

Police Services Study Fact Sheet No. 1

THE TOPEKA MAJOR CASE SQUAD

by

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Even a relatively small metropolitan area such as Topeka, Kansas, can organize and maintain a highly effective, voluntary Major Case Squad -- without Federal or state funds, and without an independent bureaucracy. Topeka is in Shawnee County, which in 1970 had a population of 155,000.

Late in 1969, Dana Hummer, then Chief of Police of the City of Topeka, called together representatives from many law enforcement agencies serving the area around the capital city to discuss ways of achieving more interjurisdictional cooperation. One topic they discussed was the possibility of establishing a special squad composed of personnel drawn from the members of local law enforcement agencies. This squad could be called upon to investigate major crimes such as murder, aggravated assault, robbery, rape, or burglary.

The Topeka area agencies had a nearby model to examine: the Metro-Squad in the Kansas City area had already been organized to successfully cope with the need for high levels of specially-trained investigative personnel at the time of a major case.

An agreement was soon reached by representatives of law enforcement agencies in the seven counties -- Shawnee, Jackson, Jefferson, Souglas, Pottawatomie, Wabaunsee, and Osage -- and by representatives of the Kansas Highway Patrol, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Forbes Air Force Base O.S.I. to organize the "Capital Area Major Case Squad." This "M" Squad, as it was first organized, was composed of 45 trained investigators from 13 law enforcement agencies in the area. The first board of directors, elected in January 1970, included:

- Harold Lusk, Sheriff of Osage County, as Chairman;
- Gene Goldsberry, Captain, Kansas Highway Patrol, as Vice Chairman; and
- Jim Freel, Captain, Topeka Police Department, as Secretary.

The first Advisory Committee for the Board included:

- F.E. Hinson, Forbes Air Force Base O.S.I.;
- Ralph Huston, Agent-in-Charge, F.B.I.;
- Allen Rush, Assistant Superintendent, Kansas Highway Patrol;
- Howard Docker, Assistant Director, Kansas Bureau of Investigation;
- Ernest Ballwed, Assistant Attorney General.

The first training session took place early in 1970, with 40 hours of classroom work devoted to organizational matters that would help the squad, when called upon, to work together effectively.

When a major case occurs in the seven-county area, the following procedures are used: The Chief of Police from the jurisdiction in which a crime happened must call upon the officer in charge of the "M" Squad within four hours after the discovery of the crime. The Officer in Charge consults with the Board of Directors to be sure that the case meets the requirements of the "M" Squad. The requesting agency estimates the number of personnel needed. The host or requesting department is then responsible for providing two meals per day per officer, five telephone lines, and any travel expenses, if needed. The requesting agency is also responsible for providing suitable headquarters for the Squad.

The "M" Squad is authorized to operate up to five days. If the case has not been closed by the end of the fifth day, the Officer in Charge may recommend continuation of the case. Continuation must be approved by the Board of Directors.

The members of the "M" Squad are usually paired with an officer from the host jurisdiction.

The Squad selects officers once a year. These include an Officer in Charge, an alternate Officer in Charge, an Investigative Supervisor and an alternate, a Personnel Officer, an Equipment Officer, and a Press Officer.

The current three members on the Board of Directors are Dick Stanwix, Chief of Police, Lawrence Police Department, Chairman; Lieutenant Russ Mairs, Shawnee Sheriff's Office, Vice-Chairman; and Trooper Harold Tuttle, Kansas State Highway Patrol, Secretary-Treasurer.

The current Advisory Committee is composed of the following members: Ralph Huston, Agent-in-Charge, F.B.I. Topeka Office; Fred Howard, Chief of Police, Topeka; Dave Johnson, Supervisor, Kansas Bureau of Investigation, Topeka; Gene Olander, District Attorney, Topeka; Rex Johnson, Sheriff, Douglas County; Donal J. O'Toole, Kansas National Guard; Gene Goldsberry, Kansas Highway Patrol; Don Collins, Sheriff, Jackson County; Milt Johnson, Topeka Police Department.

The "M" Squad has no source of public funds. It meets once a month in the various jurisdictions. At these meetings there is usually a speaker, either from an outside police agency or from one of the member agencies. At each meeting, the attending officers donate a quarter each to the Squad. This enables them to pay for some of their postage and other small incidental expenses. Although members of the Squad have contemplated requesting outside funds, they have decided to operate under current arrangements without receiving and disbursing outside funds.

Since the "M" Squad was established, it has investigated seven cases. The first case came in July 1971, a year and a half after the creation of the "M" Squad. This first case was a double homicide in the City of Topeka. The results of the "M" Squad investigation were

inconclusive. Charges were later filed in this case, with one arrest, but it was not sustained in Court. The case was turned back to the Topeka Police Department and is still pending.

The second, a homicide, occurred on July 4, 1972. The "M" Squad investigation produced four arrests and convictions on second-degree murder. Twenty-five cases of fraud were also cleared during the investigation.

The third case occurred July 5, 1973. A man was found dead near an old rock quarry north of Topeka. That investigation determined that the death was not homicide, but rather suicide.

The fourth, a rape and homicide, occurred in August 1973. An arrest and conviction on murder and rape resulted from the Major Case Squad investigation.

The fifth case was a robbery, rape, and homicide in August 1973. Again, the "M" Squad investigation resulted in arrests and charges filed against several suspects. Three men and one juvenile were convicted of robbery.

The sixth case, a homicide in February 1974, resulted in an arrest and conviction of three men on murder.

The seventh case, in July 1974, was a homicide. The investigation resulted in an arrest and conviction on robbery and first-degree murder charges.

Thus, of the seven cases that the Topeka "M" Squad has tackled, five were cleared by arrest. One case was unfounded. In only one case out of the seven were the results of the investigation inconclusive. In all seven cases investigated, the Squad also cleared scores of additional crimes then on the books of the cooperating agencies.

The number of hours devoted to each of the seven cases has varied considerably. The two cases investigated in 1974 exemplify both a rapid case and a long one. The host department in both instances was the Shawnee Sheriff's Office. The cost to the Shawnee Sheriff's Office for the "rapid" case was around \$500 to \$600, mostly for meals for the "M" Squad members. The "M" Squad worked on the case three days. Forty officers and two typists from 11 different agencies were involved for a total of 864 hours. But the other case cost the Shawnee Sheriff's Office about 10 times as much for meals, telephone calls, and overnight trips of Squad members. The "M" Squad extended its investigation to nine days. Fifty-three individuals employed by 11 different agencies worked 3,323 hours on this case.

The successful operation of the Topeka Major Case Squad ensures that member law enforcement agencies in the seven-county area can depend upon each other whenever they need a large number of trained investigators immediately after the occurrence of some types of homicides and other crimes.

TOPEKA AREA MAJOR CASE SQUAD BY-LAWS

A. Purpose of Squad

This squad was conceived as law enforcement's cooperative challenge to the criminal elements operating in the Capital Area. Our hope is that it will assist in providing an expeditious solution to the more serious types of crime, including murder, aggravated assault, robbery, rape, and burglary, and other of a magnitude constituting a community threat. It is a recognition that the law enforcement investigative staff of some jurisdictions cannot be sufficiently staffed to provide the saturation-type of investigation which may be necessary to effect a solution in such cases.

1. A smaller country or municipality rarely is sufficiently staffed or equipped to investigate a major case.
2. The perpetrator in many cases resides or takes refuge in the larger city while he preys on the smaller.
3. Witnesses, leads, and evidence may be found in more than one jurisdiction.
4. The general pooling of resources seems to be the only answer to the fight against crime, and with our already expanded cooperative functions this measure is a logical development.

We strongly emphasize that no department will assert jurisdiction where none exists, and that this squad will not operate at cross purposes with any assisting agency. In view of the fact that some cases comprise a Federal Violation as well as a State Violation, the use of this squad will not be extended where such dual jurisdiction exists.

B. Membership

The membership goal of the Squad has been established at 50, and a somewhat larger number is desirable if the participating agencies can provide the manpower. It is made up of law enforcement agencies in the following counties; Jackson, Jefferson, Douglas, Osage, Wabaunsee, Pottawatomie and Shawnee. It will be necessary for participating agencies to inform the Personnel Officer of changes in Squad membership, and to provide him a "Personnel Background Summary" form (See sample Forms Section) for each member assigned. Membership changes or additions should be provided to the Personnel Officer as soon as effected. Membership should be predicated on knowledge of investigative techniques, ability to secure citizen cooperation, skill in report writing and willingness to function

as a team member. Those selected must accept assignments as given, follow prescribed procedures, and be able to offer loyalty, energy and enthusiasm to the Squad Supervisor in no less degree than would be afforded their home agency.

Members of the Squad will be trained so that each will be able to handle any facet of an investigation. The training will consist of a minimum of forty (40) hours of classroom work, including a mock field problem. New members may possibly receive on-the-spot training but such members will later be given training comparable to that provided other members. It is contemplated that refresher courses will be held from time to time in order to keep the Squad abreast of recent developments in criminal investigation.

If at any time the Officer in Charge learns of incompetency or misconduct of a member, rendering him ineffective, this should be brought to the attention of the Directors for appropriate action. Such action being, the forwarding of a written report by the Officer in Charge to the Board of Directors, with a copy of said report to the Officer's home Department. The Officer in Charge is empowered with the authority to dismiss a member at any time, for misconduct or incompetency. The Home Department of the member, will be notified immediately, with a brief explanation of the reason for the dismissal.

C. Procedures for Activation of Squad

1. If the crime comes within purview of the Squad's purposes, and circumstances indicate outside help is needed, a call should be made to the Officer in Charge of the Major Case Squad.
2. Any request for assistance of the Squad should come as soon as possible after the requesting jurisdiction learns of the crime. Except under most unusual circumstances, a request received more than four (4) hours after discovery of the crime will be sufficient grounds to withhold squad assistance.
3. The Officer in Charge on receiving the call should in all cases secure the following information:
 - a. Name, rank, address, and telephone number of the officer requesting assistance;
 - b. Location of the gathering place or building where the squad is to convene;
 - c. Type of crime, time of the crime, and time discovered, time aid of the Squad was requested;

- d. A resume of the facts including type of terrain, equipment needed, whether Federal Jurisdiction is involved, evidence known, and other helpful data on supplied form;
- e. The number of men the caller feels would be desirable to handle this investigation;
- f. He should inform the calling authority that the crime scene should be protected at once and that it would be expected that the scene will be preserved so that Squad members might handle the crime scene search without it having been previously gone over;
- g. The man receiving the call should, after terminating the call, immediately phone back and verify that this was an authentic call requesting assistance.
- h. The Officer in Charge on receiving the call shall consult with one Director before calling the Squad into operation. The Director has Authority to limit the number of personnel to be provided.
- i. Members of the Squad will be assigned to duty in proportion to the percentage of representation of the Squad by individual agencies or municipalities. All squad personnel of the requesting agency will automatically be assigned to duty.
- j. Squad members called to duty should be informed to report as quickly as possible, and in appropriate civilian dress.
- k. Each Agency should make prior arrangements, if necessary to provide a suitable headquarters for the Squad, should it be needed in that jurisdiction. The quarters should contain office space for the supervisor, conference area, report writing facilities, interrogation space, and telephone communication. The quarters may be located in the existing facilities of the requesting agency, if they are adequate.
- l. No investigation by the Squad will extend over five (5) days, except where unusual circumstances warrant an extension. Any question concerning extension should be referred to the Directors for decision.

D. Duties of Staff Officer in Charge

1. The ranking officer of the requesting agency shall retain full responsibility. The Officer in Charge of Major Case Squad will be in full charge of Squad members assigned to assist.
2. He will retain this authority throughout an investigation unless he relinquishes it to a Squad member or supervisor, in writing, and with the approval of a Director.

3. His supervision is to be considered absolute and all members of the Squad are to clearly understand that they are to work in the assignment given them, and his decisions on this as well as other matters are to be construed as if the order were to come from the Squad member's home agency head.
4. Together with the agency he represents and designated Squad Officers, he should:
 - a. Arrange for office quarters for the Squad.
 - b. Provide proper equipment for the investigation.
 - c. Provide necessary sources of information needed.
 - d. Make arrangements for vehicle maintenance and repair, and purchase of gas and oil at any time of the day.
 - e. Arrange for transportation and communication facilities needed.
 - f. Arrange for special equipment needed, such as helicopters, airplanes, diving suits, etc.
 - g. Establish liaison with criminal investigative laboratories or other public or private firms which can aid in the investigation.
 - h. Make general preparation for introducing into an area a large investigative group and their attendant needs, both personal and official. This would include location of restaurants, etc.
5. He should maintain constant liaison with the Prosecuting Attorney for solution of legal problems which might prejudice the case.
6. He should provide the Squad members with identification authenticating their temporary official duties in the area. This should be in the form of a card limited to a specific span of time, and identifying the officer's home agency, and certifying his official capacity in the jurisdiction.
7. He should call meetings, or use other appropriate means, from time to time, to brief members on the progress of the case.
8. He should prepare reports of difficulties encountered with regard to administrative, legal, or logistical problems, and provide copies to the Directors.
9. He should stress that no member should begin investigation of a new suspect or lead without first receiving approval for such action.

10. He should consult as needed with the Directors and the Advisory Committee.

E. Administration and Organization of Personnel

The overall supervision of the Squad is vested in the Directors hereinbefore named. This group will determine major policy, establish necessary operating principles for the Squad, and shall have authority for assignment or withdrawal of Squad personnel from any case or area of a participating agency.

The Advisory Committee will act in an advisory capacity while the case is pending to render such assistance and guidance as may be necessary, and will keep informed of the Squad's activities in order to promote cooperation and effective investigation.

The requesting agency will be in full charge of any investigation arising from its jurisdiction. This accountability cannot be delegated to a Squad member by the requesting agency without the approval of a Director, and such approval, if granted, shall be in writing and a copy given the Squad member assuming such accountability.

F. General Supervision

The Squad shall be activated to work in shifts. The beginning and ending of each shift shall be at the discretion of the Officer in Charge of each particular investigation. Members of each shift shall be assigned to work a maximum of eight hours per day. Any officer that desires may work more than his assigned eight hours but this will strictly be voluntary on the part of the officer and no compensation shall be forthcoming. Should any officer work on an M-Squad investigation during his normal days off his home agency may allow the officer to take these days off at a later time.

It must be realized there can easily be extenuating circumstances that dictate some officers might have to work more than eight hours on any given day. The Officer in Charge will be charged with keeping this time to a minimum. Officer in Charge will also use officers of the activation agency wherever possible in accruing these very few hours of overtime. Officer in Charge shall ask for volunteers to waive overtime on the rare occasions someone must work more than eight hours.

Each agency shall endeavor to have each M-Squad Member sign a copy of this section of the By-Laws and that copy be made a part of the Personnel Files. This will indicate each officer understands the working time policy of the M-Squad and the officers home agency. Officers that do not sign the By-Laws will be used sparingly and a close watch kept on the hours they work.

G. Appointment of Staff Officers

The Directors will appoint the following staff personnel, and an alternate for each:

1. Personnel Officer

- a. The Personnel Officer immediately upon his appointment will survey each locality with the local agency representative and arrange suitable quarters to house the Squad. He shall determine the exact location to be used as Squad Headquarters in each general area of operation. The equipment and facilities available at each location should be recorded and the name, address, and telephone of the individual to contact for access to the location recorded and maintained. Once each quarter, the Personnel Officer should check and determine if his information is current and correct.
- b. The Personnel Officer will prepare a 4 x 6 inch index card on each officer assigned to the Squad reflecting: full name, local address, telephone, and the person to be contacted or notified in case of an emergency. Reverse side of the card should reflect special qualifications, linguistic abilities, familiarity with area, abilities with technical equipment, etc. This file should be kept current.
- c. Upon notification from the Officer in Charge, the Personnel Officer will select and dispatch the designated number of Squad members to the agency requesting assistance. The Investigative Supervisor, Evidence Officer, and crime scene search personnel will report directly to the scene but all other assigned personnel will report to the Squad Headquarters. The Personnel Officer will see that all personnel are informed of the Squad Headquarters location and telephone number, and that the Prosecuting Attorney of the jurisdiction is informed of the Squad's activities and the location of the crime scene.
- d. Upon completion of case assignments, the Personnel Officer should report to the Squad Headquarters immediately and advise the Officer in Charge of each arrival and his duty status and availability. He should check each Squad member's index card for accurate information.
- e. Explain police, press relations and other local conditions and situations to Squad, furnish Squad with list of pertinent telephone numbers, city maps, eating places, and any other pertinent information. Inform Squad of established locations where gas can be obtained locally, explain parking hours and space, and periodically advise Squad members of local problems pertinent to them.
- f. Handle personal problems of Squad members.

- g. Aid in mobilizing personnel for conferences or for other purposes.
- h. After organization and complete assembly of Squad, assist Officer in Charge in any other duties he desires.

2. Equipment Supervisor

- a. Has responsibility for the condition and availability of all property and equipment which may be used. Any expenditures must be approved by Officer in Charge.
- b. Must coordinate closely with the Officer in Charge as to how the investigation is proceeding in order that needs may be anticipated as to equipment needed.
- c. Will take all necessary action dictated by the circumstances to see that needed property will be on hand whenever a need arises. Will immediately set in motion efforts to:
 - (1) Inventory and record pertinent equipment available for use. Equipment lists should contain location of equipment and person to authorize its use. Separate lists for each department and equipment available should be maintained and kept current.
 - (a) Firearms, gas equipments, restraining devices.
 - (b) Compasses, binoculars.
 - (c) Lights: flashlight, signal, search, mileray.
 - (d) Photographic equipment and supplies.
 - (e) First-aid kits and other medical supplies.
 - (f) Copy equipment and supplies.
 - (g) Ropes and cord.
 - (h) City, County, State, and area maps. Look for aerial survey maps.
 - (i) Gasoline credit cards or vehicle servicing facilities.
 - (j) Thermos jugs.
 - (k) Technical equipment in sufficient quantity.
 - (l) Two-way radio cars and other communications equipment such as, Handi-talkies and batteries.

- (m) Boots, picks, crowbars, axes, shovels.
 - (n) Sterno sets and food on a twenty-four hour basis.
 - (o) Blankets - stretcher.
 - (p) Autos - borrow from other agencies or firms, arrange for rentals if absolutely necessary.
 - (q) Desks, typewriters, and other office equipment, if necessary, to set up temporary headquarters.
 - (r) Timetables for all common carriers in the area.
 - (s) Airplanes (or helicopters) with all facts such as capacity, range, experience of pilot, descriptive data as to craft.
 - (t) Same as above for boats and skin divers.
 - (u) List of doctors for immediate medical attention, including doctor skilled in performing autopsies.
 - (v) Blackboard and chalk.
 - (w) Extra batteries for all battery-operated equipment.
 - (x) Storage area for extra property used in the investigation.
 - (y) Room in or near office with cots for brief rests by detectives.
- (2) In addition to the above, the Equipment Supervisor should consider the advisability of:
- (a) Arrange for twenty-four hour photographic service.
 - (b) Establish extra phone service or setting up same, if temporary headquarters are being established.
 - (c) Telephone service should by-pass switchboard.
- (3) The Equipment Supervisor should prepare and maintain a list of:
- (a) Evidence Officers and equipment in each jurisdiction.
 - (b) Sound recording equipment in each jurisdiction.
 - (c) Polygraph examiners and equipment in each jurisdiction and indicate if equipment is portable or fixed.

3. Report Supervisor

The Report Supervisor will be responsible for receiving, editing, indexing, filing, summarizing and reviewing all case reports and for supervising assigned clerical employees. He should also:

- a. Require each investigator to use and properly complete the forms provided for reporting. (See Sample Forms Section.)
- b. Require reports in triplicate, one copy forwarded to Prosecuting Attorney, (original to prosecutor), two to officer in charge of the investigation. Additional copies may be made if necessary to assist the investigative staff in its duties.
- c. Require investigators to submit individual reports for each suspect investigated.
- d. Place only productive information in the main case file. No report of elimination of suspects should be included in this file.
- e. Place all non-productive information (elimination of suspects, etc.) in a secondary (or bulky exhibit) file. All extraneous investigative data, including extra copies of reports, is placed in this file.
- f. Prepare a daily or general progress report as determined by the Officer in Charge.
- g. Upon termination of the Squad's participation in the investigation, prepare a general report of the findings, (with a resume introduction) which is indexed and divided according to chronology of events and categories of investigation.
- h. Upon successful solution of a case by the Squad, prepare an indexed prosecutive summary, listing the facts of the crime, the criminal history of the defendant, and the evidence to be presented and by whom.

4. Evidence Officer

- a. Crime Scene Examination
 - (1) Photography of scene and each article of evidence.
 - (2) Scale drawing of scene
 - (3) Gathering, identification and preservation of all physical evidence.

- b. Laboratory analysis of physical evidence, and preparing for registered mailing of exhibits to appropriate laboratory for examination.
- c. Maintaining a register of mailed exhibits in order to trace lost or mislaid packages.
- d. Protect the chain of custody for all evidence.
- e. Instruct all Squad personnel in handling or preservation of evidence brought to their attention.
- f. Prepare reports setting out in detail his activities and findings.
- g. Proper preparation for availability of equipment for marketing and preservation of evidence.

5. Investigative Supervisor

- a. Must be an experienced detective, skilled in the actual direction of a criminal investigation, in supervision of personnel and in reading comprehension, retention, and logic.
- b. Will serve as the chief assistant to the Officer in Charge of the case by taking direct charge of the crime scene and all follow-up investigation.
 - (1) Supervise the actual crime scene search after preliminary review of the physical circumstances. He will direct the activities of the Evidence Officer in photographing, gathering, identifying, and preserving all the physical evidence.
 - (2) In murder cases, he will insure that the crime scene is preserved after the body has been removed until an autopsy has been performed and a reinspection of the scene has been made with the pathologist.
 - (3) Will recommend to the Officer in Charge the use of technicians and equipment beneficial to the investigation.
- c. Review all reports, including those considered non-productive, to make certain that no leads are overlooked.
- d. Upon discovery of leads, will prepare lead cards, assign leads for investigation, and follow up on the results obtained.
- e. Insures that prospective witnesses not located or interviewed initially are rescheduled for interviews.
- f. Consult with Officer in Charge regarding legal problems which may be encountered.

- g. Keeps Officer in Charge fully informed as to progress of the investigation.
- h. Control activities of all investigative personnel, insuring that they report their progress in assigned tasks before following any new line of inquiry.

6. Press Officer

- a. Handle all phases of possible news coverage as directed by the Officer in Charge.
- b. Serve as a historian for the entire case.
- c. Relay to the agency of jurisdiction, through the Officer in Charge, pertinent facts at hand.

E. Duties of Directors

The overall supervision of the Squad is vested in the Directors hereinbefore named. This group will determine major policy, establish necessary operating principles for the Squad, and shall have authority for assignment of withdrawal of squad personnel from any case of area of a participating agency.

The Directors are made up of (1) Chairman, (2) Vice Chairman, (3) Secretary-Treasurer. One Director is elected each year therefore keeping two directors on for two years at least.

END

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