

**The author(s) shown below used Federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Justice and prepared the following final report:**

**Document Title: Policing in Transition: Creating a Culture of Community Policing**

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**Document No.: 181043**

**Date Received: 03/22/2000**

**Award Number: 96-IJ-CX-0068**

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181043

**POLICING IN TRANSITION:  
CREATING A CULTURE OF COMMUNITY POLICING**

**MARCH 1999**

**SUBMITTED BY**

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**NIJ GRANT #96-IJ-CX-0068**

*NIJ - Final Copy - 2/17/2000*

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## ABSTRACT

This report summarizes the state of policing in the Albuquerque Police Department from January of 1996 through August of 1998. It represents a case study of the organizational dynamics within a medium-sized, urban police department seeking to implement community oriented policing, and of the views of agency employees' as they adjust to that effort. Through a discussion of police and civilian subcultures in APD, this study addresses the successes and difficulties of a transition period involving major organizational changes. Strategies for optimizing organizational and community strengths are presented for consideration.

The research for this report is the product of the APD-UNM Research Partnership, an NIJ-funded collaboration between sworn and civilian law enforcement professionals in the Albuquerque Police Department and researchers at the University of New Mexico's Institute for Social Research. Data for this report were obtained primarily by ethnographic techniques, including over 3,000 hours of participant observation, one-on-one interviewing, and focus groups; in addition, survey and archival data inform the analysis.

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the APD/UNM Research Partnership is to study the state of policing in Albuquerque, New Mexico. From January 1996 through August of 1998, policing in Albuquerque was shaped by the department's efforts to implement community oriented policing. It was this implementation, in an already divided department, which resulted in a "hit and miss" acceptance of the COP philosophy. This report documents those implementation efforts, their intended and unintended effects, and the role that APD's organizational subcultures had in shaping the current state of policing in Albuquerque.

APD officially adopted community oriented policing as its operating philosophy in 1994, and in 1995 began a process of strategic planning and department re-organization to reinforce this commitment. As the research partnership began in early 1997, APD was introducing significant organizational changes while attempting to overcome technological and organizational difficulties. Thus, we were able to conduct research before community oriented policing implementation had reached patrol operations at any significant level, as well as during the course of that implementation. Since January 1997, researchers have accompanied sworn officers on police operations of all types, including routine patrol, bike patrol, foot patrol, and SWAT operations. In addition, researchers have attended a variety of briefings, community/police functions (e.g., drug marches, Neighborhood Association meetings, etc.), and APD organizational meetings. Researchers have also interviewed leaders of various community organizations and city agencies who interact with APD; conducted focus groups with civilian APD personnel and managers; and observed the COP steering committee. Using ethnographic data from these settings, we have been able to track the COP implementation efforts by APD from the top-down (administratively) and from the bottom-up (officer and civilian perspectives).

Research was begun in APD during a period that one APD administrator described as "The Great Depression". The very popular four-day/ten hour work schedule was being eliminated in order to allow for officer coverage for a new fifth area command highly unpopular among officers. There was also a highly contentious lawsuit over whether officers' should be paid for lunch breaks. In addition, the department was operating with a radio system that Chief Polisar himself publicly described as "often useless and sometimes dangerous" and driving a vehicle fleet so old that contests were being held to see which officer's unit had the most mileage. Nonetheless, many of the rank and file of APD made clear that they loved their jobs. "I love being a cop," said

one graveyard officer. "I get to drive around, poke my nose into other people's business, and arrest the bad guys. And every once in a while you get to help somebody who really needs help."

Interviews done with civilian employees painted a similar picture. "I enjoy the actual work that I do, and the people that I work with. What I don't enjoy is all of the internal stuff that happens in this department." Internally, dispatchers struggled to work with the same inadequate communication system that served the officers, while being housed in a building with little room and no windows. Primary interviews with civilian employees showed that they also felt overworked and understaffed, and some expressed feelings of isolation and frustration when they felt that they were treated as "second best" to the sworn.

Original contacts with both sworn and civilian administrators showed that they also felt discouraged by what they termed an "overall morale problem". Many administrators said the rank and file mistakenly believed that the administration did not care about the problems facing the department, but that the administration did care and was frustrated by being unable to do enough to fix it. Some lower level administrators said that they were "giving up...My input has been asked for time and again, and time and again I have given it and it has been ignored. So now I am just going to do my job, try to take care of my guys. Fuck the rest of the department." Upper level administrators' opinions on the department were divided. Some felt that the majority of the department "has it good" and that they needed to "stop bitching" and just do the job they were getting paid to do. Others felt that the department was going under, drowning under the weight of political agendas and financial constraints.

This report focuses on the community oriented policing efforts made from January 1, 1996, to June 1, 1998, under the administrations of Chief Joseph Polisar and his interim successor, Chief Chris Padilla. It begins by defining community policing, then discusses the political context and precursors to COP in Albuquerque, and outlines APD's implementation efforts. The heart of the report discusses the organizational culture of the department, and its effects on COP implementation. The conclusion of the report outlines strategies for creating an organizational culture that synthesizes the best aspects of community policing with the strengths of the various organizational subcultures. This research project is now tracking more recent changes made under new Chief Gerald Galvin since his arrival in mid-1998. Significant organizational changes have taken place, but the underlying dynamics of organizational culture described here will continue to be important in Albuquerque and, we think, in police departments around the country.

## UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

Defining community-oriented policing (COP) is no straightforward task. In consulting multiple sources of information about COP (law enforcement literature, police managers, politicians, citizens' and officers' personal experiences and other accounts of community policing in action), one comes away with diverse and contradictory understandings about what community oriented policing is supposed to be. This is normal in a still-emerging concept, especially one that attempts to understand and ultimately alter the day-to-day activities in the complex world of law enforcement. As one academy instructor said, "I have been to all of the classes on COP, heard at least five different experts give their opinions on what it is all about. And each expert gave a different opinion, and every book I have read has said something else completely. So I guess even I can't define it. It is kind of like obscenity, you can't really define it but you sure know when you see it." The trouble is that many APD Officers, as we shall see, do not feel they know it or have seen it.

For the purposes of this report, it is necessary to at least have a working definition of community-oriented policing. We present our understanding of COP without assuming that everything written, built, implemented or altered under the label "community-oriented policing" is truly a COP initiative. Rather, we assume that some actions labeled as community policing efforts may prove to be valuable additions to the repertoire of officers, community members, and police departments, and other elements might prove to be less than valuable or even counterproductive.

So what is "community oriented policing"? Fundamentally, *COP is a comprehensive strategy to strengthen the fight against crime, reduce public disorder, and minimize other causes of crime by building stronger ties among law enforcement agencies, community members, and other government institutions.*

Proponents of COP argue that rising crime rates have led American police departments to emphasize reacting to crime and calls for service to the detriment of real crime prevention (Goldstein 1990, 1979). An important clarification must be made here. Police officers have always prevented crime, but in recent decades have primarily done so by arresting those who have already committed crimes and thus might commit future crimes. To the extent that these arrests get future criminals off the streets and deter others from committing crimes, this modus operandi indeed prevents crime. In this sense, "crime prevention" is nothing new.

But COP promotes a rather different kind of crime prevention in the day-to-day work of officers. COP seeks to use the authority of the police as a "magnet", joining other, less formal,



types of authorities together to fight crime. Thus, COP works to increase the informal authority at work in the community by creating collaborative relationships between the police, community, and other agencies of the government that can effectively fight crime. Community oriented policing attempts to use these ties to heighten social authority: making police authority more relationally-grounded within the community; focusing governmental and private services on environmental and social problems that lead to crime; and empowering the citizens and organizations who exert informal social authority in the community.

COP also suggests that officers need new (or at least rediscovered) tools in their fight against crime. Primary among these tools are stronger relationships with people in the neighborhoods they patrol and fuller access to the resources of city government. In part, COP seeks to bring greater human and material resources to bear against crime and disorder. However, those resources must be brought to bear not only by officers, but also by community organizations with continual presence in neighborhoods. COP strives to further empower officers in their fight against crime by allowing police better access to information from the community, more social support in confronting criminals, and more legitimacy in the eyes of society. The combined focus on solving the problems that generate crime, reducing public disorder, and enhancing social authority is what sets COP apart from other, more recent approaches to policing.

Although this research focuses on the police role within community policing models, COP does not place the sole burden of community policing on officers, but rather emphasizes policing as a shared responsibility. Increasing public safety through community policing becomes the task, not of police in isolation, but also of community members and other government agencies in collaboration. Thus, "community partnership" is one of the core components of community oriented policing. This partnership combined with the other components of problem solving and beat integrity are often cited as the "definition" of community oriented policing. But to properly understand community policing it is crucial to see this trinity of components within the broader framework of enhancing social authority and reducing the underlying causes of crime. Other components seen as elements within the broader COP initiative are: decentralization (done intelligently and within limits, not blindly), de-specialization of officer responsibilities, empowerment of street-level officers and increased reliance upon officer discretion, finding substitutes for heavy-handed administrative surveillance and rule-orientation as the primary means of controlling officer behavior, etc.

Ideally, the components of COP that prove valuable will become working parts of every officer's toolkit and day-to-day practices, used in conjunction with, and potentially transforming, the many other tools of policing. This is not just a pipe dream. Current research, including the best-designed study of the impact of community policing (Skogan 1997), documents that, if it is done correctly, properly conceived community policing can have a significant impact on crime, disorder, fear of crime, officer morale, and police-community relations. However, the same research shows that implementing community policing successfully is a difficult task requiring time, sustained organizational focus, and some refinement by trial-and-error.

This research focuses on the current state of policing in APD as it engages in this trial and error process, and strives to assess COP implementation with input from police officers, community members, civilian APD employees, police leaders, and government representatives. This report will not attempt to answer the bigger questions: Will COP as an overall thrust prove to be more effective in reducing crime, more satisfying for police officers and community members, and/or a more democratic way for cities to police themselves? Will it take root as a new paradigm for policing, the organizing principle that drives police departments in the future? Only if both these things prove true will community policing become what its proponent's hope it can be: the heart of a new era of policing in America. Some good research is being done nationwide to begin to answer these questions, and the best evidence has begun to suggest at least a partially affirmative answer to the first question. But solid answers to these questions still lie in the future, despite the ardent hopes of supporters and the bedrock cynicism of detractors.

## **ALBUQUERQUE'S MOVE TOWARD COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING**

### **Political Background of COP in Albuquerque**

It is important to recognize that community oriented policing has a political life outside of any city trying to implement it. In 1992, Bill Clinton ran for President with the promise of "100,000 new cops on the streets" as a prominent part of his platform. In 1994, Congress passed the Crime Bill which set aside 9 billion dollars for new anti-crime initiatives, much of the money dedicated specifically towards community policing. The monies were to be allocated by the Department of Justice, its research arm, the National Institute for Justice and the newly created Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office. The pot of money available to police departments was for community policing, with an emphasis on getting more officers on the streets.

Thus, a department wishing to tap into this new funding source was to write its request for resources in the language of community policing.

Locally, COP received public attention during the 1994 mayoral campaign of Martin Chavez. His campaign platform was heavily anti-crime, with the claim that community policing would be an answer to the perceived failures of the system to adequately address the crime problem in Albuquerque. Chavez pledged that he would pick a chief of police that also embraced community policing. When department insider Joe Polisar was chosen as Chief, he too promised to implement community policing.

Obviously, the political and monetary support behind community oriented policing will be a carrot pursued by departments nationwide. Until those resources dry up, there will be talk of implementing community policing. The test will come in the year 2000 when the Crime Bill money is depleted – will community policing still be a ‘philosophy’ worth pursuing? Obviously, the hope of those funding the initiative is for community policing to have taken root sufficiently in local police agencies to be viable with or without renewed federal funding.

Unlike many police departments around the country, when APD decided to implement a community-oriented model of policing it chose to do so on a department-wide basis rather than by setting up a specialized community-policing unit. This decision was driven partly by research done by APD’s Planning Division on implementation efforts in other cities, and partly by APD’s experiences of similar specialized units becoming alienated from the wider organization and ultimately being eliminated. Additionally, the tone of Mayor Chavez’s COP platform had promised COP to all of Albuquerque, not just to some segments of the city.

### **Precursors to COP in APD**

Even before a community oriented policing was formally initiated, the Albuquerque Police Department was seeking methods of fighting crime that utilized resources found in the community. The APD Crime Prevention Program was created in 1990 to combine the efforts of various crime prevention programs that were operating under several different city agencies. Programs implemented through this unit include Neighborhood Watch, National Night Out, Community and Business Crime Prevention, Business Crimewatch, Crime-free Multi-Housing and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). These programs lay the groundwork from which later community policing efforts grew.

Under ever increasing legal and political pressure, APD also began a concerted effort to hire and retain a workforce that accurately reflected the community it served. People of Hispanic decent currently make up nearly 40% of sworn officers, closely reflecting the population of Albuquerque. Native Americans comprise about 1% of sworn officers. Women make up some 11% of sworn officers, a far stronger representation than was the case even ten years ago and equal to the national average for a department this size. Hispanics and women have successfully moved into all ranks of the department.

As a fiscal strategy, and in an effort to increase the availability of officers for policing functions, APD has systematically civilianized many positions formerly held by sworn officers. APD planning, crime analysis, criminalistics, records, dispatch, and all clerical functions are now essentially civilian operations, and the department administration now includes a civilian deputy director and several civilian department heads. These have been controversial steps — particularly when civilians were given authority over sworn personnel. One consequence of this initiative was a reduction of 'inside' or 'desk jobs' formally used as positions for injured or 'problem' officers.

In an effort to improve service delivery and accountability, the City of Albuquerque Planning Department identified 10 Community Planning Areas (CPA) in Albuquerque. Although the original intention was for each CPA to match natural neighborhood boundaries, political pressures resulted in each planning area matching the 10 city council districts instead. In a reorganization of the department, APD moved area command and beat boundaries to overlap more closely with the 10 CPAs.

Prior to APD's formal COP initiative, the police operated from four substations set up as Area Commands in the four quadrants of the city. These types of Area Commands, offering services to the residents of a defined geographic area, were necessary precursors to the implementation of Community Policing. As of June 1994, APD officers were still operating out of four non-autonomous, geographically-based Area Commands, and plans for the 5<sup>th</sup> Area Command had been approved and funded.

## **APD IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING**

### **Planning for COP**

The choice was made to implement COP as a "department-wide philosophy" rather than create a separate COP unit or squad. To this end, APD formed a Strategic Planning Committee to create a plan for APD's adoption and integration of the philosophy of community policing. The

committee included representatives from all facets of the APD administration, civilian and sworn, members of the Community Oriented Policing Steering Committee, various COP consultants, and the Family and Community Services/Office of Neighborhood Coordination (ONC). In 1995 the committee released the Albuquerque Police Department's FY/96-FY/98 Strategic Plan for the Transition to Community Policing.

The Strategic Plan identified key partners in the COP implementation process, gave a brief discussion of COP, and created a mission statement for the department. The six strategic goals were broken down into objectives, prioritized and assigned to a given party who would be responsible for the completion of that objective within the timeline dictated by the plan. The Strategic Plan also summarized the best steps APD had taken, to date, on the road of community oriented policing. Of special note were the decentralization of police services to the Area Commands (and the 5<sup>th</sup> AC was added), redevelopment of the Mission Statement to include COP, several citizen survey projects, and increased crime prevention efforts with the ONC, neighborhoods, and through the Citizens' Police Academy.

This blueprint for COP implementation in Albuquerque was distributed to sworn personnel with the rank of Lieutenant and above, as well as to non-sworn personnel of equivalent rank. How the contents of the Strategic Plan were to be disseminated to Sergeants, mid-level managers, and the rest of APD personnel was left to the discretion of the Area Commanders and non-sworn managers. Interviews with department personnel indicated that the majority of APD personnel had never heard of the Strategic Plan, much less knew the contents of the plan itself. "I was told that I needed to write a summary of where my people were at on the Strategic Plan. I didn't know we even had a Strategic Plan. So I got a copy of it and read it. It was kind of interesting," said one APD administrator.

In our early interviews throughout 1997, it was obvious that the Strategic Plan was not having the impact APD administration had hoped. The sworn leadership of APD and high level civilian personnel defined community policing as involving "community partnerships, problem solving, and beat integrity," and often emphasized the notion that "community policing is a philosophy, not a program." Yet, at the same time, those interviewed expressed frustration at their inability to translate this definition into any form of working knowledge. "I can sit here and give you the definition: ownership, partnership, problem solving. But that doesn't really mean anything. I mean, it sounds good, but what does it mean? How does any of that effect me?" said one ranking officer.

Interviews with non-ranking officers throughout the department indicated notably little understanding of just what community policing was or how it impacted their work. Often, officers simply defined COP as "getting to know your community". When pressed, many officers split community oriented policing into two categories: "touchy-feely COP" and "kick-ass COP". The touchy-feely version of COP was generally defined, either with positive or negative connotations, as a "grin and wave" way of policing. "You know, contact the folks in the neighborhood and let them know, first of all, that I am here not necessarily to hurt, but to help. One of those touchy-feely kinds of things, a kinder and gentler officer," said one recent academy graduate.

Officers described the "kick ass" community policing model as a model of policing where they did not attempt to establish long term relationships with the community, but rather use their community knowledge and contacts solely as a resource for fighting crime. "They (the community) don't care if I know their name or not. They want me to keep them safe. So I do. I handle their problems, I keep the scumbags from interfering in the lives of the good citizens."

Officer interviews made it abundantly clear that no one definition of community oriented policing, much less a philosophy, has been internalized by civilian and sworn alike. "That's what my definition of community policing is. It is a two-part thing. We treat citizens better and we utilize them and the resources they have to solve the problems we have. Umm....what this department's philosophy is, I don't have a clue."

There are several reasons why this may be the case. The majority of the department's personnel interviewed felt that the 5<sup>th</sup> floor had never clearly articulated a meaningful definition of community oriented policing. "We don't have a community policing philosophy. I mean, the Chief has never come down, personally, and told me anything about a philosophy." Other officers might have understood the definition of COP communicated to them, but rejected it as a "flavor of the month" or as an impossible goal based on the department's current resources. Community oriented policing was often referred to as a "buzzword". "This may be what they want right now, because it is politically correct. Before this, it was signature service, before that "management by objective". This is the most recent 'flavor of the month'. Period."

Many of those officers who believed that COP was little more than a passing fancy felt that APD did not have the resources necessary to implement COP programs and philosophies. "We don't have the manpower, obviously, for community policing. We just don't. It is not there right now. It is a great concept, it worked way back in such and such years. And if we had a thousand more officers, or a thousand less calls, we could do COP."

## DEPARTMENT-WIDE IMPLEMENTATION

This section both documents management's efforts toward community policing and also lays the groundwork for understanding why these efforts had such limited impact on officer understanding of their role. Prior to the push for COP, APD developed several programs whose presence increased the likelihood of a successful COP implementation (see precursors to COP in APD). The current implementation strategies, programs and initiatives are presented below in terms of whether they were strictly *Internal Changes*, changes in APD policies and practices, or *External Changes* that altered the way APD interacted with the community.

### Implementing COP: Internal Changes

The Strategic Plan detailed specific internal changes that APD was to make during the COP implementation. The plan created a new mission statement that reflected the department's move toward community policing. The phrases "improve the quality of life," "reducing crime through education and prevention," and "in cooperation with the citizens..." set forth some of the basic philosophical tenants of community policing, incorporating them with the more traditional missions of order maintenance and protection. This new mission statement never appeared to be heard in the field: most officers interviewed were unable to give any answer when asked "What is the mission of your department?" The few officers that could either quote the mission statement or give a summary that included most of the mission's basic components, did so jokingly. "I read on a poster in briefing that our new mission is to be 'In Step With the Community' The only problem is that nobody in this city has any rhythm." (The variety of responses and patterned way in which officers answer this question are discussed in the section on police subcultures.)

The Strategic Plan also placed a new emphasis on decentralizing police services. Though geographic area commands pre-dated the implementation of community policing, each area command was now expected to increase their outreach efforts into the surrounding community, and tailor police services to fit each community's needs. Beat integrity became a central theme as well, under the assumption that it is necessary for an officer to know the community he serves before he can serve it well. An officer must be able to define and claim ownership of a specified geographic area and the residents of that area must, in turn, lay claim to the officers who work in their beats.

Departmental training was also addressed by the Strategic Plan. By February 1998 all sworn APD personnel and management-level civilian personnel had been trained in Problem Oriented Policing (POP). Training in problem oriented policing was also implemented in the police

Academy training, to ensure all new officers receive the training. This, along with the academy's 3 hour designated community policing training, formed the basis of a new cadet's introduction to COP. Several other COP initiatives were undertaken during the time of this study. They are briefly presented below:

- ❖ TRUs: In an effort to free up more of the officer's time, telephone-reporting units were created. TRUs were supposed to free up officers from non-emergency calls and make them more available for higher priority calls. In the COP spirit, officer's newly found "free time" would be used for community outreach activities and POP projects.
- ❖ Promotion: The promotions process within APD began to ask candidates for the rank of sergeant and lieutenant about their understanding of community policing concepts, openness to working with community organizations, etc.
- ❖ Awards: The write-ups and oral commendations given when monthly and annual awards were announced by the Department have frequently cited activities linked to community policing, as part of the reason for the award. In some cases, such activities appeared to be central to the commendation; in other cases, it appeared to be fairly *pro forma*, thrown in to strengthen the case for a commendation given on grounds more linked to traditional policing activities. This seems appropriate enough, and in any case the fact that community policing activities were consistently listed suggests that these were perceived as necessary for an individual to be considered a legitimate officer or civilian of the month.

### **Implementing COP: External Implementation**

In addition to changes to policies and practices internally, APD developed several strategies to improve community-police relationships, including the following:

- ❖ Mini substations: Beyond the area commands, APD developed and opened several mini-substations in an effort to increase accessibility of police services. Examples are the Cottonwood Mall substation, and the Triangle Diner substation.
- ❖ Community Oriented Policing Steering Committee: A committee consisting of citizens, civic leaders and APD employees was formed as a requirement for the distribution of the Community Development Block Grant (CDGB) funds associated with community policing.
- ❖ Citizens Police Academy: This program is designed to provide citizens with an overview of APD, including the many functions performed by APD staff, and to provide a better understanding of the guidelines within which officers and the Department operate.



- ❖ Neighborhood Association Patrol Training: Taught at the APD Academy, but coordinated by the ONC staff. It consists of two evenings of initial training, focused on how to organize the patrol, the liability issues involved, avoiding vigilantism, and learning from the experience of established patrols in other neighborhoods.
- ❖ Mobile Command Center: Vehicle includes communications, equipment, allows officers to set up base of operations anywhere in the city. Funded by Community Development Block Grant.
- ❖ APD Community Resource Guide: listed a variety of social service providers plus information on schools and government in the area. This was created as a supplement to POP training, providing officers with a handy list of referrals.
- ❖ Required Attendance at Community Meetings: for a short time officers were required to attend Community meetings in their beats.
- ❖ Special Initiatives by Individual Area Commands: discussed at length in *Status of COP: COP Variations by Area Command* later in report.

By drawing on various building blocks of community-based crime prevention already present in the department, engaging in some strategic planning, geographically de-centralizing the organization, and focusing on department-wide implementation of community policing, APD attempted to institute major organizational change. These included some changes purely internal to the department and others involving new initiatives and organizational ties external to the department. These represent important accomplishments on the road toward diversifying the tools available to the police and the community in the effort to enhance public safety.

However, as documented later in this report, these changes had a very limited impact on how most officers understood their role, viewed the department's mission, or actually did their work. That is, with relatively isolated exceptions, most officers believed that community policing had made no difference in how they did their jobs. Furthermore, we could document little such difference – the vast majority of officers appeared to continue doing their work in ways essentially identical to how they had always done it, or at least in ways bearing no clear, systematic relationship to the priorities of community policing. This was so for a variety of reasons: the slow process of change inherent in any organization (Kanter 1983; Kanter, Stein, and Jick 1992; Schein 1992); difficulties in communicating the new expectations to officers; problems reconciling heavy

call loads while allowing time for COP activities; and the technological problems that worked against beat integrity, etc.

But underlying all these factors were dynamics within the organizational culture of urban policing. These dynamics were important both indirectly (they shaped many of the obstacles just cited) and directly (they shaped officer resistance to community policing itself). We now turn to describe what we mean by the organizational culture of policing, what it looks like in an urban police department in the late 1990s, and how it affected the implementation of community policing in APD. We first discuss subcultures that pre-existed community policing, and later discuss the pseudo-subcultures that grew up around the implementation effort. While each subculture is interesting in itself, the focus here lies in how they interact and affect the effort to infuse new models of policing into a large police organization.

### **APD ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

Much writing on policing has focused on identifying the characteristics of police culture or of a "police identity" (Reuss-Ianni 1983; Skolnick 1994, 1996). While police may have shared such a unified organizational culture in the past, in the Albuquerque Police Department, they no longer do. Several factors have combined to create multiple and sometimes competing factions, or subcultures, within modern police departments: changing city demographics, increasing ethnic diversity among police officers and supervisors, reform-minded politicians and police managers, and popular pressure from residents who are placing new demands on police agencies. Understanding the current organizational dynamics of policing requires insight into these subcultures; the heart of this report identifies the key contemporary police subcultures in Albuquerque and how police leaders at all levels can draw on them strategically.

Some core characteristics of being a police officer continue to be shared by most police officers. Together, these make up what we call the "archetypal police culture" — what might be thought of as the foundation of police identity that underlie the other subcultures. We first describe this foundation culture of policing, then move on to a discussion of subcultures in APD. Note that, while some APD personnel operate exclusively within one subculture, others operate at the intersection of two or more of these subcultures.

## Archetypal Police Culture

*"A cop is a cop is a cop. Some are better than others, some a worse. But, we are all made out of pretty much the same stuff."*

The archetypal police culture consists of those characteristics that transcend time and geographic boundaries, and are shared by the majority of police officers (Wilson 1968). We cannot create an exhaustive list of such characteristics, but such a list would include:

First, among police officers there is a strong sense of being on the side of justice, right, or some conceptualization of "being one of the good guys". As such, law enforcement agents place a high value on the shared experiences acquired during a career in policing such as the unknown feeling when searching a dark building, the adrenaline of a foot pursuit, the horror of seeing a dead child, and the mourning of an officer killed in the line of duty. Second, officers also share a strong awareness of personal safety in their daily lives, which causes them to be careful about where they eat, drink, and seek recreation. This can be seen adopt in tell tale behaviors such as preferring to sit with their backs to the wall in restaurants; unbuckling seatbelts before their vehicle is actually stopped, etc.

Many officers also admit to being "control freaks", only feeling comfortable when they are in control of situations and personal interactions both on and off duty. Officers also said that they were 'adrenaline junkies', loving and sometimes needing the excitement derived from 'hot calls' and other intense situations. Finally, most officers said that the development and appreciation of a morbid sense of humor is a defining characteristic of being a cop.

Though by no means do all officers exhibit all these characteristics, in our observation very many do. More importantly, these qualities of the archetypal police culture constitute the shared ground on which policing occurs, meaning even those officers who do not share them end up dealing very regularly with a majority of officers who do. The existence of such an archetypal culture can be debated. For example, many officers interviewed denied that the traditional "brotherhood of blue" still exists. Yet these same officers often spoke at length about the "bond" that they automatically feel with other officers. In the words of one officer, "I'm not really sure why, but there is just that something about being a cop. It's like any place you go in the world, any person that you meet...once you know he is a cop, it just changes things. You treat him differently, trust him more than you would just Joe Schmo citizen. Just because you know he has probably suffered through a police academy, knows what it feels like to search a building, see a dead body, shoot a gun. Because he is a cop, I automatically know something about him."

Most police officers share characteristics rooted in this type of archetypal police culture, no matter what their organizational subculture. The subcultures discussed in the next section are characterized by their shared perceptions of the APD mission, their beliefs and practices, and the general feeling, or ethos, of their work world.

### **Traditional Subculture**

*"I became a police officer to catch the bad guys. Not to be a god damned social worker." Patrol officer, 7 years*

Among front line officers, the predominant subculture embodies the remnants of the traditional model of policing, as characterized in the standard literature on police culture (Skolnick and Fyfe 1993; Baker 1985, Skolnick, 1966, 1994; Van Maanen 1978; Manning and Van Maanen 1978; and Wilson 1968). Its influence is rooted in the legitimacy of its long tradition and acceptance among many officers. This subculture is the one most often represented in society and media, and provides the basis from which most citizens typify police officers.

The officer that subscribes to this subculture typically stated he became an officer to "catch bad guys." Many officers further clarified this by explaining that they had joined the police force to protect and to serve, or to simply fight crime. When asked how they intended to fight crime, officers explained that they would do so by "catching the bad guys." A few officers further explained that they would "catch the bad guys" by "doing patrol" or investigating crimes.

The belief system of traditional police culture is reflected in most made-for-television police dramas. The officers have a strong identification with the "brotherhood" of police officers, but usually limit that identification to exclude officers that are corrupt and/or extremely lazy. Some traditional officers actively seek to keep that brotherhood by purposefully engaging in traditional police activities such as "choir practice": a long practiced custom of officers drinking together after work. "I try to get my guys together once every few months," said one sergeant. "After all, they spend more time together on the job than they ever do with their families. Getting together to play every once in a while lets them blow off some steam."

These officers also view autonomy as a necessity to function in their line of work, and lack of autonomy leads to frustration. These officers believe that they are trained to do a job, and should therefore be left alone by the administration, as well as by the community, when doing that job. "They give me a badge and a gun, and trust me to decide when it's appropriate to take someone's life...but they don't trust me enough to decide whether or not I should give someone a ticket or a

warning," commented one officer after a briefing instructing his squad to meet a minimum monthly performance standard of written citations.

Along with a desire for autonomy comes the attitude that police administration is a necessary evil. These officers feel that the role of the Chief should be to provide a buffer between them and external political pressures. Officers of this subculture see police managers as functionaries different from themselves, and often state that most administrative officers may wear a badge but that "they are no longer real cops." Obviously there are exceptions to this rule, particularly seen in the relationships between some sergeants and their squads. "Sergeants are really the last of the real police officers in an administration. They still get to get out and do real police work every once in a while. But after that, you just get too political. I'll test for sergeant some day, but I never want to get any higher. My nose just isn't brown enough," said one rookie officer.

Traditional subculture officers often complain that they would like to feel less isolated from the 5th floor. In contrast, they feel that some separation between officers and the communities they serve is necessary. Thus, when talking about the community, these officers automatically divide citizens into the "scumbags" and the "good citizens". It is the scumbags that the traditional police officer hates, and fears. Yet, fundamental to the traditional subculture is an us vs. them worldview with "us" being limited to other sworn officers. "I have always said that cops should get minority rights. I mean, we get treated the same as any other minority, only worse. Because we are a cop, we have to worry about scumbags shooting at us, spitting in our food," one officer explained. "Certain people won't hang out with us, we get treated as lepers. We always worry about our cars being scratched up, our kids being bullied....just because the color of our skin happens to be blue."

The day to day practices of the traditional officer revolve around responding to calls for service, writing reports and citations, and randomized patrol. The patrol function is very important to these officers because it allows them to "investigate anything that looks hinky", or suspicious. These investigations lead to citations and arrests, two ways of "getting the bad guys". These practices also allow them a great deal of autonomous control over their own time, within the constraints of responding to calls for service. That control is a highly valued commodity in this subculture.

These officers feel that "changing times" are threatening their police culture. Officers see threats stemming from several sources: a more "touchy feely" type of officer being hired and

trained, departmental promotions being tied to buy-in of the “flavor of the month” policing style, and increasing reliance of the department on community feedback and approval. This vague sense of threat is most frequently expressed as a concern of the eroding solidarity among officers. As one officer with 19 years on the force said, “It used to be that I would know everybody who wore a uniform. We would all know each other’s families, have a beer after work, hang out together. But it just isn’t like that anymore. We are losing our sense of family.”

Finally, the ethos within the traditional subculture is one of officers who consider themselves to be professionals and who should be insulated from the demands of the surrounding community. This ethos might be summed up as one of “crime fighters” operating with as much autonomy – from the community and from supervisors – as they can manage.

### **Paramilitary Subculture**

*“We are who the police call when they need help, the last resort when everything has gone to shit.” APD SWAT officer.*

The paramilitary subculture is perhaps the most controversial subculture found in a police agency, the culture most revered and reviled. As with the traditional subculture, the ultimate mission of paramilitary officers is to fight crime. But the paramilitary style of officer adds a razor edge to their mission statement: they intend to vigorously protect society from scumbags, and believe that their duty to protect and serve is a “righteous war”. The ethos within the paramilitary subculture can best be described as that of “competitive soldiers”, with officers bringing a high-energy focus and a dedication to self-betterment to that war. “The way I figure it, we are the last line of defense. We try to keep the scumbags from hurting the normal, honest citizens any way we can,” said one officer with 12 years on the job.

In accomplishing this mission, the paramilitary officer engages in a series of complex and often grueling practices with the ultimate goal of being the best possible officer he can be (Auten 1981; Kraska and Kappeler 1997; Chambliss 1994; NY Times 3/1/99). These officers are usually the most physically fit on the department, spending hours each day at the gym and often taking a multitude of vitamins and supplements to increase physical size, strength, or overall health. The high physical standards of the paramilitary officer enhance the “hard hitting” work ethic of the officer, characterized by a “kick ass, take names” policing style. These officers are typically known for their on the job energy as well as their abilities to shoot, fight, or engage in a multitude of other high intensity police related activities. As officers, they often have the highest arrest and self

initiated action statistics. This desire to be where the action is results in these officers working areas known for their violent crimes and "scumbag" populations. The majority of the paramilitary style officers want to eventually work in an elite specialized unit (typically SWAT) that is comprised of officers like themselves and offers recognition for their abilities and actions. The paramilitary officers already in specialized units often feel that they have finally found a "home" in their unit, because they are surrounded by other officers who have similar world views and work ethics. It is in their specialized units that many of the paramilitary officers begin to accept their job as a lifestyle, if not almost a calling. Thus, the feeling these officers carry of being somewhat "elite" is nurtured and reinforced as they become more and more specialized in their jobs.

The practices of paramilitary policing reflect this sense of mission and these beliefs. When critical incidents in the community confront police, these officers tend to adopt relatively aggressive tactics in the belief that only such tactics are adequate to the task. During more routine activities, their practices tend toward quite proactive policing – initiating car stops; doing assertive foot, bicycle, or horse patrol; engaging suspected gang members – focused on establishing contact with suspicious persons. This gives these officers the opportunity to assess the person, ask for identification, check for warrants, and possibly locate weapons or drugs.

The paramilitary subculture shares with the traditional subculture a certain us-versus-them orientation, the "them", however, is more focused on those drawn together under the label "scumbag" or similar terms: criminals, those living parasitically off the wider society, etc. Other key beliefs include: First, a sense of paramilitary officers as a kind of fraternity within policing, dedicated to the true vision of what policing is about. Second, a perception of the political system as a threat to that vision, due to suspicion that politicians do not understand the value or necessity of their working methods.

Although these officers are often considered elite and are sometimes perceived as "arrogant" and "stand-offish" by other officers, among their peers it is rare that they behave as prima donnas. A crucial tenet of the paramilitary subculture is that of teamwork. Each officer recognizes that his ability to do his job effectively, if not his very life, depends on the officer standing next to him. Thus, it is in the paramilitary subculture that the greatest support for officer's immediate hierarchy (supervisors) can be found. Officers in this culture at least understand, if they do not fully support, the need for a chain of command. Although they hope for true "leaders" as their immediate supervisors, they accept that often they have to settle for a "manager" who has "hard stripes" and thus deserves, if not respect, obedience. Paramilitary style

officers often hold their superiors (especially first line sergeants) to the same high standards they hold for themselves. When these standards are not met (lack of physical ability, low shooting qualification scores, dishonesty or corruption), the officers generally do not publicly challenge their superior. Instead, they simply treated the superior as an outsider, and looked to the leaders in their squad for advice and encouragement.

### **Opportunistic Subculture**

*"I wanted to go somewhere where I could study. So, that was the carrot my supervisors held in front of me...if I go to 'Shitsville'" beat and take care of problems and square that place away, then I was allowed to come up here where the call load is less. So I am hanging out up here where the only thing that is going on is rabbits fucking." APD Patrol officer, 8 years.*

Fragmentation and self-interest define the opportunistic subculture. The mission statement for these officers is either self-preservation or self-promotion, taken to a degree that is far beyond that of the average officer. For these individuals, any attention to the common good of their squad, area command, department, or community is secondary to good that they can do for themselves. Because these officers are usually "looking out for number one", their organizational mission is dependent upon what they feel will increase and protect their power within the department. These officers learn to "play the system", using their supervisors to enable their actions. They also learn to play the community, always knowing and using all of the perks provided to them by their position -- and then some.

Opportunistic officers will often try to align themselves with other cultures to gain popularity, but they are not eagerly embraced. The actions (or lack there of) of the opportunistic officer angers some other officers, as they are forced to pick up the slack left by the opportunistic officer. It is these officers that both the traditional and paramilitary officer say give "all officers a bad name". It is important to note that the opportunistic officer is not necessarily lazy. Rather, two versions of the opportunistic subculture produce two very different kinds of officers. Those of the "careerist" variety may in fact work hard, saying or doing whatever is necessary to climb the ranks of the department, and avoid actions or situations that would hurt their chances of promotion. This happens, however, with remarkably little concern for whether their work contributes to improving the department or the community.

Another more narcissistic variety of officer may be the most egregious manifestation of the opportunistic subculture, the "corrupt" officer. This officer feels that society owes him, and therefore demands the many perks that carrying a badge may offer. "I had this supervisor once,



and he used to really lean on people. I mean, it's all right to get discounts at meals and free coffee and such, but this guy...he went too far. He would go into a business, any business, pick up an item and ask them how much it costs. If the price they gave him was the full price, then he would tell them that they must have misunderstood. Then he would take out his badge, and say 'No, I meant how much is this for a cop?'"

Superficially, it may be the opportunistic officer who responds most positively to change. When confronted with a change, these officers immediately ask, "how is this going to affect me?" Opportunistic officers concerned with promotion will embrace the change if they feel someone who has sufficient power to affect his career is pushing it. Other opportunistic officers will avoid conflict by giving lip service to any mandate while minimizing any impact the mandate would have on him, by shirking work, "milking" calls for service, etc.

The ethos of this subculture involves a collapse into one-dimensional self-interest. This can take two rather different forms: a "careerism" superficially devoted to the department's interests, and a "narcissism" that more blatantly pursues only individual benefits.

### **Administrative Subculture**

*"The guys still in the field, I know they say 'he doesn't remember what it is like to be a real cop and take calls' or that my common sense is fried from breathing the paint in the Main for too long. I know they say that, and, yeah, it bothers me some. But I still think that the job I do is important. For them to do their job, they need people like me. I make it possible for them to do their job."*

Sworn and civilian members of the administrative subculture may embrace the sense of police mission of any of the other subcultures, but they emphasize doing so in a "legally and fiscally efficient manner". Officers in this culture recognize that police work does not exist in a vacuum, but rather in important political, legal, and economic contexts. It is within those contexts that these officers must operate, regardless of how he or she is perceived by others in the department.

Those in the administrative subculture realize that it is sometimes necessary to "play politics" to accomplish their jobs. Sometimes, however, even these officers feel that the politics and bureaucracy work against the fundamental mission of the police department. They resent having to enforce rules and procedures that seem to be written with little thought as to their consequences. "I find my job....disturbing. Before I got promoted, my job was fun. My squad was great, we worked hard but also screwed around a bunch. I was very proud of being a cop. But now, I sit up here and read some of the stuff that this department actually puts in writing, and I am trying to explain it to

my people, trying to make it sound like it is not the most asinine thing I have ever read. Ever. And sometimes I just can't."

It is important to note that those who subscribe to the administrative subculture may not necessarily hold a position in the department's administration. But those who did end up in actual administrative positions seemed almost surprised to have found themselves there. "I became a police officer so I could work outdoors...and I like adventure and excitement. I never wanted to sit behind a desk (officer bangs hand on desk), wear a tie (officer pulls on the tie he is wearing), answer a phone (officer taps his phone) or do paperwork (officer picks up one of twenty files on his desk). But I just kept getting promoted (officer picks up his beeper). The day I retire, I am going to drive to the edge of a river, and the minute somebody beeps me, I'm going to toss this over. Think that's a good idea? asked the officer with a grin."

Many of those in the administrative subculture said that the hardest part of their job is the "separateness" that they feel from the rest of the sworn officers. "I know some of the guys I use to work with in the field think I am just slacking now, pushing papers so I can have a 9 to 5 (workday), with weekends off. And maybe when I came to the 5th floor, that was part of the reason. Then, I had no idea of the amount of paperwork it takes to run this department. How many problems an organization of this size has to try to handle. I sometimes envy the guys I used to work with. At least when they go home at the end of their shift, they have everything done. There is nothing hanging over their heads, no deadlines they have to meet or anything. Me...I go home with a pile of papers, knowing that this stack has to be read by the morning, this memo answered by Friday. I don't even feel like a real cop anymore. I am a secretary with a badge."

The practices of the administrative subculture are based in accountability. These officers tend to be record keepers, either by innate nature or by the necessity of their position. They gravitate towards positions with administrative responsibilities that require them to track expenditures, resources, and time. This tracking is obviously necessary, and can lead to greater efficiency in an organization. It can also lead to supervisory unreasonableness, or "bean counting".

Much depends on where individual members of the administrative subculture place their priorities in their work. Does the work of administration exist to serve managers, or to make the organization – and especially the front-line officers and civilians – as effective as possible in enhancing public safety? When they do so, the administrative subculture can bring important routinization and accountability to the department, and allow it to improve its work through

systematic organizational learning. When administrators lose sight of this goal, supervisory unreasonableness is virtually inevitable.

The resulting ethos takes two forms: a negative bureaucratic ethos centered on the needs and priorities of administration for its own sake, and a positive pragmatic ethos centered on making policing work within its current political, legal, and economic contexts. Of course, both are bureaucratic – the department could not function without a working bureaucracy.

### **Civilian Subculture**

*“A lieutenant once said that, ‘You see these people (civilian employees)? These people are the backbone of this department, our civilian staff is the backbone. If it wasn’t for our civilian staff, we would be lost. If you respect these people, there is nothing they won’t do for you. You disrespect them, they will treat you like hell.’ And he was right, because I took two days to give an officer who was a jerk the information he needed, and I had it right there. And when he said, ‘You disrespect these people, and you will get nothing.’ it made me feel good.”*

Civilians employees provide the vital services that allow a department to function, whether offering legal advice, dictating the appropriation of vehicles and equipment, prioritizing and dispatching calls for service, or coordinating the organizational planning of the entire agency.. “We are the first contact that any citizen has with the department. When somebody needs help, they call 911. If they don’t call us, they don’t get an officer...and we also have the greatest impact on what happens to that person. If they had a call, the officer wrote the report, but the report doesn’t get typed in, or we lose it...well, that is the end of their case. Whoever that officer arrested, without the report, it is thrown out of court.”

In APD, civilians have a fairly distinct organizational subculture. Although civilians may be part of the other subcultures, the very nature of their functions in the department and their relationship to sworn officers delineates them as a separate organizational subculture.

One element was uniformly widespread in the civilian subculture: Most civilians identify quite strongly with the department’s overall mission, centered around the work of controlling crime and promoting public safety. One hears little antagonism — and often real respect — toward the fundamental role of sworn police officers. Civilians are often proud of their own role in supporting that work and being part of that mission. As one high level civilian manager noted: It’s rewarding for me to work on something that in an indirect way makes the city safer for some little kid riding his bike down the street, you know. We played a role in that, and that really makes me feel good. It’s being able to see something that I’ve had a part in make Albuquerque better.”

This fundamental buy-in to the department's organizational mission, and pride at being part of it, was held widely among civilian APD employees at all levels. The terms in which they understood that mission varied, usually reflecting the individual's position in the APD structure: Those in rank-and-file positions expressed the department's mission in traditional terms, as "to protect and serve the community" or "to fight crime." Those in managerial positions often expressed the department's mission either in broader terms such as "promoting public safety at all levels" or in terms drawn from the administrative or community policing subcultures. The key point here is that civilians embrace essentially the same spectrum of organizational missions as sworn officers.

Certain beliefs also unite the civilians in the police department. The most central shared belief is that the work done by civilians is crucial to the success of the department, rather than peripheral. Connected to this, many civilians believe that sworn members of the department generally fail to recognize this. Civilians thus thirst for such recognition, as reflected in the quote that opened this section.

It is in the sharing of this departmental mission that many civilian and sworn employees find common ground, as they engage in similar practices that stem from simply working for a law enforcement agency. One manager, when asked whether working for a police department is primarily a positive or negative experience, replied "I think for me, it is overwhelmingly positive. But I also think that to be associated with a police department, civilian or sworn, you pay a price. You lose your naiveté early on. You develop a paranoia just like the cops have about where's safe and what's not safe...looking over your shoulder all the time. And you deal with other people's trauma and tragedy all the time, and I think you pay a price there. It takes a toll."

So civilians both embrace the police mission and feel they are not accepted as equals within it. This produced a certain ambivalence among many civilian employees at all levels: on one hand they like their work and feel they contribute, on the other hand they must struggle to sustain their morale. This ambivalence was expressed by one supervisor when asked whether working as a civilian in APD was generally positive or negative: "I'd say generally positive, but with a real concern about not being peers, and not communicating the way that communication should be done in the department. That's what I see generally as the issue between sworn and civilian."

But civilian employees respond to this situation in quite diverse ways. Among civilian managers and supervisors, there often exists a strong sense of being excluded. This leads to conflict over how their authority, resources, or expertise should be used, and often to a sense that

they are taken less seriously than sworn officers (regardless of their expertise). This exchange between civilian managers in a focus group illustrates their frustration:

Manager 1: [Officer attitudes toward civilians] relate to the brotherhood of the officers. Officers feel like, "If you haven't gone through what I've gone through, then don't tell me what to do."

Manager 2: Exactly, I think that's it. I have heard it time and time again... It's exactly that: we are not of the cloth. We haven't been through the Academy, the baptism by fire. We haven't gone out and arrested people, or as Chief Joe used to say, we haven't ever gone through a door with him. There's always a tacit reminder that we're just not of the cloth.

This feeling was by no means universal. Some civilian managers reported a high degree of acceptance by sworn officers. Civilian APD employees tend to divide starkly between those who identify strongly with the sworn-dominated culture of the department, and those who are quite critical of it. In our focus groups, identifying strongly and uncritically with sworn officers predominated among those managers on whom sworn personnel depend directly for expertise or resources, and rank-and-file civilian employees. In the latter group, this "strong" identification thrived in spite of frequent tension between field officers, communications personnel, and records personnel regarding dispatch priorities, report standards, and other factors.

The key practices of civilians vary enormously, depending upon their jobs. It is thus difficult to identify concrete practices that they share. This in itself reduces the bonds of solidarity felt among civilian employees compared to sworn officers, who generally perform similar work tasks. Beyond this, however, key patterns are discernible in civilians' interactions with sworn officers. First, some civilians operate on the periphery of the sworn culture, recognizing their integral role in APD but accepting the centrality of the sworn culture. Second, like some sworn officers, some civilians adopt a stance of being active agents of change within APD, striving to move the organization forward toward better civilian-sworn relations, more effective policing, etc. As in any organization, these "reformers" must find networks of support to sustain their sense of direction and effectiveness. Ideally, that network of support includes both sworn and civilian colleagues. Third, another segment of civilians become beaten down by the frustrations of their position in the agency and tire of their sense of powerlessness. Unless they can find a positive place within APD's organizational culture, they become alienated from their work and become resentful of the status quo.

The overall ethos of the civilian subculture might be best described as being one of "unequal partnership." But it plays out differently in these three groups, and thus the civilian and

sworn relationships fall along three lines: those accepting of the status quo, those attempting to reform the status quo and those that actively resent the nature of the relationship between the civilians and the sworn.

### **Community Oriented Policing Subculture**

*"I think our mission now is to be problem solvers and to involve the community in solving those problems. Five years ago our mission was to make arrests and get criminals off the streets. But now that simply isn't enough. So we have had to change our thinking."*

In recent years, as APD strove to implement community policing, some officers and civilians identified with COP so strongly that they reorganized themselves and their work around the practices and beliefs of community policing. These officers and civilians from many levels of the department have either invested considerable effort in researching and learning about community policing or its elements, or have adopted it as their primary police role after being convinced of its value through APD training sessions.

The people in this COP subculture serve as local experts on community policing, both formally and informally. Some serve in formal roles on APD's POP Committee or COPS Steering Committee, or train other APD personnel in problem-solving techniques. Others serve informally as informational resources for officers trying to understand how the department wants them to incorporate community policing into their work. Their sense of the police mission often reflects official statements of community policing, whether from APD's mission statement, national COPS materials, Robert Trojanowicz's "9 Ps" of policing, or other COP literature. Their beliefs about policing often revolve around a sense that by working together police and community members can make the community policing work to lower crime rates. They also favor opening up police boundaries to community input and participation; and share a commitment to decentralizing the policing structure. These COP "experts" view local government and media attention as potential resources for generating more effective policing and they attempt to cultivate positive ties with those organizations.

The key practices engaged in by members of this subcultures are the classic elements of community policing: problem solving, attending community meetings, trying to keep officers in assigned neighborhoods, and building ties to other city agencies potentially useful in crime prevention. Their problem solving entails sophisticated attention to underlying crime-generating problems and the creative marshalling of solutions to these problems. Likewise, these officers do not simply attend community meetings passively; they use their authority to draw community

members into more active collaboration in taking responsibility for their neighborhoods, defining their problems, and devising effective solutions.

The ethos operative within this part of the COP subculture centers around institutional reform – that is, personal commitment to trying to move APD toward being more effective in its work through community oriented policing. At its best, this ethos carries a spirit of collaborative empowerment as people work together to exert constructive and effective influence in moving the department in the direction of community policing. The members of the expert COP group are the activists, teachers, and mentors promoting community policing within the department.

The future of the community oriented policing subculture, like the future direction of policing itself, is an open question. Because the subculture of “COP expertise” is both new and has few ardent subscribers, it is still possible for it to be absorbed into the more established subcultures. Conversely, this nascent subculture may thrive as it fights for hegemony in the organizational culture of APD. The future organizational culture of the department will be shaped by the ongoing dynamics among all of the subcultures present there. Table I on the next page summarizes the mission, beliefs, practices, and ethos of all these subcultures.

In addition, a kind of phantom subculture plays an important role for those officers and supervisors fundamentally *opposed* to community policing. We call this the “weak COP” subculture. Here, the mission of policing is reduced to customer service alone; its fundamental beliefs revolve around community policing as “being nice to the community” and the idea that police “should do what the community wants.” The policing practices emphasized in the weak COP subculture are those of “Officer Friendly”: glad-handing citizens, doing public relations work, being a positive presence in the community. Note that these beliefs and practices might indeed have a role in a strong policing model – the key here is that they are seen as *all* that community policing is about. This is a “weak COP” subculture in that it reduces the complex and multifaceted tasks of policing to this one dimension.

Whether a weak COP subculture actually exists, in the sense of officers who embrace this vision of policing, is debatable. If such officers exist, they are a tiny minority. At least in an urban police department with serious crime and gang problems, this subculture holds remarkably little appeal to the vast majority of officers. It certainly holds little promise of becoming the dominant model of policing in such a setting. Indeed, it carries no true ethos for urban policing; it can exist only at the margins of the department, in isolated individuals or small units carrying out specialized functions.

**Table I: APD Organizational Subcultures**

Subculture	Mission	Beliefs	Practices	Ethos
<b>TRADITIONAL SUBCULTURE</b>	Protect & Serve Fight Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Autonomy of Police</li> <li>➤ Loose hierarchy</li> <li>➤ Us vs. Them</li> <li>➤ Police as brotherhood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Routinized call response</li> <li>➤ Car patrol</li> <li>➤ Chief serves as political buffer</li> </ul>	<p>"Crime Fighters"</p> <p>Insulated professionals</p>
<b>PARAMILITARY SUBCULTURE</b>	Fight Crime Protect society from scumbags	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Specialized units as elites</li> <li>➤ Tight hierarchy</li> <li>➤ Elite Us vs. scumbag Them</li> <li>➤ Military as model</li> <li>➤ Political system as threat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Aggressive</li> <li>➤ Proactive</li> <li>➤ Cultivate political support against political threat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Competitive soldiers</li> <li>➤ Self-betterment</li> <li>➤ High energy</li> </ul>
<b>OPPORTUNISTIC SUBCULTURE</b>	Organizationally: none Individually: ➤ self-preservation or ➤ self-promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Me first</li> <li>➤ Me vs. them</li> <li>➤ Hierarchy exists to do me favors</li> <li>➤ Only politics is internal politics of self-interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Shirking</li> <li>➤ Preserve stability, avoid demands</li> <li>OR</li> <li>➤ adopt flavor of the month but do not commit.</li> <li>➤ Climb ladder</li> <li>OR</li> <li>➤ Abuse status for gratuities, power.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Collapse into raw self-interest:</li> <li>➤ Careerism</li> <li>➤ Narcissism</li> </ul>
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE SUBCULTURE</b>	Protect & Serve in a legally & fiscally efficient manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Policing exists in political, legal economic context</li> <li>➤ Priority: line officers or managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Routinization</li> <li>➤ Accountability</li> <li>➤ Organizational learning OR supervisory unreasonableness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Bureaucratic ethos:</li> <li>➤ Pragmatic</li> <li>➤ Negative</li> </ul>
<b>CIVILIAN SUBCULTURE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reflects wider police culture:</li> <li>➤ Fight crime</li> <li>➤ Protect &amp; serve</li> <li>➤ Public safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Civilians crucial contributors to the department</li> <li>➤ Civilians not fully accepted in policing</li> <li>➤ Need for greater sworn-civilian teamwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Vary greatly</li> <li>➤ 3 relational practices:</li> <li>➤ Accept Status quo</li> <li>➤ Reform</li> <li>➤ Resists Status quo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Unequal partnership in context of:</li> <li>➤ Acceptance</li> <li>➤ Reform</li> <li>➤ Resistance</li> </ul>
<b>COP SUBCULTURE</b>	Official community policing statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ COP as best policing model</li> <li>➤ Together we can make this work</li> <li>➤ Open boundaries</li> <li>➤ Community as a resource</li> <li>➤ From hierarchy toward de-centralization</li> <li>➤ Political system as a resource</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Problem solving</li> <li>➤ Community collaboration</li> <li>➤ Beat integrity</li> <li>➤ Build ties to city agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Institutional reform</li> <li>➤ Collaborative empowerment</li> <li>➤ Activist/teacher</li> </ul>



Yet this phantom subculture plays a vital role in the organizational culture of policing. It serves as a caricature used to undermine the notion that community policing has anything to offer contemporary urban policing. Thus, those opposed to community policing seek to identify it with this weak COP caricature, and to emasculate community policing advocates as "empty holster cops." When successful, this strategy effectively undermines any effort to implement community policing, or even to incorporate its best insights into police practices generally.

If, on the other hand, the best aspects of community policing are to gain significant influence in police culture, community policing must escape from the clutches of the phantom weak COP officer depicted in this stereotype. In the grassroots police world of APD, it has not fully done so.

### **STATUS OF COP MID-1998**

By mid-1998, APD's early precursors to community policing, its strategic implementation efforts beginning in 1995, and the organizational subcultures described above had come together to produce a police department that had undergone significant organizational changes consistent with new policing philosophies, but quite fragmented in its sense of direction. In this section, we present an overview of the status of community policing in Albuquerque as of mid-1998.

### **Organizational Changes Under COP**

There is no doubt that APD has achieved several of its implementation goals as outlined in the Strategic Plan. These goals primarily involved departmental infrastructure (additional area commands and mini substations, decentralization of some specialized services, the utilization of a telephone reporting unit.) Whether or not these goals actually furthered community policing is ambiguous. On one hand, they indeed facilitated community members' access to some police services. But some organizational reforms also became at least temporary obstacles. For example, political pressure to open a 5<sup>th</sup> area command quickly led to its implementation a year and a half before a building existed to house it. During that period, this worked to decrease officer's access to departmental resources. Officers were forced to work without a substation home, and community members had no reliable way to contact beat officers, thus making COP activities unwieldy. In this case, the openness of the department to political influence worked against effective community policing (of course, in the long term the 5<sup>th</sup> area command in proper facilities will facilitate this).

Similarly, the creation of the mini substations was also seen as a political action, and civilian and sworn employees alike expressed anger at the amount of money being spent on what they perceived as a non-necessity. Many voiced opinions that this money could be much better spent on vehicles, the communication system, or salaries.

The decentralization of the department also received mixed reviews. Some specialized units were repeatedly decentralized then later re-centralized as certain crimes were conceptualized at times as problems of a specific geographic area, and at times as a citywide issue. This type of organizational shuffling reflects an issue faced in departments nationwide, as the debate rages about the benefits of a centralized crime response versus the need for localized crime response.

Another infrastructure change, the creation of the telephone-reporting unit, has been successful in handling many non-priority calls. The TRU, originally created to reduce calls for service in the field, has arguably also reduced the kind of officer/community interactions that result in information-sharing and relationship-building necessary for better policing. For example, a beat officer is unlikely to know what non-emergency crime patterns have developed in his area if a third party takes the reports of those crimes. The key question is whether the time gained by diverting calls for service into the TRU is used for other COP activities. If it is, the TRU represents a net gain for community policing. This study was not designed to answer this question, but our observations suggest that it may be so in some squads, but not so in many.

The other implementation measures attempted by APD are equally difficult to assess. The goal of training all sworn and civilian personnel in Problem Oriented Policing (POP) was met. Many of those who took the training, however, said that although they thought it was useful and interesting, they did not believe that the department would allow them the time and resources needed to do POP effectively. Officer responses to the material itself and to the teaching staff varied but two themes emerged: officers felt there was no administrative support for POP activities and that there was simply not enough time to actually perform these activities. Many on the POP training staff felt that the training did not have the support or the participation of the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. One POP training officer remarked, "If the supervisors don't buy into it, we can do a bang-up job of training the officers and the civilians, but if they use this model and they take it to their supervisor, and their supervisor says this is bullshit, and they get no support, we have wasted our time." On the issue of the additional time it took to do problem-oriented policing, one officer offered a typical response, "But the problem in this department is, there's no time to do that. You're going from call

to call to call, how can you sit there and formulate a plan and get a hold of these other agencies and do all this when the time's not there?"

Significant departmental resources have thus been invested in implementing organizational changes connected with community policing, primarily decentralization and training in problem-solving. While the results of this investment have been mixed, at a minimum they represent some objective groundwork for further progress. Subjectively, however, what is the status of community oriented policing in Albuquerque – that is, from the point of view of the various stakeholders in the COP implementation efforts?

### **COP and APD's Sworn Officers**

#### *Supervisory personnel:*

The degree of understanding of community policing, and subsequent level of commitment, vary considerably throughout management and supervisory positions within the department. This reflects both the differing dispositions of individuals and the fact that, the majority of APD's administrative personnel felt that the department fostered little early, systematic communication about the new ideas. Rather, many within the department felt that community policing was introduced as a kind of settled question: APD would adopt it – whatever "it" was. As a result, some administrative personnel have read extensively or otherwise learned about community policing, been convinced, and actively implement its priorities; while others actively resist it; and still others remain essentially non-committal.

Given the political mandate in favor of community policing expressed in the last two mayoral elections and chief selection processes, those at the rank of captain and above rarely openly oppose community policing. Some are clearly skeptical that it represents anything very new and question its promise to reduce crime, but advocacy or non-commitment are the common public stances.

Personnel at the ranks of sergeant and lieutenant more freely express the full range of attitudes regarding community policing. New candidates for these ranks must learn some basics of community policing in order to test for promotion, so those who recently made rank, as well as those veterans inclined to read the recent policing literature, typically have some knowledge of community policing. Those with an extended period of time in their rank were often less familiar with what community policing actually entails; often resulting in passive or active resistance. The

vagueness of "community policing" with no specific content make COP an easy catch-all for the ills confronting policing in the 1990s.

Of course, those actively pursuing promotion to higher ranks in the department generally espouse some commitment to community policing. However, those most committed to COP tenets included some who deny any interest in or likelihood of being promoted. For them, some elements of community policing are desirable for their utility in fighting crime, regardless of the political climate.

*Rank and file patrol officers:*

Nowhere in the department is the sense of confusion and frustration surrounding community policing stronger than among the front-line patrol officers. In our interviews, officers had universally heard of community policing and were aware that it was "what we're supposed to be doing." This much of the effort to implement COP department-wide has reached down to the level of sworn officers – but, in much of the department, little else has. The most common responses among officers asked to describe community policing were such things as "I really don't know," "you tell me," or "I have no idea" – often followed by an expression of hostility to the whole notion. This reaction is rooted in many factors, but prominent among them is the common sense of frustration among officers at having been told to do community policing repeatedly, but never really told how. As one supervisor noted, "So we are doing all this COP stuff: training, mobile command posts, going to community meetings, etc. But the question that keeps coming up, the one my officers keep asking me, is 'how has the actual day-to-day work of a police officer changed?'"

This is deeply ironic: it was precisely developments in the work of patrol officers under traditional policing – the narrow focus on law enforcement they were encouraged to bring to their jobs, their frustration at not being able to reduce crime, their alienation from citizens in general and poor neighborhoods in particular – that led to the ideas that gave rise to community policing (Goldstein 1990).

Confusion and frustration remain widespread among sworn officers in the department, but this varies considerably. Some officers express a clearer understanding of what community policing means for their work, support for some of its goals and methods, or both. Two factors appear to shape this. First, a given officer's supervisors at the sergeant, captain, and especially lieutenant level (both current and in the past) have great influence over how he or she sees

community policing. This appears to be because so few officers have been exposed to the ideas underlying new models of policing – they rely almost exclusively on information mediated to them by supervisors and their peers. This confirms the finding of other studies regarding the crucial role of mid-level supervisors in the reception of community policing (Geller and Swanger 1995).

Second, the problem-solving training that APD required of all sworn and civilian personnel in 1997 did make some significant impact among patrol officers. Although it was by no means universally embraced, officers frequently report that they found the problem-solving focus useful, learned something new about how civilian APD employees contribute to police work, or otherwise thought the training was valuable. Even here, though, community policing's profile among officers did not benefit greatly: many officers did not understand that the problem-solving techniques being promoted constituted an aspect of community policing.

The attitudes of sworn officers toward the core elements of community policing can be summed up broadly as follows:

- **Beat integrity:** Officers are generally sympathetic to this goal, see some value in focusing their efforts on a specific geographic area, but believe this is not possible at present. Officer pessimism about this is rooted partly in technical limitations of the call dispatching system and partly in their sense that APD faces such a heavy volume of calls for service that they cannot possibly afford time for the other tasks associated with community policing without sharp increases in sworn personnel. This may or may not be accurate, but it is very much the perception shared among most officers.
- **Problem-solving:** This is the element most valued at present among sworn officers. It is by no means valued universally, but is by a strong minority of officers. However, rather little clarity exists among most officers regarding what kinds of "problems" are to receive attention, or what kind of broad resources beyond traditional policing might help generate creative solutions. As a result, problem-solving often looks less like something new than like labeling as "problems" the time-honored targets of traditional policing, responding via tactical plans, and calling this problem-oriented policing. Still, this represents a base upon which the department can build, and some squads have engaged in some sophisticated problem-solving projects.
- **Community partnerships:** Early in this study, when money was available to pay overtime wages to officers attending community meetings, it was fairly common to see officers at neighborhood association meetings, community planning partnerships, and the like. As budget constraints dry up that overtime money, most officers have come to attend such meetings only when instructed to do so by their supervisors. This continues to occur regularly in some areas and not in others; frequently, this responsibility falls on one or a handful of officers and supervisors in a given area command, rather than being an

expected and accepted responsibility of most officers. We note that few officers report having received any explanation regarding what strategic value such partnerships might hold, how their ties with neighborhoods might help them in their day-to-day work, etc. This parallels patterns found in research around the country, which has shown many departments wrestling to overcome dependence on overtime money in their early implementation of community policing. What actually *occurs* when officers attend neighborhood meetings is even more problematic: the ideal is that officers share leadership with community members to identify the underlying problems that generate crime or disorder in the neighborhood, jointly devise solutions to those problems, and assess the results. More typically, neither officers nor community members are very clear about their roles in this process.

All this risks sounding overly pessimistic regarding the work of sworn officers under the community policing implementation so far. Important gains have been made, and we by no means dismiss those gains or the excellent work by some sworn officers and supervisors in this area. We do think it important, however, to be realistic about the fact that this has not permeated departmental life very fully. Rather, it depends enormously on the level of individual understanding brought to these efforts by specific field commanders and officers. This suggests that crucial attention will need to be paid to mid-level supervision in the department if officer skepticism about new ideas and roles is to be moderated.

### **COP and Civilian APD Employees**

The views of APD civilian employees regarding the state of implementation of COP varied greatly, depending on their relationship to those efforts. On one hand, civilians whose jobs were directly linked to such areas as CPTED or Crime-Free Multi-Housing tended to emphasize the advanced state of community policing in Albuquerque, presumably because their own work keeps them in frequent contact with sworn officers engaged in such efforts. These civilian personnel also tended to report the least problematic relationships with sworn personnel, probably because their expertise made them valuable resources at a time that APD was encouraging officers to be involved in these initiatives. On the other hand, many civilian supervisors in support functions emphasized that the community policing initiatives had been implemented without adequate prior discussion of how they would impact support operations such as communication, technology, budget, or personnel. These civilians felt that, as a result, the department was unprepared for

community policing's burden on departmental resources. These civilian employees noted that community policing has made their jobs much more difficult. This appears to mean not that community policing by its nature is problematic, but rather than the process of organizational change toward the new model has been chaotic, and made their work less manageable.

More widespread among civilian employees was a perception that most police officers simply lack the orientation toward serving the community or collaborating with non-police officers that community policing requires. Civilians often expressed deep respect for those police officers dedicated to working for the wider community, but felt that fewer and fewer officers have come to embody this ideal. And some said that they could not imagine most officers working collaboratively with community members, since they refused to accept even civilian police employees as real collaborators in policing efforts.

Thus, civilians who spend most of their time implementing projects related to community policing naturally see a great deal of APD effort in this regard. More typical, however, was this sentiment expressed in May 1998: "No, I don't think that the department has changed. Because we've been into community policing for over four years, but we're really not into it. We're not, we're not doing it. There have been small little baby steps made and as a department we have a better working relationship with the [City's] Office of Neighborhood Coordination. We've done some work in some pilot project areas, and some officers have actually started to do some community oriented policing activities. But as an organization, I wouldn't think that we are any farther along than we were four years ago."

### **COP Variations by Area Command**

In general, enthusiasm for and the definition of COP vary across area commands, and within command structures in each area command. In some places, COP is embraced by the Area Commander and filters down to the troops. In other places only the lieutenant or sergeant embraces COP, so implementation might only be shift- or squad-based. In evaluating the success or failure of the implementation of COP it is instructive to look *across* the Area Commands, who differ from one another not only by APD personnel and resource distribution but also in population density, population characteristics, and crime problems.

*Westside.* Albuquerque's Westside is characterized by a rapid influx of housing developments, pockets of Section 8 housing and expanses of desolate mesas. Several very active lieutenants

directed the COP efforts in this area. Through an intensive door-to-door campaign APD established good relationships with community members and with the neighborhood associations in the area. Indeed, when APD's pay raise was in question several neighborhood associations participated in a "blue ribbon" campaign to politically pressure city hall to give the officers an increase in pay. Other COP related initiatives include: working with the Albuquerque Traffic Engineering Department personnel on traffic problems (partnership with city agency), the West Central Cruiser Tactical Operation, developing beat profiles, etc.

*Northeast.* The Northeast is home to several gated luxury communities that hire their own security staffs and rely on APD to provide emergency response. Mobile home parks also exist in this area, as do large suburban-style neighborhoods. Although viewed as one of the more affluent parts of town, the Northeast boasts the same problems as the rest of the city, with a rapidly growing gang problem. Officers report that most residents in this area would rather not have to deal with APD at all. As one officer described trying to enforce traffic laws in the Northeast, "You pull over someone in this neighborhood and by the time you're out of your car and walk up to them, they've got their lawyers on the phone!" This area has the densest network of neighborhood associations. Their concerns sometimes focus on policing issues, but zoning concerns are even more prevalent. Problem solving and community partnership efforts here depend greatly on individual initiative at the lieutenant, sergeant, and officer levels. Some supervisors engage in such efforts, others focus on traditional call response, and still others emphasize proactive policing without explicit attention to problem solving or partnerships.

*Valley:* The area of Albuquerque called the North and South Valley is perhaps the most diverse area of the city. It includes the core downtown area, the oldest established neighborhoods of the city, major tourist attractions in Old Town and the Pueblo Indian Cultural Center, industrial lots, elite large-parcel housing subdivisions, dense low-income trailer parks, and large undeveloped open spaces. It also is home to the oldest neighborhood-based gangs in the city, and sections have at times served as open-air drug markets. APD has established significant partnerships with some neighborhood associations, most notably in the near South Valley. In 1995, shortly before this research project began, the Valley area command initiated a year-long campaign to clean up the South Broadway corridor, where a network of drug dealers had taken over the streets and come to intimidate local residents. Through a combination of close collaboration with neighborhood residents through their community association and highly assertive policing tactics involving zero tolerance of disorder violations on the street, the network was broken up and several members were



sent to prison on drug or parole violations. In this effort, community residents served as sources of information and surveillance by identifying and providing evidence of the activities of drug dealers; they also monitored court cases and supported the police before judges who were wary of the assertive police tactics being used. Similarly, supervisors from this area command regularly do foot patrol in the downtown entertainment district on weekend nights, initiating contact with storeowners and patrons. Other COP related initiatives include: "Knock and Talks" (door-to-door communication with citizens), a Probation Revocation/Restriction program (collaboration with the NM Department of Corrections to monitor probationers), and a Community Liaison program with businesses and churches to foster partnership and problem-solving.

*Southeast.* This area is characterized by a high density of low-income rental properties, both territorial and drug gangs, and high rates of violent crime along the Route 66 corridor, along with large suburban-style neighborhoods. One region, commonly known as the 'war zone', has been one of the most troubled areas in the city in recent years, plagued by gang activities and drug dealing. Also in this region, however, lies one of the jewels of APD's COP implementation efforts: the Trumbull/La Mesa neighborhood. APD, neighborhood activists and city agencies have worked together to make this neighborhood a safer and more pleasant place to live. Through a series of government-funded projects (CEPTED, Crime Free Multi-Housing, Weed & Seed), strong police presence, and community mobilization efforts (drug marches, interactions with individuals and groups) crime rates have decreased and residents report feeling safer in their homes. During this research project's first phase, the area command structure ardently advocated COP and had a great deal of support from neighborhood associations in the area. Other COP related initiatives include: a Landlord Intervention program (police working with landlords to evict undesirable tenants), and an active Code Enforcement Team program (multi-agency collaboration to use city code and ordinance violations to sanction owners of properties that were active in the local drug trade).

*Foothills.* For most of this study the Foothills has been an area command without a command post. From its creation on March 29, 1997 to October 1998, this area command was located in Fire Station #8. Officers did not have much of a sense of place during the time that they were operating out of the local fire station with no support services, holding or interrogation rooms or other amenities associated with a substation. Officers in APD recognized the political pressures associated with the creation and manning of the Foothills Area Command and many cited it as one more time when politics interfered with their ability to police effectively. For some time the primary goals in this area command were making arrests, writing tickets, and other traditional

police activity. The combination of a sense of physical disassociation and commander preferences worked to create an atmosphere where COP was not a priority. As a new area command the first COP-related initiative involved 'getting the lie of the land', both literally and by becoming familiar with the residents and problems particular to this area. Since gaining a substation home at the end of 1998, more emphasis has been placed on building ties with neighborhood associations.

### **COP and Community Organizations**

The community side of community policing can be represented by many different groups, including merchant associations, advocacy groups, and officially-elected or appointed representatives. But the key role is typically played by community organizations linked to neighborhoods, since these represent the broadest base of residents in a given area. These "neighborhood associations" are thus the crucial partners for APD implementation of COP.

Data from our fieldwork suggest that these groups have a strong but parochial interest in community policing. On one hand, they hold positive views of APD, want to work in partnership with the department, and are willing to invest time in doing so. Neighborhood association members tend to think COP is a good idea, and they have benefitted from COP through Citizens' Police Academy, cell phones for neighborhood patrols, and crime prevention efforts. On the other hand, neighborhood associations tend to be self-contained units expressing little interest in wider Albuquerque concerns, focusing instead on a narrow question: what can it do for my neighborhood? Their first concern is less likely to be *why* there is crime in a particular area, than *how to keep it out of our area*. Association members often recognize that COP is a good source of federal resources for neighborhood improvements and for crime-fighting projects (CEPTED, Cops & Kids, CDBG funds, etc.). But they know little about community policing and are generally less interested in wider issues of COP implementation, in being sure that other (and especially less privileged) neighborhoods also benefit, in protecting civil rights of outsiders, etc. They often also struggle to sustain a long-term focus on working together, and must be educated about what COP really is, their role in it, and how problem-solving can enhance their sense of safety and well-being.

APD also brings significant strengths and limitations to its relationships with community organizations. Among the strengths are some supervisors who see the value and purpose of community partnerships for effective policing, the ability of commanders to order officers to attend them, and the social authority of police (which can help strengthen and invigorate weak neighborhood organizations). The most significant weakness is the difficulty of monitoring what an

officer actually does when told to attend. Time and funding limitations prevented us from systematically monitoring all APD's community partnerships, but we did monitor a sample of them and received reports of many more. They vary greatly, from very sporadic contact, to highly personalized relationships dependent on a specific officer's personality, to strong institutionalized ties that have been built over the course of several years. The officers' role at such meetings also varied greatly: from passive listening, to maintaining a distant and hostile posture towards the members, to actively engaging with members in a way approximating the problem-solving ideal. The latter was most common in areas where supervisors at least partially invested in the "expert COP" subculture served as respected mentors for officers. Passivity and hostility were common where no such mentoring occurred.

All this suggests just how complex the "community partnership" element of COP is: in asking officers to carry this role, the department is asking them to change *what they do* (problem-solving), *the setting in which they do it* (community organizations), *the tools they need* (public speaking), and *their understanding of what causes crime* (problems and disorder rather than just bad guys) – all while building ongoing ties to neighborhood associations. Outstanding officers can do all this at once; more typical officers need outside help to carry this role off. Fortunately, some resources are available for unburdening officers of some of it, through APD's collaboration with other city agencies. These same collaborations can help officers draw on the strengths of neighborhood associations while overcoming their limitations.

### **COP and City Agencies**

Parallel to the development of community policing, the City of Albuquerque has launched a comprehensive planning model designed to foster citizen participation, gather citizen input, and plan the city's development. Although the original vision of establishing planning areas that corresponded to the natural boundaries of neighborhoods was lost amidst the political imperative of making planning areas coincide with city council districts, ultimately the city did establish a viable planning infrastructure. The city planning effort establishes a process whereby neighborhoods can gain official recognition of their formally-constituted neighborhood associations. As of 1999, some 288 neighborhoods have done so. The planning effort also facilitates communication between neighborhood associations and from them to various agencies of city government, divides the city into ten Community Planning Areas, and groups the neighborhood associations and other community organizations within each CPA into a Community Planning Partnership. The CPPs are

designed to meet regularly to discuss emerging issues, formulate feedback to the City, and coordinate neighborhood activities — including those related to community policing.

The city agency responsible for chartering, developing, and relating to these neighborhood associations is the Office of Neighborhood Coordination. Although at the CPP level the planning effort has faced significant difficulties, the ONC is an important potential partner in the entire community policing effort. It has institutionalized relationships with precisely the kinds of community organizations throughout the city on which APD could draw in the effort to build community partnerships and engage in joint problem-solving. Such institutionalized relationships are important because, although a few APD personnel have developed strong, ongoing ties with local neighborhood groups, more typically those ties are sporadic. Both APD's and the community's investment in sustaining these ties fluctuate with several factors: APD priorities, where personnel are assigned, and the broader agendas of the community organizations involved (policing issues being only one kind of issue they address). These sporadic relationships have sometimes been important sources of collaboration between APD and the community — but can be hard to start up on short notice as a need arises. By coordinating with the ONC, APD can draw on that office's more ongoing connections and be unburdened from establishing such ties on its own.

The ONC-APD relationship has not always been easy, but by 1998 the two agencies were striving to coordinate their neighborhood-based efforts through regular high-level meetings. In some areas of the city, APD personnel were attending the monthly CPP meetings fairly regularly, and attending local neighborhood association meetings as the need arose. Differences in the dominant operating styles of police personnel, other city personnel, and neighborhood groups sometimes made coordination of this kind problematic from the perspective of all sides. But this fact should not obscure the potentially important role such coordination can play in bringing resources beyond the police to bear on the task of reducing crime and promoting public safety in Albuquerque. As of early 1999, these high-level contacts have fallen by the wayside and the quality of ONC-APD coordination varies greatly from one area of the city to another, depending on the priorities of each area command.

If APD can succeed in building strong partnerships with neighborhood associations and institutionalize them through ONC, it will help make those ties less dependent on the personalities of individual officers and supervisors. If the ten Community Planning Partnerships become consistently viable vehicles for drawing neighborhood associations together, they too would be candidates for APD's community partnerships. Furthermore, as citizens become empowered by

COP, they develop expectations of APD (and other city departments) that include access and responsiveness. They can then contribute to sustaining the COP implementation effort as one of the external constituencies pushing it forward. As this occurs, care must be taken that this does not create a bureaucratic imperative insensitive to the needs of on-the-ground policing; police will always want to retain significant autonomy in these partnerships.

Another important set of collaborative relationships between APD and other city agencies occurs through the work of the Code Enforcement Team made up of personnel from APD, the Fire Department, the Zoning Commission, the Health Department, and other agencies. This team has been responsible for closing down buildings deemed a threat to public health or safety, often due to drug use, drug sales, or other criminal activity concentrated there.

Finally, APD personnel report significant collaboration with the city agencies responsible for placing traffic signs, maintaining roads, and cleaning up and maintaining city parks. These agencies control resources and expertise that are often important in the course of problem-solving activities. Their collaboration represents an important potential strength in APD's community policing efforts.

Noteworthy in this context is the fact that all these collaborative efforts between APD and other city agencies have occurred without having to ask the mayor's office to force participation from unwilling leaders of the relevant bureaucracies, as was required in some cities (Skogan 1997). In Albuquerque, the key stumbling block to widening such collaborative efforts has not been unwillingness on the part of sister agencies, but rather the fact that most APD personnel are not in the habit of seeing these agencies as partners on whose expertise they can draw. That some APD personnel have done so quite actively is indeed the case, but this simply highlights the fact that partnership of this kind remains the exception rather than the rule.

### **COP and Albuquerque Residents**

Although we don't know what Albuquerque residents think about community policing specifically, we know that two mayoral candidates have made successful bids for office using community oriented policing platforms. The degree to which the COP platforms swayed voters is unknown but both former Mayor Chavez and Mayor Baca have taken their victories as mandates for COP.

For the past ten years APD has contracted to have the Institute for Social Research conduct a citywide survey of the attitudes and opinions of Albuquerque citizens toward the police.

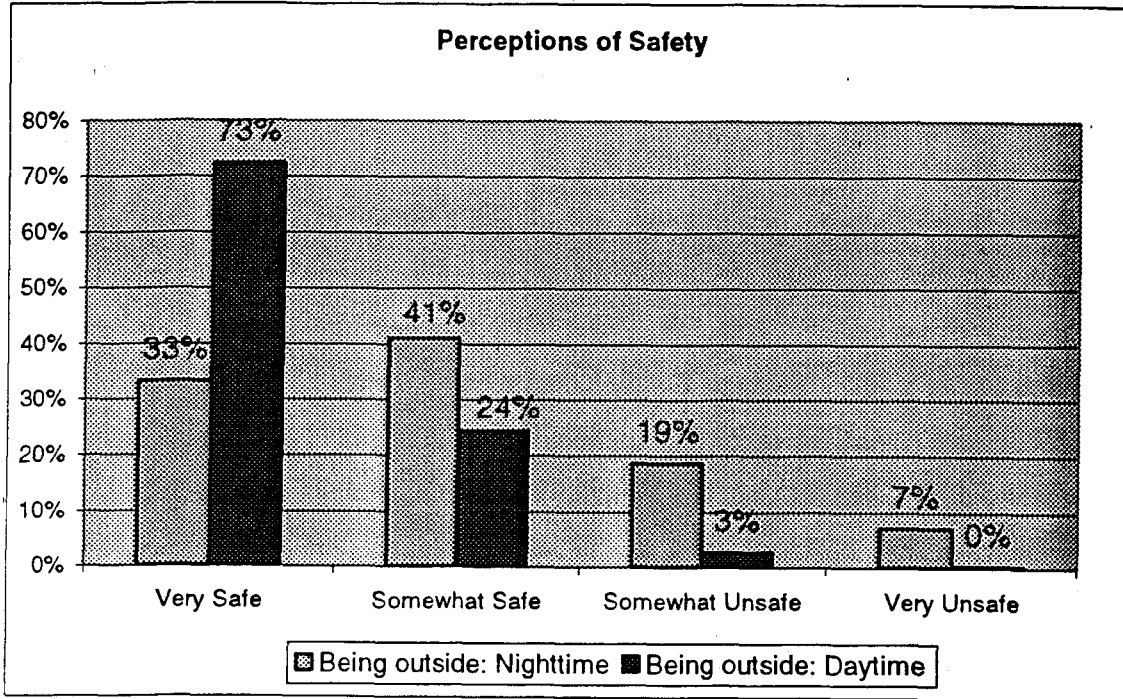
The results of the most recent survey are presented in full in the 1997 Citizen Satisfaction with Police Service Delivery report (ISR 1998) and summarized here. Although this study does not ask specific questions about community oriented policing, reviewing some of the findings of this survey will help put the discussion of COP in context of the perceptions of the public who are a vital part of the COP efforts.

*Perceptions of Severity of Crime.* In public opinion surveys nationwide, crime is identified consistently as one of the most pressing problems facing US residents. A majority of Albuquerque residents (55%) stated similar concerns in the 1997 poll, identifying crime as the single biggest problem in Albuquerque. (ISR 1998; 54) Although 55% of survey respondents ranked crime as the biggest problem facing Albuquerque, when asked about how problematic specific types of **crime and disorderly behavior** were in their neighborhoods, none of them averaged a ranking above a 5 on a 10-point scale (0=no problem, 10=a great problem). Crimes like child abuse (1.7 on the scale) and prostitution (0.8) did not seem to be pervasive problems in Albuquerque. The highest scores on the severity scale were 'gangs' (3.4), 'spray painting' (3.2), and 'littering' (3.2). The general 'crime' category received a 4.1 seriousness rating.

*Fear of Crime.* Besides actual crime statistics, one of the measures used to assess police departments is the perceived fear of crime in their jurisdictions. Albuquerque survey respondents were asked about how worried they were about the possibility of three activities in their neighborhoods: someone breaking into their home, being physically attacked or assaulted, and someone breaking into their car. For these Albuquerque residents, fear of property crime was much greater than the fear of assaultive crimes. A majority of respondents were worried, to some degree, about someone breaking in to their home (75%) or their car (72%). Forty-seven percent were worried about being attacked or assaulted.

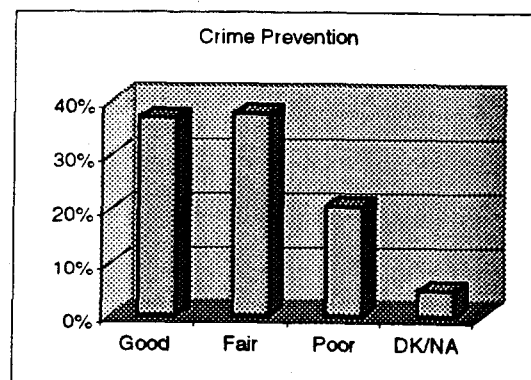
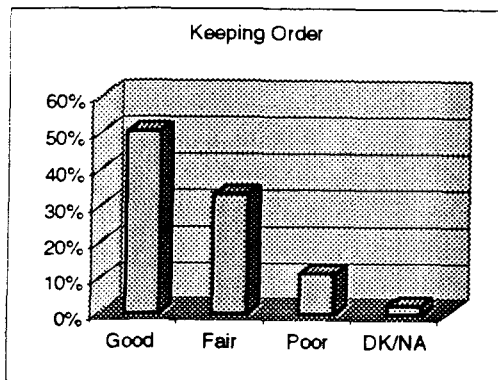
The 1997 survey also asked about perceived safety in the respondent's neighborhood during the day and at night. The results are presented in the following figure. The majority of respondents felt either very safe or somewhat safe being out in their neighborhoods, day (97%) or night (74%). Twenty-six percent of respondents stated that they felt either somewhat unsafe or very unsafe being out in their neighborhoods at night; 3% of the sample had similar feelings about being out in the daytime.

*Rating Police Interactions and Service.* A majority of respondents agreed (69%) that APD "...treats persons in custody for serious crimes firmly but fairly". Approximately 53% of the sample agree that APD police treat racial minorities the same as they treat other people.



Interpreting these data are difficult – is this glass half empty or half full? Certainly, it is significant that only about half of Albuquerque residents believe the police treat racial minorities the same as others. Whether this says something about APD specifically or about general perceptions of the police in America, it suggests that continuing attention to police-community relations in minority populations is justified.

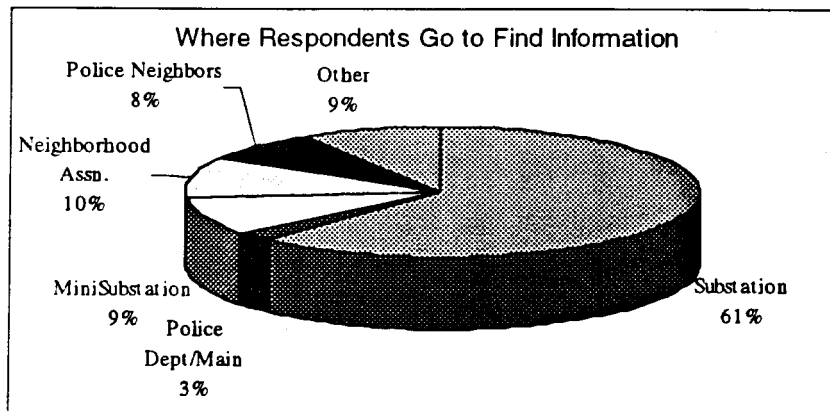
Albuquerque citizens also rated APD in their crime prevention function and how well APD kept order on the streets and sidewalks. If we look at the findings in terms of 'good, fair or poor' then APD received overall ratings of 'fair' (37%) to 'good' (38%) for their crime prevention efforts and 'good' (50%) at keeping order on the streets.



Interpreting such data is aided by comparison over time. The ISR has collected data on the approval ratings for APD since 1990. In the area of order maintenance the approval rating for APD hovers at slightly better than 50%. Because of the changes in question wording over time, we cannot make valid statements about the approval ratings for APD crime prevention.

Reported changes in crime and changes in police performance in respondent's neighborhoods are two more measures of police performance. About 70% of respondents stated that crime in their neighborhoods had stayed the same, 23% said crime had increased and 7% reported decreasing crime rates in their area. When asked whether police performance in their neighborhood had gotten better, gotten worse or stayed the same, only 4% described worsening police performance. A majority (69%) said it was about the same and 19% said that police performance in their neighborhoods had improved.

*Police Accessibility.* A core component of Community Policing is the relationship between residents and police officers. Part of this relationship is the informed citizen being able to find and approach the police. When asked "Do you know of any place in your neighborhood where you can go to get information from APD or talk to them about neighborhood problems?" 58% of the survey respondents said no. Of the 435 people who said yes, the majority of them (55%) either named or mentioned a substation. About 10% (n=45) said they would go to a mini-substation in the 7-11 or Circle K and about 7% (n=31) would go to their neighborhood association or crime watch. A surprising number of residents (30, or about 7%) identified the police officer who lives near them as the source they would go to for information or to discuss a problem.



Neighborhood associations have a special place in the development of COP. Through these entities residents have a channel of communication with area law enforcement officials that allows them to identify and discuss problems in their neighborhoods. When asked specifically about their



neighborhood associations, 60% of the respondents said there was one where they live (slightly more than half of those respondent households, about 347, were members) and 46% said there was a neighborhood crime watch where they live (to which 239, or about a third, of the households belonged).

Another component of police accessibility is residents' perceptions of APD presence in their neighborhoods. Twelve percent of respondents stated that they never saw an APD officer in their neighborhood. At the other extreme of the scale, about 10% report seeing an APD officer in their neighborhood many times per day and 19% see an APD officer once a day. When asked how many times they had spoken with an APD officer in the last 6 months, 49% of respondents had not. 18% had talked to an APD officer once in the last six months, 16% said two or three times, and 15% responded that they had spoken to an officer more than 4 times in the last six months.

In summary, Albuquerque residents express their support for community policing by voting in the politicians who clamor for it, though we have no way of knowing how salient community policing really is in the minds of voters. In opinion surveys, most residents appear to accept the professional role of police — although it is also the case that a significant level of discontent with APD has been expressed by some residents in recent years. Across the spectrum, residents appear to support the notion of community policing, although we see little evidence that most have any thorough understanding of it. The community also seems to be open to taking responsibility for their part of the COPs relationship: when asked if they would be willing to attend meetings or activities to improve policing in your neighborhood, 75% said yes. The role of APD, or any police force, in facilitating these types of meetings is still up for debate.

One of the challenges of COP, suggested by the findings of the 1997 Police Service Delivery report, remains educating the community as to how to use the police department judiciously. Residents need to know how to use the various police services (from 911 to the TRU) and they need to know where they can go if they have questions or problems in their neighborhoods. An increased awareness by citizens of the role played by neighborhood associations and crime/block watch groups is another area to be addressed through various COP partnerships.

But whether this can be done successfully depends a great deal on: 1) whether APD continues to strive to implement community policing, and 2) whether APD can do so successfully within its own ranks. The answer to the first question will probably be answered politically and appears clear: due to its popularity with the public, community policing will probably continue to be official policy for the foreseeable future. However, whether APD implements it vigorously and

successfully — the second question — depends on the interplay of the various subcultures within policing in the years to come. The next section discusses how police leaders at all levels, sworn and civilian alike, can address this key organizational dynamic.

### **THE NEXT STEPS: INCORPORATING THE BEST ELEMENTS OF COP DEPARTMENT-WIDE**

Although there are many differing opinions of exactly where Albuquerque is in its implementation of community oriented policing, most APD employees, civilian and sworn, management and rank and file, would agree that *if APD wants community oriented policing, there is still much to be done*. As we argue earlier in this report, an adequate definition of COP places its three major components – community partnerships, beat integrity, and problem oriented policing —in the context of explicit attention to **solving problems, reducing disorder**, and enhancing the constructive **social authority** at work within the community. As of mid-1998, community partnerships were on the rise, beat integrity was experiencing technical difficulties, and just about every sworn officer, and most civilian employees, had attended a 2-day training session on POP. And yet, when rank and file sworn personnel were asked about community policing, very few officers gave an answer that looked remotely like this definition. Instead, most saw only the contours of COP as understood within their own subculture. This fragmentation undermines even the most carefully planned COP implementation by preventing the best elements of COP from influencing the overall departmental culture. This represents a central dilemma for policing nationwide: As a leading policing expert notes, “Probably the biggest obstacle facing anyone who would implement a new strategy of policing is the difficulty of changing the ongoing culture of policing” (Moore 1992).

In strategically managing the Albuquerque Police Department to move it toward the most effective policing possible in the years ahead, police leaders at all levels face several alternatives for how to approach these various subcultures of policing.

One alternative would simply be to refuse to treat the subcultures strategically at all. Given the dominance of the traditional subculture of policing, this would amount essentially to working within the traditional subculture - either denying any need for change, or trying to change it from within without reliance on other models. Another approach would be to try to force as many APD personnel as possible into one particular subculture. Given the political pressures in support of community policing and the weaknesses of each of the other subcultures, the only viable way of doing this would be to try to force all APD personnel to adopt the COP subculture as their own.

Either of these approaches faces powerful difficulties. The former is essentially a head-in-the-sand approach. Refusing to use police subcultures strategically in order to change policing proactively runs the risk of making police departments passive recipients of change as interpreted by the subculture. Likewise, to try to force police personnel into a specific subculture runs up against the reality of multiple approaches to policing, and seems likely to generate powerful resistance — indeed, it already has. Such an approach would also have to assume that community policing is sufficiently developed to have all the right answers to the challenges currently facing policing, and thus has no need of collaboration from within other subcultures. Many officers believe COP does not have all the answers, leading them to dismiss community policing as simply the most recent “flavor of the month” reform.

Both these approaches run the risk of deepening the fragmentation of police culture. This is a grave risk: if officers desire one thing in their work it is a clear sense of direction and purpose to what they are asked to do. In the absence of such a clear direction, departmental subcultures become more entrenched as officers become defensive of more familiar beliefs and practices. Thus, these approaches could be expected to exacerbate police morale problems, deepen departmental fragmentation, and increase opportunistic behavior.

A more viable approach to strategically building the most effective police culture possible lies in another direction. Such an approach must recognize the legitimate pluralism of different styles of police work, and embrace the strengths and opportunities embedded in each subculture. It would grant a measure of insight and expertise to people operating in different styles and subcultures, but at the same time insist that all operate within a framework shaped by the best knowledge we have of what works in contemporary policing. In such an approach, all have something to gain: a realm of respect for their specific contribution to effective policing, and the pride of contributing to a safer community with a better quality of life for our children. At the same time, all have something to lose: the false pride of insisting that only one’s own approach can work and all others are misguided, as well as the luxury of standing apart from “the Department” and blaming all failings on someone else.

Building such a police culture will require strategic leadership at all levels within APD, from key informal leaders among officers and civilians, to mid-level supervisors of sworn and civilian personnel alike, to the upper echelon of division heads, area commanders, and police managers. In this complex undertaking, the greatest obstacle lies in losing track of its ultimate purpose: making Albuquerque a safer place with a better quality of life. The complexity of the task

can undermine any clear sense of direction. If the best efforts of APD personnel are to be drawn into this task, that clarity of direction must be maintained. Doing so is the work of strategic leaders throughout the organization: to sustain a vision of how good policing can be, and build commitment to being part of it. Strategic leaders will do these things while drawing on the best elements of all the police subcultures.

Fortunately, some individuals within APD are engaged in such a process. But they often operate in relative isolation, and thus are unable to shape overall department culture. Here, we seek to identify their efforts and put them into dialogue with one another in order to strengthen those efforts. We do so by suggesting what a strong culture of policing might draw from each of the subcultures of contemporary policing — and what from each of them must be left behind.

### **COP and the Traditional Subculture**

From the traditional culture of policing will come the sense of officers being accountable to professional standards, and of policing as a demanding craft. The status of officers as professionals will continue to provide the impetus for officers to sustain strong ethical standards of conduct and to use responsibly the discretionary authority granted to them. Professional status will also allow them to defend their discretionary authority, always under threat due to the pressures of runaway liability and bureaucratic control. Understanding policing as an exacting craft that demands rigorous training in order to be practiced safely and legally are longstanding emphases of the traditional police culture that deserve to remain in place. The core goal of traditional policing will also remain in place: police exist in order to reduce crime and enhance public safety. However, the Traditionalist's understanding of how best to achieve this goal, who the key players are, and the time line required for it will all shift under the influence of the other subcultures. Also gone from the traditional police culture will be the ethos of isolation and non-accountability. For the new models of policing to be effective, officers will have to become more accountable to their superiors and to the community — and supervisors will have to be willing to lead. Experience in other departments suggests that officers may initially resist such accountability. But studies suggest that it can actually result in *better* officer morale (Wycoff and Skogan 1993; Mastrofski, Worden, and Snipes 1995).

## **COP and the Paramilitary Subculture**

Like the traditional subculture, the paramilitary subculture feels threatened by recent departmental changes. The push for community oriented policing is a particular threat to some members of this subculture because some versions of community policing would not allow for any "kick ass, take names" policing. But within the proper constraints, assertive police tactics will indeed have a place in the strong culture of policing envisioned here, and the paramilitary subculture does have important resources to bring to that new organizational culture.

From the paramilitary subculture of policing will come a high-energy focus on shaping policing for the years to come; a belief that police really can do something about crime and safety in our city; and the disciplined pursuit of excellence that can sustain commitment during the long-term struggle for departmental transformation. Also, the highly assertive tactics developed within the paramilitary subculture will continue to be necessary tools in the Department's repertoire. Such tactics will be necessary for confronting critical incidents of various kinds, and for bringing some measure of public safety into those neighborhoods most cowed by predatory criminals and gangs. Once minimal public safety has been established and the worst fears abated, the resources from within other subcultures of policing will have to be brought to bear if the quality of life in such communities is to become truly acceptable. But these cannot be brought to bear effectively amidst predatory crime and neighborhood relations distorted by fear, so the assertive tactics often found within the paramilitary subculture will have a place in a police culture committed to helping produce thriving communities. The key here remains holding paramilitary tactics in their proper relationship to a democratic community — within tightly defined circumstances and under carefully delineated authority.

## **COP and the Opportunistic Subculture**

Does the opportunistic subculture have anything to contribute to building the most effective department for the future? Although it might seem not, this is deceiving: In a sense this is the easiest subculture for police leaders to manipulate in favor of organizational change. This is because opportunists will respond readily to rewards and punishments. By controlling what kind of work receives rewards in police career tracks and whether highly narcissistic behavior by officers is adequately discouraged, police leaders can use self-interest to the organization's best advantage. Rather than being a source of destructive opportunism that undermines departmental initiatives, the natural self-interest of police employees can become a source of striving for excellence. The trick

here, of course, is in creating incentives for police officers and supervisors that reward excellent police practice and discourage shirking. Furthermore, the challenge lies in measuring meaningful practices of policing, rather than simply using whatever traditional measures of police activity are convenient (see below, and Alpert and Moore 1994).

### **COP and the Administrative Subculture**

The administrative subculture will bring some realism about the legal and political contexts of police departments: most notably, the vast liability pressures that will continue to shape what police departments do in the years to come, and the democratically-expressed desires of city residents regarding the direction of policing. In addition, it is in the administrative subculture that commitment to fiscal accountability and the routinization of police procedures find their natural home. Finally, some elements within the administrative subculture embody a commitment to organizational learning and accountability (via CommStat or other processes) that will be crucial to systematically bringing excellence to policing in the years ahead. At the same time, this subculture will have to shed its tendency to supervise unreasonably and to exercise authority in ways that create insecurity rather than confidence among both sworn and civilian employees.

### **COP and the Civilian Subculture**

From the civilian subculture will come the ability to cross boundaries between the world of sworn officers and the wider community, and an understanding of the difficulties in creating real partnerships across that boundary. Many civilian police employees work at the leading edge of efforts to better integrate civilian and sworn expertise in a more effective model of policing. At their best, they understand police culture better than most civilians, and civilian culture better than many police officers. This places them in an excellent position to catalyze the often very difficult police-community collaboration necessary for good policing in the years ahead. However, in order to play this role effectively, more civilians will have to find ways of sustaining a constructively reformist stance. For this to occur, reformers within the sworn culture of the department will have to publicly and privately support their civilian colleagues. Only in this way will civilian police managers be able to contribute their full expertise to building an excellent department.

### **Transitions: Building a Stronger Organizational Culture**

The effort to build a stronger police culture will be led by officers, police leaders, and civilian managers at least partially rooted in the COP subculture. This subculture is the "lynchpin"

not because it will have the only important role, but because it is the subculture most capable of recognizing and integrating the particular strengths and expertise of the other subcultures. Some of the key leaders of this effort will also have ties to the paramilitary, civilian, traditional, or administrative subcultures, while others will be committed advocates of the community policing subculture. Both kinds of leaders are important: dedicated advocates of the strongest community policing elements and leaders which cross the boundary into other subcultures. These leaders will have to avoid being caricatured into the "weak COP" role, which is unlikely to gain any wide following in contemporary urban policing. At the same time, they will have to avoid being cowed or hounded into giving up the core insights of the COP subculture: that traditional policing alone cannot meet the challenges of contemporary public safety; that paramilitary policing must be tempered by professional and democratic control; that a focus on problem-solving holds promise for reducing crime and calls for service; that community partnerships can heighten public safety by providing new kinds of authority to police and the community; that police can help to mobilize the resources of city agencies in the fight for better neighborhoods; and that steps to link officers to specific neighborhoods encourage accountability, trust, and problem-solving. Sustaining a focus on these core insights of community policing and on the need for organizational changes to put them into practice, while also drawing constructively from the other police subcultures, represents a complex role. This role will require a long-term focus and building ties with like-minded leaders from throughout the department who are equally committed to departmental excellence. APD already includes some leaders at all levels with this kind of commitment, and others will come on board if they see movement in this direction.

### **Community Policing on the Ground**

Up to this point, the discussion about community oriented policing has been largely theoretical. A more grounded vision of the difference community policing makes for the work of officers is necessary if informal leaders in the department are to commit to it. The COP components given sound useful; after all, who would dispute that partnerships and problem solving are good tools in any given field of work? But how COP, if implemented correctly, would show itself in the day to day activities of officers is much harder to envision. That is, if you were simply watching police officers do their work, how would you recognize whether they were "doing community policing" or not?

One thing community policing will **not** do is eliminate call taking: Police officers will continue to respond to calls for service of various kinds. Indeed, the kinds of calls officers most look forward to – exciting, adrenaline-inducing calls for rapid response – are the least likely to be affected directly by community policing. Officers will obviously have to maintain the skills required for these kinds of calls.

But community policing will produce some very concrete changes in officer action, as well as some subtle ones. On one hand, officers will spend more time within their beats -- and while there, less time simply answering calls. Instead, they will initiate activity in three ways: First, by engaging in problem-solving to reduce call volume, crime, and disorder in the community. Second, by collaborating with neighborhood residents through various community meetings. Third, by initiating strong disorder control in areas plagued by high crime, drug dealing, or gang activity.

More subtle shifts will also take place. For example, more officers will cultivate constructive relationships with community members, not because they have been told to “be nice,” but because such relations enhance their authority and give access to information that might otherwise be denied them. This is **not** to suggest that all police will always be on friendly terms with all community members — such an idyllic view ignores both the reality of criminal and anti-social individuals in the community and the fact that officers interact extensively with such individuals and their victims. Rather, as officers also interact more extensively with individuals neither engaged in nor directly victimized by anti-social behavior, there should be a decreasing tendency toward **assuming** that interactions will be negative. Also, officers will receive greater cooperation from community members, as they come to know them and are seen as contributing to their own efforts to build better neighborhoods. Finally, officers’ attendance at more formal community functions will have a more focused and productive quality. They will be present when they can be valuable around specific issues. But trust and respect will allow them to attend to other tasks during times when their presence is not necessary, rather than the frequent sense of being required to be present simply to show the department’s commitment to community policing.

### **Summary & Conclusions**

Since 1995, under the framework of community policing, the Albuquerque Police Department has undertaken major changes in how law enforcement is done. Significant success was achieved in some areas. By mid-1998, APD had instituted some significant changes in policing in Albuquerque by drawing on various building blocks of community-based crime prevention



already present in the department, engaging in some strategic planning, geographically decentralizing the organization, and focusing on department-wide implementation of community policing. These included some changes purely internal to the department and others involving new initiatives and organizational ties external to the department. These represent important accomplishments on the road toward diversifying the tools available to the police and the community to enhance public safety.

However, these changes had a very limited impact on how most officers understood their role, viewed the department's mission, or actually did their work. With some important exceptions, which we have documented here, most officers believed that community policing had made no difference in how they did their jobs. Furthermore, our fieldwork suggests that they are right – the vast majority of officers appeared to continue doing their work in ways essentially identical to how they had always done it, or at least in ways bearing no clear, systematic relationship to the priorities of community policing. This was so for a variety of reasons: the normal difficulties of changing large organizations, lack of clarity regarding what changes were expected of officers, the heavy volume of calls for service, resistance to change among some supervisors and officers, difficulties with the communications system for keeping officers physically present in their beats, etc.

Some of these obstacles can be resolved through technological solutions, new management structures, better organizational communications, and other changes in departmental practices. But underlying them all lies the fragmentation of police organizational culture, and the dynamics between organizational subcultures we have discussed here. Creating the best police department possible in Albuquerque for the years ahead will require directly addressing these dynamics.

A final note: Throughout this project, we have learned a great deal from officers and civilians at all ranks of the Albuquerque Police Department. We greatly enjoy this partnership and thank all those involved in it. We also thank the National Institute of Justice and its staff for continued support. We do not expect that all will agree with everything in this report. Indeed, throughout the project we in the Partnership have been quite divided as to the possibility – or even desirability – of any department-wide movement towards community policing. Our discussions mirrored those being held at a national level. Could COP be implemented in a midsize urban police department? How would the attempted COP implementation be received by the many stakeholders involved in such a process? How could APD best navigate the many obstacles faced when

attempting to make major organizational change? We are still holding many of those same discussions today, and look forward to more such vigorous discussions with our counterparts in the Albuquerque Police Department and around the country.

## **Appendix: Recent changes in APD**

Since mid-1998, when Gerald Galvin became the Chief of Police in the Albuquerque Police Department, a number of organizational changes have been implemented. We have made brief reference to some of these in the course of this report, and the APD-UNM Research Partnership is now engaged in tracking how these changes shape APD's organizational culture and the subcultural dynamics discussed above. But we note here a few of the more important changes to date:

- Decentralization and organizational flattening: APD already had established de-centralized area commands, but in recent months has pushed greater authority, responsibility, and access to departmental resources out to area commanders and their supervisory personnel. In the process, though the ranks of captain and deputy chief continue to exist, they have essentially been folded together to eliminate one supervisory level.
- De-specialization: APD has eliminated a number of specialized units as separate entities, most notably by folding its SWAT unit into a larger Anti-Crime Team unit designed to engage in less specialized proactive missions. This change sees SWAT as a function to be performed by specially trained officers within the ACT unit, rather than as a specialized unit itself.
- Re-establishing a 4-10 schedule under a flex shift structure: As noted in this report, the elimination of the 10 hour shift, four day a week schedule (for budgetary reasons associated with allowing officer coverage of a new 5<sup>th</sup> area command) had created significant discontent among APD officers. APD recently re-established the 4-10 schedule, but under a flexible shift schedule designed to place more officers on duty during periods of high volume of calls for service.
- CommStat: APD has invested significant organizational focus in recent months in implementing a "CommStat" or "CompStat" model for supervisory accountability. This is intended to reinforce the department's move toward community policing, but is perceived by some to be in competition with it.
- Organizational communication: APD managers and high-level supervisors from all divisions now meet three times a week, far more regularly than had been established department practice in the past. These meetings are designed to increase communication flows between the Chief and key managerial personnel, as well as between different divisions and area commands.
- Media focus: The department now pays rather close attention to how it is covered by the local news media, and actively cultivates positive coverage.

- Cadet training: APD has moved to change the focus and tone of its Academy training of police cadets. This step has been controversial, due to differing views of the proper place of community policing within the overall training of police officers: Is it an advanced skill to be taught after cadets have mastered the fundamentals of policing, or an overall thrust that should permeate all aspects of the Academy experience? The intent of the recent changes has been to integrate serious training in officer safety, defensive tactics, and the other traditional elements of police academies within an overall training experience permeated by the priorities of community policing. This remains rather uncharted territory nationally, and police academies around the country stand to learn from APD's experience in this regard.
- APD has already developed crime mapping capabilities, and hopes to gradually acquire greater sophistication in this area.

These and other changes will be among the key influences shaping the subcultures of policing discussed in this report. We are currently tracing their influence as part of our research on the organizational dynamics of policing – while also seeking to feed back to key formal and informal leaders throughout the Department the findings from the first phase of this Partnership.

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