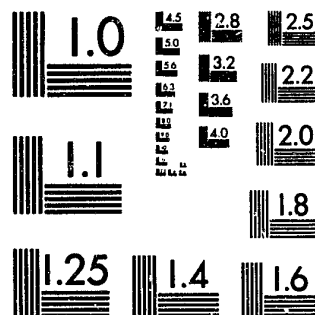


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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TRAINING IN NEW YORK STATE

by

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POLICE TRAINING IN NEW YORK STATE

On January 1, 1945, under the sponsorship of the New York State Sheriffs' Association and the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police, and with the cooperation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the New York State Long Range Police Training Program became operational.

The strength of the program emanated from the wide support it acquired in law enforcement circles throughout the state. A joint training committee was established and met regularly during the 14 years from 1945 to 1959.

George Lankes, whose doctoral dissertation covers the Long Range Police Training Program extensively, stated the following:

The impact which the Long Range Police Training Program would have upon the mandated program reflected in the Governor's reference to the latter being 'built solidly on the foundations of mutual cooperation and support of agencies.' Reports prepared by the Municipal Police Training Council give recognition again and again to the Long Range Training Program. In its very first progress report, the MTIC declared that the state of New York through the Long Range Police Training Program during the period since January 1, 1945, has been tremendous.¹

During the period of implementation of the Long Range Training Program, two distinct phases of development emerged. The first period, from 1945 to 1950, is distinguished by uniform curriculum for application throughout the State. Both departmental and regional training sessions were held, making the programs available to all participating agencies. The regional sessions were profitable in that a sense of cooperation and understanding was considered to have been established between many of the departments in their respective regions.

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¹George Lankes. *An Analysis of Influences Promoting the Development of Police Education in Upstate New York from 1945 through 1970.* Doctoral dissertation; p. 93.

The Joint Training Committee subsequently began to encourage local agencies to sponsor sessions which would meet their individual needs. This pattern, which began in 1951, typifies the second phase of the Long Range Training Program. Specialized training courses, developed to meet the needs of particular local agencies, were established on a regional basis. Courses noted as being especially popular were those in photography, firearms, defensive tactics and fingerprint identification.

The program's pioneering work became the foundation upon which the work of the New Municipal Police Training Council, instituted in 1959, would be built.

The Long Range Program was a success for many reasons. Its basic objectives were directed toward clearly defined goals. It was a self-initiated program, and the substance of its courses was essentially job oriented. For the first time, an attempt had been made to standardize police training throughout the state. Though the need for such training was long recognized, it was hoped that soon ensuing legislation would bring about the long awaited mandated program for police training, which would be applicable to officers in every law enforcement agency in the State. Of the many accomplishments of the long range program, Lankes stated: *A professional attitude toward law enforcement work on the part of the officers began to develop in New York State. A wholesome respect for the value of training in police work became quite evident... police training in New York State reached a level of maturity under the Long Range Training Program.*²

STATE LEGISLATION FOR POLICE TRAINING

Although the first attempt to legislate mandated police training in New York State was made in 1957, the bill introduced for this purpose was held up in the legislative committee and eventually died there. This bill, drafted by representatives of the New York State Chiefs of Police and Sheriffs' Association, provided for the establishment of a Municipal Police Training Division within the New York State Education Department. It generated substantial interest within the academic community, and requests for representation on the Advisory Committee which drafted the bill were considerable. The

²ibid. p. 403

original nine member Advisory Committee was expanded to 15, and law enforcement professionals quickly realized that they might ultimately lose control of the direction of police training in the State. As a result, law enforcement interests withdrew their support.

On March 12, 1959, Governor Nelson Rockefeller presented a six-point law enforcement program to the State legislature entitled a *Message Concerning the Problem of Crime*. Included in the program was a section which addressed the need for strengthening local police forces by mandating minimum training standards. Governor Rockefeller stated that:

In the State of New York there are some 20,000 local police outside of New York City and some 23,000 in New York City. It is upon these men that we rely basically for the protection of lives and property within the State. There are presently many good police training programs in operation, both for new recruits and for more experienced members of police forces. A police academy has been conducted for many years in the city of New York. Other schools are operating in a number of counties and cities. In addition, many sheriffs and chiefs of police have been working tirelessly for years to improve standards of police training and for that purpose they have established and conducted almost 1,500 courses in the last ten years, at almost no expense to the local communities. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has furnished the services of its agents as instructors, and state agencies have participated in a similar manner. The State Police have operated a training program in Troy. While many police officers have benefited from these various training programs, others have received little or no formal training. For this reason, the sheriffs and chiefs of police of our State have, in the past, urged that the State assume responsibility for fixing minimum standards of training for all local police. This same conclusion was reached by the New York State Crime Commission (The Proskauer Commission) in 1953.

The State should be more actively concerned with the problem of local police training, and I commend the sheriffs and chiefs of police for taking the initiative in urging state action to establish minimum standards. Accordingly, I recommend favorable consideration of legislation which would, in essence:

- (a) Create a Municipal Police Training Council, the members of which would be appointed by the Governor and at least half of whom would be incumbent law enforcement officials;

- (b) Authorize the Governor to promulgate the recommendations of this council as minimum standards for police training; and,
- (c) Require basic police training as a condition to permanent appointment to a local police force.

The requirement of basic training would apply only to future appointments and would not affect any police officers who have been permanently appointed before July 1, 1960. There would be no authorization for state funds for training purposes under the bill I propose. Reliance would be placed on the present structure of police training, which is being gradually expanded and improved by local initiative in cooperation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the State Police and other groups. A major benefit flowing from such legislation would be the assurance that no community in the state falls behind certain basic standards in its police training.

Our mandate was signed into law on April 15, 1959, and became effective on July 1, 1959. (The California POST was signed into law on July 11, 1959, and became effective September 18, 1959). It created the New York State Municipal Police Training Council (MPTC), which was to consist of eight members and an executive director to establish basic training requirements for local police and to encourage advanced in-service training programs for law enforcement personnel. (Article 19F Section 483 Executive Law).

Its membership, as specified by the enabling legislation, was as follows:

- (a) Two incumbent chiefs of police..
- (b) Two incumbent sheriffs (who are recommended to the Governor by their respective associations, as being qualified by experience and background in law enforcement training).
- (c) Police Commissioner of New York City, who may designate a representative.
- (d) The remaining three positions are at the discretion of the Governor (Historically, these appointees have been Superintendent of State Police, Special Agent-In-Charge, F.B.I., N.Y.C., and an incumbent City Mayor).

During its first year, the Council was engaged in frequent meetings to formulate the content of the minimum basic course for police officers and to design the state-wide administrative structure which would facilitate the start of mandated training on July 1, 1960.

Administratively, the State was divided into 13 training zones with the size of each zone determined by the police population in each county and by the boundary lines of each of the three F.B.I. field offices in the State. In each zone, a chief of police and a sheriff were designated as training coordinators. These were volunteer, unsalaried positions, whose responsibility was to monitor training needs within a zone and to arrange with the Council for the conduct of needed training.

The first mandated basic course was set at a minimum of 80 classroom hours, a compromise figure arrived at between the law enforcement community in New York State and the Municipal Police Training Council. Content of the course was determined by discussion by Council members and from input from the field.

The first increase in minimum hours, to 120, came on July 1, 1963. On January 1, 1967, the program was doubled to 240 hours, which included a mandated 40 hours of supervised field training conducted by the trainee's agency supervisors. The third increase in hours on July 1, 1971, raised the basic course to its present level of 285 hours.

Although the Council has never set an ultimate goal in hours of training, it has increased the length of the course periodically, when it was deemed appropriate. Several methods of obtaining input on the program have been used. In the late 1960's, a Staff Training Advisory Committee was formed from local police training personnel. Meeting periodically, this 12 member committee gave Council staff advice and recommendations concerning the relevance of subject matter, time allocations, new subject areas, etc. In early 1970, a survey questionnaire was mailed to the heads of police agencies and a cross-section of basic course graduates, soliciting comments and recommendations on course content. From the results of this questionnaire, plus input from the Training Advisory Committee, our own staff, and Council members, the present 285-hour course was developed.

Although there has been no mandated increase in the number of training hours since 1971, the basic schools being conducted on an average far exceed the minimum mandate.

In 1978, of the 30 full-time basic schools conducted, there was an average of 421.4 hours and 343 hours of training for the 9 part-time schools. The fluctuation in the level of training received, ranging from the 285 hours mandated to 840 hours have spurred New York States' efforts to improve the amount and quality of mandated training.

The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals stated in 1973 that: Every state should require that every sworn police employee satisfactorily complete a minimum of 400 hours of basic police training. In addition to traditional basic police subjects, this training should include:

- (a) Instruction in law, psychology, and sociology, specifically related to interpersonal communication, the police role, and the community the police employee will serve;
- (b) Assigned activities away from the training academy to enable the employee to gain specific insight in the community, criminal justice system, and local governments;
- (c) Remedial training for individuals who are deficient in their training performance but who, in the opinion of the training staff and employing agency, demonstrate potential for satisfactory performance; and,
- (d) Additional training by employing agency in its policies and procedures, if basic police training is not administered by that agency.

In 1972, the Training Aids Committee became inactive and was eventually discontinued. Except for administrative matters, the MPTC and BMP devoted their attention to activities other than the basic mandated course from 1971 until 1975. There was a change in leadership in August 1975. With the change in leadership, there was a change in philosophy. The development of the basic course was based on the perceptions of a limited number of professionals. Originally, they felt that such courses as murder, kidnapping, and arson, i.e., had to be a part of the mandate. The fact that a new police officer would probably not become involved in these types of investigations in his/her first five years as a policeman, if at

⁴ National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals. POLICE, 1973, p. 392.

all, had nothing to do with the decision to mandate these courses.

We were looking for a disinterested third party to come in and give us an objective evaluation of where police training in New York State was and where it should be going in the future. We wanted to look at what it was that all police officers *actually do* on their jobs as:

1. The police officer perceives it.
2. The police administrator perceives it.
3. The public perceives it.

Based upon this research, we wanted a model curriculum.

There was a limited amount of funds and time. We contacted John Jay and discussed our proposal with them. They felt that they could meet all of the objectives that we had set out.



END