

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

The Importance of Stress Management Programs in Law Enforcement

**A Leadership White Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Required for Graduation from the
Leadership Command College**

**By
Carol L. Riddle**

**Arlington Police Department
Arlington, Texas
February 2017**

ABSTRACT

Law enforcement officers (LEOs) are in a profession that is inherently stressful by nature. LEO's encounter stress in a variety of situations - on calls, with peers and supervisors, and at home. Over time, as stress is left unchecked, unintended consequences occur. LEO's begin to suffer from health related and personal issues. Burnout sets in, resulting in poor job performance, and citizen complaints and use of force incidents can begin to increase. These are not new ideas. Law enforcement agencies have long known about stress related issues yet failed to properly prepare LEO's for them. The solution is simple. Law enforcement agencies should have programs in place to assist LEO's in recognizing and managing stress.

Some believe these types of programs are not needed. The most common reason cited is the police culture itself. A stigma of weakness is attached to stress management programs. LEO's are cynical and have privacy concerns. Law enforcement leaders and cities believe that these types of programs are too expensive to fund and that there is not a return on investment with these programs. However, LEO's need to remember there are federal privacy laws in place under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) that makes information confidential. Furthermore, leaders need to see the bigger picture. Programs may be expensive up front, but the long term picture is lower health care costs and a healthier workforce, mentally and physically. Stress management programs are critical for LEO's to be healthy and successful, not only at work but at home as well. The time is now for agencies to begin investing more in the overall health of their employees, and reap the benefits.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract	
Introduction	1
Position	6
Counter Position	12
Recommendation	16
References	20

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a very general term and can be defined in various ways, depending on who is asked and the context of the topic. When most people think of stress, things that instantly come to mind are money issues, marital problems, or dealing with an annoying coworker or boss who constantly singles out a select few and places unreasonable demands on people. More stressors could be meeting deadlines for reports or presentations, dealing with changes in the organization, or being confronted with health problems. All of these are types of stressors that all people, not just law enforcement, face daily.

Patterson, Chung, and Swan (2014) quoted Lazarus and Folkman's definition of stress as "a relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well being"(p. 489). This definition works for law enforcement officers (LEO's), with the addition of circumstances most normal people do not face. In an early 1990's study, Patterson (1992) cited McGrath's definition of police stress as "an imbalance between what is required of an officer and what that officer is capable of giving, under conditions where failure may have dire consequences" (p. 261). High speed pursuits, foot chases, shootings, gruesome crime scenes, or horrific cases of abuse all speak to McGrath's definition.

But LEO's face administrative stressors as well. Those include things such as the problem supervisor or coworker, being called into court on a day off and missing family events, or adjusting to a new shift or schedule. What is ironic about LEO's is when they are asked what sources of stress they encounter at work, they most

commonly list the administrative stressors, not the dangerous parts of their job. LEO's understand that is what they took an oath to take on and do not see them as sources of stress.

All of these stressors elicit some type of physiological or mental response and can take a toll on a LEO both mentally and physically over time when left unacknowledged. As described by Fuller, four groups of law enforcement related stressors were identified: "stressors because of the nature of police work, stressors resulting from departmental policies, stressors dealing with the criminal justice system and societal expectations about police conduct and stressors resulting from psychological issues unique to each officer" (Chapin, Brannen, Singer, & Walker, 2008, p. 342). It is evident that LEO's endure both external and internal stressors, each affecting a LEO differently. Some LEO's feel more stress from external stressors, and others feel more stress from internal conflict.

Stress in the workplace is not a new idea. Stress in the law enforcement profession is not a new concept either, but historically, it has been under-researched. It is routinely stated that policing is one of the most stressful jobs a person can hold, with the most common reasons cited as involvement in critical incidents or other potentially dangerous situations. Typically, this statement comes from the result of a survey conducted, such as an ABC News ("The top 10," n.d.) survey that listed being a police officer as the number three most stressful occupation or a 2015 survey conducted by Career Cast (2015) listing law enforcement as the fifth most stressful occupation. But the reasons that policing is considered stressful are changing with the evolution of law enforcement and job responsibilities.

The majority of LEO's come into the profession for the same reason; they have a desire to serve their community, to help people when they need it, and to make a difference. LEO's understand the job is inherently dangerous and there is a chance for injury or death. The goal is to go home at the end of the shift. LEO's become immune to the things they encounter on the job, cynical about people, and overall experience a hardening of their personality, or disassociation.

What LEO's do not come into the job thinking about is the toll that stress can have on them, both at work and at home, mentally and physically. They do not consider the toll that day to day mundane operations can take on their body and mental state. Things such as having to go to court on their day off, writing reports that are lengthy, dealing with coworkers they do not particularly care for, or even answering very routine low key calls for service. All of these things sound very low key, but result in daily fatigue, whether the LEO realizes it or not. LEO's view themselves as invincible physically and mentally, believing nothing can touch them. They are always vigilant; both on and off duty, rarely taking time to truly decompress and go "off the job." LEO's never admit they are scared, hurt, or disturbed by what they encounter on the job. They consistently put on the tough guy act because that is what cops are supposed to be, tough. Yet as previously stated, LEO's fail to realize the toll that mentality takes on the body, personal lives, and overall job performance.

Law enforcement agencies know these situations and issues can and do occur. LEO's should expect them to occur, no matter the rank, but they do not. The mentality is "that won't happen to me" or they choose to ignore the signs their bodies are sending them. LEO's say "I'm ok, it's no big deal" or "I can handle it, I don't need any help." All

of these commonly used statements are true initially, but at some point they no longer are. Repeated exposures to the stressor or various stressors occur. Before long, the LEO may not feel well or may routinely feel tired. This results from ignoring the signals their bodies are sending them and having an invincible mindset. Chronic health issues such as cardiovascular disease or diabetes can surface, or an addiction to drugs or alcohol may develop as a means to cope with job stress.

Other signs of problems may arise such as job performance issues or burnout. Walsh, Taylor, and Hastings (2012) defined burnout as a “complex reaction occurring in response to repeated, highly challenging and difficult interactions with other people, especially where there is strong emotional content and which occurs as a result of work” (p. 168). Both health issues and burnout can cause a LEO to have absenteeism issues, ultimately affecting the LEO’s job performance. When LEO’s are at work, they do not want to be there. They do the bare minimum to get by unnoticed and keep supervisors happy or take shortcuts, causing them to do a poor job on a report. Even worse would be a shortcut or lack of effort resulting in a LEO or even a citizen hurt. Complaints can begin to be filed against the LEO, or use of force incidents may begin to increase due to intolerance for situations.

Problems at home can be another telltale sign. Frequent arguments with spouses about trivial issues, overreacting to things their children do, or treating their family members like suspects. All are indications of a LEO under stress. It could be that problems at home are affecting work. Things at work could be going well but the LEO’s mind is on those problems at home while on the job. The opposite could also occur, resulting in problems at home for the LEO. Issues at work, whatever the case, are

being internalized and taken home. Frustrations are taken out on family members inadvertently. It is a vicious cycle.

Problems continue to build on each other continuously until the LEO reaches the breaking point. Things happen or are said that cannot be taken back or changed. LEO's, supervisors, and even peers need to be prepared to act when the time comes. In reality, the intervention should occur before that critical breaking point does. The law enforcement culture is one that makes LEO's feel weak or unworthy to wear their badge if they admit they need help with anything. LEO's are supposed to be invincible, able to conquer evil when confronted and laugh in the face of danger. These stigmas reinforce the attitude of "I don't need help, I can handle this." Sadly, more often than not, LEO's cannot handle it but just keep going, not realizing the real damage being done to them. In a LEO's mind that is what is expected of them.

Reluctantly, LEO's may finally acknowledge something is wrong when a breaking point is reached, but they are unsure what the next steps are. The issue then becomes a need to be prepared by having procedures and programs in place for when the LEO or someone else realizes "I do need help, I can't do this." The solution is simple. Law enforcement agencies should have programs in place to assist LEO's in managing and coping with stress.

The irony of this issue is during the hiring process for their prospective agency, that agency almost always has the person complete some type of psychological evaluation. The purpose is to ensure that person is well rounded and of sound mind to handle the work environment they will be thrust into. That person is hired, trained in laws, policies, and procedures, and sent out to the streets with a badge, gun, and a

feeling of invincibility. It has been trained into them. The initial concern about that person's mental wellbeing is gone. That person is a LEO now and there is no need for concern.

There are numerous programs and types of assistance organizations that can provide and help LEO's manage stress. One idea is the implementation of mandatory sessions of some kind agency-wide. Other more traditional ways are to have assistance programs available for when a LEO feels it is needed or even something as basic as mandatory stress management training annually. There are far too many reasons and simple solutions available that support having these types of programs in place to not have them at all.

POSITION

The most obvious reason to have stress management programs in place for LEO's is for health reasons. Many LEO's are physically fit, but many are not. Being in shape and healthy does not make one immune from health issues. Far too often, LEO's are suffering from cardiovascular disease or other heart related issues, digestive issues, and potentially a shorter life - more so than the general population (Garner, 2008). This stems from different things, like poor eating habits, shift work, alcohol use, and not being physically fit. Cardiovascular disease can surface due to constant high blood pressure or heart rate due to calls being answered or getting into physical altercations. The constant adrenaline dump cycle LEO's experience in a single shift is more than the average person experiences daily and can play a part in blood pressure and heart rate issues. One study conducted with British Columbia police by Anderson et al. in 2002 and cited by Korre, Farioli, Varvarigou, Sato, and Kales (2014) even found that LEO's

experienced a change in heart rate from the beginning of their shift prior to even getting in their car, and their heart rate did not return to a normal resting heart rate until they were off duty eight hours later. That is at least 40 hours per week a LEO's heart is working harder than it should be.

LEO's commonly turn to alcohol as a coping mechanism. LEO's will often gather after work for what they term as "choir practice" before going home to have a couple of drinks and decompress. These get togethers typically consist of hashing out the day's events, work, and home conflicts. In reality, these shift gatherings are basically coping sessions in disguise. Whether alcohol is used as a means of fitting in with their peers, coping with the day's events, or processing issues with supervisors, alcohol use is not only prevalent but "particularly excessive" (Richmond, Wodak, Kehoe, & Heather, 1998, p. 1730). Alcohol has a detrimental effect on the body over time, leading to other health issues, or issues with controlling anger and frustration with coworkers and family members. Alcohol use added to daily stress and fatigue runs down the body that much faster, exacerbating health issues.

Fatigue is another physiological response that can occur from stress. Fatigue does not necessarily mean lack of sleep or being tired; it can be the feeling of having little to no energy to perform routine activities. Adrenaline dumps, as mentioned above, are physically very draining. The body enters a fight or flight response with numerous physiological changes taking place in the body. The actual adrenaline dump is very short, but LEO's experience a feeling of exhaustion after the situation is over. With this occurring several times a shift, the body can become stressed and ultimately very fatigued due to lack of adequate recovery time. Fatigue can cause delayed reactions to

situations or forgetfulness. Fatigue can result in the inability to make timely decisions or react to a situation physically when appropriate (Basinska, Wiciak, & Daderman, 2014). All of these are very dangerous situations for the LEO to be in.

Problems with family at home can also manifest due to stress. These problems can occur as a result of the LEO bringing home work issues and allowing them to affect their personal life, or problems occur at home, for whatever the reason, and begin to affect the LEO at work. Violanti et al. (2011) referenced a 1993 study conducted by Kannady in which he discussed this very cycle of LEO's taking work issues home and then taking home issues back to work, all having a negative effect on the LEO and his performance at work. Violanti et al. (2011) in the aforementioned research further cited a 1993 statistic from Burke in which approximately 40% of LEO's involved in the study "reported taking things out on their families and friends" (p. 347).

As previously mentioned, LEO's see people at their worst, respond to gruesome crime scenes, and deal with violent confrontations. LEO's instinctively want to protect their family from the things they see and experience at work so they do not talk about it with spouses or family. This causes emotions and reactions to be "bottled up" inside, so the LEO appears strong and unfazed on the outside, invincible. LEO spouses often develop a unique understanding of law enforcement and the culture and as a result, they become a source of support and assistance for the LEO in a silent manner. An example of this is the mentality of "let the LEO talk when they are ready, and when they start talking, just listen." Listening is key because, many times, that is all the LEO wants or needs. This is not always the case, sadly, and some spouses cannot cope with the inherently dangerous nature of law enforcement and cannot handle the changes that

happen to their spouse. Tensions can arise between spouses or with children due to perceived lack of communication from the LEO or disinterest in family matters.

Perhaps not the norm, but still prevalent, are the pressures felt at home by LEO's to be normal, not work as much overtime or extra jobs, or to be more involved with the family. These things mentally take a toll on a LEO's well-being. Spouses may pressure the LEO to switch shifts or take a "desk job," such as a detective position that is less dangerous than being on the streets, or look for a different line of work all together. Interestingly, yet another study referenced by Violanti et al. spoke directly to these things. Violanti et al. (2011) noted that DePiano, Wackwitz, Cannon, and Walfish found in their 1982 research that spouses believed the LEO's job had a negative impact on their children's acceptance in social circles. While that is a dated study, chances are, in today's society and climate towards law enforcement, that it is an even more common belief. These stressors that the LEO must contend with on a weekly, if not daily basis, begin to stack up, pressuring the LEO to figure out a solution that makes all involved happy with the current situation. If that is not possible, the LEO must figure out how to deal with it the best possible. How the LEO chooses to manage these problems can lead to adverse effects on them, their bodies, and have an effect at work.

Lack of stress management or acknowledgement of stress can manifest itself at work. Typically, issues tend to surface here first, usually in the form of poor job performance and/or burnout. Basinska, Wiciak, and Daderman (2014) wrote that "burnout is a unique response to continuous and prolonged exposure to occupational stress" (p. 668). Poor job performance and burnout can occur due to health or personal reasons as discussed previously or from other work related issues. Police officers

never go “off duty,” enduring constant demands and routinely feel underappreciated by the community they serve (McCarty & Skogan, 2012).

Early in a LEO's career, they are excited to come to work. They look forward to getting in their squad car, answering calls for service, and making traffic stops during their shift. Excitement awaits them on every call, which is why many LEO's enjoy the job so much. Every call is different, with the opportunity for something crazy and exciting to happen. However, with calls and traffic stops come reports, then court dates (normally on days off or during sleeping hours), mundane administrative tasks, and interactions with difficult citizens. Long calls result in overtime, long duty days, and less sleep than normal. A day here or there does not seem like much, but long days begin to add up. Writing memos for lost equipment or for an internal affairs investigation initiated from a supervisor or citizen complaint begin to happen more frequently. LEO's slowly begin to realize there is more to law enforcement than first thought and begin to suffer from burnout, usually around the five to seven year mark. Most LEO's never considered this aspect of the job and those who did, may really have not had a good grasp on what the job would be like. The daily feeling of fatigue at the end of the work day stemming from job demands, both regular and unreasonable, leads to elevated levels of exhaustion in LEO's and ultimately burnout (Basinska et al., 2014).

A contributor to burnout and fatigue is the ability LEO's have to work extra jobs as security. LEO's will tell anyone that asks; they did not get into law enforcement for the salary, and many LEO's work extra jobs to have vacation money, pay for family expenses such as private school or sports, and can end up dependent on them to make ends meet. These jobs are after normal working hours. Extra jobs cut into family time,

off duty time for the LEO, and much needed sleep time. If LEO's are working too many extra hours, they can become sleepy, easily irritated, or just lack the energy to perform above just answering calls and doing the bare minimum at work. They are just trying to make it to the end of the shift.

What suffers is their job performance. Productivity declines, self-initiated activity goes down, and other job performance categories, such as community engagement, decreases as well. Supervisors will usually notice these job related issues and address them with the LEO. The LEO will normally respond positively, but sometimes they do not, further digging in their heels, resulting in even bigger job performance or discipline issues. Job performance issues can affect a LEO's chance at selection for a specialized unit, annual performance evaluations, or even annual merit raises.

Following in line with job performance issues is increased use of force incidents and citizen complaints. When LEO's are under stress, they can lose patience quicker than normal when interacting with citizens on calls. Instead of taking the extra time to mitigate a situation, LEO's can actually exacerbate the situation, using inappropriate language or force when it could have been avoided all together, or even worse, using more force than necessary to gain control and compliance of the person. This can have dire consequences for the LEO if the force was unjustified or excessive. These situations also give rise to increased citizen complaints (Garner, 2008). The complaints, often legitimate in most cases, could have been avoided. No matter the situation, they are sources of stress for the LEO. Increased complaints can be one indication of a pattern of behaviors being exhibited by the LEO. Supervisors may jump to conclusions regarding the cause of the behavior, but it could be just a onetime mistake. A deeper

look could potentially reveal many indicators of a LEO that is suffering from stress related issues and is in need of some type of assistance.

Change in an organization can also have a dramatic impact on a LEO. No matter how big or small the change may be or seem, the effect can be great. Most LEO's have what is commonly labeled as a type A personality. This is defined as people with the following characteristics: high achievement levels, high productivity in a smaller time frame, very competitive with others, and highly motivated (Sameen & Burhan, 2014). These types of people like structure and the same daily routine and do not like change. Law enforcement agencies are notorious for not managing change well and do not take into account how changes will affect the workforce when implemented. LEO's are skeptical of decisions made by administration as a general rule and when changes occur, stress occurs throughout the workforce.

COUNTER POSITION

There are several reasons that some believe stress management programs are not needed in law enforcement agencies. The most obvious reason is that the law enforcement culture or subculture creates a stigma. Britz (1997) stated that a police subculture is key for cadets entering the profession for stability and acceptance. Those who need assistance, even something as basic as talking to someone about a call they worked or discussing personal issues they are experiencing, may be perceived as weak or not tough enough to handle the job. The culture in a law enforcement agency is strong and one that is very difficult to break. LEO's tend to look down on others that have spoken out in need of assistance as "not being able to hack it" in the profession. LEO's have a strong need for acceptance by their peers and do not want to be

ostracized. Walsh et al (2012) further supported this idea that LEO's admitting to stress related issues is seen as weakness in the LEO culture and is just not something that is done.

Agencies that have stress management programs have experienced little participation in them, and results have shown there is no decrease in levels of stress experienced or that stress management programs have any real impact on the overall well-being of LEO's. Richmond et al. (1998) even concluded that it is not stress causing health problems in LEO's; it is actually the unhealthy lifestyles and personal choices they engage in that are the root of the problem. Agencies or their respective cities have no need to invest in these types of programs when LEO's will not use them. LEO's are cynical people and naturally suspicious. LEO's are especially adamant about these emotions when they feel that "big brother" is watching them. Stress management programs are routinely viewed as just another way that administration is "out to get them" or get information about them that can be used against the LEO at a later time. LEO's are concerned that their personal information or diagnosis will be leaked to supervisors when utilizing stress management programs provided by the employer.

While the stigma of these programs are typically negative due to the law enforcement culture that creates them, these programs are extremely beneficial, even if only a small portion of LEO's get assistance through them. Mandatory stress management programs have shown to have positive effects on not only the LEO's but changing the stigma surrounding them. A study done by Carlan and Nored (2008) looked at stress levels in organizations where stress management opportunities were made available. What Carlan and Nored (2008) discovered was that LEO's who used

the programs made available to them had less stress levels and need for counseling sessions and further stated they willingly sought out counseling services. Furthermore, the study revealed that stress levels were higher, but those levels supported the idea that LEO's were "uniquely aware of their need for counseling" (Carlan & Nored, 2008, p. 14). In regards to LEO's concerns about private, personal information or medical diagnosis's being given to their employers, that concern is quickly mitigated by federal law. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) very plainly states that personal medical information cannot be released to anyone except the patient and is protected (US Department of Health and Human Services Health Information Privacy). Work related injuries covered by workers compensation are the only exception to this. Even then, some medical issues discovered during treatment of a work related injury are still protected under HIPPA. HIPAA is the best, most simple way to refute any claims of impropriety and mitigate concerns.

Not only is a stigma attached to these programs, there is a large cost for the implementation and maintenance of them. Mandatory programs are the most expensive and require a great deal of internal organizational change (Patterson et al., 2014). Even voluntary programs require some internal change, which is already known to be difficult to facilitate in the law enforcement culture. Patterson et al. (2014) further offered that secondary or tertiary programs are less expensive than mandatory programs. These types of programs include employee assistance programs that officers can use at no cost to them. All the officer has to do is call the program and get a referral for whatever service they are in need of. Costs are incurred by the agency or city/county for all related fees and when talking about programs for large agencies the

costs can quickly get into the millions of dollars. Manpower costs are a driving factor for both types of programs. It takes manpower to manage these programs and LEO's attend on duty as it is work related, taking them off the street and away from answering calls.

Another unintended cost of these programs is training for all employees on coaching and mentoring techniques. The training would be essential to better equip supervisors of all ranks and others with skills needed to make them more effective in talking to peers and subordinates about issues that are occurring; whether professional or personal. The general consensus is no one is utilizing these programs. In today's budget times, money is tight and hard to come by. Justifying a program that will not be used or continuing to justify a program that is not being used is not fiscally responsible. The money allocated for training and program costs could be better allocated elsewhere on equipment, additional personnel, or other police related needs.

The issue with this mindset is simple. While it is true that employers will incur large startup costs for these programs and the first one to three years typically will not be profitable for the city, what happens in the long term is the big picture. Health issues have been discussed elsewhere and with those health issues come medical costs, especially to the employer in the form of health insurance increases. Providing these programs will result in decreased medical costs over the years as employees experience better overall health. LEO's can begin to see their overall health improve and experience lower medical costs on their end. Lower employee medical costs translate into lower medical costs for the employer. By providing stress management programs that educate and assist the LEO in dealing with whatever issues they are

experiencing, reduced stress levels will occur. Further, Patterson et al. (2014) referenced data from Maxon that workers compensation issues related to stress, rising health insurance costs, job performance (lack of) and absenteeism are all directly related to the “economic costs of worker stress” (p. 488). Stress management programs can mitigate all of these; employers simply need to make implementing them a priority.

All employees within the organization will benefit greatly from training in coaching and counseling. Newer LEO's are often in need of a mentor, someone who can help them assimilate into police life. Not only that, but LEO's who are looking to advance in their careers will often turn to a more experienced LEO for advice. LEO's often confide in each other with problems and having a working knowledge of stress, indicators to look for, and being equipped with coaching and counseling techniques puts them in a position to be a more effective listener and offer suggestions to handle whatever it is they are dealing with. These are win-win situations for the organization. Employees of all ranks get training in an area that is needed in today's police profession, feel options are available to them for assistance, and, most importantly, the culture of “it's ok to ask for help” is reinforced.

RECOMMENDATION

With all the dangers of the job that LEO's can and do face daily, organizational stressors, personal stressors, and other issues LEO's encounter, law enforcement agencies should have some type of stress management program(s) in place for LEO's to utilize. These programs are of great value to the LEO and the employer with many benefits that accompany them. It is widely believed that law enforcement is one of the

most stressful jobs that a person can choose. LEO's are faced with dangerous situations daily as well as mundane tasks and personal issues they must try and successfully navigate. But when examined further, those issues are either a direct stressor or a byproduct of a stressor that is affecting the LEO. The police culture lends itself to LEO's believing they are invincible and do not need help. Over time, these issues build up and can result in various health issues, sometimes very serious.

Aside from health issues stemming from inadequate stress management, LEO's can experience job performance issues and/or burnout. Self-initiated activity will decrease, productivity will decrease, and community engagements will decline. Use of force incidents and citizen complaints often increase due to the LEO's inability to cope with always having to fix someone else's problem. Their judgment and decision making can be impaired or delayed, causing wrong decisions to be made in situations. Stress management programs designed to educate and assist LEO's in addressing and managing problems are so very important.

It is also a commonly held belief that the stigma surrounding these types of programs, especially in the police culture, keeps LEO's from using them. LEO's who reach out for assistance are perceived as weak or "can't hack it", meaning that LEO's will not ask for help or use the programs. LEO's do not want to be ostracized from the group as the police culture is that being a LEO is belonging to a family. LEO's want to be accepted and will not risk isolation, no matter what the personal cost to them is.

LEO's are also cynical. They believe that administration ("big brother") is always watching, looking for ways to single them out for any reason. LEO's will not use any type of stress management program as they fear their personal medical diagnosis will

be released to their employer. The study cited by Korre et al. (2014) supported having stress management programs in place for LEO's to utilize. HIPPA expressly prohibits personal medical information from being released to anyone except the patient. There are exceptions, but those are not applicable to these types of programs

The costs associated with these programs can be quite high, depending on the type of program and more importantly the size of the agency. Large startup costs can be detrimental to the organization's budget and cause other police related items to be cut. There are costs for managing the program, the staffing costs for officers to attend (if mandatory) and other tangible supply items to get up and running. There is also the unintended cost of training the workforce in coaching and counseling techniques. Training would be needed to better equip supervisors of all ranks and others on this to make them more effective in talking to peers and subordinates about issues that are occurring; whether they be professional or personal.

While it is apparent that there are high upfront costs of these programs to employers, what is not immediately apparent is the long term decrease in medical costs to both the employer and employee. LEO's who use these programs become better able to cope with issues they face. These coping skills can lead to improved health over time. Improved health equates to decreased medical costs to the employer and employee. A healthy workforce, both mentally and physically, is a better overall organization capable of producing quality work and relationships with the community.

No one is debating that law enforcement is not stressful, what is debatable is the benefit of investing in stress management programs for LEO's. It is highly recommended to the law enforcement community that stress management programs of

some type be implemented in law enforcement organizations to help assist and educate LEO's on stress management. Programs can be as small as a peer support team comprised of a group of officers or counselors trained in crisis management and peer support. The investment would be small as participation on this type of unit is ancillary, but it still provides an outlet for LEO's who just need someone to talk to that understands the stress of law enforcement.

Another option is to have an employee assistance program of some kind that is a voluntary program. LEO's would have the ability to contact the program independent of the organization for assistance in coping with issues. The most ideal, although most expensive program, would be a mandatory program installed department wide. Employees would be required to attend quarterly sessions with certified counselors on recognizing stressors and learning coping mechanisms. Mandatory programs help eliminate the stigmas that are attached with counseling services because everyone is doing it. Strict policies would need to be in place governing who counselors are allowed to be and to ensure HIPPA guidelines are being followed.

With the jobs that LEO's perform on a daily basis, they need to be healthy, both mentally and physically, to perform the job they were trained for to the best of their ability. This benefits them, their department, and their community. Citizens and other LEO's depend on them to respond with their best in times of crisis or need. LEO's take care of the community they serve, and it is important that they have the means available to take care of themselves so they are the best they can and need to be.

REFERENCES

- The top 10 most stressful jobs in America. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/be_your_best/page/top-10-stressful-jobs-america-14355387.
- Basinska, B. A., Wiciak, I., & Daderman, A. M. (2014). Fatigue and burnout in police officers: The mediating role of emotions. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 37(3), 665-680.
- Britz, M. T. (1997). The police subculture and occupational socialization: Exploring individual and demographic characteristics. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 21(2), 127-146.
- Career Cast. (2015). *The most stressful jobs of 2015*. Retrieved from <http://www.careercast.com/jobs-rated/most-stressful-jobs-2015>.
- Carlan, P. E., & Nored, L. S. (2008). An examination of officer stress: Should police departments implement mandatory counseling? *Journal of Police Criminal Psychology*, 23, 8-15.
- Chapin, M. L., Singer, M. I., & Walker, M. (2008). Training police leadership to recognize and address operational Stress. *Police Quarterly*, 11(3), 338-352.
- Garner, R. (2008). Police stress: Effects of criticism management training on health. *Applied Psychology in Criminal Justice*, 4(2), 243-250.
- Korre, M., Farioli, A., Varvarigou, V., Sato, S., & Kales, S. N. (2014). A survey of stress levels and time spent across law enforcement duties: Police chief and officer agreement. *Policing*, 8(2), 109-122.

- McCarty, W. P., & Skogan, W. G. (2012). Job-related burnout among civilian and sworn police personnel. *Police Quarterly*, 16(1), 66-84.
- Patterson, B. L. (1992). Job experience and perceived job stress among police, correctional, and probation/parole officers. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 19, 260-286.
- Patterson, G. T., Chung, I. W., & Swan, P. W. (2014). Stress management intervention for police officers and recruits: a meta-analysis. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 10, 487-513.
- Richmond, R.L., Wodak, A., Kehoe, L., & Heather, N. (1998, November). How healthy are the police? A survey of life-style factors. *Addiction*, 93(11), 1729-1737.
- Sameen, S., & Burhan, M. (2014). Creativity and its link with personality type A/B in students. *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, 6(1), 156-166.
- US Department of Health and Human Services Health Information Privacy. (n.d.) Your rights under HIPPA. Retrieved from <http://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-individuals/guidance-materials-for-consumers/index.html>
- Violanti, J. M., Slaven, J. E., Charles, L. E., Burchfiel, C. M., Andrew, M. E., Homish, G. G. (2011). Police and alcohol use: A descriptive analysis and associations with stress outcomes. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 36, 344-356.
- Walsh, M., Taylor, M., & Hastings, V. (2012). Burnout and post traumatic stress disorder in the police: Educating officers with the Stilwell TRiM approach. *Policing*, 7(2), 167-177.

