

HOW WOULD COMPLETE CIVILIANIZATION OF THE TRAFFIC  
INVESTIGATION FUNCTION IMPACT STAFFING OF A  
MID-SIZED, URBAN POLICE AGENCY BY 2009?

A project presented to  
California Commission on  
Peace Officer Standards and Training

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This Command College project is a FUTURES study of a particular emerging issue in law enforcement. Its purpose is NOT to predict the future, but rather to project a number of possible scenarios for strategic planning consideration.

Defining the future differs from analyzing the past because the future has not yet happened. In this project, useful alternatives have been formulated systematically so that the planner can respond to a range of possible future environments.

Managing the future means influencing the future: creating it, constraining it, adapting to it. A futures study points the way.

The view and conclusion expressed in this Command College project are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).



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# CHAPTER I

## ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

### Introduction

While municipal law enforcement's use of civilians in field operations has increased, many law enforcement agencies strictly limit the duties civilian personnel may perform in the field. One function in which civilian personnel appear significantly underutilized is traffic collision investigation. While some police departments do utilize civilians to document minor traffic collisions, most police departments still use sworn personnel to conduct the majority of traffic collision investigations. These traffic collision investigations are very time consuming and labor intensive. One must ask, does the investigation of a traffic collision require a sworn peace officer?

Since the inception of modern day law enforcement, police officers have performed a variety of duties. The duties traditionally performed by police officers may be divided into two general categories, law enforcement and order maintenance. "Law enforcement" is the traditional role of police departments and includes activities associated with the apprehension and arrest of criminals. "Order maintenance" includes all of the other duties police officers are required and expected to perform such as traffic collision investigation, traffic control, code enforcement, parking enforcement, mediating civil disputes, animal control investigations, as well as many other duties.

Over the years, the demands and requirements of municipal police departments have significantly increased. With these increased demands, police departments have responded by producing highly trained professional police officers. Increased education, training, salary and benefits, and rigorous selection standards have caused police officers to become a very expensive

commodity for most cities. A survey of several mid-sized police departments in the San Francisco Bay Area shows the average per year cost, per officer, is approximately \$115,000.<sup>1</sup> The figure does not include mandated training, equipment and other associated costs.

As the costs for police service have increased, funding sources for municipal governments have begun to diminish. For the past three to four years, many cities have experienced major budget reductions and deficits. Currently, most cities in California, as well as state government itself are experiencing some type of financial problems.

Examples of California cities facing budget deficits include the cities of Union City and Richmond. Union City is facing a \$7 million budget deficit for fiscal year 2004-2005. The city staff is currently in the process of determining layoff and service reduction strategies, which may include closing a fire station and reduction in the police department of up to five sworn positions. Despite projected income from a recently imposed 9-1-1 service fee and a recently proposed public safety parcel tax, city revenues are still projected to fall short of expenditures. City officials estimate that even with a wage concession plan to recoup one million dollars, the city could be facing a seven million dollar deficit.<sup>2</sup>

In the city of Richmond, the situation is just as bleak. In December of 2003, the city of Richmond laid off eighteen firefighters and closed one fire station. Despite this action, Standard & Poor's has informed bondholders that it may lower the bond rating for Richmond, its agencies and various bonds. Acting city manager Jay Corey estimates that unless the city reduces its spending drastically, Richmond's cash flow could dwindle to \$125,000 by mid-April.<sup>3</sup> Pat Samsell, Richmond finance director, explained the financial problems are due in part to police officer retirement costs: "Thirty percent of whatever police officers make goes into the PERS

cost, which the city pays for. That adds up to a lot of money. The percentage will rise to 40 percent next year and 44 percent the year after.”<sup>4</sup>

The service reductions implemented in December of 2003 in Richmond may have impacted the fire department’s response to a recent structure fire. The budget cuts forced the closure of Station 67 at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Cutting Boulevard. During a recent structure fire, engines from a station across town were the second company to respond and it took them twelve minutes to arrive at the scene. Firefighters stated the increased response time affected their ability to fight the fire.<sup>5</sup>

The increased cost of police officers, coupled with the increased demand for police service, have forced many cities to reevaluate and reduce some services police departments have traditionally provided to the public. One of the services significantly affected has been traffic collision reporting and investigation. A survey of several mid-sized San Francisco Bay Area police departments (refer to appendix A), conducted by this author, found many police departments no longer respond to or have very long response times to reports of minor crimes, non-injury traffic collisions and other “order maintenance” functions.<sup>6</sup> While some communities accept this reduced service level, many communities will not. How law enforcement responds to the challenge of the increased demand for services while facing declining budgets will affect policing for years to come.

This project examines utilizing civilian personnel to investigate all traffic collisions, from minor non-injury collisions up to and including serious injury and fatal traffic collisions. The project examines the impact civilianizing traffic investigations would have on staffing in a mid-sized, urban police agency.

Below are explanations of some terms, which will be used throughout this paper.

- Police officer, sworn officer, peace officer

This terminology identifies a police officer as defined by California law.

- Non-sworn or civilian personnel

This terminology identifies employees of a law enforcement agency who are not sworn police officers. Typical duties include: dispatching, records clerks, jailers, office assistants and other civilian support staff.

- Community Service Officers

Civilian personnel employed to work in the field and perform duties that in the past were traditionally performed by sworn police officers. Typical duties include: report taking of minor criminal offenses, traffic direction, non-injury traffic collisions reports, evidence collection and processing, code enforcement and related field support duties.

- Civilian Accident Investigators

Civilian personnel employed and trained to work in the field with the primary responsibility to respond to, investigate and document traffic collisions, including but not limited to injury and fatal collisions. Duties may also include traffic direction, parking enforcement and code enforcement when not performing traffic collision investigation.

One approach some police departments are using to reduce labor costs in law enforcement has been the increased use of civilian employees. The increased use of civilian personnel is frequently referred to as “civilianization.” Civilianization is not a new idea to law enforcement. Some authors estimate civilianization within law enforcement began with the

inception of formal record keeping.<sup>7</sup> During the past two to three decades, the use of civilian employees in police departments has dramatically increased. Today, civilians perform many of the duties sworn police officers formally performed. These duties include but are not limited to: records keeping, dispatching, jailer, property and evidence clerks, minor traffic investigations and in some cases, criminal investigations and management.

Within the past several years, many agencies have begun utilizing civilians to perform duties in the field. Civilian personnel utilized in the field are often referred to as Community Service Officers (CSO). The duties CSOs perform include parking and code enforcement, traffic control, preliminary investigations of minor crimes and some minor, property damage only, traffic collision reports. Some of the benefits of civilianization include the following: lower overall training costs, less turnover in what may be viewed by sworn officers as less desirable duties, improved inter-agency relationships, improved response times and improved service to the public.<sup>8</sup> Brian Frost states, “It has become increasingly clear that civilians tend to perform certain specialized roles more effectively than sworn officers, who are trained as generalists and then rotated from one assignment to the next accordingly.”<sup>9</sup> Utilizing civilians in the field relieves police officers of some order maintenance functions and allows officers to utilize their time performing law enforcement duties.

The survey of several mid-sized police departments from the San Francisco Bay Area (appendix A) found only a few departments utilized civilian personnel to investigate traffic collisions. The departments that did utilize civilians in the traffic investigation function limited the civilians to only investigating minor, non-injury collisions. One department allowed civilians to investigate very minor, complaint of pain, injury collisions. None of the departments allowed civilian personnel to investigate serious injury and/or fatal collisions.<sup>10</sup>

Each of the departments contacted had different policies regarding the documenting of traffic collisions. Some departments completed a report on all collisions reported to the department, while other departments only responded to and documented injury collisions. Each of the departments indicated the actual decision to document the collision rested with the involved drivers and officer responding to the collision. Injuries and/or major damage also influenced the responding officer's decision to document a collision. The varying policies make it difficult to establish the exact number of collisions occurring in a city.

A random survey, conducted by this author, with several citizens recently involved in traffic collisions, found many are frustrated with their local police department's response or lack of response to their calls for service. The citizens were contacted in informal settings and their names were not recorded as most wished to remain anonymous. One person who called their local police department after being involved in an accident was shocked to learn the department did not respond to non-injury traffic collisions. As the person stated, "this was my first call to the police department and they wouldn't come."<sup>11</sup>

Since the reporting procedures and use of civilian employees vary tremendously among departments, this project will focus on one mid-sized, urban, police department as a case study.

The City of San Leandro is located in the San Francisco Bay Area. San Leandro is a diverse community with a population of approximately 80,000 residents. The city is approximately fifteen square miles. San Leandro borders the city of Oakland to the north and the Oakland International Airport is adjacent to the city. A 2003 article in the Alameda Newspaper Group, Daily Review edition newspaper, stated the current passenger usage at the airport is approximately 12 million passengers and is projected to increase to 22 million by the year 2010.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, the airport employs approximately 10,000 people.

The city has several shopping areas, a large industrial section and is located between two major interstate freeways. The main north-south arterial through the city's downtown area is a state highway. Additionally, a major east-west arterial is also a state highway.

Traffic congestion and the response to traffic collisions is a major issue facing city government and police department.

During the past five years, the San Leandro Police Department, like most departments in the San Francisco Bay Area, has experienced increased demands for police service. The increases are in both order maintenance and law enforcement type duties. The tables below and on the next page illustrate the increases in police reports, calls for service and reported traffic collisions during the past five years.

The San Leandro Police Department has seen a steady increase in calls for service and police reports from 1998 - 2002. During this time, the size of the department has remained the same and the population of the city has increased only slightly. Traffic collisions increased thirty percent in 2002 after two years of fourteen and four percent reductions. In interviews with Sergeant Overton of the Police Department's Traffic Division and Anna Vickroy of the City Traffic Engineering Office, neither could provide an explanation for the significant changes.

San Leandro Police Department Calls for Service and Police Reports, 1998–2002<sup>13</sup>

Year	Calls for Service	% Change	Total Reports	% Change
1998	75,069		14,292	
1999	78,483	5 % (increase)	14,771	3% (increase)
2000	84,193	7 % (increase)	14,576	1% (increase)
2001	83,298	- 2 % (decrease)	15,324	5% (increase)
2002	86,525	4 % (increase)	15,929	4% (increase)

(Table 1-1)

City of San Leandro Traffic Collision reports, 1998 – 2002<sup>14</sup>

Year	Collision Reports	% Change
1998	1218	% Change
1999	1204	0
2000	1157	-4% (decrease)
2001	997	-14% (decrease)
2002	1292	30% (increase)

(Table 1-2)

The San Leandro Police Department has been in existence since 1922 and has a reputation for quality service. The department considers itself a “full service” law enforcement agency and presently responds to virtually all calls for service. The department currently is comprised of 94 sworn officers and 47 full-time civilian positions. Currently, the department does not have a CSO program. The department does have three civilian Police Service Aides who work in the field doing code enforcement work and one civilian position dedicated to Abandoned Vehicle Abatement. While the CSO position is not currently filled, it does exist in the department’s salary schedule. The current salary and benefit cost for a CSO is approximately \$65,000. This is approximately half the cost of a sworn police officer.

The department has a traffic division of six motor officers who have the primary responsibility of traffic collision investigation and traffic enforcement. The motor officers also respond to other calls for service as needed. In an interview with Sergeant Overton, the supervisor of the traffic division, he estimated that the response to traffic direction/control, documentation and investigation of each collision takes an average of four hours, since two and sometimes three officers may respond to a collision.<sup>15</sup>

Using 2002 information of 1,292 collisions, this would indicate a minimum of 5,168 hours were spent on collision investigations. The cost to the city for collision investigation is approximately \$285,730. It is possible that within the next five years, by 2009, civilians could accomplish the collision investigation function at a significantly reduced cost and allow the sworn officers to perform higher priority law enforcement duties.

As the trend toward increased civilianization continues, it is becoming evident that civilians are able to perform certain specialized roles more effectively and efficiently than sworn personnel: Typically, sworn officers are trained as generalists and are rotated from one assignment to the next every three to five years. Civilians, on the other hand, are typically trained as specialists and remain in their assignments for several years. Civilians also tend to remain interested in the “order maintenance duties” they were hired to perform, and they complete these duties at a higher level than sworn officers who tend to have greater interest in law enforcement duties.<sup>16</sup> Currently, there is no legislation that prohibits civilian personnel from investigating traffic collisions or even criminal matters. While criminal complaints require the signature of a peace officer, the affidavits in support of the issuance of criminal complaints, arrest warrants and search warrants may be completed by civilian personnel.

The civilianization of the traffic investigation function in a mid-sized urban police agency would allow the officers normally assigned to traffic investigation to perform enforcement duties that civilians are not able to perform. Additionally, those officers would be available to respond to serious felony crimes rather than being tied up performing traffic collision investigation duties.

The complete civilianization of the traffic investigation function will be a major change for law enforcement agencies. The issues surrounding this change are complex and difficult to

predict. However, based on the data for the past five years, it is expected increases in calls for service and collisions will continue as an emerging trend in the next five years. The budget instabilities and deficits previously discussed are also expected to continue for the next several years. Law enforcement agencies' failure to anticipate and respond to these projections will result in service reductions and citizens who will feel their police department is not available to serve them.

The failure to forecast and plan for future events could result in the failure of the recommended change. In the next chapter, trends and events as forecasted by a group of subject matter experts will provide a foundation and possible courses of action for incorporating civilian personnel in the traffic investigation function of a model mid-sized municipal police agency.

## CHAPTER II

### FUTURES FORECASTING

#### Process Description

In an effort to identify future trends and events and their potential impact on how the complete civilianization of the traffic investigation function would impact staffing of a mid-sized, urban police agency by 2009, a Nominal Group Technique (NGT) was conducted in November 2003. A panel of seven members with diverse backgrounds and various expertise in areas related to the issue was assembled. Prior to meeting in a group setting, all participants received a packet of information explaining the issue and the process.

The group included the following members (see Appendix B):

- Litigation Supervisor, California State Automobile Association
- Senior Transportation Engineer, City of San Leandro
- Attorney Specializing in Insurance Traffic Collision Litigation and a resident of the City of San Leandro
- Senior Personnel Analyst, City of San Leandro Human Resources Department
- Principal Systems Specialist from the City of Mountain View and a former Community Services Officer who investigated traffic collisions
- Police Captain from the San Leandro Police Department
- Police Sergeant from San Leandro Police Department

Upon coming together as a panel, the group was briefed to familiarize them with the issue statement and the NGT process. In the first phase of the process, the group was provided time to independently identify trends they felt would impact the issue. In a round robin format, each member provided a trend. A list of several potential trends was established. The panel then clarified the identified trends and merged similar ideas. This resulted in a list of eighteen potential trends (see Appendix C).

After the identified trends were clarified, the panel selected, by a vote, the trends they felt were most likely to impact the issue. This resulted in the eight trends listed in the trend analysis, on the following page. During the process, the panel engaged in discussion regarding the trends and provided a forecast of the trend based on the past, present and future.

### Introduction of Trends

A trend is defined as a series of incidents taking place, which would indicate a direction in which a particular issue is heading. A trend may be qualitative or quantitative.<sup>17</sup>

During the initial roundtable, the panel identified several potential trends. The panel merged the list into the eighteen trends listed in Appendix C. The panel then selected the eight trends listed in the summary trend table on the next page as the trends likely to have the most impact on the issue in the future. The panel was instructed to forecast, relative to today, the level of each trend five years in the past, five years in the future, and ten years in the future. This was done by assigning an arbitrary value of 100 to the trend today and asking each of the panel members to provide a value to the trend five years in the past, five years in the future and ten years into the future. The panelists also provided a level of concern between one and ten for each trend. A rating of ten shows a great concern for the trend. On the next page is a summary trend table, which reflects the median values of the panel.

Summary Trend Table

Trend	-5 Years	Today	+5 Years	+10 Years	Concern
1. Demand for police services	80	100	150	200	10
2. Law enforcement budget instability	80	100	110	130	5
3. Use of civilian employees to reduce labor costs	50	100	130	160	6
4. Number of traffic collisions	70	100	150	200	7
5. Civilian employees as percentage of work force	60	100	130	175	6
6. Number of developments in technology	70	100	125	175	7
7. Cost of sworn personnel	70	100	125	150	7
8. Willingness of community to accept civilian personnel	50	100	130	160	7

(Table 2-1)

Trend Analysis

T1 Demand for police services

The panel believed there has been, and will continue to be, significant increases in the demands for service by the public. The panel felt police departments throughout the country are being asked to perform more duties than ever before.

These increases include demands created by community policing, and the increases associated with terrorist threats and homeland security. The panel cited the increased staffing requirements for homeland security, as well as the increased staffing requirements due to civil disobedience and the increasing crime rate, as some examples for the increased demand for police services. The panel expressed significant concern regarding this trend and provided the

highest possible rating of ten. Homeland security, increasing crime, terrorist threats and declining resources all contributed to the level of concern expressed.

T2 Law enforcement budget instability

The panel sees the state budget deficit and budget instability in California continuing for several years. The panel discussed the loss of revenue caused by the loss of vehicle license fees as well as the public's unwillingness to accept increases in taxes and/or assessment districts.

There was significant discussion by the panel that budgets for municipal police departments will continue to suffer shortfalls for the next several years. The panel felt this was a trend not limited to law enforcement and government but was common in the private sector as well. Surprisingly, the panel did not assess a higher level of concern to this trend.

T3 Use of civilian employees to reduce labor costs

The panel believes the hiring of civilian personnel as a method to reduce labor costs will continue as an emerging trend. The panel was of the opinion that civilian personnel could not only perform many duties traditionally performed by sworn personnel at a reduced labor cost, but could also perform the duties with greater efficiency. The participants also discussed the ability for civilian personnel to work on a part-time, hourly basis as opposed to full time with expensive health and retirement benefits.

T4 Number of traffic collisions

The panel believes there will continue to be a significant increase in the number of traffic collisions, as roadways will continue to be more congested. The panel cited the increasing population and the increase in the number of vehicles registered in California as factors contributing to this. The panel also mentioned the increase in miles driven because of longer commutes by many California residents. The panel discussed the number of collisions that are

not reported and noted that alternate reporting methods need to be developed. The panel expressed a significant level of concern regarding the number of traffic collisions.

T5 Civilian employees as percentage of work force

The panel believes the increased use of civilian employees in law enforcement will continue as an emerging trend. The panel discussed not just the increased use of civilian employees but the significant increase in the ratio between civilian and sworn personnel. As law enforcement is called upon to perform increased duties and the cost of sworn personnel continue to rise, the percentage of civilian employees working in law enforcement will also continue to increase. The panel also discussed the more flexible hiring standards for civilian employees as well as the salary savings and less stringent training requirements.

T6 Number of developments in technology

The discussion of the panel indicated that ever-increasing developments in technologies would continue to revolutionize law enforcement operations. The group discussed the possibility that future technology could eliminate traffic collisions, as they are known today. Examples included radar guidance systems and collision avoidance technology. Additionally, the panel discussed “black box” technology and digital video recording technology, which could capture data such as speed, direction of travel and other information. The information captured by this type of technology could reduce and/or eliminate the need to document or investigate collisions. The panel expressed a significant concern regarding future developments in technology. The emphasis of the panel’s concern seemed to focus on the probability that technology would eliminate the need to investigate traffic collisions because digital video recording and vehicle event data recorders would provide the information required to reconstruct the collision.

T7 Cost of sworn personnel

The panel believes the cost of sworn personnel will continue to increase. The panel discussed the cost to recruit, hire and train sworn personnel as well as ongoing in-service training costs. As medical and retirement costs continue to increase, the cost of sworn personnel to cities will continue to increase.

T8 Willingness of community to accept civilian personnel

The panelists believe the public will continue to show a willingness to accept civilian law enforcement personnel working in the field performing duties traditionally completed by sworn personnel. The panel believes the public understands and accepts law enforcement using civilian personnel in field operations. The panel cited examples of many cities currently using civilian employees in the field to perform code enforcement and minor report taking. In most all of these cities, the transition to civilian personnel in the field has been seamless. The panel expressed a high level of concern for this trend relative to the issue. The panel was of the opinion that the publics' willingness to accept civilian personnel in field operations would be instrumental to the success of civilian accident investigators.

In phase two of the process, the panel used the same format to identify and select events likely to impact the issue. The panel initially identified fourteen events (see Appendix D) and ultimately selected the nine events listed in the event analysis on the following pages. Again, the panel engaged in discussion regarding the events. For the events, the panel forecast the probability, in terms of years in the future when they believed each event could occur.

## Introduction of Events

Events differ from trends in that an event is a single occurrence, taking place at a specific date and time. An event is a projected incident, which has not previously occurred, but if the event does occur, it would have a significant impact on the issue. Examples of events may include a natural disaster, terrorist event, and passage of legislation or a departmental policy change. Events may have a positive or negative impact on the issue.

The panel repeated a similar process for events as it used for trends. Initially, the panel identified 14 events listed in Appendix D. For events, the panel was instructed to forecast the probability, in terms of years, when they believed a particular event would occur. The panel then selected the nine events listed in the summary table as the events likely to have the most impact on the issue in the future.

On the next page is a summary event table, which reflects the median values of the panel. The first column (year >0) identifies the first year the probability of the event occurring exceeds zero. The second column (+ 5 years) identifies the estimated probability, expressed in a percentage that the event would occur in five years. The third column (+ 10 years) identifies the probability, again expressed in a percentage that the event would occur in ten years. The fourth column, (impact) displays the impact, positive or negative, expressed between 1-10, the event would have on the issue.

Summary Event Table

Event	Year> 0	+5Years	+10 Years	Impact
1. Legislation restricting personal liability claims	4	20%	100%	2
2. New law mandates law enforcement to investigate all collisions	5	10%	50%	4
3. Legislation restricting civilian from investigating collisions	5	15%	40%	-2
4. "Black Box" device eliminates the need for collision reports	4	30%	60%	-3
5. Labor unions negotiate restrictions on the use of civilian personnel	3	40%	50%	-2
6. Police departments eliminate traffic collision investigation all together	2	50%	90%	-2
7. Insurance companies require insured to complete police reports in all collisions as a condition of policy	10	0%	55%	3
8. State mandates CHP take all collision reports	3	15%	25%	-4
9. Court accepts collision reports by participants	7	0%	50%	-4

(Table 2-2)

Event Analysis

E1 Legislation restricting personal liability claims

The panel believed legislation could be introduced which would limit or restrict personal liability claims. The panel discussed the impact this type of legislation would have on traffic collision reporting and investigation by law enforcement. The panel was of the opinion the elimination of personal liability claims would eliminate much of the need to investigate traffic collisions. The panel agreed much of the driving force for traffic collision investigation is the major insurance companies. The panel projected a minimal positive impact on the issue if this

event were to occur. The panel sees a high probability this event will occur within ten years but a low probability of occurrence within the next five years.

E2 New law mandates law enforcement to investigate all collisions

With the increase in congestion on California highways, the panelists felt legislation could be introduced which would require law enforcement to document and investigate all traffic collisions. The panelists felt this requirement might be introduced to provide more accurate data on the types and number of traffic collisions occurring. The panel was of the opinion this event would have a significant positive impact on the issue and could force agencies to use civilians for collisions investigations. The panel expressed a 50% probability this event will occur within ten years but a low probability of the event taking place within the next five years.

E3 Legislation restricting civilians from investigating collisions

The panel was of the opinion that legislation could be introduced, which would prohibit civilian personnel from investigating traffic collision. The group discussed a variety of reasons why this type of legislation may be introduced. Examples included the safety of civilians working in the field, and civilian's inability to take law enforcement action. The panel expressed a 40% probability of this event occurring within ten years and a minimal probability of the event occurring within five years. The panel was of the opinion this event would have a minimal negative impact on the issue.

E4 "Black Box" device eliminates the need for collision reports

The panelists felt future developments in technology could lead to a "black box" device for vehicles, similar to those on aircraft, which would eliminate the need to investigate traffic collisions. Insurance companies would simply obtain the data from the box to reconstruct the events leading up to the collision. The panel noted this technology is currently installed on some

vehicles; however, vehicle manufactures do not make the data readily available to law enforcement or insurance companies at this time. Since this technology could eliminate the need to investigate traffic collisions, the panel was of the opinion this event would have a moderate negative impact on the issue should it occur. The panel felt there was a 60% probability this event would occur within ten years and 30% probability the event would occur within five years.

E5 Labor unions negotiate restrictions on the use of civilian personnel

The panelists felt the continued increase in the employment and use of civilian personnel in field operations could cause labor unions to negotiate restrictions on the use of civilian personnel in the field. The panel discussed associations concerns of civilians taking jobs away from their bargaining group, the police officers association. The panel cited examples of some sheriff's departments in which similar restrictions have occurred within the jail system. The panel felt this event would have a minimal negative impact on the issue and a 50% probability this event would occur within ten years and a 40% probability the event would occur within five years.

E6 Police departments eliminate traffic collision reporting and investigation

The panel felt, in the future, many police departments would be forced to eliminate traffic collision reporting and investigation if significant changes in staffing levels and workload distribution are not made. The panel discussed the concept of privatizing collision investigations. Members also mentioned that some police departments presently do not respond to non-injury collisions and several members felt that policy could be extended to all types of collisions in the near future. The panel felt this event would have a minimal negative impact the issue. The panel expressed a 90% probability this event would occur within ten years and a 50%

probability the event would occur within five years. The panel was of the opinion that staffing levels would have a direct influence on the probability of this event occurring.

E7 Insurance companies require insured to complete police reports in all collisions as a condition of policy

The panel felt that insurance companies, as a condition of the insurance policy, might require drivers involved in a collision to obtain a police report in all collisions as a condition of their policy. The panel believed this could reduce insurance fraud and provide insurance companies with a more accurate record of their insured's driving history. They did not discuss the impact if police agencies refused to take reports when insurance companies required their insured to obtain them. The panel felt this event would have a positive impact on the issue. It appeared the panel believed most departments would step up to the plate and investigate collisions. The panel was of the opinion this event would not occur within five years and felt there was a 55% probability the event would occur ten years or more in the future.

E8 State mandates CHP take all collision reports

The panel was of the opinion that the California Highway Patrol might be mandated by the state to investigate traffic collisions on city streets as well as state highways.

The panel felt the state could offer this as a service to the cities and the CHP could use this expansion in service as a means to increase their staffing levels. The panel saw a very low probability that this event would occur but recognized this event would have a significant negative impact on the issue.

E9 Court accepts collision reports by participants

The panel believed, with advances in technology, the court would accept collision reports completed and submitted by participants involved in the collision. Currently in several counties, the court accepts trials by declaration for traffic citations. The panel discussed the advances in

technology that could allow this to take place in the near future. The panel did not believe this event would occur within five years. The panel was of the opinion there was a 50% probability this event would occur within ten years. If this event were to occur, the panel felt it would have a significant negative impact on the issue.

### Cross Impact Analysis

In the final phase of the process, a sub-panel of three members from the original NGT panel was convened to conduct a cross impact analysis. This sub-panel was asked to rate how each event would positively or negatively impact the trends. The sub-panel was asked to assess a value of the impact between -5 and +5 for the effect of each event on each trend as it relates to the issue statement. The cross impact analysis illustrates the impact that events have on trends and may be used in the strategic planning process. The table on the next page reflects the median scores of the panelists.

Cross Impact Table

Trend	T-1	T-2	T-3	T-4	T-5	T-6	T-7	T-8
Event								
1. Legislation restricting personal liability claims	-1	-1	2	0	2	0	-1	3
2. New law mandates law enforcement to investigate all collisions	-3	-5	4	2	3	2	-1	3
3. Legislation restricting civilian from investigating collisions	-4	-4	-3	0	-3	0	-2	-3
4. "Black Box" device eliminates the need for collision reports	3	4	4	0	3	5	2	2
5. Labor unions negotiate restrictions on the use of civilian personnel	-3	-4	-5	0	-4	0	-2	-3
6. Police departments eliminate traffic collision reporting and investigation	4	2	-2	-2	-2	0	1	-2
7. Insurance companies require insured to complete police reports in all collisions as a condition of policy	-4	-4	3	0	3	1	1	2
8. State mandates CHP take all collision reports	3	3	-2	0	-2	1	2	-2
9. Court accepts collision reports by participants	1	-2	0	3	-2	2	2	1

(Table 2-3)

- T-1 Demand for police services
- T-2 Law enforcement budget instability
- T-3 Use of civilian employees to reduce labor costs
- T-4 Number of traffic collisions
- T-5 Civilian employees as percentage of work force
- T-6 Developments in technology
- T-7 Cost of sworn personnel
- T-8 Willingness of community to accept civilian personnel

An analysis of the cross impact table shows the panel felt that legislation restricting civilians from investigating collisions (event 3), had a significant negative impact on most of the trends. Event 5, labor unions negotiating a restriction on the use of civilian personnel, also had a significant negative impact on most trends. Technology's development of a "black box" device, (event 4), had the most significant positive impact on the identified trends. The panel discussed the potential possibilities and impacts future technology may have on traffic collisions. The ideas in the discussion included the possibility of technology eliminating collisions or reducing and/or eliminating the need to investigate collisions. The impact of the remaining events was somewhat split among the trends.

A new law mandating law enforcement to investigate all collisions (event 2), had a significant negative impact on trend 2, law enforcement budget instability and a significant positive impact on trend 3, the use of civilian employees to reduce labor cost. Event 3, legislation restricting civilians from investigating collision had a significant negative impact on trend 1, the demand for police service as well as trend 2, law enforcement budget instability. The development of a "black box," (event 4), showed a significant positive impact on trend 2, budget instability, trend 3, use of civilian employees, and developments in technology (trend 6). Labor unions negotiating restrictions on the use of civilian personnel (event 5), has a significant negative impact on trend 2, law enforcement budget instability, trend 3, the use of civilian employees to reduce labor cost, and trend 5, civilian employees as a percentage of the work force. Police departments eliminating traffic collision reporting and investigation (event 6), showed a significant positive impact on legislation restricting personal liability claims(trend 1). Event 7, requirements by insurance companies for their insured to complete police reports on all

collisions, showed a significant negative impact on trend 1, demand for police service, and trend 2, law enforcement budget instability.

### Scenarios

Scenario development is a commonly accepted methodology to bring different events and trends into view by a story. The NGT process provided the basis for the following three alternate future scenarios. The purpose in developing these scenarios was to create thoughts for use in forecasting what possibilities might occur. The scenarios are not predictions, but only a development of the trends and events, which may occur in the future. The scenarios allow a planner or project manager to influence trends and events to create a desired future.

The first is a pessimistic scenario, the second is an optimistic scenario and the third is a normative scenario.

### Pessimistic

In January 2007, the Police Department submitted to the city council a program to add Civilian Accident Investigators (CAIs) to the Police Department's Traffic Division. The primary responsibility of the CAIs would be collision reporting and investigation. The program recommends adding eight CAIs positions to augment the staffing in the Traffic Division. The addition of the CAIs would allow the six motor officers to concentrate their efforts on traffic enforcement and allow them to respond, as needed, to the increasing demand for police services.

The city manager's office modified the program and in an attempt to reduce the police budget, the city manager has recommended to the city council reducing the sworn staffing of the police department by six sworn positions. While the City manager is reluctant to reduce sworn

positions, he sees this as an opportunity to capture several hundred thousand dollars in salary and benefit savings for the financially strapped city.

The Police Officer's association has filed an injunction to prohibit civilian personnel from performing duties traditionally done by sworn personnel. Additionally, the association is planning to bring the issue to the bargaining table in upcoming labor negotiations and plans to use the press to notify the public of the reductions in the sworn staff of the Police Department. The Police Officer's Association strongly opposes the use of civilian personnel and believes civilians are not qualified to perform the accident investigation function.

It is now July 2009, and the city council has reached an agreement with the Police Officer's Association. No sworn positions will be eliminated. The department will hire a limited number of part-time CAIs and their only function will be to handle private property and non-injury collisions. Sworn officers will continue to be responsible for all injury and fatal collisions.

#### Optimistic

It is January 2009, and the reorganization of the Police Department is complete. Twelve Civilian Accident Investigators (CAIs) have been hired and trained. These twelve positions will augment the Patrol and Traffic Divisions. Between 0600- 2200 hours, seven days a week, CAIs will be available. The primary responsibility of the CAI will be responding to, documenting and investigating traffic collisions. Additionally, the CAIs will assist patrol officers with minor reports and code compliance violations.

The addition of the CAIs will allow the Traffic Sergeant and six motor Officers to devote the majority of their time to traffic enforcement rather than traffic collisions. In addition to

Traffic Enforcement, the motor officers will be available to respond to reports of serious felonies in progress. Because of their availability and ability to navigate through traffic, it is estimated the Department's response time to in-progress felonies may be reduced.

A recent study by the traffic engineer estimates the collision rate may be reduced several percent throughout the City due to the increased enforcement efforts. Members of the community are eagerly awaiting the implementation of this program. In a pilot program conducted 18 months ago in which the motor officers were relieved of collision reporting and investigation responsibilities for six months, community leaders stated they noticed significant reductions in speed and red light violations in their neighborhoods.

The timing of the implementation of the CAIs program could not have been better for the police department. Beginning in 2009, all municipal police department are required to document and investigate all collisions reported to them. This legislation was a result of complaints from the insurance industry regarding police departments refusing to investigate traffic collisions.

With the implementation of the CAIs program, it is anticipated the quality of collision reports and investigations will significantly improve. The CAIs have completed the same training requirements as sworn traffic officers and will have more time to investigate collisions. Additionally, the recent cooperation from the automobile manufacturers allowing law enforcement access to the information contained in the vehicle's computer system will make collision investigation much easier.

The "black box" computer installed on all vehicles allows law enforcement to simply download critical information such as speed, direction of travel, braking information and information from the vehicle's collision avoidance system.

## Normative

In fiscal year 2007, the Police Department submitted a proposal to hire twelve Civilian Accident Investigators (CAIs). The proposal recommended the CAIs would augment the Patrol and Traffic Divisions. Between 0600- 2200 hours, seven days a week, Civilian Accident Investigators will be available. The primary responsibility of the CAIs will be responding to, documenting and investigating traffic collisions. Additionally, the CAIs will assist patrol officers with minor reports and code compliance violations. With the addition of the Civilian Accident Investigators, the current Traffic Division, which consists of six motor officers and a sergeant, would focus their primary responsibility on traffic enforcement. This would substantially increase the time available for motor officers to conduct enforcement.

Due to budget deficits, the City Finance committee rejected the proposal. While the committee liked the idea, they felt there were not available funds for any new programs.

On September 25, 2009, the city manager summoned the police chief to his office. The city manager had a long discussion with the chief regarding the lack of traffic enforcement in the residential neighborhoods. The city manager explained that the city council was very concerned and upset regarding the numerous complaints they were receiving about the Police Department's lack of traffic enforcement efforts.

The chief informed the city manager of the proposal submitted two years ago in which it was recommended Civilian Accident Investigators assume the duties of collision investigation to allow motor officers more time for enforcement. The city manager, who was not with the City in 2007, when the proposal was submitted, told the chief to immediately resubmit the proposal. The city manager told the chief "we have to do something to increase enforcement in the

neighborhoods or the Council will have my neck.” It is anticipated a modified proposal, with a limited number of CAIs, will be approved at the mid-year budget review.

As previously stated, the three scenarios were developed, in part, based on information from the NGT process. While it is apparent from the NGT process that the use of civilians to investigate all traffic collisions is very feasible, the process did not answer questions regarding the method to implement such a plan. The decision to move forward with the concept of Civilian Accident Investigators will require vision as well as risk taking and will be significantly impacted by budget issues. The next chapter explores strategic planning and identifies possible strategies for implementing a Civilian Accident Investigator Section of the Traffic Division.

## CHAPTER III

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

#### Introduction

The scenarios described at the end of chapter two were developed from the trends and events identified during the NGT process. These scenarios were developed, in part, to provide visions of possible futures and to assist in the strategic planning process. It is clear that law enforcement, as well as government in general, will continue to face budget reductions in the future. In order to provide a reasonable level of service to the public, mid-sized, municipal police departments will be required to implement strategies, which will reduce labor expenditures.

The increased use of civilian employees in field operations is a viable and proven method to accomplish this goal. In examining the services that mid-sized municipal police departments provide, one service, which seems appropriate for civilians to perform is the traffic collision reporting and investigation function.

The strategic plan will identify and detail strategies that may assist a model mid-sized, urban police department in successful implementation of the civilianization of the traffic investigative function.

#### Organization Analysis

The development of a successful strategic plan must include an examination of the present situation and organization. This includes an objective assessment and analysis of an organization's strengths and weaknesses. As used in previous chapters, the San Leandro Police Department will again be used as a case study for the organizational analysis.

The assessment of the San Leandro Police Department is the initial phase for the strategic plan. The SWOT model will be used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing the organization in the context of this issue. For this analysis, strengths and weaknesses are considered internal to the organization, opportunities and threats are considered external to the organization.

#### Strengths

- Many officers would be pleased to be relieved of the responsibility of investigating traffic collisions
- Civilian personnel would welcome increased responsibility and opportunities
- Sworn officers need more time for law enforcement duties and preventative patrol

#### Weaknesses

- The number of qualified candidates is very limited.
- There is a generalized lack of trust in the ability of civilian personnel among sworn members.
- Current budget will not allow for the addition of new programs
- Would limit opportunities for sworn officers

#### Opportunities

- Citizens want police department response to collisions
- City Council and City management want to reduce police department costs
- Insurance companies want collision reports
- City traffic engineering section needs collision reports for roadway studies

#### Threats

- Civilian employee association may oppose civilians in field operations
- City Council may want police officers to respond to accidents
- Citizens may oppose civilians performing traffic investigation function

## Stakeholder Analysis

A stakeholder is an individual or a group of individuals who will have an impact on the plan or who may influence the actions taken. Typically, stakeholders are directly impacted by the plan. Failure to identify stakeholders and include them in the planning and implementation process can result in failure or unnecessary obstacles in implementing the plan. The following individuals and groups are potential stakeholders for this issue:

- Police Officer's Association

The Police Officers Association is comprised of all sworn members of the police department. The association is very politically active and is able to influence the chief and police management in policy decisions. The association is responsible to bargain for wages and benefits and has a right to be consulted on matters that affect working conditions of their members. As with any union, the association will be concerned with duties traditionally performed by their members being performed by members of another bargaining unit.

- Department Supervisors and Managers

Supervisors and managers are responsible for the implementation of new policies and procedures. For change to be successful, supervisors and managers must embrace the proposed change and be willing to implement the desired policies and procedures. Some sworn supervisors may resist civilians functioning as civilian accident investigators.

- Community Members

This group includes individuals, businesses and members of city government. Many community members are politically active and can significantly impact policy

decisions by the city council. This group also has the resources to apply pressure to the city council and city manager during the budget adoption process. To gather the support of the community members, it will be necessary to educate them on the planned redeployment of the traffic officers relieved of collision investigation duties. In addition, it will be important to educate them on the quality of service the civilian accident investigators will be able to provide. While some community members may have reservations with civilians performing the collision investigation function, the majority will be pleased with the level of service the civilian accident investigators will provide.

- City Council

The City Council establishes policy for the city. Because of the visibility and concerns with public safety, council members are very interested in issues involving the performance and staffing of the police department. The council also establishes the budget for the city and sets the spending policies of the city. The council will support programs designed to hold down labor costs while providing an enhanced level of service.

- Chief of Police

The police chief is the chief operating officer of the police department and as such, is responsible for the performance of the department. The police chief is one of several department heads within the city. The position of police chief, by title alone, establishes the chief as a person with significant political power. The police chief will approach the civilianization of the traffic investigation cautiously. While it is possible labor costs may be reduced, it is possible sworn positions could be lost. In addition, it will be difficult to request additional funding given the budget instabilities.

- Insurance Companies

Insurance companies serve the public by providing services required by law. Insurance companies rely heavily on reports completed by police departments, which document traffic collisions. The determination of fault made in part by the analysis of the reports generated by police departments can significantly affect motorists' insurance rates, civil lawsuits and driving history. The quality of reports and expertise of the civilian accident investigators will be closely examined by the insurance industry. For the civilian accident investigators to be accepted by the insurance industry, it is critical they receive adequate training.

- City Manager

The city manager is the chief operating officer for the city. The city manager reports directly to the city council and is responsible to implement the policy decisions of the council. The city manager is responsible for the overall management of city resources and supervises the department heads. The city manager will approach this issue as a business decision. It must be clearly demonstrated that an increased level of service will be provided and labor costs reduced to gain the required support of the city manager.

- Current members of the Traffic Division

The police officers currently assigned to the traffic division have the primary responsibility of responding to and documenting traffic collisions. Changes in the reporting procedures will directly affect their working conditions. The current members of the traffic division will also have a significant role in the training, development and

mentoring of the newly hired civilian accident investigators. The success of the program will be greatly influenced by the current traffic officers.

- Media

The media is the conduit through which the public receives much of its information about the police and city government. The media allows the public to learn of policy decisions and may present their own opinion in the form of editorials on potential changes in the policies of the police department. The media will respond to the concerns of the public and politicians. If the support of the community and city council is achieved, the media will support the proposed program.

- City of San Leandro Traffic Engineering Section

The Traffic Engineering Section is responsible for the overall traffic patterns and flow within the city. The Traffic Engineering Section is responsible for roadway designs and changes. This section relies heavily on information compiled from traffic collision reports in its decision making process. The Traffic Engineering Section will look closely at the quality of reports completed by the civilian accident investigators. In order to gain the support of this group, it will be critical for the civilian accident investigators to complete quality reports.

### Snail Darters

Snail darters are those individuals or groups who may surprise the organization with their opposition to the implementation of the plan. Snail darters may initially support the plan or have no opposition, but during the implementation process, they may suddenly oppose the plan and cause delays or make the environment so undesirable the plan may fail. It is necessary to

identify potential snail darters, and prepare for possible opposition that may be created by the identified snail darters. Potential snail darter candidates for this issue include:

- The San Leandro City Employees' Association

The San Leandro City Employees' Association represents civilian employees in the police department. The association may resist civilian personnel performing duties in the field. The association also may resist civilians performing similar duties to sworn officers at a lower pay scale.

- Police Officer's Association

The Police Officer's Association may perceive the police administration is trying to eliminate the number of sworn officers and replace those positions with non-sworn personnel. The Association will resist the implementation of the plan if there is any hint the number of sworn positions are being reduced while the number of civilian positions is being increased. If there is any possibility that sworn positions may be reduced during the implementation of this program it must be openly discussed with the Association during the initial planning phases.

- Current Members of the Traffic Division

The current members of the Traffic Division will be responsible to provide the field training for the Civilian Accident Investigators. If the recommendations and opinions of these officers are not implemented a backlash could result in which the Civilian Accident Investigators receive less than adequate training which will result in the failure of the program. Additionally, the current traffic officers will be responsible for the on-going training and development of the civilian accident investigators. It is

essential the traffic officers are involved in the initial planning and development of the program.

### Strategy Development

Three strategies have been developed for an agency to implement a Civilian Accident Investigator program. These strategies represent three different approaches for implementing such a program.

### Strategy One

The department fully implements a Civilian Accident Investigator section of the Traffic Division during one budget year. The Traffic Division Commander is responsible for the management of the section and the Traffic Division Sergeant is responsible for field supervision. The department hires eight civilians and trains them to function as Civilian Accident Investigators (CAI) as well as Code Compliance personnel. Additionally, the department hires one civilian to function as a field supervisor for the CAIs. The Supervisor would be a working position and would also be responsible for responding to collisions as necessary. Once trained, the CAIs would have the primary responsibility for traffic accident investigation during the hours they are working. With eight CAIs and one Supervisor, the unit could provide coverage seven days a week, approximately twelve hours a day.

### Strengths

- Immediately relieves Traffic Officers from responsibility of collision investigation
- Additional staffing will provide increased performance
- Classroom training would be accomplished in one setting

## Weaknesses

- High cost to implement. Would require funding for nine new positions in one budget year.
- Would be very difficult to provide adequate field training to nine new employees at one time.
- Places unnecessary expectations on CAIs and agency to meet performance expectations.

## Strategy Two

The department implements a Civilian Accident Investigator Section of the Traffic Division over a period of three years. Each year, for three years, the department hires and trains three Civilian Accident Investigators. In the second or third year, a civilian supervisor is hired as one of the nine positions. During the first two years, the CAIs will be supervised by the traffic division sergeant and will work closely with the Traffic Officers to develop their skills and ability in collision investigations and related traffic functions. In the third year, the trained CAIs will be supervised by the civilian supervisor and will have the responsibility to train and develop the CAIs hired in year three and future years. The current traffic officers will continue to mentor and develop the CAIs until the program is fully established.

## Strengths

- Reduces initial cost
- Allows more time for development of the program
- Provides time to modify the program after initial assessments.

## Weaknesses

- CAIs and Traffic Officers will be doing some same duties.
- Program will not reach potential for at least four years.

### Strategy Three

The department contracts with a private firm, which specializes in traffic collision investigation. The contract firm would respond to, investigate and submit a completed report to the department. In concept, some departments have implemented similar procedures for background investigations and some criminal investigations involving fraud and computer crime. Because of the depth of this strategy, it will not be explored in this project but it could be material for a future paper.

#### Strengths

- Relieves police department of collision reporting responsibilities
- Does not require hiring of additional personnel

#### Weaknesses

- Police department has minimal control over collision investigation
- Reduces opportunities within the police department
- Could lead to privatization of other law enforcement functions

### Recommendations

The first two strategies proposed are based on the assumption that the agency decides to implement a Civilian Accident Investigator Section of the Traffic Division. The difference in the two strategies is the plan to phase in the program over three years or to implement the program in one budget year. Implementing the program over three years allows for much greater flexibility and modification to the program. With the constantly changing California state budget situation, and the budget instability of many municipal governments, the phased program also allows for reductions to the program if necessary.

One of the dangers of the phased implementation plan is that the program becomes very easy to cut or reduce if budget reductions are necessary. The chief must be committed to implementing the concept of Civilian Accident Investigators and realize the potential savings and increased departmental performance once the project is in place for the program to be completed.

Equally important to a commitment for the program by the chief and program manager is a fair and impartial evaluation mechanism. In the next chapter, an evaluation mechanism is discussed. Based on the results of the evaluation, the chief and program manager must be willing to alter the program as necessary, up to and including the termination of the program if it is determined to be a failure.

### Implementation

The Chief of Police should appoint a project manager who will have responsibility to assemble a project team. The team should minimally consist of the Traffic Division Sergeant, an existing traffic officer, a representative from the police officers association, and a member of the training staff.

One of the first goals of the project team should include the establishments of timelines for the implementation of the project. The timelines should minimally include the development of policies and procedures, securing of funding, the recruiting, hiring and training of the CAIs, program implementation and program evaluations.

Once the timelines are established, one of the first steps in implementing the plan to add Civilian Accident Investigators to the Traffic Division will be securing the required funding. The project team must be creative and explore all means possible to secure the required funding.

This should minimally include federal and state grants as well as other potential sources of funding.

One potential source of funding to explore is cost recovery from insurance companies. A collaborative effort with insurance companies could result in the insurance companies paying for all or part of the cost associated with the accident investigation. Since in many cases, collision investigations are civil cases and not criminally prosecuted, perhaps insurance companies that rely heavily on the reports completed by law enforcement should share the cost of the preliminary investigation.

One interesting discussion during the NGT process from Chapter Two included statements made by representatives of the insurance industry regarding how critical the reports generated by law enforcement agencies are to their civil cases. If the insurance companies rely heavily on the reports completed by police departments responding to collisions, they may be willing to share the costs for the collision investigation. This is particularly so if the quality of the reports are improved and designed to meet their needs. While many law enforcement agencies assess a charge to the insurance companies for a copy of the report, the charge is only for the cost of duplication and report processing. Charging insurance companies for the actual costs to investigate the collision is a cost recovery method not yet implemented by law enforcement agencies.

The project manager and the police chief will be required to develop a formal budget proposal for the city manager to present to the council. This proposal should include the required salary, equipment and training for adding three CAIs in each of the next three budget years.

One of the most critical phases of the implementation plan will be the transition to the CAIs responding to and investigating injury and fatal collisions. It is crucial that sufficient time is allowed in the field-training program for the CAIs to be fully trained and confident in investigating the most serious collisions.

If the CAIs are rushed into investigating the most serious collisions without the assistance of the existing members of the Traffic Division, the results could cause the failure of the program. One idea to overcome this potential obstacle would be to recruit and hire retired police officers with experience in collision investigation. The retired officers could be hired as part-time employees, further reducing costs and would require minimal training.

As with any new program, flexibility will be the key to the successful implementation of this program. The project manager must be willing to listen to ideas and concerns the project team may have and make the necessary adjustments to the program. The project manager must also take into account past experiences with civilianization within the organization and use the previous lessons learned to provide a smooth transition to further civilianization.

The next chapter will identify the “critical mass” and use commitment planning techniques and responsibility charting to discuss transition management.

## CHAPTER IV

### TRANSITION MANAGEMENT

One of the most difficult tasks for an organization to accomplish is that of change. Management efforts to successfully and smoothly implement changes in an organization often fail because management staff does not prepare the organization for the change. One method to avoid this failure is transition management. A transition plan can make the change less painful and lead to successful implementation of the change.

#### Critical Mass

In any involved change process, there are individuals and groups whose active commitment is necessary for the change process to take place. The “critical mass” is the minimum number of individuals or groups whose participation is required to make the change happen. To implement successful change, the chief executive officer or manager seeking the change should identify the critical mass. Once the critical mass is identified, their position on the desired change should be assessed and strategies identified for obtaining the support of the critical mass for the proposed change. In some cases, it may not be possible to obtain the support of some members of the critical mass. However, if this is known ahead of time, strategies may be developed for their opposition to the proposed change.

#### Commitment Planning

Commitment planning is an essential strategy of transition management. This strategy is a series of steps designed to secure the support of those who are vital for the change to be successful. Commitment planning involves identifying the critical mass and determining their

current position relative to the issue, where they need to be for implementation of the plan to be successful and how to move the critical mass to the desired position. Critical mass analysis is also an important part of the planning process. The critical mass analysis identifies individuals or groups, which are essential to the change process. A critical mass chart may be used as a visual means to compare and contrast the projected views of those in the transition and implementation of the Civilian Accident Investigator Program. The below listed individuals and groups are the identified critical masses for this issue:

- Police Officers Association
- Police Managers and Supervisors
- Police Chief
- City Manager
- Current Members of the Traffic Division

Below is the critical mass Commitment Chart.

COMMITMENT CHART

Critical Mass Members	No Commitment	Let Change Happen	Help Change Happen	Make Change Happen
• Police Officers Association	X →	O		
• Police Managers and Supervisors			X →	O
• Police Chief			X →	O
• City Manager		X →	O	
• Current Members of the Traffic Division		X →	O	
	X= Current Position		O= Desired Position	

(Chart 4-1)

The commitment chart provides an overview of the position each individual or group is anticipated to take during the transition plan and what the desired position should be. The chart uses the symbols X and O to identify current (X) and desired (O) positions. The arrows identify the required movement to insure successful implementation of the change.

The Police Officers Association needs to let the change happen for a smooth transition to occur. While some concern may be voiced because civilians are now performing duties traditionally performed by sworn officers, the association must realize the future of the organization depends on successful restructuring. This could be an area that may encounter resistance. It will be essential for the Police Officers Association to be included in the early planning phases of the program. It must also be made clear in the early planning stages if any sworn positions will be lost or traded for the civilian positions.

Police managers and supervisors need to move from helping the change happen to making the change happen. They must embrace the concept of civilians in the field and investigating traffic collisions. The field supervisors must work to develop and mentor the Civilian Accident Investigators for the concept to be successful. It is very likely that some sworn supervisors will resist civilians working in the field. This resistance will hinder the development of the Civilian Accident Investigators and could lead to a lack of trust between the sworn positions and the Civilian Accident Investigators. It will be the responsibility of the police chief and department managers to ensure the field supervisors embrace the program with an open mind. The chief must make his/her expectations clear to staff and hold the staff accountable to carry out policy decisions.

The police chief must transition from helping the change to happen to making it happen. The chief must strongly endorse the program and guidance from his position is necessary for the

implementation of the program to be successful. The chief must use his position, if necessary, to secure the support of the Police Officers Association and the department's managers and supervisors. The chief should meet with representatives of the association early in the planning process to assess the position of the association regarding the issue and take into consideration the concerns of the association. The chief also must include the department managers and supervisors in similar discussions and listen to their concerns.

The city manager needs to help the change happen for a successful implementation of the program. The city manager controls funding for the City and has the ability to make funding for the positions available or to deny the funding. The city manager also has the ability to influence the city council and other departments who may be affected by the program. For the city manager to move to the position of helping the change happen, the police chief must convince the manager that the level of service the police department provides will be increased and labor costs will be reduced. If this cannot be accomplished, it may be difficult to win the support of the city manager.

The current members of the Traffic Division must help the change happen. They will be responsible to train, develop and mentor the Civilian Accident Investigators in the field. Without the support and expertise of the current traffic officers, the implementation of the program and its development will be difficult if not impossible.

### Responsibility Charting

The technique of responsibility charting is used to identify, assess and clarify behavior for the parties involved in bringing about the change. The responsibility table can help to reduce ambiguity and wasted energy among those affected by the change.

Responsibility Table						
	Participants					
Decisions	City Manager	City Council	Police Chief	Police Manager & Supervisors	Police Association	Current Members of Traffic Division
Initiate Program	A	I	R	I	I	I
Select Program Manager	I	I	R	S	I	I
Select Program Team	I	I	A	R	I	I
Create Policy and Procedures	I	I	A	R	I	I
Hire Civilian Accident Investigators	S	I	A	R	I	I
Train Civilian Accident Investigators	I	I	A	R	I	I
Evaluate Program	I	I	R	S	I	I
R= Responsibility      S= Support A= Approval          I= Inform						

(Chart 4-2)

In the table above, the left column identifies significant decisions in the process. These decisions include the initiation of the program, selection of a program manager, selection of the program team, creation of policy and procedures, hiring of civilian accident investigators, training of the civilian accident investigators and program evaluation. The top row identifies the individuals and groups who have a significant stake in the process and whose actions are critical for the success of the program. Each box denotes the appropriate level of responsibility for the success of the program. An “R” denotes primary responsibility for a decision, “A” denotes

approval for a decision, “S” denotes support for a decision, and “I” identifies when a participant should be informed of decisions made. The table allows all the personnel involved to see an overall projection of their responsibility as well as the responsibility of the others involved.

The police chief was identified as being responsible for the initiation of the Civilian Accident Investigator program. The chief will be responsible for meeting with the city manager to discuss implementation strategies and to secure the support of the city manager and the city council. The city manager ultimately must approve the program and it will be the responsibility of the chief to secure the approval from the city manager.

The police chief will also have the responsibility for selecting a program manager. The logical person for this assignment is the Traffic Division commander. The program manager will have the responsibility of developing the program team, and managing the project team during the creation of policy and procedures for the program and the training of the civilian accident investigators.

The project manager will also have the responsibility to recruit and hire personnel to serve as civilian accident investigators. The police chief will need to approve the recommendations of personnel by the project manager.

The police chief will have the responsibility to evaluate the program and ensure the program is effective. If the evaluation determines the program is not effective, the chief will have to decide to modify or terminate the program based on the information from the evaluation.

### Transition

In moving forward with the implementation of the program, the commitment chart and the responsibility chart are very useful tools for the project manager to consider when selecting the project team. It should be clear from reviewing the charts that the position of the Police

Officers Association as well as the position of the police department managers and supervisors will have to move somewhat for the implementation to be successful. Furthermore, since these two groups are identified as potential snail darters, it is imperative for the project manager to include members of these two groups in the project team and planning process. If they are involved in the planning and development of the program, it will significantly reduce the chances of them resisting the implementation of the program.

The current members of the Traffic Division are another group whose support is essential to the success of the program. The project manager must identify members of this group who are willing to train and mentor the CAIs. These individuals must also be included in the project team and should have a strong influence in the training plan and the development of the policies and procedures for the CAI section.

### Evaluation

In order to measure the impact of Civilian Accident Investigators, it will be necessary to develop feedback mechanisms and a method to monitor the effectiveness of the investigators. The project manager, with the input of the project team should assemble an evaluation team. The evaluation team should again be comprised of individuals and groups identified as stakeholders and possibly outside individuals. Minimally, the evaluation team should include representatives from the Traffic Engineering Section, insurance companies, current traffic officers, and possibly a member of the California Highway Patrol and a representative of the Statewide Integrated Traffic Reporting System (SWITRS) as independent outside representatives.

The project manager, project team and police chief should use the results and recommendations of the evaluation team to adjust the program as necessary. The project

manager should also utilize citizen surveys to gather input from the public. The project manager should monitor the enforcement efforts of the current members of the traffic division to ensure the traffic officers who are no longer required to respond to and investigate collisions achieve an increased level of enforcement. Finally, the project manager should frequently meet with representatives from the traffic engineering section to study changes in the collision rate and receive their input on the quality of the collision reports. Again, as mentioned previously, the key to the overall success to the program will be the ability to make changes to the program as necessary.

The final chapter contains a review of the project along with a summary of relevant material obtained through research. Additionally, recommendations will be included to provide a realistic path to the future civilianization of the traffic investigation function in a mid-sized urban police agency.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

#### Introduction

The employment of civilian personnel is not a new concept for municipal law enforcement agencies. For years, law enforcement agencies have effectively utilized civilian personnel in various capacities. The use of civilian personnel in field operations is an emerging trend for a number of law enforcement agencies. Many of the agencies using civilian personnel in field operations have discovered civilian personnel are able to perform various types of order maintenance duties more effectively and efficiently than sworn law enforcement officers.

Currently, the state and many city governments are facing what can be best described as severe budget uncertainties and instabilities. Within the next five years, one fact is clear: municipal governments and municipal law enforcement agencies must find methods to reduce labor costs while providing a level of service acceptable to their communities.

One method to accomplish the reduction of costs may be to examine the tasks law enforcement officers are performing in the field and ask: “Do sworn personnel need to perform all of these tasks, or can some tasks be adequately performed by less expensive civilian personnel?”

#### Recommendations

The focus issue of this project is the impact complete civilianization of the traffic investigation function would have on staffing in a mid-sized, urban police agency by 2009. Based on the research and information received for this project, it is evident that civilian personnel are less expensive to employ than a sworn police officer. Depending on the agency, a

front line civilian position in the capacity of a Community Service Officer or a Civilian Accident Investigator can be one-third to one-half less expensive to employ than a sworn police officer. In large part, this is due to the increasing salary and benefit costs of sworn officers, particularly the costs associated with the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS). Additionally, civilian personnel are able to work as part-time or hourly employees, receiving limited or no health and retirement benefits. This can further reduce the costs associated with civilian employees. It is extremely rare for sworn personnel to work as hourly employees, without health and retirement benefits.

The research also indicated that the duties, responsibilities and workload placed on law enforcement agencies are continuing to increase. The examples cited from the San Leandro Police Department show a four-year trend of increases in calls for service, police reports and the number of collisions reported.

The process of the nominal group technique in Chapter Two provided valuable information from a group of subject matter experts with diverse backgrounds. The process identified future trends and events, which were used to develop possible future scenarios. The process also demonstrated the assembled subject matter experts could offer no conclusive reason why the concept of civilian employees responding to and investigating traffic collisions, including injury and fatal collisions was not feasible. In fact, the panel members were of the opinion civilian personnel could possibly be more effective and efficient than sworn officers at the task of responding to and investigating traffic collisions. The scenarios in Chapter Two, developed in part from the Nominal Group Technique, provide a vision for the future and provide a path upon which to proceed.

A critical element of the future of law enforcement is dependant on law enforcement leaders implementing methods to reduce labor costs. An examination of the duties and tasks performed by sworn personnel can be a start to accomplishing the task of reducing personnel costs. This author finds that it is clearly feasible and practical for civilian personnel, in the capacity of Civilian Accident Investigators (CAIs), to respond to and have the primary responsibility to investigate traffic collisions for a municipal law enforcement agency. This includes injury as well as fatal collisions.

The difficult question to answer is the impact that civilianization of the traffic investigative function would have on sworn staffing. The answer to this question depends on the method in which an individual agency implements the civilianization plan. In the optimal case, an agency would hire the required number of civilian accident investigators to relieve existing sworn officers from the task of investigating collisions. The sworn officers relieved of the traffic investigation function would be redeployed to traffic enforcement and response to serious crimes in progress. In this scenario, the number of officers relieved from the traffic investigation function would increase available sworn staffing for law enforcement type functions. Based on the research model presented in this project, this could be between seven and nine officers for a mid-sized, urban, police agency. This option would require the department to add seven to nine civilian positions. The cost to the agency for the new positions would be approximately half the cost of adding the same number sworn positions. This cost could be reduced even further if some or all of the CAIs employed were hired as part-time, hourly employees without benefits. An hourly part-time position is potentially appealing to retired sworn personnel.

If a department is unable to fund additional civilian CAI positions, the department could opt to reduce the number of sworn positions by attrition. Since the cost of a CAI is about half of

a sworn position, the department could add up to eight civilian positions, while reducing the number of sworn positions by four. While this option reduces the total number of sworn positions, the addition of CAIs relieves the sworn officers of the traffic investigation function and increases the availability of sworn officers by a net four positions.

### Conclusion

In each of the options considered, the civilianization of the traffic investigative function increases staffing and availability of sworn officers in a mid-sized, urban police agency. With the budget instabilities facing municipal government, law enforcement agencies must identify methods to maintain acceptable levels of service while reducing expenditures. With the increasing demands being placed on law enforcement agencies, it is critical for managers to be creative in the delivery of services. The increased use of civilian personnel in field operations is one method for law enforcement managers to achieve the goal of reducing service costs while maintaining acceptable levels of customer service and public satisfaction. The labor-intensive duty of traffic collision investigation is a task civilian personnel can efficiently and effectively perform.

## APPENDIX A

Agency	Population	Number of Sworn Officers	Number of Traffic Officers	Civilian Accident Investigators	CSOs who Investigate Minor Collisions	CSOs Investigate Injury Collisions	CSOs Investigate Fatal Collisions	Total number of collisions reported in 2003
Livermore Sgt. Gallagher	73,000	97	10	No	Yes	No	No	840
Hayward Sgt. Akacos	140,000	170	10	No	No	No	No	1892
San Leandro Sgt. Overton	80,000	94	6	No	No	No	No	1292
Fremont	203,000	180	14	No	No	No	No	1586
Walnut Creek Sgt. Holian	70,000	82	10	No	No	No	No	1200
Antioch Sgt. Hopwood	100,000	113	4	No	Yes	No	No	360
Santa Clara Sharon Hoein	102,000	148	10	No	No	No	No	1300
South San Francisco Sgt. Riordan	62,000	83	6	No	Yes	Very minor only	No	1100
Palo Alto Sgt. Wong	56,000	90	8	No	No	No	No	1300
Alameda Sgt. Swatman	75,000	104	6	No	No	No	No	1131

## APPENDIX B

### Nominal Group Participants

Doug Kiner, Principal Systems Specialist, City of Mountain View

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Rob Caughell, Senior Personnel Analyst, City of San Leandro

Captain Dale Attarian, San Leandro Police Department

Sergeant Robert Cach, San Leandro Police Department

## APPENDIX C

### Trends

Demand for police services

Law enforcement budget instability

Retirees available for civilianized work

Use of civilian employees to reduce labor cost

Number of traffic collisions.

Demand for collision reports by the public

Hiring and retaining qualified civilian employees

Civilianization of tasks traditionally held by sworn

Level of response to collisions

Transportation infrastructure cannot keep pace with the increase in traffic

Improved public transportation

Level of traffic collisions due to better engineering

Costs sworn personnel

Interest of people entering law enforcement on the civilian side

Willingness of community to accept civilian personnel

Public awareness of traffic safety

Number of developments in technology

Civilian employees as percentage of workforce

## APPENDIX D

### Events

Legislation restricting personal liability claims

New law requires all collisions to be documented by law enforcement

Legislation restricts civilians to take collision reports

“Black Box” device eliminates the need for collision reports

Labor unions negotiate restrictions on the use of civilian personnel

Legislation mandates privatization of collision reports

No fault model for auto insurance

Smart Highway technology is implemented

Catastrophic event i.e.: major earthquake/terrorist event

Police departments eliminate traffic collision reporting and investigation

Reduced service level for public transportation

Insurance companies require all insured get police reports

State mandates CHP take all collision reports

Legislature accepts collision reports by participants

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## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Marc DeCoulode, Survey and Interviews with Bay Area Police Departments, January 2004.
- <sup>2</sup> Erin Breznikar, "Union City Waiting for Pink Slips to Fall," The Daily Review, 19 January 2004, local section, p. 1.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid
- <sup>4</sup> Rebecca Rosen Lum, "Richmond's Finances Get a Warning," West County Times, 13 January 2004, p. 1.
- <sup>5</sup> William Brand, "Station Closures Hinder Firefighters," The Daily Review, 19 January 2004, local section, p. 1.
- <sup>6</sup> DeCoulode, Survey.
- <sup>7</sup> Peter Dunbar, "What Will be the Impact of Civilianization on Police Investigations by 2002 at the Oakland Police Department?" Command College Paper, p. 2, 1997
- <sup>8</sup> International Association of Chiefs of Police Highway Safety Committee, "Traffic Safety in the New Millennium," p. 57, <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/enforce/TrafficSafety.pdf>
- <sup>9</sup> Brian Frost, "The Privatization and Civilianizing of Policing," Criminal Justice 2000, p. 24, 55, [http://www.ncjrs.org/criminal\\_justice2000/vol\\_2/02c2.pdf](http://www.ncjrs.org/criminal_justice2000/vol_2/02c2.pdf)
- <sup>10</sup> DeCoulode, Survey and Interviews with Bay Area Police Departments.
- <sup>11</sup> Marc DeCoulode, Informal survey with citizens involved in traffic collisions, January 2004.
- <sup>12</sup> Sean Holstege, "Airport Plan Clears Hurdle," Daily Review Newspaper, 20 October, 2003, p. 1.
- <sup>13</sup> Peggy Heubal, Administrative Specialist San Leandro Police Department, Interview January 2004.
- <sup>14</sup> Anna Vickroy, City of San Leandro Traffic Engineer, Interview January 2004.
- <sup>15</sup> Tom Overton, Sergeant, San Leandro Police Department, Interview January 2004.
- <sup>16</sup> Frost, "The Privatization and Civilianizing of Policing," Criminal Justice 2000, p.24, 55.
- <sup>17</sup> Thomas Esensten, Lecture, Nominal Group Technique Workshop, Command College Class 36.

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