Final Report, June 8, 2001

PERFORMANCE AUDIT OF THE PIERCE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

for

Pierce County Performance Audit Committee

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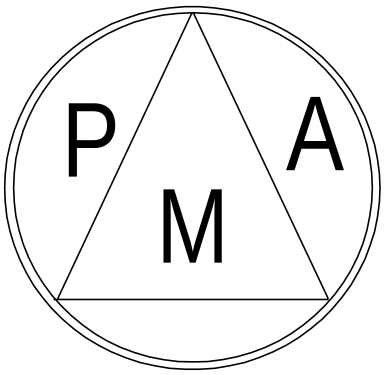

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I. INTRODUCTION

Police Management Advisors (PMA) conducted this performance audit of the Pierce County Sheriff's Department between June 2000 and March 2001. The project is in response to a provision of the Pierce County Charter that calls for ongoing comprehensive performance audits of county government.

Under the guidance of the Performance Audit Committee, PMA was directed to determine to what extent the Sheriff's Department is making effective and efficient use of resources and address a number of specific issues outlined in the request for proposals. PMA translated this directive into four major tasks:

1. Determining Service Demands – what level of service the Sheriff's Department provides to Pierce County residents, including the unincorporated areas and the three cities that are served under contract (Edgewood, Lakewood, and University Place).

2. Assessing the Patrol Function – how the Department deploys its contingent of patrol deputies and how the deputies perform their assigned duties.

3. Assessing the Investigative Function – to what extent the investigative process performs to its potential, from the preliminary investigation to case closure.

4. Assessing Administrative & Operational Support Functions – to what degree the specialized units and organizational practices support the Department's mission.

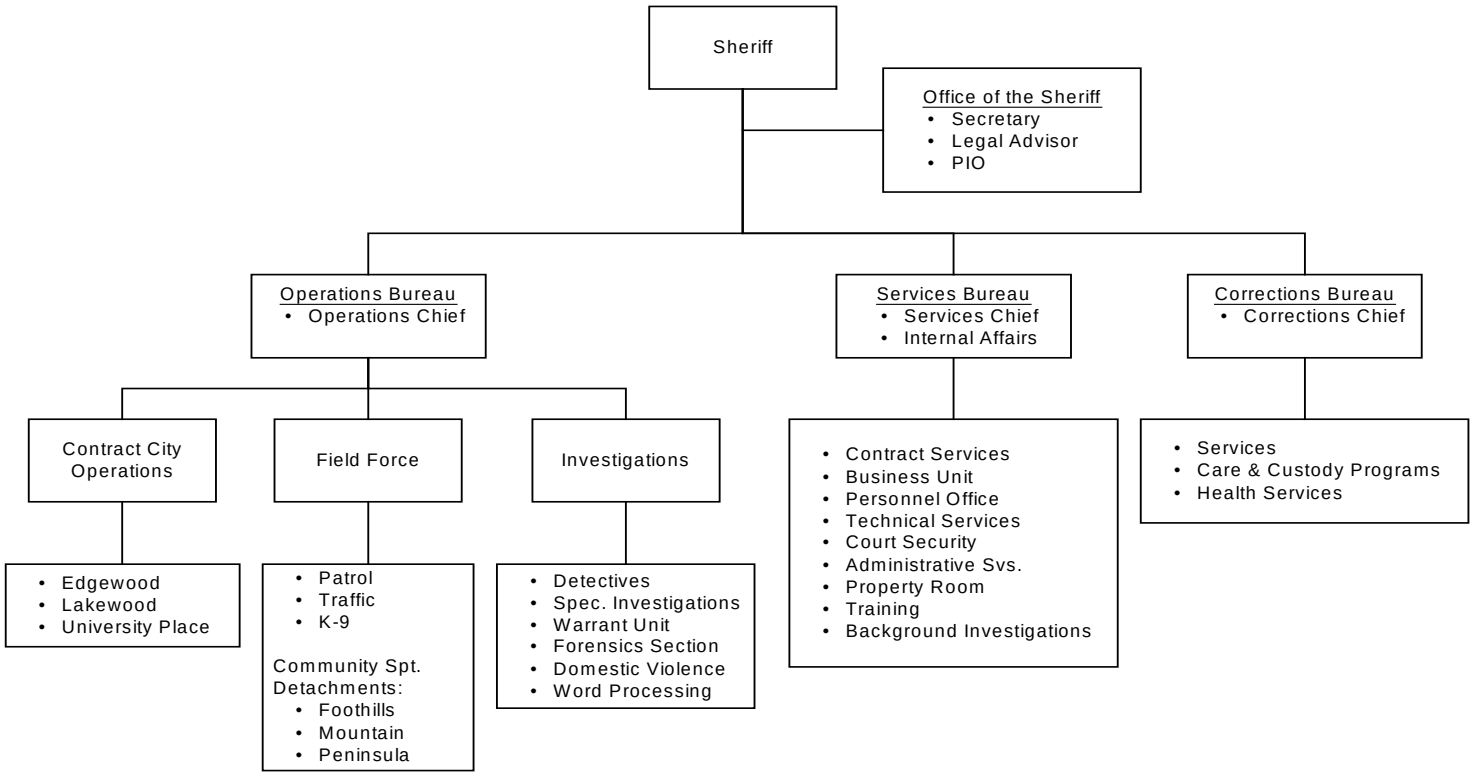
Workload was analyzed first in order to determine appropriate staffing levels. The workload analysis included both quantity and quality of the work performed. This part of the audit proved most problematic because many desired workload statistics and performance measures were simply not available. Nevertheless, the study was data-driven whenever possible, keeping the researchers' opinions to a minimum.

Overview of the Pierce County Sheriff's Department

Pierce County is the only county in the state with an appointed sheriff. The Sheriff is appointed by and reports to the County Executive. The Department is organized into three bureaus—Operations, Services, and Corrections—each headed by a chief. An organization chart appears on the next page. The Operations Bureau is responsible for police services in the unincorporated county and the contract cities. The Services Bureau includes budget and fiscal operations, information services, personnel, contracting, and other matters. The Corrections Bureau is responsible for maintaining the Pierce County jail and its inmates. Corrections, which was studied in a 1999 performance audit, was outside the scope of this study.

Exhibit I-1

ORGANIZATION OF THE PIERCE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT



Resources. Under the current budget (2001), the Sheriff's Department excluding Corrections has an annual budget of $44.5 million and 412 authorized positions. The positions include approximately 350 sworn police officers, or 85 percent of the total employees. The other 62 positions are civilian support staff.

Of the 412 authorized positions, a total of 120 (29%) are paid for by contracts for police service with the cities of Edgewood, Lakewood, and University Place.

Service Demands. Approximately 400,000 people live in the service area, including unincorporated Pierce County and the three contract cities. In 2000, the Sheriff's Department received approximately 132,000 calls for service that required a mobile patrol response. While only about two percent of the requests for police service were actual emergencies, citizens in unincorporated areas had to wait twice as long for a patrol unit to arrive on-scene as residents of the contract cities.

Response times are heavily influenced by the size and topography of Pierce County. With 1,200 square miles of habitable area and 5,000 miles of roadways, the county spreads from mountains to seashore with all sorts of communities in between.

The county includes mountainous areas, large waterways, flatlands, islands, and peninsulas. Residential areas served by the Sheriff include densely populated urban areas, established suburban communities, new and growing suburban developments, small urban centers, residential areas near two large military bases, upscale rural communities, and modest and sparsely populated rural areas. The county is quite varied, presenting many challenges and options for keeping the peace, controlling crime, maintaining order, and intervening in crises.

Besides responding to dispatched calls for service, officers investigated about 20,000 Part-I offenses and arrested 2,500 persons for those crimes. Additionally, the Department addressed some 30,000 Part-II offenses. Sheriff's deputies also investigated over 2,200 traffic accidents and issued more than 15,000 citations for safety violations. Deputies on special assignments in 1999 engaged in 31 SWAT missions, responded to nearly 200 complaints about methamphetamine labs, responded to over 600 requests for K-9 support, and made over 5,000 citizen contacts in meetings in support of Community Policing.

This report addresses how well the Sheriff's Department uses its resources to accomplish the above policing tasks, whether it should do more or less of the same tasks, and whether it should adopt different approaches to provide more efficient and effective services.

Performance Measurement

Performance measures, if well crafted, are yardsticks by which policymakers and citizens can evaluate how well the Sheriff's Department is using its available resources.

To be accountable, the Sheriff's Department or any public agency needs good performance measures. Law enforcement has used performance measures for years with varying degrees of success. Many managers often use measures to show they are "doing things right." However, not many police managers systematically measure the "right things."

Performance measures can be powerful drivers of change in an organization because they link use of resources to service demands and to results. If used well, performance measures can accomplish the following:

- Instill a sense of mission in the organization and urgency in individuals.
- Serve as a means for communicating an organization's vision and performance.
- Identify areas where productivity can be improved.
- Improve the credibility of law enforcement.
- Provide a structured means for linking priorities and budget decisions.

Most importantly, performance measures can help organizations serve customers while monitoring the use of resources. They allow a law enforcement manager to stay focused on results and allocate resources to achieve goals and objectives properly established by the community's governing body. Measuring results also allows police management to make mid-course corrections, rather than waiting until major rifts or command and control problems develop.

Performance measures allow an agency to create benchmarks—comparisons on critical measures of success with the performance of other agencies—and to identify best practices. With such information, it is possible to identify opportunities for financial, organizational, and operational improvements. Benchmarking comparisons can be used to identify not only below standard performance but also high performers and the practices used to achieve high performance.

No single set of performance measures will meet all needs. Generally speaking, performance measures are most useful when they are related to demographic factors and set in a community context.

Community views of police service are usually learned by means of a citizen satisfaction survey carried out at least every three years. The Pierce County Sheriff's Department has not used such a survey since 1994. Some other local police agencies use "contact surveying," in which a sample of individuals who have come into contact with the police is asked to comment. The Department does not use this form of determining customer satisfaction. However, citizen needs and concerns are ascertained during periodic area

meetings to help the Department determine service priorities. Such surveys are important for understanding community needs and developing performance measures of interest to the community.

Types of Measures. Performance measures are usually of four different types: (1) Input, (2) Workload, (3) Outcome, and (4) Efficiency. Definitions and examples appear below.

Exhibit I-2

TYPES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT MEASURES

INPUT MEASURES address the amount of resources used to provide a particular service • Number of detectives assigned • Hours spent providing road patrol • Number of patrol cars • Number of sworn officers versus non-sworn officers	WORKLOAD MEASURES describe the activities undertaken in providing a service • Number of parking violations issued • Number of arrests made • Number of accidents investigated • Number of residential burglaries investigated • Percent increase in tactical operations
OUTCOME MEASURES help to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of programs • Percent decrease in repeat calls for service • Percent decrease in injury accidents • Change in crime rate by neighborhood • Public perception of safety by neighborhood • Percent of community involved in a community-based strategic plan for law enforcement	EFFICIENCY MEASURES relate resources used to units of output • Average warrants issued per employee per day • Cost per case arrest • Value of property recovered per detective • Citizen calls per deployed unit • Accidents reduced per moving traffic citation

Performance measures in law enforcement too often focus on *activity and input* rather than outcomes or value provided to the community. The most useful performance measures consider customer satisfaction, are designed to encourage positive change in service delivery, and are associated with a culture of organizational improvement and success.

Law enforcement performance measures must focus on service delivery. The various areas or levels of an organization require different types of performance measures. The measures should reflect not only agency performance but also include individual effort throughout the organization.

As relates to the organization, an effective modern performance measurement system should have the following characteristics.

- Understandable significance of the measures used.

- Maximum congruence between the organization's objectives and performance measures.
- A focus on what is important, not on simply what is easy to measure.
- An optimal number of measures.
- Flexibility to change measures when the organization's goals and objectives change.

Exhibit I-3 below illustrates the linking of goals and objectives with performance measures.

Exhibit I-3

Law Enforcement Performance Measures

Overall Goal: To promote the safety of the community and a feeling of security among the citizens, primarily through prevention of crime and apprehension of offenders, providing service in a fair, prompt, and a courteous manner to the satisfaction of the citizens.

Objective	Quality Characteristic (or Service Aspect)	Specific Measure	Prime Data Sources
Prevention of crime	Reported crime rates	1. Number of reported crimes per 1,000 population, total, and by type of crime.	Incident reports
	Victimization rates	2. Number of reported plus the non-reported crimes per 1,000 households (or residents or businesses) by type of crime.	General citizen survey
	Different households and businesses victimized	3. Percentage of (a) households and (b) businesses victimized.	General citizen survey, business survey
	Physical casualties	4. Number and rate of persons (a) physically injured, (b) killed in course of crimes or non-traffic, crime-related police work.	Incident reports
	Property loss	5. Dollar property loss from crimes per 1,000 population (or, for businesses, per $1,000 sales).	Incident reports
	Patrol effectiveness	6. Number of repeat crimes and calls at same location after first call.	Incident reports Dispatch records

	Inspection effectiveness	7. Number of crimes per 1,000 businesses in relation to time since last crime prevention inspection.	Incident reports, inspection records
	Peacekeeping in domestic quarrels and other localized disturbances	8. Percentage of domestic quarrels and other disturbance calls with no arrest and no second call within "x" hours.	Dispatch records, incident reports
Apprehension of offenders	Crimes "solved" at least in part	9. Percentage of reported crimes cleared by type of crime and whether cleared by arrest or by "exception."	Incident reports
	Completeness of apprehension	10. Percentage of known "person-crimes" cleared by type of crime.	Incident reports, arrest reports
	Quality/effectiveness of arrest	11. Percentage of adult arrests that survive preliminary court hearing (or state attorney's investigation) and percentage dropped for police-related reasons by type of crime.	Arrest and court records
		12. Percentage of adult arrests resulting in conviction or treatment (a) on at least one charge, (b) on highest initial charge by type of crime.	Arrest and court records
	Speed of apprehension	13. Percentage of cases cleared in less than "x" days (with "x" selected for each crime category).	Incident report, arrest reports
	Stolen property recovery	14. Percentage of stolen property that is subsequently recovered: • vehicles • other property	Incident reports, arrest or special property records
Responsiveness of police	Response time	15. Percentage of high-priority calls responded to within "x" minutes.	Dispatch records
	Perceived responsiveness	16. Percentage of (a) citizens, (b) businesses that feel police come fast enough when called in an emergency.	General citizen survey, business and complainant survey
Feeling of security	Citizen perception	17. Percentage of (a) citizens and (b) business persons who feel safe walking in their neighborhoods at night.	Citizen survey, business survey

Honesty, fairness, courtesy (and general satisfaction)[1]	Fairness	18. Percentage of (a) citizens, and (b) businesses that feel police are generally fair in dealing with them.	Surveys of general citizens, businesses, and complainants
	Courtesy	19. Percentage of (a) citizens and (b) businesses who feel police are generally courteous in dealing with them.	Surveys of general citizens, businesses, and complainants
	Police behavior	20. Number of reported incidents or complaints of police misbehavior and the number resulting in judgement against the government or employee by type of complaint (civil charge, criminal charge, other service complaints) per 100 police.	Sheriff and Executive records
	Citizen satisfaction with police handling of miscellaneous incidents	21. Percentage of persons requesting assistance (or dissatisfied with police handling of their problems, categorized by reason for dissatisfaction, and by type of call).	Complainant survey
	Citizen satisfaction with overall performance	22. Percentage of (a) citizens, (b) businesses rating police performance as excellent or good (or fair or poor) by reason for satisfaction (or dissatisfaction).	General citizen survey, business survey, and complainant survey

A more comprehensive list of performance measures that could possibly be used by the Pierce County Sheriff's Department is presented in Appendix I. Although it is unlikely that all of the measures listed there will be adopted, there are quite a few measures that should prove valuable. Not just to citizens and governing bodies (principally Outcome measures), but to administrators and supervisors in their day-to-day management of the police resources entrusted to them (mainly Efficiency and Workload measures).

Recommendation

As the organization increases its measurement capabilities, it should begin using the 22 measurements listed in Exhibit I-3. And after those measures have been adopted and refined, the list of potential measures in Appendix I should be mined for applicability to current strategic plans and organizational goals. To start the process, however, it is better to focus on a smaller number of measures.

[1]A satisfactory approach to measuring the degree of corruption, malfeasance, or negligence is lacking. Data on the number of complaints received on these problems should be examined, particularly when their number increases substantially.

I-1. As a beginning, we suggest that the Sheriff's Department adopt, as a minimum, the Outcome performance measures presented in Exhibit I-4.

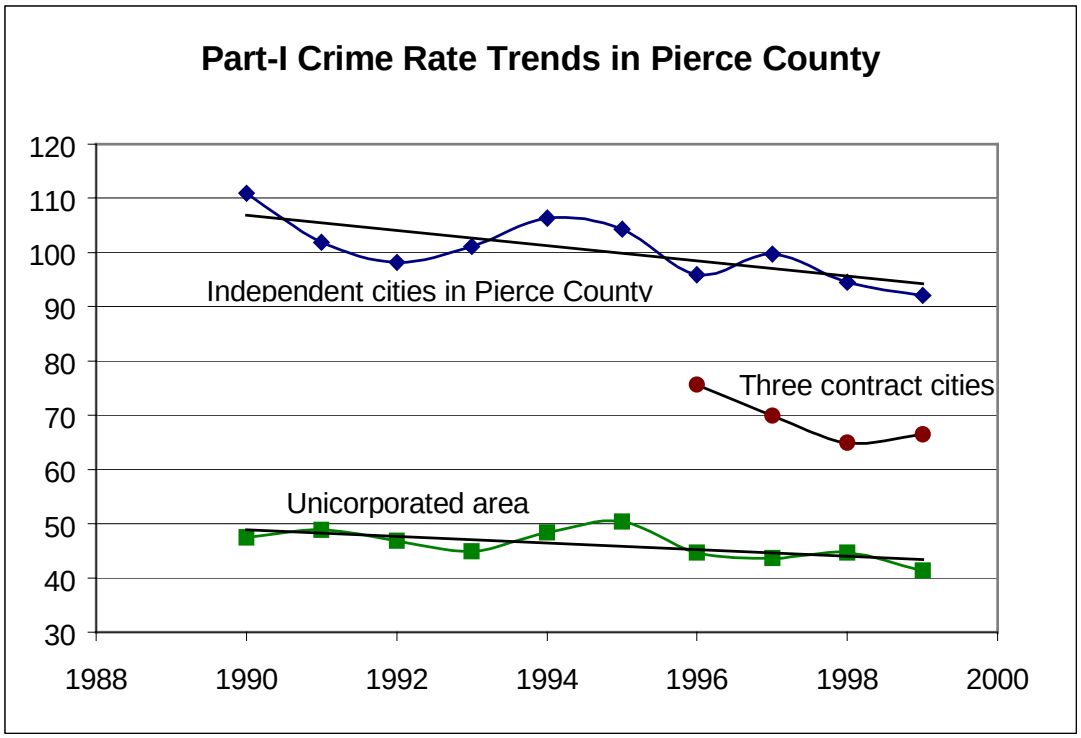
Exhibit I-4

OUTCOME PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Part One Crimes Per 1,000 Population (Percent decrease in rate)	Response Time To Priority Calls (Achieved objective of 6 ½ minutes response time to emergency calls)	Traffic Problem Solving (Percent decrease in injury accidents per 1,000 population)
Reduction in Chronic Problem Locations (Percent decrease in those locations with repeat police calls)	Cases Cleared by Arrest and Exception (Achieved objective of clearing an average of 65% all cases assigned.)	Property Recovered as a Percent of Value of Property Stolen: 1.) Vehicles 2.) Other property
Neighborhood Problems Resolved (Percent increase in number of documented problems)	School Violence Prevention (Percent decrease in violent incidents on school grounds per 1,000 students)	Patrol Achieved Customer Service Satisfaction (Rating objective of 75% of all categories of service)

As shown in the above, these are Outcome measures, and do not include Input, Workload, or Efficiency measures. The lists presented earlier in this chapter provide considerable choice of those types of measures. One of the above primary Outcome measures, Part-I crimes per 1,000 population, can be used to demonstrate trends across various jurisdictions, as shown in the next exhibit.

Exhibit I-5



As can be seen above, Part I crime is decreasing in all three areas. The greatest absolute decline has occurred in the independent cities (including Tacoma), followed by the contract cities (Edgewood, Lakewood, and University Place), and the unincorporated area of Pierce County. However, the unincorporated area continues to enjoy a much lower crime rate over the past decade than the other jurisdictions. In percent of declining crime rate, the unincorporated area shows as much improvement as the other jurisdictions.

The entire range of performance measures should be explored and considered before adopting any particular measures. Often, measures are selected for the wrong reasons. For example, the number of deputies per 1,000 residents is often used to show the need for more staff, although the statistic indicates nothing about actual performance. Some measures may be too simplistic, such as changes in the number of crimes without taking into account demographic or other contextual influences. There is an additional danger of selecting appropriate measures but making unjustified comparisons, such as seeking parity in response time to emergencies in urban versus rural areas.

While the potential value of using performance measures is generally appreciated, it is unclear whether the Department is actually able to use the full range of these measures suggested in Exhibit I-3 and Appendix I. A considerable amount of organizational information is necessary to construct and use such measures. That issue is addressed in the next chapter.

II. INFORMATION ISSUES

This chapter reviews the capability of the Pierce County Sheriff's Department to be an information-driven organization. The audit scope did not include assessment of the Department's information processing and utilization capabilities. However, we could not avoid the topic because the information issues are pervasive and adversely affect performance at many levels.

Information is the lifeblood of a modern law enforcement agency. Department personnel need good information for administrative, strategic, and tactical decision making. Policymakers need good information, including performance measures and other data, in order to evaluate and adequately support the Sheriff's Department. To acquire good information, an agency needs a competent information system that provides comprehensive, accurate, and timely data in a user-friendly way.

We focused on the Department's ability to obtain and act on information needed for fundamental performance measurements and for administrative, strategic, and tactical decision making as it relates to dealing with crime and disorder in the context of Community Policing. The findings of the study team are compared to acceptable information processing and police management standards, followed by our conclusions and recommendations.

Information Support for Performance Measurement

Later chapters of this report deal with patrol operations, criminal investigation, support services, and other topics. To assess each departmental component, the study team needed information relevant to measures of performance that we have found to be meaningful. These measures can be classified into four types: Input, Outcome, Workload, and Efficiency. The previous chapter defined each type of measure and provided examples.

In gathering information, the study team encountered difficulties obtaining either the right data or data needed for specific dates, times, geographic areas, or organizational elements of the Sheriff's Department. The data collection problems were formidable. They deserve to be mentioned early in the report before we get into analysis of patrol, investigations, and other topics. Cooperation from the Sheriff's Department was complete and sincere throughout all organizational levels, but data problems kept surfacing. In nearly every area evaluated, team members and Department employees had to make extra efforts to get the most rudimentary data.

Such problems are not new to the researchers, and we have learned to expect difficulties in data collection. To address such problems, the study team typically moves closer to the source of the needed information and the staff who produce and work with the data. Our

approach is to work cooperatively with the organization and keep pressing for the desired data until it becomes clear that we have obtained the best information that is available.

Examples of data problems appear below, organized according to the various types of measures.

Input Measurement. In assessing Patrol Operations (Chapter III), a basic input measure is the number of patrol cars deployed by time of day and area of assignment for a recent one-year period. We found that the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system did not store that data on a continuing basis. Attempts to re-program CAD records failed. Eventually, the Crime Analysis Unit collected the data by going through the paper source documents—patrol officer show-up rosters—and computing the number of patrol officers who showed up for work in each of the seven geographic areas. A complete and continuous 12-month set of rosters was not available for all patrol areas. We had to settle for an 11-month tally to calculate average daily deployment levels.

Collecting data needed to calculate the Staffing Adjustment Factor (another Input measure) was also difficult. Data had to be combined from payroll records and from samples of show-up rosters and training records. Central records do not indicate all hours that officers are away from their duty assignments by category of absence.

Workload Measurement. While attempting to determine patrol workload (calls for service), we experienced problems with incomplete or unusable databases. The CAD database for 1999 was unusable, so we used the first ten months of 2000 to determine average daily calls for service demands. These workload statistics then had to be compared with the patrol deployment figures, which are described above. This process was extremely time consuming. It also added, according to our estimates, a small amount of error into the performance measurement process. Some error is inevitable in quantitative research. The best one can do is to take pains to reduce error to a reasonable level, and acknowledge it.

A similar situation occurred in Chapter IV while attempting to determine detective workload (cases assigned for investigation). The case management database omitted a high number of 1999 cases that apparently had in fact been investigated, and the 1999 data proved unusable. We had to use 1998 data to get one continuous year of case assignments, and those data were subsequently matched with 1998 crime occurrences.

Efficiency Measurement. Measuring staffing needs in patrol, investigations, and other areas requires knowledge of the amount of time devoted to administrative tasks. Such information was not available in data systems, and substitute methods had to be devised. In one area, we used a Delphi group process (supervisor opinion) to obtain the data, while national averages had to be employed in another area. In looking at the staffing of special operations such as SWAT, because of inadequate records, we could not determine whether the operations were staffed on call-out overtime or on-duty re-assignment.

Outcome Measurement. A basic measure of investigator performance (Chapter IV) is the number of cases charged by the prosecutor as a percent of cases sent by the police. The Sheriff's Department does not keep track of those numbers, thus limiting our ability to assess investigator performance.[2]

In studying arrests and other types of case "clearances," we obtained gross data on the number of reported crimes that had been cleared, but the automated records do not indicate whether the crimes were cleared by patrol officers, detectives, or special units. Therefore, the reported clearance rates reveal little about the performance of particular units in the Sheriff's Department.

The report emphasizes clearances of Part-1 crimes, although Part-2 crimes are important and may make up a large part of investigator workload. Determining the actual number of Part-2 offenses was a problem. Additional computations by Sheriff's employees and the study team were required, since many incidents that are not Part-2 offenses were included in some of the available data tables. On community policing issues, limited quantitative data were available.

The list of incomplete databases, missing necessary data elements, and non-standardized or poorly maintained files grew as the audit continued. Because of the data problems, it is possible to reach only tentative conclusions about the work practices and staffing of many departmental functions. Databases are scattered throughout the Department, created by employees in response to administrative or operational demands, but there is no way to link them together or reconcile them with other measures.

Conclusions. The study team experienced information problems in nearly every facet of the organization examined. The researchers, however, were able to come up with reasonably satisfactory solutions with the help of the Sheriff's staff. We believe the issue is not willingness of departmental employees to gather, maintain, and compile needed data. In fact, they do a considerable amount of such work now on an *ad hoc* basis. What is missing is a sound information management system that details what data are to be collected, stored, analyzed, linked together, and reported.

The system should be driven by a strategic information plan that states when and how the necessary actions are to be done, by whom, what purposes are to be achieved by these actions, and who would be the recipients of the various system outputs.

The Department does not have a strategic information plan, which is no surprise. Many mid-to-large size law enforcement agencies are in a similar situation. The Pierce County Sheriff's Department, like most local police agencies, was not *planned* into existence. It simply evolved, while keeping traditional organizational structures and practices in place for as long as possible. The "tried and true" ways kept a sense of stability and continuity in

[2] We learned—too late—that another data system, LINX, contains data on this topic. It is unknown whether the data are sufficiently detailed to be useful in assessing the performance of specific investigative units.

the organization facing a changing environment. Police agencies tend to continue the old ways because there is almost no infusion in the middle and upper management ranks of personnel with broad-based management or information systems backgrounds. Moreover, strategic information planning involves a high level of technical expertise that police agencies or their governing bodies have not aggressively pursued. Instead, budget dollars tend to go for more police presence or more specialized units and equipment. Information systems are a relatively low priority and are often not well understood by police managers and policymakers.

Compounding the problem, resources have been wasted on failed or poorly functioning information systems. The Law Enforcement Service Agency (LESA) is responsible for developing and maintaining information systems to support the Pierce County Sheriff's Department and the City of Tacoma Police Department. Recent problems in LESA and the piecemeal strategy toward information systems may have created a lack of confidence in centralized information systems and raised fundamental issues about LESA. More will be said of information systems plans and the role of LESA later in this section.

Information Support for Operations

In this section, we look at the types and quality of information and the systems that provide the information needed to make administrative, strategic, and tactical decisions in the Sheriff's Department.

Recent Research on Community Policing. Mary Ann Wycoff, a respected researcher, focused on what agencies need to do to make better use of information at the line level. According to a 1997 national study on Community Policing, officers want their supervisors to provide them with:

1. **Time –** needed to perform problem solving tasks and also time management coaching.
2. **Resources & Information** – including data analysis, warrant reports, and other governmental or community resources.
3. **Direction, Guidance &** Support – by providing a structure for community engagement and a systematic problem solving process.

Any police agency attempting to increase the level of Community Policing could focus organizational improvement efforts on those three principal topics. The Pierce County Sheriff's Department has a history of responsiveness to citizens' needs for public safety. A public service orientation pervades the organization and is readily apparent at all operational levels. However a strong *willingness* to serve the public's safety needs and engage them in a community/police partnership, though a necessary condition, is not sufficient to bring it to fruition. The Department also needs the *capability* to engage the community in a meaningful and productive way. The needed capability has three principal components: **Time, Information,** and **Guidance**, as discussed above.

The present discussion focuses on the *Information* component, and specifically information support needed for administrative, strategic, and tactical decision making.

The consultants performed a number of activities to assess the extent to which crime analysis can enhance current police operations and support future levels of community-police problem solving in Pierce County. First, we reviewed previous studies and reports, on-going improvement plans, and current crime analysis products. Second, we conducted a survey to rate crime analysis and information services. We also conducted a number of site visits to observe analysis and information utilization operations and to interview providers and recipients of information.

Crime Analysis. A Crime Analysis Unit (CAU) plays a crucial role in transforming, analyzing, and formatting information for use by managers, supervisors, detectives, and patrol officers. Typically, a CAU retrieves reports and accesses databases created and maintained by someone else—in this case, the Law Enforcement Support Agency. If the needed databases are not available, or not reliable enough to be of practical value, the CAU can do little to fill the need for information. When complete and reliable data are available, the crime analysis function can be seen as a series of analytical processes that begin with crime, offender, and other related data and converts those data into information for use by others for tactical, strategic, and administrative decision making.

Support of Crime/Disorder Problem Solving was developed with the advent of Community Policing. Police officers are now expected to address much more than the street crimes that have typically been targeted in traditional ways. Crime analysts should be viewed as a special resource to the problem solving process. While the analyst can assist with each of the five steps in the problem solving process (problem identification, analysis, action planning, implementation, and assessment), particular help is needed in the analysis and assessment phases, which often require in-depth work. Typically, these are the weakest links in the police planning process.

In the Pierce County Sheriff's Department substantial efforts to provide decision makers with relevant and timely information were in evidence in some parts of the organization. The work of the Crime Analysis Unit was especially noteworthy because of its informational product developments and broad-based customer service, in spite of decidedly poor data sources. They were producing crime "hot spot" and correlation maps, providing investigative leads, listing locations of repeat problems, and was in the process of developing Exception Reports for each area of the Sheriff's jurisdiction. But one small unit cannot provide all the critical informational needs of an entire agency. The CAU was attempting to do this, however, and it was stretching them too much. Every request for administrative informational support takes time and resources away from strategic and tactical support. Since the CAU cannot create data, they can only analyze it, transform it into information, and present it to those who need it. Moreover, the CAU was invaluable in providing the audit team with much of its informational needs, and in the face of many source data problems.

If an officer understands all the components of a problem, that officer can develop a creative and appropriate solution to the problem. The analysis phase involves learning everything possible about the players, incidents, and actions previously used to deal with the problem. To guide this process, the study team devised a series of standard questions based on the "Crime Triangle," as part of a "Police Problem Solving Kit." (This was given to the Sheriff in response to a request for such a tool.) Answers to these questions provide the background data required for an informed analysis.

Survey on Availability and Quality of Law Enforcement Information. The 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 appears in Appendix II-A. 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 all, 75 officers completed the questionnaire. The respondents were as follows:

Exhibit II-1

Survey Respondents by Job Category/Rank

Job/Rank	*Number of Respondents*	*Percent*
Manager	6	8%
Supervisor	14	19%
Detective	16	21%
Patrol Officer	39	52%
Total	75	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.

Exhibit II-2

Average Rating by Job/Rank and Category of Information

	Types of Information			
Job/Rank	*Administrative*	*Strategic*	*Tactical*	*All*
Manager	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.0
Supervisor	1.4	1.3	1.6	1.5
Detective	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4
Patrol Officer	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.7
All	**1.5**	**1.4**	**1.6**	**1.5**

As shown above, the average ratings given by all respondents combined were approximately 1.5, or “D” to “D+.” It is notable that police managers graded all categories of information significantly lower than other personnel did. Appendix II-A presents the survey results in more detail, including the average ratings for each item on the questionnaire.

Based on the employee survey response alone, it seems clear that major improvements are needed in many information/support areas. According to a large proportion of the users of information, almost all the Strategic and Administrative areas and about half of the Tactical informational support services are seriously deficient. Our site visits to various field offices tended to extend and validate the findings from the survey.

Appendix II-B goes deeper into this subject. It lists detailed crime analysis information products and services that are available in modern law enforcement agencies.

Implementation Issues. Since this audit began in mid-2000, several organizational initiatives have tended to improve the picture of the agency's needs. First, and potentially most significant, Sheriff’s staff has undertaken to create user-friendly crime analysis information products. Reports with graphics on crimes and service calls are given to the seven geographic areas on a monthly basis. Detailed maps of crime and incident "hot spots" are produced routinely, as are crime pattern work-ups.

While trying to expand and improve the Department's crime analysis capabilities, many problems or issues will have to be addressed. Below we report a number of concerns and potentials that have been observed by PMA or reported from police agencies around the country. As such, these issues are generalized and should be considered in the context of Pierce County and its goals, plans, and resources.

Crime Analysis in Support of a Police-Community Partnership. With the advent of Community Policing, the public's need for access to pertinent police information has never been greater. Fortunately, this comes at time when police agencies, using current

technology, have the ability to meet this need.

Good information is essential to good decision-making. Historically, community members have not been kept informed about crime and police priorities. Some of the reasons include:

- The police agency itself did not have good crime information.
- The agency had good crime information, but chose not to share it with citizens.
- The agency had good crime information, but it was unclear how to relay the information to citizens.

Clearly, it is unrealistic to expect citizens to partner with police agencies if they lack supporting information. If police agencies intend to create and promote neighborhood involvement and participation in identifying and addressing neighborhood problems, they must share the available information. Appendix II-B explores the types of data that can assist in educating community members and groups. It also reviews the current and emerging technologies that will form the communications link so desperately needed.

Nearly all citizens and communities who receive crime and offender information have limited experience in analyzing and interpreting this type of data. It is incumbent upon Sheriff' Department personnel entrusted with imparting this information to provide the proper context and helpful comparisons and interpretations so that citizens who review the data can make thoughtful, logical decisions.

Recommendations

The Department should expand and improve its crime analysis services. Listed below are several suggestions that will help in the agency's efforts to bring information improvements to fruition. It is recognized that several of the recommendations may have been implemented, in whole or in part. Some of these improvements were discussed earlier in this chapter.

II-1. The Sheriff's Department should develop a comprehensive crime analysis database.

In Pierce County, the crime analysis functions often requires *manually* constructed logs, listings, and event summaries together with a variety of federal, state, county, and local automated files loosely connected. Many of these databases are composed of discrete files with similar sounding fields but vastly different field types and value codes. Moreover, many of the automated files are currently incomplete, and some of the data fields lack sufficient reliability to insure that they are a credible source of information. This situation violates the axiom that crime analysis starts with a relational database that is comprehensive, complete, accurate, and current.

LESA promises to correct a number of current database problems, which could be a large step in the direction of a comprehensive crime analysis system. However, LESA plans do not go as far as they should in creating a comprehensive database that will provide local jurisdictions with the kinds of information they will need in the next few years.
To the extent the Pierce County Sheriff's Department is able to design a comprehensive crime analysis database, it would increase in value as more police agencies contribute their data to it. A regional approach is recommended.

II-2. A concerted effort should be expended to enroll all law enforcement agencies in Pierce County to share crime and offender data in an automated format.

The ultimate goal of this suggestion is to have appropriate information sharing for all agencies (not just the Sheriff and the various police departments) that have a stake in public safety. Other jurisdictions throughout the nation have shown that comprehensive data sharing on a large scale is desirable and possible. For example, for over 20 years the San Diego region has had a joint powers arrangement with all jurisdictions to collect and maintain standardized crime and offender data.

II-3. The Department should develop a standardized request form to be used by crime analysts to document the databases and tools used, as well as the analyst time spent on each request.

This is another area where information is lacking. In order to improve services, the Department needs to know how its resources are being spent and what outcomes are consequences of those resources.

II-4. Develop a mission statement and goals to clearly define the focus and direction of the various crime analysis functions.

A mission statement and goals are indispensable parts of developing the crime analysis functions. Goals should be clear, as specific as possible (e.g., not just “provide information to patrol"), and prioritized.

II-5. Develop a method for measuring success in fulfilling the unit mission and achieving the goals.

Constant evaluation and assessment are critical to ensure that the Crime Analysis Unit is providing service that is relevant, useful, and appropriate. Formal evaluation methods, such as surveys and questionnaires, can be less than satisfactory, because of low response rates and other reasons. Informal evaluations, including interviews with users and key personnel, have worked well in other agencies.

II-6. Establish a standardized program of student interns and volunteers in crime analysis.

In at least one station that we visited, a volunteer was performing crime analysis functions. This effort should be expanded throughout Pierce County. The right volunteer or group of volunteers can transform an analysis unit that is struggling to survive into a highly successful operation. However, this is not a simple process. Detailed job descriptions must be developed. Qualification standards must be set. Screening of applicants should almost be as rigorous as for regular employees, and sufficient resources (desk, PC, office supplies, etc.) will have to made available. Appropriate training and orientation are crucial.

This method of improving organizational efficiency has proven quite successful across the nation since its development in San Diego in 1977. In fact, use of volunteers (many of them senior citizens) in police and sheriff's departments has expanded to traffic control, vacation checks, parking control, crime prevention activities, and information dissemination.

Information Systems Support

This section reviews the information systems support provided to the Pierce County Sheriff's Department and discusses applicable standards. Information systems support (above the user level) is provided by two organizational elements:

- The Pierce County Department of Information Services provides access to city core legacy and business systems, including finance, purchasing, Responder, GIS (Map your Way and County View), and Crime Star (a web-based GIS application produced for the Sheriff's Department that contains crime incident and interest areas).

- The Law Enforcement Support Agency (LESA) provides 911 communications, records management, and associated information technology support. The records element is the source of criminal history records for Pierce County and City of Tacoma criminal justice agencies. This approach has not lived up to expectations. LEADS 2000, approved in 1996, fell behind its schedule of development and installation and resulted in inaccurate data being provided to the criminal justice agencies after the system began operation in January 2000. A consultant has reviewed the situation and made a series of recommendations that require additional resources to solve the problems.

Work is now taking place to try to resolve the problems and produce accurate criminal history data and reliable interfaces for mobile computing. Obviously this should be the number 1 priority. Our comments fall in place a distant second to making the necessary fixes to obtain timely and accurate criminal history information.

Information Systems and Strategic Plans. As indicated above, both LESA and Pierce County Information Services are responsible for information systems support to the Sheriff's Department. The support is a mix of centralized and decentralized systems, but there apparently is no overall plan for future support. We found limited awareness of the need for such a plan (a Public Safety Information System Strategic Plan), which would be a major element in an overall county plan.

An Information Systems Strategic Plan is a systematic evaluation of an organization's information and communications needs and the documentation of an approach to meeting those needs. Its focus is on the allocation of resources to address critical issues. The plan has an action orientation—it identifies what needs to be done to improve information systems support for the delivery of public services. Due to the dynamic nature of technology, the plan usually has no more than a three-year time frame.

An Information Systems Strategic Plan should include:

- Overall description of the current environment.
- A vision for information technology support.
- Criteria for prioritizing needs and applications, and systems to address them.
- The information requirements of the organization.
- Training requirements for providers and users.
- The technology that makes it possible to collect, process, add value to, transmit, and use information.
- The policies that are needed to integrate the above resources--information, people, and technology into a smoothly functioning operation.
- The organization and staffing arrangements necessary to support the plan.
- A business plan that identifies costs of new capabilities and revenue sources.

Elements of an Effective Information Systems Strategic Plan. An information plan suitable to support the Sheriff should emphasize the following.

1. **Easy Access to Data.** Law enforcement managers require ready access to current data and data sharing. This may take the form of data mining and data warehouses with summary data that management can have ready access to or could include placing extensive operational information on the Web site for use by contract cities and county departments. The Internet has unlimited potential to improve internal operations and communications and to provide public information. This can be seen by checking out the home pages of police departments such as Dallas, King County, San Diego, and general-purpose governments such as Fairfax County, Virginia.

2. **Access to Data from Anywhere.** Public safety mobile computing and field reporting projects initially will have relatively slow access and response times. This problem should be recognized and planned for. Access to databases should be

ubiquitous, that is, possible from anywhere within the county. In short, access/connectivity requires constant attention.

3. **Emphasize and Enable Data Sharing.** The potential sharing of data must be planned for and worked at, including assignment of ownership and maintenance responsibilities and the development of a data schema and data dictionary.

4. **Quick Response to Changing Information Needs.** County user and business needs can change rapidly in response to the political environment and state or federal mandates. This potential must be considered in the strategic planning process.

5. **Ability to Address Ad-Hoc Information Needs.** Police managers often have short-term information needs, perhaps to support an upcoming meeting or decision, or to analyze the causes of a problem that recently surfaced. User organizations are willing and eager to satisfy these *ad hoc* needs themselves, provided that this can be done easily and at low cost.

6. **Reduce Cost of Maintaining Applications.** Applications maintenance cost is a major factor in the IT budgets of large organizations such as Pierce County. Measures that improve the support ability and maintainability of software can have a significant budget impact. For example, system and development standards should encourage re-use of software and information across applications. The simplest approach is to use off the shelf software applications and tailor them to the agency's requirements.

7. **Need for a Comprehensive Plan for Connectivity.** Networks need detailed and comprehensive planning. Without improved connectivity, the promise of ease of access, access from anywhere, and sharing information will not happen.

To perform well, a modern law enforcement agency requires good information systems support. A public safety information systems master plan is needed to systematically work towards effective information systems support.

Appendix II-C presents considerably more details as to what constitutes system support. That appendix discusses crime mapping and other computer-based applications.

In the planning process, the Department should give consideration to developing technology skills in deputies. Officers need skills to be able to use information technology as part of their jobs. Officers cannot be expected to deal with computer crime, sophisticated electronic surveillance, Internet predators, and e-commerce con artists without advance skills learned through planned training and career development and hands-on computer experience.

Law Enforcement Support Agency

This study was not designed to provide a performance audit of the Law Enforcement Support Agency (LESA) and its information systems. Nevertheless, the study team would be remiss if it did not comment on one of the most critical factors of the Sheriff's Department's management information.

LESA is a regional or multi-jurisdictional agency of Pierce County and the City of Tacoma. This cooperative approach is noteworthy, but the current agency has not fulfilled its potential to provide high-quality information for use by the member police agencies. Granted, LESA is now in the process of re-building to address the problems that have come to the surface in the past couple of years and it has made some noteworthy progress.

A fundamental premise in management is that decisions can be no better than the information used to make them. Information is the lifeblood in any police organization.

With these perspectives, the study team observed that nearly every operation reviewed in the audit suffered from a dearth of solid management information. Managers and employees often did not, or could not, make decisions that might improve the quality of their work within the Pierce County Sheriff's Department. These observations cut across organizational lines, including patrol, investigations, special operations, support services, and administrative services. We also found that the *kinds* of decisions cut across strategic, tactical, and administrative lines. Often, employees could not readily answer our inquiries because accurate and comprehensive data were either not available or not available in usable format. Even experienced Sheriff's analysts had difficulty transforming LESA data into usable information.

Recommendations

As mentioned previously, the Sheriff's Department has no overall plan to determine future technology needs and applications to meet them or to integrate current or future support. There is limited awareness of the need for such a plan. Therefore, these recommendations are presented.

II-7. Develop a Public Safety/ Sheriff's Information Systems Strategic Plan in order to meet the objectives outlined in this report.

Guidelines and standards are presented earlier in this chapter.

II-8. Establish in the Services Bureau an Information Resource Management Unit responsible for information systems strategic planning, full-service crime analysis, data standardization, certification of accuracy, and law enforcement planning.

Staffing for this unit cannot be precisely determined at this stage, but it would appear that minimal staffing would require four to five analysts as well as clerical and supervisory support. As work requests increase, and it is likely they will, the unit should adopt more automated means of performing work before hiring additional personnel. Included in this developmental effort is the support and maintenance of a patrol workload and deployment system. This should help immensely in the production and distribution of patrol workload and staffing information throughout the Department.

II-9. Review the possible uses for expanding current crime mapping provided in this chapter to build on the existing GIS capability.

The Crime Analysis Unit has been working on some promising ways to look at crime information using current GIS capabilities and has developed some useful products for solving crime problems. Such efforts are strongly encouraged and should be expanded, especially for presentation to community groups and individual residents.

II-10. Conduct a performance audit of the Sheriff's Department information needs, how those needs are currently being met, plans to meet the needs, methods and structures that could best meet those needs, and county-wide sharing possibilities.

The audit team recognizes that some previous research on management information issues has occurred, and that some in-depth process mapping has recently been done. Thus, it is with some reservation that we suggest further study. Still, we believe a comprehensive and independent audit would be advantageous.

II-11. Explore the option of splitting LESA into two separate agencies. One would continue to be responsible for communications and dispatching, while the other would focus exclusively on county-wide data capture, organization, warehousing, processing, and information dissemination.

Each function should have its own focus, plans, budget, membership, user-group, joint powers sharing scheme, and strict accountability for performance.

III. PATROL OPERATIONS

Police staffing levels must be directly linked to the level of service a local government believes is necessary to provide adequate police services for its citizens. As with most public policy decisions, information on workload must be matched with potential results that can be achieved by hiring various levels of staff. Simple ratios that compare the number of police employees per 1,000 population in local jurisdictions are not sufficient for making staffing decisions.

We believe that a rational basis for staffing a police agency begins at the curbside. Patrol is the most vital police service. Patrol officers are usually the first to respond to citizen calls for service and provide comfort and security to crime victims. Compared with other parts of the department, patrol officers also conduct most of the criminal investigations, make most of the arrests, do more traffic enforcement and accident investigations, and give most of the crime prevention advice to citizens. The number of patrol officers needed creates the framework for the staff needed for other functions.

Measuring the Need for Patrol Staff

In recent years, much attention has been given to the problem of measuring patrol staffing needs in relationship to workload. Seven models for measuring patrol workload are listed below along with a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of each.

1. **Officers per thousand population.** This measure is sometimes mistakenly offered as a basis for determining the overall staffing of a police agency. The measure ignores population characteristics, such as the number of the poor or vulnerable who generally have the greatest need of police services. Funding an average number of officers for each 1,000 people ignores actual service demands. Taking the resident population as a base also ignores the needs for police service in areas with large numbers of commuters and visitors. This measure also does not take into account police response time to priority calls. Overall, the measure is a rough indicator of what a community has already decided to spend on law enforcement, and not what it needs. The number of officers per thousand residents indicates very little about police performance.

2. **Levels of reported crime.** This measure has some face validity. However, crime problems represent only a fraction of the service demands placed upon law enforcement agencies. Public safety agencies in a community are the only services available to everyone on a 24-hour a day, 7-day a week basis. Non-crime related calls usually account for more than half of the calls for police service, even in large cities. Therefore, it is possible that a community can have citizen expectations for service that are much higher than reported crime rates.

3. **Numbers of calls for police service.** This measure provides a more complete picture of patrol workload. However, counting the total number of calls ignores differences

among calls. Some calls take more time to complete than others, and some calls require more than one police unit to respond. Travel times are longer to some districts, which affects response time to priority calls.

4. **Assigning numerical weights to different categories of calls for service.** A few police agencies have attempted to account for differences among calls by assigning numerical weights to different categories of calls for service. This approach seems "scientific." However, the weights are generally very subjective and tend to reflect policy decisions that have already been made rather than an objective measurement of workload. The weights also fail to account for multiple unit responses. They also do not take into account response time to priority calls.

5. **Measuring time spent by patrol officer on calls for service and other work.** Most police funding goes toward staff salaries. As in any other labor-intensive business, time is money in policing. Methods that base staffing on the amount of police time needed to respond to citizen calls for service come closer to measuring patrol workload accurately than the methods previously mentioned. Information on how time is spent is typically captured with the use of Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) systems that may account for time spent on officer-initiated activity, administrative duties, and other tasks. But this method does not take into account response time to priority calls or the availability of cover units.

6. **Patrol Beat Design.** This method is a hybrid of the previously mentioned methods, together with designing patrol districts to minimize response times. The method assumes that a patrol unit assigned to one of the districts will handle most of the calls there and become familiar enough with the beat to be an effective crime fighting force. This method has several problems. First, attempts to make areas of equal size (to reduce response time) invariably do so at the expense of creating workload imbalances among the beats. Second, patrol beats are usually treated as fairly constant work units, regardless of time of day or day of week, which promotes the wasteful notion of staffing a district by a single car regardless of temporal workload variations. Third, unless they are deployed in extremely remote locations, patrol units can spend almost as much time in adjacent districts as their own. The units routinely have to provide cover for nearby beat officers, and then they are often out of their district when calls come in, so other units must respond to their calls of an urgent nature.

7. **Modeling the flow of calls for service.** This is the most advanced method available for measuring patrol workload and staffing needs. It involves use of computerized mathematical models that employ queuing theory to determine the effects of a variety of factors on patrol performance. Such models can project potential response times to emergency and urgent calls as well as levels of uncommitted patrol time that will be available at various times of the day. The models are typically based on information about call rates, the priority of calls, the time spent on those calls, the number of units sent to them, the distance they have to travel, and average travel times at various times of the day and days of the week. These models not only help to assess staffing needs,

but they can also be used to test potential new deployment levels in new or current areas before plans are actually implemented.

Approach to Patrol Staff Analysis

Our approach to patrol staffing issues uses a patrol deployment computer model called "Managing Patrol Performance" (MPP). Our experience is that police managers and policymakers want a common language for proposing and evaluating various levels of service and their resulting staffing levels. For example, a city may choose to provide a 6.5 minute response times to emergency calls and 40 percent proactive patrol time for patrol officers as a level of service to the public, and then acquire staff to maintain those performance levels. MPP can be used to determine the number of field units needed to generate those levels of service by area, day of week, and time of day. Appendix III-A, Description of Managing Patrol Performance, includes a detailed explanation.

Source data. The data on patrol workload and staffing presented below refer to the 11 months from October 1999 through August 2000 because a full year of patrol show-up rosters was not available at the time of the data request.

As raw material for the MPP patrol simulation model, a number of data elements (variables) were gathered, checked, and transformed to fit the patrol areas and time periods on an average daily basis. After the data were entered into the MPP model, the study team was able to make comparisons, employ "what if" scenarios, and assess the reliability of the findings.

Data collection for this study was seriously delayed by the inadequacy of the Department's information systems. It was only with the greatest difficulty that the 25 data elements needed for MPP were gleaned from Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) records, management reports, special computer runs, and manual counts of deployed personnel and units. Sheriff personnel had to make extra efforts to get information that they should have had all along.

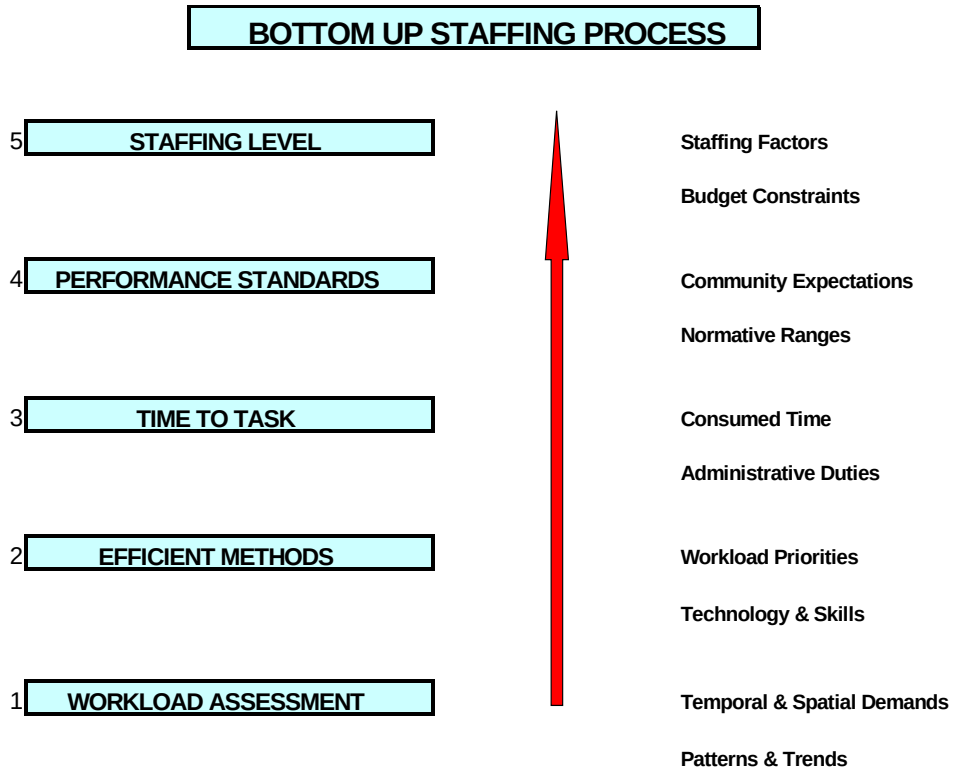
By and large, it was found that patrol managers and supervisors do not get useful standard management reports on a monthly basis. Although numerous reports are made available from the CAD, many of the reported numbers cannot be reconciled with other data.

The problems in data collection underscore the need for a complete revamping of the patrol management information system in the Department. This need cannot be overstressed and is suggested in other sections of this report. As presented in Appendix III-A, the data elements required by the study should not be difficult to extract from current information sources, given a competent CAD records management system.

Bottom-Up Staffing Process. The approach used to conduct the staffing analysis is called the "Bottom-Up" methodology, as sketched on the next page. Basically, this method offers a way to look at the required level of staffing based on the total amount of work, the work

each person or unit is tasked to do, and the level of performance that the work is supposed to achieve.

Exhibit III-1



Patrol Regions

The Pierce County policing environment is highly diverse. The various areas of the county present different challenges and options for keeping the peace, controlling crime, maintaining order, and intervening in crises. The county includes over 1,100 square miles of patrollable area, including developed residential and commercial areas, waterways and flatlands, islands and peninsulas, mountainous areas, two military installations, a seaport-transport complex, major highways, sprawling suburban growth, and many recreation areas. The county population is growing at a rapid rate, which increases the demands for police services.

Besides serving unincorporated Pierce County, the Sheriff's Department serves three cities under contract. The resources allotted to those three cities vary according to city size, crime rate, and budget. The seven patrol areas analyzed in this study are as follows:

Exhibit III-2

Sheriff's Department Patrol Areas

Patrol Area			
Edgewood	10,700	8.5	80.5
University Place	29,550	8.5	121.1
Lakewood	63,820	18.3	260.1
Contract Cities Total	104,070	35.3	461.7
Peninsula Detachment	48,249	121.1	802.6
Foothills Detachment	40,255	499.6	1,306.6
Mountain Detachment	41,874	403.8	1,255.0
South Hill Precinct	165,000	97.8	1,042.5
Unincorporated Total	295,351	1,122.2	4,406.7
Total Service Areas	399,421	1,157.5	4,868.4

The above table shows the different patrol areas and suggests that population and geography affect the level of patrol performance in each area. It should be noted that the population estimates of the unincorporated areas exclude civilians living on military installations. Thus, the service population is lower than in other data sources.

Patrol Workload

Based on various sources, the Pierce County Sheriff responded to approximately 132,000 citizen-generated calls for service between August 1999 and July 2000. Other calls were diverted to telephone report takers. In order to adequately handle those calls, about 69 units were deployed per day, creating 1.4 patrol runs per citizen generated incident.

Of the 132,000 calls for service, the dispatchers designated approximately 1,500 (1.1%) as priority 1 (emergency) calls and 58,500 (44.3%) as priority 2 (urgent). The others were classified as priority 3 (routine) calls. Emergency calls are by far the most important type of call, suggesting lights and sirens and the fastest response speed that can be safely attained. Urgent calls should not be unnecessarily delayed, but do not suggest exceeding speed limits—even when safe.

For all dispatched calls, the average time spent by patrol officers, including primary and cover units, was close to 53 minutes. This figure falls outside the range of 35-50 minutes per call that we have found from other agencies throughout the nation. The longer time per call is understandable, however, because of the long distances some units must travel.

Exhibit III-3 shows the variations by time of day and service area for the average number of citizen calls for service.

Exhibit III-3

Average Number of All Dispatched Calls for Police Service by Area & Time of Day

Time of Day	*00-0359*	*04-0759*	*08-1159*	*12-1559*	*16-1959*	*20-2359*	*All Day*
Edgewood	0.7	0.6	1.2	1.8	1.8	1.5	7.6
University Place	3.6	2.0	5.1	5.6	6.8	6.6	29.7
Lakewood	13.6	7.2	17.0	20.5	22.9	21.2	102.5
Contract Cities Total	17.9	9.8	23.3	27.9	31.5	29.3	139.8
Peninsula Detachment	2.1	1.5	5.4	5.7	5.4	4.4	24.4
Foothills Detachment	2.6	1.6	4.7	5.5	6.3	5.0	25.7
Mountain Detachment	2.7	2.0	5.8	7.0	7.5	5.4	30.4
South Hill Precinct	15.5	11.0	28.3	30.0	30.8	25.5	141.2
Unincorporated Total	23.0	16.1	44.3	48.2	49.9	40.3	221.8
Pierce County Total	40.9	25.9	67.5	76.1	81.4	69.6	361.5
Annual Total	14,938	9,460	24,648	27,792	29,727	25,396	131,960

The shaded areas in the above table indicate the busiest and slowest areas by time period. Calls for service are least frequent during the early morning hours of 0400-0759. During the late afternoon and evening hours of 1600-1959, the workload is three times as heavy considering the county as a whole. Similarly, there are large variances among the seven service areas. South Hill receives the most calls by far of any area—over one-third more than Lakewood.

For the October 1999 – August 2000 study period, it was found that an average of 69 patrol units per day were deployed county-wide to handle responses to citizen requests for service and conduct neighborhood problem solving. Since some shifts were ten hours each, this figure was normalized to fit an eight-hour shift and resulted in the equivalent of **75.4** eight-hour cars deployed per day. This convention is used throughout this report to reduce confusion concerning the matching of patrol units to workload.

Below, in Exhibit III-4, Average Number of Patrol Units Deployed by Area and Time of Day, one should note that the three detachments did not regularly deploy patrol units during the entire early morning hours (0400-0759). Instead, units were scheduled such that during a two-hour stretch, units were dispatched from the contract cities, the South Hill area, or an off-duty detachment officer was called when a police emergency occurred.

Exhibit III-4

Average Number of Patrol Units Deployed by Area and Time of Day

Time of Day	*00-0359*	*04-0759*	*08-1159*	*12-1559*	*16-1959*	*20-2359*	*All Day*
Edgewood	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3	3.8
University Place	2.7	2.7	3.1	3.1	3.5	3.5	9.3
Lakewood	5.8	5.8	6.4	6.4	6.4	9.3	20.1
Contract Cities Total	9.8	9.8	10.7	10.7	11.2	14.1	33.2
Peninsula Detachment	3.0	0.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	7.4
Foothills Detachment	2.2	0.0	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.2	5.9
Mountain Detachment	2.1	0.0	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.4	5.6
South Hill Precinct	6.8	6.8	7.7	7.7	7.1	10.5	23.3
Unincorporated Total	14.1	6.8	15.5	15.4	14.8	18.1	42.2
Pierce County Total	23.9	16.6	26.2	26.1	26.0	32.2	75.4
Annual Total	8,723.5	6,059	9,563	9,526.5	9,490	11,753	27,521

We reviewed current patrol staffing to see whether it was proportional to the calls for service. Results are partially shown in Exhibits III-4 and III-5. During two periods, 1200-1559 and 2000-2359, there is a good match between the call workload and the proportion of response units deployed. However, the busiest period, 1600-1959, had triple the number of calls as the 0400-0759 period but less than the twice the units deployed (see shaded areas). The other time periods were off by just a few percentage points, indicating a serious effort to match shift schedules with workload. However, the number of units deployed by precinct does not quite match the workload, creating inequities with respect to available proactive time and responses to emergency calls.

Exhibit III-5

Patrol Deployment and Calls for Service by Time of Day: County Totals

Time of Day	00- 0359	04-0759	08-1159	12-1559	16-1959	20-2359	Daily
Calls for Service	40.9	25.9	67.5	76.1	81.4	69.6	361.5
% Workload	11.3%	7.2%	18.7%	21.1%	22.5%	19.3%	100.0%
Cars Deployed	23.9	16.6	26.2	26.2	25.9	31.9	75.4
% Deployed (hours)	15.9%	11.0%	17.4%	17.4%	17.2%	21.1%	100.0%

Whether 75.4 units would be sufficient to provide acceptable levels of patrol is addressed later in this report. It is clear here that the deployment of patrol cars does not quite match the call workload by time of day and geography. Whether the deployment scheme corresponds better to the demands for a rapid response to emergency calls is also determined later in this section.

Staffing Adjustment. The total number of units deployed on a daily basis is a direct product of the number of officers assigned to patrol duties through the operation of Staffing Adjustment Factors (S.A.F.). These factors account for the decrease in personnel at each stage of the allocation process. Examples are the Duty Factor, which considers the practice of deploying a two-officer vehicle on some shifts in each precinct, and assignment of some patrol officers to light duty because of medical reasons. Appendix III-B, Staffing Adjustment Factors Worksheets, includes a complete list of these factors and how they are applied to determine budgeted officer positions. The appendix also includes the various types of absences that reduce the number of units that can be deployed. In all, for the August 1999-July 2000 study period, 136 patrol positions (non-grant funded) were calculated as producing a daily equivalent of 75.4 patrol units working eight-hour shifts.

Performance Levels

Calculation of patrol staffing based on the MPP model requires choice of performance levels desired by the policymakers. Three aspects of performance are discussed here:

- Problem-solving time
- Administrative time
- Response time to emergency calls for service

The performance levels included in the analysis were chosen in part so that the Pierce County Sheriff's Department can realize its potential for Community Policing. This means that neighborhood police officers have sufficient time to identify, analyze, and resolve neighborhood problems, while also responding appropriately to citizen calls for police services. Another underlying factor to be considered is the need for patrol officer time to provide detectives with better quality preliminary investigations.

Problem-Solving Time. An average of 40% of an officer's time, or 24 minutes per hour, is considered adequate for community-police problem solving. On a county-wide basis, patrol officers have considerably less time for problem solving, with wide variation by area and time of day. Figures are shown below in Exhibit III-6, Problem Solving Time per Unit. The figures were computed by MPP, the patrol simulation software.

Exhibit III-6

Average Hourly Problem Solving Time per Patrol Unit

Time period	*00-0359*	*04-0759*	*08-1159*	*12-1559*	*16-1959*	*20-2359*
Edgewood	42.5	44.9	35.4	34.4	35.9	36.0
University Place	31.1	38.5	26.4	29.1	25.9	24.8
Lakewood	19.8	30.9	10.8	6.2	2.8	19.8
Peninsula Detachment	35.9	-	24.0	21.2	20.0	25.6
Foothills Detachment	35.4	-	17.0	19.6	12.7	18.5
Mountain Detachment	23.7	-	3.7	6.2	3.6	11.3
South Hill Precinct	18.9	25.7	3.0	5.2	1.0	19.6

It is clear that Edgewood, University Place, and (to a lesser extent) the Peninsula Detachment had time to engage in a certain level of problem solving. Meanwhile, South Hill, Mountain, and Lakewood were scrambling just to keep up with citizen calls for police services during the busiest time of day, 0800-1959. From the workload and the number of response units deployed in those areas, we surmise that they could not have handled the call load without considerable help from supervisors, K-9, Traffic, and other secondary units. During the 0400-0759 periods, the three detachments have only partial staffing. It is safe to assume that the South Hill units spend much of their available time during that period responding to calls in the Mountain and Foothills areas.

The large variances in available time for problem solving underscore the need for redistribution or addition of patrol units at various times of day. This problem solving time is in addition to the time needed to deal with citizen calls for service as well as the time needed for administrative activities such as meetings, court time, equipment maintenance, meals, and personal breaks.

Administrative Time. Each patrol unit must be allotted a certain amount of time during the shift to attend to matters that do not fall into the categories of Calls for Service or Problem-Solving Time. This includes activities such as briefings, end of watch reports, equipment transfer and maintenance, court on duty, meetings with supervisors or detectives, meals and breaks, report writing after clearing a call, booking property or evidence, and personal relief time.

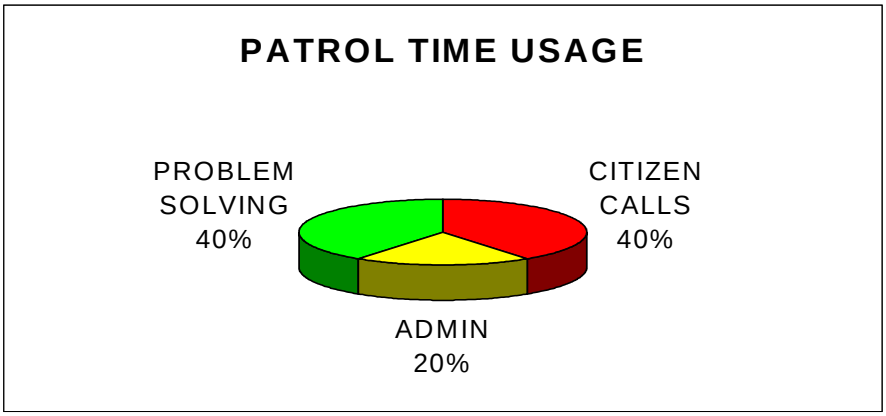
Administrative time data should be routinely available by shift and precinct in a patrol management information system. However, the information was not available in any records of the Pierce County Sheriff's Department. To obtain data on administrative time, we consulted an advisory group of patrol supervisors. They reviewed each category of administrative work and estimated the time consumed on each shift.

According to the estimates, a patrol unit spends, on average, about two hours per eight-hour shift on administrative activity, or about 15 minutes per hour for the day and graveyard shifts and about 12 minutes per hour on the swing shift. In Lakewood and South Hill, however, patrol officers arrive 15 minutes prior to shift starting time in order to get their gear together, face inspection, receive a briefing and district assignments prior to logging on as available for dispatched calls for service. This time was subtracted from the two allotted hours per unit and divided throughout the shift to yield an average of about 12 minutes/hour for all shifts to cover administrative/personal time.

The proposed distribution of patrol time is illustrated below.

Exhibit III-7

Balanced Distribution of Patrol Time by Workload Category



Response Time. Response time is a combination of travel time and dispatch delay (discussed later). Historically, response time has been viewed differently since the publication of *Response Time Analysis* (Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, 1977). The study showed that rapid police response to citizen calls for service had varying rates of efficacy, depending on the nature of the calls. In particular, rapid response by the police significantly influenced arrest rates and witness availability only in involvement crimes (crimes in progress). Moreover, the benefits of rapid response in involvement crimes dropped off sharply as the response time increased. Response-related arrests declined as *travel* time slowed from one minute (22%) to ten minutes (5%). Witness availability declined more gradually from one minute (63%) to ten minutes of travel (50%).

It is clear that most citizens desire the fastest response time to a crime in progress. However, a huge number of police officers would be needed to achieve an average travel time of one minute in emergencies. No jurisdiction could afford it. The most prudent course of action is to take a cost-benefit approach. This involves selecting the number of patrol units one can afford that give the best results, and then ensure that the units are able to respond as rapidly and safely as possible.

With that caveat in mind, the study team reviewed previous studies dealing with performance measures. We determined that *travel time of five minutes* would provide a reasonably effective response to crimes in progress. From the information presented in the Kansas City *Response Time Analysis,* we were able to determine that a five-minute travel time would produce response-related arrests in about 11% of the calls for crimes in progress. Reducing the travel time to three minutes would increase response-related arrests to about 14%.

Similarly, witness availability (an important factor in solving crimes) would improve from 54% for a five-minute travel time to only about 56% for a three-minute travel time. As shown in many later analyses, the marginal improvement in desired outcomes of rapid responses to high priority calls requires a doubling of the number of units available to respond to priority-one calls in certain precincts. If staffing is based only on response times, one rapidly approaches the point of diminishing returns.

Dispatch Delay. Also known a queue delay or "unit locate time," dispatch delay is the average amount of time it takes a dispatcher to locate an available unit close enough to the call location to respond. This time, typically between 0.5 and 2 minutes for priority-one (emergency) calls, is added to travel time to create patrol *response time*.

It is common practice in Pierce County for a supervisor or other secondary unit to be the first to respond when all primary patrol units are busy and cannot immediately respond. However, when no secondary units are readily available, the call must wait until a primary patrol unit can be made available.

The effects of these situations in South Hill and the three detachments during certain hours can be seen in the following table on average response times.

Exhibit III-8

Average Response Times to Emergency Calls by Patrol Area and Time of Day

Time period	*00-0359*	*04-0759*	*08-1159*	*12-1559*	*16-1959*	*20-2359*
Edgewood	6.4	6.2	7.4	6.9	5.5	6.6
University Place	4.7	4.4	4.2	4.4	4.5	5.2
Lakewood	4.3	3.9	5.1	5.3	4.7	5.4
Peninsula Detachment	9.2	13.7	9.0	9.2	9.5	9.6
Mountain Detachment	12.0	17.8	15.5	13.8	17.5	13.5
Foothills Detachment	9.6	11.5	9.7	9.9	11.3	10.5
South Hill Precinct	7.7	5.9	8.9	9.0	9.7	8.0

As indicated in the above table, the response times in the contract cities are close to or better than the performance standard of a 6.5-minute response time. In the other areas, response times are considerably longer during almost all periods. This illustrates the need for a more geographically balanced patrol force throughout the unincorporated areas.

Ideally, citizens in all precincts should experience the benefit of a short travel time, no greater than 5 minutes, combined with an average dispatch delay no greater than 1.5 minutes, regardless of the shift on which the call occurs. Currently this happens frequently in the contract cities but very rarely in the unincorporated areas. We could find no good reason why citizens in suburban South Hill Precinct service area should not expect the same level of service as their counterparts in the contract cities, if they are willing and able to pay for it.

However, residents in areas served by the detachments (Peninsula, Foothills, and Mountain) cannot realistically expect the same level of service because of the much greater distances patrol units have to travel. Furthermore, while an emergency call to the police is a very serious public concern, one should be aware that each detachment has experienced only *six* such calls per month for the past year.

Residents of the more distant or isolated locations in Pierce County benefit from the lack of noise, traffic, crowding, pollution, and other problems dwellers of more densely populated areas experience on a daily basis. Lower population density in rural areas also involves being farther away from essential services, often accessible only on narrow, winding, or unimproved roads. Long distances and travel impediments make it unlikely that the police can respond to emergencies as quickly as they can in more densely populated areas with better access.

It is therefore understandable that police service in the Peninsula, Foothills, and Mountain areas will have considerably longer travel times. In fact, an analysis of average travel times showed that the Foothills and Peninsula areas lagged behind the contract cities by a range of four to five minutes, while travel time to the Mountain area averaged seven to eight minutes longer than to the contract cities. This analysis did not include the 0400-0759 period because the detachments did not deploy units during all of those hours. As shown above in Exhibit III-8, the *response times* are approximately five to ten minutes longer in the detachments because of the combination of *both* longer travel times and dispatch delay.

The chief factors in travel time are the number of cars available to respond to calls, the average distance a unit must travel to a call, and the average travel speed. In contrast, dispatch delay is primarily affected by the availability of a nearby patrol unit to accept a call, the policy as to which units in the field are to respond to priority-one calls, and the amount of time necessary to transmit the pertinent details of the call. Common to both of these components of response time is the availability of patrol units to respond immediately to an emergency call. It seems obvious that the more units deployed to handle a given workload level, the higher the likelihood that one or more units would be available

to handle a priority-one call and more likely that a unit would be closer to the location of the call.

With more response units available during the busiest hours, therefore, the average dispatch delay should not exceed 1.5 minutes throughout the day. Consequently, setting a performance standard of 6.5 minutes emergency response time (5 minutes travel time + 1.5 minutes dispatch delay) seems both realistic and justified for the contract cities and the South Hill precinct. In the three detachments, however, we believe it is realistic to expect that the average response time should be five minutes longer. Therefore, we have adopted a response time of 11.5 minutes for the Foothills, Mountain, and Peninsula areas.

Determining Patrol Staffing. As mentioned earlier, the MPP patrol simulator model can calculate the number of patrol officers needed to achieve predetermined performance levels. In the urban and suburban areas, we supplied the model with average workload demands and current staffing levels (input data), together with the desired standard of ***6.5-minute response time*** **and** ***40% problem solving time*** available per patrol unit for each precinct and time period.

For the detachments, where the travel times are much higher, we set the performance standards to ***11.5- minute response time*** **and** ***35% problem solving time*** available per patrol unit. The response time standard reflects the additional five minutes average travel time to emergency calls. The reduced problem solving time takes into account the longer time on calls experienced in the three detachments.

It must be emphasized that these performance standards are not minimum starting points but ideals which a jurisdiction should strive to achieve. As illustrated in the "Bottom-Up" staffing model, Exhibit III-1 above, community expectations and budget constraints help shape performance levels and staffing. If the community does not want or cannot afford the amount of staffing required by the stated performance levels, policymakers can choose other performance standards. These will be provided in an appendix as alternative deployment levels.

Exhibit III-9

Deployment of Patrol Units to Meet 6.5 Minute Emergency Response Time and 40% Problem Solving Time

Time period	*00-0359*	*04-0759*	*08-1159*	*12-1559*	*16-1959*	*20-2359*	*Daily*
Edgewood	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
University Place	2	2	3	3	4	4	9
Lakewood	7	5	10	12	13	11	29
South Hill Precinct	8	7	16	16	16	13	38
Total	**18**	**15**	**30**	**31**	**34**	**29**	**79**

Deployment of Patrol Units to Meet 11.5 Minute Emergency Response Time and 35% Problem Solving Time

Time period	*00-0359*	*04-0759*	*08-1159*	*12-1559*	*16-1959*	*20-2359*	*Daily*
Peninsula Detachment	2	1	3	3	4	3	8
Foothills Detachment	2	1	3	3	4	3	8
Mountain Detachment	2	2	5	5	6	4	12
Total	**6**	**4**	**11**	**1**	**14**	**10**	**28**

To achieve the specified performance standards, the number of patrol units would have to be increased from 75.4 to 107 per day, and the number of officers assigned to patrol would have to be increased from 138 to 196 (allowing for rounding and combining of officers into eight-hour shifts). Exhibit III-10 on the next page shows the current and proposed staffing by patrol area.

All areas except the contract cities of Edgewood and University Place need more officers to perform the patrol workload to the proposed standards. Virtually no change is required in University Place. Edgewood, if it continues to deploy officers on ten-hour shifts, could afford to assign extra problem-solving duties to one of its officers when not needed as a relief unit.

The following points summarize the patrol staffing needs for the other areas based on the specified performance levels.

- The Peninsula Detachment could use more patrol coverage during the 0400-0759 and 1600-1959 hours, and is heavy from midnight to 0359. Otherwise, the deployment is adequate.

- The Foothills Detachment is staffed too thinly from 0800 to midnight.
- The Mountain Detachment personnel allotment is insufficient on all shifts for the workload they encounter.
- Lakewood needs to deploy nine more patrol units during 0800 to midnight period because of the heavy call volume.
- South Hill fared worse than any other area of the county with respect to patrol staffing in relation to the specified performance levels. South Hill needs to deploy significantly more units at all times of the day.

The budget impact is considerable. Daily deployment of 107 patrol units requires 196 patrol officers, to account for absences as illustrated in Appendix III-B, Staffing Adjustment Factors. This staffing level necessitates the budgeting of 213 officer positions to patrol in order to account for medical and administrative restricted personnel, and replacement of transfers, promotions, retirements, and terminations.

Exhibit III-10

Previous and Proposed Patrol Car Deployment and Personnel by Area

	AVERAGE 1999-2000		*PROPOSED 2001*		
	Patrol Cars Deployed	Personnel Assigned	Patrol Cars Deployed	Personnel Required	Personnel Change
Edgewood	3.8	7.0	3.0	5.5	-1.5
University Place	9.3	17.0	9.0	16.5	-0.5
Lakewood	20.1	36.8	29.0	53.1	16.3
South Hill Precinct	23.3	42.6	38.0	69.5	26.9
Mountain Detachment	5.6	10.2	12.0	22.0	11.7
Foothills Detachment	5.9	10.8	8.0	14.6	3.8
Peninsula Detachment	7.4	13.5	8.0	14.6	1.1

If this proposed increase is too large for a particular budget cycle, the personnel increase could be somewhat less, with less improvement in patrol performance. In South Hill, for example, deployment of 38 patrol units (69.5 officers) is proposed to reach the performance standard of 6.5-minute response time and 40 percent problem solving time. If South Hill deployed 31.5 cars per day (57 officers), it could achieve a 7-minute average response time to emergency calls and have 30 percent problem solving time per unit.

Appendix III-C presents a series of alternative deployment plans and their corresponding performance levels. As discussed earlier, a jurisdiction should choose a level of staffing that can produce desired performance standards.

Efficiency Issues

The "Bottom-Up" staffing approach (Exhibit III-1 above) requires use of efficient methods. Certain current patrol practices are not efficient.

A number of patrol activities could be either reduced or eliminated because they could be accomplished by other entities or by other means. These are the types of calls or reports that have marginal significance for the safety, security, or maintenance of order in the community, and consume precious patrol resources that could be better used investigating and resolving neighborhood crime/disorder problems.

Of the approximately 132,000 citizen calls for service in 1999, nearly one-fifth (25,000) can be considered marginal patrol runs, based on national averages. While it might be argued that *some* of those marginal calls merited a patrol response, at least half of those 25,000 calls could be handled more efficiently by other than a mobile patrol response. Other jurisdictions have dealt with such demands by using Community Service Officers (CSO), by telephonic means, delegating to other agencies to handle, etc.

False Alarms. An example is the 13,362 patrol runs to burglar alarm calls. These calls required a two-officer response. It turned out that 98.6% of these patrol runs were to false alarms. Shoddy equipment, human error, bad weather, and poor maintenance often cause false alarms. Many officers are frustrated by having to respond time and again to the same locations with no corrective action on the part of either the alarm manufacturer, alarm service provider, or the resident. The current situation involves waste of public resources. Some officers have even ceased writing false alarm notifications because they believe it to be of no use. This exacerbates the problem because without good data on alarms, the problem is not likely to be adequately addressed.

Fair but firm alarm policies and practices could realistically reduce the number of patrol responses by at least one-third. Chapter V, Support Services, includes a detailed analysis of alarm calls and recommended actions.

Alternative Call Handling. The literature on Differential Police Response (DPR) has shown over the past 15 years or so that many of the following activities, handled by other than a mobile patrol unit, have not resulted in citizen dissatisfaction of police services, when implemented appropriately. In fact, the Pierce County Sheriff's Department routinely diverts a number of citizen complaints, including bicycle thefts, property damage, telephone harassment, theft from vehicle, etc. Other uncounted calls have been taken at other locations by restricted duty personnel and do not appear in periodic management reports. There is scant reason to believe that many more calls cannot be diverted to telephone call takers, Community Service Officers, or eliminated from police involvement altogether.

Recommendations

The main reason why patrol performance looks inadequate in several parts of Pierce County is that suburban growth in those areas has outstripped the Sheriff's efforts to staff the areas with sufficient numbers of generalist patrol officers. There is just too much patrol workload for the existing staff, and small incremental staffing increases cannot keep up with the growth.

III-1. It is recommended that the Sheriff's Department begin to increase patrol staff in order to deploy the numbers of patrol units according to Exhibits III-9 and III-10.

This should be accomplished in a number of ways, including budgeting for more patrol positions, filling unincorporated area patrol positions first, and transferring some personnel allocations from specialty units, such as Traffic and the Community Support Team, to neighborhood patrol.

III-2. Pierce County should require a policing impact analysis of any new development proposal. The criteria and analysis methodology should be created by the Sheriff's Department, together with County budget analysts.

As mentioned earlier, suburban growth outpaced the County's ability to adequately respond to service demands. This procedure would put a price tag on necessary services. This would then be compared with expected tax revenues to determine the fiscal feasibility of new developments. To do otherwise does a grave injustice to the existing community who would have to "pick up the tab" for development or face a reduction in their current level of police services.

III-3. It is recommended that specialist uniformed officers such as those in traffic enforcement and community policing gradually be folded into patrol as neighborhood patrol officers.

Each specialist unit should still have only a small number of specially trained officers to *support* the role of the generalist neighborhood officer, not to take traffic and other community problem solving away from them. Failure to do so will only keep patrol in a reactive mode, and they may never reach their potential as full-service neighborhood police officers. Some of CST positions could slowly be transferred to patrol as the generalist model becomes more commonplace, but some Traffic Unit positions could be immediately shifted to patrol.

III-4. Patrol Operations should study the option of expanding the boundaries of the South Hill patrol area to include adjacent areas of both Foothills and Mountain detachments.

By combining those contiguous suburban neighborhoods that frequently draw on South Hill resources into the precinct, a better distribution of patrol units can be achieved. In return, those two affected detachments would be able to spend more of their time in the more rural areas. This issue is not new to the Department and has been under study for some time. We support and encourage this effort.

III-5. Patrol Operations should perform an annual workload/staffing study throughout the Sheriff's Department in order to ensure that resources are placed where needed and utilized as efficiently as possible.

Ongoing or at least an annual study will help keep the agency from getting too far "off track" in terms of neighborhood policing. It will also tell supervisors and commanders how well they are managing their resources in their efforts to maintain established performance standards.

III-6. The Sheriff should examine patrol responses to alarm calls, as well as other calls that could be as easily and more efficiently handled over the phone, or by a community service officer (CSO).

This approach should be implemented as soon as possible because it will take a considerable amount of time to recruit, hire, and train the number of new officers required under the proposed patrol staffing plan. Other jurisdictions, such as the Seattle Police Department, are making good uses of CSO positions in patrol.

IV. CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

This chapter analyzes the organization and performance of the criminal investigation function in the Pierce County Sheriff's Department. The analysis considers each stage of the case management process for reported crimes, including preliminary investigations, case screening, assignment, and monitoring. Investigative performance of case carrying detectives is evaluated along with caseloads and staffing levels. The chapter also discusses the proactive investigative units (General Narcotics and Methamphetamine) and investigative support units (Sex Offender monitoring, Warrants, Forensics, and Pawn).

Factors Affecting Investigative Staffing

After responding to calls for service, police personnel conduct investigations of reported crimes. Because calls for service come from the public, they directly reflect community concerns about the quality of life in neighborhoods. Oddly enough, crime problems that impact on quality of life are not always the serious offenses (Part-1 Crimes) for which national statistics are collected.

Crimes such as prostitution, gambling, and narcotics are not always brought to the attention of the police by a crime report. These problems are often identified by patrol officers themselves, through complaints called into tip lines, or complaints made to city officials that are forwarded to the police. Police agencies and local governments must make difficult policy decisions about the amount of time and money that will be spent investigating vice and narcotics activity.

Patrol staffing levels can be evaluated in terms of response time for different types of calls, patrol time available for proactive police work, and other performance factors. Methods for evaluating investigative staffing needs are much less sophisticated. The methods are affected by many variables such as the following:

- Role of patrol officers in conducting preliminary and follow-up investigations.
- Skill level and knowledge of investigative techniques on the part of both patrol and investigative personnel.
- Quality of preliminary investigation reports completed by patrol officers.
- Effectiveness of quality control procedures for preliminary investigations.
- Level of support from crime analysis and other information systems.
- Level of community willingness to participate in the justice system.
- Degree to which investigators spend time on administrative or support functions.
- Effectiveness of efforts to collect, analyze, and present physical evidence in court.

Since it is difficult to control for these factors when comparing data from community to community, there are *no national standards for investigator caseload levels*. Instead, investigative staffing analysis is based on a comparison of time available to work on cases, caseloads assigned to investigators, and results achieved.

Successful results of investigative work are usually measured in terms of the following:

- Arrests.
- Case cleared because the offender has been identified but cannot be arrested.[3]
- Sufficient evidence against a suspect has been assembled to convince a judge to issue an arrest warrant or search warrant.

A case management system is the primary tool for defining optimal caseloads for investigators that provide the best return on investment in staff time. Assigning too few cases may result in low clearance rates because few cases are investigated. Assigning too many cases to investigators can also reduce clearances because insufficient attention is given to the assigned cases. Ongoing monitoring and fine-tuning of the overall investigative process is critical to effective management and staffing of this function.

The case management process should assure that cases are expeditiously investigated and not held open longer than necessary. Supervisors should be able to set caseloads that equitably distribute work among investigators. Equity does not mean equal numbers of cases assigned to each investigative unit. Arson, fraud, and homicide cases often take more time to investigate than larcenies and burglaries. Caseloads should be set based on the relative difficulty of cases. Staffing levels can be changed, assignment decisions can be adjusted, and screening criteria can be changed to correct inequities in caseloads among investigators or units.

Role of Police in Crime Control. Another complication in evaluating the staffing needs of the criminal investigations function is that about two-thirds of the serious crimes committed in most communities are not reported to the police. Statistics reported by police to the Federal Bureau of Investigation suggest that offenders are arrested for only about 22%[4] of the serious crimes[5] committed in communities, leaving 78% not cleared (unsolved). However, victimization surveys indicate that nearly 64% of the serious crimes committed in the United States are not reported;[6] in other words, the police can only address 36 out of 100 total crimes. Applying the 22% clearance rate to the 36 crimes known to the police, we now realize that an offender is apprehended in less than 8% of total crimes committed. This effect is illustrated below in Exhibit IV-1.

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[3] The Federal Bureau of Investigation classifies these cases as being cleared by exceptional means.

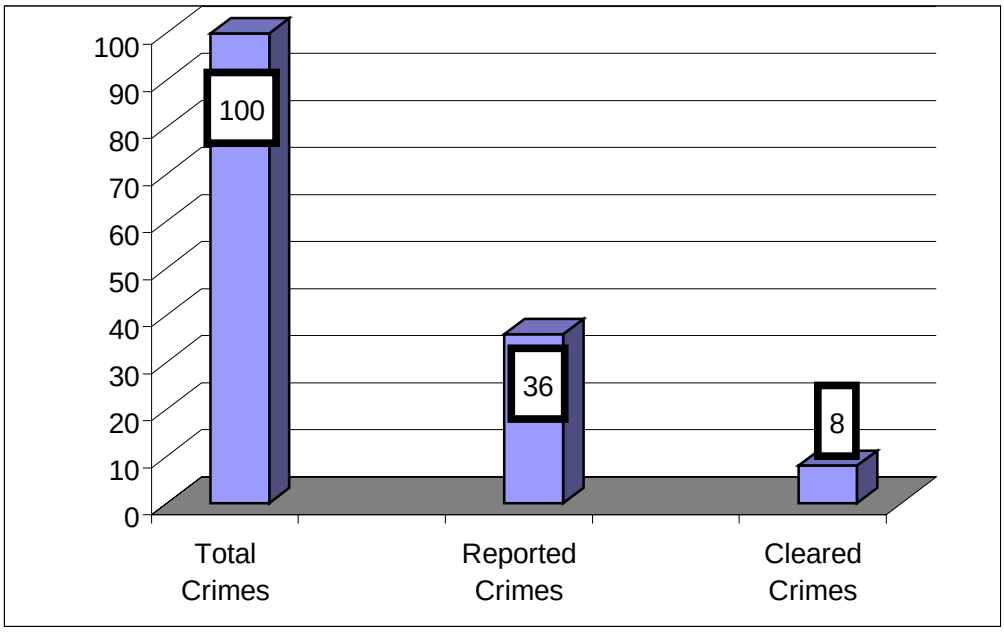
[4] Over the last five years, the average clearance rate for police agencies reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and published in the Uniform Crime Reports was 22 percent.

[5] By serious crime, we mean murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft.

[6] Bureau of Justice Assistance, Criminal Victimization in the United States, May 2000.

Exhibit IV-1

Cleared Crimes as Compared to Reported Crimes and Total Crimes



Rather than respond only to reported crimes, the police initiate a significant amount of investigative work based on information that points to potential criminal activity. Areas of investigation such as employee theft, insurance fraud, or narcotics use and trafficking can be so limitless that the problem becomes how to set priorities so the best benefit is gained from the work of the police and the justice system.

With so much crime unreported, the number of arrests a police agency makes may not be as important as focusing time and available resources on offenders who are responsible for a significant number of crimes. Research and experience indicate that a relatively small number of habitual, "career" offenders are most active when they are juveniles and are responsible for a disproportionate number of crimes. These offenders establish their criminal careers as juvenile offenders and continue to commit crimes in their adult years.

Studies have consistently shown that between five and eight percent of the entire juvenile population is responsible for 60 to 80 percent of the serious crime committed by juveniles. In addition, 25 percent of juveniles arrested are responsible for 77 percent of the violence committed by juveniles. Many communities have attempted to make arrests count by focusing on both juvenile and adult serious repeat offenders. This includes career criminals and those at high risk of becoming involved in that life style.

The most effective serious habitual offender programs use formal criteria to identify the most active offenders. Police, in cooperation with prosecutors, community organizations, and corrections officials, provide intensive community supervision, specialized case handling, and information sharing among criminal justice agencies and human service providers. Through community and inter-agency collaboration, a credible, systematic process can be established that would hold career criminals more accountable and could also increase the potential for changing their behavior through treatment programs.

Community concerns must also be considered in setting priorities for the investigation of crimes. Those concerns are expressed through calls for police service, meetings with elected officials and other community leaders, and formal community surveys. Some communities have developed formal Crime Control Plans that bring the community and the police together to reach a specific set of goals designed to improve safety.

Investigative Organizational Structure

To respond to the diverse needs of Pierce County, the criminal investigation function is a blend of decentralized and centralized units that work separately and together as necessary. Investigators assigned to centralized units are responsible for dealing with countywide crime problems and assisting the decentralized units as needed.

Investigative units are staffed in two of the three cities that contract with the Sheriff for law enforcement services (Lakewood and University Place). These units handle most cases reported within those jurisdictions, with support from centralized investigative units.

In unincorporated Pierce County, the Mountain, Peninsula, and Foothills detachments each have one investigator assigned to them. Some minor crimes reported in the detachments may also be assigned to a patrol deputy for follow-up. In these areas, investigators from the Major Crimes units in headquarters complete follow-up investigations of serious crimes against persons such as murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. The South Hill station includes investigators assigned to that location. Those investigators generally work on cases generated in the South Hill service area except for major crimes, which may be handled by investigators at headquarters.

Exhibit IV-2 summarizes the allocation of investigative personnel positions by rank and assignment as of October 2000. Two personnel from the National Guard who serve as intelligence analysts supplement the Special Investigations function, but are not shown in the table of organization. Those personnel process tips received by the Special Investigations unit through hot line telephone calls and the Internet.

Exhibit IV-2

Allocation of Investigative Positions, August 2000

	Captain	Lieutenant	Sergeant	Detective Sergeant	Detective	Deputy	Forensic Supervisor	Forensic Investigator	Forensic Technician	Office Assistant	Total
Criminal Investigations Division	1									1	2
Word Processing										2	2
Case Control										1	1
Major Crimes		1									1
Homicide/Missing				2							2
Sex crimes				2	4						6
Sex Offender Reporting				1						1	2
Arson				2							2
Juvenile				1	1	2					4
Warrants						2					2
Domestic Violence				1	2	4					7
South Hill				3	3					1	7
Peninsula, Foothills, Mountain						3					3
Special Investigations		1								1	2
Narcotics			1		5	3					9
Methamphetamine				1	2	4					7
Forensics							1	6	3	2	12
Pawn/Property Recovery										4	4
Subtotal	**1**	**2**	**1**	**13**	**17**	**18**	**1**	**6**	**3**	**13**	**75**
Lakewood		1		3	8						12
University Place				1	1						2
Total	**1**	**3**	**1**	**17**	**26**	**18**	**1**	**6**	**3**	**13**	**89**

Several important points can be made based upon the current allocation of personnel to assignments within the criminal investigation function.

- None of the investigators is specifically responsible for conducting follow-up investigations for property crimes such as burglary and larceny.

- The Department has civilianized work such as crime scene processing and tracking of stolen property pawned. This frees up sworn personnel for other work.

- There seems to be too few first line supervisors within the criminal investigation function. From interviews, we learned that even though there are 17 detective sergeant positions, 13 of them do not have supervisory duties because that rank is a vestige of a career path that is no longer operating in the Department, and is gradually being phased out. Thus, with one sergeant and 4 detective sergeants serving as supervisors, there are only 5 supervisors for 57 detectives, deputies, and non-supervising detective sergeant positions. The lieutenants and captain positions are mainly managerial or administrative in nature, and are therefore not considered supervisory.

Of the 57 officers and 5 supervisors assigned, one supervisor and two officers should be considered "support" investigators (warrants, sex crimes monitoring). This leaves 55 officers (11 of which are assigned to the City of Lakewood) to investigate criminal cases and 4 sergeants to supervise them. Further, 15 of those 55 positions are assigned to "proactive" investigations (Narcotics and Meth Units), and are not considered case-carrying detectives. The net number of investigator positions that were to be available for follow-up case assignments is therefore reduced to 40.

Quality of Preliminary Investigations

The investigation of cases begins when patrol officers respond to calls for service and ask questions of complainants and/or reporting parties to determine if there is enough evidence that a crime has committed to justify the filing of an offense report.

At the time of this study, patrol deputies in Pierce County primarily used paper report forms to complete preliminary investigations. The Department was making a transition from paper reporting to electronic reporting. Field deputies will enter their reports into laptop computers, which will create a word processing document that is sent on to the records section.

Based on interviews with investigative supervisors and review of a sample of about 100 preliminary investigation reports, it appears that preliminary investigations could be significantly improved.

- Patrol deputies know that most property crimes will not be assigned to investigators so they see little point in spending time on preliminary investigations that will receive no follow-up. The problems relate primarily to lack of investigative staff to assign property crimes for follow-up and absence of effective systems for quality control.

- The thoroughness of preliminary investigations and the extent to which a patrol officer conducts follow-up investigations are left up to the initiative of individuals rather than a system of case management.

- Reports indicate mainly what victims tell police and do not reflect much of an effort to conduct a preliminary investigation. Leads are not followed up, and canvasses of neighborhoods are not conducted.

- Officers rarely take written or sworn statements from victims. This can be critical if victims change their testimony later in a case.

- Patrol deputies rarely collect evidence from crime scenes. If evidence is collected, crime scene technicians perform the work.

- The role of patrol sergeants in quality control is limited. Sergeants do not usually review reports completed by the personnel from their shift. Oncoming sergeants review reports from previous shifts, and thus it is difficult to make any needed corrections quickly. Correction notices are sent directly back to patrol deputies and not through their supervisor.

- Patrol lieutenants do not seem to play any formal role in the quality control process for preliminary investigations or for cases in which patrol has made arrests.

- Formal case solvability factors are not included in the offense reporting form to guide patrol officers through preliminary investigations or help supervisors make case screening decisions.

- Modus operandi information is not consistently collected. The current reporting form does not include forced choice blocks for common tools used and points of entry. This information is critical for determining crime patterns and series.

- Inadequate preliminary investigations are not formally tracked, and officers do not seem to get very much formal feedback on the quality of their reports.

Written departmental directives that govern quality control do exist, but they are very basic and do not encourage patrol officers to complete high quality preliminary investigations. The Department does not have a field reporting guide that can be used by officers and supervisors as a check list for completing preliminary investigations.

These problems with the quality of preliminary investigations by patrol officers make case screening and crime analysis more difficult. Investigators and crime scene technicians spend a good deal of time trying to collect information that patrol deputies should be able to obtain quickly and efficiently in preliminary investigations. Collecting that information days and weeks after a crime occurs is much more difficult.

Case Screening and Assignment

Preliminary investigation reports are reviewed by patrol supervisors and then transported to the Department's records unit in headquarters. Copies of reports are made there. All reports except cases from Lakewood and University Place are sent to a civilian office assistant responsible for case control.

Investigations Information System Problems. The case control coordinator sorts cases and routes them back to appropriate unit. She enters information about each case into the Department's case tracking system called LECATS (Law Enforcement Case Analysis and Tracking System), a system developed and maintained through LESA. Supervisors update records in LECATS when case assignments are made at the unit level. The current process for handling reports results in delays of up to three days between the time a report is taken and when an investigative supervisor receives cases for distribution to detectives.

At the time of the study, LECATS was not being used as an effective case management tool. The data system did not provide supervisors with useful reports on case status. Few supervisors had the information they needed to track active cases unless they kept their own records of assignments.

In attempting to obtain investigations case data, we found that data from 1999 stored in LECATS was incomplete. The total number of cases in LECATS was not even close to the total number reflected in the Department's records management system (NET-RMS). Faced with these problems in 1999 data, we had to use 1998 data in this chapter because it was the most current accurate information on cases assigned for investigation.

Assignment of Cases. After investigative unit supervisors receive cases, some supervisors review them to make a decision about case assignments. Other supervisors distribute reports to investigators and let them sort through the reports to pick out those with potential to be cleared.

In the fall of 2000, a new Captain of investigations issued a set of general case screening guidelines and priorities based on the availability of investigators to handle cases. Priorities established for case assignment are as follows:

1. Cases with arrestees in custody that require follow-up work so that charges can be filed.

2. Cases with verified suspects and cooperative witnesses/victims and/or physical evidence.

3. Cases with verified suspects.

4. Cases with suspect information and cooperating witnesses/victims and/or physical evidence.

5. Cases with only suspect information.

6. Serial offenses, crimes involving criminal organizations, or criminal activity that causes public alarm can supercede these priorities. Crimes against persons are to be given more priority than crimes against property that fall into this category.

Juvenile Cases. One sergeant supervised one detective and two deputies in the Juvenile Unit. This unit tends to handle crimes involving older juveniles (closer to the age of 17) and felony crimes committed by juveniles. All crimes with juvenile suspects are sent to the Juvenile Unit from case control. The unit supervisor reviews them and then makes a decision to assign cases based on current caseloads and general case screening guidelines established by the Criminal Investigations Captain. There are two officers in the Warrants Unit listed under this element in the organizational chart, but are placed there for supervision and support only.

At the time of the review, the Juvenile Unit did not use LECATS to assign cases, and no automated data were available to analyze caseloads for these investigators. Case assignments were tracked manually on paper desk calendar sheets. Our review was confined to adult cases.

Domestic Violence. This grant-funded unit is staffed with two detectives, four deputies, and a sergeant. When the site visit to the unit was conducted, hiring of a civilian victim advocate was taking place. The unit is located adjacent to the prosecutor's office and the courts. This arrangement has created a close working relationship between the unit and justice agencies.

The unit receives about 10 reports per day of domestic violence. These are reports in which deputies have responded to a call, found evidence of domestic violence and completed a domestic violence report along with a police report. The role of the unit is to conduct follow-up investigations in those cases. The unit also works on warrant service for domestic violence offenses.

Once again, weaknesses in the LECATS case management system did not allow the unit supervisor to obtain monthly workload and outcome reports. As a result, no data were readily available regarding the performance of this unit. This leaves open the question as to whether the number of deputies assigned to this unit will be too many or too few to fulfill its mission.

Cases Assigned for Follow-Up Investigation. Based on the screening priorities and practices discussed above, and also the available staffing, cases are assigned to detectives

for follow-up. Exhibit IV-3 lists the number of police reports that were assigned for follow-up investigation in each geographic area in 1998. (The figures include some non-criminal incidents such as accidents and unattended deaths.) Overall, less than 22 percent of all police reports were assigned for follow-up investigation.

Exhibit IV-3

Assignment of 1998 Criminal Cases for Follow-up Investigation by Area

Area	Assigned to Detectives	Assigned to Prosecutor	Not Assigned	Total Cases	Percent Assigned
Edgewood	173	17	716	906	21.0%
University Place	685	129	2,855	3,669	22.2%
Lakewood	1,953	578	6,924	9,455	26.8%
Peninsula	1,208	5	2,323	3,536	34.3%
Mountain	212	11	3,537	3,760	5.9%
Foothills	582	3	2,512	3,097	18.9%
South Hill	3,189	573	14,537	18,299	20.6%
Total	8,002	1,316	33,404	42,722	21.8%

Part-1 crime cases were also analyzed by type to determine the percentage of major crimes assigned for investigation, as shown below.

Exhibit IV-4

1998 Part-1 Crimes: Assignments for Follow-up Investigation

Crime	Assigned to Detectives	Assigned to Prosecutor	Not Assigned	Total Cases	Percent Assigned
Murder	16	0	0	16	100.0%
Rape	105	3	27	135	80.0%
Robbery	135	5	288	428	32.7%
Assault	516	94	497	1107	55.1%
Burglary	556	42	4,078	4676	12.8%
Larceny	1,129	218	10,436	11,783	11.4%
Vehicle Theft	224	22	1,940	2,186	11.3%
Arson	76	2	62	140	55.7%
All Part-1 Crimes	2757	386	17,328	20,471	15.4%

The overall percentage of cases assigned for follow up investigation in Pierce County is low when compared with other agencies studied by members of the PMA study team. Assignment rates are affected by staffing levels, as analyzed later in the report.

In most police agencies, serious crimes against persons such as robberies and assaults have high assignment rates because these crimes take place at a specific time and the victims can usually provide information about suspects. In Pierce County in 1998, as shown above, only one in three robbery cases was assigned for investigation, and only 55% of serious assault cases were assigned.

As for property crimes, about 13 percent of burglaries and 11 percent of larceny and motor vehicle thefts were assigned for follow-up investigation. It is typical for crimes against property to have lower assignment rates because those crime reports contain less information. Usually there are no witnesses to property crimes and the time those crimes occur is generally not specific. Witness information, physical evidence, and a distinctive M.O. make crimes against persons more solvable than property crimes.

Investigative Performance

One of the few national benchmarks for evaluating the performance of a police agency in conducting criminal investigations is the rate at which cases are cleared by arrest or exceptional means. That information is reported by police agencies to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and is published on an annual basis. Case clearance rates were analyzed for unincorporated Pierce County as well as the three contract cities.

Clearance Rates. Appendix IV-A shows the rates of serious crimes cleared by the four jurisdictions served by the Pierce County Sheriff. Clearance rates are compared with those reported by (a) other communities of similar size, and (b) other police agencies in the Pacific States.

The data in Appendix IV-A show a general pattern of low rates of property crime clearances in the areas served by the Sheriff's Department. And except for murder, clearance rates were generally lower in Pierce County than in the comparison groups. This overall level of performance suggests the need for improvement in the overall criminal investigations process, including the level of resources dedicated to this function.

Cases Cleared by Jurisdiction. Part-1 crimes cleared by jurisdiction are listed in Appendix IV-A (1999) and Appendix IV-B (1998). Because of the method used by the Department to assign cases by a mix of personnel and unit codes, it was not possible to determine the number of cases cleared by each unit as compared to those assigned. That is, clearances were identifiable only by the geographic area where the crime occurred, without regard to which unit was responsible for the investigation. Major crimes units were not identified in the data files available for the study. Ideally, the data files should indicate the unit or investigator to which the case was assigned, and caseloads for investigators should be judged against results in terms of clearances. It is also important to know the number of arrests made by patrol officers when responding to calls for service. In most police agencies, patrol officers make about 65 percent of all arrests, thereby clearing most cases.

Once again, it was not possible to conduct that analysis because of inadequate coding of case assignments.

This information suggests that case clearance problems for property crimes are consistent among all the units in the Department. One of the reasons stated for this trend is that often the few assigned property crimes investigators get pulled away from their regular caseload and help out Major Crimes staff when they become overloaded with homicides or other high profile crimes. However, in terms of overall clearances for 1998, the City of Lakewood (primarily because of assault arrests) experienced a relatively higher clearance rate of 23 percent of reported Part-1 Crimes, while the remainder of the areas in the Sheriff's Department averaged 10 percent. It should be noted that clearance rates reported for 1999 were somewhat lower in all geographic areas, but those numbers were in question because it was shown that LESA was over counting the number of aggravated assaults.

Staffing Analysis

With workload data defined, the next step is to decide reasonable caseloads for investigators in various units. Caseloads are measured in terms of the number of new cases per week assigned to each investigator.

Lower caseloads for some units recognize that some crimes (crimes against persons) require more investigative time and more time taking cases to court. Units that handle more basic investigations (property crimes) for which arrests are made less frequently should have higher caseloads because those cases are handled more quickly and result in fewer arrests.

Measuring Investigator Availability for Duty. To determine investigator availability to handle new cases, leave records were obtained for 39 investigators who worked in criminal investigations for a full 12 months. Estimates of time were developed for administrative tasks and training time that make investigators unavailable for handling new cases. We also factored into the analysis time spent by some investigators in training necessary for secondary assignments such as SWAT, the Dive Team, and the Methamphetamine Team. As shown in Exhibit IV-5, about 17 percent of an average investigator's time is lost to allowable leave and other work. The staffing analysis that follows in this chapter will use 82.8% of actual personnel as an availability factor when estimating future caseloads for investigators.

Exhibit IV-5

Staff Adjustment Factor (SAF) For Investigators	
Annual Potential Staff Hours Available for Work	**2,085.7**
Hours Not Available, based on 1999 data	
Vacation	118.6
Holidays	71.9
Sick Leave	54.1
Training	45.6
Compensatory Time	40.0
Administrative time	17.3
Military Leave	10.7
Bereavement	1.4
Total Hours Not Available	**359.6**
Hours Available for Work	**1,726.1**
Estimated Hours for Administrative Duties (30%)	**517.8**
Hours Available for Investigations	**1,208.3**

Statements that should be said about this information are as follows:

- Investigators averaged a little more than 7 days of sick leave each in 1999, which was about equal to what patrol deputies took.

- Overall, leave time taken by investigators in Pierce County is reasonable and typical for investigators.

- Administrative time per investigator is higher than that needed for patrol units chiefly due to more court time on shift, interviewing arrestees, and responding to prosecutor requested case enhancements.

Investigative Caseloads. Because of extremely low staffing levels for the investigative function (due to both workload and vacancies), staff are routinely moved among assignments so that it becomes difficult to develop caseloads for what are typical detective squads like Burglary, Auto Theft, or Crimes Against Persons. Major sections and detachments are used as the unit of analysis. Listed below are assumptions and major factors in the analysis, based on interviews with Department staff. While there are some exceptions, these assumptions represent the typical allocation of personnel and workload among investigative units within the Sheriff's Department.

- Major Crimes investigators will be responsible for the investigation of Part-1 crimes against persons except for cases reported in Lakewood.

- Major Crimes investigators will be responsible for investigating sex offenses and forgery/fraud, which are Part-2 crimes, except for those reported in Lakewood.

- Investigators assigned to the detachments will be responsible for Part-1 property crimes but not for crimes against persons. Enough staffing should be available so that every Part-1 crime against persons (murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault) can be investigated for some period of time, as discussed later.

- Enough staffing should be available so that follow-up investigations can be conducted for at least 25 percent of Part-1 property crimes (burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft).

- Staffing in 2000 is compared with 1998 workload because that represents the best available information. Interviews determined that investigative staffing in 1998 was somewhat lower than during 2000.

Appendix IV-C contains workload data and staffing needed to establish reasonable caseloads for the case-carrying detectives based on these assumptions. Edgewood was not included because investigators assigned to centralized units conduct follow-up investigations not handled by officers assigned to that community.

Recommended staffing is based on the mix of persons and property crimes assigned to a unit. For example, caseloads for Major Crimes investigators is lower than that of staff assigned to South Hill who will handle property crimes. Caseloads of investigators assigned to the detachments should be more comparable to that of South Hill. In all, 46 investigators are needed to handle the projected number of criminal cases assigned for follow-up work. This represents an increase of 6 investigator positions.

Alternative Method of Analysis. As an alternative and cross check to the method that presumes a number of cases per detective position, the study team used the time-to-task method of workload analysis. This approach was pioneered by the Rand Corporation some 25 years ago and was adopted by team members performing research in the San Diego, Los Angeles, and Oceanside, California police departments.

This research recognized that someone has to read every case and decide whether a follow-up investigation will occur and the extent of the follow-up. It is clear that some investigations may be extensive, requiring many interviews, evidence preparation, and other work. Most cases require very little effort because it is not likely that the case can be successfully solved. Other cases may not be solved, in the usual sense, but may be resolved through formal mediation or arbitration, informal mutual agreement, or diversion. Such instances will require some time spent by a detective, but not necessarily the amount

of time it takes for a thorough criminal investigation. Additionally, this method takes into account the time spent by "proactive" detectives developing their own cases, such as narcotics violations. Based on our understanding of the typical detective workload, we have derived the following:

Exhibit IV-6

Investigative Workload Time to Task	
100% of Part-I Crimes	15 minutes
50% of Part-I Crimes	5 hours
100% of Part-II Offenses	10 minutes
33% of Part-II Offenses	1 hour

As a way of validating the allocation of 46 detectives to the Sheriff's investigative function, as proposed in Appendix IV-C, we use a formula that takes 70% of a detective's available work hours to determine potential investigative hours (1726.1 X .70) = 1208.3. This is shown in Exhibit IV-5 as Hours Available for Investigations as part of the calculation of Staffing Adjustment Factors. In that table, on average, each person could be counted on to be on the job 1,726.1 hours per year (216 workdays). Since an employee cannot be expected to work solely on assigned cases for the full shift, we have to discount it by 30% for breaks, administrative duties, aiding co-workers, responding to citizen inquiries, prosecutor case enhancements, squad meetings, court on shift, and so forth. This leaves a net case workload potential of 1,208.3 hours per detective per year.

The calculation of the expected case workload is as follows:

(100%) 19,970 Part-I crimes x 15 minutes = 4,992 hours
(50%) 19,970 Part-I crimes x 5 hours = 49,925 hours
(100%) 30,679 Part-II crimes x 10 minutes = 5,113 hours
(33%) 30,679 Part-II crimes x 1 hour = 10,225 hours
Total expected case workload = 70,255 hours/year

Now, dividing the workload by the average case hours worked per investigator yields: (70,255÷1,208.3) = 58.1 FTEs. From the table in Appendix IV-C, we see that the average case assignment method suggests 46 investigative FTEs + 15 narcotics officers = 61 FTEs. Combined, both methods suggest that the county-wide allocation should be around 58 to 61 investigators. Taking the higher figure, we find that 61 FTEs (detectives, deputies, and investigative aides) should be sufficient to work on criminal investigations, given the number of crimes in 1999. (If the number of projected crimes changes, the corresponding number of investigators should change.) The recommended number of investigative positions will require the supervision of 8 sergeants (one sergeant for every 7.5 investigators) for daily supervision, case screening and monitoring, employee coaching, and to help with heavier than normal caseloads, for a total of 69 investigative positions.

The City of Lakewood has a contract with the Sheriff's Department to provide investigative staff so that the City can investigate almost every crime that occurs there, but the rest of the contract cities and the unincorporated areas depend on their pooled investigative resources. Therefore, it seems appropriate to calculate separate allocations. Thus, the City of Lakewood, in a previous analysis in 2000 [7] as well as in Appendix IV-C, showed the need for 16 investigative FTEs and 2 supervisor positions. Taking those figures and subtracting from the overall allocation of 61 FTEs and 8 supervisors yields a remainder of 45 investigator and 6 supervisor positions to be allocated to the Sheriff's Department for investigations outside the City of Lakewood.

Additional Investigative Units

The Sheriff's Department has other investigative units to deal with crime problems in which law enforcement is driven mainly by public policy rather than citizen calls for service. Most positions in these units are not strictly "case carrying" investigators. Rather some units engage in proactive work designed to uncover and deter crime, such as drug manufacture and distribution. Other units, such as forensics, engage in highly technical work to support case-carrying investigators. Still other investigators, such as the warrants unit and the pawn unit, are devoted to special functions that support the work of the Department.

To be effective, the additional investigative units need a clear set of goals that make the best use of staff time and produce results that meet community expectations. Overall, we found that the work of the additional investigative units is sound but could be more effective with clearer goals and better measures of results that are achieved.

Narcotics Enforcement

Two units in the Department deal specifically with drug issues:

- The General Narcotics Unit (eight investigators and one sergeant) responds to complaints about drug trafficking, participates in regional task forces, and initiates investigations of drug sales networks and street level sales.

- The Methamphetamine Unit is responsible for investigating meth manufacturing and sales. The unit includes seven investigators, plus two National Guard personnel who were assigned to the unit in August 2000 to assist in analyzing intelligence and related information. In addition, three staff from the Forensics Unit and Major Crimes provide assistance in processing meth lab crime scenes.

[7] Police Management Advisors, *City of Lakewood Police Department: An Assessment of Operations and Contract with the Pierce County Sheriff's Department,* December 2000.

The General Narcotics Unit keeps limited records on active cases and does not produce a monthly report. At the time of the data gathering for this audit, no records for 2000 were available. The unit does keep on file, with the help of National Guard personnel, files of Intelligence Reports that are taken from hot line telephone calls or based on information e-mailed to the Unit from via the Internet. Another source of workload for the unit are referrals from Child Protective Services workers who identify circumstances or living conditions that suggest a child may have been exposed to drugs. These reports include allegations of parents using drugs or selling them. Only a small percentage of these reports generate cases because they contain very limited information.

The Meth Unit does a better job of documenting the work performed by its staff. Monthly activity reports are prepared and summarized on an ongoing basis. Work performed by the Meth Unit in 1999 included:

- 195 calls answered of which 137 had confirmed meth labs and 36 had weapons involved.
- 168 on-scene arrests.
- 98 search warrants executed.
- 45 consent searches of premises.
- 39 suspects verified.
- 30 arrest warrants obtained.
- 15 tactical entries of suspected meth lab locations.

Later in this chapter, the need for a Drug Control Plan in Pierce County will be explained. That plan would call for developing a community-wide effort to deal with drug problems that would help put the activities of the Narcotics and Meth Units in some meaningful context. Clearly, Pierce County has enough meth production and drug sales to keep the units busy. The key to successful drug control will be to identify enforcement work that will do the most good within the context of an overall, comprehensive effort that includes prevention, intervention, and enforcement.

Investigative Support Units

In general, these units provide information or assistance to deputies and investigators who are responsible for cases. The units include Sex Offender Monitoring, Warrants, Forensic Evidence, and Pawn.

Sex Offender Monitoring. The work of this unit is state mandated. The staff include a detective sergeant (who has an additional duty as a polygraph operator) and an office assistant. Patrol deputies also have an active role in sex offender monitoring by verifying addresses and investigating missed reporting deadlines.

As of August 2000, Pierce County had about 2,200 registered sex offenders, of which 700 lived within the primary jurisdiction of the Sheriff's Department. Different levels of supervision are required for various sex offenders. The most serious offenders lacking a

permanent residence must report to the Sex Offender Monitoring Unit on a weekly basis. On an annual basis, the Department must make a reasonable effort (usually by a mailing) to verify the addresses of registered sex offenders.

Sex offenders must be fingerprinted, photographed, and registered with the Washington State Patrol when they first report to the Sheriff's Department. Reimbursement for the cost of photographing and fingerprinting these offenders must be billed to the Washington State Patrol within 60 days.

The support staff member in the unit enters data on offenders in an automated system. In some cases, the support staff member actually goes to the front desk to meet offenders that come in to report to the Sheriff's Department. While this unit has made major strides in the last 12 months, more work needs to be done to assemble adequate files on each offender, and the overall database of information offenders needs to be checked. 1999 was also the first year the Department was in compliance with state law in making a reasonable effort to verify the addresses of offenders.

Warrant Unit. This unit is comprised of two deputies, plus two U.S. Marshals planned to be added in late 2000. The Warrant Unit staff report to the Juvenile Unit sergeant. They are responsible for (a) searching for offenders who are wanted for serious (felony) crimes, and (b) extradition of prisoners arrested in other jurisdictions who are brought back to Pierce County for trial.

Warrant service is an important element of a Department's efforts to clear cases. None of the workload of this unit is tracked through a case management system. Thus it is difficult to document the work of the unit. The investment of two personnel to this work is not unreasonable. As the patrol function gains more proactive time, patrol deputies should play an expanding role in serving warrants. A central warrant unit would serve a coordination role. If the number of investigators increases based on this report, extradition work should become the responsibility of the unit that made a case against an individual offender.

Forensic Evidence Collection. When a deputy or investigator identifies physical evidence at a crime scene that needs to be processed, they can collect an item to have it processed or request that civilian crime scene investigators respond to collect fingerprints or other evidence.

Of the five crime scene investigators, four are assigned to the day shift (staggered hours covering 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), and one works Monday to Thursday on a ten-hour shift from 2 p.m. to midnight. No staff is assigned to duty on weekends. If a crime scene needs to be processed during off-hours for the unit, that work is done on an overtime basis. In 1999, crime scene technicians responded to 1,297 crime scenes, of which 134 required overtime because a request for service came in when no staff was on duty.

The 1,297 crime scenes processed translates into about 25 per week or about 5 per workday. Typically, incoming cases are split between two of the four crime scene investigators on duty that are assigned to respond to calls. The current staffing level means that each crime scene investigator handles on average 2 to 3 crime scenes per day. Based on 1999 data, it takes an average of 1 hour and 50 minutes to process a crime scene, meaning that about 3 ½ hrs (for two crime scenes) to 5 ½ hrs (for three crime scenes) are spent daily per technician assigned to calls, exclusive of overtime.

One method for determining if crime scene investigators are having an impact on crime clearances is to determine the percentage of serious crimes from which evidence is collected. Listed below are categories of selected Part-1 crimes and the percentage of those crime scenes to which crime scene investigators responded in 1999.

Exhibit IV-8

Crime Scenes Processed by Evidence Technicians by Offense Type

	Robbery	Assaults	Burglary	Theft	Vehicle Theft	Arson	Rape
Offenses	344	1142	4256	11801	2162	110	142
# Processed	137	303	1097	155	197	28	62
% Processed	39.8%	26.5%	25.8%	1.3%	9.1%	25.5%	43.7%

This information suggests that in many cases crime scenes for major offenses are not being processed for evidence. Clearly, there is no evidence to process or collect in a significant number of cases. Nevertheless, it appears that the percentages are relatively low and may reflect a need to better assess crime scenes, involve deputies in that work, or make more time available for crime scene investigators to work in the field.

Based on all the crime scene work performed in 1999, only 19 cases involved offenders identified from latent fingerprints using the Department's Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS). An additional 166 offenders were identified using manual methods, for a total of 185 cases. When offenders are identified, the information is sent back to deputies or to investigators. In some cases, it appears that no staff time is available to follow up, so some cases go unsolved even though a suspect has been identified based on fingerprints.

Besides responding to crime scenes, crime scene investigators process evidence they collect as well as evidence taken to the unit by deputies. Generally, about half of a crime scene technician's time is spent in the laboratory and the other half in the field. A good

deal of time is spent in court testifying about how evidence was collected, preserved, and processed. However, no mechanism is in place for tracking time spent in court.

In addition to crime scene investigators, the Department employs three evidence technicians who code latent fingerprints, test marijuana seized by the Department, and take photographs of assault victims (domestic violence) who come to headquarters to file reports. The technicians also enter data into a computer database to keep track of latent fingerprints that have been successfully coded in the AFIS system.

Two office assistants assigned to the Forensics Unit are responsible for filing fingerprint cards, rolling fingerprints for people seeking permits, responding to requests from the public at the front desk at headquarters, and completing clerical work for the unit.

Overall, in our opinion, the work of the Forensics Unit was up to date and well documented. This unit and its work are assets that could be better utilized in the future to improve property crime clearances.

Pawn Unit. During a site visit conducted in August of 2000, three civilian clerical personnel staffed the Pawn Unit. The unit was in transition as result of computer problems. Through the end of 1999, the Department's information system included a fully operational pawn unit. After that system was replaced for Y2K reasons, the new system did not include a pawn module.

By August 2000, the unit staff were using Excel spreadsheets to continue to capture pawn data from the electronic files submitted by six of Pierce County's fifteen pawnshops. The other nine shops were submitting paper records, which the staff then entered manually.

The Department found a contractor to develop a new pawned items database, which was under development during the site visit. In the meantime, the Department had lost much of its ability to keep track of pawned goods. Requests for searches of information about pawned items slowed to two to three a day, because departmental staff knew of the unit's problems. Completion of a new pawn application should allow the Department to trap information about people who frequently pawn property and know offenders who pawn items. Overall, the new pawn system will be a good tool for dealing with property crimes. The use of the new system should be encouraged through training and supervision. Its operation is orderly and as effective as it can be under current circumstances.

Recommendations

To put these recommendations in perspective, it is important to recognize that the staff in criminal investigations was very open to new ideas raised as part of this study. Information was offered freely, and the study team enjoyed cooperation throughout the project. That interest in making change for the better will be an asset to the Department in the future.

Another important factor is to recognize the crucial role of patrol officers in the criminal investigations process. Recommendations made elsewhere in the report point to improved deployment practices and increased patrol staffing levels. Those changes should make more time available for patrol officers to play a more active role in preliminary and follow-up investigations. With Pierce County's large area, it is imperative that the first deputy that arrives at a crime scene be prepared to do as much as can be reasonably expected to clear a case. Expanding the role of deputies will improve their job satisfaction and improve case clearances so long as they are provided with the time to do investigative work.

Further, the Department should move away from a special unit policing model, which is not efficient or effective. For example, deputies can be most effective in serving warrants, monitoring sex offenders and parolees, and collecting field intelligence about conditions that support the drug trade. A well trained, adequately staffed, and well-coached patrol force is the foundation upon which an effective criminal investigations process is built.

Other Workload. It was brought to the attention of the audit team that oftentimes investigators are pulled away from there regular caseloads to work on more pressing issues (as was the case for property crime detectives helping in homicide, as discussed earlier). Additional investigative functions such as criminal intelligence and computer crimes were also being conducted by "case carrying" detectives. These two functions are critical to a modern police agency and need to be staffed with full-time investigators. Furthermore, the work performed on these tasks and the results achieved need to be fully documented, and available for periodic management reporting.

Recommendations are listed below in the general order in which they should be implemented. The Department should involve employees in the process of making these changes whenever possible and update this analysis with new and better data as the information becomes available.

IV-1. Re-organize the Criminal Investigations Division.

The large, diverse land area of Pierce County makes it difficult to organize an investigative function. Nevertheless, investigators should know the expectations for which they will be held accountable. Some units do not have a full time supervisor. In others, first line personnel are reporting directly to the Major Crimes Captain. The Captain should spend more time on managerial issues rather than directly supervising support personnel.

Other factors considered in developing this new organizational structure are listed below.

- Similar functions or interdependent functions should be grouped together.

- Property crimes are generally tied to the locale of the offender. In contrast, crimes against persons (except for domestic violence/family crimes) are usually committed by people who travel around the county and commit crimes away from their home or job.

- Investigation of crimes against persons requires expertise in interviewing suspects and witnesses that comes with regular practice working those cases. Deputies assigned to the three detachments (Foothills, Mountain, and Peninsula) do not get enough experience in handling crimes against persons to build their expertise, while investigators assigned to a central unit would gain that experience.

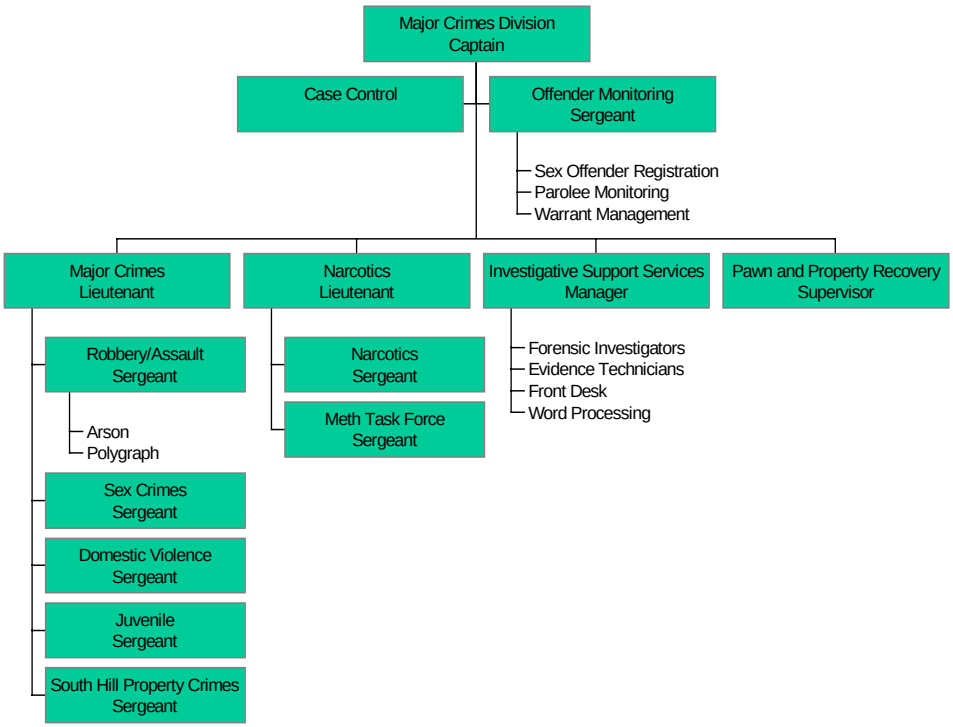
- Patrol deputies get more experience handling property crimes, which makes them more capable of clearing those cases.

- The City of Lakewood has the crime volume to be staffed as a full service municipal police agency and does not depend on the Sheriff's Department for investigators unless there is a critical situation that would require outside help. As such, that agency should be fully staffed with investigative personnel -- in keeping with the current contract.

Based on these principles, we propose a centralized investigative structure for crimes against persons and a decentralized approach for crimes against property, except that Lakewood should be staffed to handle all crimes that occur within that jurisdiction. A proposed organization chart contained in Exhibit IV-9 shows how those principles would change the organizational structure for criminal investigations.

Exhibit IV-9

Proposed Criminal Investigations Organizational Structure



Key changes are illustrated in the proposed organizational structure and include the following:

- Create an Offender Monitoring Unit by merging the current Sex Offender Reporting Unit and Warrant Unit, and later add Parolee Monitoring. This change provides the warrant unit with direct supervision, which is currently shared with the Juvenile Unit. The Sex Offender Reporting Unit has operated as a support unit to field operations and is not directly attached to any investigative unit. This approach to special units will make the best use of investigator time and will produce better results over the long term. The Offender Monitoring Unit should coordinate warrant service and parolee monitoring much the same way the Sex Offender Unit functions now. This unit should be staffed with one Sergeant, two investigators, and two clerical support personnel.

- Assign word processing and the front desk operation to the former Forensic Services Manager, who would become the Investigative Support Services Manager. Those functions work closely together in serving the public in the headquarters facility. Grouping these functions together creates more accountability for the management of word processing and the front desk without involving the section Captain.

IV-2. Allocate five personnel for investigative duties while expanding the role of patrol in conducting follow-up investigations.

In the part of this chapter where we calculated the number of investigators needed to handle 1998 workload, we stated that there were currently 48 personnel serving as supervisors and investigators in the County (excluding the City of Lakewood), but 45 were needed to handle just the caseload and 6 sergeants to perform supervisory duties. This represents an increase of three positions. In addition, a full-time Computer Crimes investigator and a Criminal Intelligence detective are needed, as discussed earlier. This represents a net increase of five FTEs.

This is complex work to orchestrate. Simply moving staff from patrol to investigations will weaken patrol and, therefore, preliminary investigations. Adding patrol officers will be necessary but may take time because hiring of police personnel is not a swift and easy process. Civilian support personnel who are paraprofessionals could be hired much more quickly to perform some of the investigative tasks that will allow commissioned officers to make better use of their time.

The following sequence of events may be feasible.

1. *Develop a position of Investigative Aide and employ them wherever possible.* It could take well over a year to fully staff the recommended investigative functions. These staff could make follow-up calls to victims in some cases, help prepare cases for prosecution, and function much like a paralegal staff member in a law office. Investigators in these units should complete a job task analysis to identify work that aides could effectively perform to support the work of investigators and help them become more productive.

2. As patrol vacancies are filled and patrol is more efficiently deployed, improve the quality of preliminary investigations. If a case management system is ready, *assign two to four property crime cases per month to each patrol officer.*

3. *Gradually increase patrol staffing by 5 additional FTEs so that the same number of patrol officers can be transferred to criminal investigations when the areas are adequately staffed.* Those investigators should be assigned to create Crimes against Property Units in Lakewood and South Hill, and to increase the number of cases originating in the Foothills, Mountain, and Peninsula detachments.

Each of those detachments had over 1,400 Part-1 reported property crimes in 1998. The estimate of cases assumed that all Part-1 crimes against persons will be assigned for follow-up investigation along with half of the reported burglaries, half of auto thefts, and about 10 percent of larcenies. These rates of assignment generate a workload level of 4 to 5 new cases per week for property crimes investigators and about 3 new cases per week for investigators handling crimes against persons.

Over time, the new case management system should be used to set optimal caseloads based on assignment rates that produce the best return in terms of clearances and other factors. The weakness of current caseload data makes this analysis an estimate that should be refined as better caseload data becomes available.

The Department should define the level of results expected from each investigative unit. Those results should include arrests, arrest warrants obtained, search warrants executed, and property recovered. Citizen satisfaction with investigative follow-up service should be monitored through the Department's developing performance measurement capability.

IV-3. Repair the current automated case management system.

Appendix IV-D contains a set of functional specifications for an investigative case management system. A contractor should be retained as soon as possible to assess whether the LECATS system can be salvaged and used to generate useful investigative case management reports. If LECATS cannot be repaired, then a simple case management system should be developed for use by both patrol and investigative units that generates caseload and case aging reports. If investigators are to be accountable and managers are to manage, it is essential to have accurate case data and good management reports.

IV-4. Improve the quality control process for preliminary investigations.

Thorough preliminary investigations are critical to case screening, crime analysis, and problem solving. Pierce County's quality control process needs to be strengthened. Fundamental problems with most quality control processes are that they rely primarily on inspection and they do not actually define the elements of what would be considered a good preliminary investigation. Effective systems improve quality by making the officers the consumers of the information they collect through crime analysis products, beat integrity, and problem solving projects.

To implement a more effective quality control process for preliminary investigations in Pierce County, the following steps should be taken.

- *Create a Useful Field Reporting Guide.* The guide (and Department policy) should clearly define the scope of a preliminary investigation, define the types of questions that officers need to ask, and indicate what constitutes a thorough investigation. The guide should be accessible and easy to use for patrol officers in the field. The guide

should also serve as the focus of in-service training, field training for new officers, and review of reports by first-line supervisors.

- *Clarify the Role of First-Line Patrol and Investigative Supervisors.* Generally speaking, a handful of officers have chronic problems with report writing and preliminary investigation. To address these situations, the Department should clearly define the actions to be taken by patrol and investigative supervisors. At present, communication between patrol and investigative middle managers regarding this topic appears to have broken down completely. A formal supervisory review system needs to be reestablished in which problem reports are identified based on the guide described earlier. Unacceptable reports should be logged and tracked so that officers with chronic problems can be identified. A committee of investigators and supervisors (new or existing) should meet on a quarterly basis to address quality control problems in a constructive way. Remedial training and individual coaching should be applied to those officers who have the most trouble.

- *Formalize and monitor the process that allows patrol officers to retain cases.* The current system seems to rely almost entirely on the initiative of individual officers rather than on a systematic process in which patrol officers retain specific types of cases on which they are responsible for follow-up. A more systematic process would help to teach officers about the information necessary to make cases and increase their appreciation for high quality preliminary investigations.

- *Improve the utilization of physical evidence to clear cases by increasing the investigative role and skills of patrol deputies.* Patrol deputies should be able to lift latent fingerprints from some types of objects, photograph a crime scene, and preserve other evidence within some reasonable boundaries. Deputies need to be better trained to identify potential physical evidence at crime scenes that should be processed by crime scene technicians. The role of deputies in recognizing and collecting physical evidence should be formalized, monitored, and encouraged by patrol supervisors.

- On a related topic, more demand will be placed on crime scene personnel for property crime cases if additional investigators are hired as recommended in this study. At present, no crime scene personnel are scheduled for duty on weekends. In the future, crime scene search personnel should be scheduled for duty when patrol deputies and investigators would have the most need for their services. These changes will help the Department make better use of its AFIS capabilities and the highly skilled, trained staff it has assembled in the Forensics Unit.

IV-5. Assess the application of exceptional clearance rule.

Exceptional clearance criteria should be reviewed with investigative supervisors to be sure that cases are being cleared that fit Uniform Crime Reporting standards. The wide variation in the application of exceptional clearance within the Department suggests that it might be used too frequently in some units.

IV-6. Implement a habitual offender tracking process.

During the process of setting goals for the criminal investigations function, the Department should build a formal, agency-wide habitual offender process. The impact of repeat offenders on public safety has been well documented. Problem solving efforts can gain more credibility with the community if the police can demonstrate the ability to invoke a justice system that deals with these offenders in a prompt way. Taking steps to help neutralize repeat offenders/career criminals can build credibility for the police and strengthen community-police partnerships. An effective tracking process could significantly impact drug problems and serious crime in Pierce County.

IV-7. Develop a Drug Control Plan for Pierce County.

A comprehensive Drug Control Plan should establish outcomes for enforcement efforts. The work of the General Narcotics Unit needs to be better documented and monitored. Narcotics work is a high-risk activity that exposes police officers to large amounts of money and narcotics that represent a corruption risk. Narcotics enforcement should have clear goals, measurable results, and strict accountability for their time.

Expand upon the interagency and community components of the current methamphetamine enforcement effort. It appears to be working well, use it as a model for the other categories of narcotics. Multiple approaches that express the community's will to reduce substance abuse have proved to be more effective than ad hoc approaches.

Current narcotic abatement efforts are generally reactive and the Department is attempting to deal with systemic problems like availability of materials. The long-term success of drug control lies in reducing demand through a balanced strategy that includes enforcement, prevention, and intervention efforts.

The Drug Control Plan should have broad-based community participation to include City of Tacoma residents and the Tacoma City government, as well as the other communities in the County. The best available information about the drug market should be used to develop a clear set of goals and plan of action. Information should be collected that describes the profile of users, sellers, and those who enable drug trafficking. If the Department can obtain community commitment for such a plan, resources could be spent in a more focused way and have a better chance of providing a return on investment.

V. Support Services

The Pierce County Sheriff's Department provides a variety of Operational Support Service functions to the unincorporated areas of the county and its contract cities. Some of these functions are staffed as full-time positions, while others are secondary assignments staffed by personnel from throughout the Department.

Functions Staffed as Secondary Assignments

Secondary-assignment units are reviewed first because they are high profile. Basic information about the units appears in the following exhibit.

Exhibit V-1

Support Services Units—Secondary Assignments

Support Service	Supervisors	Staff	Total
SWAT: Special Weapons and Tactical Team	4	18	22
Clandestine Lab Team	2	28	30
Air Support	1	9	10
Marine Support	2	17	19
Dive Rescue	1	8	9
Total			90

There are a couple of advantages to staffing specialized policing units as secondary assignments. It is an efficient use of personnel, since the incidents that require special training are infrequent and unpredictable. Keeping a full-time staff at the ready would be cost prohibitive. Furthermore, additional training and periodic call outs provide job enrichment for the line officers that comprise such units.

SWAT. The Special Weapons and Tactical team unit has 22 members assigned who perform this function as secondary assignments. Four members are negotiators, and four are tactical medical reserve deputies. In 1999, the SWAT Unit had 31 missions, of which 15 were classified as high-risk drug warrant entries. This equated to over 1,266 personnel hours to staff these missions, or about 41 hours per mission. In 1999, the personnel deployed per mission ranged from 6 to 23, the average deployment being 16.2 personnel.

For SWAT missions in 2000, information through August was provided to the study team, but it did not list the number of personnel deployed and the duration of their deployment. There were 14 missions through the end of August, three of which were drug-related.

SWAT is a critical support service, as the Sheriff's Department strives to provide support services on a regional basis. Pierce County has a well-trained and effective SWAT unit that appears to be adequately staffed. Like many other units in the Sheriff's Department, gathering of information to assess the cost, effectiveness, and efficiency of delivering the service is lacking.

Clandestine Lab Team. The Clandestine Lab Team has two supervisors and four teams who perform this function aside from their primary law enforcement duties. Each team consists of four deputies, an alternate deputy, and two investigators, for a total of thirty members. Other departments and agencies also provide resources. Exhibit V-2 lists available information on missions from 1995 through August 2000.

Exhibit V-2

Clandestine Lab Team Missions from 1995-2000

	1995	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000 thru Aug. 23*
Total Calls	42	89	66	168	195	198
Actual Labs	13	48	42	104	137	140
Lab Equipment Only	8	3	13	24	38	36
Unfounded Calls	*	*	11	11	1	0
Follow-up Response Days	*	*	12	28	20	22
Bio-Hazard Assist	*	*	*	1	1	0

* Information not available

In addition to the above information, statistics are kept on items such as type of labs, suspects, search entry methods, weapons encountered, type of structure, types of exposures, and area of the county. Information was <u>not</u> available on number of personnel deployed, duration of deployment, and how much mission and training time was conducted on and off duty.

The Clandestine Lab Team has conducted a large number of missions compared to other areas of the state. It is another critical service that serves to forward regional services for the Sheriff's Department. A thirty member Lab Team is considerably larger than teams for other agencies in the state. Concerns were voiced about the costs, time of training, equipping, coordinating, and back-filling for time away from regular assignments from around the department (not only for the Lab Team but other support units as well).

Air Support Unit. The Air Support Unit consists of one Sergeant-pilot, three pilots, and six observers who perform this function as secondary assignments. The unit has two 1970's Cessna's, one four-passenger and the other six-passenger. The planes are not equipped with modern electronic devices to aid with observations or search and rescue operations, such as infrared, thermal, etc. Appendix V-A lists information provided on missions from 1999. The two aircraft are housed at Thun Field and the $44,400 budget is

spent primarily on hanger rental, maintenance, fuel, parts and supplies, and some training. One pilot and observer staff each mission. Beginning in 2000, Air Support personnel were scheduled to attend one training day every two months. The $44,000 budget does not include overtime for most training and missions. Without the overtime figured in, hourly costs for 1999 exceeded $325 per hour.

Air Support units are an invaluable resource if properly staffed and equipped. They 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. The type of fixed winged aircraft that is used, lack of modern equipment such as infrared-thermal imaging, and the unit's part time status, impairs the unit's ability to assist management of critical incidents.

The Marine Support Unit provides boating-water education, enforcement, and marine duties on Pierce Counties fresh water lakes and Puget Sound areas. It is comprised of two unit supervisors (sergeants) and 17 members who perform this function in addition to their primary assignments. The unit had 34 missions in 1999 and 23 through August 2000. Information about the number of personnel deployed to support these missions and the time spent was not available.

The Dive Rescue Team provides dive, search and rescue, evidence recovery, and swift water rescue services. It is comprised of eight members and a supervisor who perform this function as secondary assignments. The Dive Rescue Team performed 34 missions in 1999 and 27 through August 2000. The number of personnel deployed was an average of 3.17 members per mission in 1999 and 3.22 members in 2000. Time duration information was not available.

Recommendations

V-1. The SWAT Unit needs to start gathering information about time utilization by requiring members responding to missions or training to record time on the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.

The team leader or designee should record how much time deployed or in training was on-duty or overtime. This information would prove useful in analyzing response times, duration of deployments, and numbers of members deployed by type of mission. A simple database could be easily designed to track this type of information.

V-2. Lab Team positions should be staffed as cross-functional positions, able to perform a variety of duties.

Specialized operational support functions such as the Clandestine Lab Team and Hazardous Devices-Bomb Teams are high-risk, time intensive, and necessary. For tactical entries, the Clandestine Lab Team is staffed with members of the SWAT Unit, which is an efficient practice. Another approach to consider, given the relationship of mobile offenders and the service, is to staff the team with personnel from units that investigate drugs offenses. Organizing this type of approach with other agencies in the county could increase effectiveness in both dealing with repeat offenders and managing costs.

V-3. Like the SWAT Unit, the Clandestine Lab Team and other specialty functions need to keep track of information about time utilization.

Time for missions and training should be recorded on the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. Further, the team leader or designee should record how much time deployed or in training was on-duty or overtime. This information would prove useful in analyzing response times, duration of deployments, and numbers of members deployed by type of mission. A simple database could be easily designed to track this type of information.

V-4. Pierce County should determine if there is sufficient support to properly fund and provide regional air support.

The Pierce County Sheriff's Department uses the National Guard at times to help with narcotics cases as well as for search and rescue (SAR), along with other agencies on a volunteer basis. Basically, the Department is getting along with respect to air support, but it could help manage risk of pursuits better if it had a regional air capability. It would behoove the PCSD to study government programs that would help purchase, equip, and maintain at least one helicopter and determine if there is political and financial support from other agencies in the county to accomplish this. If there is sufficient support, personnel from other departments should be considered for assignment to help support ongoing operations. If sufficient support cannot be garnered, the Sheriff's Department should seriously consider eliminating this support function and focus its efforts on delivering better core police services, since many of the missions recorded last year were of marginal operational significance.

Functions Staffed as Primary Assignments

The following exhibit gives staffing information about the units treated in this section.

Exhibit V-3

Support Services Units—Primary Assignments

Support Services	Supervisors	Staff	Total
Traffic			
South Hill	2	18	20
Lakewood	1	8	9
K-9 Team	0.5	5	5.5
Community Support Team	1	6	7
Alarm Program		2	2
Training Unit	1	2	3
Total	5.5	41	46.5

Traffic

Full-time officers are assigned to traffic duties such as enforcement, accident investigation, and facilitating the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians.

South Hill Precinct. A total of 18 traffic deputies and two sergeants are responsible for all traffic-related incidents in the unincorporated areas east of Interstate 5. (Of the 18 deputies, six are grant funded after October 1, 2000.) Priorities for traffic deputies at this precinct have emphasized responding to citizen complaints and protecting road construction work zones.

Appendix V-B lists workload statistics provided for the South Hill traffic unit, including average work accomplished by traffic deputies in 1999. While the authorized staffing was 12 traffic officers in 1999, the average workload was calculated at 11 deputies due to vacancies.

Lakewood. Eight traffic officers and a sergeant are responsible for traffic-related incidents within the city. Appendix V-B also lists workload statistics provided for the Lakewood Traffic Unit for January through September 2000.

Compared with other counties, Pierce County assigns a relatively large number of staff to traffic. Many other police agencies have never had traffic units or are moving away from them. Instead, they staff smaller groups of traffic investigators for fatal and serious accidents and accidents that pose serious liability potential. The trend is for generalist patrol officers to perform traffic enforcement and general accident investigations. This approach allows for the greatest deployment of personnel to support problem solving and community policing, as well as faster emergency responses in the community.

The same analysis applies to Lakewood. The statistics provided by Lakewood, however, more fully capture work outcomes and time used to achieve work outcomes. When emphasis is placed on measuring time use, outcome (productivity), and costs for achieving the outcome, the result is often better performance. The reason for this is that managers and employees both know what is important, what is being measured, and what will be evaluated. This is necessary for assessment of programs and to ensure accountability. Even though Lakewood can show more activity from its traffic officers, it doesn't mean that the work performed by them couldn't have been performed as well by patrol units.

Recommendations

V-5. The Sheriff's Department should re-assign their county-wide traffic deputies to support weaknesses identified in other critical services identified in this study, keeping a smaller number of accident investigators in place to investigate serious accidents.

This number of officers could be as few as four. These traffic investigators could be assigned to Investigations and assist with major crime scene investigations as well.

Before re-deploying the traffic deputies, the Sheriff's Department will need to ensure compliance with federal grant requirements. Deputies not obligated by grant restrictions should be re-deployed to support the following:

- Staffing for patrol to enhance geographic ownership, problem solving, and community policing by generalist patrol deputies.

- Staffing for detectives to investigate crimes adequately, especially property crimes.

- Staffing for a small "Special Operations" Unit whose main function would be to perform a variety of specialized services such as bomb disposal, hazardous materials, etc., but who could be assigned accident reduction duties when not training or supporting missions. This would minimize the impact on patrol and other units by reducing time away from regular duties to train and support missions. Consideration should also be given to regionalizing specialty services by incorporating officers from other jurisdictions into regional specialty units.

V-6. The City of Lakewood should re-assign their traffic officers to better support patrol's neighborhood problem solving efforts.

After any reorganization occurs, both jurisdictions should adopt a focused outcome-based use of any remaining traffic units. This includes development of a clear mission statement with prioritized goals and objectives. Then a method to measure time use and outcomes needs to be developed and implemented.

K-9 Unit

The K-9 Unit, comprised of four handlers and one trainer, works cooperatively with other jurisdictions in Pierce County to provide consistent coverage. The goal is to have two K-9 teams deployed to cover both the east and west sides of the county. Workload statistics for the K-9 unit are listed below.

Exhibit V-4

K-9 Workload for 1999

	# of Incidents	Hours spent
Total Calls	602	
PCSD unincorporated areas	340	* No data *
Edgewood	2	0.92
Lakewood	146	86
University Place	23	16.25
Outside Agencies	91	58.4
Total felony arrests	95	
Total misdemeanor arrests	34	
Priority calls	321	
Tracks/Searches	349	
Captures/track-search	112	

K-9 is a good example of multiple jurisdictions working together to provide a service. Information was not available on what resources are contributed by other jurisdictions, however. Of the 349 times that K-9 units were deployed on tracks or building searches, 112 captures were made, resulting in a 32% capture rate.

K-9 is a needed service, but few data were available on time utilization, costs, and outcomes apart from arrests. Other jurisdictions are apt to support regional law enforcement services if they are needed, cost effective, and equitable. The service provided must be demonstrably cheaper or better than they themselves can provide.

Recommendation

V-7. The Sheriff's Department should work with partner agencies to develop a method for collecting information on time utilization, costs, and outcomes for K-9 operations.

Community Policing

Reduced to essentials, Community Policing means the willingness and capability of a police agency to use the resources of neighborhoods, public and private agencies, other county departments, as well as its own resources, to jointly address crime, disorder, and community safety problems. Where appropriate, this problem solving might be unilateral, bilateral, or multi-lateral with the various entities. Four levels of police-community involvement in neighborhood problems have been formulated and are presented in Appendix V-C.

With the exception of University Place, none of the other jurisdictions studied here appears to have a consistent emphasis on neighborhood problem solving at the patrol level. While Lakewood has a number of promising police-community initiatives underway and the unincorporated areas have a specialized unit to promote and support Community Policing, we could find very little documentation of completed or current problem solving projects by rank and file deputies. Nevertheless, Sheriff's Department managers, supervisors, and officers appear to support this policing concept and indicated their desire to see it realized throughout the agency.

Community Policing Survey

In an attempt to determine the capability of the Pierce County Sheriff's Department to engage in the several policing approaches that are associated with Community Policing, we conducted a "focus group-type" survey to determine the extent to which certain departmental practices and support systems would facilitate its implementation. A total of 18 supervisors and managers anonymously completed a 20-item rating form, which appears in Appendix V-D. The survey attempted to determine which policing approaches are being used by the Sheriff's Department: reactive, interactive, proactive, or coactive. This includes the relationship with the community and relationship with employees, as explained more fully in Appendix V-D.

After analyzing the completed survey responses, we were able to discern that the Sheriff's Department is approaching the capability of being sufficiently *interactive* with the community, but is much less *proactive* in terms of taking the initiative in analyzing and solving neighborhood problems. On-site observations, interviews, and group discussions, tended to validate the survey results.

It is our conclusion that rank and file officers are appreciative and supportive of more positive interactions with the community. These attitudes, though necessary, are not sufficient to reach the more efficacious levels of Community Policing. We suggest that much more emphasis be put on patrol officers and detectives to address neighborhood

crime and disorder problems. This means being expected by supervisors and mangers to identify problems, analyze them, develop and implement reasonable solutions with the help of the community, and monitor the problem solving efforts.

Community Support Team

The Community Support Team is comprised of one sergeant and six deputies. The purpose of this group is to focus on problem areas and repeat offenders and to work with community groups to solve problems.

Workload statistics are listed in Exhibit V-5 below. As shown there, the Community Support Team logged a considerable variety of police activities. Many of the tasks appear to be helping other units perform *their* assigned tasks. Considering the thinly staffed South Hill area, it is not surprising that this unit was frequently called upon to provide assistance.

Exhibit V-5

Community Support Team: Frequency and Types of Activity

Description	1st Quarter 2000	2nd Quarter 2000	Total
Phone contacts	1202	1072	2274
In person contacts	1456	1435	2891
Noise Complaints	9	17	26
Outside agency assist	138	123	261
Community Meetings	17	9	26
Non-police service calls	5	3	8
Detective investigation assist	66	42	108
PDSD Unit assist	105	111	216
Tip sheets			
Traffic stops	18	67	85
General Reports	124	123	247
Other reports	50	41	91
Knock and talks	38	33	71
Drug activity complaints	47	70	117
Search warrants served	11	7	18
Active warrant services	223	163	386
Non-CST Comm. Policing hours	61		61
Persons arrested	124	79	203
Felony charges	100	91	191
Misdemeanor charges	116	68	184
Persons on active DOC	61	40	101
Persons on DOC detainer	19	10	29

We requested workload data that reflects problem solving projects. There were no records to review at the time, but we were assured that better documentation efforts are being

designed. Based on the statistics shown above, we cannot be sure to what extent Community Policing is being accomplished.

Recommendations

V-8. It is recommended that management and supervision be strengthened at the precinct level to include lieutenants as watch commanders and sufficient shift sergeants to support the adoption of neighborhood problem solving.

We found that first and second line supervisors are not expected or encouraged to be involved in neighborhood problem solving. Many supervisors had too many administrative duties to get out in the field and support their patrol officers. To rectify this, patrol supervisors have to spend more time coaching to ensure that officers prepare, in advance, *at least* one plan that addresses a specific problem to work on during their uncommitted time in the area they are patrolling.

V-9. All officers should receive training in community-police problem solving, including an emphasis on Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED).

Of the few problem solving attempts noticed by the study team, it was clear that the proposed solutions were quite elementary and seemed to lack depth of understanding of the underlying factors contributing to the identified problems. This was to be expected in an agency that had only recently gotten into Community Policing.

V-10. The Community Support Team should be reduced as Recommendations V-8 and V-9 are implemented.

The Community Support Team should be seen only as an interim solution to department-wide, community-police problem solving. The CST has been "breaking new ground" for the agency and should go on to train and consult district officers as they get more experience in this policing approach. Only a small core of CST members would be needed as support for patrol deputies and detectives, three officers at the most.

Pierce County Alarm Program

The Alarm Program was implemented in 1993. Its goal was provide a "uniform approach to false alarm enforcement" with the expectation that "many false alarm problems would be corrected." Program staff include two civilians working out of the Lakewood station.

The Alarm Program office issues alarm permits, processes false alarm reports, bills alarm users with excessive false alarms, places delinquent alarm users on "non-response" status, provides information to alarm owners, and collects and analyzes alarm data. The office keeps excellent statistics on alarms, permits, enforcement actions, and revenues collected. Most of the information presented below is summarized from documents generated by the unit.

False Alarms. During 1999, deputies responded to 17,375 alarm calls, which represented about 13% of all citizen calls for service to which patrol units were sent. Approximately 99 percent of the calls were false alarms.

In order for a false alarm fee to be charged, a deputy must complete a False Alarm Compliance Report (FACR). In 1999, the Department arrived at 13,362 alarm calls, or 77 percent of the alarm calls received. (A total of 4,013 calls, or 23 percent, were canceled based on telephone calls received from alarm companies.) In handing those 13,362 calls, officers did the following:

- Submitted an FACR in 7,554 cases (57 percent of the 13,362 responses)
- Completed but lost the FACR in 1,331 cases (10 percent)
- Did not issue a FACR in 2,970 cases (22 percent)
- Encountered criminal activity in 184 cases (1.4 percent).

The false alarm rate was 98.6 percent of the 13,362 alarm calls to which the Sheriff's Department responded.

The 1999 number of false alarms was a 7 percent increase over 1998 and was the highest in four years. Most of the growth in alarms was in the unincorporated areas and in Lakewood. University Place has its own alarm monitoring and billing system, and these findings do not include that city.

Alarm Permits. The number of active alarm permits totaled 21,627 at the end of 1999, an increase of 11.2% over 1998. Pierce County had a ratio of 0.8 alarm calls per permit holder for 1999, slightly better than the ratio of 0.83 in 1998. This marks the fourth year of decrease in the ratio of alarm calls to permit holders. Yet the false alarm rate (where criminal activity was not noted at the scene) remains quite high at 98.6 percent.

Revenue. The following table summarizes alarm revenue for 1999. The total was virtually unchanged from 1998.

Exhibit V-6

Alarm Revenue, 1999

Area	False Alarm Fees	Alarm Permits	Total
Unincorporated	$36,785	$27,750	$64,535
Lakewood	21,377	5,683	27,060
Edgewood	1,357	638	1,995
Total	$59,519	$34,071	$93,590

In December 1999, the Pierce County Council raised the alarm permit application fee to $20 and the false alarm billing fee to $75. Lakewood and Edgewood did not raise the fees

and kept permits at $15 and billings at $65.

Alarm users who do not purchase permits and/or do not pay false alarm bills are placed on "non-response" status. This means 9-1-1 will not dispatch a deputy when called to respond to a burglary alarm at that address. In 1999 the number of addresses on "non-response" status jumped to 379, or less than 2 percent of the total alarm permit holders.

Recommendations

The current alarm ordinance and the enforcement process are not effective in reducing false alarms. During the site visit conducted in the fall of 2000, the Sheriff's Department was exploring options for improving the way false alarms are handled. Our recommendations are intended to help the Department reach that goal.

V-11. Changes should be made to reduce the number of False Alarm Compliance Reports that are simply lost.

Enforcement efforts could be improved by up to 10 percent if the lost forms could be accounted for. Losing them costs the Department the time spent responding to calls and writing the FACR while providing no return on that investment. This recommendation is a temporary stopgap until the false alarm billings can be automated, as suggested in the next recommendation.

V-12. False alarms should be billed based on data entered in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.

Requiring officers to complete False Alarm Compliance Reports adds to the cost of responding to false alarms. Most agencies do not require officers to complete a report. Instead, the issuance of a false alarm fine request is a CAD disposition code for an alarm call. Calls in which officers have requested a false alarm billing are then sent directly to a false alarm unit like the one in place in Pierce County. Further savings accrue from such a system because it reduces data entry time for the false alarm unit. As the Department begins to deal with automation needs that are widespread, changing the system for documenting false alarms should be a high priority.

V-13. The ordinance should be changed to deal more effectively with repeat call locations.

The current fine structure does not increase the amount of the fine with repeated alarms; it is the same for the first violation or the tenth. In addition, allowing alarm permit holders to have two false alarms each six-months without a penalty, also allows them to have four false alarms per year with no fine. Both of these features of the ordinance do not create incentives for alarm owners to deal with chronic false alarms. Alarm holders should be allowed one false alarm each year and fines should increase as the number of alarms increase. At the same time, the Department should involve officers in problem solving work to reduce repeat calls caused by false alarms from certain locations.

Recruiting, Retention, and Training Issues

Like many other law enforcement agencies in the area, the Sheriff's Department has problems finding and successfully recruiting the number of quality candidates needed in a timely manner. The following observations center on what kinds of people are recruited, where recruiting efforts are focused, and how long it takes to hire recruits.

Recruiting. The consensus about what kind of persons Pierce County recruits is whomever they can get to take the test to keep up with the demands of staffing the department. One command staff member stated they would like to find more minority applicants, especially women, in increase diversity. Basically, the Department is searching for honest people who want to make a difference.

Successful law enforcement agencies must have a clear vision of where they are going, the types of services they must deliver to get there, and the type of people they need to recruit to best deliver the services. If the service delivery is based on community-oriented and problem-solving policing, the Department must identify the attitudes, traits, interests, values, and motivations their recruits need, because they are hard to develop. Interviews of people responsible for recruiting and hiring indicate these issues have not been studied or defined to the extent they should be.

Military bases are a prime recruiting area for the Sheriff's Department. It also advertises in local newspapers, the Law Enforcement Digest, the count web site, and occasionally on radio stations. The Department has also focused recruiting efforts at churches that have high minority populations.

The Department has mapped its hiring process. While not as detailed as it needs to be for process improvement, the mapping goes far beyond what most departments have done. The Department also has a hiring timeline that tracks and measures dates and times for each step of the hiring process by group tested and individuals hired. For deputies hired in 2000 (January-September), the number of days from date of test to date of hire ranged from 76 to 256. The average was 193 days, or 63 days less than in 1999.

New Hire Training. The training process for newly hired deputies includes the following:

Exhibit V-7

Training of New Deputies

Program	*Normal Duration*
Orientation and Training	5 weeks
Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) at Washington State Criminal Justice Center	18 weeks (720 hours)
Post-Academy Orientation	3 days
Field Training and Evaluation Program (FTEP)	14 weeks
Probation	52 weeks

Newly hired deputies receive five weeks of orientation and training and up to two weeks of field training before attending the 720-hour Academy. The five-week orientation includes administrative processing, tours, department orientation, and skill training. The Training Unit said that the five weeks of orientation helps the recruits feel more comfortable going into the Academy and more connected to the department. There was no collection of information or correlation about how the recruit performed in the Academy, the orientation program, and field training. After successfully completing the Academy, newly hired deputies attend a three-day Post Academy Orientation, then go into 14 weeks of field training, and then work as deputies on probation for 12 months.

New deputies recently off probation were interviewed for their view of the training process, particularly the value of the training received before attending the academy. Some of the pre-academy training was considered helpful, but a substantial amount was not. Several deputies suggested that some of the early training before the academy would have been more beneficial if it had been provided closer to the time it would be used. Many departments give their new hires five days of training before attending the academy and have equal success rates in completing the academy.

The Field Training and Evaluation Program (FTEP). Modeled after a successful program in San Jose, California, the FTEP is managed by a Training Unit Deputy and supervised by the Training Sergeant. Pierce County's FTEP program is fourteen weeks long. Deputy Recruits spend two weeks with each Field Training Officer (FTO). They evaluate the recruits each day by filling out Daily Observation Reports (DOR's). We examined these reports from several Deputy Recruit files and found stark differences in quality of the reports. Some Field Training Officers were very conscientious about documenting observed performance and training provided. Other FTO's wrote three or four lines commenting on appearance and attitude.

Probation. After successful completing the FTO program, probationary deputies are assigned to a work location and supervised by a Patrol Sergeant. All levels interviewed indicated that this was a critical period for new hires, especially laterals, and that some probationary deputies have "gone south" (developed serious problems) during this period. Patrol Sergeants indicated it is difficult to adequately supervise and evaluate probationary deputies. Department supervisors also stated that most of the employees who had developed serious performance or misconduct problems could and should have been identified and dealt with during this time. In addition, our review of the FTEP Manual and Standardized Guidelines revealed that nothing is mentioned or evaluated during this crucial time about Community Policing or Problem-Solving Policing.

The training program has a clear weakness—the time from when recruits are not with a Field Training Officer until he or she is off probation eight months later. The Department could develop a "phase" system for training and evaluating probationary deputies, such as the following:

Phase I	Pre-Academy, Academy, and post-Academy training
Phase II	With a Field Training Officer
Phase III	Under the observation and monthly evaluation of a senior deputy
Phase IV	Under the observation of a senior deputy without evaluation.

Department Training. The Training Unit is staffed with one Sergeant and one deputy. A second training deputy is scheduled to be added in January 2001. All other trainers work as a secondary duty. The Training Unit relies heavily on trainers from around the department. Below is the number of certified instructors by type of training**.**

Firearm instructors:	15
Emergency Vehicle Operations:	13
Defensive Tactics:	9

By department policy, some training is mandatory. Firearms-use of force training is scheduled twice a year for a total of sixteen hours. Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) is required once a year for eight hours. Hazardous Materials, Bloodborne Pathogens, and defensive driving are scheduled for eight hours. First aid and CPR is required every two years for eight hours.

The Training Unit prepares a schedule every year, for approval by the Support Bureau Commander. Hazardous Materials, Bloodborne Pathogens, and First Aid-CPR are regulatory required training with defined time duration. EVOC and firearms training is management directed mandatory training. There does not appear to be a collection of data and correlation between performance problems from firearms or driving incidents that drives EVOC, defensive tactics, or firearms training. Interviews around the department suggest that training is widely used as a reward and morale builder. There was little mention of training being used primarily to improve service delivery, outcomes, or community satisfaction.

Discretionary training is approved and managed by sergeants and commanders. Individual career development is planned by the individual and the supervisor. Supervisors are expected to achieve the appropriate state level certification for their rank.

There is no central database to track department training in an aggregated way, only individual records in a computerized file. Training is maintained in each deputy's training folder. Consequently, it is difficult to track attendance at mandatory department training. Supervisors indicate that coordination of the various department training efforts is an ongoing problem. This includes not only training coordinated by the Training Unit but training coordinated by the specialty units. Another problem is holding people accountable for not attending or not passing training. Many supervisors said they did not know what the consequences are for department members who do not attend or pass skill assessments.

Recommendations

V-14. The Sheriff's Department must develop the capacity to use its valuable training time to help improve the services it delivers.

Currently, the 32-40 hours of department training required per year centers on high-risk mandatory subjects. Consideration should be given to "freeing up" some of this training time to address other critical training needs. Providing emergency vehicle training every two years instead of every year might be one suggestion.

V-15. The Sheriff's Department needs to determine what skills, knowledge, or core competencies are required for employees performing the various job functions throughout the department.

Discretionary training time should then focus on helping employees perform their assigned functions well. After that, if discretionary training time remains, employees should be allowed to attend training to acquire skills and knowledge needed for career progression. The purpose of this approach is to address training *needs* before training *wants*, and to focus the use of valuable training time to help the department deliver the best service possible to the communities it serves.

V-16. The Department should improve planning and coordination of training.

By the end of the third quarter of each year, Department supervisors should submit reports to the Training Unit outlining the training they need to improve service delivery or overall performance of their units**.** This includes the specialty service functions. Supervisors from each specialty function, the Training Unit, and the commanders impacted by training would then meet, share proposed plans, and agree on an overall yearly training plan. The commander of the Training Unit would chair this group, facilitate agreement, obtain department command staff approval for yearly plans, and periodically assess the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of specialty function training.

V-17. The Sheriff should study and define the attitudes, traits, interests, values, and motivations of the Sheriff's recruits.

V-18. Once the Sheriff's Department determines the type of employees it needs to hire to best support delivery of service and that is representative of the community it serves, it should strengthen its efforts to identify and focus its recruiting efforts by targeting the right people and places.

For example, a recent study showed that a high percentage of females attracted to law enforcement participated in outdoor sports and activities. Recruiting efforts focused on athletic events, and sporting and outdoor goods stores have proven more fruitful than cinema advertising or symposia. The Sheriff's Department also needs to develop a system to track where and how successful recruits were recruited to help focus future recruiting efforts. Out of state recruitment efforts should be focused on areas that have proven productive for recruiting officers to the region.

V-19. A process improvement team comprised of members from Pierce County Personnel and the Sheriff's Department Background and Training Units should complete mapping of the hiring process and search for ways to improve it.

Recommended goals for the process improvement efforts are to (1) increase the quantity and quality of the candidate pool, and (2) decrease the amount of time needed to process candidates. If the Sheriff's Department does not significantly decrease its test to hire date time, especially in the current job market, they will lose high quality candidates to other departments. Candidates often test for multiple agencies and take the first offer they get.

V-20. The Department should improve how it projects future vacancies created by promotions, retirements, or other personnel exits.

Polling the contract cities early already has been occurring, mainly through communications with the contract city chiefs. The Sheriff's Department may want to poll its members on an annual basis to determine members' retirement intentions. This can be accomplished in a sensitive, helpful manner if the poll is intended to help determine who is considering retirement and how the department can assist them when the time comes. Additionally, Personnel needs to keep good statistics to support the Sheriff's Department by projecting vacancies from retirements, employees leaving for various reasons, etc. This is important to help develop an accurate staffing adjustment factor that will support the department's deployment needs.

V-21. The Department needs to reassess the current five weeks of orientation training before the Basic Academy and reduce the orientation to one week.

Careful consideration needs to be given to the expanded academy curriculum and in light of that, what additional department training is necessary to successfully complete the Basic Academy. Other agencies in Washington seem to do well with only one week. There will still be a need for administrative in-processing, basic policy and regulations, and a firearms course before weapons issue. Orientation courses should be conducted after academy graduation and before the Field Training Program. Additional training should be provided only if Sheriff's Department policy and practices are different than those taught at the academy or if assessment of deputies' knowledge or skills after graduation demonstrates performance deficiencies. They should strive for "just in time" training.

V-22. The Field Training and Evaluation Program (FTEP) should be moved into the Operations Division. The Chief of Operations should be assigned an Administrative Sergeant to be responsible for managing the FTEP and providing other project and staff support.

The FTEP is a critical program in any law enforcement agency. It reflects the tone and attitude of the patrol force. The program's standards and expectations must be set high, and must be consistently administered. Since the FTEP is administered by Operations Patrol personnel, it should be managed and coordinated by the Operations Division. This would result in greater accountability and help address quality and consistency problems.

V-23. The Department should increase training periods spent with a Field Training Officer (FTO) from two to four weeks.

Changing FTO's every two weeks is intended to expose Deputy Recruits to as much expertise and as many different styles as possible. This practice usually creates more problems than benefits. A two-week rotation lessens an FTO's discomfort in having to identify, evaluate, train, and assess recruit performance deficiencies. The majority of programs modeled after San Jose's assign recruits to an FTO for four-week periods. It takes that long for an FTO to become familiar with a recruit, assess strengths and weaknesses, provide training to improve deficiencies, and assess whether the recruit can overcome deficiencies through training efforts.

V-24. Field Training Officers should be selected for their ability to coach, mentor, teach, and evaluate.

These abilities are also important supervisory skills. FTO's who perform well should be given enhanced recognition, rewards, and ability to promote to either specialty or supervisory assignments. The modeling of how people are developed in the Sheriff's Department needs to start with the FTEP.

V-25. The Department must set clear expectations, train, and evaluate new deputies' ability to perform neighborhood problem solving.

At a minimum, this includes developing a community resource book, identifying patterns of crime and disorder, and conducting problem-solving projects that evaluate how the problem was reduced or eliminated (outcome). These expectations and standards must be clearly stated in the FTEP Manual and Standardized Guidelines.

V-26. To accomplish the observation and evaluations called for in Phase III and IV, the Sheriff's Department should explore revamping its Master Police Officer (MPO) program.

A strong MPO program could provide many benefits. It could set standards for and give status to the "senior deputies" who would evaluate Phase III and IV deputies. It could serve as recognition and reward for the best Field Training Officers and assist in career development. It could also provide for "an officer in charge" when a supervisor is not present. MPO's could serve as coaches and mentors for problem-solving projects and utilization of crime analysis to advance outcome based policing. Moreover, it would align the role, status, and benefits of an MPO program with responsibilities and performance of duties.

Contract City Policies and Practices

Interviews with each of the contract city Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs, and the South Hill commander revealed there are no city-unique written policies or protocols that govern practices in place. We reviewed the Sheriff's Department Manual, Inter-local Agreements between Pierce County and the contract cities, and labor contracts.

The Pierce County Sheriff's Department offers full service delivery to other jurisdictions through contract. The arrangement is similar in nature to other agencies throughout the nation that offers police services through contracting. It is most similar to contract police services delivered by the King County Sheriff's Office. Pierce County has a simpler method of pricing services than King County, something that will save time and effort for both the county and the contracting cities. Having said this, the Pierce County Sheriff's Department has some serious problems in accurately gathering information needed to measure services provided and resources used. These problems stem primarily from the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Records Management System administered by the Law Enforcement Support Agency. The Sheriff's Department itself lacks support capabilities necessary to provide information and analysis.

One example revolves around the use of resources from area to area. Data are not captured, analyzed, or reported to measure primary and back-up assistance provided from one area to another (cross dispatched calls). It is only a matter of time before a county or city council member, city manager, or county executive asks how much time deputies they

are paying for are serving their jurisdiction and how much time they are serving others. However, policymakers will usually support mutual aid if it is reasonable and equitable.

Contract city chiefs said they would like to have a better understanding of the Sheriff's Department budget so they can better explain it to others. Chiefs of the contract cities have most of the same challenges faced by a chief in a city with its own police force. They live in a highly political environment, they help develop their city police budgets, and they must meet community expectations. They must also serve two systems and resolve conflicts that arise between the two. These officers do so without the hierarchical rank that helps regular city chiefs accomplish the work.

Currently, in accord with the contract between Pierce County and police bargaining unit, deputies bid for patrol assignments every six months, but traffic deputies and detectives do not. This bidding practice has the potential to negatively impact two areas. The first is the longer-term partnerships and problem solving needed for community policing. The second is the need for a stable workforce desired by both the contract cities and the unincorporated areas. A longer assignment period based on geographic area is desirable for both.

Recommendations

V-27. The Sheriff's Department should aggressively join with other providers of police contract services to develop and improve training development courses.

Contracting opportunities will continue to grow in Pierce County. The future of the Sheriff's Department rests on its ability to provide satisfactory services. The Sheriff's Department will need to facilitate the growth of professional police administrators. The department should also aggressively develop current and likely future chiefs with training. While the FBI National Academy might not always be possible for contract city chiefs, state level executive courses and certification is.

V-28. The Sheriff's Department should meet with the bargaining unit and discuss longer geographic based assignments of its patrol deputies and detectives.

A minimum one-year assignment to a specific geographic area is recommended for the reasons discussed above. A viable Community Policing philosophy depends on it.

VI. Agency Organization

This chapter examines the organization of the Pierce County Sheriff's Department from the perspective of organizational theory, common approaches to structuring local law enforcement agencies, police reform initiatives, community orientation, and structure to support needed changes. The discussion of organizational issues is set in a context of Community Policing. Appendix VI-A, Organizational Models, provides more detailed information on internal organizational issues.

The mission of the Sheriff's Department is as follows:

> " . . . work in partnership with the community to increase the feeling of safety, security and peace for all; to reduce the fear of crime; and to enhance the quality of life of the community. This will be realized through caring and creative professionals who are Personally Committed to Service and Dedicated to making a difference in their Community. Excellence in policing."

This mission statement clearly indicates the organization's intent to embrace Community Policing.

As discussed earlier in the report, the Sheriff's Department is still evolving from a tradition-bound organization toward a community-oriented one, while striving to become more information driven and business-like. Accordingly, the Department's structure and practices are evaluated below with respect to these ideals. First, it must be clarified as to what it means to embrace Community Policing.

Traditional and Community Policing

From a practical, operational perspective, local law enforcement agencies generally follow one of two basic approaches to "policing"—*traditional and community policing.* These two approaches represent different sets of values, missions, beliefs, organizational structures, and operational activities. Since the mid-1980's, many departments have attempted the transition to a community-oriented approach. Organizational change in law enforcement comes about very slowly, and change has to be forced in many instances by external forces or pressures. Environmental changes include increased diversity in population and demand from the community for a more caring approach. In addition, many departments seek to adopt more efficient and effective practices to cope with limited resources and rising expectations.

Traditional Policing. This approach came into place in the early 1900's when reformers had a key objective of freeing local, state, and federal institutions from political patronage. They wanted police departments that, in consonance with the scientific management movement, emphasized efficiency, management principles, and structured work practices.

This reform movement, which was billed as freeing police from political control, promoted professionalism and a crime control mission focus. The publication in the 1950s of O.W. Wilson's classic book, *Police Administration*, reflected American law enforcement's widespread acceptance of the bureaucratic model. In particular, Wilson's book justified direct coordination between bureaucratic structure and operational activities; the prime example was the concept of preventive patrol.

The traditional model (also known as the bureaucratic model) can result in a closed system in which the environment does not have a substantial impact on police work. There is clear separation of officers from their broader community, making a police or sheriff's department a tightly knit, autonomous law enforcement force. Reforming government managers were motivated to remove politics from police decision making. In their zeal, they tended to create autonomous and socially distant police organizations.

Community Policing. Also referred to as Community Oriented Policing (COP), this policing model sharply differs from the traditional model and is predicated largely on the reform that has occurred in American society since the 1960's. Writers in the field indicate that it is a "democratic model" of policing that represents:

> ". . . a flexible, participatory, science-based structure that will accommodate change. It is designed for effectiveness in serving the needs of citizens rather than autocratic rationality of operation. It is democratic in that it requires and facilitates the involvement of citizens and employees in its processes."[8]

A key development in bringing about change was the 1967 *President's Commission Report on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice.* This report acknowledged the importance of "the community" and the concept of co-production between the police and the community to improve the quality of life for all concerned.[9] A second development involved a shift in focus for some police organizations from the traditional organizational structure to alternative forms of organizational design. Organizational theorists demonstrated that what were supposed to be scientific rational principles of scientific management and structure were actually "proverbs." Additionally, the 1967 *President's Commission Report on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice* called for "team policing" and "participation" of rank-and-file officers in building commitment to police agency goals and objectives.

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[8] J. Angell, "Toward an Alternative to the Classic Police Organizational Arrangement," Criminology, Volume 8, 1971.

[9] Co-production or co-activity means joint efforts between law enforcement agencies and community elements to maintain peace and order in society. This approach tries to attract direct citizen involvement in planning and overseeing the delivery of police services, and acknowledges the potential importance of such citizen involvement.

According to Herman Goldstein, developer of the concept of Problem Oriented Policing, the principles of the Community Policing model include the following: [10]

- Generalization of skills and work assignments
- Decentralization of organizational structure and authority
- Encouragement of horizontal and vertical interactions
- Goal-oriented work emphasizing task achievement
- Use of rewards that are distributed based on task accomplishment.

Community Policing involves significant changes in the operational activities of officers. The emphasis is on generalist patrol officers who work to solve problems with residents of the community. Successful problem solving generally means changing the management infrastructure of an agency and downplaying the use of specialized units.

Police Organizational Change. Organizational theorists pointed to the impact of community characteristics on organizational change. They suggest that the fundamental position of policing in American society should be conceived of as intermediary between legal principles and community demand: "The police department is principally organized to respond to community demands and crimes." The literature indicates the traditional or bureaucratic model failed to respond to the community's needs. Community Policing is meant to meet community demands and solve community problems. Murphy summarizes some essential assumptions regarding the mutual relationship between the police and the community under the COP model: [11]

1. Neighborhoods or small communities should serve as locations for police operations.

2. Urban and suburban policing should be organized and conducted at the community or neighborhood level.

3. Communities have unique and distinctive policing problems that conventional police organizations and responses do not address.

4. Community consensus should guide police response to community crime and order problems.

The focus of these assumptions is to redefine police operations based on community problems instead of just responding to "incidents." A cardinal tenet is to establish a partnership between the police and the community because problems such as crime and disorder represent social disorganization. The police, rather than focusing narrowly on

[10] H. Goldstein, *Policing a Free Society*, Ballinger Publications, 1979.

[11] C. Murphy, "Community Problems, Problem Community, and Community Policing in Toronto," Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency.

crime control, should provide other services. Therefore, cooperation between the police and community residents can be cost-effective in addressing problems.

This cardinal tenet of community policing can be achieved through two specific steps:

- **Diagnose and manage community problems that produce crimes, thus facilitating the community's crime-solving capability.**

- **Establish specific programs aimed at addressing problems.**

Organizational change is partly a function of a community's co-production network. Co-production of order is defined as cooperation between public servants and citizens in a community to accomplish community goals. This assumes the success of COP innovative programs depends in part on a jurisdiction's co-production network.

Implementing Community Policing

According to a summary by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), Community Policing has three objectives: [12]

1. Improve the efficiency of delivery of police services.
2. Achieve equitable delivery of services to all communities.
3. Enhance the delivery of police services.

Seldom do these objectives/approaches exist in a pure state, and law enforcement agencies change their emphasis from time to time. Nevertheless, it should be helpful to understand how each objective has been interpreted in many agencies and how each one takes on a distinctive theme or "style." Such an understanding can alert decision makers as to why a "best practice" in one jurisdiction may not work as well in another jurisdiction with a completely different context.

1. Efficiency-based model of community policing. The mark of this model is the tendency to organize around changes in modes of policing, such as deployment methods, decentralization, telephone, walk-in reporting, bicycle patrol, or permanent beats. Such models use a different approach to police work to make the best use of scarce resources. This is most common where 911 calls are perceived as excessively burdensome and where financial resources for police personnel are in short supply. The efficiency model depends on a considerable amount of community participation, particularly volunteers.

[12] "Themes and Variations in Community Policing," Police Executive Research Forum, supported by the National Institute of Justice, 1996.

2. Equity-based model of community policing. Perhaps the most common model, equity-based community policing often evolves from demands for racial access and equity of services within a jurisdiction. Such demands might include more personnel or greater access to police services. This model typically uses similar delivery mechanisms, such as community meetings, foot patrols, mini-stations or storefronts, walk-and-talk programs, or mounted patrol. The focus of the equity model is typically on the form of police service delivery—designed to build trust between citizens and the police or to "empower" citizens—rather than the substance of service delivery. Addressing substantive problems may be part of the approach, but it is usually secondary.

3. The effectiveness-based model of community policing. This approach reflects an emphasis directly on substantive community problems. Although this model may use community-outreach approaches such as foot patrol or community meetings, the primary objective is to resolve identified community problems. Community involvement may be the most efficacious mechanism for doing so. This model normally involves identifying relevant stakeholders for specific problems, and the stakeholders naturally vary from one problem to another. The effectiveness model seems to be more common when concerns about rapidly escalating workload and equity issues do not dominate the political agenda.

Community Policing Motives. The selection and implementation of any of these approaches or models to community policing thus depend on the objectives and motivations of those who have the vision or who are tasked with implementing community policing. The desired goal may be improved relations with the minority community (the legitimacy perspective or equity model), and community policing may be a vehicle for achieving this objective. Similarly, a department overloaded with calls for service may develop alternative methods for handling calls for service and open substations to facilitate citizen reporting. This approach reflects the efficiency model and the deployment and customer perspectives. In short, the motivation for deciding on particular programs, procedures, and practices in the name of Community Policing is very important.

The goals or motivations for Community Policing suggest variation in the form to be adopted and the mechanisms for implementation. Objectives related to improving efficiency of police service, for example, are likely to reflect long-lasting mechanisms and changes in how police business is conducted. If an agency adopts the efficiency model, for example, and establishes a non-sworn community service officer component, such a program would be difficult to dismantle. Changes in deployment of current personnel, such as reassigning patrol officers to foot patrol teams, may relate to equity issues. Such an approach could be easily dismantled if organizational priorities shifted. Adopting the problem perspective and using the effectiveness model suggest a long-term organizational commitment that requires extensive training and permanent changes in organizational procedures such as performance evaluation and other techniques.

Good information is now available on research that has been done on the various approaches to community oriented policing.[13] This included programs that are considered innovative, or include best practices, in Edmonton, Las Vegas, Newport News, Philadelphia, Santa Barbara, and Savannah.

Organizational configurations to implement Community Policing vary based on the type of model being implemented. Equity-based models seem more likely to use special units of personnel to interact with citizens. Effectiveness-based models are more likely to involve department-wide participation in the community policing effort. Efficiency-based models may involve organizational changes but will not typically involve establishment of special units. These variations suggest that form should definitely follow function in community policing efforts.

Police Organization and Problem Solving

Traditional Police Responses. Law enforcement agencies generally do not have good information systems that allow supervisors to anticipate and thoroughly understand crime problems. (Pierce County falls into this category with ineffective and inefficient information systems support.) Instead, increases in reported crimes in a neighborhood lead to requests for additional police officers for the area. Those requests become the focus of attention, particularly if the police agency has an "incident orientation." Such agencies often do not look beyond crime reports or individual calls-for-service in a neighborhood to identify the specific problems that continually generate patrol and detective workload. Research suggests that about two-thirds of patrol calls are generated by only one-third of the locations in a community.

Similarly, agencies with traditional approaches allow patrol officers to engage in random patrol. The officers circulate throughout a neighborhood based on no particular plan for using their time. Time between calls-for-service is spent waiting for the dispatcher to send patrol units to another call. By and large, random patrol produces random results. In contrast, focused patrol produces focused results.

In attempting to deal with neighborhood problems, traditional police agencies use something resembling a medical model in which the police present themselves as experts who know all the answers to crime in neighborhoods. In this model, the typical "solution" to problems is stronger enforcement to generate more arrests. Citizens are asked to observe and report, but they are not invited to work with the police and other community agencies to help identify causes and solutions to neighborhood problems that often result in crime and disorder.

[13] Police Executive Research Forum, *ibid*.

Police-Community Problem Solving. If the Pierce County Sheriff's Department is to move from a traditional policing model to one based on problem solving, it needs to rethink its role in the community and the way the department is organized to carry out its work. Rather than being treated like the patient of a doctor, the community needs to be viewed as a customer who receives service from the police and as a participant in solving problems related to crime and community life.

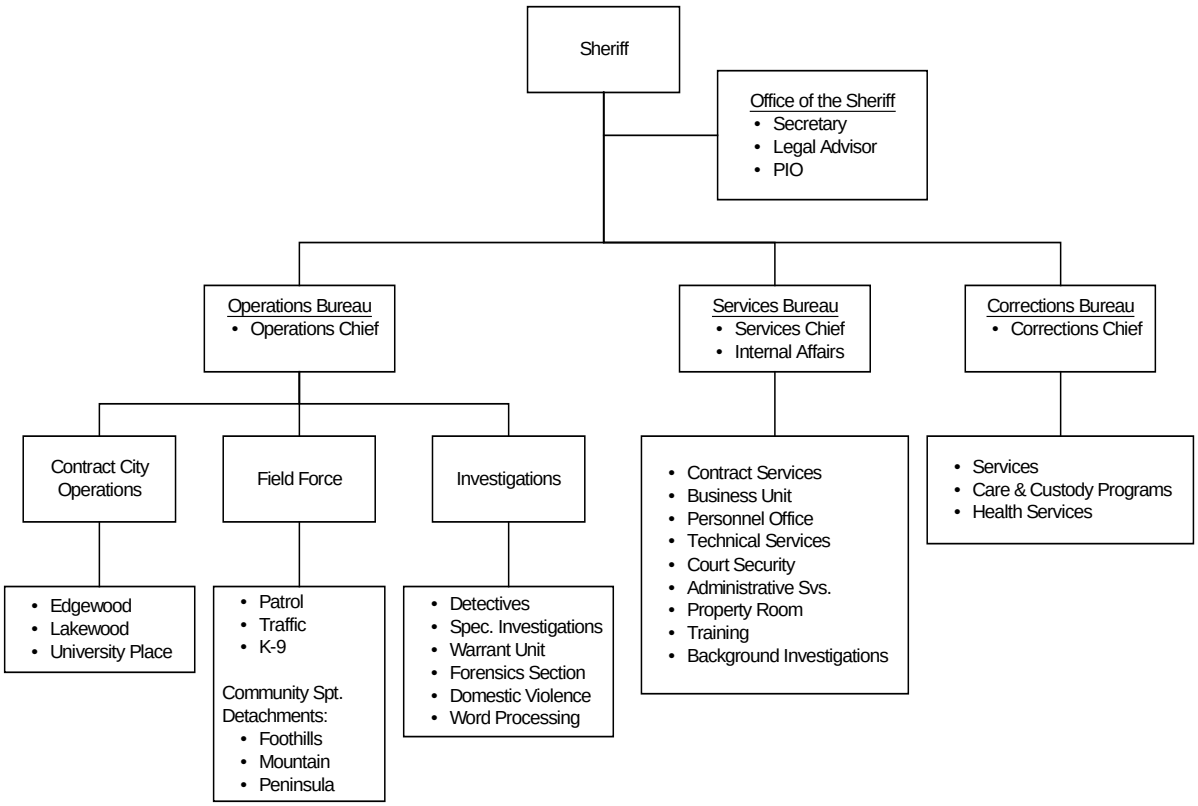
With a good understanding of the above as background, we now turn to the organizational structure of the Sheriff's Department.

Department Organization

The Sheriff's Department current organizational design is illustrated below. The chart is from the Department's policies and procedures manual.

Exhibit VI-1

ORGANIZATION OF THE PIERCE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT



The chart indicates that the basic organizational design is a "multiple bureau chief model," with Operations, Services, and Corrections bureaus that are managed by Chiefs. The Sheriff has a small special staff (Confidential Secretary, Legal Advisor, and Public Information Officer).

The way an organization is structured can either foster or impede effectiveness and efficiency. Structural weaknesses include overlapping, conflicting, or unclear assignment of responsibility; confusing lines of authority; unnecessarily long chains of command; and excessive spans of control. Such organization can create confusion, breed conflict, complicate communications, impede decision making, and weaken accountability. Conversely, good organizational design can pinpoint responsibility, facilitate communication, foster cooperation and coordination, expedite processes, multiply efforts, and create synergy.

The basic issues addressed by organizational design are:

1. How best to divide work to provide for the necessary participation of numerous and differently skilled individuals.

2. After dividing the work, how to provide for necessary coordination and control among work elements.

Although there is no "one best way" to organize, the following guidelines may be useful.

- Emphasize organizational simplicity for ease of understanding.

- Group activities, functions, processes, and purposes in consistent ways that make sense in light of the organization's responsibilities and objectives.

- Provide for the clear fixing of responsibility and lines of authority.

- Recognize that effective spans of control vary by type of organization and capability and experience of managers and supervisors.

- Recognize that modern organization is based upon minimizing hierarchical levels consistent with the size of the organization (flatten the organization).

These guidelines are tools for evaluating existing organizations and developing more effective arrangements. They were used here in analyzing the structure of the Pierce County Sheriff's Office. Overall, the Sheriff's Department has few structural problems. The South Hill Precinct's patrol and investigations responsibilities are too fragmented,

however. Also, there is no centralized planning, research, or information integrity function. Further, the Internal Affairs function is too far removed from the top.

Additionally, it was noted by PMA researchers that a study dated August 3, 1999, carried out through the loaned executive program of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police, stated that the span of control and functions assigned to the Field Force major were excessive. The study made the following recommendation:

> "The Sheriff's Department accept a new organizational model that recognizes its transition to a contract service provider: the likelihood of future expansion of contracting, and the mission essential functions of the specialized agencies."

PMA agrees with the above recommendation. The current organization and staffing pattern places too many functions/activities and too few supervisory positions in the Field Force Division.

The average span of control is over 8 patrol officers to 1 supervisor. This ratio is excessive for this type of activity. Like functions are not grouped and effective communications and control is difficult. Comments were made that information does not flow well and decision making is hampered by an unwieldy organizational design. The organization also has a large number of specialized units that are not pulled together in any organizational unit.

Recommendations

VI-1. Supervisors should spend more time in the field supporting and coaching patrol officers for both reactive and proactive work. This can be accomplished by setting the officer to supervisor ratio to no more than 7 patrol officers directly reporting to a sergeant.

Too much of a shift sergeant's time at the South Hill precinct is spent in the station dealing with administrative matters that should be handled by either lieutenants or sergeants specifically designated for administrative tasks. As a result, field supervision is spotty and administrative duties are not given the degree of attention they deserve. This is particularly acute on weekends and on the evening and night shifts. If the number of deployed patrol units increases, a commensurate number of supervisors will be needed.

In addition, the organization does not provide effectively for institutional planning and crime analysis or information systems services support. An alternative organizational design would remedy the above deficiencies and be a superior framework for effective and efficient operations. This is addressed in the next recommendation.

VI-2. The Department should organize the "patrol area" into two major Service Zones. These zones would include precincts, contract cities, detachments, and the unincorporated areas. Specialized services such as Traffic and the Community Support Team would be minimized and incorporated into an Operational Support Division.

Each zone would be commanded by a Zone Major (superior in rank to all personnel in the zone, including the current majors in the contract cities. The personnel assigned to lead the contract cities would be referred to as City Chiefs (not Major, Lieutenant, or Sergeant).

VI-3. An Information Resource Management unit should be formed in the Services Bureau.

As indicated in recommendation II-8, this unit should have the responsibility for general planning, administrative and operational crime analysis support, as well as information systems support. This unit would also carry out strategic planning, policy and procedures development, and performance measurement on behalf of the Sheriff. Additionally, precinct and contract city analysis functions would be linked through this unit.

VI-4. Internal Affairs should be moved from the Services Bureau to the Office of the Sheriff and a Lieutenant assigned to manage the investigations that take place there.

The Internal Affairs function is too sensitive to be outside of the Sheriff's direct supervision.

VI-5. The Sheriff's Department should adopt the organizational design illustrated in Exhibit VI-2.

The proposed structure is the template or "shell" on which the organization fills in its elements and recommended numbers of staff. This is also true for the organizational arrangement recommended for the Criminal Investigation function in Chapter IV.

Exhibit VI-2

RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN
PIERCE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT