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FINAL REPORT ON

THE JOINT RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP FOR COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY AND THE ST. LOUIS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The partnership grant envisioned a formal collaborative structure with five building blocks for partnership. The building blocks were a joint management team made up of police and university personnel, a jointly controlled fund pool, a common project space, continuous joint monitoring of the initial project so that any adjustment in the research focus was jointly determined, and a series of bi-monthly seminars for the timely exchange and dissemination of information.

The most successful elements of the partnership were the joint management team and the continuous project monitoring for mutual determination of the research focus. Ironically, these two elements were successful because of the formal division of labor that already existed in both the University and the Metropolitan Police Department. In other words, the organizational units charged with external collaboration, collaborated. The Department of Public Policy Studies at Saint Louis University had already had a long relationship with the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department's Research and Evaluation Division and the Training Division. In a way, this current collaboration was simply an extension of the previous relationship with the addition of the Office of Community Oriented Policing. Joint project management and monitoring was easily accomplished because many of the individuals involved had worked together before or were at least knowledgeable about each other. Ironically, however, the division of labor that aided these two elements of the collaboration, made implementation of the others more difficult.

Although a jointly controlled fund pool was envisioned as a way to integrate both University and police personnel from units not originally involved in the project, the formal divisions of labor existing in both organizations inhibited such collaboration. While the Department of Public Policy Studies is an interdisciplinary department, we were not successful in engaging faculty from

other University units such as Education and the School of Business and Administration in the project. Similarly, while patrol officers, sergeants and command personnel were part of the study, they were not part of the formal mechanism for deciding the use of funds, next project steps, or the usefulness of the information gathered. Practitioners at each institution, whether professors or police officers, remained pretty much in their own "silos"" unaware of the collaboration. Thus, common project space and bi-monthly seminars for expanding exchanges of information among a variety of individuals remained elusive goals. Graduate students assigned to the project were able to use office space and computer equipment at Police Headquarters, and one "'seminar" was held with the command staff including the Chief of Police and five division chiefs. Information exchange only regularly occurred between the project staffs. The planning year data did, however, show strong indications that institutionalization rather than simply limited partnerships are possible.

During the course of the project, the Department of Public Policy Studies was reorganized to become part of a larger academic structure, the Institute for Leadership and Public Service. This new academic unit includes the Departments of Research Methods, Leadership and Higher Education, Counseling and Family Therapy, Educational Studies, and Communication Disorders.

It is clear that the foundation for a broader collaboration has been built during the first year of the planning grant. In fact, one of the highlights of the year, in part made possible by the planning grant, was the participation of police personnel, including district commanders, in a University sponsored conference on neighborhood stabilization and the role academics can play in strengthening the local community. Faculty from Social Work, Family Counseling, as well as Public Policy and the Business School exchanged information and insights with neighborhood leaders. This conference resulted in a sharing of ideas among police managers and academics not previously associated with the project as to how each might more effectively work with the other to advance community oriented policing strategies.

Also during the planning grant period, the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department underwent an organizational realignment. Lt. Colonels (divisions chiefs) were formerly assigned to headquarters as heads of bureaus. Majors were in charge of the three area stations, each area housing three districts. Captains were responsible for one of the nine patrol districts in the city. Lt. Colonels (with the exception of the Division of Investigation) have now been reassigned to the area stations and are responsible for managing crime and citizen satisfaction within their boundaries. Majors have taken over support bureaus. Monthly meetings are held with Area commanders to review problem areas in their districts and to determine strategies for coping with them. Three things have been accomplished by this realignment. The importance and visibility of the patrol function has been increased. Responsibility for safety outcomes within an area has been focused at the highest level of command. The need for continuos analysis and feedback has been highlighted.

The partnership has developed a solid core of data to help advance these innovations thereby solidifying both a university - law enforcement collaborative and a community oriented policing approach within the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. These data were gathered through two mutually arrived at research projects. These projects and their findings are detailed in the remainder of the report.

THE ROLE OF SERGEANTS IN COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

Project Background

During the six month period, January 1, through June 30, 1996, the project refined its research focus. After a meeting with the newly appointed chief of police and his executive group which consists of five division chiefs (lieutenant colonels), it was decided to concentrate on the question "What makes an effective sergeant?"

Based on previous research done by the principle investigator, one answer to the question was clearly, "It depends on who you work for." Thus, there appeared to be multiple models of effective

supervision. The first mutually arrived at goal of the planning grant was therefore to determine which models were supportive of a community oriented problem solving approach.

This refinement of the research question resulted in a changed strategy. Focus groups were held with nine district captains and the three area majors. The purpose was to establish the characteristics and/or behaviors associated with being an effective street supervisor. It seemed clear from these data that there was agreement on the characteristics associated with being an effective supervisor, although different captains demanded different specific behaviors from their sergeants. Adaptability, assertiveness, self confidence, and knowledge were among the characteristics universally recognized as being necessary for effective supervision. Specific behavioral expectations varied according to immediate needs or preferences of lieutenants and captains. Some preferred an emphasis on paper work, others on specific enforcement patterns (for example, narcotics, burglaries, etc.).

After these focus groups, an extended participant observation phase with sergeants began. We asked captains to designate strong, average, and weak sergeants for our observational pool. The researchers did not know who had been designated in a particular category. This way we could try to empirically assess the judgments of captains and explore whether there were in fact empirical indications of supervisory style. Twenty-seven sergeants representing all nine police precincts were observed and interviewed in over 100 hours of ride alongs.

Results From the Participant Observation

A review of literature on policing suggests a number of ironies. First, despite a popular image to the contrary, police officers spend relatively little time dealing with serious crime (Reiss, 1971; Gilsinan, 1980; Kappeler, Blumberg and Potter, 1996). Second, even so called emergency dispatching rarely involves emergencies (Gilsinan, 1989). Third, police administrators express preference for participatory management while simultaneously acknowledging that the para-military nature of the organization is the

best way for a police department to function (Auten, 1985; Kuykendall and Unsinger, 1982). Further, most police managers tend to see their style as participatory, while the majority of the officers saw the same style as autocratic-authoritarian (Auten, 1985). The participant observation data add to the irony of the police management literature.

Researchers observed few instances of situations requiring the employment of either supervision or management skills. The main function of sergeants seems to be one of observation, stressing a monitoring role, as officers went about their routine duties of answering calls and taking reports. In brief, the opportunities for creative supervision were rare indeed.

This state of affairs can be interpreted two ways. On the one hand, police work is routine and therefore the role of the sergeant is limited to that of being a bureaucratic overseer who monitors and coordinates repetitive tasks. On the other hand, the current organization of police service may not have taken full advantage of new ways to think about and do police work. If the work were reorganized to emphasize proactive rather than reactive problem definitions and solutions, the area for creative supervision would be considerably enlarged. The dilemma for reformers is whether training in new methods of supervision can alter structures so that the methods can be used, or do structures have to be altered first? In brief, what is the potential support for creative supervision within the organization?

Assessment of Sergeants Leadership Styles

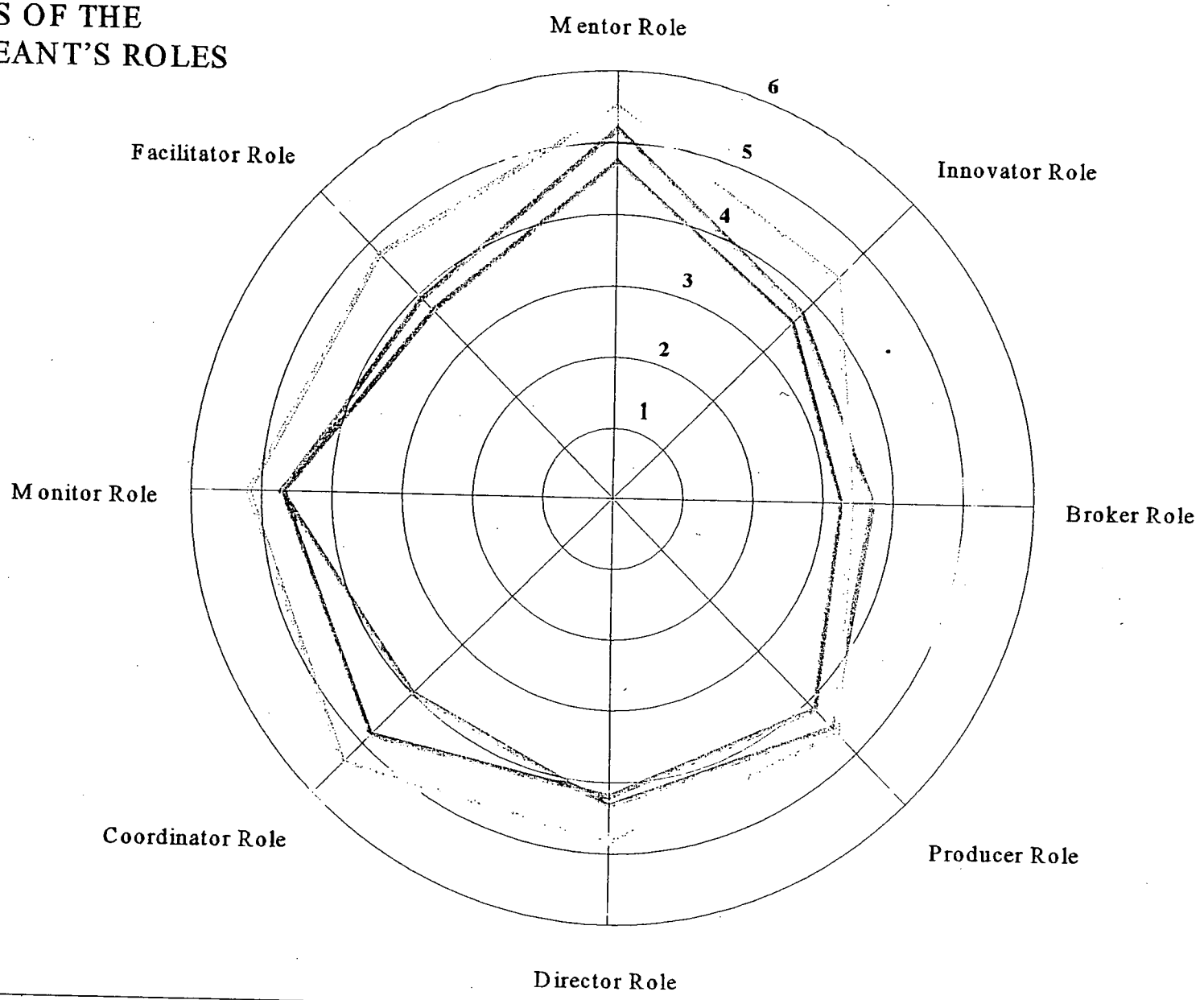
To begin to address this question, over 1400 questionnaires were distributed to police officers, sergeants and lieutenants. The questionnaires were based on work by Robert E. Quinn (1988). He developed a method for assessing leadership styles as perceived by both a self assessment and the assessment of subordinates and superordinates. Eight styles of leadership are mapped. According to Quinn, the dominant organizational culture will encourage particular styles. Thus, a bureaucratic culture will support and reward either a monitor or a coordinator style of leadership. The monitor is concerned

with rules and with unit quotas. The coordinator stresses paperwork flow, report evaluations, budget and system maintenance. On the other hand, a human relations culture supports and rewards mentoring and facilitating. The mentor stresses people development through empathetic employee relations which include listening, supporting, and complimenting. The facilitator stresses team work and cohesion together with group problem solving. A culture represented by an open system's model supports and rewards the leadership styles of innovator and broker. An innovator is one who can be a creative dreamer, both anticipating new directions and facilitating change. A broker possesses a high degree of political skills, is astute in obtaining resources, and maintains the group's external legitimacy. Finally, the planning culture supports the producer and the director styles of leadership. The producer is a high energy, task oriented leader that stimulates goal accomplishment. The director sets goals, strategies for obtaining them, and systems of performance evaluation.

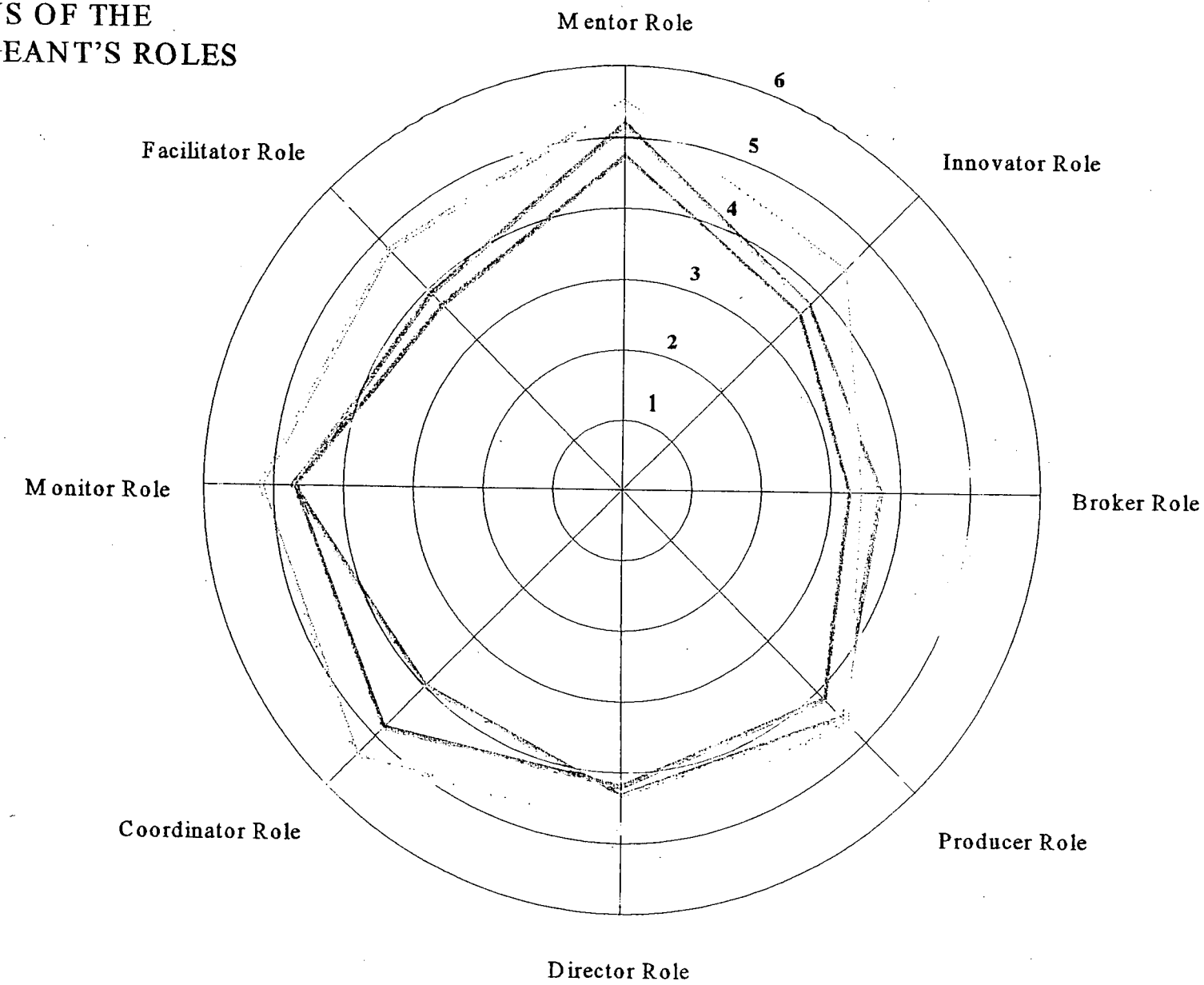
Two modified versions of the instruments assessing these leadership styles were distributed, one asking the sergeant for a self assessment of both current activity and whether the activity should be done in the future, the other asking patrol officers and lieutenants the sergeants' current and desired activity. 332 number of questionnaires were returned, 237 from patrol officers (14% return rate), 66 from sergeants (27%), and 29 from lieutenants (53%)

The diagram on the next page illustrates the different perceptions of leadership styles when comparing sergeants to both their subordinates and superordinates. Sergeants (light blue) see themselves has having a much fuller leadership style than either patrol officers (dark blue) or lieutenants (red). The yellow line indicates how both patrol officers and lieutenants would like to see sergeants lead. Two things are clear. First, sergeants do have a different view of how they lead than do those subject to their leadership and those who review it. Second, there is a striking degree of agreement among both groups about how sergeants should function. This provides a map for how to structure the training of sergeants

VIEWS OF THE SERGEANT'S ROLES



VIEWS OF THE SERGEANT'S ROLES



for supervision, particularly if their supervisory style is to support a community policing approach. It seems clear, however, that there is an organizational consensus that would support a more creative, less bureaucratic style of supervision.

During the final phase of this project, the research team examined calls for service focusing on high use locations. The goal was to determine if any problem solving strategies were employed by supervisors and/or officers involved. This helped us to determine the depth of organizational commitment to problem solving and shed light on the question of whether training or structural alterations should occur first, or in some combination.

CRIME AUDIT

Procedure

The St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department has for over fifty years conducted systematic audits of officer response to citizen demand for service. Such audits, using researchers from Saint Louis University, have focused not only on calls that resulted in a crime report and therefore were officially counted, but on the far more numerous calls which officers coded, indicating that no crime had occurred or that a report was not necessary. These coded calls provide a means of measuring citizen satisfaction with the peace keeping activity of officers. Unfortunately, however, the audit's full potential as a tool for police managers to proactively analyze and confront systemic impediments to job performance and citizen satisfaction has never been realized. There are three primary reasons for this.

First, the audit has its roots in an older, disciplinary, reactive management model of police supervision. The emphasis has been on catching mistakes rather than on establishing patterns of activity for analysis. Changing people rather than circumstances was the driving force. Second, the audit takes place only annually and is unable to adequately sample the high volume of calls throughout the year. Any findings are therefore only tentatively generalizable. Third, there is a lag time of up to three months

between the calls sampled for audit purposes and the attempt to contact the caller. This lag time results in a large number of calls that cannot be followed up because the caller has moved, does not remember the incident, or the phone number has been disconnected. To fully realize the audit's potential as a community policing tool, it must be linked with the Department's computer aided dispatch system, carried out continually, and information fed back regularly to the appropriate line personnel for analysis and action.

During the planning grant period, the audit was modified to focus on high incident addresses in order to test its potential as a proactive community policing tool. High call locations were identified as addresses that had at least fifteen calls during the year, and three during the month immediately preceding the audit. The police department's current management information system was able to produce this list.

Sample

The St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department generated a computer listing of all "high call" addresses as defined above. This list had 1,153 locations which met the high call location criteria. A systematic random sample was drawn of 185 high call locations.

A second sample of high call locations was selected for site visits after the telephone contacts had been completed. The researchers sampled in six of the nine police districts. The purpose of this sample was to attempt to contact callers at the high call locations that were not contacted by telephone. Additionally, addresses were selected on a systematic random basis in order to expand the observations available for analysis of proactive possibilities in community oriented policing.

A third sample of 100 reports that had been assigned a departmental offense code was also drawn to evaluate Uniform Crime Reporting accuracy. The days and dates chosen for audit purposes were Friday, March 17, Saturday, March 23, and Sunday, March 30, 1997.

High call location telephone contact sample

Previous crime audits have shown that in at least 50% of the dispatches chosen for evaluation, the researchers were unable to establish telephone or field contact with a person who could provide information about the original call for police service. Such cases are referred to as "no contact possible." Combining the data on total high call locations with the results from previous audits, the researchers established a sampling interval of every sixth location and applied that to the list generated by the Department. This procedure produced a systematic random sample of 185 high call locations from the list of 1,153 high call addresses. The number of high call locations and the audit sample, by district, is shown in the following table.

HIGH CALL LOCATIONS, TOTAL & SAMPLE, BY DISTRICT		
DISTRICT	**HIGH CALL LOCATIONS**	**AUDIT SAMPLE**
1	109	17
2	78	12
3	254	41
4	133	20
5	91	14
6	138	22
7	145	24
8	81	14
9	127	21
TOTAL	**1153**	**185**

The researchers used the original printouts of all calls for service at each address to select the specific call that would be included in the sample. Starting with the most recent date for a call (usually in March, 1997) the most recent call that had a name and phone number for the location was selected for the telephone contact portion of the audit. The street intersections that were included in the printout as high

call addresses were included if any of the individual calls had information on the name and phone number of the caller.

High call location field site visit sample

The purpose of the field site visits was two fold. First, since auditing of high call locations was new for the Department, it was decided to field visit a selection of locations to determine the actual conditions that might be involved in such a high volume of calls for police service. This information might suggest methods that could be used in community oriented policing to reduce the volume of calls. Second, a portion of the "no contact possible" telephone audit was selected for field visits to determine whether problems were going unrecorded using telephone contacts.

At the completion of the telephone contact phase of the audit, researchers selected addresses in six of the nine districts for further follow up. Addresses were selected from the original list of high call locations and the "no contact" pool remaining after the telephone contacts. The goal was to make field visits to approximately fifty high call addresses. Calls from pay phones, mobile phones, disconnected numbers, and calls made from stores, bars, etc. where personnel had no recollection of an incident, were eliminated.

Uniform Crime Report Sample

For the three dates of the U.C.R. audit, a systematic random sample of 100 reports were selected that had been given a crime classification number for Uniform Crime Reporting purposes. These were then reviewed and compared to both departmental crime classification categories and U.C.R. categories.

Audit Results

The researchers attempted a telephone contact with all individuals in the sample of 185 high call addresses. The telephone audit results are presented in the table below. Fifty-five citizens were reached

in this manner. Fifty-two were satisfied with service received. The remaining 3 calls required further follow-up because of some expressed concern with how the calls were handled. These incidents are presented below as Telephone Audit Issues.

AUDIT OF HIGH CALL LOCATIONS, TELEPHONE	
TELEPHONE CONTACT: CITIZEN SATISFIED	52
POTENTIAL PROBLEMS	3
NO CONTACT POSSIBLE	130
TOTAL	185

The researchers completed field site visits to 50 sites from a sample consisting of a combination of unsuccessful telephone contacts and other high incident addresses in order to assess their potential for problem solving interventions. The results of the field site visits are shown in the table below. During the 50 site visits, 21 individuals were interviewed. Nineteen expressed satisfaction with the level of police service. Two reported some concerns. The other 29 sites produced information on the physical surroundings of the high call location. For example, several addresses were vacant, but had a high volume of burglar alarm calls.

SITE VISITS TO HIGH CALL LOCATIONS	
SITE VISIT : CITIZEN SATISFIED	19
POTENTIAL PROBLEMS	2
NO CONTACT POSSIBLE : OBSERVATION*	29
TOTAL	**50**

*** Includes locations where the person was not there, pay phones and vacant sites.**

Thus, within the 185 attempted telephone contacts and 50 field site visits, 71 individuals (93% of the 76 high call addresses contacted) expressed satisfaction with the service received, 5 expressed concerns and there were 159 locations where interviews could not be conducted. These results are

summarized in the following table:

AUDIT OF HIGH CALL LOCATIONS, BY DISTRICT				
	TELEPHONE CONTACT			
DISTRICT	CITIZEN SATISFIED	POTENTIAL PROBLEM	NO CONTACT POSSIBLE **	SITE VISIT*
1	11	0	6	0
2	2	1	9	0
3	11	1	29	8
4	6	0	14	0
5	4	0	10	9
6	7	1	14	17***
7	2	0	22	7
8	4	0	10	4
9	5	0	16	5
TOTAL	**52**	**3**	**130**	**50**

*** **Two potential problems**

** **Includes phone disconnected, pay phone, mobile phone and refusals**

* **Sample of high call locations including those used for telephone contact and therefore may include some double counting with telephone contacts.**

Adding the 52 satisfied phone contacts, the 19 satisfied field contacts and the 5 contacts indicating potential concerns gives a total of 76 fully-audited calls presented here. This represents the results of multiple efforts to contact citizens and are viewed by the researchers as an acceptable audit base in keeping with national standards for contacting high-risk populations.

Uniform Crime Report Audit Results

As in past audits, this audit found a consistently high rate of coding accuracy. In the 100 hundred reports reviewed, no miscodes were identified. In the 1994 audit, only three miscodes had been

discovered.

The audit of U.C.R. coding once again underscores the high degree of professional competence that has been characteristic of the unit responsible for this task. Accuracy, dedication, and an enthusiasm for the work make this unit a model to be emulated, both within the Department and nationally.

Telephone Audit Issues

Three telephone contacts raised issues concerning police response to calls for service. However, in each case the "problem" actually represented citizen suggestions concerning police department sensitivity. In District #2, the respondent expressed some general concerns and made several suggestions including foot patrols and more street lights. Although noting that officers were friendly and responsive to immediate concerns, the caller felt that they did not provide long term problem solutions ("Not much they can do"). There was also some concerns expressed about slow response time.

In District #3, the occupants were concerned with ensuring that the police were sensitive to alternative lifestyles. The respondent felt officers were demeaning when responding to domestic disturbance complaints because the couple was gay. This call was further audited by the police department, but the couple had moved between the time of the initial contact and the police department follow-up. A neighbor did comment that these individuals were "troublesome" and there were many fewer calls since the people left.

The final potential problem was in District #6 and related to comments regarding police response to domestic disturbance calls . During the phone interview, the respondent expressed a willingness to consider crisis hotlines and other community services for dealing with chronic familial occurrences.

Site Visit Audit Issues

Two issues emerged during the site visits. In one location, a gas station, the person interviewed claimed that an officer told her there was nothing they could do about fights on the premise. The next

week a fight occurred and she did not call because of what she had been told.

In another incident, a call coded for a non criminal sudden death had been preceded by numerous calls for disturbances at the address. The individual who had died was not, however, the individual involved in the disturbance calls. Both of these site visits were in District #6.

Summary and Conclusions

Despite problems of response rate, the audit of high incident addresses yielded a number of insights. Citizens were generally very pleased with the response of the police. This was somewhat surprising since the audit focused on high demand addresses. But apparently those individuals who work or live in such locations (food stores, fast food restaurants, apartment complexes with rowdy tenants, etc.) do not expect the police to solve the problem, only to manage its immediate manifestations. Thus, effective community oriented policing will involve neighborhood training as well as police training. Further, police supervisors did not assess police response based on problem solution, but on more traditional output measures such as response time, time out of service, and citizen satisfaction. Finally, what constitutes community oriented policing varied from district to district, and from neighborhood to neighborhood. Some respondents to the audit indicated that they were aware of community oriented policing efforts and would even name officers whom they felt were responsive to their needs. Other areas were not aware of either officers or programs, but were nonetheless pleased with how their calls were handled.

The site visits made to selected locations for in person interviews with individuals who were high users of police services explored three questions:

- Are there problem solving activities that could reduce the number of calls from a location?
- What are the potential cost savings if the number of calls to an address could be reduced?
- What potential problem solving strategies will citizens suggest?

During the site visits, it became apparent that problem solving strategies would likely reduce a significant number of repeat calls for service. For example, a number of sites had repeat calls for false burglar alarms that were apparently due to equipment malfunctions. These could be managed more effectively by working with the building owners and alarm companies to upgrade leased equipment. A surprising number of individuals interviewed regarding repeat calls for domestic disturbances showed insight into the chronic problems that required continuous police intervention. Thus, crisis counseling and/or alcohol treatment referrals may be strategies that at-risk- families are willing to accept thereby reducing calls for service.

Site visits also uncovered problems that police were unaware of. For example, a major supermarket chain was experiencing problems with cashiers who would take advantage of elderly customers. Because of failing eye sight, some customers would ask the cashier to enter their confidential personnel identification number so they could use a credit card to pay for the purchase. The printed receipt for the purchase had the credit account number printed on it so that after the transaction, an unscrupulous cashier had both a pin number and an account number that could then be used to make charges against the account. The solution to this problem was to not print the credit account number on the receipt.

Potential cost savings from employing problem solving techniques are significant. A total of 2, 276 calls were made from the fifty sites visited in the audit. Addresses ranged from a high of 242 calls during the previous year to a low of fifteen calls. Although the actual time for handling a call varies by type, district, and number of officers involved, 52.4 minutes is the average time out of service, that is the time from when the officer(s) received the call to the time they report back in as available for the next assignment, for a disturbance call. Since this call constitutes a high percentage of all calls, it seems a reasonable number to use in estimating the amount of time that could be saved by reducing repeat calls.

Thus, multiplying 2,276 by 52.4 minutes means that 119,262 minutes on average were used in responding to these 48 sites or over 1, 987 hours. Departmental data suggests that an officer has on average 201.5 days available for patrol during the year. This takes into account vacation days, sick leave, training days and so on. Dividing 1,987 hours by an eight hour work day shows that 248 more officer days would be available for patrol and problem solving if repeat calls to these addresses could be eliminated. That is the equivalent of one and a quarter new officers. A total of 58,103 calls were made from the 1,153 locations that constituted our universe of high incident calls. Extending the analysis to the total universe means that the equivalent of almost thirty two new officers would be available by employing problem solving techniques.

This year's audit, by focusing on high use addresses, suggests a number of things. First, there is not a problem with officers mis-coding calls for service. This finding is in line with previous audits. Second, citizen satisfaction with officer response remains high. However, it appears that officers are not generally employing problem solving techniques to deal with repeat occurrences. Nor do they seem to be soliciting citizen advice on the nature of the chronic problems of a location. Working together, officers and citizens could go a long way toward reducing repeat calls for service.

When interviewing individuals at high use locations, a number of potential strategies for call reductions emerged. As noted, these ranged from store owners working with the district captain to encourage alarm companies to upgrade their leased equipment thereby cutting down on the number of false alarms to civil abatement procedures to remove troublesome neighbors and upgrade deteriorating property. The range of potential solutions are as varied as the types of neighborhoods and calls police officers respond to. What is needed is a systematic way to analyze repeat calls for service and to advise officers both on the number of previous calls to a location, and on any follow up strategies that are being pursued to reduce this number. In short, there is need for department wide recognition that problem

solving is not simply responding professionally to citizen complaints, but that it also involves analysis and consultation so that complaints are not simply managed but resolved.

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