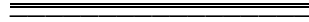
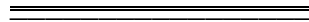


**The Bill Blackwood
Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas**



Police Chaplains



**An Administrative Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Required for Graduation from the
Leadership Command College**



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ABSTRACT

This research examines the question, "Can a police chaplain program benefit law enforcement?" Law enforcement agencies traditionally have focused on their employees' quality of life through physical benefits such as salaries and retirement packages; however, this philosophy leaves out the employees' mental and spiritual needs. The research was conducted through the use of a survey of 20 agencies. The findings of this research revealed that employees feel they would benefit from a police chaplain program, In addition, they rated the chaplain duties that most benefited their own needs as most important, as opposed to those that benefit the community. The research concluded that there is a benefit and illustrated what duties a police chaplain should most focus on.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract	
Introduction.	1
Review of Literature	4
Methodology	8
Findings	10
Discussions/Conclusions	16
References	21

INTRODUCTION

Law enforcement has evolved in many areas over the past several decades. In days past, officers have used reactive policing to serve the community. In other words, they reacted to crimes when they were committed. Today, while reactive enforcement remains important, law enforcement agencies across America are seeking proactive solutions to problems in their community. This strategy has also been internally focused, seeking to respond to the needs of the department's employees. Programs such as wellness programs, increased benefits, and salary comparisons help to address many of the employee's needs and improve employee retention. Even though this is the case, many departments have realized In order to keep an employee spirited, addressing strictly the physical needs is only half the battle. Departments in recent years started to address the mental and spiritual needs of their employees as well. The theory is, if an employee is happy at home and at work, he will be more productive and less likely to seek employment elsewhere.

While the salaries and benefits address employees' physical needs, they do not address mental or spiritual needs. To address this aspect of employee needs, many departments have borrowed from their military counterparts and begun utilizing police chaplains. These chaplains not only help to fulfill employee needs, but also can play an important role in community relations and crime prevention by networking with area churches and community groups.

History tells us that military leaders have placed a significant importance on religion since Old Testament Biblical times when priests accompanied armies in battle. The Pentateuch, Deuteronomy 20:2-4 says, "And it shall be when ye are come nigh

unto the battle, that the priest shall approach and speak unto to the people.” Later, for the Romans, the presence of a priest before each battle was vital. The priests even proclaimed war upon the advice of the Senate, thus declaring the war both just and holy. The modern chaplain’s roots are medieval Catholic in origin. The Council of Ratisbon (742 AD) first authorized the use of chaplains for armies, but prohibited them from bearing arms or fighting. The word chaplain itself comes from this period. Today, the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and U.S. Coast Guard deploy military chaplains. Their duties typically are to minister to the needs of the men and women of the armed forces. The ministry of each military chaplain differs, as do the duties of the police chaplain. Borrowing from the experience of military chaplains, police departments are utilizing the chaplain program in a variety of ways to meet employee and community needs.

The purpose of this research is to examine the question, “Can a police chaplain program benefit law enforcement?” First, the researcher will examine whether there is a perceived need for a police chaplain. Secondly, the study will include the duties of a police chaplain, present and future. These duties vary widely from department to department; however, many similarities exist. Finally, the research will examine the perceived impact of police chaplains on the community and department employees. A written survey of 20 agencies was conducted to determine what programs were already in place, what programs were needed and most important, and what could be done to improve police chaplain programs. It is anticipated that the outcome of this research will determine that there is a need for such programs, both internally and in the community. In addition, the outcome is expected to find that officers would like to utilize chaplains to

a greater extent within their departments. Should the anticipated outcome be found, this research will benefit police agencies by determining if a need does exist for chaplains, providing information regarding the expected duties of a chaplain, and assist in meeting the needs of the community. Officers and other law enforcement employees will benefit from the additional support services offered by their police departments.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A written survey was conducted of 20 city, county, and school district law enforcement agencies, 19 from Texas and one from Alaska (Appendix 1). These agencies were represented ranged in size from four to 450 employees, providing a wide range of input. Each respondent, all of which are administrators and leaders in their respective agencies, was provided with a list of 10 questions. Of the 20 agencies polled, 15 responded, providing a 75% response rate. The purpose of the written survey was to determine how many agencies already have a chaplain program, the perceived importance of such a program, what the chaplain duties are, and what duties might be seen as beneficial.

The first question asked was, "Does your agency have a chaplain program?" Of the 15 respondents, 66% stated that their agency already has a chaplain program of some sort in place. Each representative was then asked, "Do you think your agency benefits (or would benefit) from such a program?" Of the ten respondents that stated that their agency has a chaplain, only one answered negatively. That respondent's also clarified their response with the comment that the chaplain is "never seen." Obviously, there would be no benefit to such a program if the position has no function. Of the five respondents that stated their department does not already have a chaplain program,

only one stated that his/her agency would not benefit from such a program. No explanation was given for the response from this 4-man agency.

These first two questions were critical in this research to determining if further research was warranted. With the exception of two agencies polled, one providing a valid reason for a negative response, 13 of 15 agencies felt that their agency either has or would benefit from a chaplain program.

Next, respondents were given a list of eight typical duties of a police chaplain and asked to rank them in the order of their perceived importance. Response possibilities were Employee/Family Counseling, Crisis Counseling, Employee Death/Funeral Benefits Assistance, Religious Encouragement/Support, Hospital Visits/Support, Interaction with Community Churches, Community Speeches, and Mentoring. Respondents were also given the option of answering, "None (it has no place in police work)." Of the 15 respondents, none checked the latter response. Appendix 2 illustrates the responses. Of the responses, 11 of 15 completed the question correctly. Of the four remaining, one checked only Crisis Counseling, one checked Employee/Family Counseling and Religious Encouragement/Support, and two indicated that all responses were equally important. The remaining responses were averaged and ranked from highest to lowest.

Of the remaining 11 respondents, the top three most important perceived functions of a chaplain are Employee/Family Counseling, Crisis Counseling, and Employee Death/Funeral Benefits Assistance; in consecutive order. These were followed by Hospital Visits/Support, Religious Encouragement/Support, Interaction with Community Churches, Mentoring, and Community Speeches.

The remaining seven questions were designed to determine what functions a chaplain currently plays in respondents' departments. Respondents who had no chaplain program currently in place were not asked to answer the remaining seven questions. Again, 10 of 15 respondents have a chaplain program currently.

Of the 10 respondents, the following was discovered;

- 90% have 1-3 chaplains; one has a 10 to 12-person chaplain corp.
- 80% use civilians; 20% use certified officers as chaplain
- 100% are ordained ministers
- 90% are volunteer, one is not certain
- 50% do not involve community churches
- 40% report to the Chief of Police; 60% report to various other supervisors
- 50% have a department policy regarding chaplains

In this survey, respondents rated internal benefits (those that benefit employees) higher than external ones (those that benefit the community). Overwhelmingly, respondents felt that a police chaplain program would benefit their department. However, in the case of one respondent, a chaplain program that is not administered properly holds no importance or significance. As anticipated prior to the survey, police employees, whether city or county, small or large, want a chaplain program. The motivation is primarily for self and family support; however, respondents expressed a need for chaplains to be involved in the community also. This result was also anticipated, given that police chaplain programs began like their military counterparts (internal support). In addition, while community programs have existed

for quite some time, police chaplains working in the community is a relatively new idea.

There is very little comparative literature available for review. Several agencies offer information on their respective websites regarding their own chaplain program, but little is written regarding police chaplains in general. Until recently, police chaplains were only a figurehead, used to indicate compassion for employees, but had no real significance. Only in the last 20 years have police chaplains been used in law enforcement, and only in the last six years (since the bombing of the World Trade Center) have they become prevalent. An important study by the National Institute of Justice, called Project Shield was conducted at the time regarding the hazards of police stress. In that study, increased utilization of chaplain programs is recommended as a source for stress management. The primary source for police chaplain information is the 2,700-member International Conference of Police Chaplains (ICPC). Founded in 1973, the ICPC is a non-denominational, non-profit, national organization that assists in training and assists law enforcement agencies in establishing standards for police chaplains.

METHODOLOGY

The question raised in this research is, "Can a police chaplain program benefit law enforcement?" The findings are expected to be two-fold. First, it effects the internal organization by offering guidance and counseling, assistance with benefits in the event of an officer's death or disability, comfort for family members, and an aid to employees' mental and spiritual well being. Secondly, if properly deployed, a police chaplain can offer external benefits through the chaplain's interaction with local churches and

community organizations. This builds greater support for the police department, an outlet for disseminating information, and offers valuable, two-way dialog, which results in increased crime prevention information for both the department and the community.

The written survey conducted was offered to 20 various law enforcement agencies. The participants were administrative officers, ranking from Sergeant to Assistant Chief, from city, county, and school district police agencies. 19 agencies were from Texas and one was from Alaska. Participants' names were intentionally omitted to attempt to solicit candid responses; however, the agency size was collected. Agencies responding ranged from 4 officers to 450 officers. Of the 20 agencies polled by the written survey, 15 responded, resulting in a 75% response rate.

The survey contained 10 questions. The first question asked if each agency already had a chaplain program. The second question asked the respondents if they thought that their agency benefited, or would benefit from a chaplain program (depending on their answer to the first question). The third question asked each respondent to rate a list of eight typical chaplain duties, in the order of perceived importance, from zero to eight. The answers were input into an Excel spreadsheet (see Appendix 2). The rank of each possible response, as submitted by the 15 responses, was averaged. This figure determined the average ranking for each of the eight chaplain duties. Then these duties were re-ordered, from lowest to highest. This method determined the average response to the question of ranking eight typical chaplain duties in order of their importance. The results are evaluated in this study.

FINDINGS

This research was intended to answer the question, "Can a police chaplain program benefit law enforcement." First, it was necessary to determine if there is a perceived need for a police chaplain program in police departments. If officers feel that there is no benefit to a chaplain program, the research would end with that question.

A written survey was conducted of 20 city, county, and school district law enforcement agencies of varying sizes. 75% of those polled responded to the survey. The first question asked was, "Does your agency have a chaplain program?" 66% (2/3) of those responding, stated that their agency already has a chaplain program of some sort in place.

All respondents were then asked, "Do you think your agency benefits (or would benefit) from such a program?" Of the ten respondents that stated that their agency has a chaplain, only one answered negatively. That respondent clarified the response by commenting that the current chaplain is "never seen," and "more of a chief saying we have one." Given that explanation, a reasonable person can understand that if the chaplain is never seen, there would be no perceived benefit. As is evident from this unsolicited comment, police department officials should ensure that they are committed to the services of a police chaplain program before they implement such a program. To implement a chaplain program that is non-functional is counterproductive to the reason for having such a program in the first place. Employees can see such a move as a political move rather than one intended to benefit the employees.

Of the five respondents that stated their department does not already have a chaplain program, only one stated that his/her agency would not benefit from such a program. No explanation was given for the response from this 4-man agency.

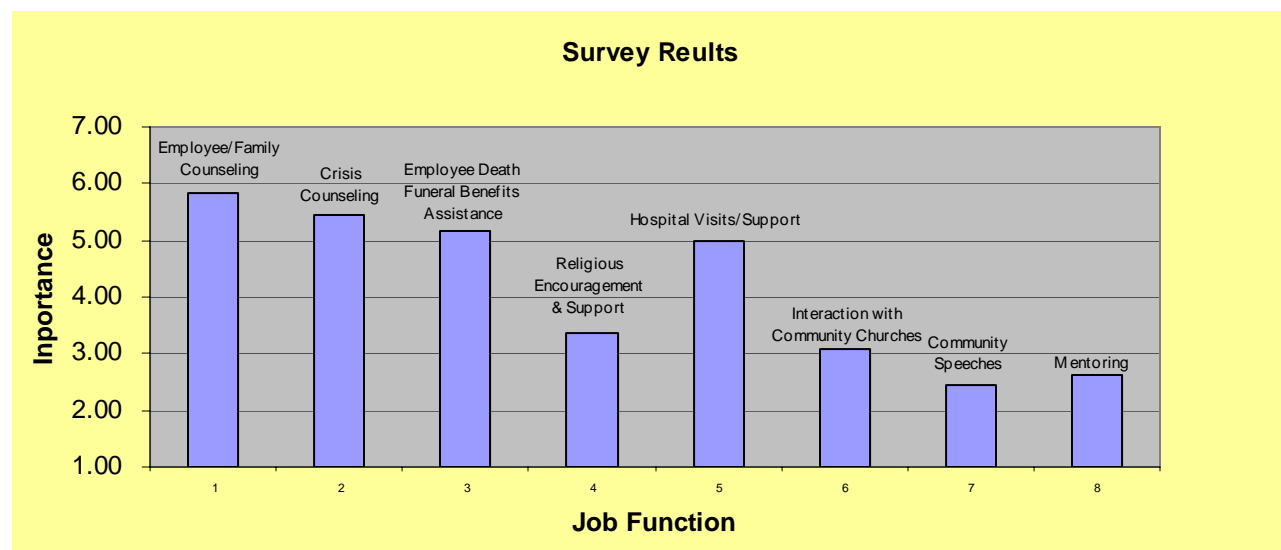
These first two questions were critical in this research to determining if the research was warranted. With the exception of two agencies polled, one providing a valid reason for a negative response, 13 of 15 agencies felt that their agency either benefits or would benefit from a police chaplain program.

Once it was determined that there is a perceived need for such a program by the employees, the research could move forward. If there were no perceived need for a chaplain in police agencies, there would be no need for further information in this line of research. Answers to questions one and two overwhelmingly confirm that employees do see a benefit to a chaplain program in police departments. The remainder of the survey information was used to determine what specific functions of a chaplain were important, as well as compiling some additional useful data.

In the survey, respondents were given a list of eight typical duties of a police chaplain and asked to rank them in the order of their perceived importance. Response possibilities were: Employee/Family Counseling, Crisis Counseling, Employee Death/Funeral Benefits Assistance, Religious Encouragement/Support, Hospital Visits/Support, Interaction with Community Churches, Community Speeches, and Mentoring. To reaffirm that employees saw a need for a chaplain program, respondents were also given the option of answering, "None (it has no place in police work)." None of the respondents chose this answer, affirming again the need for a police chaplain program in law enforcement. Appendix 2 illustrates the responses.

Of the responses, 11 of 15 completed the list as requested by the written instructions. Of the four remaining, while their information could not be calculated in the analysis, the information obtained from these responses was useful. Of the four, one checked only Crisis Counseling, one checked Employee/Family Counseling and Religious Encouragement/Support. This response indicated that these were their only choice when asked which duty of a chaplain was most important. These two responses coincide with the results of the analysis, as noted later in this research. These two responses were also the two responses that were most important to the remaining 11 respondents who completed the question correctly. Two other respondents indicated that all possible responses were equally important; one commented that they were equally important.

The remaining 11 responses were averaged and ranked from highest to lowest. These respondents, ranked the top three most important perceived functions of a chaplain as: 1) Employee/Family Counseling; 2) Crisis Counseling; and 3) Employee Death/Funeral Benefits Assistance. The remaining four responses were, in order of importance: 4) Hospital Visits/Support; 5) Religious Encouragement/Support; 6) Interaction with Community Churches; 7) Mentoring; 8) Community Speeches.



By looking at the overall responses, it is apparent that the respondents, all law enforcement employees, found that the duties of a chaplain that most benefited the employees were most important. Employee/Family Counseling ranked highest among the duties, followed by Crisis Counseling and Death/Funeral Benefit Assistance. The reason for this may be three-fold. First, police chaplain programs were started in the 1980's based on their military counterparts. Military chaplains administer internally, to the men and women of the armed forces. The military chaplain has very little responsibility to the surrounding civilian community. Police chaplains too have traditionally not been used in the community. Secondly, community programs such as neighborhood watch, crime prevention programs, and children's programs, have typically been the responsibility of community service officers. Finally, as of yet, the vast resources of churches have yet to be tapped into.

Many agencies are afraid to become involved with churches because of misinformation about so-called separation of church and state. Several groups, like the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Americans United For Separation of Church and State, and Freedom and Religion Foundation cite that the "separation of church and state" should be maintained in government. However, groups such as the Reliance Defense Fund and Family Research Counsel counter, "Contrary to popular opinion, the term "separation of church and state" is found nowhere in the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, or any other founding document of this nation." In reality, provided that agencies do not discriminate against or promote any particular religion, there is no legal precedence that prevents the deployment of a chaplain program. The implication of a "state sponsored religion" can be avoided by

working closely with all churches in the community, or soliciting their participation in the program.

To address some of these issues, the International Conference of Police Chaplains (ICPC) the only nationally recognized police chaplain organization, has established qualifications for its member chaplains. These include ecclesiastically certification with five years clergy experience in good standing, interest in chaplain duties evidenced by training and work experience, and a willingness to help people regardless of race or religion. That organization makes it clear that its members are not to promote any religion or belief, but to minister to whatever needs arise.

Besides determining the need and duties of a chaplain program, the following information was also obtained by the survey, from the agencies that already have a chaplain program:

- 90% have 1-3 chaplains; one has a 10 to 12-person chaplain corp.
- 80% use civilians; 20% use certified officers as chaplain
- 100% are ordained ministers
- 90% are volunteer, one is not certain
- 50% do not involve community churches
- 40% report to the Chief of Police; 60% report to various other supervisors
- 50% have a department policy regarding chaplains

As evident from the survey, chaplains are typically ordained ministers. Of those surveyed, all of them use ordained ministers. The International Conference of Police Chaplains lists a license or ordination as one of the requirements for a chaplain. Such a standing demonstrates credibility in the chaplain, because the chaplain has already has

a publicly recognized position as a pastor, priest, rabbi, or minister in the community. Whether the chaplain is a certified peace officer is secondary.

Only 20% of those agencies polled use peace officers as chaplains. The primary reason for this is availability. There are very few police officers that are ordained or licensed ministers; therefore, police agencies must rely on civilian ministers. Agencies that have a minister who is also an officer have a unique and beneficial situation. These chaplains are better able to relate to the needs of the officers, particularly in terms of death and hospital benefits. At the same time, they can relate to the community that they already serve. This combination makes them a great intercessor between the police and the community.

One of the agencies polled utilizes a Chaplain Corp in their department. This agency has 72 sworn officers, with 10-12 civilian chaplains; all ordained or licensed ministers from the community, including one rabbi. These chaplains come under the supervision of a Police Sergeant, who is also an ordained minister. These chaplains work together to minister to the needs of members of the department, as well as interact with the community. This agency could be used as a model for future police chaplain programs.

DISCUSSION

The question proposed by this research is, "Can a police chaplain program benefit law enforcement." The anticipated response was that there are benefits to such a program. The research also set out to review what benefits police employees most wanted from a chaplain program. The results were that, based a survey presented to 20

law enforcement agencies, overwhelmingly police employees not only see benefit but want a police chaplain program in their agency. While this answer was anticipated, the number of agencies that already have a chaplain program was not anticipated. It was expected that the number would be much less since there is very little written or heard of the police chaplain program. The duties of a chaplain most expected by employees were anticipated to be those related to their personal needs. Community benefits were rated lowest, but none were submitted as unimportant. While employees see their own needs as most important, they also recognized the secondary needs of the community for a police chaplain program. This was confirmed in the survey. The only hindrance to this research is the amount of information already available; therefore, the research is based almost exclusively on the survey. While little printed information is available, the usefulness of a police chaplain program is indisputable.

Based on the survey, chaplains help to benefit and police employees in agencies where they are deployed. Using the comments received from the surveys, chaplain duties could also be extended to the community. By working closely and building relations with these clergy, law enforcement can enhance their community programs by extending them to the churches. Traditionally, churches are already performing some of the same functions as law enforcement, such as drug counseling, intervention programs, and community outreach. It is a natural merging to blend the law enforcement aspect with the programs churches already have in place. For example, a church youth program targeting at-risk youth is a perfect opportunity for law enforcement to promote community relations. Much like the D.A.R.E. Program does in schools, officers would be available to make presentations regarding teen crime

prevention, drug awareness, peer pressure, and other topics relevant to the youth in their community. In addition, church groups would be another opportunity to address crime prevention techniques such as locking your car, placing items in the car out of sight, and being aware in parking lots. For one agency surveyed, church parking lots are a target of car burglars, particularly where purses and cell phones are left in plain view on the seat. Such interaction could make parishioners more aware of crime trends, reduce crime, and offer a benefit to the church and its members.

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