

**How Will Law Enforcement
Effectively Recruit University Graduates
by the Year 2007?**

by

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“Leadership is like the Abominable Snowman, whose footprints are everywhere but who is nowhere to be seen”

Leaders; Strategies for Taking Charge
Warren Bennis & Burt Nanus

INTRODUCTION

The conventional wisdom of the past decades dictated that all one needed to be a police officer was a badge, a gun, and physical strength. With all of these attributes, one was effectively equipped to handle all of the issues facing a police officer. The recruitment of police officers was centered around this successful image, as there was only a minimal need to communicate and write reports. As American culture developed, so did its technology. It was no longer enough to simply “catch and arrest.” Society began to have expectations that police officers could drive a radio equipped car and actually communicate by wireless radio to the police station. Telephone call boxes and walking beat officers were not enough for a growing and advancing society. Since the first time a VHF radio was put into the police car, technology associated with the police officer has moved forward with increasing speed. The police officer of today is faced with voice activated computer systems installed in the police car, is expected to understand a complex legal system that is orchestrated by highly educated attorneys, and is expected to possess the ability to understand DNA evidence processing procedures; all the while retaining humanity in handling human situations in our society. The social complexity of our society is going to require that a police officer, surviving in the community policing arena of the future must have a broad base of social and community problem solving skills. These skills will be developed from job training programs, life experience, and a broad base educational experience. Is there a need for university educated police officers?

The emphasis on advanced education for police officers is due to the increasing complexity of the role of the police officer in our society, as they are involved in interrelated role concepts of law

enforcement, maintenance of social order, and social services.¹ These role concepts require an in-depth understanding of the psychological and sociological implications pertaining to our communities which is gained through broad based university education.² If law enforcement efforts are going to be effective, it will be necessary to produce sensitive, holistic police officers who can produce practical results without losing sight of the moral consequences of their job.³ This will require that they receive a higher form of education than is presently required or offered.⁴ The university education of police officers, which includes multi-disciplinary training in law enforcement, the physical sciences, public administration management, social sciences, humanities with a small professional police science core curriculum, is the desired university educational program.⁵

Currently in our university system there exists a highly educated potential work force, which I do not believe law enforcement is effectively recruiting. In the City of Chico, California, very little time is spent recruiting the 15,000 college students that are an integral part of our community. It would seem that recruitment of these educated students would be one way to address the age old

¹ Daley, T.P. 1989 Little Rock, Arkansas
Increasing Educational Levels of Little Rock Police Officers.

² *ibid.*

³ Educational and Psychological Research, Volume 5, Number 3, pages 149-164
“Criminal Justice Education and the Humanities” (1985)

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ Liberal Education, Volume 63, Number 2, pages 154-158
“College Education for Police Officers?” (1987)

problem of police officer recruitment. Looking back at the 1970s and early 1980s, law enforcement would recruit for a position and would then select the most qualified applicants for employment. The number of applicants applying was plentiful and the qualifications of the candidates were high. The qualification issue may have been directly related to the technological and legal standard of the era. It has changed considerably since that time and the comparison we make is to current complex technology and performance. It is very unlikely that technology will slow down or decrease in complexity. Sophistication will continue, not only in the computer arena, but also in the police vehicle and the defensive weaponry of the future.

As law enforcement addresses personnel needs in the future, they are going to be required to broaden the base of their recruitment efforts to meet their human resource requirements. It has been determined that currently only 4% of all applicants for police officer are successful in becoming a sworn police officer.⁶ In the 1989 Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Symposium on Police Officer Recruitment, findings were presented which indicate that 33% of applicants fail the written examination and another 30% fail the oral interview for admission to a police academy.⁷ In a national survey of 185 law enforcement agencies nationwide, 93.5% of the

⁶Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training
“POST Symposium on Recruitment, June 1988,” Sacramento, CA.

⁷ *ibid.*

respondents felt that college education contributes to the success of the police candidates in the testing and selection process.⁸

It is an important aspect of this research project to examine where law enforcement has been, where law enforcement is, and where law enforcement maybe going. The time frame of this project will be the next 10 years.

In the past 10 years, POST educational requirements for employment as a peace officer have been governed by California Government Code section 1031(e), which requires high school graduation or passing of the General Education Development Test (GED), or attainment of a two or four year degree from an accredited college or university.

The California Government Code has allowed the law enforcement agency the flexibility, within section 1031(e), to enact educational standards requiring two and four year college educations. There has been a slow, but steady increase on the part of individual, local, and state agencies toward the requirement of college education as a minimum requirement for recruitment as a police officer.

The "Employment Data for California Law Enforcement 1995/96" published by POST covers the 580 law enforcement agencies employing 73,079 sworn officers in the State of California. The breakdown of these 580 law enforcement agencies is 344 Police Departments, 58 Sheriff's

⁸ Downs, Max. 1987.

Recruiting Qualified Police Applicants: Problems and Responses.

Departments, 51 University/College Police Departments, 9 Marshal's Offices, 47 District Attorney's Offices, 25 State Agencies, and 46 other POST certified departments. The educational requirement for peace officer recruitment for these agencies is as follows:

1. 503 agencies require graduation from high school or GED attainment.
2. 31 agencies require 15 to 30 semester college units of work.
3. 26 agencies require 31 to 60 semester college units of work.
4. 15 agencies require AA/AS degree attainment.
5. 5 agencies require BA/BS degree attainment.⁹

The Lakewood, Colorado Police Department was formed in 1969 with the new city of Lakewood. Since 1969, the minimum educational requirement for a Lakewood police officer has been a four year degree. Lakewood Police Chief Charles Johnston reported that this educational requirement has allowed Lakewood to be "successful in emphasizing and attracting the brightest, most energetic people in law enforcement." Chief Johnston noted that since 1969, "50 former Lakewood police officers now hold chief executive posts in law enforcement agencies across the country." This is good testimony to the requirement of higher education leading to a better quality of law enforcement.

The definition of university graduate for this project, is limited in scope to an individual who has graduated from a four year accredited college or university. This study is focused at the four year graduate, but it very easily could be applied to graduation from a two year accredited college.

⁹ Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training. 1995
"Employment Data for California Law Enforcement 1995/96," Sacramento, CA.

This project is trying to determine a means by which law enforcement can effectively recruit university graduates by the year 2007. It is not my intention to suggest that law enforcement recruitment should only be directed toward university graduates, but there will be a point in the future when being a police officer changes from a vocation to a profession. It is reasonable to expect that there will be qualified, motivated, and self-disciplined individuals who are attending universities in our state that would have an interest in applying for the job of police officer. This study assumes that law enforcement will continue to recruit police officers at the current or increased rate, while maintaining the current entry physical standards.

FUTURES RESEARCH

The future trends, events and issues associated with this research project were identified using the standard Nominal Group Technique (NGT) for trends and events combined with a discussion group of law enforcement managers to research and discuss identifiable issues for this project.

Nominal Group Technique

In an effort to more clearly define the impact this issue may have on a small-sized police department, a group of eight individuals was selected to analyze the issue statement. The group was composed as follows:

1. Municipal government Personnel Manager
2. Police middle manager - Lieutenant
3. Unified School District Director of Alternative Education
4. California Legal Services Staff Attorney
5. Criminal Justice Graduate Student
6. Police Officer Association President
7. Part-time University Instructor
8. Police Manager - Captain

The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) was used to identify trends and events that could impact or change this issue. The group was provided a clear explanation and definition of trends and events, combined with a group discussion of the issue statement.

Trends

Trends are a series of events used in futures research to identify past, present and future events which can be identified as having a collective impact upon a specific issue being studied. Trends are viewed as having an impact upon a specific issue. The direction of the trend, being positive or negative is not the determining or significant factor. Trends are not singular events. They are multiple events that impact a specific issue. Trends provide society's views on a specific issue which, when combined with identified events, can help to direct issues in the future.

Top Ten Trends by Group Priority

1. Level of technology continues to change.
2. Image changes - instead of "men in blue, men we sue."
3. More citizen involvement in police decision making (advisory board, review boards, community groups).
4. Diversity of the work force.
5. Crimes committed against police officers.
6. Greater dependence on volunteers.
7. Continued over-legislation. More and more new laws are created.
8. Population growth of cities.
9. Ineffectiveness of court systems to reduce crime and control criminal behavior.
10. Societal trend toward a lack of personal responsibility.

Group Discussion of Trends 1 to 5 - Identified as Most Important to Group

1. Level of technology continues to change.

The level of technology is changing and will continue to do so to the degree that technology is self driven. Technology has created a life all its own, which in certain settings is not dependent upon outside involvement or catalyst. The financial gain associated with technological advances is staggering; it is truly money driven. The effective use of technology in law enforcement will require a higher education standard in the future. The

group identified the higher education standard as being associated and reflective of the university educational requirement for police officer by 2007. The group felt the impact of this technology trend will be realized within the next five years.

2. Image changes - instead of “men in blue, men we sue.”

The image attached to the police officer of today is an impression based upon public exposure to the police through the media in the majority of the cases that were discussed. It is not always a factual or correct image, but is an image based upon perception. The current image of police in general is negative, which to a degree is causing the police to be ineffective in the public eye. As we progress into the future, all police officers are going to be required to become more involved in their community. The image that results from this involvement will directly effect recruitment and the interest in becoming a police officer. The group described this trend as “image is everything.” The group collectively felt the impact of this trend will be within the next five years and will be positive or negative depending upon the conduct of law enforcement.

3. More citizen involvement in police decision making (advisory boards, review boards, community groups).

The group felt that in the future law enforcement will be impacted by the involvement of citizens’ groups in decision making. An observation was made that citizen review boards would become a part of police operations, either on a voluntary or court settlement basis as the result of legal action. It was felt this form of citizen involvement may directly effect recruitment issues in the future. The impact of this trend will not be felt in the next five years.

4. Diversity of the work force.

The group believed that recruitment would be effected by the employment of more protected class employees in the future. It was estimated that by the year 2007, 50% of the law enforcement work force would be female. Further, by the year 2007, the diversity of the work force in California would mirror the racial diversity of the state and 50% of the work force would be Hispanic. The direct result of this trend would imply that any strategic recruitment plan include an element addressing these key issues. The group feeling was that this trend impact will be felt during the next ten years.

5. Crimes committed against police officers.

The discussion on this trend centered around a perception that violent crime against police officers has increased in the past years and will continue to increase in the future. During the past five years, California Police Officers have been killed in alarming numbers: 1993 - 13 officers; 1994 - 13 officers; 1995 - 19 officers; 1996 - 15 officers; and 1997 - 14 officers. The increase in violent crimes against police officers was linked to population increases as well as to individual community cultural changes. This trend will impact recruitment within the next five years as it is expected that the current trend of violence directed toward police will continue.

Events

Events are singular incidents which have a significant or meaningful impact upon a specific issue. As we view events, one of the keys to understanding the application of an identified event to an issue is that the event does not have to occur. There must be a degree of probability in the event happening, but for the event to impact the issue the event does not have to happen. When events are

combined with trends, they provide the basis for the writing of research scenarios, describing different projections of the future. The generation of events for this research was focused on the City of Chico, California, as the example city for this process. A discussion was held by the group concerning the five most important events, which are reflected below.

Top Ten Events Ranked in Order of Group Vote

1. Loss of public confidence in law enforcement due to an event similar to Rodney King.
2. Change in POST standards requiring police officer candidates to have BA/BS degree.
3. Spanish speaking requirements for police officers.
4. Affirmative action banned or enforced.
5. Tuition based recruitment program for police officers/contract hiring.
6. Narcotics are legalized.
7. Deletion of the physical requirements for the job of police officer.
8. Mandatory drug/alcohol/smoking testing for police officers.
9. Population shift in age - older to younger - median age is significantly younger.
10. Establishment of non-traditional Police Officers Associations representing minority and alternative life style interests.

Group Discussion of Events 1 to 5 - Identified as Most Important to Group

1. Loss of public confidence in law enforcement due to an event similar to Rodney King.

If an event occurs that causes the public confidence in law enforcement to decrease, there will be a direct effect upon recruitment and an individual's desire to be employed in law enforcement. The group identified an event on a local level that would have this effect as the conviction of three deputy sheriffs currently charged with the jail beating of a gay prisoner charged with child molestation. The public standard is to hold their public law enforcement servants to a higher standard and any issues of cover-up or conspiracy drastically effect that standard. The group projected this event to occur within the next five years.

2. Change in POST standards requiring police officer candidates to have a BA/BS degree.

The identified event discussed was for POST to change the employment standards on a state-wide basis requiring all police officers, at the time of appointment, to hold a four year university/college degree. The degree should be a broad based degree as opposed to limiting the degree to a Criminal Justice degree. This change in standards is projected by the group to occur within the next 10 years.

3. Spanish speaking requirements for police officers.

The requirement for employment as a police officer in California will require bilingual ability. This requirement would be a POST standard or enacted by legislation. The group felt reality was going to mandate that police officers be bilingual in Spanish or another identified language within five years.

4. Affirmative action banned or enforced.

The group identified that Law Enforcement in the future will be hiring more females than males, due to the perceived abilities of females to mediate problems better and the changing role of community policing in our society. This hiring practice was identified as the catalyst for changing affirmative action protection for protected classes. This event was predicted to occur within the next 10 years.

5. Tuition based recruitment program for police officers/contract hiring.

A program of contract hiring, similar to an ROTC program, where a law enforcement agency hires the recruit officer in a trainee position, while paying for the recruit's education. At graduation, the recruit comes to work for the agency with a four year degree. The costs of

education are offset at 25% for each year the officer works for the hiring agency. It is a contractual agreement for employment and education

Law Enforcement Managers Group

Seven law enforcement managers were assembled together to engage in a discussion group in regard to the question of “How Will Law Enforcement Effectively Recruit University Graduates by the Year 2007?” This group of managers ranged from a Captain of an agency employing 6,680 sworn officers to a Lieutenant of an agency employing 37 sworn officers. This “brainstorming” session was held in an effort to further research issues that may be encountered in the future for law enforcement agencies as they approach the concept of a higher educational requirement. The managers utilized the concept of trends and events to identify issues for the future that will directly effect higher educational requirements for a police officer applicant. The purpose of this exercise was to provide some current day thoughts on the problems associated with this issue in the future from the historical perspective of law enforcement managers. This manager’s group had considerable discussion on the subject and was able to identify the following issues:

1. It was the managers opinion that the requirement of a college education for police officer applicants was going to increase as a matter of necessity in the future, due in part to the technological advancements that were going to continue. It was the managers’ feelings that within five years, POST requirements for employment as a Police Officer would require an AA degree or 60 units of college level work.

2. The managers, with the exception of one, felt that an important issue for the future would be the providing of funds to employees as a recruitment benefit, to be applied toward college education. Further, there was speculation in the group that agencies in the future will provide tuition reimbursement as a standard employee benefit to increase the college education levels of their existing personnel.
3. The managers felt that if the requirements of a four year university education were standards enacted by POST or the State of California, then wage parity with the private employment sector would become an issue. The basis of this feeling was that law enforcement without a degree requirement is a “vocation,” but once the 4 year degree standard is required, then law enforcement becomes a “profession.” This issue, if realized, could have a dramatic impact upon budget resources.
4. If higher educational standards become reality, the necessity to elevate existing employees to new educational standards will become a critical issue. The managers felt that non-traditional flexible work schedules would become necessary. The employee’s work schedule would include time scheduled during the work period for attending college classes.
5. A critical issue to be examined is the budget process throughout the state. The managers felt that if local and state budget stability at a minimum were not attained, higher educational standards for police officer recruitment would not occur. The budgeting impact associated with the identified additional cost factors of a higher educational standard would be detrimental to successfully providing basic services on a local level.

6. It was determined that if educational recruitment standards for police officers are increased, then a smaller applicant pool would be the result. It was determined through discussion that this would be true, but the employment pool would be more stable, due to educational commitment and maturity on the part of job applicants. It was felt that an increased quality of applicants would be observed as the overall benefit, but the applicant numbers would decrease to a point that it may be difficult for an agency employing 6,680 officers to simply fill the employment numbers of hiring 800 officers per year.

SCENARIOS

As a result of the processes used to review possible trends and events that may have a significant impact upon the issue of the effective recruitment of college students to be a police officer in 2007, three scenarios were developed. These scenarios are not predictions of the future, but are an interpretation of what the future might hold based upon developed trends and events. These scenarios are all set some time after the year 2005.

Scenario #1 *(optimistic future)*

Civil War in China

For the past two years, China has been involved in a bloody civil war over human rights issues within their country. The United States has been deeply involved in supporting human rights issues throughout the global environment, and continues to seek human rights sanctions against the Chinese Government through the United Nations Human Rights Council..

United States military forces have been deployed throughout the Pacific Rim as peace keeping forces in countries which are United States allies. Further, the peace keeping forces of the United States military are still deployed in Bosnia and the Middle East. This large scale deployment of United States military forces has caused the reactivation of the military draft as of January 2006. The draft has focused on physically fit males and females between the ages of 18 and 24, and the ability to obtain a college deferment has been seriously restricted.

The reinstatement of the draft has seriously impacted the recruiting efforts for domestic law enforcement. The majority of the applicants recruited have been unable to pass current physical standards. The applicant pool for police officer is shrinking rapidly. The under age 25 workforce is not a viable option for police officer recruiting. The current physical standards for becoming a police officer at the state level are currently under emergency review for proposed modification. POST is recommending that recruitment efforts for police officer be redirected to an older population base with relaxed physical standards.

The Police Officer Training Corps Program for university graduates to become police officers for local law enforcement agencies had been funded to become effective July, 2005. The program has developed major problems in producing enough student interest from the university student population. Funds dedicated to this program are currently being frozen at the federal level, while the redirection of these funds to recruitment programs directed toward military veterans and “career changes” for disabled veterans are being considered for those individuals who will be returning from military service. The outlook for the continuation of the Police Officer Training Corps Program at this time is somewhat discouraging.

Scenario #2 (*pessimistic future*)

Economic Stability in 2007 - It Will Not Happen

The economic stability desired by both local and state governments has not been realized. The federal and state grant funding that has become a necessary portion of the majority of local public

safety budgets may disappear. The local governments which have become experts in doing more with less, are again being financial challenged because of the shrinking budget dollar.

Currently, the unemployment rate is rising. There are no shortage of applicants for employment, but the problem is not quantity. The problem is the quality of the applicant pool. Highly qualified applicants are quickly finding jobs, but there are so many people unemployed that the public sector employer is being flooded with applications from the unemployed. The screening process for applicants is massive and people have given up on education in their search for basic employment. The economic picture for a successful police officer recruitment program at the university level is very dismal. The economic stability of the university system is currently unstable due to budgetary shortfalls on incoming revenue. There is currently a university plan for increasing tuition as an effort to balance the budget and continue to support programs such as the Police Officer Training Corps.

The economic downturn of sales tax revenue has caused many cities to severely trim their budgets, programs and personnel. The involved local governments are forced to focus on essential citizen services as opposed to programs and services that enhance the community's quality of life. The California City Managers' Association has predicted that local government must manage their budgets "very tightly" and there should not be any "overfilling" of anticipated vacant positions for training purposes, as this can result in over extension of local resources.

Resources will be directed to basic local services, designed to keep the local government running

at an acceptable level for each city. The funds previously designated for recruitment, tourism, business development and civic promotion will be redirected toward operational costs to keep services at an acceptable level. Recruitment and business development, given the current economy, were not designated as a priority for future funding until economic indicators of a drastically lower unemployment rate and improved business economic indicators were present.

Scenario #3 (*surprise free future*)

Police Corps Training in 2007

The afternoon heat of Thursday, August 15, 2007, is beating down on the students at California State University, Chico, as they finish the final days of the summer session. The newest and most popular program at the University is the Police Officer Training Corps Program, which is a collaborative effort of the City of Chico Police Department, the University Associated Students and the University. Currently, there are eight students enrolled in the program which is a combination of an academic and work experience program. The students' work experience program affords them paid employment of 30 hours per month under the Student Noise Abatement Patrol (SNAP), which is the first responder to reports of college parties creating noise which have generated a complaint.

Under the academic program, each student completes their course of study for a Bachelor's Degree which includes mandated POST Basic Academy training. Tuition and books for the program are funded through the state/federal sponsored Police Officer Training Corps Program which is similar in nature to the Armed Services ROTC Program. This program provides a

contractual employment program for the students with a law enforcement agency, which has already accepted the student's employment application and personal history statement.

Police Corps trainee, Mario Montero, has just completed his final project for this session and has requested a review of his final draft on his voice activated laptop computer. After Mario reviews and approves the final project, he will instruct his computer to transmit the project to the class professor and the police department Training Officer, Sheryl Garcia. As part of Mario's employment contract with the Chico Police Department, he was provided with a voice activated laptop computer.

Mario confirms, via his computer, that he is scheduled to work with his Police Officer Training Corps Program student-partner, Bill Wong. This is their weekend to work as the SNAP Team to intervene in school parties that are causing disturbances in the neighborhood. Mario and Bill will work three 10 hour shifts as first responders to party disturbance calls in the college district. This employment is funded jointly by the City of Chico and the Associated Students, and provides the students with funds to assist with their educational pursuit of a college degree. The Police Officer Training Corps Program pays for all of their tuition, books, and materials associated with their education.

Mario and Bill have contracted with the Chico Police Department for employment as a Police Officer at the conclusion of their university education. The Police Officer Training Corps Program provides for a 25% cancellation of the financial debt incurred in obtaining a college

degree for each year they are employed by the contracting agency. Mario explains that this is mutually beneficial in that he is afforded job security, and the Chico Police Department is guaranteed a university graduate, who has received four years of training and education. At the completion of four years of employment, Mario's costs of education will be forgiven. If Mario leaves the Chico Police Department prior to completion of his four year employment obligation, he is liable for the costs of his education at a rate of 25% per year. Mario's intentions are clear in that he will stay with the Chico Police Department and that his goal is to assist other interested students in getting involved in the Police Officer Training Corps Program to help the community.

Chico Police Chief, Melanie Davis, has identified this program as being the best recruiting tool she has been involved with during her 25 year police career. Chief Davis was instrumental in designing and implementing this program with the University, after state and/or federal funding was made available. The program has been identified as being the means utilized to recruit across all ethnic and gender backgrounds, provide solid educational experience, and the broad based experience required for the police officers of the next generation. Chief Davis recently reported to the City Council that slightly more than 50% of the Chico police officers were bilingual, predominately in Spanish, and that the higher level of education has, in her opinion, been effective.

STRATEGIC PLAN

As we enter the twenty-first century, strategic recruitment plans designed for law enforcement must include issues that have been identified through our trends and events study. These recruitment plans must address the need for educational requirement changes; bi-lingual police officers requirements; professional salaries comparable with private sector employment; the need to focus on minority recruiting; the mirroring of community demographics; consistent drug testing of applicants; and changes in physical requirements for police officers.

As identified in Event #2 and in the Law Enforcement Managers' futures research, this plan for police officer recruitment during the next 10 years should include a rising level of educational requirement. It would be desirable to implement, by 2007, the requirement through POST that all police officer applicants in the State of California be university graduates. If we are going to reach this desirable point, then plans must be made on a state level to begin the transition to a higher educational requirement. This strategic plan could include educational requirements for police officer at five year intervals. By the year 2002, POST would require all police officer applicants to possess a two year college degree or 60 semester units of completed college work. By the year 2007, POST would increase the educational requirement, mandating that all police officer applicants possess a four year college degree. This change will require legislative change to the Government Code, introduced by POST with support from law enforcement as well as the university educational system. This plan must be managed and reviewed by a comprehensive broad base panel which represents all stakeholders in this issue. This panel would include

representatives of the current POST Commission, local law enforcement, law enforcement labor organizations, and university representatives.

Our efforts to recruit at this educational level for the job of police officer are going to require alteration to the current structure of pay and benefits. By changing the educational requirement to require university graduation, the position of police officer will effectively be moved from a vocation to a profession. The applicants for police officer will be competing in a professional job market where starting salaries are considerably higher than the average annual California police officer salary of \$31,188.00.¹⁰

Recruitment of university graduates to be police officers must be approached in a different manner than that used to recruit police officers in the past. We must have a plan which is a cooperative effort with the institutions of higher education, POST, federal government level funding and law enforcement. This recruitment effort should embrace a plan to recruit, educate, and train, with a focus on university graduates. The implementation of a Police Officer Training Corps Program at the university level will provide for a university education, combined with a monthly salary based upon hourly employment for the student/employee. Further, upon completion of the four year degree program, there would be a commitment to four years of service as a police officer to a law enforcement agency. The concept of a Police Officer Training Corps Program will require financial support from the federal government due to

¹⁰ Commission on Peace Officers Standard and Training. 1995
"Employment Data for California Law Enforcement 1995/96," Sacramento, CA.

financial needs associated with this type of program. The recruitment of personnel for employment through the Police Officer Training Corps Program will require a cooperative formal agreement with colleges and university campuses, participating law enforcement agencies, financial aid organizations, and POST.

When this issue is subjected to an organizational capability analysis in an attempt to determine the strength and weaknesses of the issue, the following key issues were readily apparent:

Weaknesses

1. There must be a funding source identified at a federal/state level which will provide funds to local law enforcement to implement a Police Officer Training Corps program in the university system. **Recommendation:** This funding legislation could be similar in nature to the Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP) of the 1970's but managed under the current Office of Criminal Justice Planning.
2. As university graduates are hired, based upon the educational requirement of a four year degree, declining moral and resentment may become issues with current employees with a lower educational standing. Older, established employees will see themselves in all probability being past over for promotional and career opportunities which will lead to resentment. **Recommendation:** A plan should be developed which provides current employees with the ability to upgrade their educational level, if they have the desire and dedication.
3. The applicant pool will decrease with the educational requirement of a four year

degree. This reduction will self-adjust as this employment standard becomes the norm. **Recommendation:** There has been a very similar issue in POST basic academy requirements. Currently, the applicant who is presenting a desirable employment package, has already completed a POST Basic Academy. The projection is that once this educational standard becomes accepted, the completion of a four year degree by dedicated applicants will steadily increase, outside the perimeters of the Police Officer Training Corps Program.

4. The educational requirement of a four year degree will undoubtedly cause problems based upon the current recruitment process that law enforcement has been using for years. There will be a period of time, as educational levels of applicants increase, during which recruitment will be very difficult for law enforcement. **Recommendation:** This educational requirement should be managed in two phases, at five year intervals. By phasing in this requirement, applicants will be provided an opportunity to plan their educational program.
5. Financial compensation for employees is a major concern for every manager in public and private business. Increasing the educational requirements of police officers will dramatically increase their expectations of higher wage and benefit packages. Wages paid to graduate engineering students by computer and software companies are staggering when compared to law enforcement compensation **Recommendation:** The recruitment of police officers will now become a competitive process offering compensation comparable to that of private industry, commensurate with their education.

6. This educational requirement for police officers must be one that the university/college system is willing to support. **Recommendation:** Their support of this concept is required as they must be a partner in the promotion of any campus based educational program such as the Police Officer Training Corps. Further, their involvement in the recruitment of applicants from all educational fields is necessary if the result of this educational requirement is going to be a benefit to society in the future.
7. Currently, a limited number of lower division credits are provided for the basic academy, which is focused solely on the police education process. There is no melding of the current POST Basic Academy Program with a university based four year degree program. **Recommendation:** Expand the basic academy, in a planned, controlled manor. This would include providing the student the opportunity to gain some upper division credits, outside of the limited focus of police education. Basic academy student with classes specifically designed to broaden their picture of law enforcement...to make them start looking outside the traditional box at an early age in their career.

Strength

1. The educational process, through exposure and learning, causes people to consider a broader vision of society and the world we live in. It causes people to examine the future and what the requirements of the future are going to be. If police officers have a higher educational level, their vision will be broader. They will

see the long-term ramifications of our societies strength and weaknesses. If the combined education of our police officers is from diverse fields, their vision will be even better and more encompassing.

2. The number of employees, currently employed who possess four year degrees can be determined to be a strength toward an agency enacting this educational requirement at a local level.
3. During the next several years, there is a prediction of a “tidal wave” of college students in California.¹¹ The university and college systems are currently looking for program expansions and course offerings to help cushion this influx. A Police Officer Training Corps Program at a university level could provide some needed relief to this anticipated problem. This would be an excellent time for a combined effort between POST and the university education system.
4. As in other professions, the increased level of education of a police officer will directly effect the level of job performance. As the educational level of the police officer increases, the numbers of community complaints about the officers performance and attitude should decline. The police officers with higher education will provide to their community a more holistic approach to job performance.¹² This expected job performance should lead to a reduced level of

¹¹ “Higher Education Enrollment: Is a Tidal Wave Coming?”
California Postsecondary Education Commission. Sacramento, California. 1996

¹² Educational and Psychological Research, Volume 5, Number 3, pages 149-164
“Criminal Justice Education and the Humanities” (1985)

citizen complaints, law suits and internal affairs investigations.

5. As we examine some of the public service job classifications that our police officers are interacting with on a daily basis, we find strength in the requirement of a four year degree for a police officer. The police officer is the most powerful public servant in a community, but is not always of comparable education to other public servants. When we look at the probation officer, the parole agent, and the social worker, to name a few, we see four year educational requirements for those jobs.

The issue of a four year degree requirement for the position of police officer may be an issue for local legislative control, based upon the legislative authorization already found in the Government Code Section 1031(e). Local governmental bodies already have the power to set employment standards for the position of police officer to require a two or four year degree. This may be a community opportunity for requiring higher levels of education, based upon community demographics. It may be very desirable for the communities who are directly connected to university campuses to require a college education for their police officers. This would be an employment requirement that could be the subject of a study or survey to determine the level of community support. If the community support is present, then the opportunity could be realized by a coordinated effort between the university, local government, and the community. This would be the ideal arrangement for the implementation of a Police Officer Training Corps Program or similar concept.

Leadership

An important aspect to be considered when planning the recruitment of employees for an organization is the future leadership that will be required for the success of the agency. As positions are filled and personnel are promoted to new positions of supervision and responsibility, the appointing authority needs to be constantly mindful of the organizational needs in the future. If educational requirements of recruit police officers are increased, the net effect will be a higher level of education throughout the organization. This will provide a much broader knowledge base than has been traditionally found in law enforcement agencies and one could assume that an increased level of leadership may evolve. This leadership style may be observed at a lower organizational level than traditionally observed in the past. If identifiable leadership, formal or informal, is a desired attribute of organizations engaging in higher educational requirements for their police officers, they need to start implanting the leadership concept as part of the initial training. We cannot continue to wait to institute leadership training until we are training managers, most of whom are within five years of retirement. Law enforcement managers need to adopt the concept of “planning beyond your tenure” and to encourage their employees to pursue higher educational levels.

CONCLUSION

The critical issue for law enforcement in the area of human resources for the future is going to be how to attract qualified applicants for police officer positions. The position of police officer has already undergone a transformation of unbelievable magnitude. The transformation of the police officer will continue to occur based upon society's needs and technological advances. As this transformation occurs, the police officer position will transform from a vocational position to a professional position. This will require the police officer to be university educated with a four year degree. This degree will not be based upon the traditional "cop" subjects of criminal justice or administration of justice, but rather on degrees in liberal arts, engineering, history and computerization. The recruitment of university students is just one more possibility in the recruitment of qualified applicants to be police officer.

There has to be a workable operational plan in place to allow university students exposure to law enforcement which adequately generates a level of employment interest. The desired future for this exposure is found in the surprise free future scenario, describing the Police Officer Training Corps Program. This system could easily become a reality with planning and funding. The program could be located on select university campuses throughout the state and would involve a contract system of hiring between law enforcement agencies, universities and students.

In the early 1970s there was a federally financed program entitled Law Enforcement Educational Program (LEEP), which was administered by university financial aid offices. Students at the

institution would borrow funds for tuition and books which would be guaranteed by signing a commitment to work in law enforcement for four years after completion of their education. The loan amount would be set aside at the rate of 25% for every year that one worked in law enforcement after leaving the university. At the conclusion of four years of work in law enforcement, the student education loan was eliminated.

If our educational system and government could conceive a successful educational loan program, (such as LEEP) and given our current economy and planning abilities for the year 2007, then a successful law enforcement training program can be accomplished. The concept of a Police Officer Training Corps Program, similar to the Armed Forces ROTC Program, can be a reality. Law enforcement agencies with university campuses in their cities need to begin planning for the recruitment of graduate students.

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