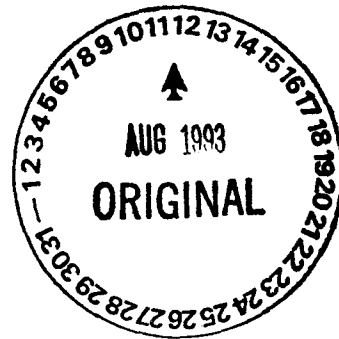


LAW ENFORCEMENT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

**THE PADDY WAGON
IN A
MEDIUM-SIZED POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**A RESEARCH PAPER
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
MODULE II**

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INTRODUCTION

The "paddy wagon" is a specially equipped patrol van that is primarily used to transport prisoners to jail. It has found its greatest use in deteriorated inner-city areas that attract large numbers of hard-core alcoholics and transients (Kirkham & Wollan, 1980). The transportation of these individuals is more of a social service than a law enforcement act. In the past, police paddy wagons have delivered a essential service in core-city skid-row areas. By regularly cruising the streets and picking up alcoholics who are unable to care for themselves, paddy wagons have served to protect these very individuals from becoming victims of street crimes. These individuals are not only saved from crimes such as robbery and assault but also the natural elements such as the cold and hunger.

In the 1980's, with the growth of urban-renewal projects, the use of paddy wagons to pick up inner-city transients and drunks declined. Nevertheless, paddy wagons remained an important law enforcement tool in large and medium-sized police departments (Kirkham & Wollen, 1980). It is their ability to transport numbers of arrested subjects at one time, such as riots and vice raids, that make them such an asset in those police departments that have kept them in operation. It is the use of the paddy

wagon that allows regular beat cars to remain in service and answer life threatening calls for help. It also accomplishes the task of transporting prisoners with minimal risk to the officers involved.

The freeing up of officers to handle calls for service and the safe transportation of prisoners are important topics of concern. Almost all cities suffer from a shortage of personnel due to budget restraints. The police are definitely not an exception. Today's police administrators seek to place as many officers on the street as possible and utilize them as effectively as possible. The police administrator should also be aware that the handling and transportation of prisoners are potential points of prisoner abuse both by incompetent or unethical police officers (McLaren & Wilson, 1977). This is another situation where a paddy wagon program can be effectively utilized.

Most police departments in the United States fall into the category of small to medium-size. Due to infrequent arrests and small operating budgets in most small police departments, a paddy wagon might not represent a efficient nor effective use of funds. A medium-sized police department is defined as consisting of fifty to two-hundred and fifty police officers (Hale, 1981). Because of this wide range in the definition of a medium-sized department,

one can not give a "blanket" statement on the effectiveness of a paddy wagon program in all such municipalities. The purpose of this paper is to take an objective look at the efficiency and effectiveness of a paddy wagon in a medium-sized police department.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature on the subject of paddy wagons revealed little if anything of substance. Sheldon Greenburg at the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) (telephone interview, February 15, 1992) stated that there was very little written on the paddy wagon and even less on the cost effectiveness of it. Greenburg stated that there is a trend to move away from the use of paddy wagons in many departments. But he also stated that there are still departments that continue to implement them. Each department must look at its own demands and needs to answer the question of whether to establish the services of a paddy wagon.

The National Criminal Justice Institute was also contacted and did a search of its archives which, again, resulted in no information. After countless hours of searching library files, this author concluded with

Greenburg at PERF that the topic of paddy wagons has not received attention as a topic of research.

This condition could exist because the service aspect of police work, and public expectations, promote decisions which are often not based on cost-benefit analysis. The benefits may not always be in dollars, but the cost associated with the program are always calculated in dollars. This could cause many top police administrators embarrassment if these programs went into print and were construed by uneducated readers as being failures just because dollar costs were more than dollar benefits. Herman Goldstein (1990) in his book *Problem Oriented Policing* called this very problem "airing one's dirty laundry." These intangible benefits may not be readily measurable but are definitely as important if not more so than ones where a dollar amount could assigned. The following will examine both the tangible and intangible costs and benefits of a paddy wagon in a particular medium-sized police department.

The police department used for this study is the Garland Police Department in Texas. Garland is located in Dallas County in northern Texas. It is the largest suburb of the metropolitan City of Dallas. The City operates under the Council-Manager form of government. Garland covers over fifty-two square miles and has a population of over 182,000

people. The Police Department consists of 221 sworn officers and 120 of these are assigned to the patrol division. These numbers put the Department on the extreme edge of falling into the category of a medium-sized police agency. For police purposes, the City is divided into five sectors and each sector is further divided into five districts. Each district is patrolled by a one-man marked police vehicle. Some exceptions to this rule are three high-crime districts that are manned by two-officer squads when manpower permits. At this time, the Police Department does not have a operational paddy wagon program.

If implemented, paddy wagons would not only serve to pick up arrested subjects at the arrest scene and then transport them to the city jail at night, but also be used for daily transportation of prisoners from the city jail to the county jail during the day. The City presently owns a mini-van that is used for the daily transportation of prisoners from the city jail to the county jail but is not used to pick up prisoners at arrest scenes. Therefore, the implementation of the paddy wagon would not only start a new program, but also enhance a existing one.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The key factor to examine in deciding to implement a paddy wagon program is whether or not the man-hours needed to run the paddy wagon exceeds the amount of man-hours used for transportation and booking of prisoners under the current system. These personnel costs, in addition to the equipment costs, represent the two dominant expenses associated with the program. To examine these and other dimensions of prisoner transport it seems important to explore Garland arrest and prisoner transport over a one year duration.

The arrest time period examined in this research effort reviews trends from November 1, 1990 to October 31, 1991. Almost 10,000 arrests were made during that time period. It is necessary to examine each arrest to see if circumstances would warrant the prisoner being transported in the paddy wagon. Arrests such as driving while intoxicated were not used in this study due to the fact that the arresting officer must be present in the jail to do the mandatory DWI taping. Other serious arrests such as burglaries, robberies, and felony assaults were also omitted when there were multiple subjects which should be transported separately to the jail. At times separate transport is required to restrict subjects from conversing

with each other and fabricating like stories. It is possible for one-man squads to transport prisoners since their marked police vehicles are equipped with a heavy metal screen separating the back and front seat. While this type of transportation is not as safe as the use of a paddy wagon, it is an approved manner of transportation.

After each call was flagged as being appropriate for the study, the time the officer advised the dispatcher he was enroute to the jail to the time the officer left the jail was tabulated. This was performed for all seven days of the week between the times of 9:30 pm and 4:30 am. So if the time the officer told the dispatcher he/she was going to jail with a prisoner between these two times, and the charge was not one being excluded from the study, the arrest was used in the project. These arrests were first tabulated in minutes and totalled for each day. Arrests that took place between the time of 12:00 am and 4:30 am were totalled with arrests made on the previous day between 9:30 pm and 11:59 pm. Once these arrests were totalled they were converted to hours. Once the hours were totalled for each day they were examined to see if they would be even close to the amount of man-hours needed to operate a paddy wagon. It was found that Friday night/Saturday morning and Saturday night/Sunday morning were the only days that they arrests

were numerous enough to warrant the operation of the paddy wagon.

Greenburg at PERF advised that in a medium-sized department only a part-time paddy wagon would seem necessary. Therefore, the study from the beginning was based on this information. The study then focused on operating the paddy wagon on Friday and Saturday nights from 9:00 pm to 5:00 am. The actual first available pick-up time would be closer to 9:30 pm and the last pick-up around 4:30 am. This would allow the paddy wagon officer time to leave the station at the beginning of shift and drop off the last of his prisoners by 5:00am. Then the paddy wagon could be used in the early afternoon hours Monday through Friday to transport prisoners from the city jail to the county jail.

The man-hours spent on Friday night use in the sample were totalled and averaged. This calculation produced an average of 10.15 man-hours spent dealing with prisoners. On Saturday nights, the sample showed man-hours expended as 8.02. The total arrests that could be transported in the paddy wagon for Friday and Saturday nights during the one year period was 1,132.

The monetary costs of the program were considered under two categories. The first being direct costs and

second, the actual purchase of the vehicle. Larry Smith, of the Dallas County Sheriff's Office, was contacted and stated that the purchase price of the eight-foot panel cargo van used by their agency was \$13,500. This van has a one-ton rating and would be suitable for use as a paddy wagon. The van has an expected life span of eight years.

It is, of course, necessary to equip the vehicle to transport prisoners safely. Several companies were contacted and Mavron Inc. in Indiana has a unit appropriate for the Department's needs. A bolt-in module type seems most suitable for this application. This would allow the modules to be moved from one van to another when the van needed to be replaced. The two modules to be purchased would cost \$3,000 each and can be installed by two persons in less than a day. These modules have an expected life span of fifteen to twenty years. It was determined that the vehicle should be equipped with twelve pairs of handcuffs, six leg restraints, and one special tie-down harness for combative prisoners.

This newly equipped paddy wagon would replace the departmental mini-van now in use. The purchase price of this van in 1987 was \$15,200. This original van also has a life span of around eight years and could probably be sold for about \$4,000 with this money applied toward the purchase

price of the new vehicle. There are presently six pairs of handcuffs used for county transports that could also be used in the new program, therefore decreasing the start up costs even further.

Another important expenditure is personnel costs. To operate the paddy wagon with one officer two times a week and county transfers five days a week for fifty-two weeks would require 1,352 man-hours expended. The police officer's hourly rate for operation ranges from \$13.06 to \$15.89. An average of this rate would be \$14.48 an hour. Applying this dollar amount to the man-hours required for annual operation yields a total personnel cost of \$19,969. Without the paddy, the Department commits 1,465 hours a year to county transfers and prisoner transportation. Applying this same hourly rate indicates that the Department is spending currently \$21,213 in prisoner transport. Thus, the new program would save the City \$1,244 a year in personnel costs (See Table 1 in the Appendix).

The second type of monetary expense associated with the programs are indirect costs. The only identifiable cost element in this category is the loss of time of the prisoner when he is being transported to jail in the paddy wagon versus arresting officer transport in a squad car. The average time to transport a prisoner to jail in the paddy

wagon would increase from one hour to two hours with the new program. The per capita income in Dallas County is \$19,602 (Texas Almanac, 1991). This can be broken down to \$10.21 an hour. Arrestee time was figured at one-quarter of the average wage rate (Schofield, 1989) which comes to \$2.55 an hour. The prisoners arrested in the sample came to 1,132 but only approximately 5 percent will be delayed in getting out of jail. Most prisoners will have to wait on arraignments by the judge the next morning or they will just "sit" their tickets out instead of paying the fines. This 5 percent comes to \$145 under the old method and \$290 with the new program lost in leisure time. The new program has a cost of \$145 over the existing program (See Table 1 in the Appendix).

A non-monetary cost of the factor in evaluating the two transport approaches is the hardship on the officers. A survey was given out to fifty officers who worked the shifts that would be affected by the paddy wagon program. The forty-two, who replied, overwhelmingly picked the paddy wagon program over the existing one. Not one of the officers who replied opposed the paddy wagon approach. They still picked the new program even when faced with the task of driving the paddy wagon.

The hardship suffered by the prisoners was also considered but ranked lower in importance than the officer's hardship. The new program could cause some prisoners to suffer embarrassment from being in close quarters with other arrested subjects. Some prisoners may also have sanitary or safety concerns. Many people arrested do not practice the same type of hygiene methods and it is possible that disruption might erupt in the wagon.

General benefits of the programs can now be considered. Benefits are broken down into those that can be assigned a dollar figure and those that cannot. Because officers will not have to make frequent trips to the jail with prisoners, general performance and productivity on the beat should increase. . There are times, of course, when an officer will not arrest an individual with a warrant for a minor traffic offense just because he does not want to waste the time needed to go to the jail. Consequently, with the paddy wagon program a 2 percent increase in warrant arrests might be expected over figures from the previous year. This 2 percent increase is based upon a survey conducted of fifty officers in the Department. This increase could result in an approximate \$2,000 in revenue from tickets that have become outstanding warrants. The paddy wagon program might also assist with the occasional need to make mass arrests and more rapidly process

offenders. This will dramatically reduce the number of officers needed to transport prisoners.

This latter issue of time in prisoner transport is important. Every police administrator is faced with the problem of providing a certain level of service to the community with a specific number of personnel (Iannone, 1987). Reduction in transport manhours allows police administrators to free up officers to answer service calls and permits the officer time for preventive patrol in his assigned area.

Another important non-monetary benefit is the increased safety of the paddy wagon program. This increase in safety would not only apply to the officer but also to the prisoner. The International City Management Association reported in 1977 that escapes, deaths, and injuries are more likely to occur during the transportation of a prisoner than at any other time. The officer is better protected from the prisoner who is locked in a one-quarter inch thick aluminum box than if only protected by a metal screen. The "panic stop" technique for punishing hostile or aggressive prisoners by the arresting officer while they are being transported has been used for many years and results in prisoner's being thrown headlong into the front of the vehicle (McLaren & Wilson, 1977). The hostile or aggressive

prisoner is therefore better protected in that he is removed from the arresting officer and transported to jail in the paddy wagon by an officer who was not directly involved in the arrest.

Table 2 (See Appendix) depicts the net benefits for the next twenty years for each program. Table 3 (See Appendix) then takes the information from Table 2 and gives the present value of benefits to be received in twenty years. Using the Modified Cost/Benefit Analysis Rule, the paddy wagon program has the greatest net benefits.

CONCLUSION

As stated earlier, it is the duty of the police administrator to insure the safe transportation of prisoners, as well as to insure the safety of the officers, in a manner that is an efficient allocation of resources. As one can see, this is not a task easily achieved. The study of the Garland Police Department is an illustration of an agency that should implement a part-time paddy wagon program. The monetary costs are less than the method now in use, but more importantly the increased safety for the prisoners and officers dictates its need.

APPENDIX

TABLE 1

	Paddy Wagon Program (A) 1	No Program (B) 2	(A) - (B) 3
<i>COSTS</i>			
<u>Monetary costs</u>			
Direct			
1. Vehicle	\$ 13,500	\$ 15,200	\$ -1,700
2. Personnel	\$ 19,969	\$ 21,213	\$ -1,244
3. Equipment	\$ 7,357	65	\$ 7,292
In-direct			
4. Lost leisure time	\$ 290	\$ 145	\$ 145
Total	\$ 41,116	\$ 36,623	\$ 4,493
<u>Non-monetary costs</u>			
1. Hardship on officers		X	A
2. Hardship on prisoners	X		B
<i>BENEFITS</i>			
<u>Monetary benefits</u>			
1. Reduction of man-hours needed	(see personnel under direct costs)		
2. Replaces mini-van system	\$ 4,065*	0	\$ 4,065*
3. Increased warrant arrests	\$ 2,070	0	\$ 2,070
Total	\$ 6,135	0	\$ 6,135
<u>Non-monetary benefits</u>			
4. Safety	X		A
5. Improved attitude of prisoner	X		A
6. Improved attitude of officers	X		A
7. Incentive to make mass arrests	X		A

* used only once in start up costs of paddy wagon

TABLE 2

Paddy Wagon Program	Net Benefits	
	Year	Old Program
\$ -16,792	0	\$ 0
-18,189	1	-21,358
"	2	"
"	3	"
"	4	"
"	5	-34,623
"	6	-21,358
"	7	"
"	8	"
-29,689	9	"
-18,189	10	"
"	11	"
"	12	"
"	13	-34,623
"	14	-21,358
"	15	"
"	16	"
-29,689	17	"
-18,189	18	"
"	19	"
"	20	"

TABLE 3

Present Value of the Programs in 20 Years

$$PV = \frac{B_t}{(1+r)}$$

where

PV = present value of the benefits

B_t = the value of benefits in each year

R = the rate of discount (5 percent)

Y_n = the benefits in the year

Paddy Wagon Program

Benefits = see TABLE 2

$$\begin{aligned}
 PV = -16,792 & - (Y_1 \times .9524) - (Y_2 \times .9070) - (Y_3 \times .8638) \\
 & - (Y_4 \times .8227) - (Y_5 \times .7835) - (Y_6 \times .7462) \\
 & - (Y_7 \times .7107) - (Y_8 \times .6768) - (Y_9 \times .6446) \\
 & - (Y_{10} \times .6139) - (Y_{11} \times .5847) - (Y_{12} \times .5568) \\
 & - (Y_{13} \times .5303) - (Y_{14} \times .5051) - (Y_{15} \times .4810) \\
 & - (Y_{16} \times .4581) - (Y_{17} \times .4363) - (Y_{18} \times .4155) \\
 & - (Y_{19} \times .3957) - (Y_{20} \times .3769) \\
 & = \underline{-255,893*}
 \end{aligned}$$

Old Program

Benefits = see TABLE 2

$$\begin{aligned}
 PV = 0 & - (Y_1 \times .9524) - (Y_2 \times .9070) - (Y_3 \times .8638) \\
 & - (Y_4 \times .8227) - (Y_5 \times .7835) - (Y_6 \times .7462) \\
 & - (Y_7 \times .7107) - (Y_8 \times .6768) - (Y_9 \times .6446) \\
 & - (Y_{10} \times .6139) - (Y_{11} \times .5847) - (Y_{12} \times .5568) \\
 & - (Y_{13} \times .5303) - (Y_{14} \times .5051) - (Y_{15} \times .4810) \\
 & - (Y_{16} \times .4581) - (Y_{17} \times .4363) - (Y_{18} \times .4155) \\
 & - (Y_{19} \times .3957) - (Y_{20} \times .3769) \\
 & = -283,589
 \end{aligned}$$

***The Paddy Wagon Program has the greatest net benefits**

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