

## **Responses to Performance Audit**

The following pages contain two responses to the performance audit of the Pierce County Sheriff's Department, plus comments by the contract auditor:

1. Response by Paul Pastor, Pierce County Sheriff
2. Response by Mark French, Interim Director of the Law Enforcement Support Agency (LESA)
3. Comments on the responses by George Sullivan, Police Management Advisors.

*The original document is on Sheriff's Department letterhead*

April 18, 2001

Dear Mr. Temmel:

Attached to this letter you will find my responses to the recommendations set forth in the Performance Audit report authored by Police Management Advisors. I would appreciate it if you would submit the responses on to the Performance Audit Committee and the Pierce County Council.

I would like to congratulate Mr. George Sullivan of PMA, and his staff, for their solid efforts in researching and writing this report. I am impressed with Mr. Sullivan's ability to grasp a project of this complexity. Careful review of the document revealed errors related to organizational structure, goals and missions. That is not unexpected, given the huge task of evaluating one of the most complex law enforcement agencies in the state and given our scarcity of information resources (clearly documented in the report). The fact that Mr. Sullivan was able to do so much in such a short period of time is remarkable.

We have attempted to correct errors that were found in the document. Because this report can and should have profound influence on how public safety services are delivered in Pierce County, we believe that the citizens of the county deserve to have the most accurate document that can be delivered.

As Mr. Sullivan indicates, this report is not to be viewed as a series of isolated recommendations. Rather, as he states, the recommendations are "interlocking" with each necessary for implementation of the whole. Therefore, we need to address all of these issues lest, by picking and choosing, we waste energy and resources without achieving our goal.

The primary objective of the report (found in the very first paragraph of the Executive Summary) was not directly answered. We believe that the implied question - "Is the Sheriff's Department making efficient and effective use of resources?" - should be answered with a resounding yes.

Throughout the report, Mr. Sullivan paints a picture of an under funded agency struggling with too few commissioned resources, scarce support staff, inadequate supervision levels and a very dysfunctional information infrastructure. In many law enforcement agencies, these indicators would likely result in a demoralized, apathetic department. Instead, Mr. Sullivan indicates that he finds an agency ready and motivated to re-invent itself, staffed by energetic and innovative people. The men and women of this agency are positive about the future and "their commitment to effective law enforcement in Pierce County was apparent to the entire audit team." Mr. Sullivan freely admits that many of the recommendations in this document came from employees themselves.

The issue is public safety and the time to act is now.

Respectfully submitted,

*Original Signed*

Paul A. Pastor, Jr.  
Sheriff of Pierce County

Cc: County Executive John Ladenburg  
County Council Chair Wendell Brown

# **PCSD Performance Audit**

## **Recommendations and Sheriff's Department's Responses to Same**

### **INTRODUCTION / ORGANIZATIONAL**

#### **Recommendation:**

**I-1 The Sheriff's Department adopt, as a minimum, the Outcome performance measures presented in Exhibit I-4.**

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon collateral resources being provided.**

The measures of outcome performance listed in Exhibit I-4 appear strong and several should be adopted. Still, other similar measures might be added.

One measure is inappropriate as a measure of Sheriff's Department performance because it is directly dependent upon action over which PCSD has no control: cases filed by the Office of the Prosecutor. PCSD does not control prosecutorial discretion or prosecutorial priorities.

As to the other measures of outcome performance, it is essential to note that such measurements are an empty exercise if they are not preceded by the implementation of other recommendations in this performance audit. The collateral resources, which are needed to implement this recommendation, are the resources needed to achieve the information and staffing goals described in these recommendations.

Accountability is essential and PCSD intends, with many of the excellent recommendations in this performance audit, to apply measurement to hold itself accountable.

But outcome measurement, absent the other recommended changes, is an exercise in measurement for its own sake. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union was famous for developing grandiose 5-year plans for industrial and agricultural production and then failing to provide the wherewithal to accomplish those plans. The 5-year plans became a laughingstock on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Outcome measures and outcome goals need to be put in place but far more needs to be put in place if those outcome measures are to mean something.

The Department would actually like the opportunity to truly build a consensus among stakeholders in public safety by taking this recommendation one step further. We

propose that *during* the construction of the 2002 budget, and immediately afterwards, appropriate representatives of the Council, the Executive's Office, the Sheriff's Advisory Board, the Deputy Sheriff's Guild and Sheriff's Administration meet with the expressed purpose of crafting specific and obtainable outcome measures based on newly available resources.

## **INFORMATION ISSUES**

### **Recommendation:**

**II-1 The Sheriff's Department should develop a comprehensive crime analysis data base.**

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon direct resources being provided.**

As clearly noted in the audit, upgrading the crime analysis database is dependent upon upgrading the crime analysis unit and the quality of data available to the Department. While the troublesome situation in LESA (also clearly described in the audit) is part of the issue to be addressed, PCSD needs to step up to the situation internally as well.

The text of the audit is full of references to inadequate data. And full of praise for the work of the current crime analysis unit and other parts of the agency seeking to remedy this situation.

It is the goal of the Department - - - and was the goal before the audit - - - to be a more powerfully, "information-based" organization.

The Department has begun to take steps - - - and taken resources "out of its own hide" to make this happen. The Department was forced to "eat" one detective/sergeant position and assign that position to overseeing the Crime Analysis Unit. The Department sought out and received grant funding of civilian crime analysis technicians to initialize the unit and sought out a volunteer to help in the unit. In short, the Department has cobbled together a Crime Analysis Unit without initial major funding support from the County.

A clear message has been received from the federal government that future grant funding of personnel will be severally curtailed. In order to implement Recommendation II-1, additional County resources will be needed.

### **Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Noting that achievement is contingent upon decisions by outside agencies.**

LESA is a logical conduit for achievement of this recommendation. LESA is currently reassessing its approach to governance and its business plan. LESA has suffered from a number of setbacks in the past three years. Until it re-establishes its own equilibrium, the countywide participation of all agencies (only a few now subscribe) cannot come about. Even if this were to happen immediately, there remains the issue of the effectiveness of "management by committee" versus unilateral accountability.

It should be noted that the Crime Analysis Unit had previously indicated a desire to promote an automated countywide crime information system. Since such a system would be information (not data) driven, it would be much easier and less expensive to implement. This information system could become the backbone of a data driven system sometime later.

**Recommendation:**

**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.**

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon collateral resources being provided.**

The achievement of this recommendation will not be possible if the Crime Analysis Unit is not upgraded and strengthened. See reply to Recommendation II-1.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - With no conditions.**

This is needed and can be accomplished within existing resources.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - With no conditions.**

This is needed and can be accomplished within existing resources. However, to do this without upgrading and strengthening the Crime Analysis unit by adding resources is an empty exercise. Any measurement without the upgrade would simply show what the performance audit shows: inadequate information to accomplish the work.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon collateral resources being provided.**

The Pierce County Sheriff's Department currently has over 90 volunteers. The Department is no stranger to using volunteers. We believe strongly that using volunteers increases our impact and our effectiveness. However, we are also strongly aware that while volunteers are very inexpensive they are not free. Particularly in highly technical and highly confidential areas such as crime analysis. Volunteers must be carefully screened, trained and supervised.

The auditor may not be aware of the extent of our current use of volunteers or the fact that we have procedures for volunteer selection and assignment.

To add a program for interns and additional volunteers to what the auditor describes as a well-motivated but understaffed area might introduce its own variety of inefficiency unless and until the Crime Analysis Unit is strengthened and upgraded. Specific space and equipment needs would need to be addressed prior to enhancing existing volunteer and intern support.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - With No Conditions.**

A plan is needed. And one can be developed without additional resources.

However, once again, to plan simply for the sake of planning is unproductive. Our planning effort must be enabled with credibility. For the process to be credible, we must take it seriously. In order to take it seriously, we must believe that it will be received seriously and stand some chance of being implemented - - -even if that involves resources - - - once it is completed.

**Recommendation:**

**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.**

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon direct resources being provided.**

This is an absolutely essential recommendation. It is key to upgrading and strengthening the Crime Analysis Unit. It is essential to achieving recommendations II - 1, II - 3, II - 5, II - 7 and II - 9.

The support that this recommendation receives is a litmus test of the seriousness with which this performance audit will be taken.

It is a litmus test for the Department. It is a litmus test for the County Council.

The Department takes this sufficiently seriously that it is attempting to immediately implement this recommendation by exploiting already critically short resources in the patrol (See Recommendation III-1). We intend to seek to create this position in order to link with LESA and carry out the recommendations in this chapter.

But this practice of creating positions out of existing positions is ultimately self-defeating. When we cannibalize resources from one essential area to staff another area we are chasing our tails.

We need something more deliberate and planful. We need to partner with the County Council and the Community to carry out essential recommendations identified throughout this performance audit.

To do so, we will all need to focus on providing effective law enforcement and not just cheap law enforcement.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - With no conditions.**

**Recommendation:**

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 the needs, and county-wide sharing possibilities.

**Reply: Agree - With No Conditions**

We believe that this recommendation is linked to recommendation II-8. Once commitment is in place for an Information Resource Management Unit, the Department will immediately set in place such a process. A tremendous amount of talent exists within the Department and in the Pierce County community that could satisfy this recommendation at little or no cost.

**Recommendation:**

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.

**Reply: Agree - With No Conditions**

The recommendation to explore LESA options is one the Department agrees with.

## **PATROL OPERATIONS**

**Recommendation:**

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.

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon both direct and indirect resources being provided.**

This recommendation is yet another litmus test. It is a difficult recommendation. The recommendation cannot be achieved as worded because the Sheriff's Department alone

cannot increase patrol staff as recommended. This can only be done with additional resources.

This recommendation states loudly and clearly that we need to hire personnel. The Sheriff's Department developed a staffing plan in 1997 and has provided an upgraded version of that plan to the County Council and to the County Executive every year since. And that staffing plan, every year, has noted that we need to hire personnel - - - and hire them at a rate far faster than we have been.

It is recognized that the County does not have unlimited resources. But this recommendation identifies lack of resources as a key problem facing the Sheriff's Department. This recommendation is a rallying cry for effective law enforcement rather than cheap law enforcement.

We have done it on the cheap for too long. Despite dedication and good heart and valiant effort, there just isn't enough to go around when you do it "on the cheap."

This recommendation, while fairly simple on the surface, requires understanding of several complex issues:

- The analysis is based on conditions that existed nearly a year ago. Calls for service have increased since then, and are likely to increase in the near future.
- The recommendations are tied to specific performance standards. Unless recommendation V-20 (projecting vacant positions and filling through anticipatory hiring) is also adopted, any effort to achieve the performance standards will likely be doomed to failure.
- Staffing levels in the contract cities is the prerogative of the political leaders and citizens of those jurisdictions. We doubt, for example, that the leaders of University Place would find the stated performance standards acceptable.
- A real world scheduling model will likely increase the number of personnel needed to achieve the stated performance standards.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon both direct and indirect resources being provided.**

There is currently not an effective or consistent mechanism for commenting on proposals for new development. And new development is everywhere in unincorporated county. Development can be very positive and usually is to be encouraged. Except when there is no infrastructure to back it up. In the case of law

enforcement resources in Pierce County, it often seems that there is no infrastructure to back it up.

When we have been asked to comment to proposals, our comments received no reply. Apparently they carried little or no weight since where we noted impact and the need for mitigation, the development went forward and no mitigation was forthcoming.

To accomplish this recommendation, we need a portion of an F.T.E. to track this plus training plus the use of budget analysts plus a commitment on the part of policy makers to (1) listen (2) act on advice provided.

**Recommendation:**

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.

Reply: This recommendation is repeated in Recommendation V-5 (Traffic Unit) and in V-10 (CST). Our responses can be found in those locations.

**Recommendation:**

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

Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon direct resources becoming available in rough proportion to the adjustment of boundaries.

It is important to note that the Department has been actively working on a plan to reconfigure boundaries since before the performance audit commenced. The problem that we encountered is again the problem of taking from one under-served area and giving to another. This is extremely frustrating and has been repeatedly brought to the attention of policy makers in our staffing plans.

The answer is not in continual re-analysis and reconfiguration of scarcity. The answer is not in continually calculating how we can do the job more cheaply and more marginally. This will never provide an adequate solution. The answer is in confronting the central issue of inadequate resources and making the needed changes.

**Recommendation:**

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.

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon direct and collateral resources being provided.**

This recommendation relates to the improvement of Crime Analysis and workload analysis facility within the Department. The recommendation is sound and proper. But as the text of the performance audit amply notes, the Department lacks the systems and personnel to generate needed information. We will gladly pursue this recommendation provided there are the resources to do so.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon direct resources being provided for the CSO and / or phone report unit.**

This is a classic example of efficiencies being achievable if investments are made. Requests for additional civilian support personnel have been very hard to obtain from the County; and requests for deputies have been only slightly less hard to obtain.

The Department is well aware of the impact of responses to false burglary alarm calls. We have identified this type of call as a persistent drain on uniformed resources. With legislative assistance, the Department plans on saving a significant amount of wasted patrol time through an aggressive and innovative policy change.

## INVESTIGATIONS

### Recommendation:

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

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon direct and collateral resources being provided.**

This recommendation is closely tied to IV-2 and IV-3.

We believe that the Performance Audit has suggested some interesting and seemingly constructive re-structuring concepts. Having an effective Case Management system (IV-3) in place is critical to positive change.

The Department believes that additional analysis is in order to accurately determine the actual number of investigators needed. This confusion stems from the "Investigation Workload Time to Task" information on page 58. This calculation was based on 19,970 Part One crimes, yet the table in Exhibit IV-4 cites 20,471 Part One Crimes. Internal analysis by Sheriff's staff suggests over 22,000 Part One crimes occurred countywide in 2000. This discrepancy in basic numbers can significantly change the number of needed resources. Using the year 2000 estimated Part One crimes instead of the 19,970 cited in the report, the calculation indicates that at least six additional positions above the recommended staff changes are needed. This does not include a more accurate assessment of Part Two crimes.

Sheriff's staff will supply accurate Part One and Part Two crimes and apply the "Investigative Workload Time To Task" calculation to them. The revised estimate will be provided to Council staff as recommended in the report. We also will attempt to clarify what resources are needed in the unincorporated areas, as opposed to the sum of CID including Lakewood. As indicated elsewhere in this document, deployment levels in the contract cities are up to the political leaders and citizens of those communities.

The Department has long told the public and the policy makers that we do an inadequate job of investigating property crimes. This is not because personnel are not motivated or not capable. It is because we must triage the worst cases that come before us. We have invested the greater part of our resources in crimes against persons. Because of our low staffing - - - clearly described in the performance audit - - we have not had the resources to deal with property crimes. And our patrol deputies have not had the time (or the supervision) to insure top quality preliminary investigation. This results in a mutually reinforcing situation with a poverty of resources at its base.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree – Conditioned upon direct resources being provided.**

The word “allocate” in this recommendation should be changed to “add.” Allocate suggests that the already inadequate resources could be further re-positioned to achieve the goal. This is not the case and the text of the performance audit relating to this recommendation clearly indicates that more resources are needed.

**Recommendation:**

**IV – 3 Repair the current automated case management system.**

**Reply: Agree – Without conditions.**

In reality, achieving this recommendation will take some collateral resources, which should link with the increase in resources needed for information systems. However, this is so urgently needed that we need to do whatever we can immediately to address this problem as a first step in starting a better approach to case assignment even before the urgently needed investigative personnel and systems development resources become available.

**Recommendation:**

**IV – 4 Improve the quality control process for preliminary investigations.**

**Reply: Agree – Conditioned upon direct resources being provided.**

As clearly noted in the text of the performance audit report, the quality of preliminary investigations by patrol deputies are a function of time they have available for such activities, supervision available in the field and the likelihood of follow-up by detectives. The reports note that staffing and the time it provides is inadequate. The number of patrol supervisors is inadequate and the number of detectives is inadequate.

This is an important recommendation that needs to be implemented. It is abundantly clear that the path to implementation will involve resources.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Without Conditions**

Note: This cannot be accomplished until the LECATS system is repaired, recommendation IV-3.

**Recommendation:**

**IV - 6 Implement a habitual offender tracking process.**

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon both direct and indirect resources being provided.**

The ability to provide a tactically useful tracking process will depend on the ability to staff the Crime Analysis function and sufficient patrol and investigative time to put the tracking system to work.

It should be noted that a very rudimentary habitual offender tracking process is already in place.

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

**Reply: Agree - Without conditions**

The Department has developed just such a plan for dealing with Methamphetamine. It is agreed that a more comprehensive drug control and enforcement plan which likewise involves multiple disciplines co-operating to address the problem is needed.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon collateral resources being provided.**

Better time investment tracking of all specialized units is needed. To properly provide this via the CAD system, that system will need to be strengthened consistent with the recommendations relating to information systems.

### **Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Already in progress.**

This is something that is already underway. Some members of the Lab Team are actually case carrying detectives, and receive training in a variety of issues related to hazardous materials.

### **Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon collateral resources being provided.**

The issues here are the very same noted in reply to Recommendation V - 1 above.

### **Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Without conditions.**

**Recommendation:**

**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.**

**Reply: Disagree - With Comment**

The Department understands and appreciates the need for careful and efficient deployment. We are not opposed to change. But this recommendation requires careful scrutiny and some background information not addressed in the report.

The current size of the Traffic Unit is a direct result of a policy change from the Washington State Patrol in 1999. Prior to that time, WSP Troopers investigated nearly all county road accidents. With little warning and time to plan, the Sheriff's Department was faced with how to deal with an activity that was formerly accomplished with over 30 troopers in east Pierce County. With assistance from the County Council and from grants, several new positions were created in the Sheriff's Department to deal with this emergency. Those positions, designed to replace the former WSP responsibility, were placed in the Traffic Unit. Again, this has all happened within the past two years. Too little time has elapsed and too little good data exists for a thoughtful and careful analysis of such a significant resource.

**We feel it critical to point out that the existing emergency response times (table III-8) already include support from the existing Traffic Unit personnel. Traffic has always been a "primary responder" to emergency calls.**

Shuffling the personnel from one job title to another will not improve emergency response times.

This underscores an important issue: traffic units are currently call responsive to many calls for patrol service. Traffic units are not exclusively focused on traffic now. The poor quality of information coming from LESA in the past made it difficult to determine the full extent of the practice (or, for that matter, the full extent of traffic activity given the problem with CAD data). However, it is likely that significant amount of traffic unit time is devoted to assisting patrol, either as a primary initial responder to emergency calls, or acting as back up units to patrol in priority calls. Thus, transferring traffic units to patrol will not result in a one-to-one benefit in terms of ability to answer patrol calls and improve on problem solving availability and response times.

Another issue is important to consider with regard to traffic as well. The traffic problems on County roads have been increasing as population in unincorporated county increases at a rate of nearly 3 % per year and transportation / road infrastructure increases at a far slower rate. When this fact is coupled with the fact that the Washington State Patrol pulled its Troopers off of County Roads, the result is that an

increasing burden for traffic control, traffic enforcement, other traffic related functions and accident investigation falls to the Sheriff's Department.

In addition, the report did not focus on certain vital missions that the Traffic Unit currently manages: DUI enforcement and DUI education, underage drinking (emphasis patrols that concentrate on the underage drinking driver) and school zone speed enforcement - just to name a few. These types of missions, long term and time intensive, often get overlooked in a generalist approach. Many require longer periods of uncommitted time than is normally found in general patrol.

For these reasons, we are very reluctant to shift these resources based on limited information. The fear is that by removing this singular flexible resource, emergency response times might actually increase. The Department feels that a far safer approach is to carefully examine good data related to Traffic Unit assistance to the Patrol function and to Traffic's mission. At that point, if the data suggests it, the Sheriff's Department will either change the Traffic Unit's mission (for example, to respond to more priority 2 and 3 calls), or reduce its size, moving some of the resources into Patrol.

**Recommendation:**

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

Reply: Disagree - On the grounds that beyond basic deployment of resources, our contract customers ought to be able to determine their own enforcement priorities.

**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.

Reply: Agree - Without conditions.

Note: This recommendation seems to overlap or repeat the recommendation in V - 3 above.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon direct resources being provided.**

This is another absolutely essential recommendation. Interestingly, it is virtually the exact same recommendation that was provided by a Loaned Executive Management Assistance Program study conducted by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs in 1999.

Once again, to be effective and efficient will require an investment. We cannot simply throw dollars at problems. Nor can we constantly throw excuses that there are no dollars.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon both direct and collateral resources being provided.**

This is an excellent recommendation. Its implementation will take an appreciation of the context in which it must be implemented.

Three facts about training are true. Training takes existing resources and makes them more effective. Training is a force multiplier. Training is not free.

One of the great unfunded mandates of the past 10 years has been police training. The state and federal government insist - - - and properly so - - - that deputies be trained regarding hazardous materials, blood borne pathogens, airborne pathogens and other hazards of our work.

We have increased our ethics and supervisory training. We are about to initiate training which condemns racial profiling and instructs on the use of additional lethal weapons and teaches our people to better enter and access computerized data.

All are necessary. All are important. But the increase in the time needed to cover these vital training areas have not been accompanied by an increase in the hours available in the year or the personnel available to cover the calls while others are in training.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Disagree - V-8 and V-9 are far less essential to implementing this recommendation than is III - 1. The**

**Recommendation to reduce the CST is a good idea, providing there are sufficient resources to allow for the tasks that they are currently performing to be addressed.**

It needs to be recognized that Community Support Team personnel were obtained with a federal COPS grant to perform the tasks that they are performing. We are using them as our "neighborhood crisis team" to deal with local problems where additional resources are needed.

If we were to integrate them into patrol without increasing the numbers in patrol ranks, we would simply be taking from one important under-staffed function and giving to another understaffed function. Lack of resources has forced the Pierce County Sheriff's Department to do this far too frequently in the past. The Department has been asked to reallocate existing limited resources rather than being provided with adequate resources.

Again, it needs to be emphasized that the performance audit clearly indicates that more staffing is needed.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Without conditions.**

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon collateral resources being provided.**

As with other recommendations relating to data gathering and storage and the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, these systems must be upgraded and strengthened before the recommendation can be implemented.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Without conditions.**

As noted in the report, the Department is moving towards an aggressive and pro-active approach to dealing with the sometimes wasteful use of resources needed to deal with false burglary alarms.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Without conditions.**

**Note:** This is a very general recommendation and is almost a proverb as opposed to a recommendation. That said, the Department agrees and will do its best to implement this very general recommendation. See the comments in Recommendation V- 9.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon both direct and collateral resources being provided.**

This is a laudable recommendation that could be generally applied to all law enforcement organizations as well as all sections of county government. To implement this recommendation in the Sheriff's Department would take a portion of a dedicated F.T.E. plus some dedicated time from the Department of Personnel and possibly the paid time of a consultant as well.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Without conditions.**

This is an appropriate if very general recommendation and should be expected of our training division on a regular basis.

**Recommendation:**

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

Reply: Agree - Without conditions.

**Recommendation:**

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 recruiting efforts by targeting the right people and places.

Reply: Agree - Without conditions.

It is worth noting that whatever process has been used in recruiting people for the ranks of deputy, the outcome of the process seems to be very successful. Pierce County is noted at the state level for sending candidates to the Basic Law Enforcement Academy who have a very high likelihood of graduating and doing so with distinction. The Department has a high retention rate and a strong reputation for integrity and for delivery of well-motivated service despite the lack of resources identified in the performance audit. If the issue is that we should hunt for people like those we have been hiring and target them for recruitment, then there is full agreement with this recommendation.

**Recommendation:**

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.

Reply: Agree - Without conditions.

**Recommendation:**

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

Reply: Agree - Without conditions.

It is essential to note that the consultant instructed the Sheriff that the Department needs to find a means to pro-actively hire in order to account for the vacancies which occur in this manner while still having sufficient staffing to meet the criteria for productivity as described in Exhibits III – 9 and III –10.

The ability to meet various performance measures is directly tied to the ability to perform anticipatory hiring.

This recommendation is critical to making many of the other recommendations work.

**Recommendation:**

**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.**

**Reply: Partially Agree**

This certainly warrants review. However, there is a possible cost that I do not believe that the consultant considered. Currently, we have one of the highest successful Basic Academy graduation rates in the State. Instructors on the Basic Academy staff often comment that our recruits are particularly well prepared for academy work.

The Basic Academy is currently nearly five months long. To the extent that we are reducing failure / drop out rate after the first three weeks by extending our pre-academy period, we may be saving resources rather than over-expending.

This is, of course, an empirical question. Thus, the agreement with the idea that our practice should be reviewed and changed if the costs outpace the benefits.

**Recommendation:**

**V - 22 The Field Training and Evaluation Program should be moved to 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.**

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon direct resources being provided.**

This recommendation seems like a good way to strengthen and tighten the system of Field Training and the proper use of the probationary period. However, it cannot work successfully without the recommended addition of the Administrative Sergeant.

Recommendation V – 8 above and indicates that more and not fewer Sergeants are needed in the field. Under these circumstances, a new Sergeant's position will be needed lest we implement Recommendation V – 22 at the expense of Recommendation V – 8 as well as Recommendation VI -1.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Conditioned upon minor changes**

A recommendation the Department endorses with a minor modification-some FTO assignments -specifically to the Detachments - are designed to familiarize the new employee to the various areas served.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Without Conditions.**

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Agree - Without Conditions.**

It is necessary to consider this Recommendation in light of earlier Recommendations and the content of the performance audit. The consultant properly made a large issue of the fact that at current staffing levels in patrol, personnel had little or no time to perform neighborhood problem solving. Unless there is progress with staffing increases (note Recommendation III -3), then implementing this Recommendation will have little impact and little meaning

**Recommendation:**

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

Reply: Agree - Without Conditions.

The Department agrees that exploration of this program is of value, and should be done in partnership with the Deputy Sheriff's Guild.

**Recommendation:**

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

Reply: Agree - Without Conditions.

**Recommendation:**

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

Reply: Agree - Without Conditions.

## **AGENCY ORGANIZATION**

### **Recommendation:**

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.

**Reply:** Agree - Conditioned upon direct resources being provided.

This Recommendation is an elaboration of Recommendations III - 1 and V - 8. In order for supervisors to spend more time as note and in order to have the sergeant - officer ratio recommended, more supervisory positions will need to be created. These cannot be created at the expense of patrol officer positions lest Recommendation III -1 and others be ignored.

### **Recommendation:**

VI - 2 The Department should organize the "patrol area" into two major service zones. The 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.

**Reply:** Agree - With comment.

The Department agrees with the philosophy that reorganization is in order. The exact configuration should be carefully thought out and configured based on a number of criteria. For instance, the re-organization may focus more on developing more "ownership" districts in the central patrol area to more closely match existing neighborhood boundaries - for example Parkland/Spanaway and South Hill.

It should be noted that reorganization was in the planning stages prior to the inception of the report. It is targeted for implementation in January, 2002.

### **Recommendation:**

VI - 3 An Information Resources Unit should be formed in the Services Bureau.

**Reply:** Agree - Conditioned upon direct resources being provided.

**Note:** This Recommendation seems to be virtually the same as II – 8 above. As was the case with the reply to Recommendation II – 8, there will need to be resources provided for this to be implemented. This Recommendation as well as Recommendations II –1, II – 3, II – 5, II – 7 and II – 8 are dependent upon those resources.

**Recommendation:**

**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.**

**Reply: Agree - Without conditions.**

**Note:** The consultant may not be aware that a Lieutenant and a Detective/Sergeant currently work in the unit. The transfer of the unit to work directly under the Sheriff is no problem.

**Recommendation:**

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

**Reply: Disagree - With Comment.**

A new organizational design is in order. We don't believe that the model in Exhibit VI-2 would best address the needs of Pierce County citizens for a variety of reasons.

See comments regarding recommendation VI-2 for explanation.

04/18/01

# LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT AGENCY

930 Tacoma Avenue South Room 239  
Tacoma, Washington 98402

Telephone: (253) 798-7519  
Fax: (253) 798-4313



May 18, 2001

Matt Temmel  
Performance Audit Coordinator  
Pierce County  
955 Tacoma Avenue  
Tacoma, Wa.

RE: LESA response to Sheriff's Performance Audit

Dear Mr. Temmel:

Thank you for allowing LESA to provide a response to that part of the Sheriff's performance audit that relates to LESA. Staff and I appreciate it!

I read LESA related portions of the audit with interest. I agree with many of the auditor's recommendations regarding the need for timely, accurate and detailed information through automated information systems. It was in recognition of that need that LESA and its many owners and customers, including the Sheriff's Department, created on-line systems several decades ago. That need was reaffirmed several years ago when those same owners and customers, in partnership with LESA, embarked on the LEADS 2000 project.

Clearly, good, accurate, timely data is necessary for administrative, strategic and tactical decision making. Of the three, LESA (for the most part) only supplies its customers with data for tactical decision-making. For instance, we keep substantial amounts of data on crime types, locations, times and on suspects, arrestees, fingerprints, mug shots, etc. We also keep substantial amounts of data on calls for service and dispatched calls. These types of information are used extensively by the Sheriff's Department, primarily for tactical decision-making.

On the other hand, LESA keeps almost no data, nor have we been asked to keep, data whose primary use is for administrative or strategic decision-making. For example, LESA keeps no data related to officer productivity, employee time cards/accounting, deployment, scheduling, etc.

Page Two  
Matt Temmel  
May 18, 2001

These and many others are examples of data that is critically necessary to the Sheriff's Department for administrative or strategic decision-making. LESA has never been asked to, nor does it, provide management information systems/data to the Sheriff's Department. We do keep crime data used to formulate the UCR/NIBRS data.

I noted, at page 17, that the survey results show that of the three types of information, survey respondents felt that the tactical information they use was the best of the three. They also noted that almost all of the strategic and administrative information systems were seriously deficient and only about half of the tactical information was. While we at LESA are striving to improve our service we note that the tactical information systems and decision-making, which rely heavily on LESA data, were rated the highest.

Now, let me answer the specific recommendations that apply to LESA. They are numbered identically to those in the Audit Report.

#### II-1 – Crime Analysis Data Base – Concur

LESA stands ready to assist the Sheriff's Department in any way we can, consistent with available budget. The Sheriff's Department relies heavily on LESA kept data for crime analysis. I note that the Sheriff's audit was conducted between mid 2000 and early 2001. Sheriff's personnel have personally reported to me substantial progress in the timeliness, quality and accuracy of the data we store for their use in crime analysis. We are elated with the progress and will continue to make data improvements.

I note that the Audit says that LESA plans do not go far enough in creating a comprehensive database. Its important to note that the LEADS 2000 Project, which TPD and PCSD helped design, has four stages. The auditor's statement is based on an analysis of the information currently captured. The project is not yet complete. If subsequent stages are properly funded, much more comprehensive data will be available. It's the type that the auditor envisioned when he wrote this statement. It's the type that TPD and PCSD envisioned several years ago when they started planning the LEADS 2000 project with LESA. If completed, the data will support better tactical, strategic and administrative decision-making. We are very willing to work with our customers to insure that all our databases meet their needs.

A regional approach is desirable. LESA's was created almost 27 years ago in order to have shared data available on a regional basis. The original LESA agreement, drafted in 1974, contains language about regional data sharing. We believe that having shared data available on a regional basis is critical to successful law enforcement.

#### II-2 – Shared crime and offender data in an automated format. – Concur

LESA stores some of this data for about 8 – 10 Pierce County Police agencies. Thus, they enjoy the benefits of shared crime data. When the LEADS 2000 system is fully operational, this recommendation will be substantially achieved. Despite some of the LEADS 2000 challenges

Page Three  
Matt Temmel  
May 18, 2001

LESA has experienced, even more law enforcement agencies are contracting with LESA so they too can access this data.

On Page 22, the auditor makes comments about LESA. We agree that the full potential of LEADS 2000 has not been fully achieved. There are a number of well-documented reasons why that is the case and some of those are well beyond LESA's control. For those that are within our control, we are fully committed to achieving that high-quality information.

I note that the auditor points out that LESA "has made some noteworthy progress". That comment comes from LESA's users, not just LESA staff.

It's important to note that for the most part, LESA's data is tactical data, not administrative or strategic. I'm not sure that everyone understands that.

#### II-11 – Split LESA – Do Not Concur

Of all the recommendations, this has the least amount of supporting comments or rationale for it. This is interesting in light of the *huge* number of issues associated with the recommendation. Implementing this recommendation is very complex, would take several years, or more, and in the interim reduce, or stop, regional information sharing, the very thing the audit purports to improve. There are numerous labor, union, civil service, cost, technology, federal grant funding reimbursement, distribution of capital assets, renegotiation/cancellation of leases/contracts and a whole host of other issues to be considered and managed. It could easily take 2 – 3 years to implement this suggestion. During that time, LESA's efforts would, of necessity, focus on carving up the company (operationally, administratively and technically) rather than on improving data quality and regional sharing of information. The Sheriff's Department, indeed all LESA's users, would not get the improved data that they need or, at least, they would experience further delays in attaining it. These additional delays could even be longer than it would otherwise take to "stay the course" and have LESA make the improvements.

While the auditor was charged only to audit Sheriff's services, splitting LESA would impact all LESA's customers, not just the Sheriff's Department. That impact could be substantial and must fully be taken into account. Such decisions cannot and must not be made in a vacuum. Putting LESA together was complex. Operating and managing LESA is complex. Taking it apart will be at least equally, if not more, complex.

The recommendation seems inconsistent with Recommendation II-2. If Records management services are split out of LESA, it will take some time to return to the current level of regional data sharing LESA provides, let alone make progress. For instance, there are huge technical issues associated with this recommendation. It will be very difficult to attain uniformity and consistency amongst numerous users regarding data standards, protocols, data exchange, security/privacy issues, etc.

Page Four  
Matt Temmel  
May 18, 2001

Finally, splitting LESA, as proposed, creates, in effect, another LESA. One would provide communications and dispatching services, the other on countywide data capture, organization, warehousing, processing, etc. This would create duplication of administrative overhead. It results in two regional agencies, not one, as is the case now. It doubles the issues that it purports to mitigate.

Thanks again for providing us an opportunity to comment on the audit. As we have done in the past, we are again ready to work with the Sheriff's Department, indeed all our customers, to insure that our products meet their needs.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Original Signed*

Mark French  
Interim Director  
Phone 253.798.4029  
E-Mail: [frenchm@lesa.net](mailto:frenchm@lesa.net)

C: LESA Executive Board

June 1, 2001

To: Matt Temmel, Pierce County Performance Audit Coordinator

From: George J. Sullivan, Police Management Advisors [*Original is signed*]

Re: Response to Comments by Sheriff and LESA

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the written comments by Sheriff Paul Pastor and LESA Director Mark French about the performance audit report on the Pierce County Sheriff's Department. The Sheriff's comments are in his letter of April 18, 2001, and the LESA response is dated May 18.

By and large, the Sheriff agreed with the recommendations proffered by the audit team. Some recommendations were deemed acceptable providing resources would be available to implement them. There were, however, a few recommendations that may not have been fully explained as to their impact on other functions, or the way they could best be implemented.

#### Patrol Performance Standards and Staffing Levels

Recommendation III-1 suggests staffing levels needed to achieve particular patrol performance standards. One should be reminded that such staffing levels are minimum numbers required to achieve those levels. If a particular jurisdiction wishes the higher performance levels that result from higher staffing levels, then they should have them. The audit team did not mean to imply that a contract city, for example, should reduce service levels. In fact, we believe that any jurisdiction should have all the service they can afford. Nevertheless, we also believe that it is the responsibility of the Sheriff's Department to tell those jurisdictions what the minimum staffing levels are for any given set of performance standards.

#### Investigative Staff

The second recommendation that we wish to clarify is IV-1, Re-organize the Criminal Investigations Division. With respect to the apparent confusion of which set of figures used to compute the number of investigators, we used the *most recent, most reliable* crime figures – 1998. Only as a cross check did we use a totally different methodology with the most recent (but admittedly less reliable) crime data – 1999. When we compared the two methods, using two different databases, we found that the cross check method came within 5% of the primary method (58.1 FTE versus 61 FTE). We thus felt more assured of the 61 FTE we recommended. As far as using year 2000 crimes to determine staffing, we heartily approve. To restate our position: Use the most current, most reliable data in the most robust way.

### Traffic

The third recommendation that should be discussed is V-5, concerning the reassignment of some county-wide traffic duties to support other critical services. As mentioned elsewhere in the report, re-organizing the agency to better support priority functions is tricky. Not all staff hires and transfers can be done at the same time, and certainly not at once. It will take time to get new hires and start building a strong patrol force. Part of that building is the gradual transition of traffic officers to accomplish the full range of patrol duties, as generalist neighborhood police officers. The issue of traffic officers as primary responders to emergency calls in the unincorporated areas is an important one, but is presumed to be a critical factor in reducing response time without any empirical data to back that presumption.

What we are describing in our “blueprint” for the organization of the future is one where there are sufficient supervisors, K-9 units, and other field units deployed by time of day and day of week to help the neighborhood deputies with priority one calls when they happen to be simultaneously busy. One should recall from Chapter III of the report that the number of emergency calls represented only about 1.1% of all dispatched calls. And since Exhibit III-3 shows less than 400 calls/day in the Sheriff’s jurisdiction, the average number of emergency calls one could expect would only be between four and five per day in the contract cities and the unincorporated areas combined.

So the notion that a relatively large allocation of traffic officers is absolutely essential to patrol performance may be overstating the case. However, we do agree with the Sheriff that the issue should be subjected to an empirical study.

### Contract City Issues

A question was raised as to how the audit addressed the issue of whether contract cities are taking Sheriff’s resources from the unincorporated areas. The audit did not find any evidence that this problem existed. While it is true that the three contract cities did seem to have relatively more personnel allocated to them, given their respective workloads (with the possible exception of Lakewood), it is also true that the residents of those jurisdictions were willing to pay for the higher level of services received. The unincorporated areas have the same option as the contract cities of paying more for higher levels of service, as presented in the report.

In another sense, it is to the advantage of the unincorporated areas that the contract cities pay for and have relatively high levels of resources provided by the Sheriff’s Department. This is beneficial because the effect of mutual coverage and tactical support will most likely help those areas with the worst staffing problems. It was for this very reason that the audit team recommended that better workload information be collected and better management reports be generated so that managers could ascertain more precisely how their respective resources are being used.

Matt Temmel  
Response to Sheriff and LESA  
June 1, 2001

### LESA Issues

The response to the preliminary report by the Law Enforcement Support Agency (LESA) reflected agreement on most of the major findings and recommendations. However, the LESA administration did not concur with Recommendation II-11, which says:

**“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.”**

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

It should be emphasized here that PMA is urging Pierce County to “Explore the option of...” and is not expecting the county to immediately execute the splitting of LESA in two organizational entities without further study. It should also be emphasized that this audit did not include LESA as a specific topic of study, but our initial observations and interviews with users contrasted with what we have seen consistent with successful regional law enforcement information systems throughout the country. And that is a single (sometimes broadly) focused mission.