20 (10.7%)	166	186
V-81 (Khan Market)	2 (3.9%)	49	51
	44	347	391

There are several concerns with the way the department is recording call details, which are highlighted in detail under Section 4.3.2 below.

Summary of findings

- The AWPCR vans have not taken sufficient or proactive steps to spread and strengthen their visibility in their local areas.
- 60% of the public surveyed had not seen the AWPCR vans in their area.
- PCR unit staff, both men and women, doubt the ability of an AWPCR van to serve in high-crime areas and/or deal with aggressive situations.
- Only 11.25% calls received by the AWPCR vans were "relating to women".

²² Call details of each AWPCR van from September 2016 till March 2017 shared by the PCR unit.

4. FINDINGS ON THE PCR UNIT

In this section, we share our observations on the functioning of the PCR unit to the extent it impacts the effectiveness of AWPCRs.

4.1. Supervision

4.1.1. Inadequate follow-up despite elaborate supervisory structure

The supervising structure of the PCR unit in each zone is extensive. Besides the DCP PCR who oversees the entire unit, at the zonal level, supervision is as follows (this relates specifically to New Delhi zone but the basic pattern will be similar in other zones):

The overall supervisory head is the Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) New Delhi Range. Under the ACP, there are two Inspectors – one in charge of Administration and one in charge of Operations. The Inspector in charge of Operations is the chief “checking officer” for the entire zone. His duties are to oversee VIP movement and do regular checks of all the PCR vans in the zone. In addition, there are three “checking officers” who are Sub-Divisional Officers. They each have a designated number of PCR vans to check on a daily basis. Lastly, supervision ends with the In Charges in the vans themselves.

The Standing Order lists the roles and responsibilities of each rung of the supervising structure:

- the DCP/PCR is to be “mostly in the field checking MPVs, advising them, observing essential compliance of orders etc...” and periodic surprise checks in the evening and night”²³
- the Inspector (Zone) “will personally supervise day-to-day functioning of MPPs and also during all-important occasions such as Republic Day/Independence Day duties, elections, major law & order problems, communal situations and important route arrangements etc. He shall check that no PCR van is diverted from their bases/beats to go to any other place without the prior concurrence of the CPCR”²⁴
- the checking officers are to check PCR vans in their zone and send daily checking reports to the DCP/PCR – they are to brief PCR van staff of any threats, check that they are alert and are properly positioned. Notably, they are to spend “a minimum of ten minutes” to check each PCR van.²⁵

The daily routine supervision is the job of the checking officers. In their own words, they check: the 1) condition of the van, 2) appearance of personnel, 3) whether weapons are in working order, and 4) whether any van staff has a difficulty or problem they need to share. Each checking officer conducts a staff briefing as part of their first daily check to appraise the van staff about any highlights or developments in the local area. They conduct several checks a day

²³ Standing Order No. Ops. -13, page 104

²⁴ Standing Order No. Ops -13, page 128

²⁵ Standing Order No. Ops -13, page 129

of the vans in their charge and write entries in the “checking” register which is present in every van. They also send daily diaries to senior supervisors.

The PCR unit sent CHRI a ‘checklist’ for supervising officers which details the factors to check (verbatim below):

1. Turn out of deployed staff on PVs.
2. The worthiness of PV allotted to All Women Staff.
3. Lady driver is briefed about maintenance of PVs.
4. Checking of Arms & Ammunition worthiness & precautions of proper handling.
5. Proper way of standing & their posture near PV while on standing duty one by one.
6. Proper maintenance of all records & entry made therein.
7. Re-checking of call register, regarding calls attended by them.
8. Briefed them to prepare all monthly diaries regarding call attended etc.
9. They are specially briefed to behave gently with General Public & take special care to women, old aged people and children
10. Maintenance of wireless set & battery. The proper way of communication.
11. The utility of items provided in PCR PVs.
12. They are briefed to take help of nearby PVs in case of emergency if required.
13. They are briefed about the Topography of their beat area, red alert point, vital installations in their area.
14. Briefed to report on their duty well before time.
15. They are briefed to write down all instructions in QST register issued by senior officers time to time.

Based on our interactions with the AWPCR van staff as well as supervising officers themselves, CHRI found that the frequency and visibility of field-level supervision in the PCR unit cannot be faulted. All the AWPCR vans said their checking officer conducts numerous checks daily without fail, and these are mainly surprise checks which compels them to be prepared.²⁶ All supervisors also stay in constant contact and communication with the vans through the wireless. It is clear that there is sufficient communication and checking both directly and through the wireless.

²⁶ Some van staff said they sometimes get wind of when the checking officers are on their rounds, taking away from the surprise element of some checks. In smaller districts like New Delhi, this is probably unavoidable at times. It does not appear to be an endemic problem.

Our concern is with the quality of the supervision. In our discussions with the checking Inspector Zone and two more checking officers, they said if they find something amiss in their check, they give an oral warning first and only if there is no improvement, they put the problem in writing. We could not get details as to how long they wait before putting a situation in writing, how frequently oral warnings are given in lieu of documenting, and for what kinds of faults or problems oral warnings are given. This could be leading to (potentially serious) faults and/or problems persisting longer than they should. CHRI urges the DCP/PCR to examine this aspect on priority.

CHRI requested copies of a selection of daily checking reports and any special assessment reports of the AWPCR vans from the PCR unit. We were not provided these reports. We were only sent a very cursory document that explains supervision functions in very general terms.

While conducting the audit, CHRI glanced through the checking officers' entries made in the "checking" registers kept in each van – these were rote, and did not indicate much more than the time that the check took place.

4.1.2 No attention on quality of public interaction

CHRI also notes with concern that the parameter of how PCR vans are interacting with the public and/or complainants does not figure into the daily supervision. As per our discussions with checking officers, and as mentioned above, their focus is on physical conditions – the working state of each van, how the staff is presenting themselves, the state of the weapons. They also guide vans in responding to emergency calls, and must be monitoring response times over the wireless. These are all undoubtedly important, but there seems to be no attention to assessing the nature and quality of the daily interactions PCR vans have with both the general public and complainants/callers. By this, we are not referring to response to calls, but how van staff are talking to and behaving with anyone who approaches them – whether a member of the public or a caller/complainant – and also local people (shopkeepers, vendors, etc) in the areas where the vans are based.

While the checklist above includes being briefed on how to "behave gently" with the general public and take special care of women, old people and children, this is only prescriptive advice which is targeted to certain constituencies. There is no indication that efforts are being made to regularly assess levels of the van staff's public outreach or state of local relations. In the cases we analysed above in terms of complainant feedback, there are clear patterns of numerous gaps in basic communication with callers/complainants. Considering PCR vans are among the most visible public face of the Delhi Police, this most fundamental aspect of behavior, communication and interaction at the local level must also be tracked and monitored, towards improvement. We strongly suggest this is incorporated as part of daily supervision.

Increasing the responsibilities of checking officers will necessitate increasing the number of checking officers themselves. New Delhi zone has 79 PCR vans in total, and only three checking

officers (plus the checking Inspector who has overall charge). The Standing Order mandates each checking officer to spend a minimum of ten minutes to check each van in his/her jurisdiction, multiple times a day. With so few officers for so many vans, it is inevitable that the quality of supervision will be rote and hurried.

4.1.3. Gender bias

Lastly, we detail our findings of the PCR unit's supervisors' views of the AWPCR van initiative. We found it was quite mixed across the supervising structure. We are encouraged that there is a considerable level of support for this initiative and a sincerity of wanting women police to be publicly visible and grow in confidence. At the same time, supervisors recognize the socio-cultural backgrounds of the women joining the Delhi Police and how this affects their orientation and work as police personnel. Views were expressed that the women largely come from villages and/or small towns in Haryana and Rajasthan and are both unfamiliar and intimidated by the big city of Delhi. There was repeated reference to their young age at the time of joining the police and its impact:

"The women (new recruits) from Rajasthan and Haryana are not able to disconnect from their families"

"Young women join, get married soon and then are in the 'family way' – it is about the age they are in"

Ultimately, despite the support expressed for the AWPCR van initiative, we observed a lack of confidence in the capabilities and potential of women police among the supervisors. For instance, we were told women are not suited for night shifts:

"It is awkward to have women in night shifts on the open road – women are not ready for night shifts. This is change that needs to happen in a phased way".

The checking officers very candidly expressed their views that they do not have confidence in the young women posted in AWPCR vans:

"If a fight breaks out and men are involved, we send a mixed van too. We don't have total trust. The new girls don't have enough knowledge".

"It is hard for women to succeed in tough situations or heinous cases – they are held back by their own lack of confidence".

The gaps in preparedness of the AWPCR van staff that we ourselves flag above may be, to an extent, fueling the lack of confidence among supervisors. However, it is important for the police department to ensure that gender bias is not at the root of this, or that it is allowed to take root. If so, this will only make women police incidental to policing rather than equals to their male colleagues. To move forward, the emphasis must be on increasing the overall

representation of women in the Delhi Police and providing every opportunity and support to women to hone and upgrade their policing knowledge, skills, and experience on par with their male colleagues. Most importantly, the onus is on the police leadership, down to local level supervisors, to create a working environment in which women in the police are not seen as weaker or inferior to men in their capacities and potential as police officers.

Supervision by Van In-Charges

CHRI interacted with women In-Charges of the AWPCR vans, as well as male In-Charges of mixed PCR vans from both New Delhi district and other districts. We found that the In-Charges had clear and consistent views of their specific role and responsibilities, both in terms of being a leader and also towards their staff. It seemed that relations between In-Charges and their staff were respectful and positive, though this aspect was beyond the audit's scope and perhaps in too formal an atmosphere to honestly discern.

One positive trend that emerged was the view expressed by male In-Charges that the very presence of women in PCR vans made male police behave better, for instance being mindful of their language and actions. Male In-Charges themselves felt quite conscious of how they speak to women staff, particularly to not be misread in any manner or be insensitive. This recognition is positive. It is crucial for the PCR unit leadership to recognize and do what is possible to guide these aspects of gender relations and dynamics, between both colleagues and supervisors and juniors, through training particularly.

Summary of Key Findings:

- The frequency and visibility of field-level supervision in the PCR unit, on a daily basis, is consistent and unfailing.
- CHRI was not provided any copies of written daily checking reports or special assessment reports of the AWPCR vans. This fails to give us any material to ascertain the quality or consistency of written feedback by supervisors.
- Overseeing physical conditions and monitoring PCR van response time dominate supervision. There appears to be less emphasis on monitoring the frequency and quality of PCR van staff behavior, communication and interaction with the public, complainants, and the local population.
- There is a severe shortage of checking officers for the total number of PCR vans in New Delhi district. This affects the quality of supervision.
- While there is support for the AWPCR van initiative among supervisors, there is also a lack of confidence in the capacities and potential of women police.

4.2. Training

It is very positive that there is a specific two-week training induction course for all new staff posted in the PCR unit. This exclusive mandatory training specific to a single unit happens only in the PCR unit, and is an excellent innovation in training. The two-week course is split between one week of indoor training and one week of outdoor training.

The PCR unit sent CHRI the basic syllabus of the two-week training, giving us a broad sense of the scope of the indoor and outdoor training. Unfortunately, the timing did not work out for CHRI to sit in and observe any live training.

Our observations on training are limited to four main points, drawn from our interactions with the AWPCR van staff and our reading of the syllabus.

4.2.1. Lack of Refresher Training

CHRI found that the AWPCR van staff value the induction training, particularly to acquire a variety of basic skills needed to work in the PCR unit. At the same time, across the board, the majority of them repeated the lack of, and need for, regular refresher training, following the induction training. Many mentioned that there is continuous training on weapons management and firing, however, they suggested that refresher training on a wider range of topics would be most useful.

4.2.2. No module on Crime Situation

While there is a wide variety of relevant modules taught in the indoor training – ranging from first aid (from CPR to first treatment of a gamut of injuries – burns, stab wounds, poison, fractures, animal bites, among others), gender sensitization, organization of the PCR unit, and communication and soft skills – a module on the crime situation (statistics, trends) in Delhi is absent. CHRI suggests this is a needed addition to orient all new entrants to the PCR unit to the crime trends in Delhi, and identify crime “hotspots” in local areas. While it is the police station that ultimately deals with crime, as the first responder in so many cases, knowledge of crime trends and statistics can prepare PCR van staff to better understand what they may face and have to respond to in their local areas.

4.2.3. Little attention on improving “local relations” of every PCR van

CHRI notes there are modules on communication and soft skills, with a focus on behavior and listening when attending calls. In addition, there is a module titled “handling and good behavior to the public, senior citizens, women and children”. These are necessary in training. However, relating to the point made above in the supervision section, in spite of these included in training, it is not clear how frequently PCR vans’ everyday orientation, behavior, and communication with all the people they interact with are actually assessed and monitored. In fact, PCR vans will probably have relatively less interaction with ‘senior citizens, women and children’ than with those they encounter on a daily basis in the areas they are stationed – shopkeepers, local residents, local security guards, vendors, and auto and rickshaw drivers. To reiterate, the police department must recognize and make efforts to assess the state of ‘local relations’ of every PCR van, as this is a significant measure of each van’s level of outreach at the local level.

4.2.4. Absence of Principles on the Use of Force

Lastly, CHRI seeks to point out a major lacuna in the PCR unit training. The entire second week of training is devoted to weapons management, upkeep, and firing practice. Considering every PCR van has a gunman/woman, this is obviously needed. But it is a glaring gap that there is no dedicated module that explains the principles on the use of force, such as proportionality, necessity and the overriding requirement to protect and preserve life. The AWPCR van staff said that they are constantly told that when firing, they must aim below the waist to seek only to temporarily immobilize the person. This is not adequate to the purpose above, which is to holistically explain to all police personnel the limits on the use of force and how to understand these limits in operational terms. CHRI notes that Standing Order No. Ops. -13 is totally silent on use of force. We strongly recommend that a module is introduced in the indoor training that teaches the provisions and principles found in the United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials²⁷, and also lays down all the reporting requirements following firing in any circumstance in the Punjab Police Rules and/or any other internal rules and regulations for all Delhi Police personnel. These materials should be widely circulated among all PCR van staff, and translated into Hindi and any other languages needed.

Summary of Key Findings

- It is of tremendous value that the PCR unit has a dedicated exclusive two-week training induction course for all new entrants
- AWPCR van staff expressed the need for regular refresher training on diverse topics following the induction training
- A module explaining the crime trends, statistics, and 'hotspots' down to the local level in Delhi is absent from the PCR unit training
- The absence of a dedicated module, in indoor training, on the use of force including principles, limits, and reporting requirements, is a major and serious gap in the PCR unit training

4.3. Quality of Records Maintenance

CHRI calls attention to several gaps in the PCR unit's maintenance and quality of records of calls and complaints received. This relates to the section above in gaps in documentation relating to complainant feedback, by pointing to the larger gaps. Our reference is the data we received pertaining to the AWPCR vans, which allows us to make observations related to AWPCR specifically which can be extrapolated to the PCR unit's records maintenance more broadly.

²⁷ Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms,
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/UseOfForceAndFirearms.aspx>

4.3.1. Gaps in maintenance and quality of call records

The details of every call received by each AWPCR van is recorded in the following format by the department:

S No	Date	Time	Brief contents of call	Facts of call	Action taken by PCR

This needs improvement. Information on calls received by the AWPCR vans from September 2016 to March 2017 (as shared by the department) does not lend itself to a clear understanding of each incident. There are several inconsistencies. The exact name of the place and location where the incident being complained of is said to have taken place is not mentioned for every call. The names and/or address of the complainant is mentioned in some, and not in others. The clear purpose of having 'brief contents' and 'facts of call' as two separate columns is not reflected in the way data is being recorded. In several instances, the action taken by the PCR is recorded under 'facts of call.' The last column on action taken does not list out clear steps, but a general remark that the incident was handled amicably.

4.3.2 Insufficient disaggregation

Data shared on the calls received by AWPCR vans shows calls are clubbed under either "relating to women" or as "Other/Self Calls". This raises several concerns. First, the base for determining calls relating to women is not specified. For instance, it is unclear whether chain snatching is recorded as a complaint relating to women or under others. Also, self-calls may include incidents relating to women, but are counted separately. As a result, the data does not give a complete picture of concerns relating to women safety. Second, using a generic heading of 'Other' does not give a sense of overall safety concerns (other than women's safety) that are being reported by the public. Without a detailed category of every kind of complaint being handled by the AWPCR, and a PCR in general, the department will not be able to capture trends and improve its response accordingly. Third, despite the high number of self-calls recorded by all vans, there is no information available on the types of issues self-calls handled. Again, maintaining details of every self-call will not only be useful in assessing public safety concerns but also the general preparedness of PCRs. It will highlight pro-active behavior which can further be used in training for motivating new recruits.

Summary of Key Findings:

- There is inconsistent and incomplete documentation of types of calls received and action taken on each call
- There is insufficient disaggregation and details of calls received "relating to women" in terms of both the classification of complaints and action taken
- There is insufficient disaggregation and details of "self-calls" (suo moto action) in terms of both the classification of what is responded to and action taken

5. Public Survey on AWPCR vans (V-41), (V-81) and (V-75)

CHRI conducted public survey in three locations: Jesus and Mary College/Maitreyi College (Van-41), Khan Market (Van-81) and K.G. Marg (Van-75) over two days. The team interviewed 131 people in total which included 75 men and 56 women. The survey assessed general public awareness about the AWPCR vans, satisfaction with their performance, and preferences between all women vans and mixed gender vans. The CHRI team designed a questionnaire and administered it face to face with members of the public.

The findings from the survey are summarized below. Our intent is only to present the findings which are revealing on their own. There is limited analysis pertaining to specific points only. The surveys revealed very little public awareness of the AWPCR vans in their areas. Recognising this, the rest of the questions on performance and preferences were asked with a view to ascertaining general perceptions of the usefulness and role of all-women vans (illustratively vis à vis mixed gender vans) in a broader sense.

5.1. Awareness about PCR vans in general

Visibility of the police in these areas is quite strong as 81.6% of the respondents had seen a PCR van. Please note this does not mean visibility of AWPCR vans.

Table 5: Gender-wise total number of responses on awareness about PCR vans

	Yes			No			Total
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	
Do you know what a PCR van is?	71	48	119 (90.8%)	3	9	12 (9.16%)	131
Have you seen a PCR van in this area?	67	40	107 (81.6%)	9	15	24 (18.32%)	131

5.2. Awareness about All Women PCR vans

Public awareness of AWPCR vans, however, is insufficient in the areas where they are posted. In each of the 3 areas, less than 50% people knew about them (40% in K.G. Marg region, 27.7% in Khan Market, 46.6% in Jesus and Mary Marg region). Around Jesus and Mary, only 12.5% of the student respondents we spoke to knew about AWPCRs. Those who claimed to have seen AWPCR vans were uncertain when these started operating, with replies ranging from “recently” to “a few months back”.

Table 6: Gender-wise total number of responses on awareness about AWPCR vans

	Yes			No			Total
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	
Do you know it is an All Woman PCR van, staffed only by women personnel?	42	10	52 (39.7%)	33	46	79 (60.3%)	131
Have you seen the AWPCR van patrolling?	30	4	34 (25.95%)	52	45	97 (74.04%)	131

None of the respondents had a chance to interact with the vans, but three of the male respondents saw and observed them from a distance while dealing with a fight between two auto rickshaw drivers. The only other interactions were when they entered the College for using the washroom, went to a store to recharge their phones, or when they approached the CNG centre to fix the van tyres.

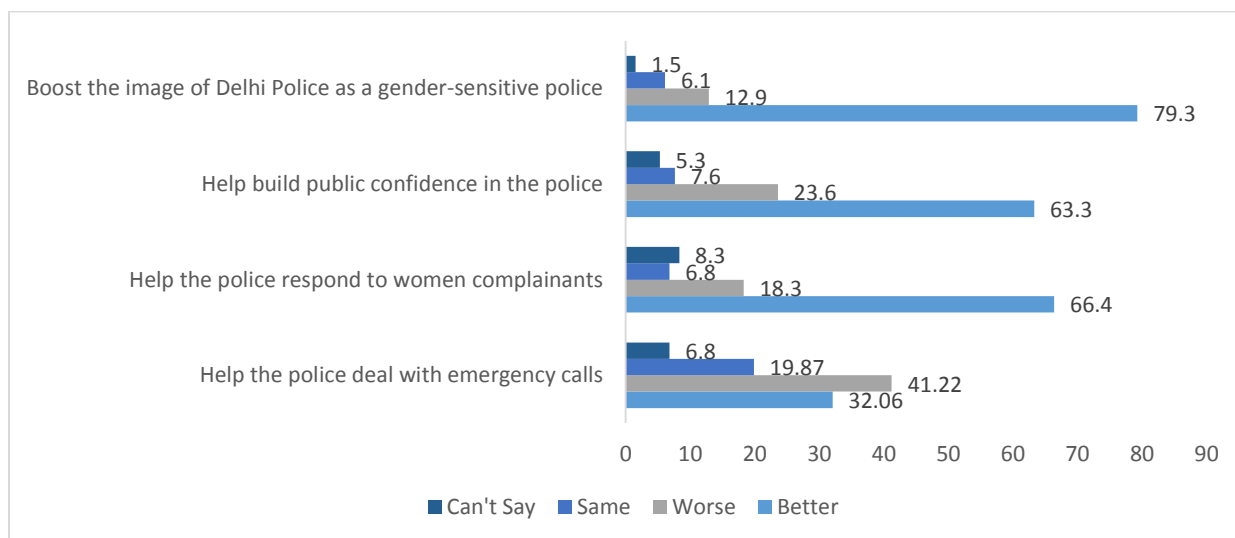
5.3 Comparative analysis between All Women PCR and Mixed PCR

While there is a clear preference among the public surveyed for mixed PCRs in terms of operational readiness such as responding to emergency calls; there is also majority opinion which sees the value of an all-women initiative to increase public confidence in the police (63%) and to perceive the Delhi Police as gender-sensitive (79%). These are important indicators of public perception pointing to the benefits of gender-based efforts to strengthen public trust in the police more broadly. Notably, a larger majority of respondents felt the AWPCR vans will respond better to women complainants than mixed vans, while mixed vans will respond better to emergency situations. Most of the women respondents feel more comfortable around women police officers.

Table 7: Total number of responses on AWPCR versus PCR vans

	Better	Worse	Same	Can't say	Total
Do you think an AWPCR van will					
a. Help the police deal with emergency calls	42 (32.06%)	54 (41.22%)	26 (19.87%)	9 (6.8%)	131
b. Help the police respond to women complainants	87 (66.4%)	24 (18.3%)	9 (6.8%)	11 (8.3%)	131
c. Help build public confidence in the police	83 (63.3%)	31 (23.6%)	10 (7.6%)	7 (5.34%)	131
d. Boost the image of Delhi Police as a gender-sensitive police force	104 (79.3%)	17 (12.9%)	8 (6.1%)	2 (1.52%)	131

Graph 3: Total number of responses on AWPCR versus PCR vans in Percentage



Key findings:

➤ Responding to emergency calls

- 42 (17F+25M) out of 131 (32.06%) respondents said that AWPCR vans would help respond to emergency calls in a better way.
- 54 (20F+34M) out of 131 (41.22%) respondents said AWPCR vans would not be better than mixed PCRs. Opinions expressed were that at least one policeman should be present in every PCR van to handle incidents in a “balanced” way, as most perpetrators in women related issues are men, and they do not take women police officers seriously.
- 26 (12F+14M), (19.87%) respondents felt that it would remain the same.
- 9 (7F + 2M), (6.8%) respondents expressed it depends from case to case and the capability of the person dealing with the incident.

➤ Responding to women complainants

- 87 (33F+54M) out of 131 (66.4%) respondents said it will help in a better way. Few of them reasoned by saying that women are more comfortable with women police.
- 24 (8F+16M) (18.3%) respondents out of 131 respondents said it would not be better than mixed PCR.
- 9 (4F+5M) out of 131 (6.8%) respondents said that it would remain the same.
- 11 (8F+3M) (8.3%) respondents said that it would depend on the capability of the van staff.

➤ Boost public confidence in the police

- 83 (43F + 40M) out of 131 (63.3%) respondents said that it will help to build public confidence in the police.

- 31 (13F+18M) out of 131 (23.6%) respondents said that it will not help to build public confidence.
- 10 (2F+8M) out of 131 (7.6%) respondents said that it would depend on the performance of the AWPCR.
- The rest (6% approx.) of the responses were vague and non-committal.

➤ Makes Delhi Police more gender sensitive:

- 104 (45F + 59M) out of 131 (79.3%) respondents said yes
- 17 (9F+8M) out of 131 (12.9%) respondents said no
- 8 male (6.1%) respondents said that it depends on several factors

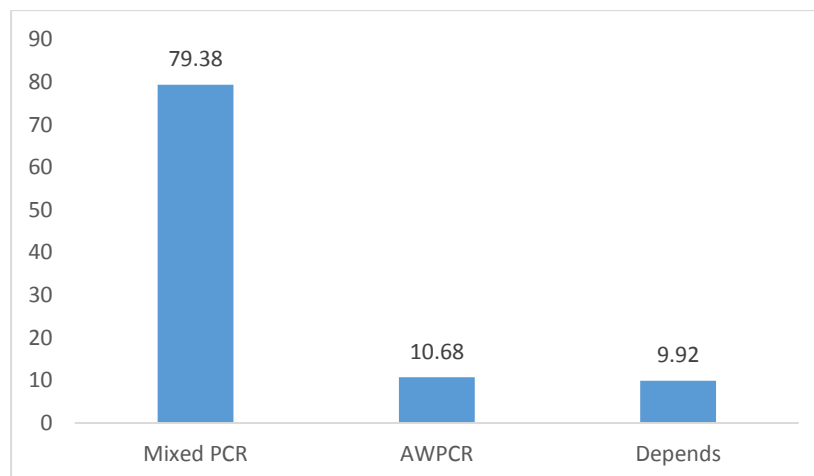
5.4. Overall Preference

Overall, on a choice between AWPCR and Mixed PCR, 79% of respondents prefer mixed PCRs.

Table 8: Gender-wise total number of responses on overall preference between AWPCR and a Mixed PCR van

	Male	Female	Total
Mixed PCR	61	43	104
AWPCR	6	8	14
Depends	10	3	13

Graph 4: Total number of response on overall preference between AWPCR and a Mixed PCR van in Percentage



The following responses were recorded. We present them below verbatim to show their diversity.

- a. 79.38% respondents chose Mixed PCR, and the reasons cited were:
- i. This would help in achieving gender neutrality. (Female Student)
 - ii. Both genders are needed to handle various situations. (Male Shopkeeper)
 - iii. Sometimes, male dominance is needed, especially in crime prone areas. (Female Student)
 - iv. Women police officers are more patient as opposed to male police officers who are abusive, while male police has more physical strength. (Male Auto driver)
 - v. Women complainants would be able to interact with women officers more easily and male complainants would be able to interact with male police officers easily. (Female Student, Male Government Servant, Male Security Guard)
 - vi. Women police officers would deal with aggressive women. (Male Government servant)
 - vii. More women police officers are required because they can handle situations better when they are strong and confident. (Female Security Guard)
 - viii. "For women's safety issues, women police can be better and for using brute force, men are required" (Physician, Male).
 - ix. "For big crimes like alcoholism and drug dealing, men are required" (Shopkeeper, Male).
 - x. "Any single gender can't handle the problem of the entire population alone. Hence, best to have both". (Student, Male).
 - xi. At least one of the police personnel would listen to the complainant.
 - xii. "We don't want All-women PCR because there shouldn't be reverse chauvinism. Ignore the bigger drawback and work for greater equality". (Film maker, Male)
 - xiii. "Misbehaviour with women is always a possibility, so would need men for protection" (Photographer, Female).
 - xiv. "Depends on the situation, men will be physically more powerful and the impact on the perpetrator's mind will also be more if men accompany women" (Journalist, Female & Serviceman, Male).
 - xv. "Both men and women should be there because some problems only men can handle while some others only women can handle" (Student, Female).
 - xvi. As a man, I feel more comfortable talking to male policemen, therefore better to have both (Studio head, Male).
 - xvii. It would be an advantage to have both men and women in the PCR as they can work in support of each other. (Security Guard, Male)
 - xviii. Ladies complainant can't put an allegation of any sort against men police personnel as lady women police personnel would also be present there. (Traffic Policeman, Male)
 - xix. Complainant grievance would be seen from both the perspective of men and women. (Caretaker of masjid, Male & Student, Male)

- xx. Men don't take women seriously.(Student, female & Advocate, Male)
- xxi. In case of heinous crimes men would be able to deal with it in a better way. (Student, Female)
- xxii. Miscreants can't be controlled by women.(Student & Advocate, Male)
- xxiii. Men can be handled by men only moreover in case of a fight. (Serviceman, Male)

b. 10.6% respondents preferred AWPCR over mixed for the reasons cited:

- i. "The cases of women complainants can be handled better by women police. (Both men and women said it).
- ii. "Women can do the job with more responsibility. Men are usually casual in their attitude" (Cobbler, Male).
- iii. "Bhalai hogi, mard k dil mein maya hai" (Tea-stall owner's wife).
- iv. "We will feel more comfortable, women's problems can be handled better by them and can be shared completely." (Student, Female & Serviceman, Male).
- v. Women are able to handle the case/complaints efficiently and are not even corrupt. (Security Guard, Male).
- vi. People would be more comfortable talking to all women PCR van about their problems. (Driver, Male).
- vii. Women tend to have soft corner and would be less corrupt. (Retired Officer, Male).
- viii. If we have women, then in any situation they can be called upon. (Serviceman, Female)

c. 9.95% respondent believed that it depends (a whole range of reasons provided by them) on various circumstances.

As per the data, both men and women prefer Mixed PCRs over AWPCR due to the variety of reasons cited above. There is a clear preference for mixed PCRs in tougher situations – even women respondents who feel AWPCR vans are better placed to deal with women complainants prefer mixed PCRs in emergency situations. The reasoning of most of the respondents rests on notions of gender stereotypes and patriarchy, such as men in Indian society take men more seriously, and men are physically stronger than women. It was also shared that in most complaints by women, the suspects are men, hence men are more capable of dealing with men than women.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The AWPCR vans have not demonstrated they are essential to enhancing the safety of the city, or to the safety of women in particular. Operationally, we find that these vans have been ineffective, both in terms of calls handled and responding to public complaints. In part, we attribute this to their limited jurisdictions, the selection of locations, and short working hours. Therefore, while CHRI feels the pilot experiment of AWPCR vans was justified and useful as a short term test-out, this audit reveals it has shown virtually no impact. We recommend AWPCR vans should be discontinued and brought to an early end.

At the same time, two working assumptions have emerged in the course of this audit: 1) women complainants generally feel more comfortable with policewomen as first responders, and 2) the presence of policewomen is necessary to respond to women complainants. These make the argument that policing needs women. CHRI's overall recommendation to the Delhi Police is to ensure there is at least one woman in every PCR van. This was the dominant view of both the AWPCR van as well as non-AWPCR van staff. In fact, many women police stated that the ideal would be to have at least two women in every PCR van, but the shortage of women and the limited space in PCR vans will prevent this in the short-term. There is no bar on setting this as the standard to achieve in the long-term. To meet this recommendation, the Delhi Police must continue and strengthen its efforts to recruit more women (not just for the PCR unit). This is of the utmost importance, and was repeatedly mentioned by all the stakeholders we met.

More largely, both men and women in PCR vans should be better oriented in how to behave with the community on the street; the common characteristics, crimes and conflicts to expect in the areas they are in; the principles on reasonable and proportionate use of force; and how to manage a mixed and confined workspace. PCR van drivers, whether men or women, must have tested advanced driving skills and a modicum of mechanical knowledge to deal with immediate repairs.

CHRI recommends a slew of measures towards improving the PCR vans' visibility; and public interface and satisfaction with PCR vans. Random surveys of public satisfaction and safety perceptions should be part of effectuating PCR vans across the city. Similarly, a system of collecting feedback from complainants every week (randomized) should be made to ensure that incidents have been accurately recorded and dealt with. Supervisors must be held accountable for any lapses in supervision and reporting. Yearly incentives, such as the most satisfied locality or the bravest PCR team, assessed both by the PCR unit/Delhi Police and the public, can be devised. Publicity generated by the Delhi Police itself should make the purpose, duties, and working of PCR vans widely known; and make a point of indicating that there are women present in each.

Ultimately, the success of the performance of PCR vans can be judged by the number of complaints responded to, including suo moto; action taken; proactive public outreach; and public perceptions of safety.

We commend the police leadership for testing this new idea towards supporting and promoting women in the police and underscore the importance of continuing efforts to promote and establish gender equality within the police.