

# Pierce County Sheriff's Department

## Office of the Sheriff

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## MEMORANDUM

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**DATE:** March 16, 2005

**TO:** Performance Audit Committee  
Dick Muri, Chair  
Shawn Bunney  
Barbara Gelman  
Tom Weber, Alternate  
Matt Temmel, Performance Audit Coordinator

**FROM:** Paul Pastor, Sheriff

**SUBJECT:** 2001 Performance Audit of the Sheriff's Department

**SUMMARY:** Nearly four years have elapsed since the completion of the 2001 Performance Audit of the Pierce County Sheriff's Department. The Audit, which consisted of 58 separate recommendations, has served as a valuable tool in providing a "blueprint" for moving the agency forward. The PCSD takes very seriously its obligation to provide safety and security to the citizens of Pierce County in the most efficient and effective means it can.

Much has happened since June of 2001. No one at that time could have predicted the events of 9/11, and the profound changes that have occurred to police agencies around the country. Responsibilities, tactics, and the resultant changes in equipment and training needs have made us a very different looking agency than we were at the time of the Audit. Nor did we anticipate the loss of the Lakewood policing contract, which directly contributed one hundred jobs to the Department - and indirectly helped contribute to the critical support infrastructure. Most recently, our focus has evolved to being a values led information-based police department.

All of this means that parts of the Performance Audit are showing their age. But we still believe that selective application of the Audit has value to our managers and staff. We still believe that absolutely critical to the implementation of this study lie in having sufficient staff to do the job. And that means more than line patrol deputies. We are still in need of significant additional staffing in patrol and investigations, as well as in supervision and management.

Some time ago, the County Performance Audit team recommended that Department staff prioritize the recommendations into categories - from "High Priority" to "Not feasible or Realistic." The purpose of this update is to take a look at many of the High and Medium Priority recommendations. It should be noted that some related recommendations fall into different priority levels. We will attempt to note related recommendations wherever logical.

One of the most important areas of the Audit dealt with Patrol workload and staffing. By agreement, that singular (and complex) topic will be the basis of a second presentation in August of 2005.

We also understand that 2005 will bring discussion of the possibility of a new Performance Audit for the Sheriff's Department. We welcome that discussion, with the caveat that much still needs to be accomplished from the 2001 Audit. It seems somewhat hasty to try to create a new audit when many of the earlier identified recommendations have not been fulfilled. Still, the taxpayers of this County have a right to expect that their public safety dollars are being wisely used. And as a method to determine realistic performance outcomes, we would expect that any new audit would include a per capita cost (expenditures) comparison for police services with all other police agencies in the County, as well as other major Sheriff's Offices in the State. We encourage such an independent analysis and believe that an expenditure comparison will help determine if the level of services provided are a good buy for the taxpayers.

But again, we believe in finishing one project before starting another. That too, is an indicator of government effectiveness and efficiency.

**PRIORITY ONE**

Num	Page	Status	Type	Recommendation
III-2	41		New Program	Pierce Co. should develop "policing impact" for new housing

This recommendation has changed priority. The Department proposes working with the Performance Audit team, Budget and Finance and the Council to determine the feasibility and level of legislative support for this recommendation.

Currently in the unincorporated county, "impact" fees are assessed for (at least) schools and parks. It seems logical that law enforcement should be considered as well. It is the Department's experience that new general fund positions are created mainly because of emergency situations, or through grants. Investigative positions normally don't receive the same level of attention as patrol staffing, yet they are key to any balanced strategy of law enforcement. The Department's inability (due to low staffing) to investigate property crimes on a consistent basis is legendary. But new challenges are emerging as well. Identity theft and elder abuse are areas that require significant investigative support.

In considering this recommendation, it is important that all parties begin by considering what is authorized or not authorized by state law. We should begin with legal review of whether impact fees are allowed currently or whether state law needs to be changed to accommodate impact fees.

Currently in Olympia the whole issue of impact fees is under review and scrutiny by the legislature. Thus, it is possible that the whole terrain may change. There are also multiple policy level issues to be considered by Council, Executive and other stakeholders.

Thus said, a conservative projection of new housing over the next several years could provide a significant approach to mitigating this problem.

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In fairness, the Department believes that other members of the criminal justice community - especially the Prosecutor's Office - should be included in this recommendation.

Num	Page	Status	Type	Recommendation
IV-7	70		Organizational	Develop drug control plan

The Audit identified several goals under this heading. The "meth initiative" scores high marks under almost every measure. It includes a balanced strategy that includes enforcement, prevention, education, and intervention efforts. The collaborative effort includes several police agencies, code enforcement, prosecutors, and even DSHS – to deal with the problem of dependant children found at meth lab sites. The meth initiative - using the collaborative strategy that began here - is used as a model elsewhere to fight this particularly vexing problem.

Num	Page	Status	Type	Recommendation
III-1	41		Staff Increase	South Hill Patrol Staffing Increase
III-1	41		Staff Increase	Mountain Detachment Patrol Staffing Increase
III-1	41		Staff Increase	Foothills Detachment Patrol Staffing Increase
III-1	41		Staff Increase	Peninsula Detachment Patrol Staffing Increase

Staffing levels are key to implementing desired change within the organization. The following table helps to illustrate what has happened since 2001:

Unincorporated Commissioned Staffing Levels - 2001 and 2005

	2001	2005	Change	24/7 Addition	Ratio Maintainer*
Sheriff	1	1	0		
Bureau Chief	2	2	0		
Major	1	1	0		
Captain	2	2	0		
Lieutenant	7	8	1	1	
Detective Sergeant	14.5	13.5	-1		
Sergeant	17	24	7	2	
Detective	19	20	1		
Deputy Sheriff	180	204	24	14	
Authorized Positions	243.5	275.5	32	17	15.6

Population (Uninc) 323,741 345,379 21,638

2005 is estimated

\*Ratio Maintainer is the number of new positions needed to maintain 2001 levels at 2005 population

As a direct loss of the Lakewood policing contract, there were enough employees available for the Executive to propose the "24/7" concept in the three Detachment areas. The idea was to increase staffing to a level that would normally provide round the clock staffing in the more rural areas of the County.

In addition, 15 new authorized positions have been added since 2001. Several of those were grant funded. The 15 positions are almost exactly what were needed to maintain staffing ratios (number of officers per 1,000 citizens) at the 2001 level. It is estimated that over 21,000 people have moved into unincorporated Pierce County since the Audit.

Noteworthy is the fact that INVESTIGATIVE staffing levels have virtually stood still since that time. One new Detective's position (to assist with sex offender registration) was added in 2003 - no other investigative positions have been added.

As previously stated, a detailed analysis of patrol workload and staffing will be presented to the Committee in August. Anecdotal information suggests that the 24/7 plan is having its desired effect. Informal conversations with Deputies in those areas reveal that morale levels are up dramatically. One Sergeant (assigned to the Mountain Detachment) believes that three effects have been noted almost immediately: first, there now exists enough staffing to address operational and community issues that could not have been worked previously in the previous call-driven environment. Secondly, residents have noticed and appreciated the additional staffing. And third, other police agencies are aware of the staffing increase. In fact, at a recent South Sound information exchange meeting, representatives from Thurston and Lewis Counties mentioned that they are seeing an upswing in criminal activity that THEY attribute to the round the clock staffing in the Mountain Detachment. But perhaps the best feedback came from the criminal element. During a recent arrest during the early morning hours, a suspect told Deputies "you guys aren't supposed to be out here this late."

Num	Page	Status	Type	Recommendation
VI-1	99		Staff Increase	Increase sergeants so ratio is reduced to 7 to 1

This recommendation has been partially achieved. The current ratio at South Hill patrol is 7 to 1. But in the Detachment areas the ratio is 10 to 1<sup>1</sup>.

**PRIORITY TWO**

A number of the recommendations that the Department has categorized as a second level priority are linked and are shown together.

Information Management

Num	Page	Status	Type	Recommendation
II-8	24		Information	Start info resource management unit
III-5	42		Information	Perform annual workload/staffing study
V-1	73		Information	SWAT - Develop time management computer program
V-3	74		Information	Lab team, others - development management tracking system
V-7	77		Information	K9 - Develop time management reporting system

Near the very beginning of the Executive Summary of the Audit Report the following quote can be found:

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<sup>1</sup> This ratio does not include "transition" staffing. Each Detachment, as of March 14, 2005 has an extra Sergeant assigned, bringing the ratio down to slightly less than 7 to 1. But these supervisory positions are scheduled to be eliminated - and the incumbents reduced in rank to Deputy - during the year as Deputies retire or are otherwise separated.

"Most noteworthy is the general absence of competent information systems to support administrative, strategic, and tactical responses to crime and disorder."

It is in the area of information management that the Department has made some of the greatest advances. The Law Enforcement Support Agency (LESA) has gone from being a much derided and under funded liability to a well-respected and responsive criminal justice information manager. In 2000 and 2001, Deputies could not depend on getting basic, accurate information critical to performing the most elementary tasks. In 2005, Deputies have a state of the art system that allows them to access a wealth of information and file crime reports directly from their patrol vehicles.

Ironically, one central recommendation was achieved since the Audit, and has since been moved out of the "completed" status. In 2002, a Lieutenant's position was added as the Information Resource Manager. In 2005 (as part of the indirect funding loss from the Lakewood policing situation) that position had to be eliminated. Some shuffling of staff resulted to partially fill the void. Current configuration now has Information Resource Management being supervised directly by the Services Bureau Chief. Other civilian resources are being used to coordinate information needs from LESA and Pierce County Information Services.

A notable addition to the Information Resources team was a developer to assist in creating needed new systems to provide administrative information. That position created a new system for processing overtime. The new system also stores the information (the previous paper driven system did not) that can help with the analysis of overtime "drivers." The development of this system proved much more complex than originally anticipated, and eventually turned into a voracious consumer of developer time when the Corrections overtime situation became a primary budgetary concern. Much work remains to be done, including developing methods for monitoring and evaluating training, creating a modern scheduling program for our various units, and streamlining the never ending flow of information to our employees - to name just a few of the projects.

Within the LESA environment, the Department is currently assisting with the development of the next level of programming needs. We have placed the creation of a new investigative "case management" system as our number one priority. This system (as envisioned) will not just track the progress of an assigned case, but would assist supervisors in managing investigative resources more effectively.

In 2000 the Performance Audit study team administered a 60-item questionnaire to a sample of departmental personnel to determine how well the Sheriff's Department (as a whole) supported managers, supervisors, and line staff with useful crime and offender related information. In 2005, the survey was repeated. Of the 20 categories surveyed, only two scored lower in 2005 while three had the same score. The respondents overall see the department doing a better job now than in 2000. The complete 2005 study can be found at the end of this document.

V-4	74		Organizational	Determine if regional support for air (helicopter) unit exists
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Pierce County may well be the largest county sheriff's organization in the region without any air unit support. Air units are.....

"an invaluable resource if properly staffed and equipped. The can significantly assist in management of critical incidents that threaten life and make the high cost a bargain from a

risk management perspective. Critical incidents include search and rescue operations, searches for armed and dangerous suspects, and motor vehicle pursuits."<sup>2</sup>

We disagree with some of the Auditor's comments about the disadvantages of fixed wing aircraft. There are many tactical reasons why fixed wing aircraft can be superior.

The former Air Operations budget was totally eliminated in a budget reduction move in 2002. We are currently examining a plan that would restore this vital support. Funding for operations (fuel, maintenance and equipment) could possibly be funded from Homeland Security funds. Personnel costs could possibly be mitigated through the use of high caliber volunteer pilots. The Deputy Sheriff's Union has agreed to explore this possibility.

TRAINING

V-15	86		Training	Focus training on job functions
V-16	86		Training	Improve planning and coordination of training
V-18	87		Training	Focus recruiting on right people and places
V-19	87		Training	Complete mapping of hiring process
V-20	87		Training	Project vacancies (retirements and exits) to support deployment

A number of recommendations focused on activities that are conducted from the Department's Training/Hiring Division.

Central to many of the Training recommendations was the mechanism for tracking training in a meaningful way. The development of a computerized database to accomplish this is part of the in-house developer project mentioned earlier.

A new Field Training Officer program was implemented in 2003. The new program requires that new deputies actually perform and succeed at measurable dimensions.

An effort has begun in the Criminal Investigations Division to more closely match training to career growth and to management expectations.

As far as hiring goes, the Department has worked with Civil Service and Human Resources to map out the hiring process. Through this analysis, a number of issues were identified that can help the Department continue to hire quality individuals - and at the same time become more diverse and reduce potential future risk concerns. A continuing significant issue is somehow managing the time between testing and hiring better. Quality applicants frequently test for multiple agencies at the same time - and take the first offer. We are continuing to work on these issues for when the Department is back in a "hiring mode" for Deputy.

III-6	42		Organizational	Alternatives to alarm responses
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The Audit contained several recommendations to the alarm response problem. Well publicized is the fact that about 99% of all alarms are false, and led to a patrol response to what is basically an alarm malfunction. The Department believes that a complete overhaul of the alarm response process is the only way to bring true change, and to free up patrol resources.

Many of the alternatives that have been explored (and are in use in other jurisdictions) do nothing more than retain a fine system that is difficult to enforce, requires significant support staff, and really

<sup>2</sup> Performance Audit, Page 73

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does nothing about the crux of the problem. Those agencies still employ priority responses that are not needed and that take away time that could be better spent working on neighborhood level problems.

The Department has proposed an ordinance change that sets a higher standard for responding to a monitored burglary alarm. That ordinance is currently at the Public Safety and Health Committee of the Pierce County Council.

I hope that the above information is of value to the Committee.

cc: John Ladenburg, County Executive  
Lyle Quasim, Chief of Staff

## Survey on Availability and Quality of Law Enforcement Information

In 2000 the Performance Audit (Police Management Associates) study team administered a 60-item questionnaire to a sample of departmental personnel to determine how well the Sheriff's Department (as a whole) supports managers, supervisors, and line staff with useful crime and offender related information. The survey instrument is attached. The questions concerned the availability and quality of three types of law enforcement information: Administrative, Strategic, and Tactical. Criteria for answering the questions included the relevance, completeness, timeliness, and usability of crime/offender information generated by the department. The sample was a diverse group of managers, supervisors, detectives, and patrol officers from each precinct, detachment, and headquarters. The survey was anonymous, although respondents indicated their rank or job category, thus allowing for sub-group comparisons. In 2005 this same survey was repeated in the same manner. In 2000, 75 officers completed the questionnaire. In 2005, 85 officers completed the questionnaire. The respondents were as follows:

<u>Performance Audit</u>			<u>2005</u>		
<u>Job/Rank</u>	<u>Number of Respondents</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Job/Rank</u>	<u>Number of Respondents</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Manager	6	8%	Manager	4	5%
Supervisor	14	19%	Supervisor	12	14%
Detective	16	21%	Detective	11	13%
Patrol Officer	39	52%	Patrol Officer	58	68%
Total	75	100%	Total	85	100%

The respondents to the survey were asked to grade each item on a five-point scale from "A" through "F." In analyzing the results, we converted the "A" through "F" ratings into numbers (A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1, F = 0), so that the ratings appear as "grade point averages." Considering all items on the questionnaire, the average ratings were as follows.

<u>Job/Rank</u>	Types of Information			
	<u>Administrative</u>	<u>Strategic</u>	<u>Tactical</u>	<u>All</u>
Manager	0.8 / 1.4	0.9 / 0.9	1.1 / 1.3	1.0 / 1.2
Supervisor	1.4 / 1.7	1.3 / 1.7	1.6 / 2.2	1.5 / 1.9
Detective	1.6 / 1.5	1.4 / 1.0	1.4 / 1.4	1.4 /
Patrol Officer	1.7 / 1.9	1.6 / 1.8	1.7 / 2.1	1.7 / 2.0
Total	1.5 / 1.8	1.4 / 1.6	1.6 / 2.0	1.5 / 1.8

There are two sets of scores shown above. The scores on the left half of the “/” are the results from the 2000 performance audit; those on the right side are from the 2005 survey. Of the 20 categories only two scored lower in 2005 while three had the same score. The respondents overall see the department doing a better job now than in 2000.

### Summary Results of Survey

In compiling the results, the ratings of the groups most familiar with the category of decision making were used. This is the same method as used in the performance audit. The scores from the manager and supervisor groups were used for the Administrative and Strategic decision making support.

For the Tactical decision making support, it was thought that those personnel closest to tactical problems on a day-to-day basis—patrol officers and detectives—would be more accurate in their perceptions. To better reflect the magnitude of those informational issues in need of attention, it was further decided to list each item on the survey with the corresponding letter grade averaged from the above groups. These expanded ratings appear below. The first set of grades is those obtained from the first survey done at the time of the performance audit. The next set is those obtained from the same survey in 2005. The bold letters represent the higher grade of the two surveys. In almost all cases those responding in 2005 see the department doing a better job now.

#### *Information/Analytical Capability Average Rating*

*I - Strategic Support N = 20 (PA) / 16 (2005)*

	<u>PA</u>	<u>2005</u>
1. Forecasts when and where crime is likely to increase.	D	D
2. Identifies many of the factors that affect crime trends.	D+	D+
3. Provides statistics that identify emerging crime/disorder problems.	D+	<b>C-</b>
4. Determines patrol deployment by area, time of day, day of week.	D	<b>C-</b>
5. Analyzes & interprets community survey results.	D+	<b>C-</b>
6. Calculates detective workload based on trends.	<b>D</b>	D-
7. Produces in-depth analysis of persistent crime problems.	D	<b>C-</b>
8. Presents profiles of geographic areas including problems, resources, and subjects of interest.	C	C
9. Gives the recent crime picture by geographic area.	C-	<b>C+</b>
10. Analyzes & interprets community survey results.	D	<b>C-</b>
11. Provides statistics on arrests and case clearances	D	<b>D+</b>
12. Projects patrol & detective workload based on upcoming events and seasonal trends.	F	<b>D+</b>
13. Identifies physical/environmental conditions that contribute to crime/disorder problems.	D	D
14. Produces patrol workload and performance measurements.	D	<b>D+</b>
15. Computes likelihood of victimization for various target groups	D	<b>D+</b>

and for specific locations.

16. Develops crime pattern information for citizens at risk.	D-	<b>D+</b>
17. Calculates patrol allocation by geographic area.	D	<b>C-</b>
18. Correlates F.I.'s, cite and arrest data with crime/disorder problems.	F	<b>D+</b>

*II - Administrative Support N = 20 (PA) / 16 (2005)*

19. Provides data to determine feasibility of new laws and ordinances.	D	<b>D+</b>
20. Determines if particular crime/disorder controls are working.	D	<b>C-</b>
21. Computes cost effectiveness of particular programs and procedures.	D	<b>D</b>
22. Assesses how well current case screening is working.	D	<b>D+</b>
23. Evaluates law enforcement strategies and tactics.	D	D
24. Calculates long-term workload and staffing projection.	D-	<b>D</b>
25. Supports training efforts by supplying statistics & examples.	D	<b>C-</b>
26. Develops systems for regular exchange of crime and offender data with other agencies.	D	<b>D+</b>
27. Generates statistics/analyses for licensing decisions.	D+	<b>C-</b>
28. Assess impact of community redevelopment, annexations, and growth on police resources.	D+	D+
29. Forecasts service levels based on community changes.	D-	<b>D</b>
30. Presents training programs on information utilization.	D	D

*III- Tactical Support N = 55 (PA) / 69 (2005)*

31. Determines if case is part of a series	C	<b>C+</b>
32. Lists possible suspects to current investigation	C	C
33. Lists cases an in-custody suspect may be good for.	D+	<b>C-</b>
34. Lists cases where a particular weapon may have been used.	D+	<b>C-</b>
35. Provides all want/warrant data on suspects	D+	<b>C+</b>
36. Verifies identities of in-custody suspects	C	<b>C+</b>
37. Identifies cases where recovered property (with or without serial numbers) may have been stolen.	D	<b>C-</b>
38. Lists crimes or persons associated with a vehicle	D+	<b>C</b>
39. Provides names of possible suspects from latent prints	<b>C</b>	<b>C-</b>
40. Lists possible suspects from tattoo, oddity or other description.	C-	<b>C</b>
41. Lists suspect names from drawings, photos, and composites	D+	<b>C</b>
42 Names persons F.I.'d. or cited by area, time span and crime potential	D	<b>C-</b>
43. Lists possible vehicles a person may be associated with	D	<b>C-</b>
44. Lists cases of different types that may be related.	D+	<b>C-</b>
45. Provides profiles of likely targets for on-going problems.	D+	<b>C-</b>
46. Forecast addresses/specific locations of potential targets.	D+	<b>C-</b>
47. Relates one fraudulent document to others.	D	<b>D+</b>
48. Names and describes associates of a particular subject	D+	<b>C-</b>
49. Gives possible identities from nickname or AKA	C	C
50. Gives possible locations where a subject may be found	D+	<b>C</b>

51. Lists articles pawned, by date, for any given subject.	C	<b>B-</b>
52. Gives names of anyone pawning certain items/number of items.	C	<b>B-</b>
53. Provides complete work-up on any current crime pattern.	D	<b>C-</b>
54. Lists possible suspects on the basis of M.O.	D	<b>C-</b>
55. Identifies vehicles from partial license numbers or unique descriptors.	D	<b>C-</b>
56. Alerts concerned personnel when a particular subject is F.I.'d, cited, or arrested.	D	<b>C-</b>
57. Forecasts dates and times of emerging crime patterns.	D	<b>D+</b>
58. Draws links among criminal associates/locations/events.	D	<b>C-</b>
59. Identifies residents/owners/ of potential crime targets.	D	<b>D+</b>
60. Detects or verifies emerging crime patterns.	D	<b>C-</b>