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Police Model

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Statement of the Problem

In recent years, youth gang or street gang violence has become more lethal largely due to use of sophisticated firearms. Youth gang members are generally older than they were two or three decades ago; although, the age of introduction to the gang may be somewhat earlier, as well. Delinquent and criminal youth gangs and gang members appear to be more prevalent and they are developing in almost all states and territories of the country, especially large, middle-sized, and small cities, and suburban areas. Drug trafficking characterizes the activity of many older gang youth or former gang members. There now seem to be closer connections between youth gang members and adult criminal organizations or adult entrepreneurs engaged in such trafficking. However, it is still not clear whether youth gangs account for the significant expansion of the drug problem in most communities where there are gang problems. Gang-related crimes account for only a small percent of total reported index crimes, even in municipalities with serious youth gang problems, but they commit a high proportion of the most violent crimes, i.e., homicide and aggravated assault, in certain neighborhoods.

There is still a great deal we do not know about gang characteristics or the impact of street gangs. In part this is a result of differential police reporting of gangs and gang crimes across cities. It is also partially a result of the fact that gangs and their criminal patterns differ across cities. Nevertheless, it is quite clear that the youth gang problem, in both emerging and chronic contexts, exists primarily in low income, minority, socially disorganized communities.

A variety of police organizational arrangements exist for dealing with gang crimes. Specialized gang units have been established in some large and even a few smaller cities. These units may have officers who carry out specialized functions: investigation, tactical patrol, intelligence, and liaison with other criminal justice agencies. In many police departments, a variety of units with more general responsibilities, such as community relations, robbery, youth division, vice, narcotics, patrol have also been assigned to deal with gang crimes. Particular officers in these units may be given special responsibility to deal with gang crime. In a few cases, a police department may have separate juvenile and adult gang units or a regular gang unit and a separate more specialized drug-gang unit as well as a narcotics unit. The number of police in a typical specialized gang crime unit can range from one to 300 or more. In general, the larger the community and the more serious and sophisticated its problem of youth gangs, the more likely the establishment of specialized units in a police department.

While a few of the gang units, especially in a handful of the very largest cities, have been established for decades, the vast majority have been formed within the past decade. Gang units tend to be frequently reorganized or to come under political or community pressures to deal more vigorously with rising gang crime

problems or sometimes to be less "punitive" or more focussed in their pro-active efforts. In some cities the traditional gang crime problem has been sharply curtailed or transformed to a narcotics or organized crime problem. In these cities the size of gang units may have been sharply reduced and their original mission changed. There is little, if any research available, however, directly linking any particular structure or set of processes of gang units or alternative police arrangements to changes in the gang problem.

Our own recent survey of the responses of organizations, including those of the police to gang problems, indicates that an exclusive or predominant police suppression approach is not associated with perceived (or actual) success in reducing gang crime, especially in chronic problem cities. A mixed police strategy involving other approaches, particularly community mobilization, appears to be more promising. The following police model further develops the proposition that a mixed police strategy will most likely contribute to a lowering of serious gang crime rates.

Definition of Youth Gang, Gang Incident, and Gang Member

For present analysis purposes, the youth portion of a street gang should be defined as a group of members, ranging in age mainly from 12 to 24 years old. While the youth gang or street gang is variably organized and engages in social as well as anti-social activity, it is recognized mainly for its violent, criminal gain, and/or symbolic behavior. The definition of a gang incident should be narrow for targeting and resource deployment purposes, as well as to avoid excessive labelling.

The definition should be based on gang function, motivation or particular circumstances, not simply on gang membership of a suspect or victim in a criminal incident. A gang incident therefore should be any illegal act which arises out of gang motivational circumstances (See Appendix for operational considerations). In the following discussion, the term "gang-related" is used in a broad sense to indicate any crime incident which involves a gang member. The term "gang-motivated" refers to an incident which grows strictly out of gang interest or purposes by at least one of the participants. Nevertheless, the tracking of non-gang related offenses as well as gang-motivated offenses should occur, especially since core gang members tend to be high rate, general crime offenders.

The youth should be identified as a gang member based on his own assertion, by other gang members, or outside observers. Such identity furthermore should be periodically verified since the youth may shift positions back and forth over time as a core or regular member, leader, fringe, wannabee recruit, former or gang member associate. A fundamental mission of the police is to protect society from individuals and groups engaged in criminal and delinquent activities. Two general methods should be employed to achieve this end in respect to youth gangs. One is the traditional

police role of law enforcement. The other method is prevention, i.e., the control and modification of conditions and situations which precipitate gang crime and delinquent behavior, and also which may contribute, directly or indirectly to the social development of gang members and youth prone to street gang activity. This latter method includes networking with local community organizations including schools, churches, grassroots groups, youth agencies, as well as a range of criminal justice agencies for a common but now more complex framework inhibiting gang crime.

Objectives

The broad functions through which the police mission is accomplished are investigation, intelligence, suppression, community relations, and training. The specific objectives associated with each include:

Investigation: Follow-up inquiry and activity on reported youth gang crimes.

- *** Investigate gang crimes to gather information and evidence to successfully prosecute gang members involved in crimes.
- *** Maintain cooperative, working relationships with other departmental units, e.g., vice, violent crimes, organized crime, and other criminal justice and community-based organizations.
- *** Coordinate appropriate referrals for gang crimes to and from other departmental units and criminal justice agencies.
- *** Share gang crime information with other criminal justice agencies and community organizations to the extent that the law permits.

Intelligence: Develop background information on gangs and gang members for investigative purposes.

- *** Standardize definitions as to what constitutes a gang, gang crime, and gang member.
- *** Maintain updated information on gangs and gang members.
- *** Evaluate information to insure that it is relevant for the purposes of controlling gang crime.
- *** Develop and/or maintain a computerized information system.

- *** Purge obsolete files on a scheduled basis, i.e., purge individuals from files, if not involved in a gang (or non-gang) crime for three years after last entry.
- *** Insure that constitutional safeguards are built into the collection and maintenance of intelligence information.
- *** Track hard-core gang members, i.e., violent, serious criminal, repeat, and leadership, on a local, state and national level.

Suppression: Target youth gang leaders and other hard-core members for surveillance, arrest, and prosecution; patrol locations of high gang activity.

- *** Concentrate efforts of surveillance and prosecution on gang leaders and other hard-core gang members, many of whom may be on probation and parole.
- *** Target specific neighborhoods, streets and locations where gang crimes are most prevalent.
- *** Target schools for special patrol during crisis periods, e.g., spring and fall, after school when recruitment and gang activity are likely to occur, and especially after a gang clash has occurred in the neighborhood and is likely to spill over to the school.
- *** Educate prosecutors and judges as to the seriousness of gang crimes and the need for special prosecution and sentencing of hard-core gang members.
- *** Cooperate with probation and parole officers to enforce compliance of probation and parole regulations.

Community Relations: Reduce circumstances under which youth gang crimes are likely to occur through community involvement, social intervention and opportunity programs.

- *** Develop and maintain a strong community relations role.
- *** Present anti-gang educational programs to schools, parent groups, community organizations and other interested organizations.

- *** Coordinate efforts and work with school staff, school security, or school assigned police officers to control gang activities including gang recruitment, the use of gang symbols and gang conflict at school.
- *** Refer gang youth to programs which provide education and employment services. If possible, assist business and industry to recruit, train, and employ older gang youth as well as help keep these settings free of gang activity.
- *** Refer gang youth to youth service, family counseling, drug treatment, and recreation agencies.

Training and Evaluation: train, develop and evaluate programs and activities.

- *** Train gang unit and other departmental officers in gang recognition, gang control and prevention procedures, within a policy framework relevant to the complex gang problems.
- *** Develop special communication and problem solving procedures which assist officers in dealing with gang problems.
- *** Assess the processes and effectiveness of gang focussed efforts, including those of the gang unit, patrol, tactical support and other units.

Multiple Program Strategies

The degree of reduction in gang crimes should be dependent in large measure on appropriate selection, timing, and implementation of certain strategies. Police departments which have identified criminal/delinquent gangs within their jurisdictions, or suspect the emergence of such gangs, need to develop short- and long-term objectives and plans of action in regard to the identified problem. Law enforcement ordinarily involves reaction to crises, i.e., police activity following the commission of a crime in terms of investigation, arrest and preparation for prosecution. While the traditional role of crisis response is essential to gang crime control, it should be augmented by other well-planned strategies to reduce the need for crisis management.

Multiple strategies are necessary because the police must confront a range of types of gangs and gang situations: some gangs are well organized while others are newly established; and some gangs contain many older youth and are highly violent and criminal.

Different types of gang members -- leaders, core gang members, fringe youth, wannabees, associates, younger and older gang youth - require different approaches. Contacts must be developed with suspects and victims, parents, neighbors, and a variety of agencies, schools, and community groups affected by the problem differently. Local politicians, community organizations, and the media place pressures on the police to respond in certain ways. Furthermore, the problem may change its intensity and character, and occur in cycles.

Therefore, a variety of strategies in different combinations need to be employed which make the most efficient use of available police resources. These include, in addition to traditional proactive suppression, mobilization of community interest and action in regard to the problem, social intervention, opportunities provision, and the development of appropriate organizational mechanisms or delivery systems to carry out these strategies. Consequently, a complex set of police activities must be adopted to implement these strategies.

Planning

Law enforcement agencies should, first of all, map out a set of basic activities by which they plan to reduce gang crimes and periodically update them. These strategies require the following:

- 1) in emerging problem contexts, recognition of the presence of youth gangs and a gang problem where they did not exist before and development of a campaign to sensitize or educate city government officials, and other criminal justice and community-based agencies;
- 2) in chronic problem contexts, special communication of the growing seriousness of the gang problem to appropriate authorities, and development of a campaign to mobilize resources to deal with the problem through both "beefed up" law enforcement and resources targeted to meet the social and economic needs of gang youth;
- 3) realignment of police department organization, i.e., policy and procedures, to better target the problem;
- 4) development of a set of criteria and a process for selection of police officers to meet the particular set of gang problems to be confronted;
- 5) appropriate training of gang unit officers and other personnel in the department to deal with gang youth and related aspects of the problem;
- 6) education of other criminal justice and community-based personnel as well as citizen groups on the specific nature of the problem and how best each group can deal with it;
- 7) advice to the media on how best to report gang incidents;
- 8) development of guidelines for appropriate description and communication of what the department is doing about the problem;
- 9) regular evaluation of the effectiveness of police efforts in high gang crime areas with attention to different approaches required for certain types of gangs, gang youth, and situations.

Investigation

A primary function of the gang unit or officer is to investigate crimes which have the appearance of being gang incidents. The process originates with the first officer, usually the patrol officer, at the scene of the crime or potential crime. All officers are expected to recognize circumstances which suggest a gang incident has taken place or will occur. In the conduct of the preliminary investigation, officers should be careful to identify and collect evidence which will be useful for purposes of prosecution later. Specific characteristics of gang motivation, function, circumstances, or modus operandi should be recorded and guide whatever action the officers take. The case should be referred to a gang officer or to the gang unit for further investigation.

In high volume chronic gang problem cities, types of cases need to be prioritized with the most serious referred in accordance with the gang units current capacity. From this point in the process, the gang unit specialist or other investigator, as appropriate, follows through on interrogation of suspects, victims, witnesses and other investigative procedures. The cases are then prepared for court processing in close cooperation and coordination with the district attorney's office.

Successful investigation requires a number of additional elements. Cooperation with other departmental units is essential in relation to serious youth gang cases which also involve homicide, narcotics, robbery, burglary or other part I crimes. By the same token, other units should immediately notify the gang officer or gang unit of a serious crime which may be gang related. This procedure should be strongly enforced in order to efficiently coordinate the investigatory process. Equally important is the gang unit's access to and use of a computerized data system to provide detailed data on the suspect or victim's prior and current contacts with the justice system. Such an information system should contain gang relevant information, e.g., gang names, individual monikers, as well as identify the gang related character of each offense.

Intelligence/Investigative Files

A primary function of the police gang unit is to gather and process intelligence for investigative, planning and community mobilization purposes. Reliable information is necessary to prepare cases for prosecution and to keep abreast of criminal acts resulting from gang activity. Files should be kept to identify individuals and membership rosters of gangs involved in gang crime. Due to the changeable or often unstable nature of youth gangs, it is important to develop a pro-active capacity to maintain and provide accurate up-to-date information.

The value of intelligence is dependent upon the format, validity and quality of information collected. Information collected in a standard format with definitions, criteria of

appropriate sources of information, and specific identifiers of a gang incident or categories of gang incidents serve the objectives of the gang unit. Training of gang unit officers in reporting techniques will further aid the intelligence function. Again, computerization of relevant gang data will enhance the efficiency of the gang unit.

Inter-county, inter-state, and national systems of intelligence gathering would serve a need to track the mobility and spread of particularly serious criminal youth gangs and gang members throughout various areas which are larger than a neighborhood or city. Such wider tracking is important to assess the origin, nature, and patterns of gang crime and to improve law enforcement planning. For example, many respondents from emerging gang problem cities or areas claim that at least part of their youth gang problem results from an influx of gang members from nearby or sometimes distant chronic problem cities, e.g., Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, New York, and Miami.

The nature and basis of this movement are extremely important to determine. Key questions to be answered are whether chronic city gang members are spreading their criminal activities strictly for economic gain purposes; whether the movement is the result of families with gang youth simply leaving inner-cities to improve their living standards; or whether the problem is primarily of local origin with local officials defensively placing the blame for an emerging gang problem on outsiders. Specifically, a national information depository would be most helpful in achieving this objective.

We also observe that some youths in emerging gang problem cities have been introduced to the gang culture while incarcerated with youths from chronic gang problem cities. It is a fact of correctional life that many inmates either voluntarily or involuntarily join a gang during their stay in the correctional institution. After incarceration, some of these youths may spread the gang culture to their associates within the community. Consequently, it is important for gang officers to monitor gang situations in various state and county correctional institutions. Furthermore, it is important for gang units to monitor the release of gang leaders and core gang members particularly to chronic gang problem cities where, as a consequence, the problem may suddenly flare up again.

Another concern is the extent to which gangs or their members are involved in the sale and distribution of illegal drugs. Many departments report a large proportion of the illegal drug trade is due to organized street gang activities. Some individual or former youth gang members appear to be particularly likely to be involved not only in the street sale but increasingly in mid-level distribution of drugs. However, there is still not sufficient evidence to link entire street gangs to a major role in drug trafficking in most urban areas. Careful intelligence efforts are required to clarify the extent to which street gangs and youth gang members are involved in the drug trade, in order not to minimize or exaggerate the youth gang drug connection.

In summary, gang intelligence serves an essential role in defining, tracking and understanding the basis for gang activities. The police must share such information in detail with other divisions of their department, other police agencies, and probation and parole units. It also must disseminate the information in a more general form to the community at large. Gang intelligence is an invaluable aid for achieving the following objectives:

- identification of youth gang members;
- tracking changes in youth gang structure, intergang affiliations and conflicts, and modus operandi, and evolving crime patterns;
- tracking youth gang members as they move from one neighborhood or city to another;
- tracking gang members on parole and probation.

Targeted Gang Suppression

A key strategy of the police gang unit is targeted suppression, in which the unit concentrates its attention on the nucleus of the youth gang. Every effort should be made to target and arrest criminal youth gang leadership and hard core gang "bangers" or serious criminals, and to prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law; and to remove them from the community. This is important not only because of the nature and seriousness of the crimes they commit, but also because of the influence such youth have on other members in the group. An adequate and successful targeting process can limit the gang's development and criminal activity. Success in this undertaking is usually achieved through cooperative and sustained efforts with prosecution and the judiciary. It is also important that the gang officers work closely with other officers in the department as well as with probation and parole to follow up on these youths.

However, it should be noted that targeted suppression by itself should not be the exclusive strategy pursued. While some departments claim that the number and percent of gang crimes have been greatly reduced by targeting gang leaders and core members, others claim that gang leadership is soon replaced or new gangs are formed. As a result there seems to be little effect on the overall amount and pattern of gang crime in the long term. If there is to be significant and sustained reduction in gang motivated criminal activity, the gang unit and the police department must broaden their functions and take on additional roles and strategies, particularly community mobilization, and to a lesser extent social intervention, e.g., social services referral, and provision of social opportunities, e.g., referral for and assistance in job creation.

Community Mobilization and Opportunity Provision

The police should utilize community mobilization and assist with opportunity provision strategies in an effort to reduce the gang problem. The police, including gang unit officers, should also be involved on a regular basis with a range of community agencies and organizations in social intervention activities such as preventing "wannabees" and fringe members from joining and easing fringe members away from the gang. The police are in a good position to refer interested or responsive gang members to appropriate service agencies, job and school programs as well as their family members to counseling and other services. The issuance of community service directories to gang officers would be an aid in this endeavor.

Community Relationships. Positive relations with community residents, agencies, and knowledgeable informants serve the gang unit in many ways. The police need acceptance and support from law abiding residents, agency representatives, and even from gang youth to obtain intelligence and best perform their various functions. The gang unit should be perceived as a positive force within the community and not as an enemy. This requires more than just a few community, agency, or church educational meetings or workshops. It means building trust with community residents, community agencies and grassroots organizations on a day-to-day basis through prompt response to calls for assistance and information, particularly in respect to gang problems. Such trust and cooperation can be effective not only in intelligence gathering, but in witness and victim cooperation for the successful prosecution of gang cases.

In general the gang officer needs to be sensitive to and understand the community's culture, social, and organizational structure, particularly in changing communities experiencing an influx of newcomers of different racial/ethnic backgrounds or from other countries. Problems of communication often arise. Many of these people fear police due to previous encounters with police repression in their countries of origin. Special efforts at the development of relationships and collaboration with local community organizations that have positive relationships with newcomers are needed to reduce misunderstandings and antagonistic feelings toward authority and facilitate the gang unit's investigation and suppression duties.

School Liaison. Schools, especially at the junior high and high school levels, may serve as an arena for the planning of gang activity, more often outside than on school grounds. Gang members are known to recruit on playgrounds and within areas on the perimeter of school property. Youths sometimes find themselves in violent gang situations or confrontations as they travel to and from school, rather than in school itself. In any case, many non-gang youth are extremely frightened and even reluctant to attend school.

Adequate police, school, and citizen authority and supervision must be present at or near schools during times when the risk of gang confrontations or recruitment are high, especially at times of

school dismissal. Gang officers, in particular, can supply training, direction and support to school officials, parent and community groups for such efforts. The police can be most effective only when school authorities are clearly aware of the problem, i.e., do not deny its existence, and fully participate in gang prevention and control efforts.

The police can also be helpful in limiting the gang threat through development of a strong liaison function which focuses on educating school administrators, faculty and staff to identify gang problems and work closely with the police and other organizations to maintain a safe school environment. Gang awareness workshops co-sponsored by the schools and the police are a means of achieving this end. The involvement of parents and even youth in these workshops may be useful. Gang awareness and prevention curricula, such as DARE (Drug Awareness Resistance Education) and SANE (Substance Abuse Narcotics Education), illustrate ways the police can work together with younger students to develop attitudes which challenge or neutralize the influence of gangs (as well as drug abuse).

Gang unit officers can contribute to their effectiveness by developing a positive image with students. Young people need to view the police in a variety of roles. Not only should the gang unit officer present anti-gang seminars or workshops to youth within the school, but he should also serve as a role model through involvement in extra-curricular activity with students before and after school to the extent that departmental resources permit. A frequent or sustained police presence is a necessary ingredient in the development of rapport with youth. These relationships should lead to improved gang intelligence and prevention capabilities.

The police gang officer also needs to coordinate his gang control activities with those of school-based police officers and school security personnel. Some police departments have youth officers assigned to specific schools. The school-based officer and security staff are especially good sources of intelligence and knowledge about gang activities. The gang unit officer and the school security officer should regularly exchange information on gangs, gang members, and potential gang situations in order to maintain security within the school and the adjacent community.

Employment Opportunity Programs. Reducing the amount of gang crime also requires a plan of action which attacks the causes of the problem. According to the police as well as others in our survey of 45 cities and 6 sites, a key cause of gang crime is lack of social opportunities. Poverty, low educational achievement, inadequate vocational preparation, and lack of employment were often reported as reasons why young people join gangs. While the survey was not primarily a study of the causes of gang crime or delinquency, the responses are consistent with the findings of social science research on the etiology of gangs. The police, especially gang officers, have a special but generally "untapped" capacity to deal with this aspect of the youth gang problem.

Gang unit or other police officers may be able to assist directly and indirectly in the provision of opportunities denied to

or not used by both younger and older youth gang members. Officers may assist with school tutoring and even educational remedial activities. They may know about job openings and job training programs and provide such information to gang members. Police officers who know the community may assist employers with information about availability of and access to a pool of youth interested in jobs and training. Gang officers may also join boards or advisory groups which advocate for employment opportunities.

Social Intervention Programs. The police, including gang unit personnel, are in a unique position to link gang members with a variety of socialization or social intervention programs in the community. The gang unit officer is often the most knowledgeable person about specific gangs, gang activities, and the state of individual youth participation in criminal gang incidents in the local area. Such knowledge can be used to reduce the amount of gang crime by brief counseling and referral of selected gang youth and young adults to agency programs which provide alternatives to gang activities. Social intervention programs, e.g., truancy patrol or special counseling programs, in cooperation with schools, youth agencies or community organizations can serve important diversion as well as treatment and prevention purposes. These programs offer a variety of services to the individual gang youth and his family. The gang officer must also provide support and referral services to victims of gang crime as well as protection in collaboration with the district attorney's office when victims are requested to testify in court.

Examples exist of the development of promising and important secondary roles and functions by the gang officer in social intervention. Police in some departments have taken an active role in recreational programs which reach out specifically to gang members. "Wannabee's," younger and fringe members of gangs, are the most likely candidates for these activities. As suggested above, some gang officers have volunteered their time to youth agencies and schools to assist in recreational, tutorial, anti-gang education programs and job training projects. They have also taken community leadership in advocating the need for such resources and services which are often in short supply in high gang crime communities.

The gang unit officer's community mobilization, social intervention and opportunity development roles may be summarized as follows:

- ... careful development and monitoring of citizen patrols;
- ... support for victims of gang crimes;
- ... provision of responsible adult role models for gang members to emulate;

- ... close liaison with schools, including administrators, teachers, students, and security personnel in gang prevention and control;
- ... support for parents of gang youth through referrals to assist them in improving their parental functions;
- ... provision of some positive activities (recreational/athletic) for gang youth;
- ... referral of gang members to social intervention agencies;
- ... assistance in the development of school and job programs for gang youth.

Relations with the Media

The police department and its gang unit or gang officers are usually subjected to great pressures for information on gang crime. Serious gang incidents are a source of considerable public interest and the press often caters to this interest through sensational coverage. The police need to respond to media requests in appropriate ways. Requests for aggregate data on gang crime or for a specific location should be provided as fully and accurately as possible. However, extreme caution is required in providing information about particular cases, especially gang names and names of individuals involved. This is not only to protect potentially innocent suspects, victims, and witnesses from retaliation for cooperating with the police, but also to prevent the notoriety which gang-related publicity provides to specific gangs and gang members.

The name of a gang, and sometimes that of its members, mentioned in the media may reinforce gang structure, identity, and prestige. Other gangs and gang members may be encouraged to commit actions for which they would also receive media attention. While the police should assist the media in every way possible to publicize the scope and seriousness of the gang problem, police should not contribute to occasional media efforts to distort or sensationalize the problem. The police, through the media, should provide as much understanding as possible about what the community can do to deal with the complex problem of gang crime.

Administrative Leadership

The police role in dealing with gang crime is central in confronting the problem. The police usually are the first to know about and act in regard to the problem. The police role as we have conceived it is also the most varied and complex of all required by community actors who must become involved. It is essential to any broad based community effort. A great deal of responsibility of the police department for successfully addressing the problem,

therefore, must fall on the shoulders of the principal administrator.

The top administrator (chief, superintendent, or sheriff) must become directly involved in the determination of gang policy and carefully oversee its implementation. He must insist on full and consistent carrying out by his officers of gang orders and procedures he has approved. Internal departmental support of the chief's initiative and inter-unit cooperation and coordination of effort are essential. The top administrator must also take community leadership in recognizing the problem and insisting that it be dealt with openly and adequately by a variety of agencies and groups in the community. He must go out of his way to seek support for his policy from grassroots groups, business associations, and community agencies. He has to educate governmental leaders and community influentials about the complex dimensions of the problem and the need for comprehensive and balanced approaches. Also, he needs to control his own interest and that of other administrators in the department in unnecessarily expanding organizational resources, including manpower and equipment, through exaggerating and exploiting the seriousness of the problem. This is not to deny the legitimate needs of the department to expand resources to adequately deal with the actual dimensions of the problem.

Police administrators, however, may need to operate with somewhat different emphasis in cities which are confronting an emerging or a chronic gang problem. In the emerging gang problem context, he should avoid denying the scope of the problem to protect the "good name" of the neighborhood, city, or organized interests, and insist on calling attention to the facts of gang crime as they manifest themselves. In the chronic gang problem context, he needs to withstand pressures from a variety of organizations and community groups to pursue particularistic, often contradictory, strategies, especially at times of a sudden rise in the seriousness of the problem. He should direct concern to the importance of the development of a comprehensive, community mobilized approach with special attention to improved educational, training, and jobs for gang members and gang prone youth.

Finally, the top administrator of the police department in smaller often resource starved communities where the gang problem is emerging, must give special attention to the deployment of manpower. The department should consider targeting juvenile gang repeat or hard core offenders. There may be insufficient resources available to establish a gang unit or even specialized gang officer positions. However, a careful crime analysis will often reveal that a very small group of juvenile offenders is responsible for a majority of the serious gang crimes. These youth should be identified and targeted for special attention. The intelligence officer in the department must communicate such information to all patrol officers who should develop sufficient knowledge and skill to deal with these few chronic juvenile gang offenders.

Selection and Training of Gang Officers. The effectiveness of the gang unit or police department in reducing gang crimes or at

least efficiently addressing the problem is probably most highly dependent on the quality of its personnel. We believe that officers selected should have a mix of abilities and skills including:

- ... the development of positive relationships with youth and adults based on natural interpersonal relationship abilities;
- ... sensitivity toward working with different ethnic/racial and socioeconomic groups;
- ... ability to be firm and fair, but not overly aggressive in the treatment of suspects;
- ... ability to balance or manage multiple roles suppression, prevention, community relations;
- ... ability and desire to work with organizations and schools;
- ... strong investigative skills or strong potential to acquire these skills, and
- ... experience or ability to be a trainer and/or a public speaker.

Training. For new gang unit officers to understand the complexities of the gang problem and develop ways to deal with it, knowledge from many fields must be adopted and integrated with police missions and responsibilities. Experienced gang unit officers and experts from other criminal justice and community-based agencies as well as academic sources should be considered as trainers. Conversely, the police department has a special community wide responsibility to train a variety of groups to understand and deal with the youth gang problem; these include other law enforcement officers within and outside the department, judges, prosecutors, probation and parole officers, grassroots organizations, parent groups, schools, youth agencies, and employers.

Each training group requires general information about such topics as what causes gangs, how to identify a gang, the nature of gang crime, and what roles each type of organizational or community group can play in addressing the problem(s) of gang crime. Training programs for new gang officers should focus on the following additional questions or areas:

- ... knowledge mainly of specific local but also national gang patterns, codes, symbols and gang attire;
- ... how to determine whether incidents are gang motivated or gang related;

- ... establishing appropriate communication and productive relationships with gangs;
- ... how to use and cooperate with other departmental units in dealing with gang crime;
- ... developing quality and reliable gang, gang member, and gang incident information, and recording it appropriately;
- ... appropriate use of suppression tactics;
- ... dealing with different types of gang crises;
- ... cooperating with community-based programs, including how to make referrals to intervention, opportunity and recreational services;
- ... serving as an expert court witness in gang cases;
- ... education of other criminal justice personnel especially prosecutors and judges in the understanding and use of gang information.

Evaluation

Of special importance is use of evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the department's strategies and methods for dealing with youth gangs. The evaluation, whether performed within the department or by an outside researcher, needs to be broad and flexible, include process and outcome measures, and be carried out on a regular basis. The police functions and processes to be evaluated should include:

A. Outcome

-- suppression measures

1. Incidence and prevalence of gang crime and gangs:

- (a) gang homicides
- (b) violent gang crime
- (c) drug related gang crime
- (d) number of gangs
- (e) size of gangs

2. Community perception of the scope of the problem and the effectiveness of the police response to it:

- (a) arrest rates
- (b) rate of successful prosecutions

- (c) statistics on removal of gang leaders and hard-core members from the community
- (d) changes in patterns of gang recruiting in and around schools

B. Organizational Process Measures

1. The intelligence process especially needs to be evaluated as to:

- (a) accuracy of data collected
- (b) quality of informants
- (c) utility of data retrieval system
- (d) purging of irrelevant and outdated materials
- (e) quality of data analysis as it relates to controlling gang crime

2. Staff development

- (a) Performance appraisal of personnel
- (b) Satisfaction by trainees with training programs

C. Community Process Measures

(1) Statistics on referrals of younger gang members to community-based programs and social intervention services.

(2) Number of anti-gang education workshops delivered and number of contacts with employers.

(3) Interagency collaboration and community mobilization

(4) Cooperation with the courts, probation and parole.

(5) Cooperative efforts extended to community-based programs in organizing anti-gang activities.

Appendix

Our survey data suggest that there are three general ways used to define a "gang-related delinquent or criminal incident." (1) a gang motivated activity, (2) a gang-related activity, and (3) violent or threatening offenses committed by a group which has not, as yet, been identified as a gang.

We believe that the most precise and valid definition of a gang incident for justice system purposes should be based on specific gang motivation, interest, or circumstances. In this definition, an offense is committed by a suspect who holds membership in an identified gang and is motivated primarily to commit actions which benefit the street gang as a whole in terms of status and/or income.

These activities emphasize acts of violence which are motivated by expansion or protection of a gang's territorial boundaries, retaliation for insults, competition over drug sales, and involvement in other vices, where profits accrue primarily to the gang organization. We observe that generally, profits from drug sales tend to be shared by specific individuals rather than directly by the gang as a whole. The over-riding consideration is that the offense(s) benefit the gang directly, particularly in terms of social status, defense of "honor" and sometimes criminal gain.

Incidents in which a gang member is involved as a suspect or victim, but where the offense does not appear to be directly gang motivated, are often classified as "gang-related" in certain cities or jurisdictions. Examples have been cases of domestic violence involving a gang member, robberies for personal gang member gain, and offenses committed by a gang member without direct relation to the interests of his organization. The broader, gang-related definition results in higher numbers of gang incidents, often double those found when the narrower, more focussed gang motivation definition is used to identify a gang incident.

Offenses committed by a group of youth which are generally not violent or threatening should not be included as gang offenses, especially if the youth involved hardly know each other and the group may exist only for a short period of time. Such group offenses, however, may be precursors to sustained, and more identifiable gang activity. Also, when the purpose of the group's activity is primary and systematic criminal gain, the incident should be categorized under organized crime, particularly if adults are significantly involved or give direction to the group.