

COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER PROGRAM  
AND  
ROBBERY PREVENTION OFFICER PROGRAM  
(City of Newark Police Department)

NCJRS

MAR 20 1978

ACQUISITIONS

An Evaluation Report  
Submitted to the  
Prevention Committee  
of the  
Governor's Commission on Criminal Justice

45756

by  
Pat Robinson  
Monitoring/Evaluation Unit - GCCJ  
January 1978

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PROJECT INFORMATION . . . . .	iii
Section	
I. Introduction . . . . .	1
II. Project Operation . . . . .	2
A. Community Service Officer Program . . . . .	2
B. Robbery Prevention Program . . . . .	3
III. Project Impact . . . . .	5
IV. Conclusion . . . . .	8
V. Project Recommendations . . . . .	9
VI. Evaluator's Comment . . . . .	9

PROJECT INFORMATION

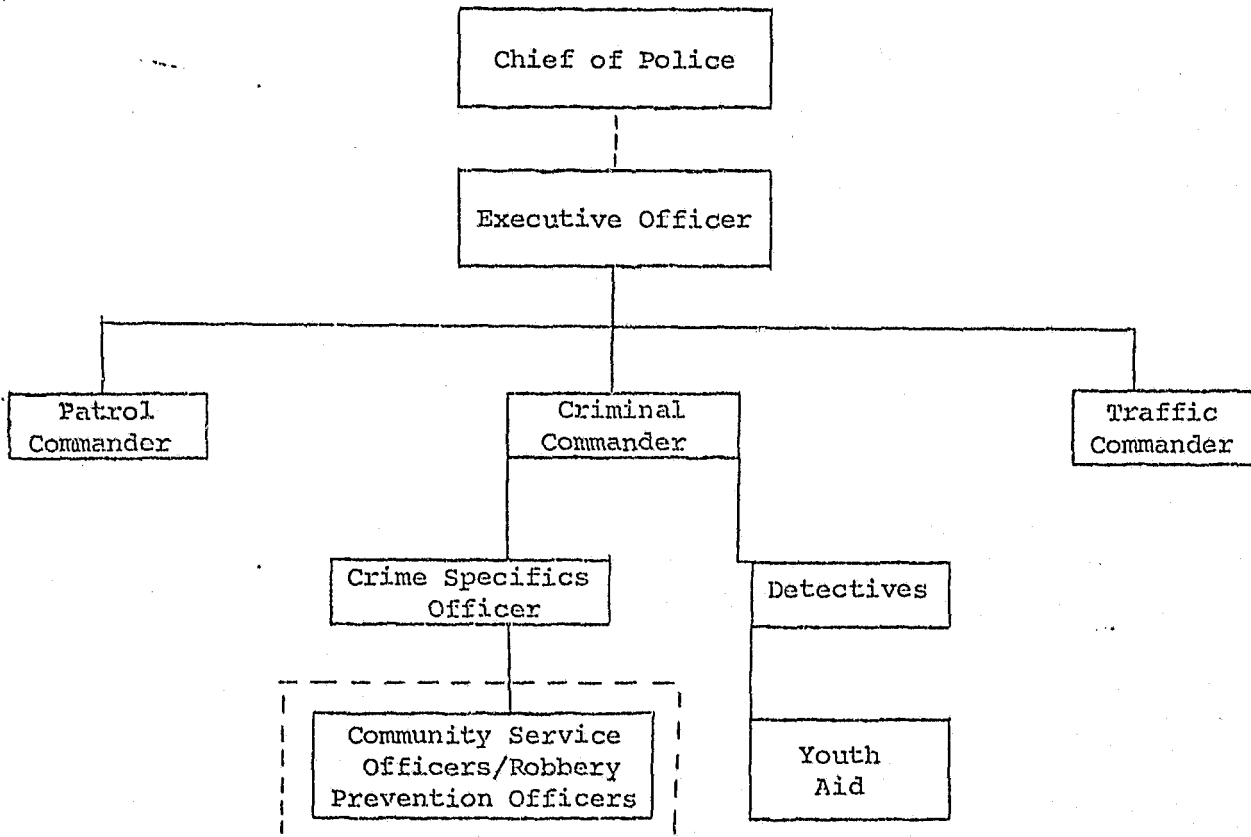
General:

Grant Number(s): 75-062, 76-003, 77-044  
 Grant Title: Community Service Officer Program  
 Implementing Agency: City of Newark Police Department  
 Project Director: Chief William Brierley  
 Project Period: July 1, 1975 to December 30, 1977\*

Budget:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Allocations</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
Personnel (eight community service officers)	\$46,390	\$39,231
Supplies	92	92
Total	\$46,482	\$39,323
\$41,525 Federal 4,957 Match		

Organization:



\*The City of Newark supported the project from 4-1-77 through 6-30-77.

## I. Introduction

Since September of 1972, GCCJ has awarded six grants totaling \$86,885 to the City of Newark Police Department for a community service officer program. The first three grants (FA-27-72, FA-49-73 and 74-065) primarily provided funds for one sworn police officer who was a full time community service officer. In 1975, the concept was altered in that rather than having a sworn officer be the community service officer (CSO), college students were hired to serve as CSO's<sup>1</sup>. In 1977, the concept was again altered and the CSO's were primarily concerned with robbery prevention and were therefore called Robbery Prevention Officers (RPO's).

The purpose of this report was to examine the performance and impact of those projects which employed college students. The projects, 75-062, 76-003 and 77-044<sup>2</sup> operated from 7/1/75 through 12/31/77, with a total funding of \$46,390 (including matching funds) from GCCJ. The report was based on a review of archival material and interviews with persons who had had contact with the project.

---

<sup>1</sup> The CSO's are also sworn officers. However, they do not carry firearms and they are not encouraged to make arrests. Throughout this paper the term sworn officer is used to refer to the full time police officers in the department and not the CSO's.

<sup>2</sup> The other grants, FA-27-72, FA-49-73 and 74-065 were discussed in a previous GCCJ evaluation, Harold Metz and Pat Robinson, Police Community Relations, A Program Evaluation, GCCJ April 1976.

## II. Project Operation

### A. Community Service Officer Program (75-062 and 76-003).

The goal of these two grants as stated in the applications was:

To improve the channels of communication and relations between the Newark<sup>3</sup> Police Department and the University community<sup>3</sup> by the use of the community service officer concept.<sup>4</sup>

The applications further stated that there were to be four main target populations which the project would address: juveniles, University of Delaware students, the business community and senior citizens.

Both applications contained only one performance objective and that was to have the CSO's work an average of 80 to 160 hours (combined) per week on various community relations or service oriented police work. Table I provides a breakdown of the average number of hours per week devoted to various tasks.

TABLE I

Average CSO Time Devoted  
Per Week to Various Tasks  
75-062, 76-003, 7-1-75 to 3-31-77

<u>Task</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Crime Watch (Neighborhood Crime Prevention)	25
Foot Patrol	20
Business Checks	20
Residential Checks	17
Youth Activities	12
Miscellaneous (court, clerical, reports, traffic)	12
Vehicle Patrol	9
Total	<u>115</u>

<sup>3</sup> There was some confusion as to who the term "University Community" referred to. It was the belief of GCCJ staff that it referred to members of the University of Delaware community, i.e., students and teachers. It was the intent of the subgrantee that everyone in the City of Newark comprised the university community. This problem was never resolved.

<sup>4</sup> GCCJ applications 75-062 and 76-003.

A comparison of Table I, the stated performance objective, and the project description contained in the application, revealed that although the performance objective of having the CSO's work an average of 80-160 hours per week was achieved, and the project did operate as had been described (i.e. CSO's were hired and worked the amount of time proposed in the application), two target groups, senior citizens and University of Delaware students, were only minimally dealt with.

It was the opinion of the author that both applications were poorly written in that they contained only one performance objective, and that objective was so vague that it permitted a minimal level of performance for its achievement. The applications contained no measurable objectives dealing with amount of time to be devoted either to the specified target group or various tasks. In December of 1975 GCCJ staff met with project staff and it was agreed that a more precise application would be submitted.<sup>5</sup> Such a revised application was never received by GCCJ.

B. Robbery Prevention Officer Program (77-044). Although technically classified by GCCJ as a continuation of the CSO projects, the RPO was in fact a program distinct and separate from the CSO. The primary similarity between the two was that college students were hired as part-time employees in each. The RPO project contained clear measurable objectives. The project emphasized crime prevention activities and its main goal was to

---

<sup>5</sup>Memo from Michael Nardo to Jim Brown, RE: Monitoring Visit #75-062, December 30, 1975.

prevent robberies in Newark by using the RPO's in stake outs, foot and vehicle patrol and in distributing crime prevention literature to area businesses. Also, prior to their working on the streets, the RPO's participated in a month of training which covered topics such as self defense and crime prevention. The specific objectives contained in the application were as follows:

1. To hire eight Robbery Prevention Officers (RPO's);
2. To provide 30 hours of training to the RPO's;
3. To have the RPO's contact five businesses per week and assist in the robbery prevention programs of these businesses;
4. To have the eight RPO's conduct robbery preventive patrol, vehicle and foot, 130 hours per week.
5. To reduce the crime of robbery in the city by 20 percent.

Eight RPO's were hired by August 1, 1977. Through the month of August they were engaged in a training program. Beginning in September 1977, the eight RPO's were divided into two teams. During the period 9-1-77 through 12-31-77, the RPO's worked a total of 2482 hours; 384 in training, 887 on foot patrol, 887 on vehicle patrol, 180 on public awareness activities, and 144 on administrative duties. The crime prevention materials for distributing to area businessmen had just arrived as of the writing of this report and the RPO's were beginning to distribute them.

### III. Project Impact

There was insufficient data available with which to measure the impact of the CSO component of this project. There were no pre- and/or post surveys conducted to determine if police-community relations had improved in Newark, and even if there had been such a survey, it would have been difficult to unquestionably attribute any improvement (or deterioration) in police community relations to this particular project.

Since objective data was unavailable, subjective measures were used to attempt to ascertain the value of the CSO project. Conversations with police in the Newark Police Department revealed support for the concept of community service officers and for how the concept had been implemented through this project. It was felt that the CSO's who had been hired had been a valuable asset to the Newark Police Department and that they performed the duties assigned as well as a sworn officer would have.

While the CSO project was in operation, it was the subject of favorable newspaper articles in both the Evening Journal, and the Weekly Post.<sup>6</sup> These articles indicated that citizens of Newark interviewed were very supportive of the project. One reason cited for this support was that Newark hired as CSO's its first black and first woman to patrol the community.

Upon completing his/her term as a CSO, each CSO submitted a report describing how he/she felt about the project. These

---

<sup>6</sup>See Evening Journal, August 12, 1975, Philadelphia Inquirer, September 7, 1975, The Weekly Post, September 1975.



reports indicated that all participants were very pleased with the experience and found it helpful in assisting them in deciding upon a career. The majority indicated, that based on their participation in the project, they were going to pursue a career in law enforcement. According to the project director, at least five of the 18 CSO's had become police officers in the State of Delaware.

A review of national literature reveals that another benefit of a CSO project is that it can, at a reduced cost to a department, relieve sworn officers from doing routine work so they can concentrate on more specialized tasks such as criminal investigation. At a cost of approximately 50 percent less than employing a patrolman (the CSO's and RPO's were paid \$3 per hour compared to approximately \$6 for a patrolman), the Newark Police Department received approximately 72 months (or nine months of eight full time people) of service. It could not be determined what impact this "freeing up" of sworn personnel had, that is, whether they in fact investigated or cleared more crimes or if they engaged in other activities not directly related to law enforcement.

Table 2 depicts the crime and clearance rates for Newark for selected crimes for a period before the CSO's were hired and while they were working. As this table shows, Newark experienced a rise in both the number of crimes reported and the number of crimes cleared. The impact or relation of the CSO project to this (e.g. its crime prevention activities were not extremely successful, but the time freed up enabling police to

engage in investigatory functions resulted in an increased clearance rate) could not be determined with available data.

TABLE 2

Reported Crime and Clearance Rates for  
Selected Crimes for Newark for  
1974, 1975 and 1976  
(Data Not Available for 1977)

Year	CRIME														
	Robbery			Aggravated Assault			Burglary			Larceny/ Theft			Auto Theft		
	A*	B*	C*	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
1974	20	3	15%	27	15	55%	311	30	10%	1452	190	13%	134	45	34%
1975	26	7	27%	30	21	70%	539	61	11%	1567	234	15%	128	43	34%
1976	23	10	43%	37	15	40%	511	82	16%	1654	282	17%	123	38	31%

\*A - Reported Crime

B - Number of crimes cleared

C - Percent of Crimes Cleared

In relation to the goal of the RPO component to reduce robbery by 20 percent, it should be noted that there were only six robberies in Newark during the time the RPO's were working, compared to 14 in the corresponding time period of 1976, a reduction of 42 percent. However, this reduction cannot unquestionably be attributed to the RPO's. Also, the RPO's were directly responsible for the apprehension of at least four suspects.

#### IV. Conclusion

The CSO component of the project was based on poorly written applications. Although the only quantifiable performance objective stated was achieved, it appeared the project did not serve all the target populations defined in the grant. This is not to say that this was not a worthwhile project. The support which the project received from the police, the community and the CSO's indicated the project had some value to the Newark Police Department.

An examination of the performance of the Newark CSO project revealed findings parallel to those of a national evaluation of CSO projects which indicated the following:

- ° Police managers' objectives in hiring CSO's were to improve police/community relations, relieve officers of selected tasks and identify potential recruits. They believed that these objectives were met to a reasonable degree and in some cases to a substantial degree.
- ° Both officers in charge and CSO's felt the major program benefits were in police/community relations, assistance to sworn officers, identifying recruits, providing CSO's with educational opportunities and the possibility of careers in police work.
- ° Few problems were experienced with CSO's and most were considered minor by their officer-supervisor.
- ° The average cost of employing CSO's was 49 percent less than for employing patrolmen.<sup>7</sup>

The RPO component of the project was based on a well written application and it achieved its stated objectives. Unfortunately,

---

<sup>7</sup>Alfred Schwartz et.al., Employing Civilians for Police Work, The Urban Institute, Washington D.C., 1975, p. 18 and 19.

the RPO's had not worked long enough (only five months) to permit an extensive evaluation of their impact. However, it appeared that the RPO component had a more direct relationship to impacting on crime than did the CSO component.

#### V. Project Recommendations

The following recommendation was made based on the findings in this report:

If the RPO project is continued, the project director should keep data which will enable the evaluation of the impact of the project. Such should include a) the number of apprehensions attributable to RPO's; b) the number of businesses which receive crime prevention literature and which implement recommendations; c) the number of businesses victimized and whether or not they had implemented any crime prevention recommendations.

#### VI. Evaluator's Comments

Based on the findings in this report, the evaluator made the following comments in relation to CSO and RPO projects in general:

1. Simply finding a project worthwhile does not imply GCCJ should fund it. GCCJ is designed to provide funds for innovative projects designed to impact on reducing crime. Many of the functions performed by the CSOs, while important to the police department, were rather peripherally related to the reduction of crime or improvement of the criminal justice system. Therefore, it was recommended that in the future, GCCJ not fund CSO type projects unless they can clearly show a relationship between what the CSO's do and a reduction in crime or demonstrate that the additional time available to the sworn officers was used in a beneficial manner.

2. Newark and other police departments may wish to explore the possibility of developing CSO programs at no cost by utilizing interns from area colleges and universities similar to programs which have been developed for student teaching.

75-062                   Community Service Officer Program and Robbery  
76-003                   Prevention Officer Program  
77-044                   Newark Police Department  
                          7-1-75 to 12-31-77  
(\$41,525)                January 1978

A. Purposes:

1. Community Service Officer Program

a) To improve the channels of communication and relations between the Newark Police Department and the University of Delaware community by the use of the community service officer (CSO) concept.

b) To have eight CSO's work an average of 80 to 160 hours (combined) per week on various community relations or service oriented police work.

c) To address the needs of the following four target populations: juveniles, University of Delaware students, the business community and senior citizens.

2. Robbery Prevention Officer Program

a) To hire eight Robbery Prevention Officers (RPO's).

b) To have the RPO's conduct robbery preventive patrol 130 hours per week.

c) To have the RPO's contact five businesses in Newark per week and assist in the robbery prevention programs of these businesses.

d) To reduce the crime of robbery in Newark by 20 per cent.

B. Findings:

1. Community Service Officer Program

a) The CSO's worked an average of 115 hours per week on various tasks such as crime watch (25 hours); foot and vehicle patrol (29 hours); business checks (20 hours); residential checks (17 hours); youth activities (12 hours); and miscellaneous duties such as record keeping (12 hours).

b) It appeared that two of the proposed target groups, senior citizens and University of Delaware students were only minimally dealt with.

c) There was insufficient data with which to determine the impact of the project on either improving police community relations or on reducing crime.

d) Subjective measures were used to attempt to ascertain the value of the CSO project. Such measures revealed support for the project. Also, while the CSO project was in operation, it was the subject of favorable newspaper articles in the Evening Journal, the Weekly Post and the Philadelphia Inquirer.

e) An examination of the performance of the CSO project revealed findings parallel to those of a national evaluation of CSO projects which revealed the following:

- Police managers' objectives in hiring CSO's were to improve police/community relations, relieve officers of selected tasks and identify potential recruits. They believed that these objectives were met to a reasonable degree and in some cases to a substantial degree.
- Both officers in charge and CSO's felt the major program benefits were in police/community relations, assistance to sworn officers, identifying recruits, providing CSO's with educational opportunities and the possibility of careers in police work.
- Few problems were experienced with CSO's and most were considered minor by their officer-supervisor.
- The average cost of employing CSO's was 49 percent less than for employing patrolmen.

## 2. Robbery Prevention Officer Program

a) Eight RPO's were hired who worked a total of 2482 hours from 9-1-77 through 12-31-77 in the following activities: training (384 hours); foot patrol (887 hours); vehicle patrol (887 hours); public awareness activities (180 hours); administrative duties (144 hours).

b) As the evaluation report was being written, crime prevention materials for distribution to area businessmen had just arrived and the RPO's were beginning to distribute them.

c) There were only six robberies in Newark during the time the RPO's were working compared to 14 in the corresponding time period of 1976, a reduction of 42 percent. However, the reduction could not be unquestionably attributed to the RPO's.

d) The RPO's were directly responsible for the apprehension of at least four suspects.

e) It appeared that the RPO project had a more direct relationship to impacting on crime than did the CSO project.

C. Recommendations:

If the RPO project is continued, the project director should keep data which will enable the evaluation of the impact of the project. Such data should include a) the number of apprehensions attributable to RPOs; b) the number of businesses which receive crime prevention literature and the number which implement recommendations; c) the number of businesses victimized and whether or not they had implemented any crime prevention recommendations.

D. Evaluator's Comments

1. Simply finding a project worthwhile does not imply GCCJ should fund it. GCCJ is designed to provide funds for innovative projects designed to impact on reducing crime. Many of the functions performed by the CSO's, while important to the police department, were rather peripherally related to the reduction of crime or improvement of the criminal justice system. Therefore, it is recommended that in the future GCCJ not fund CSO type projects unless they can clearly show a relationship between what the CSO's do and a reduction in crime, or demonstrate that the additional time available to the sworn officers was used in a beneficial manner.

2. Newark and other police departments may wish to explore the possibility of developing CSO programs at no cost by utilizing interns from area colleges and universities similar to programs which have been developed for student teaching.





**END**