

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Generally, police organizations have been resistant to change and reflect policies and operating procedures not consistent with demands of a modern urban community. Enlightened police management, seeing the value of modern technology, has analyzed basic problems and prepared detailed plans and alternatives for confronting the crime situation. While examples of this are few, modern police work demands the use of a systematic planning process to develop policies which guide and control the performance of officers at the street level.

Changing Practices

Police must be given some flexibility to modify practices in harmony with changing social conditions. There are numerous situations where detailed guidance is lacking and the responding officer must rely on his good judgment and common sense. The use of this "discretion" becomes critical when an officer's judgment becomes the focus for a serious community confrontation. This is particularly true in street situations having racial overtones or recent mass demonstrations that place large numbers of citizens in a position of confrontation. The potential for community disruption, based upon the individual miscalculation of an officer, requires the promulgation of overall departmental policies that must be communicated to the patrolman level. Frequently, the officer is caught in the bind between changing expectations of the citizen and police procedures which have the potential to incite groups and disrupt community peace.

It is imperative, therefore, to formulate policies and communicate their content to the operational level. Top administration must begin to articulate

a definition of police-community relations and show how programming in this area reduces police hazard, improves relationships with the citizen and leads to a reduction in crime.

The police department's top administration should review field procedures and operations from the viewpoint of their impact upon community relations.
(In process.)

Management Improvement

The Detroit Police Department is overwhelmed by mounting criminal statistics and inadequate financial and personnel resources to do the job required.

In the past year, two problem identification studies of the Department pointed to administrative deficiencies that reduce the overall effectiveness of the Department. A number of recommendations were offered in the two studies that may make a significant contribution to the reduction of police-community confrontations at the street level. From the outset, the Committee concluded that deficiencies in policy administration and supervision had their impact at the level of street performance. The Committee did not wish to extend itself into a management analysis because the Mayor, in cooperation with New Detroit, Inc., has agreed to conduct a management improvement project during the coming year. Two organizations with national reputations have been selected to conduct this effort and the Committee is enthusiastically supportive of this needed activity.

Community Relations Unit

The primary responsibility for improving police-community relations rests with the police. Community relations programs have limited impact if street

response is split between various uncoordinated police units. The Detroit Police Department needs a central community relations unit with the capability of planning overall programs, responsible for training and assigning police personnel in community relations, and representing the police force in its dealings with citizens' groups.

This special unit should formulate and supervise precinct-level community relations efforts. The overall function of this specialized unit goes well beyond considerations of "public relations." A community relations unit must be viewed by senior command as a function with prestige and authority for effective organization. Responsibility for community relations operations must, therefore, be placed at the highest possible command level.

Community relations assignments should permeate every aspect of police activity. Specialists who perform the community relations function should be assigned to each precinct and to special squads. In a real sense, the officer on the beat is the most visible agent of an effective community relations program. Because of this fact, primary responsibility for day-to-day operations is placed at the district commander level.

A central community relations unit must maintain close contact with precinct officers and coordinate staff supervision assigned at the precinct level. An effective community relations program involves command in all aspects of policy management and influences personnel training that is likely to have community relations impact.

This suggests that the community relations unit plays a key role in planning for demonstrations or civil disturbances. It has a major responsibility for anticipating and preventing minor incidents that can trigger a major community disruption. It is actively involved in areas where strong

anti-police feeling is in evidence or where an incident has inflamed the community and engendered strong hostility towards police presence.

Personnel selected for the community relations unit should be especially picked for their ability and sensitivity in the field of community relations. Conscious and visible integration of this unit is highly desirable. Not only must the unit have real authority, but those persons assigned should be appropriately rewarded by promotion and opportunity for professional development and growth. This would induce superior and committed personnel to seek community relations positions. In addition to sworn police personnel, an effective community relations unit must have civilian representation with expertise in the behavioral sciences and experience in the problems of the urban community.

Establish a community relations unit in the Department with direct access to the Commissioner. This unit must have specific responsibility for planning overall programs to promote better police-community relations. It should provide training content for cadets and officers already in service. It should coordinate community relations efforts within the precincts. It should represent the Department in contacts with city-wide citizens' groups. This unit should have an adequate budget and staff, including civilian as well as police employees. (Exhibit I)

Public Relations Specialist

The extreme sensitivity of the Police Department in its dealings with the citizenry necessitates a professional community relations and public information activity. Management analysis of the administration and operations of the Department could review the present setup for public dissemination of

activities of the department. It is recommended that strong consideration be given to the hiring of professional public relations assistance to enable the Department to improve existing public relations efforts. It would be well to explore the possibility of approaching the business community to possibly secure the assistance of an experienced public relations individual who could assist the Department during phasing in of a public relations unit.

Hire a public relations specialist and adequately staff a public relations department to disseminate information to mass media and community groups.

Officer Identification

Recently, incidents between police and citizens have led to the rumor that police are removing their badges and other identification. It has been alleged that some officers refuse to wear their nameplates as directive requires. Men should have pride in being policemen and wear their identification proudly. Professional performance at all times eliminates the fear of identification for improper conduct. Senior command should review departmental policy with regard to identification and enforce departmental rules and regulations in this regard.

Nameplates and badges should be worn in the appropriate manner. Police command should instruct staff in this requirement and clarify the positive significance of proper identification.
(Implemented.)

The state legislature, through its licensing authority, should require more visible means of differentiating between police officers and private

guards. This designation would be publicized and private security forces would not be permitted to copy this identifying feature.

Technology and Equipment

Despite the costliness of equipment, advances in science and technology promise a major contribution to law enforcement. The Detroit Police Department led the nation in developing a "modis operandi system" in 1964. This sophisticated system records and files on magnetic tape the physical and operating trademarks of criminals. By rapid machine processing, likely suspects can be identified and the data used by investigating officers and victims of crime to apprehend suspects. This method has proven its worth in a number of situations. Additional equipment is required to speed up the investigative process and provide instant information at the precinct level.

A frequent citizen complaint alleges slow police response between the call for service and the dispatching of patrol cars. Sensor devices are currently available which permit rapid dispatching of police units to the crime scene.

In August of 1969, the Detroit Police Department tested the effectiveness and performance of helicopters assigned to the Department. The results of this test experience should be evaluated and consideration given to the securing of this equipment for operational use.

The Committee unanimously supported a management evaluation of the equipment needs of the Detroit Police Department. It also recommended the acquisition of modern devices that aid in identifying wanted persons, improve the capability to respond to service calls and computer use to guide in personnel deployment, data analysis and policy formulation.

Provide equipment produced by advancing technology that has promising applications for improved research, greater planning capacity, more effective police deployment and speedier emergency response.

Determine the feasibility of acquiring helicopters to be used for traffic survey and control, assist in search operations, to be available for difficult rescue missions, to assist in coordinating activities of police ground units, waterway patrol, and emergency transport for auto accident victims.

Police Legal Advisor

The complexity of the criminal law and recent judicial interpretations demand sophisticated and precise judgments regarding police behavior. A professional police force will make sure that officers are current on judicial pronouncements and are informed as to the actions and judgments permissible under the law.

To insure sensitivity to judicial pronouncements and increase police effectiveness, some police departments have hired legal advisors who work directly with that department on a broad range of duties. Some of these include policy formulation with regard to training and investigations, liason with the legislature and other elected bodies, liason with prosecution and courts, and defense of police officers in false arrest and other suits. A police legal advisor could anticipate legal trends and assist in the preparation of administrative procedures compatible with recent legal decisions.