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INTRODUCTION

Consolidation of police services is nothing new, but present and future fiscal constraints demand an increased change in that direction. Post Proposition 13 budget cuts, inflation and reduction in federal financial assistance to state and local government necessitates an examination of alternative methods to provide police services. Consolidation of police services and/or agencies can result in the development of a more efficient and effective organization. Experiments in this area have shown a marked increase in the level of service and a significant reduction in duplication of efforts. Consolidation is here to stay and, by necessity, we will see many more mergers of police operations in the very near future.

The intent of this research effort is an attempt to provide the reader with an overview of a variety of forms of cooperative efforts utilized in law enforcement. Specific areas of shared services, contract services, and consolidation and their legal and informal processes have been examined.

These approaches have been studied to learn the impetus for the efforts and to evaluate the successes or failures and/or symptomatic problems that arise in cooperative ventures.

This study combines the authors personal experience with police consolidation and interviews with other people involved in similar efforts, as well as examinations of numerous articles related to combined police activities. As a result of this investigation the authors believe combined efforts in police service will increase greatly in the next five years.

The authors personally disagree with the consolidation of police services between county and city agencies where an elected official (sheriff) commands the new single entity. Specific reasons for this stance are addressed later in this paper.

THE LITERATURE

During the past three decades many forms of consolidated services have evolved. As early as 1954 the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department initiated contract law enforcement services in the community of Lakewood, California. Since then, other substantial forms of combined services have developed. In Canada, the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force was created through the consolidation of 13 separate police agencies varying in size from 13 to 1,400 personnel. In Florida, the City of Jacksonville and Duval County went a step further. They combined totally two separate governmental bodies to form a large single agency, the City of Jacksonville. Five years later, the Las Vegas Police Department and Clark County Sheriff's Department combined forces to create the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. A more recent experience occurred in Marin County, California. There, in January of 1980, the two separate police forces of Corte Madera and Larkspur were abolished and a new single consolidated law enforcement entity was formed - The Twin Cities Police Department. The Twin Cities will be the prototype for this discussion.

LEVEL OF SERVICE

Probably the most prevalent impetus to consolidated and shared law enforcement services has been the desire of government officials to improve the level of service without a substantial increase in costs. One of the strongest arguments for the creation of Metropolitan Toronto Police Force was the belief that the standardization of police services in a metropolitan area would result in more effective and efficient police service.¹ A unified countywide department insures the following goals: 1) uniform law enforcement, 2) increased crime prevention and traffic control, 3) an adequate financial support base, 4) better utilization of manpower and facilities, 5) cohesive planning to meet current and future law enforcement needs.²

On January 30, 1980, the Corte Madera Town Council and Larkspur City Council signed a joint exercise of powers agreement for police service creating the Twin Cities Police Department. Within that document, both councils recited their reasoning for the consolidation of both police forces. "...since January 1979 the Police Departments of the agencies have operated under the direction of one police chief with greater coordination and cooperation, resulting in better quality and less costly police services..." Their emphasis, however, was placed on the quality and level of police service rather than any anticipated cost savings.

Other combined efforts were the result of greater consideration to the quality and level of service over that of cost savings. Consolidation has not brought about discernible savings to taxpayers, but no monetary value can be placed on increased protection of life and property.³

The Larkspur/Corte Madera experience with consolidation of existing police agencies has resulted in both communities receiving better and broader police service at an overall reduced cost without sacrificing local control and responsiveness to the individual community's needs.⁴

EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

The Larkspur/Corte Madera merger enhanced the effectiveness of field operations without significantly impacting costs. (There were initial increases in salaries and benefits to equalize pay for officers of the previous two agencies. However, after combining forces the overtime was reduced notably). Before the formation of the Twin Cities Police Department the total combined number of police officers assigned to field duties was fifteen and one half. Once merged the number of officers assigned to patrol activities rose to nineteen. This reorganization enabled the department to assign more officers to field operations during peak activity periods. The change in staffing provided flexibility in the scheduling and deployment of manpower. As a result of improved allocation of personnel, it not only resulted in decreased response time to in-progress calls but enhanced officer safety. In addition, high visibility patrol tactics were improved and allowed officers to take a more proactive posture rather than a reactive approach to address crime and community needs.

A similar experience was witnessed when Jacksonville and Duval County, Florida, consolidated their agencies. Their merger freed more personnel for first-line field duties. Both had 27 men assigned to communications. When consolidated communications occurred, they were able to reassign 18 officers to field duty.⁵

Other areas of improved effectiveness and efficiency were realized by both consolidation efforts. Centralized records were extremely beneficial to the investigative units, as well as the general overall operation of police services. Centralized records and coordinated exchange of criminal information provided investigators with the ability to identify criminals and successfully solve cases in a more timely and effective manner.

Certain efforts to consolidate services have resulted with increased costs. Despite higher initial outlays, the cost effectiveness of each dollar for consolidated law enforcement can be considerably enhanced in terms of achieved quality of police services.⁶ Consolidation can frequently upgrade services and lower their cost. This is often the case when counties consolidate municipal and county police agencies to create a single countywide police force. As a result of this type of merger superior resources can be attained through the creation of a larger agency. Consolidation can be less expensive and eliminate duplication and the citizens get more for their money.⁷

On the other hand, the size of the consolidated organization can have a substantial impact on the degree of effectiveness achieved. Larger agencies may reach a point where effectiveness is significantly reduced. According to one observation, a movement toward massive consolidation of public agencies into a large conglomerate agency (with very large constituencies) may not lead to a general improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of American policing.⁸

Moreover, certain studies claim that smaller agencies provide more field services than larger agencies do. Small municipal patrol agencies have a lower proportion of their officers assigned to administration and a higher proportion assigned to patrol than do larger departments. Municipal, campus, and special district departments with 10 or fewer officers assign, on the average, more than 90% of their officers to patrol. Municipal departments with more than 150

officers average less than 60% of their officers assigned to patrol. The percentage of officers assigned to patrol decreases as agency size increases.⁹ There may be some truth to these observations on both ends of the spectrum. However, a comparison of high or low percentage of time officers spend assigned to field duties does not accurately address the total picture of law enforcement services rendered. Nor does it reflect the wide range - full services provided by a larger agency compared to services offered by smaller agencies. Neither does it take into account the specialization and quality of services provided by a large organization, or consider how much time is spent by the officer of a smaller agency away from field duties to provide support and/or specialized services.

A smaller police organization cannot be as effective and efficient as a larger agency. Obviously, the two person department is much too small to offer complete law enforcement protection to a community of any size. Even if both officers work more than forty hours per week, there will be large gaps in the patrol coverage.¹⁰ At a minimum, police agencies that employ fewer than 10 sworn employees should consolidate for improved efficiency and effectiveness.¹¹ With a department staffed with less than 10 officers, it can be expected to perform more as a "watchmen" type organization.¹²

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Normally, when consolidation occurs there is, at least, an initial "start-up cost" (standardized equipment, uniforms, building modifications, etc.) as well as an adjustment in salaries and benefits to equalize pay for all employees. However, in some cases, after a period of time, the overall cost for police services can be reduced substantially.

For instance, in the Jacksonville-Duval County merger there was a marked increase in start-up costs. Their first combined budget of \$8 million was about \$50,000 less than the two separate budgets, but some funds had to be spent to accomplish consolidation: 1) \$175,000 for new uniforms, 2) \$125,000 to remodel the police station. As a result of their merger they came to the conclusion that you can promise them (citizens) a much more efficient operation through consolidation, but adequate law enforcement is expensive.¹³

The Las Vegas and Clark County merger had a very similar experience. They too had a substantial increase in costs to formalize the start of the new Metro organization. The City and County were spending a combined total of \$13 million for the police and sheriff departments in fiscal year 1972-73, the year before consolidation. The budget for Metro had increased to \$29 million by 1977-78.¹⁴ However, today neither city or county pays a significantly higher portion of its total budget for police services than it did just before consolidation, perhaps because the expected savings of combined operations were offset by the new costs.¹⁵

Some of their increased costs were attributed to a rapid increase in population and the upward spiral of inflation. Although other factors were directly traced to consolidation that impacted the overall cost for police service. Some factors involved equal pay "best of both worlds" and no loss of jobs or salary. Other costs were a result of standardization of equipment. They purchased hundreds of new pistols, new uniforms and other gear. The cars were repainted and badges changed, all of which cost about \$3 million dollars the first year.¹⁶

Economics of scale achieved through consolidated auxiliary operations and larger bulk purchases have a limited effect, since salaries usually comprise 80% of a police budget. Salaries and the number of people receiving them almost never decrease as a result of consolidation.¹⁷

The Twin Cities Police Department consolidation had similar initial increases, but on a lesser scale. However, a substantial overall reduction in cost is anticipated in the future. To begin, the Twin Cities Police still operate out of two separate police facilities, about a mile apart. To accommodate the merger, support services were assigned to the Corte Madera facility and field services to the Larkspur facility. An initial outlay of \$10,000 was required for building modifications for the Larkspur facility. Both the Corte Madera and Larkspur officers wore similar uniforms and drove similar patrol vehicles; however, \$5,000 was spent for new badges, shoulder patches, and another \$2,000 for revised stationery.

In addition, there was an increase in costs attributed to the equalization of salaries and benefits and retirement plans for the previous two departments. No one was reduced in rank or salary, but two unfilled sworn officer positions were eliminated at a cost savings of about \$55,000.

On the other hand, the consolidated department became top heavy in supervisory positions. The department now had a total of nine sergeants when only five to six supervisory positions were needed. Later two sergeant positions were eliminated through attrition which resulted in even additional savings.

Another financial consideration when consolidation occurs is the percentage of funds paid for each function of police services by the individual participating governmental agencies. This aspect of combined services created a serious conflict in the Las Vegas Clark County merger. In fact, it drew the city and county into heated battle. This conflict moved into the courts when the city filed a lawsuit to have the consolidation declared unconstitutional.

Clark County population grew, and serious crimes reported increased. The City and the County immediately began squabbling over who was going to pay how much for police services.

The Nevada State Tax Commission arbitrated and decided that the county owed 47% and the city 53%. The County Controller's office also gained control over the disbursement of funds. Later, in 1975, after the county successfully lobbied the legislature to remove city representatives from the police commission, the city was able to get the legislature to reinstate them on the commission and reduce their share of expenses to 50%.¹⁸ Since then, however, the rate of funding has changed. The city now pays 47% and the county 53%. Also, in 1978 a new sheriff was elected. He had been a city police employee prior to winning the election.

In the Twin Cities Police merger all phases of consolidation were planned in advance. However, in the Las Vegas-Clark County operation they had but three months to implement the consolidation once the legislature enacted law to accommodate such a move.

In the Twin Cities concept, Corte Madera and Larkspur together decided to share expenses for police services on a 50/50 basis for administration, communications and investigative functions.

However, the shared cost for patrol services was based upon the level of services in field manning that existed prior to consolidation. Corte Madera pays 45% of patrol costs and Larkspur 55%. Moreover, through prior agreement the door was left open for future negotiation and adjusted compensation of funding levels should population, residential and/or commercial areas expand to a point where demands on police services are impacted. Corte Madera has assumed the responsibility for the disbursement of funds for the new police entity and the added cost for the expanded service are funded by Larkspur. Sufficient prior planning and a negotiation approach to the merger on the part of both communities has successfully avoided some of the pitfalls experienced in the Las Vegas Metro Police Consolidation.

PROFESSIONAL REPORTS:

There have been many reports completed on the topic of sharing or consolidating full or partial police services. One of the most informative reports was done in 1973 by the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals - Police, "Combined Police Services". This report suggests that every state and local government and every police agency should provide police services by the most effective and efficient organizational means available. In determining this means, each agency should acknowledge that the police organization (and any functional unit within it) needs to be large enough to be effective but small enough to be responsive to the people.¹⁹ The Commission further recommended that joint efforts should: 1) maintain the current level of a service at a reduced cost, 2) increase cost if justified, or 3) provide an additional service at least as effectively and economically as it could be provided by the agency before.²⁰

The report went on to encourage every local government and every local police agency to study possibilities for combined and contracted police services and where appropriate implement such services. It suggested a variety of approaches such as total consolidation; partial consolidation; regionalization; metropolitanization; contracting total or specific police services; and service sharing.²¹

The Commission recognized that before consolidation of shared services could be implemented several important things should be considered: 1) size of agency, 2) geographic area to be served, 3) population density, 4) other agencies involved, and 5) legal responsibilities mandated to each level of government by state law.²²

Even as far back as 1967 similar recommendations were being voiced. A presidential crime commission produced an extensive inventory of needs to improve the nation's response to crime in all sectors of criminal justice administration. Prominent among its recommendations, but by no means inclusive of all of them, were a group designed to cut through the present irrational, unprofessional or duplicative organization of criminal justice agencies. Their solutions to improved police service were a combination of efforts by way of consolidation, regionalism, pooling, or joint services touching all components of law enforcement.²³

The crime commission hit hard upon the inefficiency caused by the fragmentation and overlapping of the nation's police services, and cited Southern Illinois, where each of 128

municipalities of under 5,000 population has its own police department, as an example of this fragmentation.²⁴

Further, in 1979, the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), a consortium of chief executives from large jurisdictions, recommended that police departments follow a schedule of consolidation that would bring all departments up to at least 200 officers by the year 2050.²⁵ An appropriate size for an effective police organization may not be 200 but this will be discussed in more detail later in this paper.

Many communities, whether knowingly or not, have followed the suggestions put forth by these perceptive commissions. Much of what has been professed by the PERF group may become reality sometime in the future.

METHODS OF CONSOLIDATION

There are basically three methods of joining functions or forces in a coordinated effort to share or combine services: Joint Powers Agreement (JPA); Formal Contract; or Informal Agreement. Each form has positive aspects, but also raise points of serious concern.

JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT:

Local communities are reluctant to share control over their police. They fear that reorganization will be detrimental to service delivery; that employment opportunities will be curtailed; and that their best interests will not be served by sharing control.²⁶ These concerns can be overcome if sufficient time and consideration are given to draft a comprehensive Joint Powers Agreement.

Governments interested in formalizing a consolidation using the legal device of a Joint Powers Agreement should first determine if state legislation exists such as the Inter-Local Government Agreement Act or a Joint Powers Act.²⁷ This document covers a variety of areas, but most of all it affords each participating agency equal input-and control over the particular entity formed.

The Joint Exercise of Power Agreement for police services between the City of Larkspur and the Town of Corte Madera addresses in great detail the specific concerns of both communities regarding their efforts to consolidate police services. The initial element in the Joint Powers Agreement identifies the purpose of the consolidation and the expectation of an improved level of police service and equal responsiveness to the individual community needs. Next, it creates the new police authority and establishes a Twin Cities Police Council to oversee the budgetary process and personnel matters.

This group meets at least once each year or more frequently if needed. It is comprised of two council members each from both Larkspur and from Corte Madera. Initially there was concern about the need for a fifth member on the council to settle any differences or deadlocks with a deciding vote. After much discussion and consideration it was decided, however, that four members were an appropriate number because if the difference wasn't settled there, it certainly could not be settled when the disputing parties returned to the general membership of their individual councils.

The next element in the JPA was the establishment of a Management Committee - City/Town Managers from each community. The committee was given specific powers: 1) to execute contracts for purchases of items in accordance with the Twin Cities Police Council approved budget; 2) to employ personnel; 3) to sell property; 4) to settle damage claims against the authority; 5) to represent the authority in meeting and conference sessions; 6) to act as personnel officers, including hiring and firing employees; and 7) to administer the priorities established by the Twin Cities Police Council.

Further, the JPA identified the authority as a public entity separate from the Agencies and provided it with general and specific powers to accomplish the purpose of the Agreement. Article V of the Agreement establishes Methods of Procedures to address the assumption of

responsibilities by the authority; delegation of powers; transfer of records and accounts; and funding.

Another section deals with the budget and the sensitive area of allocation of expenses. This section specifically states that each community will pay on a 50/50 basis for those functions in the police organization identified as Administration, Investigation, and Communications. Patrol activities and related training and support costs will be shared on a basis approved by the Twin Cities Police Council, which shall include consideration of: 1) the most current population available through the State Finance Department of each agency, 2) the most current County prepared assessed valuation of each agency, 3) calls for service within each agency, 4) identification of expenses attributed solely to one agency, 5) recognition of individual agency producing activities. At present Corte Madera funds 45% of the patrol function while Larkspur pays 55% of the service. This ratio of funding is reviewed annually and can be changed based upon the aforementioned criteria.

The remainder of the legal document deals with such things as self-insured and pre-existing conditions. It takes into consideration prior Workers' Compensation and liability obligations; Workers' Compensation losses; cumulative trauma; New Workers' Compensation and liability obligations; Unemployment Insurance claims; and New Unemployment insurance claims; property losses; ownership and final termination of agreement procedures.

As a word of caution, once agencies enter into a Joint Powers Agreement for consolidated police services, termination of that Agreement and the recreation of separate organizations can be a time consuming and very costly venture.

The Joint Powers Agreement is a very effective vehicle to ensure equal control over, and responsiveness from a consolidated entity. In the case of a consolidated county and city police agency, however, it may have little effect on the direct operation of that agency when headed by an elected official like a sheriff. In the case of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police consolidation, the City Commissioners were uncomfortable with the fact that they no longer had direct control over police decisions. Before consolidation, city police chiefs were hired by the city commissioners and fired if they did not make the proper decisions. Now, with an elected sheriff, the commissioners are helpless to demand anything from the police.²⁸

CONTRACT:

Previously, contract law enforcement was cited as probably the most easily implemented form of consolidated service arrangement.²⁹ It has been described as a partnership of cities and the county to provide joint services at the least cost while both agencies retain the power of self determination and home rule.³⁰

This formal business contract to pay for a specified level of law enforcement services can be a positive approach to reducing costs while increasing services. A contract can be an important management tool, but it often raises difficult administrative issues which require careful attention. The contracting city must understand its own needs, as well as the services the provider agency can offer. Local administrators must evaluate their own service priorities and

needs, their ability to meet those needs, and the methods of evaluating the service provided. Contracting for police services can be an important tax-saving arrangement, but its ultimate success depends upon administrative skills for determining needs and monitoring service.³¹

Although contracting for police services has been a success in many areas especially in California, this type of formal agreement does not provide for the same level of quality control that is the essence of a Joint Powers Agreement. The agency requesting contract service does not normally have control, let alone input, in the budget process of the provider agency. This lack of input is especially important where salary increases are involved. That agency's cost for services can be increased substantially or the agency may be forced to request and pay for a reduced level of service.

As previously mentioned, the requesting agency must be aware of the types of services the providing agency can offer. In many cases, a county sheriff's agency is not a full service organization like a municipal police agency is. Often, sheriffs' departments do not handle or investigate traffic accidents nor will they take an auto theft report. Normally, these types of incidents occurring in unincorporated areas are the responsibility of the Highway Patrol, State Police or other law enforcement agency. Even more important is the fact that under a contract agreement, the requesting agency has little, if any, control over law enforcement practices and no control over the elected sheriff. Even with these drawbacks, this method of obtaining law enforcement services has been very successful.

INFORMAL AGREEMENT:

The informal agreement is simply a "gentleman's agreement" to share or pool resources. There is no legal or binding document to address the joint efforts or any potential for future litigation. It is very easy to enter into this form of cooperative venture and equally easy to terminate.

The basic hazards involved in this arrangement relate to civil liability and Workers' Compensation claims. If a joint investigation is formed and one of the officers is seriously injured or killed while working a case in the sister jurisdiction, does the agency of hire assume all Workers' Compensation and related costs? If that officer shot and erroneously killed a citizen while working that case in another jurisdiction, who would assume the civil liability, one or the other, or both? These hypothetical examples demonstrate the need to examine potential liability aspects of shared informal service before implementation of that venture. On the other hand, an informal agreement has worked well when utilized in areas where there is minimal exposure to hazardous situations and where civil liability is not likely to be a factor. A simple example involves joint purchasing for reduced costs.

DEGREES OF CONSOLIDATION

TOTAL CONSOLIDATION:

Total Consolidation can develop in several forms and to various degrees. Consolidation can occur on a local City/Town level to a merger of city and county to a broader regional level where many governmental agencies join forces.

LOCAL LEVEL:

Combining two separate police agencies to form a single new entity such as the Twin Cities (Larkspur/Corte Madera) merger is an example of a local endeavor. The consolidation of two city governments is another type of local consolidation. Even the merger of a sheriff's department and police agency, both of which serve a relatively small constituency, can also be placed in this category. The combining of two governmental bodies (such as the Jacksonville and Duval County merger) to form a single government could be considered local consolidation or even metropolitanization.

REGIONAL LEVEL:

Regionalization can occur when a sufficient number of police organizations are combined to police a geographical area rather than merely a jurisdictional one. An example of this form of policing is Great Britain's amalgamation in 1966. Through the British Home Office, the police reduced their departments from more than 100 to fewer than 40 with no department with fewer than 600 men.³² This arrangement could well be considered regionalization or even metropolitanization.

METROPOLITAN LEVEL:

Metropolitanization can evolve when two or more police agencies totally combine forces to service communities in a metropolitan area. There are several examples of this form of consolidation. Clark County and Las Vegas formed the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department serving a population of about 450,000. The Metropolitan Toronto Police Force was the product of the federation of 13 municipalities with member size ranging from 13 to over 1,400 personnel.

PARTIAL CONSOLIDATION:

Partial consolidation of police services involves the combining of like functional units of two or more agencies. This type of combined service has frequently occurred in the area of emergency communications services. It has also occurred in investigations, youth services, crime prevention, and records and warrants activities. Partial consolidation can be done formally or informally. It can be created through a joint powers agreement, written contract, or by an enough airmail gentleman's agreement. Obviously, some functions assume more liability risk potential than others.

CONTRACT SERVICES:

Contracting for police services can include total services or specific services. Contracts can develop formally, city with city. For instance, the City of Yorba Linda, California, with an initial population of 12,000, contracted for police services with the neighboring City of Brea, which had a population of 19,000. The present total population is 60,000.³³ More frequently, however, is a city contracting with the county for police services. Los Angeles County's contract with Lakewood in 1954 was the first of these endeavors. These contract cities have curtailed the proliferation of police agencies and the resulting fragmentation of police efforts.³⁴ Since then LASO polices almost all the county's 30 municipalities outside the city of Los Angeles.³⁵ All of the newly incorporated areas were formally policed by the sheriff. When they incorporated, they simply kept the sheriff by contract, in lieu of forming their own departments.³⁶ There are more than 500 contract agreements in which one jurisdiction furnishes for a fee some or all of the police services for another jurisdiction.³⁷ Other forms of contract services include specific services such as lab work and other special services.

Contracting services in Los Angeles County has since expanded and the concept of contract law enforcement is growing all over the nation.³⁸ There are approximately 1,500 full service contract law enforcement programs being administered in 41 states.³⁹

The Los Angeles experience indicates that contracting agency officials can select any type of service which exceeds a sheriff's department's recommended minimum service requirement.⁴⁰

Reliance on the other agencies for auxiliary services is not limited to small departments. Many larger organizations rely on other agencies for detention, crime lab services, etc.⁴¹

SHARED SERVICES:

Sharing Services is basically the efforts of two or more agencies to join together to share resources and support-type services. One example is as Interagency Cooperative Task Force. It has been long recognized that criminals not only fail to respect the law, but also they do not respect geographical boundaries and political subdivisions.

It is often necessary for neighboring agencies to cooperate in apprehending these criminals.⁴²

In 1977, in Marin County, California, 11 separate police departments and the sheriff's department informally established and shared in a Major Crimes Task Force. Equipment and personnel (investigators) were donated to the unit which was under the direction of the Police Chiefs' Association. Since then, the unit has been formalized through a Joint Powers Agreement by all participating agencies on a pro rata basis according to individual population. The unit has established a central repository of information for the entire county. Moreover, the total investigative resources of the unit can be utilized by each participating agency to effectively address major crimes. The unit has helped to coordinate multi-jurisdictional arrests, as well as arrests and investigations by state and federal agencies.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Prior to any consolidated, contracted, or shared service arrangement, a closer analysis should be undertaken to determine what impact that change may have upon the community and the organization.

COMMUNITY:

The Las Vegas and Clark County law enforcement merger is one example of what can happen when one political body involved in a consolidated effort has received unequal control over the new entity. Of equal concern to elected officials, as well as community members is service level. The community may fear that service delivery will be reduced or the organization may become rigid and less responsive to local needs.

It is extremely important that these issues be resolved prior to any efforts to consolidate. Likewise, it is equally important to monitor these areas of concern after the merger is complete. This can be especially true of larger mergers because some studies have shown that small to medium sized police departments have been rated more favorably by citizens (lower victimization, and quicker police response).⁴³ Moreover, some academics who have looked at hard evidence say that large consolidations swell bureaucracies, do not necessarily save money, and often make the police less responsive to neighborhood problems.⁴⁴

Sometimes police administrators and others anticipate problems and/reactions to change that are not accurate perceptions of expected community response. A case in point occurred during the consolidation of the Twin Cities Police Department. The consolidated police department still operates out of two separate facilities and neither facility is open for 24 hour citizen drop-in. A direct hot line was installed outside the front entrance of each building to enable a citizen instant contact with the communications center. It was thought that this change from an open station on a 24-hour basis to a normal 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. basis might generate a certain amount of negative response from the citizens. That was not the case. There was very little concern expressed by citizens of either community. In fact, the system has been working smoothly, and has enhanced the safety of communications personnel who, in the past, during evening hours had to provide service at the front counter, as well as emergency communications duties. This approach enabled them to maintain better radio control for field officers, and has reflected a cost benefit since both stations must no longer be manned by personnel on a 24 hours basis.

One reason for the success in this aspect of the consolidation may be the result of the organization's efforts to keep the community informed of potential and forthcoming changes. It probably helped too that Corte Madera many years ago did not maintain the station on a 24 hour basis.

In another case, however, when in 1975 the Washington State Police consolidated communications, a citizen reaction of serious concern was clearly voiced. Before the consolidation, most local offices were open 24 hours a day to serve the public with their day to day problems. Consolidation left these offices unmanned at night. The public resented a hot line

telephone at the front door of the local State Patrol Office which connects them to the communications center miles away.⁴⁵ Eventually the Washington State Police decentralized communications because of citizen and personnel dissatisfaction.⁴⁶

Local communities also want to avoid transition problems should each community insist that its policies and agreements be generalized. Each department may have to compete for the plum of the new consolidated entity, and police officers may have to adjust to their new integrated world.⁴⁷

Each functional element of a consolidated effort must be scrutinized to determine its potential impact on the citizens. Whenever possible, every effort should be made to inform the citizens of various aspects of consolidation and encourage their input prior to implementation. These steps may result in better police-community relations, and will certainly help to avoid wasted costs and effort if negative community reaction to the change causes a redirection of effort.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACTS:

Whenever consolidation occurs, conflicts and a variety of problems may arise. The rectifying of issues associated with personalities, philosophies and employees considering variance in salary and benefit scales, will not be an easy task.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department experienced a few serious difficulties in bringing personnel together from two separate agencies. There was a lingering resentment between some former city officers and former sheriff's deputies. Suspicions persisted that administrators from one department or the other had taken control.⁴⁸ This problem has greatly improved in the past few years. Time has healed some wounds. Also, later the department changed command and a staff officer, previously with the City department took the helm. Now everyone works fairly well together. It didn't help either that Metro Police had to know two sets of ordinances instead of one - complicated by boundaries.⁴⁹

Control and smooth implementation was probably hampered somewhat by the physical restrictions of a partially decentralized organization. The Metro Police central administration was still split between two buildings five blocks apart (the county courthouse and city hall) because the city and county declined to build a central headquarters for them.⁵⁰ However, a consolidated police department can still be more efficient and effective operating out of two facilities than two separate departments operating independently. Two new facilities have since opened, the West and South substations.

The Metro Police administration had its hands full, too. They had different kinds of problems to deal with. With the sudden doubling in the size of the department the administrative headaches doubled. Day to day department operations were much more difficult with fewer staff personnel to cope with the increase.⁵¹ The administration felt the consolidation was premature. It should have been taken by steps.⁵²

The Twin Cities merger experienced many of the same type of impacts on the organization that Metro Police did, but to a much lesser degree. One organization was somewhat rigid and high

profile while the other was less formal and low-keyed. Officers from both departments had some prior interaction with members of the other agency and developed certain judgments about the abilities and attitudes of officers in the sister jurisdiction. These preconceived judgments carried over into the merged department. After a while many of these personal evaluations of their fellow officers dissipated and a close working relationship emerged. However, some negative feelings among a few officers still linger.

Twin Cities officers also had to learn two different, but often similar, sets of municipal codes as well as different departmental procedures. They had to apply the codes according to political boundaries. The department rules and regulations, policies and procedures have since been standardized. Several of the City-Town Ordinances have been changed for standard application.

This merger also involves a single agency operating out of two separate facilities approximately one mile apart. Field Operations and Communications work out of one station while Support Services functions in the other building. The Police Chief until recently maintained an office in each facility and alternated days between the two. That situation existed for nearly two years. The consolidation could have gone smoother and intra-communications and control could have been enhanced if the total organization had operated from one facility.

During the initial informal steps of this consolidation, which took about one and half years, the officers worked closely together, but not on a totally consolidated work schedule. The personnel from the two departments worked a modified but separate schedule because of their expressed concerns regarding equal pay for equal work. One department received higher pay while the other had a better benefits and retirement package. This issue was not resolved until the formal contract was signed with the new Twin Cities Police Officers' Association several months into fiscal year 1980-81. Now all salaries, benefits and the like are the same with improvements in several areas.

During the informal stages of consolidation the pay and benefit issue did have a negative effect on personnel morale. However, there was give and take on both sides and generally in a cooperative spirit.

As was the experience of the Las Vegas Metro Police administration, there was a doubling of administrative headaches and day-to-day problems with even the informal stages of consolidation. This was overcome somewhat with the reassignment of a supervisor to administrative duties.

The Toronto Metro Police consolidation improved recruitment and career opportunities. The promotional system was substantially affected by metropolitanization. Not only did opportunities for advancement become greater, but the process became fairer.⁵³

That was not totally true of the Twin Cities Police merger. Recruitment was enhanced, but promotional opportunities were not. Lateral movement to specialty positions improved, but upward mobility was stifled. The primary reason was the resultant excess of supervisory positions because of consolidation. It became obvious that advancement opportunities would not be realized for several years. Several very competent officers have since left for higher level

positions with other departments. Some have gone to departments where present advancement opportunities are better. This was one of the frustrating side effects of the consolidation.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Within the next few years we will probably see many law enforcement administrators and community leaders take that step toward sub-regional (local), regional or metropolitanized law enforcement services. Even though some say the trend in the past few years has been toward decentralization of police services in an effort to improve police-community relations and police morale, thus decreasing general interest in police consolidation, consolidation efforts are continuing and the successes of these efforts are building.⁵⁴ Interests in the improvement of police service without substantially increasing costs are mounting. This is especially true when concerned public servants and citizens observe the amount of redundancy that is still in effect in the police industry. More people are becoming aware of this problem since the passage of Proposition 13 (Taxpayer's Revolt) in California in 1978 and President Reagan's recent budget cuts.

There are more than 20,000 independent police units in the United States alone. In Cooke County, Illinois, in addition to the Chicago Police Department, there are over 120 municipal police forces.⁵⁵ Further, a study in a Midwestern state showed 8,796 of the state's police departments are in communities of under 5,000 population.⁵⁶ There is a mean average of just over two officers per department.⁵⁷ At least 80% of the departments in the United States have 10 officers or fewer, although these small departments police only 10% percent of the country's population.⁵⁸

There is no definitive research that identifies an optimum size for an efficient police department. In fact, research is at such an elementary stage that we do not know exactly how to define an effective police department. But experience and common sense suggest that there are technical skills and quick communications available to a large organization that are not available to a smaller one.⁵⁹ Crime does not observe political and jurisdictional boundaries. So why create problems for ourselves by splitting up the police?⁶⁰

Some say a mixture of large and small agencies producing complementary services within a police industry may be a better organizational solution to the problem of metropolitan policing than the creation of large police agencies who must each produce a wide variety of different police services to meet the diverse demands of the heterogeneous population living in most metropolitan areas.⁶¹

On the other hand, in the United States we tend to dwell on the extremes of either a police state concept or a totally decentralized system. There must be a position in between where a number of our police forces can be consolidated for better management.⁶² Sub-regional and regional consolidation of police forces can have a direct impact on police effectiveness with a resultant reduction in crime. Regionalization is not a panacea. Operationally, a department can lose control.⁶³ We must recognize that whether it is through contract-for-services, regional cooperation pacts, or total consolidation, there is going to have to be some sharing of costs among agencies if we're going to maintain an acceptable level of protection.⁶⁴

On July 1, 1978, the requirements of California's tax-slashing Proposition 13 became reality. Although there were restrictions on reducing police and fire services and a large revenue surplus in the State Treasury which mitigated the initial impact of Proposition 13, spending growth limitations, such as Proposition 4, and demands for other local social services have left law enforcement administrators hard pressed just to keep up with the increasing cost of providing police service.⁶⁵

Fortunately, the consequences of Proposition 13 were not felt as fast as they might have been. Under emergency legislation drafted in the month before the tax cut became law on July 1, local governments were granted a reprieve. Four billion dollars of surplus state funds were allocated to the cities, counties and school districts for 1978-79 fiscal year.⁶⁶ There were numerous strings attached to the state "bail out" bills. Police and fire departments were given top priority in the legislation, which stipulated that levels of protection could not be lowered in the coming year.⁶⁷ Thus, law enforcement has yet to feel the real impact of Proposition 13. But it soon will.

When Proposition 13 passed, nearly 26,300 local government employees were laid off. Of this number, nearly 8,500 have been rehired leaving a net layoff of nearly 17,800 local government employees. Nearly 3,000 of these employees worked for municipal governments.⁶⁸

Recently the Governor of California proposed, in order to balance the state budget, to do away with "bail out" funds to the cities and counties. This could mean a revenue loss of as much as \$250,000 to a community of about 12,000 population. However, the financial loss varies as it is tied into sales tax and property tax growth. Of even a broader scope and impact is President Reagan's budget cutting plans which will reduce other funds previously directed to state levels and distributed to some degree at the local level.

Considering the increase in citizen demands for police service, the continually increasing crime rate, the need for more efficient and effective law enforcement, coupled with reduced funding sources, the only logical and realistic direction for police services to go in today's society is regionalized law enforcement services.

SUMMARY

This study has identified many different forms of cooperative law enforcement and many methods utilized to establish joint efforts for service. It has further identified some of the problems associated with these various processes. Research indicates that many more consolidations in the law enforcement field will be forthcoming in the near future. This study has shown that much more step-by-step planning implementation must be the method.

Further arrangements in joint services will likely come about in the form of sub-regional and regional consolidation. That is not to say that more shared or contract service agreements will not continue, but regionalized services will be on the upswing. This will be partly the result of previous successes and limited revenues for local government.

As a result of this study it is obvious that more investigation is needed on this subject. Many aspects of consolidated policing still must be resolved. For instance, still of significant concern is the issue of equal control and maintenance of effort and responsiveness to individual community needs. In particular in the case where an elected official directs the operation of a multi-jurisdictional organization. Even if that official makes every effort to satisfy individual community needs, he will not eliminate the actual and natural feeling by participating governments that they no longer have direct control over police services. It is different when their department was administered by an appointed chief - a person whom that government could select or, if need be, terminate with cause.

More should be done to establish comprehensive step-by-step guidelines for consolidation of services. These steps should be recommended in logical order with appropriate time frames for various phases of implementation. With an instrument of this sort many problems involving the political element of a community, the citizens, personnel and other affected agencies can be avoided.

There has not been sufficient research to determine what is an effective and efficient police organization. Neither is there sufficient information to identify what size police agency is appropriate for the best management and responsiveness to the community. Answers to these questions can have a great bearing on the degree of regionalization required for a particular geographic area and the appropriate population density.

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