



**"FIFTEENOCT" MINISTRIES
AND CONSULTANTS TO LAW**



**Organizational Assessment
of the
*Dumfries Virginia Police Department***

January – February 2010

Submitted By:

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**FifteenOct Inc. Ministries and Consultants to Law
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We would like to thank Town Manager Kim Alexander, Chief Johnson and all of the members of the Dumfries Police Department for their cooperation and assistance in this project. They were instrumental in ensuring that this assessment could be conducted in a timely and productive manner.

Their support of this effort, to enhance the effectiveness and professionalism of the Dumfries Police Department, is greatly appreciated.

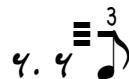


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FORWARD

When an organizational assessment is requested by a governmental entity, it is often due to concerns about efficiency and/or effectiveness of the organization. Nevertheless, it is the goal of this assessment to address both deficiencies and accomplishments of the Dumfries Police Department.

This report does contain findings and analyses that point out deficiencies in the Dumfries Police Department. They are in the report either because they were identified by participants as areas negatively affecting the overall performance of the agency or because, in the author's expert opinion, they are issues that are inhibiting the department from being the professional and progressive police agency the residents of Dumfries deserve.

In the midst of what might be construed by some to be a negative portrait of the Dumfries Police Department, it is important for the readers to remember that a significant number of the police department staff are dedicated, eager, loyal, and committed public servants who want the department to progress, modernize and become the best police agency possible. Without these dedicated individuals, most of the changes and recommendations included in this report could not, and would not, be made.

It is important for readers to understand that this assessment resulted from a three-day visit to Dumfries and Prince William County including interactions with approximately 35 people. It is impossible to identify and assess all issues or propose recommendations for all facets of a community's police department in that time period. However, it is also important to understand that it is the responsibility of the contractor to conduct the most comprehensive assessment possible, within the constraints of the contract, and to provide thorough and honest feedback while making recommendations based on their law enforcement experiences. It is the opinion of the authors that the following report meets these criteria and expectations.

Note: *The use of the male pronoun when referring to police officers in this report is for the sake of convenience and consistency and is not in any way intended to ignore the presence or importance of females within the ranks of the Dumfries Police Department.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Between January 14, 2010 and February 19, 2010, the assessors conducted face-to-face and phone interviews, met with citizens of Dumfries and Prince William County and conducted brief interviews with people randomly selected while walking through the business district of Dumfries. Based on these interviews, a review of several surveys completed by members of the police department, and a review of the department's policies and procedures manual, we offer the following observations and conclusions.

The Dumfries Police Department is staffed with a number of dedicated employees. It is a department that strives to maintain a level of pride in its operations. The department has a mix of senior and relatively young officers, many of whom value working for their agency. Although turnover has been low in the past, in the last year there has been significant attrition which has negatively impacted the effectiveness and efficiency of the department.

Despite the best intentions of many of the agency's employees, the Dumfries Police Department lacks sufficient and critically needed direction, guidance and accountability. The agency does have a recently released mission and values statement to facilitate the department direction, as well as a complete set of policies and procedures, but it operates on occasion under a haphazard system of command and control without structure and consistency. The newly released policies and procedures are generally in-line with the State of Virginia Accreditation Standards; they were vetted by the Town Attorney and former Town manager, but the fact is that the day-to-day operations of the organization are conducted in a more informal than formal manner. Accountability for performance is often lacking or is provided intermittently based on personal preferences or individual relationships.

Advanced training opportunities are rare and there is neither a formal career progression system nor a formal promotion process in place. Much of this is due to the limited staffing as well as the limited promotional opportunities.

Decisions regarding operational priorities and expectations are based on individual knowledge and preferences rather than on empirical and historical data.

Although there are several formal outreach efforts to the community, such as the Christmas program for local under privileged children and an elder care program conducted by the auxiliary police program, community-oriented policing is not a priority in the Dumfries Police Department.

Among the employees there is, without exception, great admiration for their chief of police. However, there is also a practically unanimous consensus from those employees that the lines of communication and authority within the department are

unclear and confusing. The lack of clear lines of command and communication in addition to related issues of political interference were the most often mentioned reasons for low morale among employees. While claims of political interference are not uncommon in public service organizations, the level of purported interference revealed in this assessment appears to be significant. It also appears that the recent increase in a more hands-on approach by the town manager is due to a sense that the police department lacks in accountability and operational focus.

The Dumfries Police Department has a strong foundation upon which to progress. Many of the employees are eager to grow and improve. Most employees offered suggestions regarding how the agency can become the professional agency the community deserves. Change needs to occur within the Dumfries Police Department. Some of the changes recommended herein will be difficult, and a few may be costly. However, if the department does not change, the town faces a strong likelihood of increased liability exposure, internal turmoil and a future where the reputation of its police department will be one of mediocrity, not professionalism.

From the moment the assessors drove into the town it was clear that the town of Dumfries prided itself on its welcoming atmosphere. A police department is often a community's most public representation of its values and ideals. For the Dumfries Police Department to attain this status it must enhance and codify its management systems, establish processes to enhance outreach to stakeholders, and clearly delineate lines of authority, responsibility and communication. Most importantly, the Police Department must revamp its perspective on the role of a police agency in modern society, specifically in the town of Dumfries, Virginia.

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Purpose

The function of this document is to report on the findings of an organizational assessment of the Dumfries Police Department and to provide recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of the department's organization, operations, and service to stakeholders in the Dumfries community.

Background

On December 29, 2009 the town of Dumfries town manager, Ms. Kimberly Alexander, met with Col. Bob Beach, Vice President of Operations for FifteenOct Inc. (hereinafter referred to as the *contractor*). During that contact, Ms. Alexander made a request for a proposal from the contractor to design and conduct an assessment of the Dumfries Police Department which would, in turn, be delivered to the Office of the Town Manager of said locality.

At the conclusion of that contact, the contractor agreed to provide a proposal for the following:

1. Gather pertinent information about the department through interviews, document reviews and other methods of data collection.
2. Report on the findings; and
3. Provide recommendations on how the department can maintain its positive attributes and offer suggestions for enhancing areas potentially determined to be less than adequate.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

During conversations with the town manager the contractor asked for guidance on the breadth of assessment desired. The contractor was instructed not to limit the scope of the assessment, but the following five specific areas of focus were requested by the town manager:

1. Overall policy and procedures used by the police department in its day-to-day operations.
2. Hiring policies and practices of the police department.
3. Promotional and duty assignment policies and practices.
4. Firearms training practices.
5. Policies and practices of handling complaints against officers and/or staff.

Methodology

It was the contractor's intent to gather information from a wide variety of stakeholders. With the assistance of town staff, the contractor identified more than a dozen individuals whom we believed would have direct knowledge about the department, its history, its performance and/or its level of service. These individuals included members of the local judicial system, local law enforcement agency leaders, merchants and business leaders. Also, the contractor met with the town manager, other town staff, and members of the Dumfries Police Department. Finally, the contractor conducted "on the street interviews" with randomly selected citizens in the business district.

Information was gathered from stakeholders through face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, e-mail interviews and, in addition, surveys were distributed to all department employees (see Appendix A).

Documents such as the department's policy manual, organizational chart and the FY 2008-09 budget were also reviewed.

FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The department's policies and procedure manual was completed and distributed the week of January 4, 2010. The town attorney advised us that she had reviewed and approved all of them. The new set of policies and procedures were released in the form of a CD distributed to each member of the department. During this assessment the majority of the staff had not reviewed the new policies. Prior to the release of the new policy CD, the department used a series of policies and procedure in four volumes that were developed in January of 2003. Those policies were approved by the Chief of Police and the Town Manager in place at the time of their issuance.

Findings

Due to the fact that all of the new policies are reported to have been developed in accordance with the Virginia Accreditations Standards, and that the Town Attorney had reviewed and approved them, the assessors did not review all policies and procedure in depth except as they related to specific issues of concern or observation or as related to specific areas that we were asked to review in the assessment. The assessors were provided with one copy of the new CD and they examined one copy of the four 2003 manuals that were housed in the sergeant's office.

No officer interviewed had a complete copy of the four 2003 manuals, but each did know of their existence in the sergeant's office.

A review of the current policies issued on January 4, 2010 indicated they appeared to be in good order and are sufficient for managing and leading the agency if followed as documented.

Analysis

Now that the department has a complete set of policies and procedures issued to all employees, a process must be followed to assure that these policies are maintained and updated on a regular basis to keep abreast with changes in state or town laws and other policy modifications.

Recommendations

1. Policies

It is recommended that a process that requires a review of all policies and procedures be conducted each year and that all staff members be issued a complete set of updated policies and procedures annually.

This project could be conducted with the assistance of a professional law enforcement organization, such as the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police (VACP) or the Small Agency Section of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). Virginia is fortunate to have many outstanding police chiefs who are active participants in both of these organizations. Dana Schrad, Executive Director of the VACP, has connections to both statewide and national resources.

These policy revisions are a priority. The cost of doing so may be significant, but the cost of doing nothing could be enormous to the town's reputation and financial health.

Assessors Note: At some point in the past, the Dumfries Police Department purchased a computer program that could be used to train and test all officers on the department's policies and procedures. It is highly recommended that this system be re-established and used.

2. Accreditation

This assessment found that the Dumfries police command had undertaken a six-year intensive effort to achieve accreditation through the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (VACALEA). For some reason, this significant on-going effort to reach state accreditation has been halted by the town government.

VACALEA is established through the collaboration of the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police (VACP), the Virginia Sheriffs' Association (VSA) and the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). It began in the early 1990's, is overseen by the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC), and consists of representatives of the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and the Virginia Sheriffs Association with staffing provided by DCJS.

The accreditation program involves self-assessments by participating departments as well as on-site review by outside assessors. Participation in the state accreditation program is completely voluntary. There are now 72 law enforcement agencies in Virginia that have achieved accreditation. They represent about one fifth of all law enforcement agencies in the Commonwealth. Accreditation has been seen as an effective tool for strengthening law enforcement, increasing its professionalism and improving quality and delivery of services.

The process of accreditation is complicated, time consuming and requires a significant manpower commitment. Nevertheless, it is the opinion of the assessors that the benefits are well worth the effort.

Applicable Virginia State Accreditation Standard

The assessors provide this information as review documentation of the current Virginia State Accreditation Standards. The town and the agency may wish to consider these standards as they review the assessment.

ADM.09.01 The agency has a written directive system that includes, at a minimum:

- a. Procedures for carrying out agency activities.
- b. Procedures for reviewing, maintaining and revising written directives.
- c. The identities of the persons or positions that have the authority to issue, modify, or approve written agency directives.

ADM.09.02 A written directive establishes procedures for the dissemination of approved agency directives to the agency by:

- a. Placement at accessible locations

Organizational Structure

The documented organizational structure of the agency provides for consistent lines of communication. But the assessment found that the true operational organization did not follow the organizational chart, thus allowing poor oversight and accountability with a lack of supervisory control.

Findings

Each member of the department was shown the organizational chart and they confirmed that, with the exception of the auxiliary police function having been moved to a position that made them accountable to the criminal investigations detective and a patrol officer, the chart did represent the reported organization of the department. The department members interviewed believed that the day-to-day operation and chain of command was fluid based on the issues being dealt with, but there was significant confusion as to who made decisions and resolved issues.

When the department is at full complement, the patrol operation of the department is divided into two patrol squads consisting of one sergeant and five officers with each officer working a permanent twelve hour shift of two days on and two days off, with every other weekend being three days off. It should be noted that this is a standard shift configuration for many law enforcement agencies in the nation and is chosen for its efficiency in the use of agency personnel and its significant benefit to the officers for both health and morale reasons.

Each patrol squad is divided into a day work shift, which consists of two patrol officers working from 5:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and a night shift of three patrol officers who work from 5:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. The sergeant, who also functions as the squad supervisor, works a twelve-hour shift, but the hours he works are 3:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. This allows the sergeant to interact with all members of his assigned squad. This does appear to have an element of efficiency in the organization of staff. Nevertheless, at the time of our assessment, the department's manpower was down by five personnel. The department had two vacant positions and three officers were on "light duty" and therefore not available for patrol assignments. In addition, the current HIDTA assigned officer was also removed from the routine patrol function.

These short falls were being addressed by having the criminal investigation detective work in uniform, the captain (deputy to the chief) work patrol functions on day work shift as needed and the sergeants adjusting their shift assignment as deemed necessary.

During interviews it was determined that even prior to the current manpower shortage situation, on one squad the sergeant was altering his shift hours most workdays. The adjustment was to more of a "day work shift." This was done to accommodate a multitude of additional assignments that had been given to the

sergeant. These were duties or assignments that were above and beyond the normal squad supervision assignment. In looking at the organizational chart, one sergeant had two additional, documented, significant administrative duties, while the other sergeant had no identifiable additional duties. During the interviews it was learned that the senior sergeant was routinely given additional tasks that came up because the sergeant “was willing to take on such assignments and could get them done.” However, the problem that this situation causes is an inconsistency of oversight, supervision and leadership at the patrol operations level.

The top command structure of the department, the chief and captain, seems to be sufficient for the effective and efficient operation of the department. It was noted in the organizational chart that the captain was also given the responsibility of being the professional standards officer. It is assumed that this designation was to indicate the position that would deal with internal and external complaints concerning the departmental staff. At the time of our assessment, we were advised that this responsibility had been removed by the town manager.

Our assessment revealed that there does not appear to be an allegiance to a formal chain of command. Officers were very direct - and in some cases unapologetic - in asserting that they do not always follow the chain of command when communicating work related issues. More than a few officers stated that they had bypassed supervisors and command personnel in their chain of command to communicate agency related information to people they felt would deal with the issue. This could be another sergeant, the captain, the chief or even other members of the town administration including the town manager, mayor and town council members. This was an obviously high level of concern at the command and sergeant levels. It was also clear in our assessment that orders, directives, and commands from the top of the organization do not always flow downward through a formal organizational structure.

Analysis

An organizational chart is an agency’s primary roadmap to illustrate the reporting lines of communication and command. Having an incorrect roadmap is as bad, and sometime worse, than not having one at all.

Employees need to know to whom they report, to whom they can go for guidance and support, who will discipline them if they perform poorly, and who is ultimately responsible for the operation of the work unit and the department. There must be order and consistency of expectations for a police agency to maintain control. Order and control is provided through clear and understandable lines of command and communication. Officers must be confident that they receive clear information through consistent lines of communication. They must also know that their job performance will be observed and evaluated in an equally consistent manner. At this time, due to the lack of a clear chain of command, there is a lack of accountability of responsibilities in the Dumfries Police Department.

No police agency can effectively serve its stakeholders - including its employees - if it is not protected from outside interference. A chain of command must exist, it must be codified through an organizational chart and it must be followed. Those in that chain of command must be held accountable. If the chief is at one end of the chain of command, he should make the decisions affecting the operation of his department (in collaboration and with guidance from the town manager).

It is important to recognize the very critical role of the town manager and town council in the delivery of town services; however, their input into the day-to-day operation of the police department should go through proper channels starting with the police chief. In our assessment, we found that many members of the town council had limited knowledge of their ultimate responsibility to the police department or the department's responsibilities to the town council. This must be clearly understood, all elements must adhere to the chain of command and each group must be held accountable to a high level of responsiveness to issues as they develop.

Employees of the agency must refrain from going outside of the chain of command when communicating agency-related business and must adhere to the department's chain of command.

Recommendations

1. Organizational Chart

An organizational chart that accurately reflects the current command structure must be developed, maintained, distributed and followed. It is suggested that the organizational chart include the town manager and town council for clarification purposes.

In the police department chart, names should be attached to each position on the chart, making clear the lines of accountability and responsibility for each employee of the department. A directive should be issued along with the organizational chart stipulating that official communication will flow up and down through the chain of command without deviation, unless otherwise directed by the chief of police. Consequences for failing to adhere to this directive should be made clear and adhered to.

Processes and systems should be put in place to minimize and ultimately eliminate interference in running the day-to-day operation of the department.

There is nothing more important for a community than ensuring that its police department understands and adheres to the values and expectations of the community. Members of the town council are elected by the citizens to represent them. The town council should ensure that the voices of the citizens are heard by the chief of police and the police department employees. However, decisions regarding personnel, enforcement strategies, operational priorities, etc. should be the purview of the police chief. Input should be relayed from council members to the town manager and then through the chief to the men and women of the

agency. Likewise, elected officials and the town manager should take measures to ensure that upwards communication from the department flows through the proper channels.

2. Office of Professional Standards

The agency position designated as the of the “Office of Professional Standards” must be re-established in the police department. Strict, standard, law enforcement operational guidelines for handling internal and external complaints must be established and followed fully at all times. The police department’s handling of such complaints must be totally transparent to its stakeholders to eliminate rumors and instill confidence in the ethics of the department and its personnel.

When the town of Dumfries hires certified officers, those who meet the Commonwealth of Virginia standards as a police officer, the training costs are substantially diminished. For example, an uncertified officer must attend a 16-week training academy at the expense of the town. Many departments focus their recruiting efforts toward current Virginia certified officers. This is an appropriate use of resources, as long as an appropriate hiring process is followed and appropriate field training occurs prior to their assignment of official duties. During our assessment, it was reported that a certified officer does receive what appears to be appropriate training before being assigned to operational duties.

The hiring, as well as the career progression of employees, are included in the current policies and procedures. But it does appear that although the hiring practices are defined, the staff relates that those procedures are occasionally circumvented.

The assessors found that in reality the policy is only followed “*most of the time.*” In fact, the last three officers hired were hired in accordance with the policy. But there were occasions in the past where the policy was not followed. To not follow the policy will lead to mistakes being made and potential liability. The hiring process must be maintained at all times.

3. Training

At the Dumfries police department, training opportunities are minimal and current department efforts to secure quality training are limited. According to the supervisory staff, much of this is due to manpower concerns. A review of the departmental training records indicates that supervisors and officers receive only basic, mandatory in-service training. Most training is operational in scope, with a lot of it centered on firearms qualification. Few of the officers interviewed had ever received or had the opportunity to attend training in leadership, managed community-oriented policing, mentoring and coaching, or incident command.

One particular issue raised by stakeholders prior to the assessment relates to firearms training and the firing range. Under General Order 704 Section IV Weapons Qualification, General, sub-section D, the firearms qualification requirement is outlined: "Officers qualify semi-annually with their service weapons." In the judgment of the assessors, the questions about frequency and cost of firearms training are quite legitimate. For example, the assessors were told that there have been as many as four regular firearms training sessions per year for some officers. If accurate, in the professional experience of the assessors, we have never heard of a police department conducting that number of regular firearms training courses per year. Most agencies will conduct one regular firearms training per year to meet the requirements of the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). Any other firearms training may use specialized training, such as "shoot don't shoot" decision-making or simulations, both of which provide the most realistic training possible and should be

considered. The amount of training must be balanced with other workload and costs involved and the decision should be made by command staff after a significant study of those issues.

A review of individual training records indicates there has been no management training for supervisors. Stakeholders indicate that the only training provided is the annual law enforcement officer in-service.

Assessors found that most of the officers felt that they saw little opportunity to pursue advancement in their professional career. Most realized that the size of the department and the limited turnover have a certain influence on these capabilities; nevertheless those issues, when combined with a lack of focus on the departmental personnel's strengths and passions along with limited training opportunities and assignments, are issues that should be explored and would increase the officers' potential for growth and development. Additionally, it would increase staff morale.

Training is often viewed as a luxury by elected and appointed government officials. Thus, it is often the target of budget cutting initiatives. It is also common for supervisory and mid-management police personnel to complain about the scheduling of in-service training because it pulls people out of their operational assignments. The chief must be aware of these potentially detracting influences and press forward by persuasively arguing for monies and flexibility in scheduling. The use of training bulletins and roll-call training also represent training forums, which impact operations less than classroom training and should be considered.

Who should attend training is another important aspect of a successful training strategy. Training dollars are best invested in developing demonstrated talents, rather than trying to fix what is wrong with a poorly performing officer. For example, an officer who shows aptitude for crime scene investigation should

be targeted for training that will allow him to continue to develop this strength. Training dollars should be invested where there is potential for the greatest payoff to the organization and to the growth and development of the individual. This investment payoff is always found in helping the best to become better in their area of strength. There is very little payoff in trying to make everyone good at everything. All that is created with this approach is a low, common level of performance, and a great deal of individual frustration. This training strategy does not dismiss the importance of individual, remedial training or the necessity to deliver mandated training to everyone, but more to the overall training investment strategy.

- The town should consider sending all supervisors to some type of management or supervision training.
- The town may consider reimbursement for tuition and books for personnel to pursue advanced education.
- The departmental command should develop and implement a training module on community and problem-oriented policing.
- The town and departmental command should consider recognition and a pay incentive for Field Training Officers (FTOs) who should be selected through a formalized process and have the requisite skills required of trainers.
- The town and departmental command should review the training budget for appropriateness of expenditures.
- The departmental command should limit firearms training to one regular firearms training per year to meet the requirements of the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). Any other firearms training should be specialized training to be determined by needs and availability.

4. Staffing

As stated, the current organizational design of the department seems to be appropriate when the department is fully staffed. But it is the responsibility of the chief of police and his command staff to monitor manpower and workload issues and to be sure that the most efficient and effective organizational model is being used when staffing issues occur. There should be a systematic review of needs to determine what the community and the town can fully support and fund. This should be done periodically by the chief of police in consultation with the town manager.

What should be the manpower size of the police department? Currently the department has an authorized staff of fifteen sworn officers that includes the chief of police. There are also two civilian staff members assigned to administrative tasks. When meeting with the chief of police, he advised that the number of sworn personnel was set by using the town population and a Federal Bureau of Investigations model for assessing manpower allotments of officers based on a "per 1500 persons" of residential population. It appears from our discussion that the model did not take into account other significant issues that must be considered when establishing manpower needs and minimum staffing requirements. The most glaring shortfall, as the process was explained to us, is that the model used the residential population of the town, but the police

department does not just police the residential population; they must also police the transient population of the town. The fact is, the population of the town changes from day to night, and season-to-season. The town of Dumfries, which sits between U.S. Route 1 and Interstate I-95, has a much more significant population than just that of the identified residential population. In addition, the make up of the population and the numbers and types of calls for service must be considered when determining the number of sworn officers needed to serve the needs of the community. It is the recommendation of the assessors that the town administration and the chief of police consider several other available models for manpower allotment. Models are available from the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and the International Association of Chiefs of Police, to name two. There are many other models that might be worth considering to help in evaluating manpower needs and determining what the town is willing and capable of supporting.

It is also recommended that the workload between the sergeants be reviewed and evenly balanced. It is important to utilize the best talents of each sergeant to achieve the best results for the agency. But it is unfair to the agency as a whole, to the patrol shifts, and to the sergeants to either over-burden or deny opportunities for assignment. In addition, the critical need for consistent patrol operations and officer supervision requires the sergeant's schedule to be reasonably consistent.

Two other organizational issues were identified as areas that the assessment should address and the assessors recommend the following suggestions as to the following department positions:

One was participation in the ICAC program and the other was the HIDTA Task Force Program.

5. ICAC:

ICAC stands for *Internet Crimes Against Children*. The department currently has one officer trained in this very specific investigative process of monitoring and investigating the activities of predators that are using the internet for on-line, child sexual exploitation. The designated officer visits chat rooms and other social networking sites on the Internet, posing as a child. He then uses various strategies designed to detect and collect evidence which will assist in enhancing the arrest and prosecution of sexual predators of children. This officer certainly dedicates significant time to this effort and, according to his statements during the assessment, indicates that he is very successful in identifying and prosecuting these predators. However, we found no evidence of any noteworthy supervisory oversight of this activity or of data collected and verified of these criminal arrests and prosecutions. The current ICAC officer is assigned to a patrol squad on day-shift and does the ICAC duty "only part time, when other patrol duties are not pressing."

During this assessment, it was felt that the added responsibility was not causing major negative impact to the operational structure or effectiveness of the organization. According to the ICAC officer, the lack of manpower due to staff shortage had significantly cut into dedicated time to the ICAC effort; nevertheless, the officer was still successful in making cases and identifying sexual predators as well as handling patrol functions. There appeared to be little or no monetary expense to the program as it is now being operated, and therefore does not seem to be a negative in the overall operational efficiency of the agency. The program does provide a significant positive effect in identifying sexual predators and bringing them to justice. It must also be noted that most of the cases developed by the officer in this program do not involve offenders in the town of Dumfries or even in the Commonwealth of Virginia, but the important value of overall social safety through this effort must be grasped.

The assessors encourage the department to seek possible financial support for any potential needs for this project, if it is determined that it should be continued, through grants that may be available at the federal and state level. One point of warning, as with any specialized operation, there must be considerable department supervisory oversight so as to assure the quality and appropriateness of this operation.

6. HIDTA

The *High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas* program (HIDTA) was authorized by the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 and is administered by the Office of National Drug Control Policy. The HIDTA's mission is to reduce drug trafficking in the most critical areas of the country, thereby reducing its impact in other areas. This is accomplished by institutionalizing teamwork among local, state, and federal efforts, synchronizing investments in strategy-based systems, and focusing on outcomes.

The Dumfries Police Department's canine officer is a member of the regional HIDTA taskforce and has been for approximately two years. The assessors did not determine exactly how the scheduling of the officer's work hours was handled. He advised that he was available for duty whenever needed and that, by agreement, the team must do assignments in town at least once each month. In addition, he advised that when not on other assignments with the team, he spent a significant amount of his working hours in town. Command staff advised that if they needed him they could contact him and he would respond and bring the HIDTA Team. But, from our interviews, it did not appear that this officer was readily available to help address the current manpower short fall. In addition there did not appear to be any departmental supervision of his day-to-day activities. The department and town do receive a significant financial income from the HIDTA relationship.

Because of the town's commitment to providing the officer for the task force, it receives as its compensation sixteen percent of any seized assets that the team recovers as part of its duties. The assessors were advised that this past year the town would receive in excess of \$50,000.00 as the town's part of this process. This money, by law, must be spent for law enforcement purposes. It will be critical that the chief of police and the town manager be keenly aware of the legal constraints and required accounting procedures for these received funds.

Membership in the HIDTA taskforce was and is a command decision that must be weighed against the manpower needs and benefits to the town. This is a matter that should be discussed by the chief and his command staff and then with the town manager. As stated above, a point of warning as with any specialized operation, there must be significant department supervisory oversight of the operation so as to assure quality and appropriateness of operation.

Virginia State Accreditation Standards

The assessors provide this information as review documentation of the current Virginia State Accreditation Standards. The town and the agency may wish to consider these standards as they review the assessment.

ADM.06.01 A written directive:

- a. Requires officers to receive training and demonstrate proficiency in the use of any weapons issued and they must be authorized before carrying them.
- b. Requires officers to qualify within every calendar year with any firearm they are authorized to use.

- c. Requires officers to undergo refresher training at least once within every two calendar years for any issued/authorized weapons other than firearms.
- d. Lists procedures for addressing duty status for those that fail to qualify with any issued/authorized firearm, to include remedial training.

ADM.07.01 A written statement issued by a unit of government, or a law or ordinance, or a combination, designates the authority and responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer.

ADM.07.02 The agency establishes a protocol for the following situations, at a minimum:

- a. The absence of the Chief Executive Officer.

ADM.07.03 The agency maintains a chart depicting its organizational structure that is made available to all personnel.

ADM.07.04 A written directive requires that:

- a. Each employee is responsible to only one supervisor at any given time.
- b. Each organizational component is under the direct command of only one supervisor.
- c. Supervisory personnel are accountable for the performance of employees under their immediate control.
- d. All employees obey any lawful order of a supervisor, including any order relayed from a supervisor by an employee of the same or lesser rank.
- e. Procedures to follow when an employee receives a conflicting or unlawful order *should be detailed in the job description*.

ADM.18.03 A written directive establishes the agency's internal affairs function, to include:

- a. The categories of complaints that require investigation by the internal affairs function.

- b. Designating a position or individual within the agency who is responsible for the internal affairs function, with the authority to report directly to the agency's chief executive officer.
- c. That the written directives relating to the administration of the internal affairs function are to be disseminated to all personnel.

OPR.01.07 A written directive specifies procedures for:

- a. Assignments to operational shifts.
- b. Frequency of shift rotation, if any.
- c. Assignment to beats, if any.
- d. Frequency of beat rotation, if any.
- e. Continuous coverage during shift changes, if the agency operates on a shift schedule.
- f. Providing information to incoming shifts of previous shift's activities.

PER.01.01 A written directive identifies the agency's process for the selection of qualified applicants for sworn positions and includes, at a minimum, adherence to the requirements found in the *Code of Virginia*.

PER.01.02 A written directive requires that all elements of the selection process be conducted in a uniform manner.

PER.01.03 A written directive requires steps utilized in the selection process be conducted by trained personnel.

PER.04.02 If the agency permits sworn personnel to engage in extra-duty employment, a written directive addresses the following:

- a. The requirement that sworn personnel must receive agency permission to engage in extra-duty employment.
- b. The behavior and activities of officers during extra-duty employment.
- c. Revocation processes pertaining to officers' extra-duty employment.
- d. Designation of a point of coordination within the agency to oversee adherence to the aforementioned policies, processes, and other matters deemed appropriate by the agency.

- e. Description of the responsibilities of each officer's extra-duty employment.

PER.05.03 The agency maintains an ongoing inventory of skills, knowledge, and abilities of each employee.

PER.07.01 A written directive describes the agency's promotional process, to include:

- a. Identifying a position or positions responsible for administering the promotion process.
- b. Describing the elements to be used in the promotion process.
- c. Providing eligible employees with a written announcement of the promotion process.
- d. Establishing procedures for review of results for each element of the promotion process.
- e. Establishing years of service, or time in rank/grade requirement for promotion.
- f. Ensuring all elements used in the promotional process are job related.

TRN.01.01 The agency requires all newly sworn officers to have successfully completed a recruit-training program prior to any routine assignment in any capacity in which the officer is allowed to carry a weapon and/or is in a position to make an arrest, except as part of a formal field-training program. The recruit-training program shall include:

- a. Curriculum based on tasks of the most frequent assignments of officers who complete recruits' training.
- b. Use of evaluation techniques designed to measure competency in the required skills, knowledge, and abilities.
- c. Compliance with state training mandates for police officers and deputy sheriffs.
- d. Any applicable legal requirements relevant to the performance of duties.

TRN.01.02 A written directive establishes a field-training program for recruits with provisions for the following:

- a. Field training for trainees in accordance with DCJS standards, at a minimum.
- b. A selection process for field training officers.
- c. Supervision of field training officers.
- d. Rotation of recruit field assignments, if possible.
- e. Guidelines for the evaluation of recruits by field training officers.
- f. Reporting and documentation responsibilities of field training officers.

TRN.02.01 A written directive identifies the functions for which specialized training is required, and includes the following:

- a. Development and/or enhancement of the skills, knowledge, and abilities particular to the specialized training.
- b. Supervised on-the-job training.

TRN.02.02 A written directive requires that sworn personnel be trained or at a minimum provided information on newly enacted laws and revisions to laws relating to the agency's responsibilities.

TRN.02.03 The agency provides skill development to all personnel upon functional reassignment or promotion.

TRN.04.01 A written directive requires that proper documentation and records be kept on file for all job related training received by agency personnel, to include:

- a. The dates and number of hours of attendance.
- b. The identification of trainers or agencies presenting the course.
- c. The names of all agency personnel receiving the training.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Dumfries Police Department's internal processes are limited in scope and practice. These processes should ensure the efficient and effective delivery of services, the professional growth of the department and its members, and enhance the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of the department in meeting the expectations of the community.

Findings

The assessment found no routine planning components in place for strategy development of the departmental operations. Organized, regular staff meetings with supervisory and command personnel to discuss goals, objectives, progress or results, are currently held infrequently. No roll-call or formal shift pass-on occurs from shift to shift. Resources are available through the computerized report management system, but there is no formal or required viewing of that information by officers returning to shift. There is no formal crime analysis process occurring at any observable department-wide level that identifies areas of community or departmental concern so as to focus department resources and activities.

Officers report that daily patrol assignments are not based on empirical data or historical reports, but rather on what might have taken place the previous twenty-four hours or from information provided by investigators or previous shift officers. On occasion, there may be a note or memo from command based on a citizen or town government complaint. Many officers stated that time not spent answering calls is often unstructured and the decision as to how to fill this undirected time is often left to their discretion. Though an Incident Based Reporting (IBR) system is in place, along with a very significant computerized records management system, little is done to use these available tools as analysis instruments to help in the weekly/monthly operational focus.

Analysis

The success of an agency and its level of professionalism cannot be evaluated without goals and objectives, systems for measuring productivity, standards established to guide performance, mechanisms for improvement, and processes to gather and analyze critical information. These efforts and abilities are limited in the Dumfries Police Department.

Accreditation of the Dumfries Police Department should have significant operational and organizational results. There is general agreement that the existence of accreditation has enhanced law enforcement in a number of positive ways, among them is increased professionalism. Law enforcement used to be seen as a "trade" but accreditation has been important in elevating it to the status of "profession" by pushing the agency to meet comprehensive, recognized, statewide and national standards.

Achieving accreditation has the effect of validating the department as a bona fide law enforcement agency.

Accreditation will also increase accountability and credibility. Achieving accreditation and periodically attaining re-accreditation means that a department operates according to established standards governing policy and practice. The department's performance can then be judged objectively on an on-going basis by how well and consistently it meets those standards. This can give the department greater credibility in the eyes of the citizens it serves and the governing body to which it is responsible. Participating in an accreditation program requires management to know and examine all aspects of a department's operation in light of the accreditation standards.

The community of Dumfries should understand that accreditation increases the law enforcement agency's ability to prevent and control crime through more effective and efficient delivery of law enforcement services to the community it serves. Accreditation enhances community understanding of the law enforcement agency, its role in the community as well as its goals and objectives. Citizen confidence in the policies and practices of the agency is also increased. Accreditation, in conjunction with the philosophy of community policing, commits the agency to a broad range of programs (such as crime prevention) that directly benefit the public. Accreditation creates a forum in which police and citizens work together to control and prevent crime. This partnership will help citizens to understand the challenges that confront law enforcement. Law enforcement, in turn, will receive clear direction from the community about its expectations. Thus, a common set of goals and objectives will be identified and implemented.

Recruiting/hiring was another issue that the assessors were asked to review. A department's status as having achieved accreditation has proven very valuable in recruiting. Potential applicants look for evidence of a department's commitment to professionalism and high standards.

Professional police agencies of today focus less on quantitative results and more on the quality of service and the level at which that service meets the expectations of its stakeholders.

Incentives such as training, promotions, and assignments to positions of higher authority and responsibility should be earned. Command must institute efforts to identify the strengths and weaknesses of officers and then build-in an internal process to help officers address these issues. This effort must be conducted based on needs of the department and community, along with the department's operational vision and mission. Though factors such as seniority and productivity should be considered, they should not stand-alone. Processes that provide a comprehensive review of an employee's skills, knowledge and abilities produce much better indicators of future success.

Training and learning are critical to the growth and professionalism of any police agency. The Dumfries Police Department does not appear to place a high value on a wide range of training. Officers may attend schools that are offered in the area but

rarely have a chance to attend training outside of the region. Advanced training opportunities in leadership and management are practically non-existent. Such training can enhance the capabilities of the officers and enable in-house candidates to advance within the agency. Training should not only be focused on what is fun to do or what is needed today, it should include what the officers, the agency, and the community will need in the future.

Recommendations

1. Accreditation

The town should re-institute its support for accreditation. The town manager should sit down with the chief of police and the accreditation manager and determine a realistic timeline for achieving accreditation.

The assessors believe that the commitment to complete the accreditation process is worthwhile. The department has already designated an accreditation manager and has dedicated many hours and much effort in moving toward accreditation. It appears that the process is approximately one-half completed. Although the reason for halting the process is not known by the assessors, it seems that to stop the process may not be in the best interest of the department, the town of Dumfries or its citizens. If it is determined that accreditation should be achieved, a decision will need to be made on a reasonable timeline for completion and appropriate resources must be applied to complete this significant positive effort.

Many of the issues that the department faces, such as manpower shortages, will have an adverse effect on the timeline and must be taken into account. But the road to the completion begins with the first step and those steps have already been taken. In addition, it should be part of the process that the chief, the town manager and the accreditation manager meet on a regular basis to discuss progress. It is suggested that routing reports of the accreditation process to the town council may increase community buy-in and support for the effort. This is a lengthy and somewhat costly process but one that, the assessors believe, is absolutely necessary.

2. Operational Resources

Focus of operational resources must be made a priority. Development of this process will require command staff and supervisors to review resources and options and then establish policies and procedures.

One possible resource would be to use the Prince William County Police crime analysis function, which can give invaluable insight into local and regional crime and traffic trends that can help supervisors develop documented, actionable, patrol operation strategies. Command staff, utilizing functions of the current records management system, may find operational assistance while revealing trends and may also discover topics of interest to help develop programs and operations.

Command staff should identify and publish regular times for staff meetings with supervisors and, at least a couple times each year, schedule a full “all hands” meeting to discuss issues, visions and goals as well as to discuss within the group other questions, concerns and ideas.

Patrol sergeants must be consistent in their shift assignment so as to provide oversight and consistent effort in operational focus. Sergeants should routinely have “all hands” staff meetings with the squad to address concerns and questions and share department visions and goals. These meetings become a great opportunity to provide training on specific department or town policy changes or review recent incidents that contained learnable issues.

Officers should be held accountable for reviewing crime or incident statistics and passing along information that has occurred since their last tour of duty. This is not just a management and efficiency issue; it is also a safety issue, making officers aware of potential issues they may encounter during their shift. This information may be from the current computerized records management system, or by pulling out and posting incident reports, as well as other sources, that should be identified by command and supervisors.

Applicable State Virginia Accreditation Standard

The assessors provide this information as review documentation of the current Virginia State Accreditation Standards. The town and the agency may wish to consider these standards as they review the assessment.

ADM.10.01 A written directive establishes and defines the planning and research function of the agency.

COMMENTARY: *The responsibility for planning and research must be clearly delineated. This responsibility should identify the types of planning necessary to ensure effective agency operations.*

PER.07.01 A written directive describes the agency’s promotional process, to include:

- a. Identifying a position or positions responsible for administering the promotion process.
- b. Describing the elements to be used in the promotion process.
- c. Providing eligible employees with a written announcement of the promotion process.
- d. Establishing procedures for review of results for each element of the promotion process.
- e. Establishing years of service, or time in rank/grade requirement for

promotion.

- f. Ensuring all elements used in the promotional process are job related.

PER.07.02 If the agency uses eligibility lists in its promotion process, a written directive establishes:

- a. A system for ranking eligible employees on the lists.
- b. A system for selecting names from the lists.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTROL

SUPERVISION AND DISCIPLINE

Department policies are in place to address issues of internal accountability and provide an oversight process. However, there is evidence that practiced behavior is not consistent in keeping with the policies. This situation leads to poor supervision of officers, unregulated behavior, increased civil liability potential, and loss of respect and support from the community.

Findings

The Dumfries policy and procedure for dealing with internal and external complaints against department employees is in a good format and should be sufficient to address the needs, if followed. In addition, the town attorney evaluated them and it is assumed that the town feels they are sufficient to manage the accountability process. The assessors did note that the policy on citizen complaints against officers contained a statement that “all complaints against officers must be in writing...” That standard is more restrictive than is generally accepted by communities and agencies. Although all complaints should be documented, to require a citizen to have to file their complaint in writing has been seen to be too restrictive and not in the best interest of the agency or the community.

During the assessor’s interviews, each staff member identified their responsibility for knowing and following the policy for dealing with external and internal complaints against members of the department. Complaints coming to the department are documented in writing and passed on to the sergeants to be reviewed and analyzed as to the ability to address the complaint at their level. Should they be able to do so, the issue is dealt with, documented again and passed up the chain for review. Should the sergeant feel they cannot handle the complaint according to policy or achieve a successful result, the complaint and the documentation is forwarded to the captain for

resolution. Upon completion of the investigation by the captain, he documents his findings, conclusions and recommendations and forwards it to the chief for action.

The problem noted by the assessment was the follow-through with this practice. In a random spot inspection of the internal affairs files, we reviewed five cases. The random pull of cases were:

Case 1 - a complaint filed by the chief, after a review of an in-car camera event and what he determined was inappropriate action.

Case 2 - a citizen complaint against an officer for not effectively handling a case and racial bias.

Case 3 - an officer's use of force in the shooting of a dog.

Case 4 - a citizen's complaint, forwarded by the town mayor, questioning an officer's conduct.

Case 5 - a citizen's complaint of sexual harassment by an officer.

All cases were appropriately documented upon receipt but Cases 2 and 3 contained only limited documentation and did not contain documentation of reviews by the chief and his action taken. It is only through consistency, in processing all complaints or incident reviews, can the agency build a transparent view of its ethics and commitment to high standards of accountability. It is the assessors' opinion that many of the issues of concern by members of the town government, the citizens, and even those within the police department, are centered around rumors and insinuations that could be and should be effectively dealt with by a fervent, accurate and complete documentation of all internal and external complaints and then followed by a consistent discipline process and a practice of following up with the complainants regarding the process, findings and action taken on their concerns.

Employee and citizen interviews indicated that the handling and response to internal and external complaints was not consistent, and there is speculation as to their completeness. There is also no sense of follow-up after the fact to provide the complainant with information as to the findings and actions taken, thereby leaving them with a sense that nothing was done or a cover up occurred. Our assessment determined that this did not appear to be the case in the random cases that were pulled. The problem seems to lie with the openness, follow up and confidence in the process.

Analysis

The department's organizational structure is adequate to effectively monitor the performance of officers in the field, if the schedule is followed. As mentioned previously, if sergeants do not work their assigned shifts, supervision and accountability will suffer. Even under the current schedule, supervision during certain hours of the night shift is non-existent. The department may need to examine the squad staffing structure surrounding this issue. It may mean assigning some level of supervisory responsibility to senior officers when a sergeant or other command staff officer is not working or adjusting command staff schedules to fill the gap. This lack of oversight can

encourage an attitude among a few officers in the department that they can operate with impunity and without fear of consequences.

Assessors note: Not all officers interviewed hold this attitude; rather, they felt that something needed to be done to stop those officers that did.

Again, the assessors felt that the policies and procedures are in place to provide effective supervision and discipline. Nevertheless, the courts and liability attorneys will ultimately police a law enforcement agency that does not effectively police itself. The Dumfries Police Department has a number of fine officers who are frustrated by what they perceive as a lack of discipline and effective supervision.

If this behavior is allowed to continue unchecked, it could lead to serious consequences and significant officer turn over. A process of following the policy in detail and then following up with the people bringing the complaint will go a long way in building a transparent supervision and discipline process. The assessors are keenly aware that you will never be able to please everyone as to your effort spent and action taken, but with a continuous effort it will be seen by the majority for what it is, the action of a highly ethical professional law enforcement organization.

Recommendations

1. Accountability

The comprehensive and enforceable investigative and disciplinary policies specific to the Dumfries Police Department must be followed for every internal or external complaint received.

Each complaint, whether founded or unfounded, must be documented completely and forwarded through command to the chief for final documented review and action taken. A transparent system must be established.

Stakeholders must have complete confidence that its police department is willing to maintain the highest level of integrity and professionalism and that employees who violate these high standards will face consequences through a fair and transparent process. Complaints that are unfounded will be documented and followed up so that it will be shown that frivolous complaints are being addressed with the same significant effort as the more serious. Once the facts are known, appropriate action will be taken. To do otherwise would create loopholes that could allow frequent violators to escape detection.

It is recommended that an early warning system should be established as a part of this complaint system. An officer, who has multiple complaints lodged against him, sustained or not, would undergo an internal evaluation process to determine whether that officer should be disciplined, undergo retraining, and/or be more closely supervised.

Assessors Note: The assessors were not made aware of any documentation or instrument that is currently being used as an “early warning system” against officers who may be generating excessive complaints. This system should be in place along with a process for monitoring that system. It may be present but the assessors were not provided with that information.

2. Supervision

A redesign of supervisors’ duties and assignments must be done to enhance oversight in the field.

Schedules need to be changed and/or assignments revamped to enhance the level of supervisory coverage in the field. The balancing of administrative duties among the sergeants is imperative; this balance should be directed at allowing for more consistent operational oversight.

A review of the number of sergeants may need to be conducted or some change to occur to the shift configuration among the sergeants and command to cover the loophole in the current supervision process. A third alternative is establishing a senior officer status that carries with it a defined supervisory responsibility during times when the sergeant or command officer is not working.

Supervisors need to be held accountable by command officers for the behavior of their subordinates and the command officers need to be held accountable by the chief. Systems need to be implemented that would require regular field evaluation reports on all officers, documenting their strengths and deficiencies. Supervisors should receive additional training in coaching and mentoring. They should be alert for negative tendencies in officers that could expose the town to increased liability.

Applicable Virginia State Accreditation Standards

The assessors provide this information as review documentation of the current Virginia State Accreditation Standards. The town and the agency may wish to consider these standards as they review the assessment.

ADM.07.04 A written directive requires that:

- a. Each employee is responsible to only one supervisor at any given time.
- b. Each organizational component is under the direct command of only one supervisor.
- c. Supervisory personnel are accountable for the performance of employees under their immediate control.

- d. All employees obey any lawful order of a supervisor, including any order relayed from a supervisor by an employee of the same or lesser rank.
- e. Procedures to follow when an employee receives a conflicting or unlawful order *should be detailed in the job description*.

ADM.18.01 The agency makes information available to the public on procedures to be followed in registering complaints against the agency or its employees.

ADM.18.02 A written directive requires the agency to record, investigate, and adjudicate all complaints against the agency or employees of the agency.

ADM.18.03 A written directive establishes the agency's internal affairs function, to include:

- a. The categories of complaints that require investigation by the internal affairs function.
- b. Designating a position or individual within the agency as responsible for the internal affairs function with the authority to report directly to the agency's chief executive officer.
- c. The written directives relating to the administration of the internal affairs function are disseminated to all personnel.

ADM.18.04 A written directive specifies the activities of the internal affairs function, to include:

- a. Overseeing the assigned investigation(s) of alleged misconduct within the agency regarding a criminal matter.
- b. Overseeing the assigned investigation(s) of alleged misconduct within the agency regarding an administrative matter.
- c. Maintaining the confidentiality and security of the internal affairs investigation and records.

ADM.18.05 When employees are notified that they have become the subject of an internal affairs investigation, the agency provides the employee with:

- a. A written statement of the allegations.
- b. Employee's rights relative to the investigation.

c. Employee's responsibilities relative to the investigation.

ADM.18.06 Notification of the status/disposition of complaints against the agency or its employees is made to:

- a. The complainant; and
- b. The employee(s) investigated.

ADM.19.01 A written directive specifies the agency's inspectional process and includes, at a minimum:

- a. Procedures to be used in conducting line inspections.
- b. Frequency of line inspections.
- c. Identity, authority, and responsibilities of person(s) conducting line inspections.
- d. Criteria to identify those inspections that require a written report.
- e. Follow-up procedures to ensure noted deficiencies are corrected.

PER.06.01 A written directive establishes the performance evaluation system and it:

- a. Defines its objectives.
- b. Requires an annual written performance evaluation of each employee.
- c. Addresses performance evaluations of probationary employees during the probationary period, or as required by jurisdictional personnel policy.

PER.06.02 A written directive requires a supervisory review to include the following areas:

- a. Results of the performance evaluation just completed.
- b. Level of performance expected, rating criteria or goals for the new reporting period.

SETTING OF OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

Methodologies for the establishment of departmental priorities; officer assignments and accountability must be formalized.

Findings

As previously mentioned, decisions about where and how officers should focus their time and energy seem to be based more on personal preferences and gut feelings than on data. Likewise, there is no mechanism to evaluate whether the work product of the officers results in any positive benefits for the community.

In conversations by the assessors with various stakeholders in the community, there was a mixed bag of responses when asked how effective they felt the Dumfries Police Department was in providing police services for serving and protecting the citizens of the Dumfries community. The assessors asked the stakeholders to rate the department on a scale of one to ten, with one being the very worst and ten being the very best in its effectiveness. The average was five, the lowest was three and the highest was seven. Complaints ranged from *lack of response* (requiring the Prince William County Police to respond) to almost instantaneous response to calls for service by not one but three officers.

The analysis of the interview is what was expected; a certain level of ambivalence. It depended on whether a person had a negative encounter with the police or an association with someone else who had a negative encounter, or if a person had a positive encounter with a Dumfries officer or had a close association with someone else who had a positive encounter. It appeared that if the citizen lived in a certain area of the community where police activity was more prevalent, due to incidents or calls for service, he might have a polarized view but it could have been positive or negative. If the citizen lived in an area where little police response was required, he might also have a polarized view based on rumor, innuendo, or even factual involvement with the police department.

Analysis

Progressive police agencies do things because they should do them, not because they can do them. For example, the fact that the law allows officers to pursue vehicles at high rates of speed does not necessarily mean that the department should allow officers to do so without restriction. Also, the fact that the law allows officers to use force, does not give officers an unlimited license to do so. Modern police agencies seek out and listen to the expectations of the community, use their in-house expertise to

evaluate community needs, and determine a course of action that will meet those needs and expectations.

Professional police agencies do not send officers into the field without guidance and oversight. They first take the following steps:

- Determine their mission with the input of stakeholders.
- Evaluate alternatives to accomplish the mission.
- Set performance standards consistent with the values of the community.
- Establish protocols for reaching objectives.
- Act on those objectives.
- Measure results.
- Evaluate outcomes.
- Start the process all over again.

It does not appear that the Dumfries Police Department has any method for establishing priorities and assigning resources to address those priorities. If priorities do exist, no one in the department was able to describe them with any clarity.

This structural failure has resulted in a negative image for the department in the eyes of some in the community and the town government. It has also had an impact on the morale of many of the officers who have expressed a desire to work for a professional organization.

Anyone with experience in law enforcement understands that many complaints filed against police departments and their staff have little merit and are filed by an individual seeking retribution for having been arrested or cited. However, experienced command officers also know that “where there’s smoke there’s likely fire” and that numerous complaints against the same individuals or about the same tactics or issues should raise a warning flag that intervention is to be sought.

Recommendations

1. Standards and Practices

Establish standards and practices that set operational priorities for patrols and enforcement. Command officers should regularly (at least once a month) set priorities for day-to-day operations.

These priorities should be based on the following assessments:

- What are the community needs?
- What have citizens asked of the police department?
- What crime trends have been detected?
- How can we best use our resources?

Officers must seek input from community stakeholders through business and neighborhood foot patrols, community forums, citizen surveys, community watch groups, etc. The way productivity and success are measured must be changed, requiring more oversight by supervisors and less reliance on officers doing what they feel they want to do. A regular re-evaluation of priorities is required. Command officers must continually ask:

- Why are we doing what we do?
- What are we accomplishing?
- Who is benefiting from our service?
- Are we providing fair and equitable service to all?
- Are we basing our operational decisions only on our needs or together with those of the community?
- Are we trying to improve relationships with all of our stakeholders or only with those whom we believe support us or the ones causing us trouble?

Establish a set of values, duties and responsibilities (see appendix B) by which all officers will conduct their business.

Establish an atmosphere of cooperation and collaboration within the department. Look to establish positive relationships with stakeholders. Ensure that the department adopts values that demand respect for individual rights, the rights of law and values that promote the respectful and ethical treatment of all.

Enforce the newly created values and standards. All the words in the world are worthless unless they are enacted by the members of the organization and supported by employees, command staff, town management and elected officials. Employees who act in accordance with the Dumfries Police Department's values and standards should be rewarded. Those who violate them should be disciplined.

2. Community Policing

What can be done to address this mediocre response and opinion of the stakeholders, who are the clients that the Police Department serves?

All that has been stated above will help in some form or fashion, but another significant effort would be to institute a full community policing philosophy, policy and practice across the department. This will be time consuming and somewhat costly as it will require training of command, supervisors, officers and civilian staff and it will change operational priorities and focus. But with appropriate effort, it is the opinion of the assessors that it will build confidence and support in the community for the Dumfries Police Department.

Applicable Virginia State Accreditation Standards

The assessors provide this information as review documentation of the current Virginia State Accreditation Standards. The town and the agency may wish to consider these standards as they review the assessment.

ADM.20.01 The community relations' function provides the following, at a minimum:

- a. A process to continually address citizen concerns.
- b. Establishing liaison with community organizations/groups
- c. Informing all personnel that they are responsible for achieving the agency's community relations objectives
- d. Developing community relations policies for the agency as a whole.

ADM.20.02 The agency prepares a departmental annual report that is available to the public and includes, at a minimum, the following elements: **(01/09)**

- a. Agency statistics
- b. Agency activities.

ADM.20.03 If the agency conducts a survey of citizen attitudes and opinions, it should include:

- a. Overall agency performance.
- b. Overall competence of agency employees.
- c. Officer's attitudes and behavior toward citizens.
- d. Concern over safety and security within the agency service area as a whole.
- e. Recommendations and suggestions for improvements.

CONCLUSION

The Dumfries Police Department is an organization in need of some overhaul but not necessarily a complete make over. It is a department that has gotten caught in the “problem of the rut.” Past history, rumor, and innuendo have worked their way into the community, town government and the department to the point that confidence has been eroded. Due to mundane, routine and in many cases untrue or long past negative situations, it is the opinion of the assessors that the department has failed to keep up with their practices and principles, which should be modeled after a modern police department.

The Dumfries Police Department is housed in a newly renovated facility and has developed significant computerization of its records-keeping system. The agency is small enough to promote a family atmosphere and financially healthy enough to appropriately equip and train officers.

Many of the men and women of the department are dedicated to the community and the organization. Ironically, though, most officers said that they enjoy working for Dumfries but they also admit that morale is low. While some staff noted during their interviews that the department was “perfect” and that they “wouldn’t change a thing,” the remaining agency members indicated that significant change is needed.

It is promising that the agency has officers who want to be part of the change. Some of these officers may not currently be in positions within the agency where they can readily help make these changes. They need to be identified, placed in positions of authority and responsibility through a fair and open system, and allowed to participate in the change process. These officers should be viewed not as the problem but as an answer to problems.

Elected officials and management of the town must have a desire for the change to occur, with the intent not to destroy but to fulfill the need of and facilitate the development of a modern, professional law enforcement agency. They must allow the change without unnecessary political interference. Council members and the town manager will be major players in the determination of the mission and values of the agency. They are obligated to ensure that the “new” Dumfries Police Department is developed in such a way that it meets the expectations of its stakeholders. This will require that these stakeholders educate themselves on their responsibility to the police

department and the police department’s responsibility to them. Once the right people are in place within the agency and the impediments to change have been removed, these officials must step aside (maintaining appropriate and educated oversight) and let those who have been charged with running the department, do so. Those in charge of the police department must remember that they are partners with the council, town

manger and mayor in providing services to the community. The police department must also be transparent and responsive to all its stakeholders as to its methods and its operations.

Making the needed changes will be challenging and will not happen overnight. To be effective, all stakeholders must be invited to be a part of the change process. Positive change will bring a sense of honor, pride, professionalism, and integrity to the agency and its employees. All that is needed now is an investment of desire and effort, and the willingness to make tough decisions.

APPENDIX A

DUMFRIES POLICE DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

(Please use additional sheets of paper if necessary)

1. How long have you been a member of the Dumfries Police Department?
 - 0-3 Years
 - 4-7 Years
 - 8-15 Years
 - 16 + Years

2. How many other law enforcement agencies have you been employed by in your professional career?

3. What lead you to apply for a position in the Dumfries Police Department?

4. In looking back over your career with the Department have the reasons for joining the Department been fulfilled? (Explain if necessary)

5. List the top three things you like about the Dumfries Police Department?

6. In what areas could the Department improve?

7. What specific recommendations do you have that would make the Dumfries Police Department a better agency?

8. Without naming names, what are the best qualities possessed by the command and supervisory staff of the Department?
9. Again without naming names, what leadership attributes among the agencies command and supervisory staff could use some improvement?
10. What do you think the community's impression of the Department is?
11. What could the Department do to improve its image in the community?
12. If you were chief for one day, what one thing would you do that would make the Dumfries Police Department a better law enforcement agency?
13. Is there anything else you would like to share?

NOTE: In an effort to assure you that your comments will remain confidential I have not asked for your name, rank, position or other identifying characteristics. Unless you choose to do otherwise, please return this survey directly to me in the attached self-addressed stamped envelope. If you'd like to meet to discuss your opinions in private please contact me via e-mail and we can make arrangements.

Col. Robert R. Beach
FifteenOct Ranch
27856 N. James Madison Highway
New Canton VA. 23123

APPENDIX B

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CID Investigator (GENERAL ASSIGNMENT)

The Investigator reports directly to and is responsible to the CID Assistant Commander, or in his/her absence, to the Commander of Criminal Investigations, or to the Administrative Bureau Captain. On a daily basis, during the regular work-week, the CID Investigator communicates in person with the CID Assistant Commander to offer assistance with specific problems or be made aware of particular situations.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- The investigator addresses all citizens in a firm, courteous manner calculated to develop respect and confidence in the officer and the department.
- The investigator shall work to create good relations with other public officials for the purpose of creating an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.
- The investigator cultivates friendly but formal relationships with all citizens and civic leaders he encounters.
- The investigator shall tactfully refuse any gifts, favors, or other rewards which may be offered him by the public for his acts or omissions, so as to avoid placing himself and the department in a compromising position.
- When on duty, the investigator shall address his supervisors by rank or title, never by first name.
- The investigator, through continuous study, will have a thorough and complete knowledge of all sections of the State law and City ordinances, both criminal and traffic.
- The investigator will be thoroughly familiar with all statutes which govern or limit his authority and responsibilities. He will be thoroughly familiar with all policies, procedures, rules, and regulations set forth in General Orders and special orders.
- The investigator shall have a general acquaintance with community leaders, other governmental agencies, and area law enforcement agencies and persons in charge. He shall know the authority and location of all enforcement agencies.
- The investigator renders assistance to all other enforcement agencies when

requested, if the request is compatible with departmental policy and is approved by the shift supervisor.

- The investigator assists and works with other agencies in time of emergency when such assistance is needed and is approved by competent authority.
- The investigator shall complete all reports required of him promptly and forward them to the CID supervisor within the time prescribed.
- The investigator shall complete all reports and make them complete, neat, clear, and understandable.
- The investigator is responsible for maintaining all equipment issued to him in good condition and is using it as effectively and economically as possible.
- The investigator will avoid unnecessary waste of materials.
- The investigator shall strive to keep his vehicle in good condition. He shall take reasonable precautions to avoid damage to his vehicle. He shall report all vehicle defects that need correcting to his supervisor immediately upon discovery.

SPECIFIC DUTIES

- The investigator is responsible for investigation of the following criminal offenses:
 - Homicide and other deaths, with the exception of traffic fatalities.
 - Abduction.
 - Rape.
 - Robbery.
 - Bigamy.
 - Blackmail and Extortion.
 - Check Cases Involving Forgery/Uttering.
 - Child Abuse.
 - Embezzlement and Fraud Cases Over \$1,000 or Multiple Suspects.

- Felonious Assaults or Malicious Wounding.
 - Sex Offenses.
 - Bribery.
 - Hit and Run Fatalities (assist Patrol Division if necessary.)
 - Missing Persons.
 - Auto Theft.
 - Vice related offenses including prostitution, gambling, and pornography.
 - Narcotic related offenses.
 - Burglary.
 - Grand Larceny Cases Over \$1,000.
 - Bomb Threats.
 - Vandalism involving extensive or widespread damage to property. Widespread would include a number of cases of the same type reported within a specific locale. An example of this would be a number of tire slashings on one specific street or within a subdivision.
- Review and analyze all previous reports prepared in the preliminary phase.
 - Conduct additional interviews and interrogations.
 - Arrange polygraph examinations.
 - Review departmental records.
 - Seek additional information (from uniformed officers, informants, etc.).
 - Review results of laboratory examinations.
 - Arrange for dissemination of information as appropriate.
 - Plan, organize, and conduct searches.

- Arrange for surveillance.
- Collect and preserve physical evidence.
- Determine involvement of suspects in other crimes.
- Check suspect's criminal histories.
- Keep CID supervisor informed of all major investigations.
- Brief Commonwealth's Attorney and assist in prosecution of cases by preparing witnesses and testifying.
- Investigate cases received by the Division.
- Initiate correspondence as directed or as a matter of routine duties.
- Participate in on-call status within the Division.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

EXAMPLE

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Police Sergeant (PATROL DIVISION)

The Police Sergeant reports directly to and is responsible to their respective Division Commander or in their absence, to the Chief of Police or his designee. On a daily basis, during the regular work week, communicates in person with the Patrol Division Commander to offer assistance with specific problems or be made aware of particular situations.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Police Sergeant addresses all citizens in a firm, courteous manner, calculated to develop respect and confidence in the officer and the department.
- The Police Sergeant shall create good relations with other public officials for the purpose of creating an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.
- The Police Sergeant cultivates friendly but formal relationships with citizens and civic leaders.

- The Police Sergeant shall tactfully refuse any gifts, favors, or other rewards which may be offered to him by the public for his acts or omissions, so as to avoid placing himself and the department in a compromising position.
- In addition to a thorough knowledge of all sections of State and City Ordinances, the Police Sergeant must be thoroughly familiar with all statutes which govern or limit his authority and responsibility.
- The Police Sergeant must have a thorough knowledge of the departmental regulations and must be willing to assume full responsibility for overall operations of his/her assigned shift.
- The Police Sergeant renders assistance to all other enforcement agencies when requested if the request is compatible with departmental policy.
- The Police Sergeant assists and works with other agencies in time of emergency when such assistance is needed.

SPECIFIC DUTIES

- Maintains leave, training, and other necessary schedules to ensure the proper allocation and deployment of resources.
- Develops a daily duty roster assigning officers to specific areas or special assignments.
- Patrols in car to observe officers on post or in car for efficiency and appearance and to direct them in their duty.
- Organizes and relays information daily to officers under supervision before each tour of duty.
- Arranges for support, training, and direction at the squad level and communicate to the Patrol Division Commander any such needs which are beyond squad resources.
- Maintains liaison with and ensures support from other sections within the department.
- Counsels and instructs officers in areas of performance deficiencies.
- Ensures that subordinates receive the training necessary to improve performance.

- Renders assistance to subordinates through instructional guidance and direction.
- Conducts periodic inspections of personnel and equipment ensuring that deficiencies are noted and corrected.
- Monitors squad and individual performances and takes or recommends steps for improvement.
- Acknowledges good work and takes or recommends discipline as appropriate.
- Recommends subordinates for specialized training.
- Delegates non-supervisory authority and provide subordinates with the opportunity to assist in planning and evaluation in order to develop each member of the squad to his full potential.
- Assists in preparing annual and promotional evaluations of subordinates providing complete documentation to support the evaluations given.
- Participates in staff meetings.
- Communicates to the members of the squad all orders, instructions, and pertinent information that will aid them in performing their tasks properly and to remain fully informed of departmental objectives, policies, and plans.
- Acknowledges radio transmissions relaying citizen's complaints and proceeds to location.
- Answers complaints from citizens such as domestic disputes, fights, vandalism, etc., and takes necessary corrective action.
- Ensures safe and fair treatment of prisoners.
- Notes unsafe and hazardous conditions within the City, such as holes in street and sidewalks, obstructions and leaking gas mains, and reports to the proper authority or agency.
- Contacts citizens and businessmen of district to stimulate cooperation between the community and the police division.
- Deploys available personnel to ensure the proper coverage of areas and special assignments.

- Assigns officers tasks to perform during the period of time normally used for random patrol to ensure efforts are directed toward a stated objective.
- Ensures all equipment is kept in working order, identifying to the Patrol Division Commander any additional equipment needed.
- Monitors radio traffic to ensure proper radio procedure.
- Ensures that an excessive number of officers do not respond to police incidents.
- Limits the number of backup vehicles at the scene of incidents or traffic stops to prevent unnecessary or inefficient deployment of department resources.
- Monitors radio traffic field notebooks and complaint reports to ensure proper disposition.
- Ensures that adequate and complete preliminary investigations are conducted.
- Directs traffic law enforcement activities with his assigned squad to ensure consistency and adherence to department policy, including authorizing and observing of the use of radar.
- Authorizes overtime for subordinates consistent with departmental policy.
- Approves or disapproves leave for subordinates.
- Reviews reports submitted by subordinates for accuracy, clarity, and completeness and to ensure that necessary follow-up action is taken.
- Keeps the proper Division Commander, Duty Officer, and Chief informed of all major incidents.
- In the absence of adequate staffing, handles calls for service.
- Ensures compliance with departmental General Orders, regulations, and policies.
- Possesses a level of understanding and familiarity of police department General Orders and procedures, City personnel rules, State and City laws and supervisory practices required to effectively perform assigned duties.

- Reviews crime and traffic reports and utilize applicable information in the deployment of available personnel.
- Reviews with subordinates, individually, their monthly performance, commending good work and making constructive suggestions for improvements where necessary.
- Performs other duties which may become necessary or assigned.

EXAMPLE

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Police Officer (PATROL DIVISION)

The Police Officer reports directly to and is responsible to the Patrol Sergeant or Patrol Division Commander. On a daily basis during the regular work week, they communicate in person with their Patrol Sergeant to offer assistance with specific problems or to be made aware of particular situations.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Police Officer addresses all citizens in a firm, courteous manner calculated to develop respect and confidence in the officer and the department.
- The Police Officer shall work to create good relations with other public officials for the purpose of creating an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.
- The Police Officer shall tactfully refuse any gifts, favors, or other rewards which may be offered him by the public for his acts or omissions, so as to avoid placing himself and the department in a compromising position.
- When on duty, the Police Officer shall address Police Supervisors by rank or title, never by first name.
- Patrols an assigned area within the City of Harrisonburg by foot and/or vehicle to prevent crime or disturbance of businesses and persons within that area.
- Notes suspicious persons and unusual conditions and makes preliminary investigations. Examines premises of unoccupied buildings and checks doors and windows for security.

- The Police Officer, through continuous study, will have a thorough and complete knowledge of all sections of the State law and City ordinances, both criminal and traffic.
- The Police Officer will be thoroughly familiar with all statutes which govern or limit his authority and responsibilities. He will be thoroughly familiar

with all policies, procedures, rules, and regulations set forth in General Orders and special orders.

- The Police Officer serves warrants and summonses, arrests violators for misdemeanors and felonies, accompanies prisoners to headquarters or jail and makes reports of events leading to and surrounding an arrest.
- The Police Officer confers with the Commonwealth's Attorney or City Attorney to coordinate courtroom testimony and appears in court as the arresting officer, reporting person, witness or person with knowledge.
- The Police Officer shall have a general acquaintance with community leaders, other governmental agencies, and area law enforcement agencies and persons in charge. He shall know the authority and locations of all enforcement agencies.
- The Police Officer renders assistance to all other enforcement agencies when requested, if the request is compatible with departmental policy and is approved by the shift supervisor.
- The Police Officer assists and works with other agencies in time of emergency when such assistance is needed and is approved by the shift supervisor.
- The Police Officer shall complete all reports required of him promptly and make them complete, neat, clear, and understandable then forward them to the police sergeant within the time prescribed.
- The Police Officer is responsible for maintaining all equipment issued to him in good condition and using it as effectively and economically as possible.
- The Police Officer will avoid unnecessary waste of materials.
- The Police Officer shall strive to keep his patrol vehicle in good condition. He shall take reasonable precautions to avoid damage to his vehicle. He shall report all vehicle defects which need correcting to his supervisor immediately upon discovery.

SPECIFIC DUTIES

The Police Officer, during his tour of duty, shall patrol his assigned area for the purpose of, but not limited to the following:

- Prevention of crime.
- Law enforcement, both traffic and criminal.
- Protection of life and property.
- Preservation of the peace.
- Apprehension of violators of the law.
- Acknowledges and responds to radio transmissions and assignments regarding citizen complaints and proceeds to that location as required.
- Answers complaints by citizens such as domestic disputes, fights, vandalism etc., and takes necessary corrective actions.
- Recovers stolen property.
- Investigates reports of suspicious persons.
- Investigates vehicle crashes and renders aid to the injured.
- Directs traffic around crashes and other traffic disruptions as required.
- Provides information to lost persons or motorists.
- Investigates missing persons and watches for runaways and truants.
- Watches for and makes the recovery of lost and stolen property and vehicles.
- Provides escorts for dignitaries, parades, funeral processions and currency transportation when requested.
- Responds to alarms.

- Enforces parking regulations.
- Files written reports on all complaints when required.
- Investigates all petit larcenies.
- Familiarizes him/her self with their assigned area, already knowing the locations of places frequented by suspected violators and where crowds gather, for the purpose of enforcing all laws and ordinances.
- Patrols assigned area unless cleared to do otherwise by his supervisor.
- Reports to the proper authority or to communications personnel nuisances or other matters affecting the safety and convenience of the public interests of the City, such as street and sidewalk construction and defects, faulty street lamps, traffic lights, traffic signs, street name signs, power lines or any hazardous condition. The officer shall remain at the location, when necessary, until the hazard is past or the officer is relieved.
- Always be alert for motorists who need assistance and provide such aid if practical.
- Check all abandoned vehicles parked in unusual locations for the purpose of detecting possible criminal activity.
- The Police Officer shall check all complaints received and take whatever remedial action is required.
- Make thorough and complete investigations of all complaints received and any law violations that are brought to his attention and make all required reports.
- Take initial charge at the scene of an investigation and determine what additional police service is required to complete the investigation and notify headquarters. At the scene of a crime, the patrol officer's primary purpose, after determining what shall be needed, is to protect the crime scene, keeping all unauthorized personnel out.
- Provides specialized enforcement activity for targeted areas.
- Prepare and presents court cases for successful presentation.
- Maintains uniform and equipment in top condition.

- Performs community oriented patrol daily or as assigned.
- Adheres to all departmental policies.
- Keeps supervisors and dispatchers advised of current status of all major events.
- Maintains professional demeanor at all times.
- Conducts periodic inspection points to check for violations of motor vehicle licensing requirements.
- Assists in providing crowd and perimeter control at major incidents and events.
- Performs other duties as may be required or assigned.

March 2010 DW