



PATROL STAFFING AND DEPLOYMENT STUDY

The IACP has long been recognized for its preeminence in the field of patrol staffing, deployment, scheduling, and productivity. We have a series of service packages available to assist jurisdictions to cope with the highly technical considerations that characterize patrol staffing. Most are collaboratively designed.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives of IACP patrol allocation, deployment, scheduling, and productivity studies can include any or all of the following:

- Determine the number of field patrol officers and supervisors currently required to enable a department to:
 - respond to emergency and non-emergency demands of citizens in a timely manner;
 - conduct prevention and other proactive patrol tasks effectively, including community-oriented policing and problem solving;
 - conduct all other patrol tasks effectively, including traffic control and special missions work;
 - allow officers to meet all administrative requirements satisfactorily, including report writing, training, court, and personal needs; and,
 - promote the safety of the public and police officers
- Assess gross patrol staffing requirements for the immediate future
- Design a plan for deploying the required number of patrol officers and supervisors most cost-effectively, by shift and patrol area, in response to temporal and geographic incidence of crime, demands for non-crime services, and the policing approach selected by the department

- ❑ Develop schedules for assigning required manpower most productively and equitably
- ❑ Examine the frequency and appropriateness of use of patrol overtime
- ❑ Assess the dimensions and appropriateness of officer availability
- ❑ Train department staff to conduct staffing requirements and deployment analyses.

Studies result in an extensive number and range of findings to immediately upgrade the effectiveness and productivity of patrol operations and intensify the accountability of both patrol units and officers. Training and technical assistance efforts impart knowledge and skills to enable department personnel to replicate the IACP patrol allocation and deployment methodology.

THE IACP APPROACH

Ready-made, universally applicable patrol staffing standards do not exist. Ratios, such as officers-per-thousand population, are totally inappropriate as a basis for staffing decisions. Accordingly, they have no place in the IACP methodology. Defining patrol staffing allocation and deployment requirements is a complex endeavor which requires consideration of an extensive series of factors and a sizable body of reliable, current data. In defining patrol staffing requirements, we consider the following factors, the mix of which is absolutely unique to each locality and agency:

- ❑ Policing philosophy
- ❑ Policing priorities
- ❑ Police policies and practices
- ❑ Number of calls for service
- ❑ Population size and density
- ❑ Composition of population, particularly age structure
- ❑ Stability and transiency of population
- ❑ Cultural conditions
- ❑ Climate, especially seasonality

- ❑ Policies of prosecutorial, judicial, correctional, and probation agencies
- ❑ Citizen demands for crime control and non-crime control services
- ❑ Crime reporting practices of citizenry
- ❑ Municipal resources
- ❑ Trends in the foregoing areas.

To prescribe patrol requirements properly, a series of professional guidelines and departmental policy preferences must be explicitly considered and deliberately applied. These concern policing philosophy, service philosophy, response time standards, and supervision philosophy. The IACP survey team ensures that these guidelines and preferences are consciously deliberated and reflected in study findings and recommendations.

- ❑ **Policing Style/Philosophy.** It is common practice to divide the time available for field patrol activity equally, allowing one-third of an officer's time for response to calls for service; one-third of his or her time for crime prevention, community relations, and other proactive services that an agency may elect; and one-third for administrative duties such as writing reports, conferring with supervisors, and meals. Variations of this basic formula occur, especially in jurisdictions committed to problem-solving and/or neighborhood-oriented approaches. In these jurisdictions, the portion of time allocated for proactive activity must be substantially greater.

Police agencies should consciously choose a policing style, recognizing that modifications have direct effect on staffing requirements. Agencies coping with budget constraints can choose to reduce uncommitted, prevention-focused time, thus expanding the time committed to response to calls. This strategy reduces patrol staffing requirements, which may risk public safety. Alternatively, agencies can choose to be more proactive, allocating, for example, 40%, 45%, or 50% of each officer's time to crime prevention, problem solving, community relations, and other proactive activities. This strategy intensifies (increases) manpower requirements. The IACP management survey staff prefers this more proactive approach to policing.

- ❑ **Service Philosophy.** Police agencies can dispatch a field officer to handle each complaint or request made by each citizen. Agencies can also choose to be selective in dispatch choices. Stabilization in police department budgets has occurred in many cities at the same time that citizen demands for police service have increased and/or departments have been engaged in efforts to improve quality of service, reduce response times to urgent calls, and develop new strategies for crime prevention and community-police interaction, without measurable increases in patrol staffing. Many departments cope with this

condition by diverting non-emergency calls. Rather than dispatch mobile units, agencies employ alternative responses such as taking telephone reports, promoting walk-in and mail-in reporting, using para-professionals and referring calls to other governmental agencies. Agencies often combine these strategies with delayed mobile response, which involves on-site response, delayed 30-60 minutes. Use of these alternatives, referred to as differential responses, lowers field staffing requirements. They represent a tradeoff of costs for on-scene service levels.

- **Response Time Standards.** Response time to highest-priority calls must be as rapid as possible. Highest-priority calls include those which pose danger to the lives of citizens and/or police officers and those which present opportunity to arrest an alleged offender. Absolute, formally-endorsed response time standards have not been established. Response times, like other factors discussed, have major impacts on manpower requirements. The impact of response time goals is evident. The higher the goal (the faster the desired response), the greater the staffing requirements. Response times are not exclusively staffing driven. Call prioritization is crucial in achieving desired response times.

- **Supervision Style and Requirements.** The Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies recommends a supervisor be responsible for no more than twelve officers or eight beats. This standard is useful but requires skillful adaptation. To prescribe the number of supervisors required, it is essential to consider entry level selection standards, quality and experience of patrol personnel, the process used to select supervisors, quality of supervisory training, time available for supervisors to supervise, and preferred supervisory style -- control-oriented, coach-facilitating, coaching, or a combination. Fewer supervisors are required when an agency has an experienced field force and experienced supervisors. More are needed when an agency has a young, inexperienced field force. Well trained officers require less supervision than modestly or poorly trained officers.

- **Community Policing Roles.** The role of the patrol officer differs radically in agencies committed to community-inclusive forms of policing. A patrol officer's role must be fully defined in order to incorporate time components into the calculation of patrol officer requirements. Community and problem solving policing is labor-intensive for patrol, although empirical evidence has yet to accumulate to quantify requirements with confidence.

Because of public safety, public policy, and cost implications, IACP's approach to staffing allocation and deployment ensures that a jurisdiction's own preferences in the foregoing policy areas are reflected in findings, recommendations, and prescriptions, without ever compromising professional police standards.

WORK PLAN

To achieve study objectives, a five-phase work plan is conducted:

- ❑ Phase 1 - Staffing Requirements Training
- ❑ Phase 2 - Policy Preference Review
- ❑ Phase 3 - Patrol Staffing Data Collection
- ❑ Phase 4 - Staffing Requirements Projections
- ❑ Phase 5 - Report Preparation.

PHASE 1: STAFFING REQUIREMENTS TRAINING

Work begins with one to three days of training. The training, prepared and delivered by a lead member of IACP's Progressive Patrol Administration professional development seminar, focuses on IACP's patrol manpower and deployment approach, data needs and collection requirements, scheduling methodologies and alternatives, patrol philosophies, and the unique requirements for patrol management under problem-solving and community-oriented approaches. At the conclusion of the training, participants are prepared to assist in data collection. This reinforces the capabilities acquired in the classroom, further equipping department members to conduct future studies. A department chooses the number of individuals to be trained. Computer experts from a department and/or a city and budget/control agency personnel find this training of exceptional value.

PHASE 2: POLICY PREFERENCE REVIEW

Concurrent with training, IACP staff meets with local officials to review and receive direction on policy options that influence staffing requirements, namely policing style, service philosophy, response time standards, and community policing roles of patrol officers. Because of the profound public policy implications of these options, elected and appointed municipal officials should be central to the process. IACP staff sets forth the substance and implications of the issues and otherwise facilitates discussions. To proceed constructively with a study, staff needs only direction from this process, not binding decisions.

PHASE 3: PATROL STAFFING DATA COLLECTION

Phase 3 entails collection of data needed to develop staffing requirements estimates and define the most cost effective deployment patterns. To develop a clear and accurate description of needs, information, records, and documents are collected that pertain to and include:

- ❑ All occasions when officers report for duty
- ❑ All occasions when officers do not report for duty due to time off, vacations, sick leave, court time, and for other reasons

- ❑ Availability/show-up rates
- ❑ All directed officer activity
- ❑ All self-initiated officer activity
- ❑ All officer administrative activity
- ❑ Overtime
- ❑ Type and quantity of reported criminal activity personnel regulations that describe amount and types of authorized leaves of absence
- ❑ Personnel regulations that describe amount and type of authorized leaves of absence
- ❑ Daily activity reports of each officer to determine division of labor
- ❑ New or special programs or administrative restrictions contemplated (in-service training, for example)
- ❑ Organization charts and descriptions which describe present work assignments and manpower levels
- ❑ Maps showing beat assignments and general geography of the area.

The scope and reliability of CAD/computer supplied data governs the simplicity, complexity, and timeliness of completion of work. Some required information may not be readily available. In these instances, standard forms and data collection instruments are used to generate fresh data.

PHASE 4: STAFFING REQUIREMENTS PROJECTIONS

Using the policy intents expressed in Phase 2 the data gathered during Phase 3, staffing requirements are calculated. Alternative requirement configurations may be prepared, reflecting variations and options in schedules. The most cost effective configuration is identified.

Once staffing requirements have been calculated, two additional major products can be developed.

- ❑ **Budget Impact Projections.** The projected number of patrol officers needed can be compared to current number to develop budget impact estimates -- whether more or fewer officers are needed and whether this number will call for increases or produce savings in expenditures.

- **Deployment and Scheduling Plan**. A shift deployment scheduling plan can be produced for the next year. Comparison of current and proposed deployment will reveal whether current deployment and scheduling patterns have been wasteful or failed to optimize potentials.

PHASE 5: REPORT PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION

A study concludes with preparation of a written report. The report is presented by IACP's project manager at a time and to an audience chosen by local officials.