

WHAT WILL THE IMPACT OF REGIONALIZED IN-SERVICE
TRAINING BE ON THE DAVIS POLICE DEPARTMENT
BY THE YEAR 2002?

JOURNAL ARTICLE

by

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"You can never plan the future by the past"

Edmund Burke

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Summary

This journal article on regionalized in-service training was completed for the State of California Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST), Command College. The article is an analysis into the idea of regionalized in-service training for the six law enforcement agencies in Yolo County, a rural county in the Sacramento Valley. The intent is to raise the awareness of the advantages, the hazards, and the possibilities of regionalized in-service training for law enforcement agencies that fit the profile. This article is divided into three sections.

The introduction will provide the reader with a literature review on the stated topic. The literature searched helped to focus the article by providing support that the need for increased training is a reality for future law enforcement managers Yolo County.

The second section contains a brief overview of the futures analysis conducted. A select group of individuals helped the author identify trends and events that may be major factors in influencing the future of a consolidated in-service training program. The participants in the study used the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) to first identify 20 trends and 17 events that could affect regionalized training in the identified geographical area.

The second section concludes with the development of a scenario that is “most likely” to occur. The probability of occurrence in the next five years for the refined trends and events was used to develop the “most likely” scenario. The level of influence the trends and events would have, and the impact if they did occur, were also factored in during the scenario development.

The third section is the development of a strategic and transition management plan for dealing with the most likely scenario. The Davis Police Department and the other agencies (Woodland, West Sacramento, Winters, University California at Davis Police Departments, and the Yolo County Sheriff’s Department) that provide law enforcement services for Yolo County were used as the model for the development of the strategic and transition management plan. The strategic plan is designed to help the organizations identify the “stakeholders” and “snaildarters” to the unification of in-service training programs. The strategic plan also helps agencies identify resources and outlines suggestions for gaining needed support to ensure success in attaining the desired future state.

The transition management plan outlines basic steps an agency can take to initiate a move from the present to a desired future state.

This article ends with a brief discussion of the outcome and conclusion of the studies.

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Issue

A futurist in a 1985 article is quoted as saying “Every crisis brings opportunity.”¹ This has never been more true than with the status of today’s in-service law enforcement training programs. Over the past 30 years the demand for frequent, high quality, job applicable training

has substantially increased. This increase can be attributed primarily to changes in three key areas: 1) an increase in the technical nature of police work, 2) civil liability, and 3) state mandates for both sworn and civilian employees. Unfortunately, this increase in demand has not been accompanied by an increase in funding. This Introduction will discuss the impact of these three factors and the relationship of funding to in-service police training.

Today's law enforcement agencies have witnessed a tremendous increase in the demand for service, a 500% increase in the last 30 years.² For every eight crimes reported, there is only one officer to respond.³ One way police agencies have tried to mitigate this discrepancy between demand and officer availability is through technological advances. In other words, more efficiently and effectively using the officers who are available.

Technologically speaking, this is an interesting time to be involved in law enforcement. There was a time in the recent past when a vehicle or a revolver was the most sophisticated piece of equipment an officer was required to train with and operate. However, the modern police employee must be trained to operate numerous computer systems (computer aided dispatch, mobile data terminals, hand held computerized citation books, and automated records management systems). In addition, there are numerous types of firearms, less than lethal equipment (Tasers, capture nets, flexible batons, and wraps), and complex radio systems personnel must be able to operate efficiently to function on a daily basis. The technological revolution is just starting to take hold in law enforcement.

In 1995 President Clinton and U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno became interested in dual use technology; that is technology that has uses for both law enforcement and the military. This prompted the development of the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology

Center (NLECTC) and the Technology Reinvestment Project (TRP).⁴ The expressed goal of these organizations is to work with the Department of Defense, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the National Technology Transfer Center (NTTC), and the Office of Law Enforcement and Technology Commercialization to “accomplish the transfer of technology from laboratory systems (and the military) into the market, where new products can actually be sold to the law enforcement community.”⁵ At stake is approximately \$415 million dollars worth of government contracts.⁶

Since the military is reducing its spending and downsizing its forces, companies once heavily invested in military “war technology” are looking for a place to divert their attention and resources. Law enforcement and dual use technology are a likely place for them to land, particularly with the financial encouragement of the President and key members of Congress. Already one of the branches of the NTTC is working with the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory to develop a remote controlled retractable spike barrier used to end vehicle pursuits.⁷ It is probable that in the near future even small agencies will be using fiber optic scopes and probes, on board x-rays, pursuit termination devices, and unmanned airplane drones loaded with cameras and/or other detection devices. Considering these technological advances on the immediate horizon, it is evident that law enforcement managers will need to face the need for on-going training will only increase as the years pass.

The proliferation of technology is a major concern for today’s manager. According to a 1996 study conducted by Eckard College, over two-thirds of the managers interviewed rated information technology in the workplace as their chief concern for the future.⁸ Combining this with their number two concern, a drop in the skill level of the entering workforce, there is a gap

that managers must reconcile.⁹ More than likely this will need to be addressed during in-service training.

Excessive civil law suits are another reason to expand training. In the 1996-1997 U.S. Supreme Court term 99 cases were heard. Of the 99 cases, 25 cases dealt with criminal law; 11 cases cited police training as a key in the ruling.¹⁰ When combined with state and local legislation, it is obvious that if officers tasked with enforcing the law are to keep abreast of the most advanced techniques and the most recent case law, they will need frequent and in-depth training.

There are few professions that equal law enforcement in public exposure and scrutiny. If an officer takes controversial action, the first question asked by the department, the public, and potentially a jury is, "How well trained was the officer?" It is important for today's law enforcement leaders to provide training to increase efficiency and productivity. But, in today's litigious culture, managers have an affirmative responsibility to provide training to protect employees and the organization from law suits. In fact, a 1989 Supreme Court decision, *City of Canton v. Harris*, "the court held that a municipality can, under some circumstances, be held liable for constitutional violations resulting from a failure to train its employees."¹¹ According to Christopher Hennen's article in the September 1996 issue of Law and Order, "Training represents the great equalizer and, if conducted properly and regularly, can become a force multiplier and public relations device, and can ease the civil liability burden of departments."¹² Of course, training cannot resolve all shortcomings within an agency, or prevent law suits. However, it does reduce the likelihood of a successful suit and does keep the department's exposure to a minimum.

Finally, the State of California, through the Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training, (POST) mandates that certain subjects shall be taught on a periodic basis.¹³ The number

of mandated courses for sworn peace officers have for the past fifteen years increased in number. In more recent years POST has started mandating training standards for civilian employees, namely dispatchers.

An interview with the Yolo County regional POST representative indicates he believes the mandated training for full time sworn personnel has reached a static point. However, it is likely there will be additional mandates (including on-going professional training) for dispatchers and Records Supervisors. The most comprehensive changes for the next five years will be in the Reserve Police Officer ranks. The changes have already begun with increasing the requirements for Reserve Police Officers to gain certification to work patrol. The trend will be to mandate on-going professional training equivalent to a permanent sworn officer. Many smaller and mid-sized agencies “employ” a large contingent of reserve officers to supplement staffing, particularly for special events or during a major crisis. The added training requirements will tax an already overburdened budget.

The above arguments show the need for increased training for all law enforcement agencies. However, the demand placed on the peace officer profession has not been matched with financial support from state or local sources. Since the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, followed by Propositions 4 and more recently Proposition 218, governmental organizations are competing more than ever for dwindling tax dollars. In Yolo County, all but one of the law enforcement agencies has had their training budgets reduced or eliminated in the past three years.

All of the agencies in Yolo County are considered medium to small in size; the largest agency employing 56 officers. Each one of these officers is required to meet the POST mandated Advanced Officers Training (24 hours every two years). Generally, the advanced training is

focused on the mandated areas: domestic violence, missing persons, first aid/CPR, and other required training. It is easy to see how there would be excessive duplication within the county.

For every employee to receive the required instruction dictated by the 24 hour POST requirement, each agency would have to present the same class four times. This means that the six law enforcement departments in Yolo County would put on the same class 24 times every other year. In spite of this, because of vacations, illness, or injury, some individuals would be missed. In addition, this does not include the non-police agencies like the District Attorney's and Public Defender's Investigators and the Welfare Fraud Investigators who are also required to meet minimum State training requirements. The obvious duplication of effort does not even address those areas that are not mandated, but are desirable by most agencies to help develop officers into more efficient and effective employees. Nor does it address the issue of needing to train officers on all of the advanced technology equipment that is just beginning to enter the profession.

Keeping in mind that police departments need to do more with less, there is clearly room for improvement in the manner in which in-service training is delivered. As the departments in Yolo County are geographically close, are of similar size and similar budgets, it seems reasonable that police agencies in Yolo County could combine their training resources.

Research Focus and Definitions

The focus of this article will be:

What will the impact of regionalized in-service training be on the Davis Police Department by the year 2002?

This article may focus its terminology on municipal police departments. However, the intent is to refer to both municipal law enforcement and county sheriff's departments. For purposes of this article, regionalization is defined as an official cooperative effort by agencies that share a general geographic region (generally, a separation of less than 25 miles).

The following sub-issues were developed during this investigation:

- What law enforcement actions will be necessary to join training programs.
- What measures need to be taken to ensure the cooperation of police managers, employee groups, and line personnel.
- What control issues need to be address before regionalization can take place.
- What sources of funding will need to be addressed

FORGING THE FUTURE

As important as it is to understand historically where we have been on the issue and what current areas impact the issue, it is equally important that law enforcement managers project what the future holds for in-service police training before taking action.

By using the Nominal Group Technique, (NGT), a study of possible trends and events that could influence regionalization of law enforcement in-service training for Yolo County, and more specifically the City of Davis Police Department, was conducted. A panel of experts from both law enforcement and civilian backgrounds was used to help predict the trends and events. The time span of the year 2002 was used as a guideline for the panel to work with when establishing

their predictions. The participants were selected based on their expertise in one or more of the following areas:

1. Familiarity with law enforcement operations and issues.
2. Experience with financial planning and administering government budgeting.
3. Familiarity with the philosophy of regionalization and consolidation in law enforcement.
4. Experience with needs of law enforcement training.

Six people were chosen to sit on the NGT panel. This falls within the recommended number of participants according to NGT guidelines of six to ten individuals.

The panel was made up of the following individuals:

1. A municipal financial planner.
2. A regional law enforcement and fire training director.
3. A law enforcement training manager.
4. A municipal planner.
5. A retired law enforcement Lieutenant of operations, currently involved in law enforcement training standards.
6. A hospital administrator with extensive background in future planning and budget.

The group was provided with some background information on the topic and a description of the NGT process. They were instructed that the NGT process is a small group operation designed to generate ideas and for achieving acceptable agreement on the answer. In addition, it was explained the NGT process was not designed to determine the absolute “truth” or future, simply some likely events and trends that could give shape to the future.

Forecasting Trends

The group generated the ideas individually first, and then presented their ideas one by one to the entire gathering. A list of approximately 20 trends was initially identified by the participants. The panel then worked to refine these 20 trends into the six major trends they felt would most effect the issue:

1. Change in the level of community expectations.
2. POST changing it's reimbursement policy for funding to schools away from the officer's home agency.
3. Change in required state mandated training.
4. Officer's skills will not keep pace with the demand from the community.
5. Changes in municipal budgets.
6. Technology in the workplace.

Review of Trend Information

*Trend 1 - Change in community expectations.

The panel believed the scope of law enforcement responsibility has changed dramatically during the last decade. This is particularly true of those departments that have fully embraced the concepts of Community Oriented Policing, (COP). Now peace officers are expected to handle not only criminal activity, but also, visual blight, concerns of cultural diversity, issues with seniors and the homeless, and advanced technology. Today's law enforcement agencies must train their officers to anticipate the changes in the community and adjust their own performance and abilities to reflect the community standards and expectations.

*Trend 2 - POST will change its reimbursement policy for funding to schools away from the officers home agency.

The group discussed the general improvement in the state budget. However, the state and federal focus in recent years has been towards improving education and welfare reform. Most agencies, particularly small and mid-sized departments had the majority of their internal training budgets drastically reduced or eliminated years ago. Therefore, they have relied heavily on POST reimbursement for sending officers to advanced training. With the state focus on education and welfare reform, there is no clear direction for POST reimbursement. The panel felt that if welfare reform continued there could be additional money available for law enforcement. However, law enforcement would be competing with schools for any money freed up from the reforms.

There was recognition that there is federal money available through the "Clinton Cop" grants. However, this money is limited in its use. Currently it cannot be used for in-service training of existing officers.

*Trend 3 - Change in required state mandated training.

This trend was closely linked to Trend 1. The forecast group believed that when the community is sufficiently dissatisfied with the direction of its law enforcement agency it works through the legislation to effect change. The legislation mandates that POST will modify its training requirements to include appropriate training on the area the community is dissatisfied with, typically without providing the budget to effectively train. This has been the case in areas such as cultural awareness, domestic violence, missing persons, and child abuse investigations. The panel felt the trend of mandating more frequent and more diverse training would only accelerate over the next five years.

*Trend 4 - Officer's skills will not keep pace with the demand from the community.

As previously stated, the communities we live in are very dynamic. Officers must be able to deal with all levels of the social, cultural, and economic structure. The panel felt that one way to overcome the diverse job requirements was with training.

*Trend 5 - Changes in the municipal budget.

Over the past 20 years there has been a steady drain from municipal budgets. It started in 1978 with the passage of Proposition 13, continued with Proposition 4, and again most recently with Proposition 218 (the effects which will not be realized for another year). In addition, when the state experiences revenue loss, it can and does revise the distribution of certain taxes and fees. For example, the redistribution of the DMV registration fees. The state now raids fees once allocated to the counties and municipalities to balance its budget short falls.

*Trend 6- Technology in the workplace.

All of the society is experiencing a technological revolution, law enforcement is not exempt. The group acknowledged how much technology has moved into the law enforcement profession. It is common for even small agencies to have Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), some type of automated records management system, a mobile computer system, in car video, and computerized booking.

These are tools that must be operated by employees. Those individuals must be trained on the proper use, and possible misuse, accompanying policies, and potential liabilities to the tool. The panel agreed that changing technology in law enforcement will necessitate continued training.

Forecasting Events

As with the trends, the panel first generated their ideas privately, then presented them one by one to the group. The forecasting group used the NGT process to identify the 17 major events that would likely have the greatest impact on the issue of regionalized in-service training. The top six events are as follows:

1. Change in Police Chief or Sheriff.
2. Yolo County files bankruptcy.
3. A major lawsuit following a police misconduct incident.
4. A local scandal involving the police department.
5. A major tax revolt resulting in the loss of General Fund tax revenue.
6. Redistribution of tax dollars to welfare as part of welfare reform.

Review of Event Information

*Event 1- Change in Police Chief.

The group discussed the possible impact of the change in leadership in any of the agencies attempting to regionalize. The prevailing feeling was that if there was any organized resistance to the regionalization effort by any one of the Chiefs or the Sheriff the regionalization effort would likely fail. The panel felt that any attempt to regionalize would take about four to five years to demonstrate its true success or failure. With that in mind, and the fact that most California Police

Chiefs last only three to four years, it is important that if the regionalization effort is going to be given a fair chance to succeed, cities should know what position a Chief candidate would take on regionalized training if hired.

*Event 2 - Yolo County files bankruptcy.

Yolo County is considered to be a poor county. In fact, in 1995 it was considered to be the second poorest county in the state, behind Lake County. The group believed that there was a 60% chance that Yolo County will file bankruptcy in the next five years, with chances remaining about 60% for the next ten years. The group thought this would have a negative impact on any regionalization efforts. The concern is that if the county files for bankruptcy, they may divert moneys from the cities, or begin charging additional or higher user fees to the cities. Of course, this will likely result in reduced training budgets as part of overall budget reductions.

*Trend 3 - A major lawsuit following a police misconduct incident.

The forecasting group considered this to be the most likely incident that would impact regionalized in-service training, with a likelihood of 75% in the next five years. They felt that an incident which resulted in a negligent death (e.g., a bad shooting) would rally the community. The community would demand additional training without adding additional funding. The only way this additional training could be accomplished is through a change in the way agencies deliver training.

*Trend 4 - A local scandal involving the police department.

Although the group felt that this had a low likelihood of occurrence, only 20% in the next five years, if it did happen, it would have the maximum impact. The community would not tolerate police corruption or misconduct on any major issue. Any event the community perceived as a scandal would likely result in a demand for extensive training.

*Event 5 - A major tax revolt resulting in the loss of General Fund tax revenue.

The group believed that there is 40% chance there would be another tax revolt in the next five years, increasing to 60% chance in the next ten years. If this event did take place, the manner in which police training is delivered would have to be altered. The panel did not differentiate between a state level tax revolt and a local tax revolt. There was strong opinion that a local revolt in just Yolo County or one of the participating agencies, could have as much impact, if not a greater impact, than one that extended across the state. With the passage of Proposition 218 in November 1996, the loss of "park taxes" could cause a immediate and dramatic reduction in police training budgets.

*Event 6 - Redistribution of tax dollars as part of welfare reform.

The nation and the state has been in the process of revising and reforming the welfare system for the last several years. The group believed this would continue to take place for at least the next five years. If the state and federal governments paid less into the welfare system, there could be additional money for law enforcement. The panel believed that there was a 35% probability that former welfare money would be redistributed to law enforcement. However, the forecasters felt this probability would drop to a mere 10% over the next ten years. In short, if this event did take place, agencies should act immediately as within the following five years, there was a good chance this money would not be available.

SCENARIO

Yolo County was selected as the setting for the scenario to follow. The County is a rural area of the Sacramento Valley. It has a population of 150,000 people primarily located in one of three cities: Davis (55,000), Woodland (45,000) and West Sacramento (30,000). As a rural county, the main industry is agriculture. There are six law enforcement agencies in the County: Winters PD (8 officers), Woodland PD (55 officers), Davis PD (55 officers), West Sacramento PD (56 officers), the University California at Davis Police (50 officers divided between the campus and the UCD Medical Center in Sacramento), and the Yolo County Sheriff's Department (50 officers).

The scenario was developed using the events and trends the NGT panel refined. The scenario is designed to present a possible outcome and is not intended to predict what actually will happen.

SCENARIO-Most Likely

Lt. Smith sits behind his desk going over his computerized calendar to see that the end of the year is fast approaching, it is September 15, 2002; where does all the time go. He reflects on the changes that have taken place in the past few years, it seems like so much in such a short time.

It has been two years since his appointment to the new Yolo County Cooperative Public Safety Training Center. It was his "baby". Once the local agencies agreed to combine their training programs, Smith was put in charge of making it happen. Currently, Lt. Smith is on temporary assignment from the Davis Police Department. There is a five year rotational assignment to the Training Center with the six participating agencies sharing not only the facility,

but also, the management of the facility. As the first person to run the facility, it fell to him to develop the curriculum and deal with all the political headaches that come along with starting a facility.

The idea of regionalization was not new to Yolo County. EOD had been a regional team since 1984 and the SWAT Teams combined in 1998. However, agencies were hesitant to give up their autonomy when it came to training, that was Lt. Smith's first battle. But, with a series of events it was inevitable that training programs would also unify.

It all started when the citizen's of California passed Proposition 117 in 1998. Tired of what they perceived as continued government waste, the State budget was cut 30%. In response, the State cut back on all but essential services. POST is a skeleton of an agency now. POST not only does not reimburse for salary, that was cut in the mid-1990's, but also it ceased paying for travel, lodging, and per diem. It now only handles the administrative functions for establishing training requirements and the new three dimensional video conferencing. Sure the training is "almost" like being there, but can one really substitute a video image for actual hands on experience. Even the required arms training has been reduced to FATS training.

The next set of events which drove the law enforcement agencies in the County to unify their training programs happened in a compressed time period, from June of 1998 to March 1999. In that time, there was a sexual harassment scandal at the Davis Police Department involving the Chief and a female officer; the Sheriff's Department had a bad officer involved shooting and a pursuit that killed a pregnant mother and her two year old son; finally, the Woodland Police Department was sued for age discrimination. All of these incidents resulted a region wide community outcry for additional training. Citizens were not willing to listen to excuses about a

lack of funding, they did not feel officer's skills were keeping pace with the needs of the area, and they expected results. Rehabilitating the image of law enforcement in the County was Lt. Smith's second challenge.

There were some close calls that almost caused the failure of the program. West Sacramento's Police Chief retired in 2000. The City Manager for that city did not consider the Regional Training Center when looking for his replacement. The woman who was eventually hired as Chief was not supportive of the regional concept. She came from a large Southern California agency and thought her department would lose too much control. The Chief's Coordinating Council was able to apply some pressure, and with the accompanying political and economic pressures from her own department she did join.

Each agency contributed what it could. The property was acquired from the University of California at Davis. They converted about 30 acres of agricultural research property between Woodland and Davis for a range, the classrooms, and a driving skid pan. The Sheriff's Department provided inmate power for construction and facility maintenance, while Woodland, Davis, West Sacramento, and Winters provided what capital outlay they could for the structures and the equipment needed to operate.

The real windfall for the project happened in late 1999, when the last of the "Clinton Cop" money was allocated. Additional funding was made available after the federal government refined the welfare system. The reforms resulted in about one billion in unexpected money for other programs. The "Clinton Cop" program received just over of the new money. President Clinton, in a political move to bolster the Democratic Party prior to the election in 2000, decided to allow

for this additional money to be used in more innovative ways, not just for additional officers. The Training Center applied for and received a one time grant of two million dollars.

Fortunately, the Yolo County Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), the cooperative agency that oversees the Training Center, has been very easy to work with. Lt. Smith knows that each participating agency has set aside their individual needs and wants for the long term benefit of the whole. At times his experience has been frustrating, but Lt. Smith knows that he is just seeing the beginning of what promises to be a successful future for the Training Center and the participating agencies.

RESOLUTION TO PARTNER

The determination of law enforcement agencies to partner with each other on a regionalized training plan should be given careful consideration. Before any plan is developed and implemented two areas should be considered:

1. The perception of stakeholders, including their assumptions and criticism.
2. Future trends and events outlined in the previous section.

Stakeholder Identification

Stakeholders are those individuals or groups who: 1) have interest in the organization(s), 2) are impacted by changes in the organization(s), and 3) can create support or opposition, or have conflicting/mixed interest in the issue. The identification, evaluation, and mapping of their position is important for the successful implementation of any strategic plan. A stakeholder's position may be based on assumptions. However, understanding their position can assist police

executives in gaining additional insight to make more informed decisions. The following is a list of ten stakeholders and their assumptions about regionalized in-service police training programs.

⇒ Peace Officers Associations- mixed

With the countywide combining of training programs and the proposed cost savings, it is possible that Officer's Association would expect the dollars saved would be recycled back into the larger program. They could expect to receive more frequent and diverse training. In addition, the associations might be resistant to unification on the grounds that nearby participating agencies have philosophical differences and those differences could be conveyed during training sessions, confusing particularly newer officers. Most associations are concerned about the loss of jobs. Police Associations in Yolo County could be concerned that this regionalization effort is the first step in a region wide law enforcement agency, which could result in the loss of jobs. Certainly they would be concerned that officers from their association might lose out on opportunities to become in-house experts, as those assignments would now be spread throughout the county.

⇒ Police Chiefs/Sheriff - supportive

One of the primary concerns for any law enforcement executive is the fiscal well being of the organization. Regionalization is a good opportunity for a Chief or Sheriff to participate in an innovative program for the area, provide mandated training to reduce liability, all while saving taxes dollars. In addition, a forward thinking executive might also see this as an opportunity to be entrepreneurial by providing, for a fee, the training to other agencies not involved in the consortium.

⇒ Citizens/taxpayer - supportive

Generally speaking, citizens are not well informed about financial issues that face law enforcement agencies. However, they do expect to get the most for their tax dollar. If the community becomes aware of the duplication of effort that exist within neighboring police departments, it is likely they will demand a change in training. Therefore, it should be anticipated that the community will see regionalization as a positive move to meet both expectations. They will receive better trained officers at a lower cost.

Civilian Personnel - mixed

Currently, most agencies do not adequately train their civilian personnel. If agencies combined their resources to develop a regional training facility, civilian personnel would see this as an opportunity to receive more frequent and diverse training. However, it should also be noted that civilian personnel might fear that this is a move to better train sworn employees, not civilians. The Civilian employee is likely to take a wait and see position on regionalization.

⇒ City Manager - supportive

As in any region of California, the City Managers and the CFO of Yolo County will be supportive of just about any effort to save the cities money. They will see money saved from this project as money that can be diverted from law enforcement into other city projects. Individuals putting this plan together should capitalize off of that eagerness to save money. Seed money should be asked for prior to the start of any implementation. However, some savings will need to be shown quickly if the support of the City Managers is to be maintained.

⇒ Regional Training Institutions - opposed

There are several private regional training centers in the immediate area. They would not want to see agencies in Yolo County regionalize. If the agencies in Yolo County stop using the existing training centers, money will be lost and there is the possibility of losing POST accreditation. In addition, the existing regional centers have support from local community colleges. There would be concern that if there is a significant drop in enrollment, they could lose the support of those institutions.

⇒ Line police officer/deputy - mixed

Like the civilian employee, the sworn line officer will see more training opportunities for diverse training. However, they would also be worried that they would be required to train with officers and trainers from neighboring agencies that have philosophically different methods of doing their job. Currently, most advanced training in Yolo County takes place away from the officer's agency. A regionalized training center would mean less travel (thereby less officer interaction with officers from around the state) and perhaps less overtime pay for the training.

⇒ Minority Activist - mixed

Many minority activist groups have a general mistrust of local law enforcement. Potentially, those activist will view this as a means to save money, but not to improve training. They will be concerned about the type of training conducted. If allowed to work with the formation of the training schedule, this is potentially an opportunity for the activist groups and the agencies to build a better working relationship and strengthen the trust and understanding.

⇒ POST - supportive

POST has been given a difficult task of developing and maintaining high training standards for the State of California. However, like most government organizations, their budget has not kept pace with the demands. POST would be supportive of a regional training facility in Yolo County. This is an opportunity to better administer mandated training to a wider region without paying for additional travel expenses. The agencies developing this type of training facility should look to POST for guidance and assistance to develop a successful plan.

⇒ City Attorney - mixed

Most city attorneys will change their concerns as the concern of the city council changes. They will be instrumental in developing a MOU that covers the legal issues. Of chief concern for many city attorneys will be liability. If the city they represent teaches officers from another agency, and the newly trained officer gets sued for some error (actual or alleged), is the city responsible for conducting the training also going to be sued.

A snaildarter is defined as a group or individual who has some influence over the issue, but it is not known whether it will be positive or negative. A snaildarter for regionalized law enforcement training in Yolo County is the local community colleges. They could view this as an opportunity to be a part of more training and as a financial opportunity, or they could view it as a threat to the relationship they currently have with the existing private regional training centers.

A review of the above assumptions show that most stakeholders are supportive of a unified training program that would meet the training needs of the participating agencies at a lower cost. The only major concern is to what degree each agency will lose control over their own training.

Strategic Planning to Success

Whenever an organization begins to undertake any significant change, there is uncertainty and anxiety. People feel they have lost the ability to predict or anticipate what is going to happen; they have lost control of their environment. One way to mitigate the negative impacts of implementing a significant change in the organizational environment is to develop a strategic plan. Strategic planning is, "A systemic way to create and manage a desirable future."¹⁴ In other words, it is a map and a compass that an employee can use to get from the current organizational state to the desired future organizational state. Bearing this in mind, eight strategies to successful execution of regionalized law enforcement training were developed.

1. The development of a regionalized Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the six participating agencies. The MOU would include the macro and micro mission statements, the vision and goal statement for the project.

2. Establishment of a policy body that is supportive of the concept of regionalization. The body will have policy control of the regionalized service. The body should include at least one member from each participating agency.

3. Bring together the policy body and the law enforcement agency staffs to outline expectations. The emphasis should be on the scope of control and the limitations for both the policy body and the individual agencies. The goal is to build effective communication between the emerging governing body and the agencies to assist in eliminating the feelings of loss of control. This step is critical to the success of the project.

4. In conjunction with the administrative staff of each agency, the policy staff would conduct a needs assessment survey. This would include the determination of the scope of training, just state mandated training, or in-house training as well. In addition, they would simultaneously conduct an analysis of current resources available within each agency and the county in general. This analysis would include a search for the appropriate site location, structural needs, and capital supplies needed.

5. Set-up a system for feedback for all the involved agencies to insure that complaints and concerns are heard and acted upon efficiently.

6. Select the operational staff for the training center.

7. Establishment of an implementation calendar for the training center to become operational.

8. Train the agencies using the training center on its operation and policies.

The strategy of bringing together of the policy making body and the staffs of the participating agencies is critical to successful implementation. For the agency heads to sell the concept of regionalized training to the line officer, the officers' participation is a requirement; they need to share in the ownership of the project. This task is paramount for the policy body to accomplish. This assignment will be taking place in conjunction with other ongoing strategies, but should help establish a solid foundation.

There are certain advantages and disadvantages of allowing participation by the line personnel in the decision to unify training and in the manner in which that union will take place.

Below is a list of advantages and disadvantages:

Advantages

- ⇒ All personnel are aware of the regionalization effort and its limitations.
- ⇒ Reduces the likelihood of late opposition to the project.
- ⇒ Increases buy-in by all parties from Chief to line personnel.
- ⇒ Allows for understanding by all parties as to the level of expected involvement.

Disadvantages

- ⇒ Invites individuals who might be opposed to the regionalization effort, such as the Peace Officers Association, to challenge the unification before it actually develops.
- ⇒ An expectation could be created that line personnel will be consulted on all decisions involving department policy before implementation.
- ⇒ Individuals who are in opposition to the regionalization could be alienated from participating in other aspects of the organization.

As with any major project, one of the most important bridges a manager must cross is the support of the personnel expected to carry out the new policy or project. Gaining support can be hard, because change is uncomfortable. According to management experts like Peter Drucker and Peter Senge who specialize in organizational change and leadership, genuine commitment at many levels of the organization is the only means for achieving true long term change and acceptance. According to Senge, "Hierarchical authority, as it has been used traditionally in Western management, tends to evoke compliance, not foster commitment. The more strongly hierarchical power is welded, the more compliance results. Yet there is no substitute for commitment in

bringing about deep change.”¹⁵ To be supportive of the concept of regionalized training, the line personnel in the all the agencies must be committed to the change. The garnishment of support should begin with the first steps of establishing the MOU and should continue even beyond the opening of the training facility.

TRANSITION MANAGEMENT

To change the manner in which an organization operates is transition management. The key to implementing a strategic plan is an effective transition management plan. Transition management takes into consideration important approaches to the stakeholders along with their respective spheres of influence. Their commitment, or lack of it will be of key import when developing any plan.

Making the transition from six separate training programs to one unified regional program with system side support is a multi-step process.

Step 1 (MOU development)

The initial phase of gaining support for the regionalization concept is identifying a team of individuals from within each participating law enforcement agency. The goal of the team would be to develop a collaborative MOU, mission statements, and goals and vision for the project. This beginning serves to both build team work and to develop conflict resolution. This team would be responsible for seeking input from all levels. This should reduce the amount of apprehension and permit open discuss on relevant issues.

Natural leaders should be approached to participate at the earliest possible time. Generally, natural leaders are well respected by the line personnel, often are respected by supervisors, management staff, the Officer’s Association, and the community. The leader should

be given tasks or responsibilities that can positively influence the direction of the project. A contingency plan should be developed to deal with the disillusioned natural leader to avoid the deleterious impact they can have.

As part of the development of the MOU Team a conflict resolution plan would be developed. Unless conflict is kept in check, it can control the process, usually to the negative. To avoid the loss of control, the person selected to sit on the MOU Team from each agency should have strong negotiation skills.

Step 2 (Research)

During the second phase of this project, the MOU group would find similar programs in and out of the State of California. The project team should make contact with those organizations, determine what policies were developed, what was successful, what would they have done differently, and what unanticipated problems surfaced.

Step 3 (Surveys)

It is important for the agency to poll those individuals not directly involved in the development of the MOU, mission, goals, and visions to make sure the “message” is getting out. One means of accomplishing that task is to take a survey of the line personnel and supervisors. This will assist in projecting to the organizations that what they think of the regionalization effort is important. As important as it is to receive the information, it is equally meaningful for the MOU Team to review the data and respond back to those individuals who provided it. Managers often ask for input then fail to respond back, leaving the people providing feedback with a feeling of mistrust and animosity.

Step 4 (Reward system)

Providing credit where credit is due is one of the best ways to reward people who positively participate in the process. Recognition should be done throughout the transition period. In financially strapped times it can be difficult to reward people monetarily, but many cities do have some funds available for monetary rewards. Where available and appropriate, individual and/or team efforts should be recognized with service awards. Care should be given to giving rewards too capriciously as it can lose its effectiveness, leading to petty jealousies. This is particularly true because this project involves several different agencies who probably have different reward systems.

Step 5 (Responsibility charting)

Responsibility charting is a technique used to distribute the needed work and establish clearly who is responsible for a particular activity or behavior. This reduces the likelihood of duplicated effort. It also allows each individual the opportunity to view what areas they are responsible for, what areas they merely have input on, what they have approval authority, and/or what areas they are to provide support for.

Step 6 (Review)

Once the MOU, mission, goals, and visions are complete, a rough draft would be circulated to the staff officers from each participating department and the Officer's Association. They would be expected to review and provide input to the MOU Team. This is also the point where the City Attorney's Office from each agency will provide input on any legal issues.

STEP 7 (After action report)

This final step allows for critical examination of the plan after implementation. It confronts the problems encountered and how they were handled. This process is not an opportunity to fix the blame. Rather, it is an opportunity to examine the action, or inaction, of the participants in hopes to improve the operation or streamline the process. These reports should be provided by individuals who have direct responsibility for any functional task.

CONCLUSION

The decision for law enforcement agencies to regionalize their training programs is not without potential problems. However, the benefits seem to outweigh the difficulties. The most significant concern is the political and social loss of control for the participating agencies. The necessity of the organizations to meet the needs of an ever demanding community in financially leaner times will have to take precedence over "tradition".

Given the prevailing economic instability in the State of California and the increased demand on law enforcement agencies from the community and the State Legislature, it appears that the consolidation of police services in Yolo County will continue. As there are a number of auxiliary services currently regionalized, namely EOD and to some extent communications, and efforts to regionalize other services (SWAT), it is conceivable that training is another area to be explored.

It is hoped that by employing a solid strategic plan which includes extensive line personnel involvement and extensive research, the majority of pitfalls can be avoided. This plan should, without question, involve the line personnel as much as possible at the policy making level.

NOTES

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