

A Snapshot of Racial Profiling Data from the Laredo Area

Laredo Police Department

The Laredo Police Department did not report on the total number of searches conducted in 2003. As such, it is impossible to determine the rates at which different racial groups were searched.

Looking at Consent Searches

Consent searches take place when an officer has no legal basis (or “probable cause”) to search either an individual or his/her vehicle, but he asks that individual for permission to do so. Because consent searches are performed entirely at the discretion of the individual officer, the data that these searches produce may provide a more accurate measure of racial profiling than the data produced by non-discretion searches, which results from situations in which officers are required to perform searches.

- The Laredo Police Department did not conduct any consent searches of Blacks in 2003.
- **FINDING:** Latinos were **six-and-a-half (6.5) times more likely** than Anglos to be subjected to a consent search following a stop. This means that Latinos were subjected to a consent search **550% more frequently** than Anglos were following a stop.

Webb County Sheriff’s Department

Getting Searched by the Webb County Sheriff’s Department

	SEARCH RATES	
	Percentage of those stopped who were searched	More Likely than Anglos to be searched?
Blacks	62.5%	9.7 times
Latinos	0.0%	x times
Anglos	6.5%	
Anglos		

- **FINDING:** Blacks were **significantly more likely** than Anglos to be searched following a traffic stop by WCSD, at a rate of **almost ten (9.7)**. This means that WCSD searched Blacks **870% less frequently** than they searched Anglos following a stop.
- The Webb County Sheriff’s Department reported that they did not conduct any searches of Latinos in 2003.

Looking at Consent Searches

- **FINDING:** The Webb County Sheriff’s Department reported that all searches conducted in 2003 were consent searches. Thus, again, Blacks were **9.7 times more likely** than Anglos to be subjected to a consent search following a traffic stop.

➤ **FINDING:** If 100% of WCSD searches were high officer-discretion searches – meaning officers never had a legal basis to conduct a search in 2003 – then local government officials and community members should be on alert about the department’s policy and police practices.