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INDIVIDUAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REPORT

In Response to a Request for Technical Assistance

By the

Cedar Falls, Iowa, Police Department

October 10, 1973

NCJRS
NOV 30 1976
ACQUISITIONS

Prepared by:

Public Administration Service
1313 East 60th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637

(Per Contract J-LEAA-015-72)

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I. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

A. **Consultant Assigned:**

John R. Kleberg
Donald C. Hanna
Police Consultants
Columbus, Ohio

B. **Date Assignment Received:**

July 20, 1973

C. **Date of Contact with LEAA Regional Coordinator:**

July 30, 1973

D. **Dates of On-Site Consultation:**

August 23, 24, 25, 1973

E. **Individuals Contacted:**

Chief Roger A. Wood

Captain G. E. Bisbey

Captain R. L. Curtis

Captain K. R. Lonseth

Captain M. A. Reifsteck

Captain L. W. Young

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A. **Problem as per Request for Technical Assistance:**

Need for technical assistance in reorganizing the police department and improving the records system.

B. **Problem Actually Observed:**

See consultant's report.

III. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

See attached consultant's report.

IV. DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION

See attached consultant's report.

V. RECOMMENDED COURSES OF ACTION

See attached consultant's report.

CONSULTANT'S REPORT

During the on-site consultation, extensive, comprehensive, and candid conversations and interviews were conducted with the Police Department's senior staff. Our reception was warm and congenial and all staff members fully participated in candid observations. It was apparent that the Department's senior staff was professionally oriented, concerned with departmental growth and development, earnestly concerned with the welfare of the community, and desired quality service provided by the Department.

On August 24, upon invitation of the Police Chief, consultants participated in a regularly scheduled senior staff meeting. It was evident that many, if not all, department personnel were aware of our presence and purpose and of the technical assistance being sought with regard to organizational structure.

The Department has excellent physical plant facilities, although they are being outgrown, and takes considerable pride in the public image created. Modern, clean, well-maintained facilities, progressively managed, and a young energetic department provide Cedar Falls with a good quality of police service.

Statement of Problem

As the result of a recent retirement of the Assistant Chief of Police, the Department sought technical assistance in restructuring the Department's formal organization. Principal efforts were, therefore, devoted to a critical evaluation of the "formal" and "informal" organizations so that candid, practical, suggestions and recommendations regarding organization could be formulated.

The Chief of Police also asked that practical suggestions be made about current police records procedures so that informational systems might be facilitated. This effort was considered of secondary importance to the reorganization plans.

In reviewing the organizational structure all members of the senior staff were interviewed—many at considerable length. Personal views, ambitions, interests, concerns, career objectives, perceptions, and attitudes were solicited and freely given. Frank conversations of significant meaning were easily developed.

After reviewing current organizational structure, historical development, a departmentally proposed organizational scheme, and the informal organization, the consultants' proposed organizational structure was discussed frankly with the Chief of Police. This discussion encompassed organizational principles, possible organizational structures, possible courses of action, the "formal" and "informal" organization, and individual personalities involved. By and large, therefore, Chief Wood has been appraised of the recommendations to be included in this report.

Our brief association with Chief Wood and his staff was professionally rewarding. Our interpersonal contacts were candid, comprehensive, and friendly.

Records system consultation was accomplished by providing suggested forms to the captain in charge of police records, conducting a two-hour orientation on system design and methodology, to be followed by forwarding text materials to be used as a functional guide.

Facts Relative to Problem

Cedar Falls, Iowa, is a northeastern Iowa City of approximately 34,000 persons and the home of Northern Iowa University, with a campus of about 10,000 graduate and undergraduate students primarily studying in education curricula. The City is governed by a major-council form of government.

About 17 manufacturing firms and 13 processing firms are located in the City. Regular growth is reflected by a 1950 census of 14,334; 1960 census of 21,195; and a 1970 census of 29,598.

Cedar Falls traces its beginning to March of 1845 when the first known log cabins were built on the west banks of the Cedar River. The City was plotted in 1853 and incorporated on April 12, 1854. Northern Iowa University finds its beginnings when the Iowa State Normal School was founded in Cedar Falls in 1876.

The Police Department has experienced fairly regular growth corresponding to city development. The Chief of Police is appointed by and reports directly to the Mayor although he functions within council guidelines as developed by a Council Public Safety Committee and Council Personnel Committee. Department civil service requirements are established by state law and a local Civil Service Commission.

Positions, rank, and authorized strength are, therefore, regulated by the Civil Service Commission and City Council through specific authorization, procedures, and budget appropriations.

Organization Survey Objective

The objective of surveying the Department's organizational structure was to review historical development and informal organization and propose an organizational arrangement based upon basic organizational considerations and needs.

Basic Organizational Considerations

The proposed organization of the Cedar Falls Police Department is based upon several organizational considerations, viz., purpose, objectives, flexibility, effectiveness, and good organizational concepts. These considerations are briefly described to support the proposed organization structure.

Definition of Organization

Organization is an administrative arrangement of authority, responsibility, functions, control, relationships, personnel, and material by which departmental objectives are accomplished. Such an arrangement should be subject to modification as changing conditions and circumstances dictate. Organization should neither be a static condition nor an end in itself. Actually, it is a facilitative tool of management.

Purpose of Organization

The purpose of organization is to simplify the direction, coordination, and control of members of the Department so that the objectives of the Department may be

attained efficiently, effectively, economically, and harmoniously. Resources of manpower and material alone are not enough to meet the challenge of present day law enforcement problems. They must be arranged and utilized within an organizational structure that provides the framework for their efficient and effective use.

Organizational Axioms

There are three basic organizational axioms which should be foremost in the police administrator's mind when he is involved in the administrative task of organizing or reorganizing his police department.

1. The organizational arrangement or structure of the police department is dependent upon its *objectives*.
2. To function effectively, the police department must have *flexible* structure.
3. The effectiveness of the police department as a whole is dependent upon the effectiveness of its several *parts* or *units*.

It should be recognized that the *objectives* are the initial and primary consideration in the task of organization. The police administrator should recognize and distinguish between the objectives of the police department and the objectives of police management.

The objectives of a police department may be briefly stated as the following:

1. The protection of life and property (life/property safety).
2. The repression of crime (crime control).
3. The preservation of the peace (maintenance of public order).
4. The enforcement of the law (detection and apprehension of violators).
5. The regulation of various noncriminal conduct.

The objectives of police management consist basically of the efficient and effective utilization of available resources to achieve the objectives of the police department.

Organizational Concepts

These concepts do not by any means comprise all the art of administrative organization, but they do furnish criteria with which an established or proposed organization can be evaluated. They also provide excellent guidelines for restructuring an existing organization arrangement.

Briefly, these organizational concepts can be stated as follows. The police administrator should recognize that they are only guidelines which may be modified as necessary for local circumstances and conditions.

1. **Hierarchy.** There should be a hierarchy wherein lines of authority and responsibility run upward and downward through the several levels with a broad base at the bottom and a single head at the top.
2. **Ultimate Responsibility.** Each and every unit or person in the organization should be answerable ultimately to the chief administrator at the apex of the hierarchy.
3. **Functional Grouping.** Every necessary function involved in the mission and objectives of the organization is assigned to a unit of that organization.
4. **Clarity of Assignment.** The responsibilities assigned to a unit of an organization are specific and understood. This emphasizes the necessity of developing and implementing policies, procedures, and rules, in addition to training of personnel.
5. **Unity of Arrangement.** Consistent methods of organizational structure should be applied at each level of the organization.
6. **Unity of Assignment.** No function is assigned to more than one independent unit of the organization.
7. **Chain of Command.** Each member of the organization from top to bottom knows: (a) to whom he reports and (b) who reports to him. Channels of command are not violated by other units or individuals.
8. **Unity of Command.** No member of one organization reports to more than one supervisor.
9. **Authority Commensurate With Responsibility.** Responsibility for a function is matched by the authority necessary to perform that function.
10. **Span of Control.** Individuals or units reporting directly to a supervisor do not exceed the number which can be feasibly and effectively coordinated and directed. The number of subordinates that a superior can manage effectively or supervise, depends upon a number of factors:

- a. The nature of the task.
- b. The nature of the instructions.
- c. The time involved.
- d. The area involved.
- e. The ability of the subordinates.
- f. The ability of the supervisor.
- g. The amount of authority delegated.
- h. The material used.
- i. The harmony of the subordinates.

Whenever a superior's span of control is reduced, it results in: (1) lengthening his chain of command; (2) increasing the span of control of one or more of his subordinates.

11. **Communication.** Channels of communication flow vertically and horizontally throughout the organization.

The functional grouping concept needs further explanation than its brief description above. Functions are grouped upon the basis of three criteria. Primarily, functions are arranged as: (1) line, (2) auxiliary, or (3) staff in nature. Line functions are those activities of a police department which directly attempt to eliminate or repress those impediments to organizational goal; namely, the patrol function which is the primary line effort. However, the patrol function is not completely effective. Therefore, line functions of a secondary nature are necessary; namely, traffic control, investigative, and special task efforts.

Administrative services include auxiliary functions and staff functions.

Auxiliary functions are nonlinear in nature and are those which support line functions; for example, records, communications, detention, property and evidence control, and crime laboratory services.

Staff functions are also nonlinear in nature and basically involve those efforts which relate to management and personnel; for example, planning, research, public information, fiscal, inspection and control, community relations, recruitment, selection, training, promotion, etc.

Functions can also be arranged according to: (1) purpose, (2) process or method, and (3) persons involved. Finally, functions can be grouped by: (1) time and (2) area.

Charts of Organization

Three charts of organization are included in this report: (1) current organizational arrangement by position, (2) proposed organizational arrangement by position, and (3) proposed organization arrangement by function.

Records Survey Objective

The records survey objective is to report concisely on a records system which: (1) provides an organized and detailed report repository; (2) enables easy and useful retrieval; (3) reduces any duplication and fills in the major reporting, filing, and indexing gaps; and (4) has the functional utility to expand, without loss of serviceability, as the Department and community grow.

Problem and Deficiency Analysis

In directing the police effort, law enforcement agency records provide information about the character, extent, location, and time of occurrence of criminal activity in the jurisdiction being served. With this information it is possible to identify police hazards, to determine needs for additional police service, to determine changes in these needs, and to have information upon which enforcement strategy may be based.

Also within this area of record use and purpose, it is possible to evaluate to some extent police success. The number of cases that are successfully cleared, offenders convicted, stolen property recovered, and the effectiveness of police investigations assist in evaluating the total performance of the law enforcement agency concerned.

Within the area of criminal justice, police records provide information on criminal convictions which assist in evaluating the machinery of the criminal justice system; they also provide a comprehensive record for prosecuting officials of all available information to be used during criminal actions in courts of law.

Also of significance for the police administrator is that records of his department assist in directing police operations. As it is true in the supervision and management of any organization, records must be available to account for the time and activity performed by personnel of the Department. This is particularly important in the law enforcement agency since the majority of officers perform difficult and complex duties without the benefit of direct supervision and guidance. It is essential to maintain such performance records to supervise and manage personnel properly and to analyze an individual's accomplishments in order to reward ability.

The final area of use of police records includes those miscellaneous administrative activities which are essential and supportive of the total law enforcement service. Such matters as furnishing means of communication between members of the Department, calling matters of importance to the attention of other municipal departments or officials, public information, budget or fiscal matters, and various informational needs pertaining to distribution of departmental equipment are part of this area of purpose and use.

The importance, value, and relative significance of police records in the total operation of any law enforcement agency cannot be overestimated. The very nature and

Chart I
PRESENT ORGANIZATION OF THE
CEDAR FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT
CEDAR FALLS, IOWA

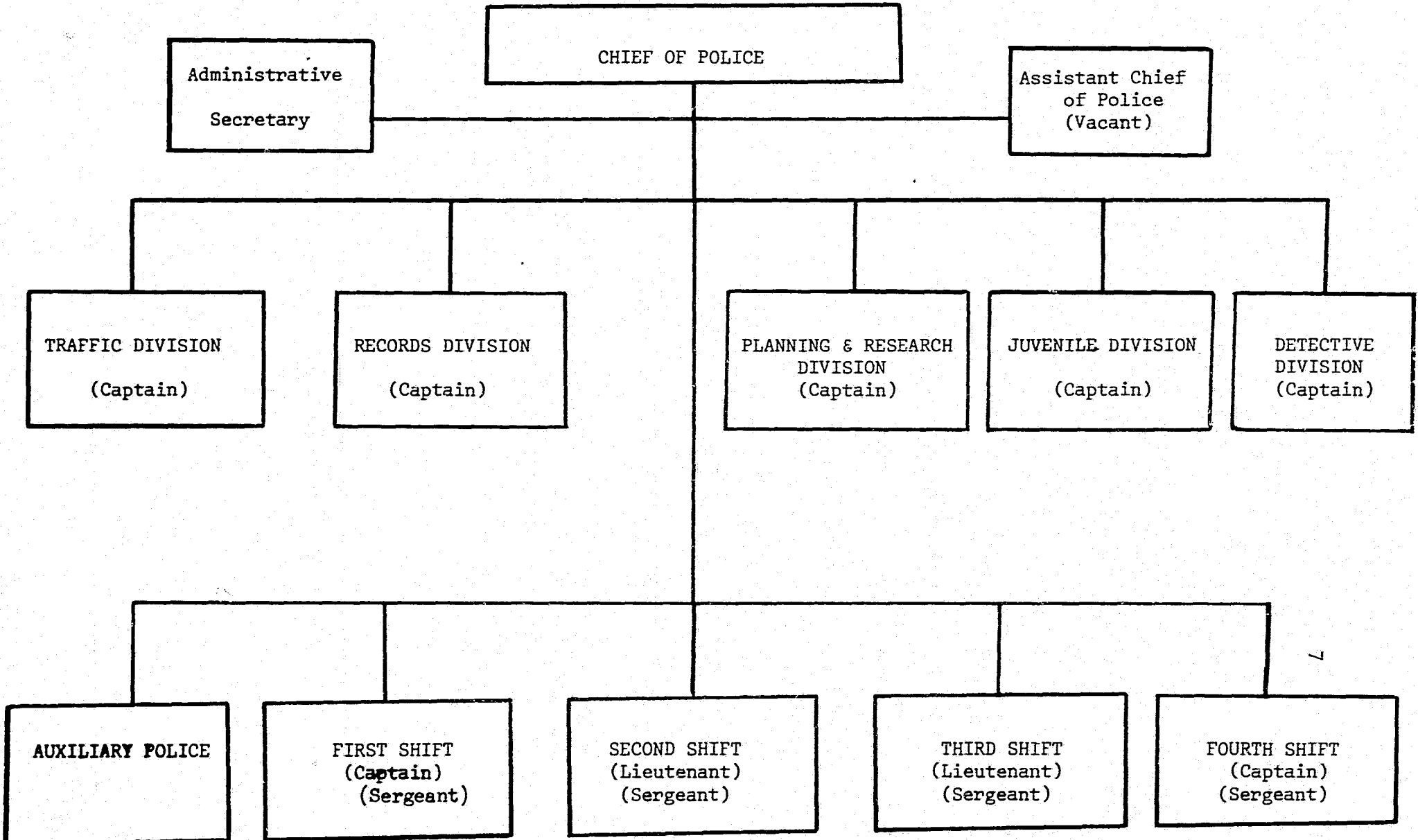


Chart II
PROPOSED ORGANIZATION OF THE
CEDAR FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT
CEDAR FALLS, IOWA

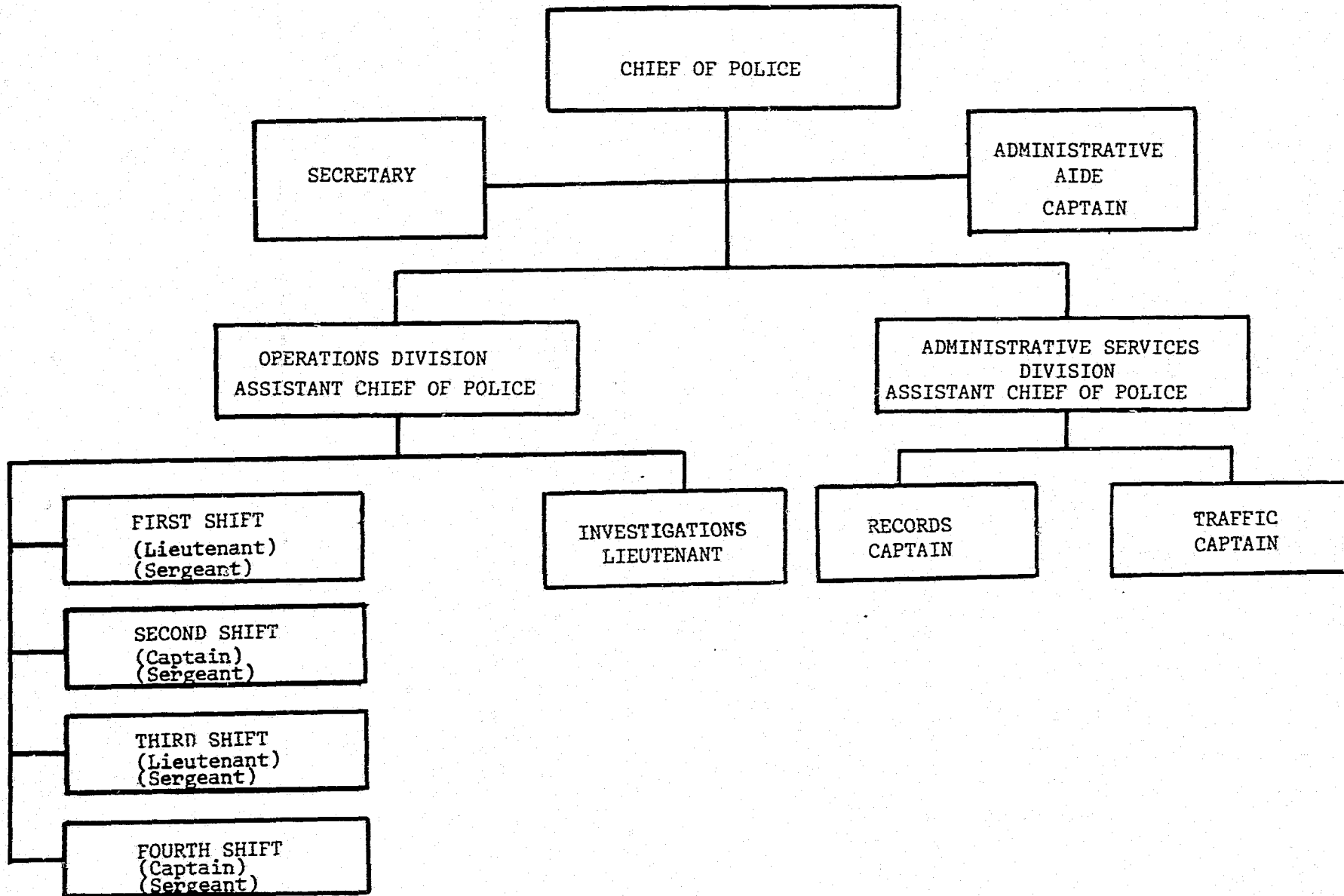
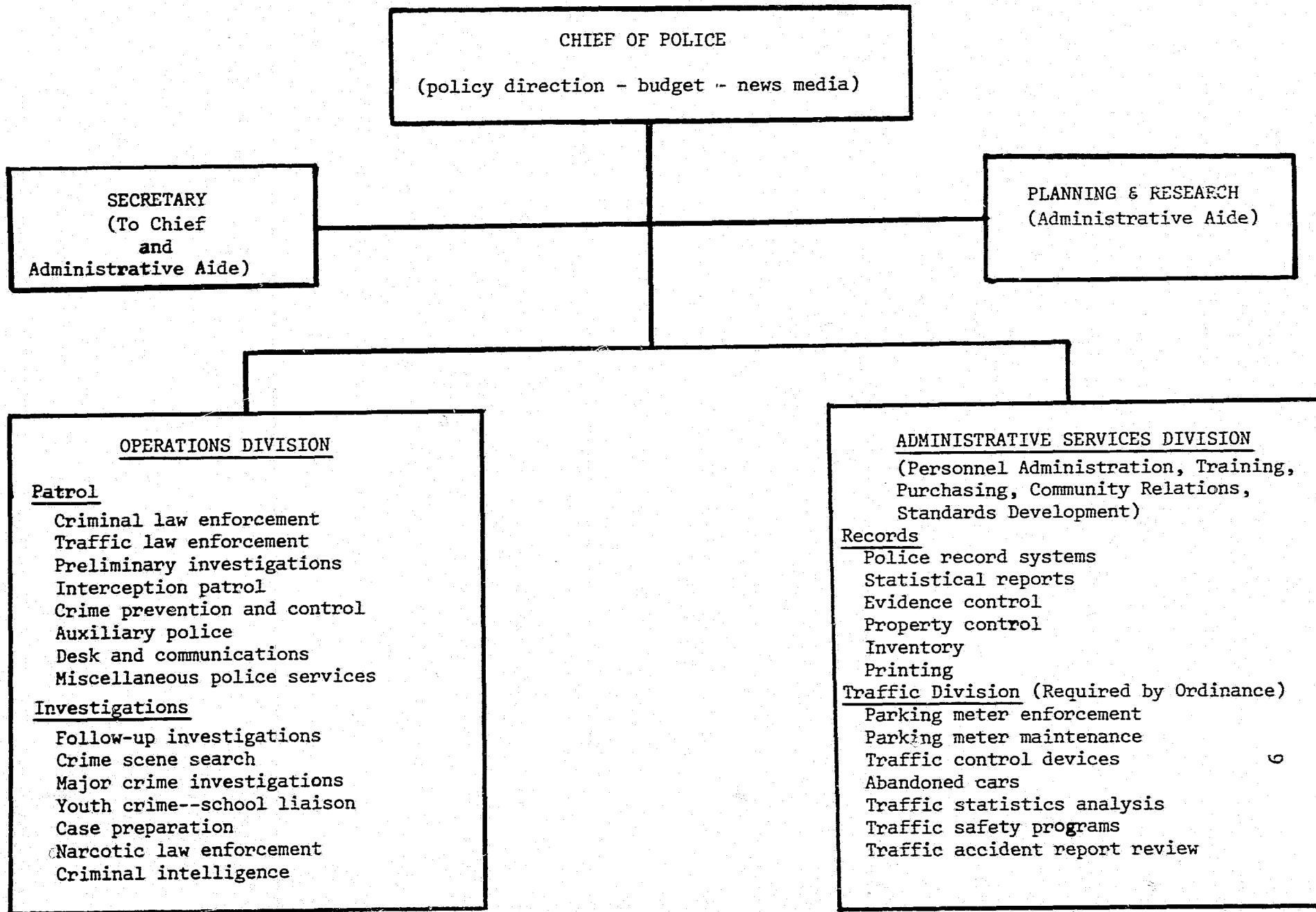
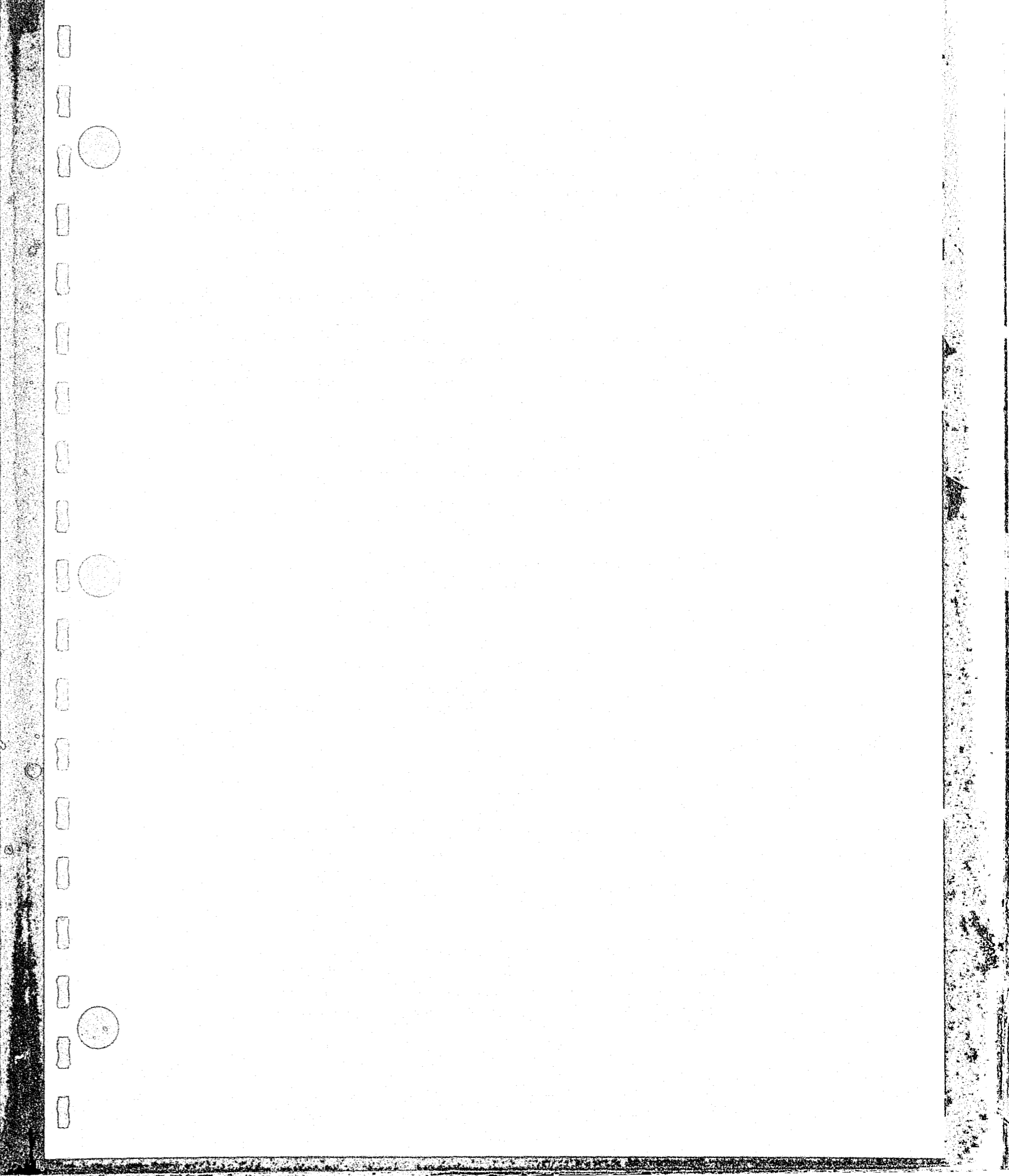
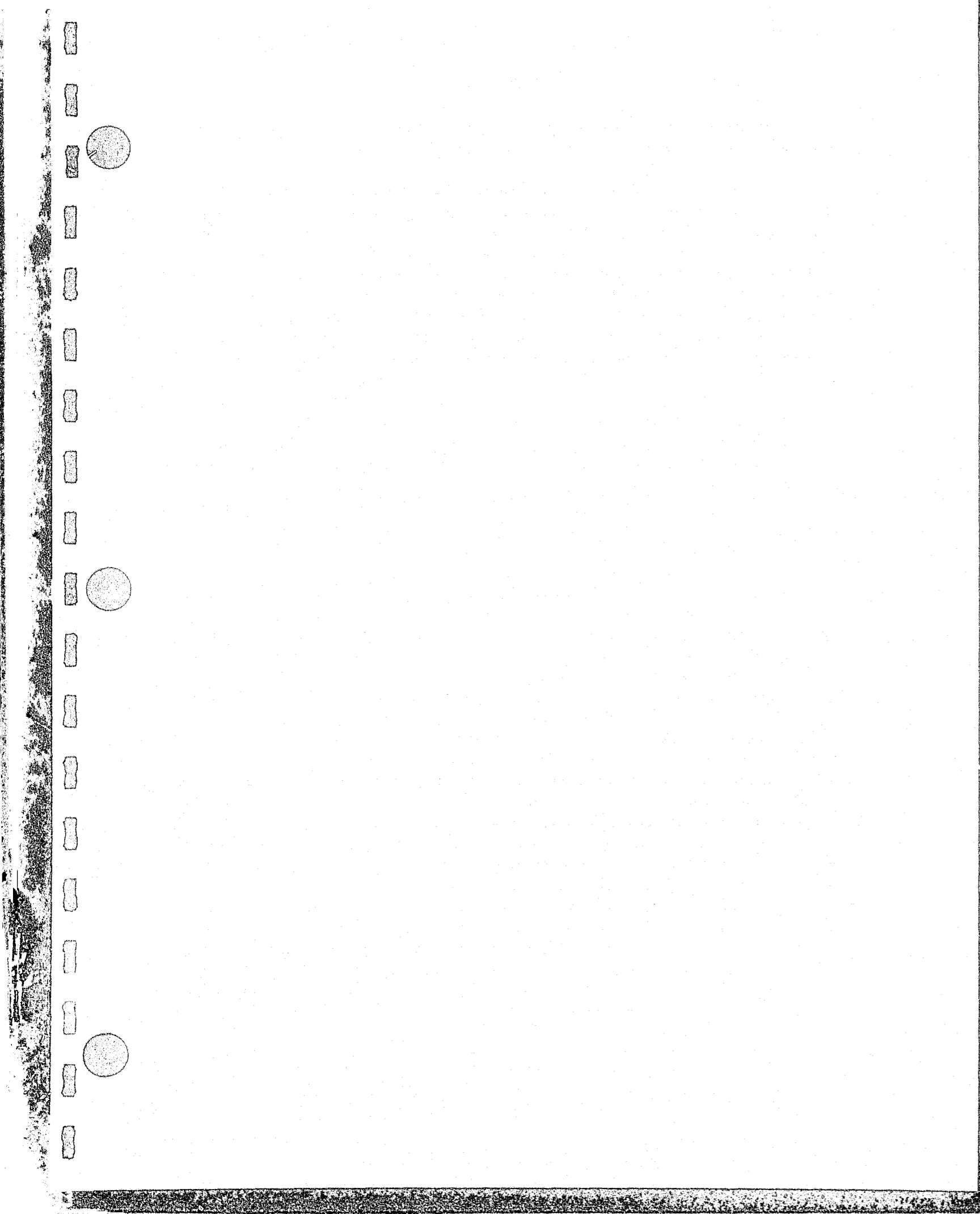


Chart III

PROPOSED FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE
CEDAR FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT
CEDAR FALLS, IOWA





5. There are some record forms which are partially duplicative in nature.
6. There are limited cross-index files to enhance information retrieval.
7. There is no single report file containing all investigative reports filed in a single, uniform number sequence.
8. Formats of investigative report forms do not call for sufficient specific information and do not provide for handprinted completion to conserve time.
9. Current records procedure does not provide a copy of the police incident report for the information of other officers.
10. Current records procedure does not provide an abbreviated form for passing on pertinent, brief information obtained in the field.

Proposed Course of Action

In view of general inherent weaknesses presently existing in records maintained by the Cedar Falls Police Department, this survey report presents certain recommendations for the development of a police records system which will meet current and future expanded departmental needs with a minimum of modification if implemented as suggested. However, several preliminary comments should be made before the presentation of general statements pertaining to particular recommendations or proposals.

As a records process, it is important to recognize that case reports and similar official departmental documents are confidential police business; and access to reports should be restricted to law enforcement officials. Therefore, it is suggested that no report or copy be taken or removed from the Department except by law enforcement officers, prosecuting officials, or court personnel. The present departmental policy that the police case report is accessible to news media reporters, should be discontinued.

This is not to say that members of the news media are not entitled to some items of police information. It would be desirable to determine the appropriate information for regular release to news media representatives in cooperation with the prosecuting attorney and local news media directors. News releases pertaining to an offense under investigation or an arrest should follow guidelines suggested by the American Bar Association in conjunction with recent appellate court decisions. Such guidelines appear in Appendix A.

In view of the various records suggestions made in this survey and to make their implementation possible, *it is recommended* that part of the city code pertaining to the Police Department should include the following or a similar provision:

RECORDS: The Chief of Police shall maintain an adequate police records system to provide factual and accurate statistical information regarding police service and performance in the City. An annual report for the preceding fiscal year shall be submitted to the City Council on or before the first day in August of each year upon a form prescribed by resolution of the City Council.

For the police administrator to stress the importance of accuracy, honesty, and completeness of departmental record files is not enough. He must recognize the importance of a report review process and assign a shift commander responsibility for a regularly scheduled review and control of all police reports. Shift commander report-review responsibilities require thorough familiarity with the operations of the various facets of the Department, the interrelationships involved within the Department's operations, and the relationship of police department functions to those of other municipal departments. The report-review process should be directed toward the objective that the decisions and activities of patrol and investigating officers are proper and that decisive steps have been taken toward the completion and disposition of cases under investigation.

The police administrator must also recognize the vital need for development and implementation of directives to inform departmental employees of the policies and procedures to follow in the departmental records system. Police administrators who fail to develop definite guidelines governing the entire records process frequently discover that police incident reports are inadequate. To proceed without such directives and guidelines is to contribute to a breakdown in the records system. Lack of adequate guidelines and directives can be avoided by careful planning before implementation of any major revision of the records system. In addition, one full-time clerical person should be able to maintain police records, but only as an exclusive responsibility. It is imperative that such assignment be made to provide a successful records system.

The records system here proposed is essentially designed to fulfill current police records needs and to provide sufficient flexibility to grow as the community, Department, and calls for police service increase. This system centers around a single numbering design and one major report file with limited supplementary and support files.

To assist in the planning and implementation of the proposed records system, initial direction was provided in the form of: (1) on-site instruction to the command officer of the Records Division and (2) provision of text material and sample report forms with detailed instructions.

The provision of certain sample report forms has a twofold purpose: (1) to provide a frame of reference which local police administrative officials can revise as necessary to develop and implement a new records system, and (2) to provide report formats in which specific information can be handprinted to enhance report quality.

The number of report forms used in the system must be kept at a practical minimum. Special interest forms should not be allowed to be added periodically to the system. Otherwise, a proliferation of report forms will reduce simplicity of the system and result in confusion.

- b. Incident report number.
 - c. Arrest number.
 - d. Evidence number.
 - e. Use of incident number assignment log for control of number assignment, type of incident, officer assigned, etc.
2. Desk Complaint Control Card.
- a. Provides initial control for documentation of called-for police services.
 - b. Handprinted completion.
 - c. Time stamped.
 - d. Provides consecutive 24--hour period of called-for police services.
 - e. Provides replacement of radio communications log.
 - f. Cards to be chronologically filed by: (1) time of day, (2) day of month, and (3) month of year, and to be purged from files after each year.
 - g. A typed summary log would provide appropriate, pertinent information upon a continuous availability basis to news media consistent with departmental news release policy.
3. Criminal Identification File.
- a. Filed alphabetically by last name.
 - b. Contains fingerprint cards, identification photographs, "rap" sheets, alias, etc.
4. Basic Incident Report Forms.
- a. Incidents against property.
 - b. Incidents against persons.

Handwritten reports by completion of spaces specifying pertinent information are recommended for the following reasons:

1. Reduces travel to the Police Department to prepare the report.
2. Eliminates the taking of preliminary or original notes that must subsequently be recorded upon the report form.
3. Eliminates transcribing of reports by clerk-typists.
4. Fixes responsibility of error upon the investigating officer.
5. Serves as a control factor by requesting certain types of information which enhances completeness of investigation.
6. Reduces time between the receipt of the information and its availability to other departmental employees.
7. Reduces cost of personnel time.
8. Provides for quicker and more effective supervision of the investigation.

Local desires might dictate that handwritten drafts later be transcribed by clerical personnel and typed in final form.

On-Site Instruction

The on-site instruction for records system improvement included the following recommendations in addition to text material and sample report forms:

1. One Basic Number System for all Incident Reports.
 - a. One consolidated incident report file for all incident reports.
 - (1) Numerical filing.
 - (2) Manner of using file divider tabs.
 - (3) Use of case jackets to hold report attachments.
 - (4) Storage period during statute of limitations followed by purge of files.

- c. Miscellaneous field report.
 - d. Continuation page.
 - e. Supplemental report form.
 - (1) To be completed by each officer obtaining information relative to the incident but who have not been assigned the responsibility for original report completion.
5. Arrest and Booking Report.
- a. Can be used for recording disposition information and replacement of a separate disposition report.
 - b. Can be used to record pertinent information during detention of prisoner.
6. Property Received Report.
7. Report Review.
- a. Primary responsibility of immediate supervisor of reporting officer.
 - b. Traffic crash reports and uniform traffic tickets to be reviewed by Traffic Captain only in a secondary role.
 - c. All other incident reports to be reviewed by Records Captain only in a secondary role.
 - d. Information that is to be recorded on index cards from all reports and tickets to be designated by flagged spaces or highligh markings.
8. Indices for Cross Reference—Key to Retrieval of Records Information.
- a. Master name file.
 - (1) Single card, tag board, reusable.
 - (2) No address or disposition recorded.

(3) Master name all reports, tickets, and warrants.

(4) Master name complainants, victims, witnesses, arrested persons, aliases, and organizational names that are recorded on reports.

b. Type of incident file.

(1) By incident code.

c. Location file.

(1) By location code (street or area of City).

d. Property file.

(1) Numerically filed by last three digits of serial number.

(2) Purging of file.

9. Miscellaneous.

a. Accessibility to files should be limited to key persons.

b. Availability of records information should be to all officers 24 hours a day.

c. Record control of reports removed from files.

d. Only records personnel to refile a removed report.

e. Personnel need to be specifically designated and made responsible to perform records maintenance duties during times records personnel are on vacation or extended absence from duty.

f. Shift Commanders and Traffic Commander should assume more report review responsibilities to free Records Commander's time for records management duties.

APPENDIX A

RELEASE OF POLICE INFORMATION—NEWS MEDIA

The release of police information to members of the press or the public generally can have considerable implications. Not only does the information become a matter of public record but improper release of such information may significantly interfere with the investigative process, create poor public relations, cause a change of venue, be improperly interpreted as departmental policy, have great personal implications concerning persons involved, incorrectly reflect the performance of the law enforcement agency concerned, and have additional ramifications.

Because of the seriousness of releasing police information, the following policy and procedure will be followed:

1. Departmental police information, whether regarding police activity or internal affairs, should be considered as confidential by officers. Disclosure of such information should be restricted so that such items are not discussed with members of the press, the public generally, friends, neighbors, or members of the officer's family.
2. Officers not in a supervisory or command position will not release information regarding police activity to members of the news media nor make public statements regarding police actions.
3. Shift commanders are authorized to make releases to members of the news media of the following information when they are in command of the shift during which time the inquiry is made:
 - a. In situations of mass disorder.
 - (1) Refer all inquiries of a general nature to the Chief of Police.
 - (2) If the information requested by news media is not of a general nature but rather concerns persons arrested, refer to c below.
 - (3) Officers will not estimate size of crowds involved, interpret policy, or indicate numbers of police officers committed or any information regarding police tactics, procedures, or equipment used.
 - b. Situations regarding criminal activity prior to arrest, issuance of arrest warrant, or filing of formal charges.

- (1) No information should be released which would *logically* interfere with the investigative process.
 - (2) No information should be made available regarding the identity of any suspect.
 - (3) Information may be released if such information may assist in the apprehension of the suspect or if the public should be warned of potential danger.
 - (4) The following information about the offense, providing paragraph (1) is observed, can be released.
 - (a) Type of offense (nature).
 - (b) Time, date, location.
- c. Situations regarding offenses where arrest has been made or a complaint filed.
- (1) The following *will not* be released:
 - (a) The existence or contents of any statement, written or oral, made by the subject arrested.
 - (b) Prior criminal record of the subject.
 - (c) Observations about character or reputation of subject. Observations about the physical or mental condition of the subject.
 - (d) The refusal of the subject to make a statement.
 - (e) Information about examinations or tests administered.
 - (f) Identity, testimony, or credibility of witnesses.
 - (g) The possibility of a guilty plea.
 - (h) An opinion of guilt or innocence or the merits of the case.

- (2) The following *may* be released:
 - (a) Accused's name, age, and residence.
 - (b) A statement *may* be made that the accused denies the charge made against him if such is the case.
 - (c) Facts and circumstances of arrest including time, place, resistance, pursuit, and use of weapons.
 - (d) Identity of arresting officers.
 - (e) Disclose the nature, substance, or text of charge.
- d. No information regarding the identity of minors under 17 years of age who are subject to police activity by members of this department will be released.
4. No subject in custody will be posed for photographers.
5. Nothing in this policy precludes any police officer from replying to charges of misconduct that are publicly made against him; precludes any police officer from participating in any legislative, administrative, or investigative hearing; or supersedes any more restrictive rule governing the release of information concerning juvenile or other offenders.