THE FIRST-LINE SUPERVISOR AS LYNCHPIN

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A number of law enforcement practitioners who participated in the study agreed that early intervention systems can strengthen both organizational and officer behavior. While each agency tailors an early intervention system to meet its specific needs, the reality is that in most agencies first-line supervisors overwhelmingly assume responsibility in these systems because they spend so much of their time observing and interacting with officers on the street. Because of the nature of their work and the close contact they have with the community, officers on the street are the group that most frequently reaches thresholds within EIS.

In fact, the first-line supervisor is likely to be the one to identify a potential problem early on, thus providing an opportunity for that supervisor and the department to avoid potentially escalated issues (e.g., lawsuits resulting from inappropriate behavior such as excessive force or an increase in community complaints).

The PERF study revealed, however, that many supervisors did not feel supported by the agency and that despite their important role in their agency's early intervention system, they felt their input was not often heeded. This disregard sometimes resulted in ill feelings from supervisors toward the system and the department. For example, one supervisor stated, "I give my recommendation and then someone goes over my head and completely disregards my decision." Supervisors from another department felt that they had little discretion in the early intervention system and that they were not given appropriate resources with which to respond. One supervisor commented, "As a supervisor, I want to be heard and respected. I want some sort of reward system that I can use for my superior workers, and there are real limitations on this." Other supervisors described the level of paperwork that EIS can create as taking away from the time they have to spend with their officers. "When you tie up . . . supervisor[s] with paperwork, they can't monitor their people," one supervisor commented. This type of attitude can have a negative impact on supervisors' commitment to their early intervention system, their performance, the performance of their officers, and overall morale.

Conversely, findings from the study also showed that negativity on the part of supervisors and officers can be rectified. A number of departments in the study had successful EIS, in part because the message from the chief executive and the command staff was clear—they supported and encouraged a culture of accountability, including the department's early intervention system. By expressing the important role of the first-line supervisor and their overall commitment to the agency's system, chief executives garnered sincere support from the rank and file. In these departments, street-level sergeants and officers expressed a commitment to providing the best possible service to the community and to identifying and correcting officer performance problems. They believed that an early intervention system is a resource they can use to accomplish this. One supervisor commented, "The early intervention system helps us to promote healthy employees and keep the organization ethically responsible to our community." Another supervisor said, "If the officer fails, then we all fail."

It is recommended that chief executives convey the important role of first-line supervisors in early intervention systems. They should emphasize how supervisors can significantly and positively affect officer performance, and why first-line supervisors are the key to identifying potential problems early on. It is also recommended that police executives strongly consider supervisors' suggestions related to EIS, which would help provide supervisors with a sense of pride and ownership in the system.

Holding Supervisors Accountable

The buy-in and support of supervisors is critical to the success of EIS because they can have significant influence over the officers whom they supervise. Thus, it is just as important to value those supervisors who properly support an agency's early intervention system as to formulate ways to hold supervisors accountable for upholding their responsibilities within these systems. A participant in the expert panel stated, "An agency needs to urge and expect good supervision." Another said, "EIS is what a good supervisor should be doing anyway."

Consistency across supervisors was a significant issue that arose during the study. Relying on first-line supervisors to identify, intervene, and follow up with officers means that agencies are putting a great deal of responsibility on them. Consistency is imperative if officers are to feel that the system is fair. In different departments visited during the course of the study some officers felt that supervisor consistency was a problem. Some felt there were inconsistencies in the quality of supervision, while others felt there was inconsistency in how early intervention system procedures were enforced by supervisors. Inconsistencies resulted in officers' identifying ways to avoid poor supervisors or avoid reaching a threshold within the system. For example, in some departments there appeared to be "supervisor shopping," that is, officers' requesting transfers or shifts to work with a particular supervisor. Some officers were found to be "jumping supervisors" in hopes of avoiding an early intervention system trigger or intervention. In that instance, officers got transferred to a new supervisor, who knew little, if anything, about their history. One officer admitted to simply adapting his style of policing, to his supervisor.

The study revealed both formal and informal ways in which departments emphasize supervisor accountability. One formal way EIS can create more accountability for first-line supervisors is to encourage them to review system data regularly (perhaps before roll call), to be proactive in addressing potential problems (documenting informal meetings with officers regarding issues that arose during the shift or from system data), and to report back to supervisors within their own chain of command (either through regular meetings, reports, or evaluations). Some agencies, especially larger ones, rely on this type of formal accountability structure. In the Pittsburgh Police Department, for example, command staff and the chief meet quarterly for a COMPSTAR (Computer Supervisor Trend Analysis Review) meeting to review the behavior of officers above threshold levels. At these meetings, the chief looks to supervisors to make recommendations on how to help officers and prevent others from reaching a threshold within the system. The San Jose Police Department has implemented a Supervisor's Intervention Program (SIP), which is essentially an early intervention system focused on supervisors. Under this

system, supervisors are tracked based on the number of complaints filed by the community about their officers. When a team of officers assigned to a supervisor receives three or more complaints within six months, the Internal Affairs Department notifies the chain of command, and the supervisor is called in for a meeting. At these meetings, supervisors engage in a discussion about their officers' behavior and how to improve performance.

On a more informal level, one notable statement of a department's commitment to accountability and integrity came from a sergeant at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. He said, "We rebuild the department every night." He was referring to the informal counseling that occurs on the street when sergeants talk with officers about conduct that needs improvement. He also mentioned informal meetings among sergeants in one station, where they compare notes on what officers are doing, problems they see, and what steps they are taking to correct them. The sessions are often frank and critical, and they represent a collective effort to improve the department. Other informal methods of ensuring supervisor accountability include drop-in meetings by the chief executive, as well as the involvement of an on-site staff psychologist. In the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, the psychologist goes on frequent ride-alongs with officers and supervisors and is often available and accessible at stations. The availability of the staff psychologist can increase the use of counseling—or Employee Assistant Program (EAP)—services, as well as provide on-site, real-time assistance for supervisors who may have questions about how to handle a particular situation. Staff psychologists might also report to a chief executive that they see instances where their services might have been useful but where a supervisor did not involve them. One supervisor commented on his dealings with a staff psychologist, indicating that the psychologist offered several options without giving directives, which allowed him to expand his knowledge and made him a better resource for his staff.

It is recommended that agencies adopt both formal and informal mechanisms (e.g., training, counseling, conferring with psychologists, and requiring documentation) to hold supervisors accountable for their early intervention system responsibilities and to increase consistency in supervision across the agency. Having supervisors regularly review system data and then having upper level management follow up with them in more formal meetings will help improve accountability and consistency, as well. Similarly, encouraging supervisors to discuss issues with other supervisors will increase consistency and provide the added benefit of enhancing routine communication among supervisors.

Different Roles and Responsibilities for Supervisors

In the study, agencies with some of the most successful EIS revealed that the roles and responsibilities of first-line supervisors changed (sometimes dramatically) to accommodate their early intervention system. The degree to which roles and responsibilities changed depended greatly on the foundation upon which an early intervention system was built. In agencies where supervisors regularly monitored officer data, met with their officers, and observed officer performance, the supervisors' roles and responsibilities changed only slightly. Supervisors in these agencies said that small changes in their role as a result of the system included an increase in paperwork, more interaction with officers, and a heightened awareness of the role of their department in the community. In other agencies where these activities rarely took place, the supervisors' day-to-day routine changed quite dramatically. These supervisors described how they were now responsible for maintaining, interpreting, and analyzing huge amounts of data collected by their system. Others noted the change in supervisors' "presence." "Before the intervention counseling program was implemented," one supervisor commented, "you would never see or hear a supervisor; now it is very common. We are always there with our officers, even if it is something very benign." In fact, these two changes in supervisors' roles—taking on the task of analyzing data and being more involved with and aware of their officers' behavior on the street—were the two most frequently cited changes by supervisors during the site visits.

Supervisors as Data Analysts

The power of EIS lies in its ability to identify patterns of officer performance and to permit supervisors to intervene early to prevent more serious problems from developing. This is done by providing supervisors with detailed information about what their officers are doing out on the street and how they are interacting with the community. Data about officer performance can and should be used on a regular basis because they can reveal patterns of unacceptable behavior and/or indicators of potential problems that need to be corrected. Some departments visited during the study, such as the Pittsburgh Police Department, require supervisors to access the database every day.

This is one of the biggest changes for first-line supervisors and even mid-level managers. Traditional supervision has not involved analyzing a database, looking for patterns of behavior, and making critical decisions about what kind of patterns require intervention. Some supervisors and middle managers may feel uncomfortable with these new tasks. It is helpful for the police executive to explain how these new tasks fit into the agency's accountability structure and to reiterate the importance of the system and their support of it.

It is recommended that the chief executive explain to supervisors that the supervisors will be performing new roles and engaging in new tasks as a result of the early intervention system, including reviewing and analyzing data. The chief executive should clearly outline why such tasks are important. Making this kind of connection can help supervisors better understand the system as a whole and will help reinforce the chief executive's support for the early intervention system. This kind of communication may also help supervisors respond to the many questions officers will have later on.

Enhanced Supervision or "Early-Early Intervention"

As noted, early intervention system databases can help supervisors identify patterns of behavior that raise questions about an officer's performance. However, what has not yet been stated outright is the notion that these patterns are frequently evident long before an officer reaches a threshold within an early intervention system or before there is a major incident. Findings from the study revealed that department personnel (of varying ranks) in many of the agencies visited during the study felt that the keen eye of the first-line supervisor can identify these patterns early on. At more than one site experienced commanders told project staff, "It really shouldn't get to the early intervention system. You should spot those problems before they reach that point." In the Tampa Police Department, a commander told the project team, "Good supervisors know what is happening to their officers without the [system.]" In the Prince William County Police Department, supervisors said they "know their officers" and can prevent patterns of inappropriate conduct from developing in the first place. In general, supervisors explained, they really do not need a computer or a database; they can spot problems in the making. One chief said, "If the officer gets to [the early intervention system], the department has failed to supervise the officer." This approach to supervision may be referred to as early-early intervention. In other words, supervisors are responsible for identifying potential problems very early on, even before a threshold is reached within an early intervention system. Under this approach, then, departments view EIS essentially as a backup to responsible and effective ongoing supervision. One commander characterized the system as "a good checks and balances system."

Directing officers under an early-early intervention approach can be done formally or informally, For example, the Prince William County Police Department's general orders outline supervisory responsibility in terms of "early, early intervention." The department states, "the early intervention system does not alter the responsibility of supervisors as the primary source for monitoring performance and behavior of personnel on a daily basis. Supervisors shall continue to be alert to, and monitor, the strengths and weaknesses of members assigned to them and may detect

a need for EIS in this way." The Pittsburgh Police Department requires that supervisors meet with their officers quarterly, or more frequently if needed. In the Pocatello Police Department's system, supervisors are notified if an officer is *approaching* a threshold so that they may meet with that officer. Supervisors might even take some immediate steps to find out what is going on by asking for an impromptu, informal meeting with the officer when they notice inappropriate behavior on the street.

Even if supervisors are monitoring officer behavior closely, what exactly should they be looking for? The PERF project team asked many supervisors, "What do you see? What do you look for that indicates an officer might be having problems?" Although the departments were different, the answers were similar. Here are some of the indicators that supervisors mentioned:

- An outgoing officer is suddenly quiet and withdrawn, or vice versa.
- The usual joking among officers suddenly has an edge, with a note of hostility just below the surface.
- The quality of an officer's paperwork has declined.
- An officer begins avoiding responsibilities in small ways.
- An officer is going through a difficult divorce, or one of the officer's children is having serious problems.

This approach seems to have taken hold in some departments and has begun changing the way supervisors do their jobs. As one supervisor put it, the implementation of an early intervention system has heightened the standards and the expectations. This has changed the way we do business. You hear something on the radio and you think, 'Hey, maybe I should go and be there with my officers because there is some potential for a problem there.'"

These aspects of supervision under EIS are discussed in greater detail in the forthcoming EIS Supervisors' Guide. One point bears repeating here: while proactive supervision is imperative to the health of the organization and individual officers, formal EIS are still necessary for accountability purposes and to document interactions and interventions with officers.

It is recommended that the chief executive explain to supervisors that they are expected to closely monitor the conduct of all officers under their command, and explain that this close supervision represents an early- early intervention system, which can lead to positive outcomes and increased officer productivity and well-being. If this process works effectively, performance problems may not reach the formal early intervention system.

Preparing Supervisors for Their New Roles and Responsibilities

To properly support and engage in an agency's early intervention system, supervisors need more specific training that speaks directly to their new roles and responsibilities within their early intervention system. Officers at all ranks repeatedly talked about the need for supervisors' training in both their agency's early intervention system and in leadership. When asked what they would do with unlimited resources, nearly all chiefs interviewed expressed their desire to fund more supervisor training programs. This theme was reiterated during the meeting of the expert panel as well. With regard to the systems themselves, some study participants suggested that supervisors are not using EIS because they are unsure about how the system works. One executive said, "Understanding [their new] role takes some time to get used to. On a scale of 1 to 10 [with 10 being full understanding of EIS], I think, on average, supervisors understand [EIS] 6 to7."

Departments also have a responsibility to provide training on supervision and leadership, especially as these relate to supervisors' new responsibilities within EIS. For example, it is reasonable to expect that when supervisors approach officers about conduct that needs improvement, they will uncover deeper personal or professional issues that are the underlying cause of the officers' behavior. This would be an excellent opportunity for supervisors to ask some probing questions to help link an officer with an appropriate intervention. However, some supervisors may not be prepared to handle this type of interaction; some may not feel comfortable discussing personal problems "on the job." It is also possible that new supervisors are not ready to lose their peer status among officers. Some new supervisors felt that friendships that had been formed as officers were placed at risk when they were promoted in rank. As a result, many were reluctant to use the system for former peers.

Indeed, the amount and type of training provided to supervisors can dictate the culture of a department. A lack of proper training for supervisors can affect officers' trust and respect for their supervisors. In some departments officers said they would not seek out their supervisor if they needed help.

It is recommended that the chief executive provide adequate resources and training to assist supervisors in taking on their new roles and responsibilities within the early intervention system. The chief executive may even consider a mentoring program whereby supervisors with certain knowledge or experience can be paired with those who have less experience performing certain tasks such as analyzing data or identifying subtle behaviors that may indicate a potential problem.

INTERVENTIONS AS THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN EIS

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Findings from site visits revealed again and again that what makes EIS effective is supervisors' access to programs and services that meet officers' needs. Particularly important is the need for a range of intervention alternatives. Officer performance issues come in a wide variety. Some officers are too aggressive while others may be doing little if any police work. Serious family issues affect some officers while others have simply forgotten what they learned in training. In the West Jordan Police Department, a supervisor described their approach as "customized interventions"—identifying the best course of action for a particular individual.

Throughout the study the project team identified a number of valuable programs and services available to officers. Some departments have all of them while others have only a few. These are proactive programs that *supplement* formal EIS but also exist *independent* of them. In other words, these services are available and offered to officers even when they have not reached a threshold within their early intervention system. Proactive supervisors seeking to identify potential problems early on will have these in their arsenal to help meet officers' needs. A participant in the expert panel also suggested going beyond these suggestions and exploring ways private organizations intervene with employees.

Successful intervention programs observed during the study are outlined below. They range from informal meetings with an officer's supervisor to formal training or meetings with a professional counselor.

Counseling by an Immediate Supervisor

Counseling by an officer's immediate supervisor is the most common intervention. These informal counseling sessions take many forms. Some occur long before anything has appeared in the early intervention system database. Usually, they are informal conversations, often occurring immediately after an encounter with

a citizen where the supervisor observed a need for improvement. In one agency, these are sometimes referred to as trunk meetings, as in "meet me by the trunk of your patrol car." The Tampa Police Department mandates that supervisors conduct informal meetings with an officer who reaches a trigger point. On a more formal scale, supervisors in the West Jordan Police Department meet with officers, and if a performance problem is identified the officer signs a performance improvement contract that outlines a plan for improvement. The San Jose Police Department uses intervention counseling sessions to speak with officers who have reached a threshold as a result of their actions and how they could improve. The Prince William County Police Department uses a similar technique, called performance review, which precedes a formal intervention such as training or a referral to an EAP. In the latter two departments, higher-ranking officers also take part in these processes.

During the site visits, many supervisors and commanders agreed that some officers simply need a wake-up call. In most instances, they are good officers who, for some reason, have lost perspective on quality police work. Often they only need someone to tell them they are on the wrong track and are jeopardizing their career.

It is recommended that chief executives strive to provide high-quality training on leadership and counseling techniques to help improve supervisors' skills in handling these tasks and to help build rapport with officers.

Training

Training is a common form of intervention. An officer may simply need refresher training on traffic stops or on the use of force. One of the most interesting findings from the site visits was the extent to which officers were vigorous advocates of continuing training. Again and again, officers expressed a demand for more training. In one department where budget cuts had reduced training opportunities, officers were very concerned about maintaining quality standards. In one department, "self-initiated" officer requests for retraining were common. This was interpreted as reflecting a well-developed culture of accountability in the

department. It means that the department holds its officers to high standards, that officers have internalized those expectations, and that the department makes the programs and services necessary for improving performance available to the officers.

But relying on training as an intervention may impose a burden on the training unit by requiring personnel to respond to training requests quickly. It also may require some reorganization of the training unit and may even require some additional resources. The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department has implemented some online training to help reduce costs and increase the number of training resources.

It is recommended that agencies assess existing training resources and explore opportunities to expand training for officers, perhaps allowing for self-initiated training if feasible. It is also recommended that agencies identify more cost-effective, nontraditional approaches to training, including online training options.

Professional Counseling on Personal or Family Problems

Referral to professional counseling was an option in all EIS examined during the study, but there were important differences in how it worked. In several departments, officers expressed deep suspicion of their EAP. Some were not confident that their participation would remain confidential, while others apparently felt that going to the EAP was a sign of weakness or failure.

In departments with strong peer officer support programs, project staff did not observe the same distrust of EAP or other forms of professional counseling. It may be that the peer officer support program helps to create a culture in which it is acceptable to admit that an officer is having problems, either on the job or at home. Similarly, a chief executive's commitment to EAP services can increase their use. In explaining his approach to EAP, one chief asked, "Who hasn't been to a psychologist at one time or another?" This culture also helped officers feel that the department sincerely wanted to help them.

The effectiveness of professional counseling programs depends in part on the scope and cost of the services available. The West Jordan Police Department has a strong family orientation. The chief, in particular, felt strongly that one cannot separate the employee from the home, and that what happens at work affects the family, and vice versa. Consequently, this department made professional counseling services available to anyone dependent on the employee's income. This includes spouses, children, and elderly parents who live with the employee.

Providing professional counseling services for the full range of family or personal issues that may affect an officer's performance seems like a sound approach. Providing those services, however, has obvious budgetary implications for a department and the city, county, or state it serves. The chief executive needs to assess existing services carefully and explore with elected officials the possibilities of expanding those services in ways that will help officers maintain their professionalism.

It is recommended that agencies review their employee assistance programs to assess their operational effectiveness. Specifically, agencies should inquire whether officers trust the program and feel comfortable using it and, if not, consider corrective steps that can be made to better serve the needs of the officers.

Peer Officer Support Program

Several departments maintain a peer officer support program. This program involves a few officers in each precinct or unit who are designated peer support officers and who receive specialized training. In some cases, the peer supporter comes from a neighboring agency, creating an environment of heightened confidentiality and comfort for the troubled officer. Moreover, peer supporters usually receive extensive hours of training. Peer support programs allow officers to talk frankly with individuals of the same rank who might have had similar experiences. Officers can talk with peer supporters confidentially about personal or professional problems. During the site interviews it became apparent that because they were fellow officers, the peer support officers had immediate rapport and built-in trust.

Agencies that maintain peer officer support programs include the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, the San Jose Police Department, the West Jordan Police Department, the Clearwater Police Department, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, and the Prince William County Police Department. During some of the site visits, the project team interviewed both officers in the peer support program and officers who had received assistance from their department's program. Officers who received assistance felt very positive toward their programs and were grateful for being provided one-on-one support, a good listener, and compassion during a difficult time.

Because of the great deal of positive feedback received regarding this type of intervention, it is highly recommended that agencies implement a peer officer support program. Agencies can identify various approaches by studying successful programs and adopting components that are suitable for their own department.

Crisis Intervention Teams

Many departments maintain a crisis intervention team (CIT) that responds to critical incidents such as officer-involved shootings or excessive use-of-force incidents. In some cases, CITs are teams that include officers from several area departments. The CIT member can talk in confidence with an officer who has been in a similar situation. The Los Angeles Sheriff's Department has worked out an arrangement with the homicide unit to allow a CIT member to sit with the involved officer while the officer is waiting to be interviewed about the incident. The only stipulation is that they cannot talk about the incident.

Three of the sites visited have CITs. Project team members were impressed by how strongly officers who participate in these programs felt about the value of their programs. Virtually all felt that the programs conveyed a message of support and concern to officers who were involved in critical incidents.

It is recommended that agencies implement some type of CIT, possibly one that incorporates officers from other jurisdictions who have been involved in similar events.

Reassignment and Relief from Duty

Reassignment is another intervention option. The Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, which perhaps had the most comprehensive set of programs, conceptualized this approach as an acknowledgment of the different risk factors associated with different assignments and an attempt to reduce those risk factors for certain officers. In other words, this kind of intervention recognizes that law enforcement assignments differ—patrol duty is different from traffic enforcement, and both are very different from narcotics. Some officers simply have problems coping with the special demands of certain assignments. The Los Angeles department decided that, if alternatives do not succeed or are not available, it is in everyone's interest to transfer an officer to an assignment where the particular problem situations are less likely to occur, thus reducing potential risk factors for that officer.

Similarly, one of the more creative interventions found during site visits involved temporary relief from duty. In the Los Angeles and West Jordan departments, sergeants have the authority to relieve an officer from duty and send home an officer who is clearly under stress and not fit for duty that day. In most cases, the officer in question was having some serious but temporary personal crisis.

PERF project team members asked probing questions about relief from duty and found that this practice is not a formal personnel action or disciplinary action, nor is there any loss of pay for the officer. It is simply a way to provide supervisors with the flexibility to handle short-term personnel matters. This approach boils down to a sergeant paying close attention to their officers, including their attitudes and behavior, and noticing anything out of the ordinary. This type of intervention also reflects a supportive work environment, but it should be used only in rare instances, since there is potential for abuse (a sergeant giving their friends time off with pay). Overall, study findings indicated that it was not abused in the departments visited and that the benefits clearly outweighed potential problems. Essentially, these departments already embodied a strong culture of accountability, which discouraged this kind of abuse.

It is recommended that agencies consider reassignment and relief-from-duty policies that would effectively meet the short-term needs of officers with performance or personal problems. It is also recommended that agencies institute safeguards (e.g., periodic reviews of these types of personnel decisions conducted by mid-level or senior managers) to ensure that these practices are not abused.

Intervention Follow-Through

Because the intervention phase is such a crucial component of EIS, if meaningful intervention does not occur, the entire system collapses. Results from the study showed that follow-through procedures varied by agency, with some agencies instituting a lengthy follow-through process while others had no formal follow-through at all. For example, some agencies recommended formally monitoring officer behavior for six months, a year, or more after the officer had reached a threshold within their system. Monitoring would sometimes include observing officer performance on the street many times during a month. Other agencies recommended less intensive follow-through procedures for supervisors, such as periodically checking in with officers to see how they were doing and whether they needed additional assistance. At the other end of the spectrum, it appeared that one site did not effectively follow through on interventions. Officers who were identified as having problems received only a verbal reprimand; the agency had no formal process for retraining officers. At another site, interventions were entirely voluntary; supervisors were not required to carry out any response. These types of approaches may not reinforce the message that the agency truly wants to help its officers. In fact, these approaches may lead officers who are experiencing problems to feel isolated. Even worse, such approaches may help some officers circumvent the system altogether.

Follow-through is essential to the success of EIS. Officers with performance problems require intervention of some type. This is reinforced by the testimonials of officers who did receive the help they needed. One said, “I wouldn’t be here today if it hadn’t been for the help I got.” In another department, many officers referred to a case where the department went to great lengths to help an

officer who was addicted to prescription drugs. Even though the intervention was eventually not successful and the officer was terminated, it was clear that the officers interviewed were impressed with the effort the department made in trying to save his career. It is cases such as this that communicate the message that the department is serious about professional conduct and helping officers improve their performance.

It is strongly recommended that agencies adopt a formal follow-through process for officers who have reached a threshold within an agency's early intervention system.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND MAINTAINING AN EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND MAINTAINING AN EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM

As mentioned earlier, while the PERF project team focused its interviews on the supervision and intervention components of EIS, the team learned additional information about some general EIS issues. In particular, team members found that agencies had definitive ideas about what worked—and what did not work—regarding their early intervention system. Provided here are some lessons learned as they relate to the development, implementation, and maintenance of EIS.

The Planning Process

Careful planning is essential in developing an effective early intervention system because most are extremely complex administrative tools. Many initial EIS were adopted without adequate planning; some departments hurriedly instituted them, creating EIS without adequate strategy. The inevitable results included a variety of problems: departments collected the wrong kind of data or collected too much data, overwhelming staff. Departments did not have the in-house expertise to analyze complex data reports. Many of these departments had to start over to better tailor the system to their needs and available resources.

Some of these mistakes may be avoided by addressing issues at the outset. A critical question that should be asked is, "What kind of EIS do we want to create?" Some existing EIS are comprehensive personnel evaluation systems that include 20 or more performance indicators. Others are smaller, with only 5 or 8 indicators. The larger, comprehensive systems have a greater capacity to identify both positive and negative performance, but such systems tend to be more expensive and difficult to manage because they require more complex technology and more personnel to monitor and analyze data. The smaller systems cannot do as much, but they are less expensive and easier to create. Some departments still use paper files or simple Excel spreadsheets. A police department must determine the size, capacity, and purpose of the system at the outset.

Project team members learned that some agencies are asking key questions that should ideally be posed when planning an early intervention system: "What should we do with the system data? Who will have access to the data? How will we interpret it? How will we intervene with officers whose records suggest problems that need correcting? How will we make sure that the system is operating the way it should? Do we have the necessary technological infrastructure to allow an early intervention system to work? Do we have the budgetary resources to provide the necessary computer hardware, software, and training programs?"

One of the first steps in addressing these questions and implementing an effective planning process is to establish a committee responsible for planning and implementing the early intervention system. The committee should be comprised of key internal stakeholders. If it is not feasible for the chief executive to personally manage this process, a high-ranking executive who has direct access to the chief executive and who can speak for the chief executive can lead the committee. Members of the committee might include any number of stakeholders. For example, the Austin Tex. Police Department created such a committee during its planning for an early intervention system. The committee was composed of officers, supervisors, labor union representatives, the department psychologist, personnel from the city's information technology department, Internal Affairs investigators, and members of the community.

The committee chair should be familiar with the chief executive's expectations about the kind of system wanted, the time frame for development, and the people responsible for each implementation phase. When necessary, the planning committee chair should delegate responsibility for important issues to subcommittees or the appropriate executives (e.g., developing a timetable for training or enhancing the agency's technological infrastructure to support the system). The chair of the planning process needs an accurate timetable to create an early intervention system implementation plan with a realistic set of goals and timelines. Site visits revealed that many departments experienced significant delays in implementing their system. Some of these problems were due to a lack of planning or an unrealistic estimate of how long it would

take. The technological issues alone could lead to significant delays, not to mention potential problems with vendors who, for example, are unable to produce what was promised. Clearly, certain parts of EIS depend on the completion of other tasks. Installing the software, for instance, depends on having executives and first-line supervisors trained and ready to use the system. It is unrealistic to set a target date for having the system up and running without ensuring that all the necessary components are ready.

One of the best ways to get started is to learn from the experiences of agencies described in this guide. The executives of one department, for example, admitted that they borrowed a system from another agency only to find a few years later that it really did not fit their needs, thereby forcing them to spend several years completely rebuilding it. Another agency—one of the first to create an early intervention system—had to learn "on the job." Without the benefit of others' experiences, the agency had to wrestle with many of the basic issues itself and create its own answers.

It is recommended that agencies create a planning process as the first step in creating an early intervention system. Many departments emphasized the importance of not rushing into creating EIS without careful planning. This process includes asking some key questions and forming a committee responsible for the development and implementation of the early intervention system. It is also recommended that agencies draw on the experiences of other departments, perhaps by sending some officers to other departments or inviting command officers to visit and advise the planning committee.

Assessing Departmental Needs

During the planning stage it is also important to ask, "What is the state of the department? What resources does a department have that will augment the desired early intervention system? In which areas will the department require more funding or reorganization to meet the needs of its system to make it successful?" More specifically, chiefs and other police executives should determine if their agency maintains the following:

- current accountability structures;
- a comprehensive performance reporting system;
- reporting systems that capture basic early intervention system data such as use of force, vehicle pursuit, officer use of sick leave, and officer involvement in civil suits;
- training for supervisors that captures the type of responsibilities they will have within their system, such as informal counseling techniques and strategies for matching interventions to officers' specific needs;
- *trusted* programs and services designed to meet the needs of officers who are dealing with a variety of personal and/or professional problems, including peer officer support programs, an EAP, and crisis intervention teams;
- a strong technological infrastructure that can support the needs of the early intervention system (e.g., pulling data from multiple sources) and one that is user friendly for the officers;
- resources for data entry and analysis related to the system.

Defining the New Culture of Accountability

The planning process is a good time to clearly demonstrate how an early intervention system fits into an agency, which includes highlighting how the system will be a mechanism for ensuring accountability, integrity, and quality service. Also important is stressing that EIS are not a narrowly focused disciplinary tool, but rather a tool that helps officers improve their performance and recognizes positive performance.

Creating an early intervention system involves developing or enhancing a culture of accountability in the department. Many of the departments included in this study identified their early intervention system as part of their overall effort to enhance accountability. The West Jordan Police Department refers to its approach as "positive accountability." To develop such a culture a department must be willing to "hear the bad news" and to look squarely at its own problems. In a controversial officer-involved shooting incident, for example, a department must examine the situation to learn what happened and take the necessary steps to fix any problems. Problems may have resulted from inadequate policy, shortcomings in the training program, or lax supervision in the field. Whatever the issue, it is the chief executive's role to set the tone for the department in the early planning stages for its early intervention system. Chiefs who hold themselves accountable provide a good example for supervisors and officers.

It is recommended that the chief executive communicate to the department their plans to lead the organization toward a new culture of accountability and explain that the early intervention system will be a part of this culture. This message should be reinforced at all levels, by mid-level managers as well as command staff. It is also recommended that the chief executive support this message by being willing to "hear bad news," to evaluate potential problems, and to respond quickly.

Budgeting

Creating a system to meet the needs of an agency, including providing the necessary range of programs and services, poses difficult decisions about resource allocation. Law enforcement agencies simply do not have all the financial resources they would like, and probably never will. As a result, implementing EIS and ensuring that a range of appropriate intervention options are available may adversely affect other programs. Accordingly, EIS can take many forms. Some are comprehensive personnel assessment systems that incorporate several performance indicators and capabilities such as identifying top-performing officers. Other systems are smaller, less expensive, and focused on specific performance problems such as use of force or complaints.

They have fewer indicators than the larger systems and cannot do as much; therefore, they are less expensive and easier to manage. Planning should take into account the financial considerations of size and capabilities.

It is also necessary to consider long-term priorities. Traditionally, support services are often the first to be cut during budget shortfalls. Deploying a patrol officer on the street is sometimes considered more important than employing someone to process or analyze data in an early intervention system. It should be noted that EIS reinforce accountability and integrity, which are essential to an agency.

It is essential that agencies review the budgetary implications of an early intervention system and develop plans on the basis of available resources.

Developing and Implementing an Early Intervention System

Although the planning process can be challenging, the development and implementation phases of EIS can be just as demanding. It is during these latter phases that agencies face difficult tasks ranging from the technical (e.g., defining thresholds and capturing essential data that may be in multiple data sources) to the political (e.g., garnering support from department staff, elected and appointed political leaders, labor union officials and perhaps members of the community). Some of the technical issues have been raised in previous research. Furthermore, gaining support for an early intervention system is critical. The sections that follow address various aspects of gaining support from inside and outside the law enforcement agency.

Getting Buy-in from Officers at All Ranks

Demonstrating to officers and non-sworn personnel in an agency the value of supporting the early intervention system is crucial. There is tremendous potential for opposition from both rank and file and middle management. Much of this potential opposition can be addressed through education and inclusion in the process.

The Rank and File

Rank and file officers may think that EIS is simply a "gotcha" system, a means of trying to catch them doing something wrong and punishing them. In many departments with a functioning early intervention system, many officers were initially worried that the system would punish them unfairly. In particular, they were worried that the system would punish hard-working officers who initiate a lot of contact with the public, undertake numerous citizen stops, and make more arrests than other officers. Although there is no rigid formula for setting thresholds, the best systems use peer officer comparisons that take into account different assignments and different work environments. Police executives in one city studied were aware of the variables that might influence officers' threshold-reaching behaviors. They understood that location, time of day, and type of assignment all have a great impact on the situations an officer might face and how an officer might react. All "hits" within the system, therefore, are reviewed by supervisors and command staff to gain an understanding of the motivation for behavior. "The data has to be interpreted," the executives explained. Analyzing system data can also help "find the most productive officers and put them in the most effective 'seats on the bus.'"

It is imperative that rank and file officers understand the intervention process. All officers should attend a training program that explains what data the system captures, and how that data will be interpreted as well as the purpose for the data (e.g., improving officer well-being, raising standards, and maximizing accountability). Failure to prepare officers adequately can lead to serious problems and misunderstandings. In one department, an officer referred for an intervention said, "I was so confused… I didn't know what this was all about." Another officer said, "I wasn't told about it and what its purpose was." In general, the study found that few officers knew and understood their early intervention systems. This can lead to misinterpretation, distrust, and low morale.

There is also the danger of going too far in selling the concept to the rank and file. At one site, the system was sold to the officers as a 100 percent voluntary, self-help system. Primarily, this meant that there would be no mandatory intervention for officers whose performance records indicated possible problems. This approach may have helped some officers, although several noted that the system had no "real teeth." The true impact of such an approach is not known because no records are kept on how many officers have taken advantage of interventions and have been helped. This approach is not as effective as it could be.

It is recommended that agencies give officers access to their own data file and allow them to challenge any incorrect information that has been entered. This step will take the mystery out of the system and reduce the possibility that officers will regard it as a "big brother" operation. It is also recommended that agencies inform rank and file officers about the early intervention system at the very beginning, and also include representatives from the rank and file in the planning process.

Supervisors and Middle Management

Some supervisors and middle managers may also be skeptical or even hostile to the prospect of an early intervention system because they worry it will burden them with paperwork. This is an understandable fear. The study findings showed, however, that effective EIS actually mean less paperwork in the long run. Executives at one of the sites visited were adamant on this point: as they explained, identifying performance problems and intervening early result in fewer problematic incidents in the field later on. "If you do the extra paperwork demanded by an early intervention system now, you will have less work in the long run."

The degree to which supervisors' jobs change depends on the existing structure of the department. In departments with a historically low emphasis on accountability, the change will be dramatic. If a department does not have a comprehensive use-of-force reporting system, for example, shifting to a computerized database will be a tremendous leap. The change will be much

smoother in departments where accountability mechanisms are already well developed. Supervisors and middle managers need to understand how they fit into the accountability process before they can support it.

It is recommended that agencies train supervisors and other managers in their new responsibilities, including the additional forms and other paperwork necessary to make the system function effectively. Training should be accompanied by a discussion about the long-term goals of the early intervention system and how these responsibilities and additional paperwork will pay off in long-term benefits such as decreased performance problems and less paperwork.

It is also recommended that supervisors and middle managers be involved in the development and implementation processes, including assisting the agency in potentially streamlining the early intervention system process and testing the system once it is implemented.

Bringing in the Union

The union is an important constituency that needs to be brought into the planning process early because it can provide important perspectives and suggestions. Union opposition or resistance can severely undermine early intervention system development. The individuals involved in the study were nearly unanimous on this point. Talking with union leaders at the earliest moment and explaining the goals and operations of the planned early intervention system are imperative. The basic goal of helping officers needs to be emphasized again and again. During site visits the PERF project team talked with a number of rank and file officers who had been through the system. Not one of them rejected the basic idea of EIS.

Chief executives should assert basic management prerogatives regarding EIS, since EIS are not normally a matter for collective bargaining negotiation. During site visits the project team did not find a single department where the union effectively blocked the implementation of an early intervention system.

It is recommended that union representatives be kept fully informed about the early intervention system. Any misunderstandings should be addressed as soon as they arise.

Building Community Outreach

It is important to develop outreach to stakeholders in the community, including elected and appointed leaders, heads of neighborhood and community organizations, and business owners so they understand the priority the department places on police integrity and accountability. Interviewees from one department felt that becoming more responsible and accountable for officers' actions brings a lot more respect from the community.

Elected and Appointed Leaders

Mayors, city council members, and county commissioners may not have heard of EIS. They should be briefed on how these systems can reduce performance problems, reduce community tensions (particularly with racial and ethnic groups), minimize loss of life, and save on litigation expenses for the jurisdiction (not to mention lessening the economic and emotional impacts of controversial incidents). There is a lot to be gained by fully discussing this new approach and letting political leaders know that you are adopting the recognized best practices in the field.

Political leaders should also be informed about the possible budgetary implications of EIS, which vary from agency to agency. Some agencies already have a good computer infrastructure but others do not. EIS may involve significant costs for computer hardware, software, and training.

It is recommended that chief executives keep elected and appointed representatives fully informed about the early intervention system.

Community Organization Leaders

Citizens are the ultimate consumers of police services and they are entitled to effective, fair, and impartial service. Tensions with a community sometimes result from a perception that a department does not care about citizens' concerns or from some type of officer misconduct. EIS can help produce better community relations because when the system works properly, there will be fewer incidents in which officers use excessive force or offend community residents. The transparency that comes with EIS can also help address misperceptions of wrongdoing or inaction. Informing key community leaders about the system can show a department's commitment to accountability and integrity and can increase support for the department.

Business Community Leaders

Business community leaders are also valuable partners. Many business executives will immediately understand the risk management aspect of EIS and the potential for the system to reduce problems and lower the costs of lawsuits. It is also possible that some executives will be able to volunteer personnel to help with computer technology or organizational change issues related to the implementation of EIS. Business leaders are an important constituency in the community. To the extent that they are impressed with the good management practices represented by EIS, they can become an advocate for the department.

It is recommended that chief executives reach out to the business community to inform them about the early intervention system. Chiefs may also consider reaching out to local businesses for support and assistance when appropriate.

Maintaining the System

Creating an early intervention system is just the beginning of the challenge. The experience of many departments shows that maintaining the system is almost as difficult—and possibly even more difficult—because it is necessary to continually evaluate the choice of data being collected, how useful they are, whether new data should be collected, and whether the data being collected are of high quality. Despite these challenges, many chief executives involved in the study emphasized the great benefits of such systems. The experience of various departments leads to several major lessons learned.

Data Integrity

EIS are only as good as the data they contain. It is essential, then, to ensure the integrity of the data entered into the system by continuously monitoring use-of-force reports, citizen complaint data, and other performance indicators used by EIS. Furthermore, if data are not entered in a timely fashion, the system will not provide meaningful analyses of performance.

Clarity and Consistency

All the elements of EIS need to be clearly spelled out in official protocols. They also need to be consistent because ambiguity can lead to serious problems. In one site visit, rank and file officers arrived at their scheduled group meeting with a copy of their early intervention system protocol in hand. They pointed to a part that referred to "unacceptable behavior," arguing that it was vague and not clearly defined. Some complained about a lack of consistency in the application of this and other elements of their system. As mentioned above, consistency, especially across supervisors, was a significant topic for discussion during site visits and at the meeting of the expert panel. In part, inconsistency may be due to shift changes. Both officers and supervisors commented on the difficulty they experienced in getting to know and feel comfortable with a team that rotated every three months. As a result, some departments are addressing these concerns by expanding fixed shifts, creating a more formal system of shift change

documentation, and allowing supervisors and officers to mutually request working with one another. Other departments are taking steps to design additional early intervention system training for officers and supervisors, which is aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the system. This training is being presented in the academy, at roll calls, through literature, during in-service training, and via informal meetings.

Ongoing Training

As mentioned earlier, EIS pose a number of new demands on departments' training systems. First, officers need to be trained in the purpose and operation of the system itself. Commanders and first-line supervisors need extensive training so that they can utilize the system as intended. Moreover, since retraining for officers is one of the most important interventions, the training unit should be capable of responding quickly to requests for services. If it is determined that an officer is in need of retraining—in use of force or in traffic stop procedures, for example—that retraining needs to occur immediately. The PERF project team found the Pocatello Police Department rich in training resources. In fact, that department had three different routes for officers to receive training: directed or mandated by a supervisor, recommended but not mandated by a supervisor, and self-initiated.

Maintaining EIS, in part, means keeping training up-to-date and fresh, which can be accomplished in a number of ways. First, if EIS are maintained properly, then they will regularly undergo changes to ensure they are capturing the necessary data and setting thresholds at an appropriate level. Changes in early intervention systems should be conveyed to those affected by them through ongoing training (e.g., during roll call) or through scheduled in-service training. Similarly, training topics on leadership and supervision should be provided and updated regularly to ensure that the most effective methods are being employed. Agencies' training divisions should continually evaluate training requests and identify the most pressing training needs as officers reach the early intervention system threshold. Training divisions can thus identify more innovative ways to present information and explore new approaches to help streamline training of officers who need retraining quickly.

Hostility to the System / Morale Problems

EIS represent an agency's change to an enhanced culture of accountability. Change can lead to hostility or low morale, especially in departments where there is no well-established commitment to accountability. One of the departments in the study was still in the process of a major change from virtually no automated accountability to a high level of accountability built around a new early intervention system. The change produced a great deal of conflict. Study findings revealed that morale problems among the rank and file existed but that the chief and the top command staff were firmly committed to the new approach to accountability—a vital first step in improving morale within the department. The chief persisted in implementing the early intervention system and other reforms in the department and succeeded in bringing about a number of well-documented improvements.

Making EIS work effectively involves closely monitoring the implementation process and identifying significant opposition. "Is the early intervention system creating a morale problem? If so, how serious is it? Is the problem caused by a failure to explain the system to rank and file officers? Is it the result of insufficient training for supervisors on how to use the system? Is there a problem with the system itself that needs to be rectified?" To address these questions, a department must monitor the situation, identify implementation problems, and take the necessary steps to correct them quickly.

It is recommended that agencies and chief executives keep channels of communication open and be alert to any concerns with the early intervention system or morale problems related to it.

CONCLUSION & REFERENCES

CONCLUSION

EIS can have a positive impact on many aspects of a law enforcement agency. Some of the most significant benefits include improving supervision, helping officers overcome personal or professional problems that affect job performance, identifying potential problems with personnel very early on, strengthening the culture of integrity and accountability within agencies, improving community relations, reducing litigation costs, and bringing agencies to the forefront of the field by adopting proven best practices.

EIS can improve supervision by providing richly detailed information about officers that first-line supervisors can use to proactively observe, identify, and intervene with potential problems on the street. If this happens early enough, it can help the officer, the department, and the community avoid potentially significant problems in the future. Departments that provide a wide array of intervention options not only produce a supportive environment, they increase their chances of helping address an individual officer's needs by tailoring their approaches to the problem.

EIS can make a direct contribution to improved community relations as well. The equation is simple and direct: underlying problems identified plus corrective action equal fewer controversial incidents on the street and improved relations with the community. When community leaders know about and understand the system, they will be far more likely to believe that the department is responding to community concerns.

Effective EIS can also reduce a department's litigation costs by identifying officer performance problems early and addressing them effectively. One example might be an officer's use of force. Once a supervisor observes or is informed (through data) of possibly questionable behavior, the supervisor should intervene immediately and arrange for an appropriate intervention (e.g., retraining or counseling). The supervisor's proactive approach, coupled with a suitable and effective intervention, should lead to a positive result.

EIS have emerged as an important tool for ensuring accountability and integrity. Many organizations have suggested that EIS are a successful approach for law enforcement. Indeed, successful EIS can help enhance integrity and accountability in law enforcement agencies across the country.

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APPENDICES

APPENDICES

Appendix A—Participating Agencies

Site Visits

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Chief Robert Davis
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San Jose, CA 95110
Contact: Lt. Dave Cavallaro

Chief Charlie Deane
Prince William Police Department
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Prince William, VA 22192
Contact: Lt. Steve Hudson

Chief Edward Guthrie
Pocatello Police Department
911 North 7th Street
Pocatello, ID 83206
Contact: Lt. Brad Hunt

Chief Stephen Hogue
Tampa Police Department
411 North Franklin Street
One Police Center
Contact: Captain Joan Dias

Chief Sidney Klein
Clearwater Police Department
645 Pierce Street
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Contact: Lt. Ron Sudler

Chief Ken McGuire
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Contact: Lt. Kyle Shepherd

Chief Robert McNeilly
Pittsburgh Bureau of Police
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Contact: Commander Linda Barone

Sheriff William Young
Las Vegas Police Department
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Contact: Deputy Chief Mike Ault

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Sergeant Mike Schaller
New Jersey State Police
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Appendix B—Telephone Survey Participants

Arlington (Texas) Police Department
Austin Police Department
Baltimore City Police Department
Boston Police Department
Chicago Police Department
Clearwater Police Department
D.C. Metropolitan Police Department
Denver Police Department
Knoxville Police Department
Las Vegas Metro Police Department
Los Angeles Sheriff's Department
Miami-Dade Police Department
Minneapolis Police Department
Missouri City (Texas) Police Department
New Jersey State Police
New Orleans Police Department
Oakland Police Department
Omaha Police Department
Philadelphia Police Department
Phoenix Police Department
Pittsburgh Bureau of Police
Pocatello Police Department
Prince William County (Virginia) Police Department
Salt Lake City Police Department
San Jose Police Department
Seattle Police Department
St. Paul Police Department
Tampa Police Department
West Jordan (Utah) Police Department

Appendix C—COPS Office/PERF Staff

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS/ CONTRIBUTOR

ABOUT THE AUTHORS/CONTRIBUTOR

Samuel Walker retired in May 2005 after 31 years as a professor of criminal justice at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He continues his research and consulting on police accountability, including citizen oversight of the police, early intervention systems for police officers, and the mediation of citizen complaints against police officers. He is the author of the report *Early Intervention Systems for Law Enforcement Agencies: A Planning and Management Guide* (2003), published by the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. Walker has written 13 books on policing, criminal justice policy, and civil liberties, most recently *The New World of Police Accountability* (2005). He is also the author of The Police in America: An Introduction (5th ed. 2005), Police Accountability: *The Role of Citizen Oversight (2001), and The Color of Justice: Race, Ethnicity, and Crime in America*, with C. Spohn and M. DeLone (3rd ed. 2003). He served as the coordinator of the Police Professionalism Institute (PPI) at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The PPI is engaged in a number of projects relating to police relations with the Hispanic/Latino community, early intervention systems, national standards for police auditor systems, and a comparative analysis of police accountability in the United States, Latin America, and Europe. PPI reports are available at www.policeaccountability.org. Walker has also served as a consultant to the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice and to local governments and community groups in a number of cities across the country on police accountability issues.

Stacy Osnick Milligan is a criminal justice consultant whose most recent work focuses on performance measurement and accountability within law enforcement agencies. Milligan is also coauthor of the companion guide to this publication, *Supervision and Intervention within Early Intervention Systems: A Guide for Law Enforcement Supervisors* (forthcoming), and coauthor of an upcoming National Institute of Justice report, *Measuring What Matters: The PERF Law Enforcement Performance Measurement System*. Milligan's other research experience includes work on national program evaluations,

homeland security, police use of force, drug enforcement, police department management, and strategic planning in a law enforcement agency. She received a master's degree in criminology from the University of Delaware and bachelor's degrees in both administration of justice and sociology from Pennsylvania State University.

Anna Berke joined PERF in July 2003 as a research assistant and conference coordinator. Berke is currently the project manager for the early intervention systems project. She has written portions of the EIS guides, as well as coordinated site visits to police departments throughout the country. She traveled to each department to conduct the interviews that formed the basis for this document. As PERF's conference coordinator, she has successfully managed many meetings and other forums throughout the United States, including the 2004 and 2005 PERF Annual Meetings, the 2003 Problem-Oriented Policing Conference, and the 2004 and 2005 PERF Use-of-Force and Mass Demonstration Conferences. Berke holds a bachelor's degree from Colby College in both Spanish and women's studies and is pursuing a master's degree in public administration at American University.

ABOUT THE POLICE EXECUTIVE RESEARCH FORUM

ABOUT THE POLICE EXECUTIVE RESEARCH FORUM

PERF is a national professional association of chief executives of large city, county, and state law enforcement agencies. PERF's objective is to improve the delivery of police services and the effectiveness of crime control through several means:

- the exercise of strong national leadership,
- the public debate of police and criminal justice issues,
- the development of research and policy, and
- the provision of vital management and leadership services to police agencies.

PERF members are selected on the basis of their commitment to the organization's objectives and principles. PERF operates under the following tenets:

- Research, experimentation, and exchange of ideas through public discussion and debate are paths for the development of a comprehensive body of knowledge about policing.
- Substantial and purposeful academic study is a prerequisite for acquiring, understanding, and adding to that body of knowledge.
- Maintenance of the highest standards of ethics and integrity is imperative to the improvement of policing.
- The police must, within the limits of the law, be responsible and accountable to citizens as the ultimate source of police authority.
- The principles embodied in the Constitution are the foundation of policing.

Categories of membership also allow the organization to benefit from the diverse views of criminal justice researchers, law enforcement of all ranks, and other professionals committed to advancing law enforcement services to all communities.

ABOUT THE PERF CENTER ON FORCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

ABOUT THE PERF CENTER ON FORCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Created in April 2005, the PERF Center on Force and Accountability is designed to be a significant resource for PERF members and others in law enforcement, and to serve as the principal clearinghouse for ideas, strategies and data that will address problems related to police use of force and accountability. Ultimately, the Center provides law enforcement executives with information and strategies that will help them make more informed decisions as they serve their communities.

The PERF Center on Force and Accountability has four primary objectives:

- Identify emerging trends and seek out effective new strategies
- Conduct groundbreaking research
- Provide high quality technical assistance to law enforcement agencies
- Create a central resource for information regarding use-of-force and police accountability issues

To that end, the Center is continually developing competencies in areas that include the following.

Use of Force: community outreach and accountability; equipment and weapons (including TASERS™); investigations; police canines; policy development; review boards; tactics; technology; training; trends and promising approaches identification; statistics, tracking and analysis; vehicle pursuits; and violence against law enforcement officers.

Police Accountability: community involvement; consent decrees/memoranda of accountability; discipline and conduct review; early intervention systems and processes; equal employment opportunities; internal investigations; law enforcement ethics; misconduct statistics, tracking and analysis; policy development; technology; training; and trends and promising approaches identification.

ABOUT THE COPS OFFICE

ABOUT THE COPS OFFICE

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services was created in 1994 and has the unique mission to directly serve the needs of state and local law enforcement. The COPS Office has been the driving force in advancing the concept of community policing and is responsible for one of the greatest infusions of resources into state, local, and tribal law enforcement in our nation's history.

Since 1994, COPS has invested over $11.4 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing. COPS funding has furthered the advancement of community policing through community policing innovation conferences, the development of best practices, pilot community policing programs, and applied research and evaluation initiatives. COPS has also positioned itself to respond directly to emerging law enforcement needs. Examples include working in partnership with departments to enhance police integrity, promoting safe schools, combating the methamphetamine drug problem, and supporting homeland security efforts.

Through its grant programs, COPS is assisting and encouraging local, state, and tribal law enforcement agencies in enhancing their homeland security efforts using proven community policing strategies. Traditional COPS programs such as the Universal Hiring Program (UHP) gives priority consideration to those applicants that demonstrate a use of funds related to terrorism preparedness or response through community policing. The COPS in Schools (CIS) program has a mandatory training component that includes topics on terrorism prevention, emergency response, and the critical role schools can play in community response. Finally, COPS has implemented grant programs intended to develop interoperable voice and data communications networks among emergency response agencies that will assist in addressing local homeland security demands.

The COPS Office has made substantial investments in law enforcement training. COPS created a national network of Regional Community Policing Institutes (RCPIs) that are available to state and local law enforcement, elected officials, and community leaders for training opportunities on a wide range of community policing topics. Recently the RCPIs have focused their efforts on developing and delivering homeland security training. COPS also supports the advancement of community policing strategies through the Community Policing Consortium. In addition, COPS has made a major investment in applied research, which makes possible the growing body of substantive knowledge covering all aspects of community policing.

These substantial investments have produced a significant community policing infrastructure across the country as evidenced by the fact that at the present time, approximately 86 percent of the nation's population is served by law enforcement agencies practicing community policing. The COPS Office continues to respond proactively by providing critical resources, training, and technical assistance to help state, local, and tribal law enforcement implement innovative and effective community policing strategies.

EIS GUIDE

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