

Libertarian Think Tank Launches Online Police Misconduct Tracker

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A bloodied man lies handcuffed on the sidewalk after being arrested by [police](#) on Conti Street near Bourbon Street in the French Quarter of New Orleans Saturday night, Oct. 8, 2005. At least one [police](#) officer repeatedly punched the 64-year-old Robert Davis, accused of public intoxication, and another officer assaulted an Associated [Press](#) Television [News](#) producer as a cameraman taped the confrontations. (AP Photo/Mel Evans)

(MintPress)—The [homepage](#) for [National](#) Police Misconduct Reporting Project (NPMRP) includes a list of stories alleging police misconduct, including the tale of a Connecticut officer facing [manslaughter charges](#) for killing a teenage boy. Another story indicates a Las Vegas police officer is facing charges for ‘lewdness with a minor’.

The new website is run by the CATO Institute, a libertarian think tank dedicated to issues of limited government and peace. Its new NPMRP project has a pretty lofty goal — to track police misconduct throughout the [nation](#), providing the first up-to-date information center highlighting alleged abuses within American police departments during a time of rising allegations of [police brutality](#) and intimidation.

The project was voluntarily taken on by the CATO Institute in March, after it was learned that an independent researcher, David Packman, who had previously run the project under the same title, could no longer sustain the workload. In May, Cato officially re-launched the site, under its own web address, www.policemisconduct.net.

In its ‘About’ section, the website is described as a service intended to gather credible reports of police misconduct as a tool for addressing how widespread concerns are. The

information is intended to serve as a resource for those who are responsible for changes in policy — and a tool for those attempting to shed light on the misconduct.

“The purpose of this project is to gather reports of credible allegations of police misconduct so policymakers (and others) can make informed assessments of the nature and circumstances of police misconduct, and consider proposals that can minimize wrongdoing,” the [website](#) reads.

How it works

Daily media reports from around the nation are analyzed every day by those working on the project. Each report detailing a credible alleged act of police misconduct is filed into the database system, and a report detailing the incident is made available on its website.

Individuals are also able to submit credible reports through the website, though the Cato Institute indicates that people making accusations of police misconduct will have to wait a while until such allegations are deemed worthy of factual evidence.

“Individuals who are victimized by police misconduct should expect a review process that will seriously investigate complaints,” the [site](#) reads.

The site indicates it also scrutinizes reports to be sure that duplicates are not entered twice and that allegations of misconduct fall into the [legal](#) realm of just that — misconduct.

All reports are compiled into a database, providing statistics that look over a period of time, shedding light on the frequency of various types of police misconduct. The information can then be used as a guide to pinpoint areas that are most in need of improvement. The program produces a [quarterly and annual report](#).

Analyzing the data

Along with statistics, the NPMRP also compiles a map, with a key indicating the number and locations of alleged police misconduct throughout the nation. Clicking on portions of the map takes the reader to a page that details each county’s number of cases.

In its 2010 third quarter report, the project indicates that from January through September, 2010, the project recorded roughly 3,814 cases of police misconduct, with roughly 5,711 victims. The program further breaks down the information to show that 25 percent of reports had to do with excessive force, while 10 percent involved cases of sexual misconduct. Nearly 8 percent of cases had to do with alcohol or drug related offenses.