

**THE BILL BLACKWOOD
LAW ENFORCEMENT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE OF TEXAS**

**F.T.O. PROGRAMS EVALUATIONS
AND PERFORMANCE METHODS**

**A Policy Research Project
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ABSTRACT

This policy research project will identify the importance of enhancing the Field Training Programs to their highest levels of proficiency in order to prepare police recruits for the 21st Century, using the trends and events that will impact the Field Training Programs.

The major sources to be utilized in this policy research project include the San Jose Police Department F.T.O. Program, the U.S. Department of Justice, the National Institute of Justice, the Santa Ana Police Department and the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training.

The information gathered assists the Eagle Pass Police Department F.T.O.'s and the new police recruits to be well prepared for the 21st Century. It identifies some of the events and trends most likely to occur in the near future, and how these will affect the Field Training Programs in law enforcement.

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Introduction

Evaluation and performance of new officers are two key factors that must be highly stressed during their F.T.O. Program Training. Also documentation of all evaluations must be properly done by their F.T.O.'s not only on a daily, weekly basis, but throughout each phase of the program. Any recruit's deficiency must be assessed and corrected immediately.(M.S. McCampbell/1 987/Field training for police officer.)

The recruitment of qualified personnel becomes more difficult as time passes.

As police work becomes more complex, new officers are confronted and must solve more than the classic, textbook problems. The situations on the themes they study during basic training are an introduction to real police work. In field training the recruit must show high proficiency at all times, sensitivity toward victims, and a level of common sense, as well the classroom and the real world of police work. This will minimize liability to the department as well as increase the officer's safety awareness at all times. (M.S. McCampbell/1987. The state of the art.)

Proper documentation of recruit performance evaluations improves the agency's ability to make informed decisions about recruit retention. Field training officers must be especially selected, since they have the most critical position in Field Training Programs. It is absolutely necessary that these training officers be trained well in order for trainees to complete their training successfully. Agencies devote considerable time and resources to selecting, training, and retaining F.T.O's, and they must undergo special required training prior to assuming their duties as F.T.O's.

As a member of the Eagle Pass Police Department F.T.O. program, I believe

it is also my responsibility to seek the best methods of evaluation for police recruits. Which ultimately will produce well prepared officers to serve our community's need. The literature that I will look at will include the F.T.O. programs that were first implemented, such as the San Jose, California program and F.T.O. programs that followed addressing the liability and risk involved on the F.T.O. programs over the past years and this is due to their success.

The intended audience for this project is the Eagle Pass Field training program staff, and the police recruits of the Eagle Pass Police Department.

The intended outcome of this paper is to find solutions to the problems that the Eagle Pass Police Department is encountering with the training of new recruits, and to correct those problems as soon as they arise in order for the new officers to follow high standards and to conduct themselves professionally as prescribed by the police department's code of ethics.

The proposed suggestions are made to better improve the current program to it's highest standards therefore giving our community the best service possible.

Newly hired police recruits traditionally have received most of their basic training in the classroom with little hands on experience, this often leaves a gap between the real world of policing and the classroom. F.T.O. officers play a significant role in teaching new officers how to be effective in actual street encounters. (Killeen Police Dept./Macro Curriculum Document)

The earliest formal field training program appears to have been established

in the San Jose Police Department in 1972. San Jose Police Department began its F.T.O. program in 1972 after a fatal traffic accident that involved a recruit officer. The accident demonstrated serious flaws in the recruit evaluation process, however, there has been a recognized need for formal training before the San Jose Program. (Killeen Police Dept./Macro Curriculum Document)

Field training programs have been influenced by the recommendation of four national commissions: the Wickersham Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration (1931), the President's Commission (1967), the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice and the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement (1979). The Wickersham Commission first called attention to some of the problems in (1931), which reported that no formal recruit training was performed in 80% of the police departments it surveyed (383).

The problem was particularly acute in smaller departments, which had no training personnel. The President's Commission formed to study the entire criminal justice system after the civil unrest of the 1960's, making numerous recommendations to improve management of police departments. One important recommendation was that agencies should implement and supervise a Field Training Program.

The most important support given to the concept of the field training came from the Commission on Accreditation for law enforcement agencies, formed in 1979. With guidance from the four associations that represent 90% of all law enforcement agencies in the United States. (Police Executive Research Forum, International association of Chiefs of police, National sheriffs association, and the National association of

Black Enforcement Executives).

The basic standard program which was started, required the following as recommended by the national commissions:

- (1) The field training for at least four (4) weeks
- (2) A selection process for field training officers.
- (3) Supervision of field training officers.
- (4) Liaison with training academy staff.
- (5) Training for field training officers.
- (6) Evaluation and responsibilities for field training officers.

Presently most police departments have a better structured F.T.O. program. Most include five (5) phases in their programs, which concludes with a remedial loop at the end when necessary. The phases are as follows:

Phase - 1 (1 or 2 weeks)

Primary objective is orientation, familiarization with the program and to stress the importance of basic safety patrol procedures. Although Phase - I is very heavily oriented toward observation, the recruit should actively record all the actions of the F.T.O. so that by the end of the phase, he/she can be capable of becoming a cover officer. The object of the field training is not to get a good evaluation, but rather to become a competent officer.

Phase - 2 (3 to 4 weeks)

The trainee will be given some responsibilities on basic patrol procedures. They will be responsible for approximately 25% of the duties. The F.T.O. will do (75%). This phase will primarily concentrate on learning. The trainee will be expected to contribute more

actively and assume full responsibility as the junior officer in the patrol unit.

Phase - 3 (3 weeks)

This phase can be categorized as a period of partnership learning. The trainee is now ready to assume (50%) of the responsibilities as a partner. The trainee will be expected to respond to radio calls, initiate activities, and carry out contact through their own conclusions with minimal supervision. Basic skills taught in Phase - 1 and Phase - 2, will be reviewed and developed further.

Phase - 4 (3 weeks)

Advanced patrol procedures will cover advanced instruction in complex patrol skills not covered in the first three phases, the Field Training Officer will act as an advisor, covering the trainee when necessary. The F.T.O. will evaluate the trainee's ability to function independently.

Phase - 5 (1 week)

Solo performance and final evaluation. This will be the recruit's last week with a Field Training Officer. This period should be spent with the trainee's first F.T.O. The goal will be to demonstrate that the trainee can now work as an independent police officer in a single police unit. The F.T.O. will ride with the trainee and not interfere with the trainee's police performance, unless absolutely necessary. The overall goal is independence. After this final review the F.T.O. officer will give the recommendation to the F.T.O. supervisor on release of trainee or placement of trainee on remedial loop if recommended by the F.T.O. officer.

Phase - 6 (time varies)

This phase is recommended by the F.T.O. supervisor based on observation and documentation throughout the program. The remedial loop covers the following:

Step # 1 Problem area identified as documented.

Step # 2 The trainee is informed of the problem.

Step # 3 The trainee is assigned to remedial loop.

Step # 4 Trainee is instructed how to perform the task.

Step # 5 The trainee is shown the correct procedure.

Step # 6 Trainee performance.

Step # 7 The trainee is released from remedial loop.

Evaluation must continue throughout this phase. After remedial loop the F.T.O. must recommend the release of the trainee as a solo police officer or recommend termination, depending on the trainee's performance.

Review of Literature of Practice

In 1987, the U.S. Department of Justice, the National Institute of Justice and the U.S. Department of Justice published field training documents of police officers. The analysis of the current operation of field training for law enforcement officers concluded that these programs are relatively inexpensive ways to improve the selection and training of new officers and should be established in all police agencies.

A police liability case was filed in 1983 that found an agency negligent for training. This fell under the 42 D.S.C. 1983 civil action. This case discussed police

negligent cases, including negligent appointment, retention, assignment and entrustment to establish a course of action under section 42 U.S.C. 1983. Three requirements are needed to file a lawsuit: (1) a constitutional deprivation of rights, (2) rights taken under color of state law. (3) deprivation resulting in injury.

The Santa Ana police department F.T.O. training guide instructs trainees in the objectives and procedures of the Field Training Program and outlines the time frame and purpose of each of the required five phases and remedial loop phase. The remedial loop is used at the discretion of the field training officer. This guide also provides a performance record for each phase. Which provides for the date when each task was demonstrated and documented.

In 1994, the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training. also looked at impact of the changing work force in law enforcement field training programs by the year 2003. Forecasted trends and events were used to develop nominal normative, and hypothetical future scenarios. Strategic plans are presented for modeling a police agency's environment and organization and is used to develop alternative strategies. The selected strategies include the redesign of field training programs. the development of total quality management and a community satisfaction rating system. (FJ. Scialdone/1994/California Cmssn on Peace Officer Standards and Training).

Suffolk County Police Department, Yaphank, N.Y. the Suffolk county, New York police department's field training program uses the Recruit Field Training Guide (RFTG) to structure and standardize the field instruction provided to police recruits. The F.T.O. is responsible for addressing all job tasks listed for a particular week, during which

they are field training a recruit. The RFTG covers a nine (9) week period. Topics included in the RFTG include relief procedures, vehicle and equipment check, radio procedures, precinct orientation and map use, patrol vehicle operation, police officer safety, police use of force, desk officer duties, patrol officer duties, vehicle and traffic law enforcement, arrest procedures, prisoner procedures, and crime scene procedures (Training handbooks/manuals) (Suffolk County Police Department 30 Yaphank Avenue N.Y. 20849).

Discussion of Relevant Issues

An analysis of the current operation of Field Training Programs show that F.T.O's are relatively inexpensive ways to improve the selection and training of new officers and should be established in all police agencies. All these programs usually consist of on the job training, according to data from a national survey that sought information from 588 local and state law enforcement agencies. The 288 respondents included 183 agencies that had Field Training Programs. The case studies provided details on the operations of different types of field training programs. The programs appear to reduce civil liability complaints and ultimately increase the police agency's effectiveness in the community. (M.S. Campbell, 1987).

An opportunity that we have to improve our program include the use of citizen volunteers within the community, who should be integrated into the field training process and used for such special training such as cultural diversity and language (basic Spanish, etc.). Enhanced exposure in cultural diversity as well as officer and civilian expertise are strong assets of this strategy. Increased program quality bring with it added enthusiasm

and a high degree of commitment within police ranks. (California Commission. On Peace Officer Standard and Training/1994). As the quality of field training officers improves and the scope of the program expands, so will the quality of the program, undoubtedly, this will improve the trainee, who is the most important aspect of the program.

Through consistent training techniques, coordination between all aspects of the field training program, improved evaluations of trainees, and the inclusion of advance officer training for field training officers, the overall performance of the field training program will be successful.

The constraints which will face the field training programs in the future will be the new possible trends, and events. Some of the predicted events which may impact the Field Training Programs will be as follows:

- . Laws Passed restricting peace officers powers of arrest.
- . Non-essential police functions due to decreased funds.
- . Elimination of all reimbursement for police training.
- . Misdemeanor crimes discriminalized.
- . Misdemeanor crimes not prosecuted.
- . Regional criminal justice programs eliminated by legislative action.
- . Use of lethal force by law enforcement is prohibited by law.
- . North American Free Trade agreement passed.
- . College tuition increased.
- . Major earthquake occurs.

(FJ. Scialdone/1994).

Some of the trends most likely to affect the Field Training Programs of law enforcement may be as follows:

- . Level of lawsuits resulting from training issues.
- . Level of gang activity in our society.
- . Concerns about drug in society.
- . Level of financial resources for police.
- . Level of cultural conflicts between different ethnic groups.
- . Level of violent crime involving juveniles.
- . Public confidence in police.
- . Number of unsupervised juveniles in society.
- . Level of unrest in public schools.
- . Level of technological advances in law enforcement.
- . Concerns about bilingual needs for police.
- . Level of privatization of police service.
- . Level of affirmative action requirements affecting local govt's.
- . Concerns about educational level/quality of new personnel.
- . Concerns about law enforcement work force retention.

(F. J. Scialdone, 1994).

Conclusion

The goals and recommendations for this research project is to enhance the Field Training Programs in its proficiency in all areas. This can be done by being prepared for the next century's different types of crimes, trends and events.

With the inclusion of new ideas and techniques to the Field Training Program, will contribute to show success through time and use. Recommendations for the F.T.O. program are as follows:

(1) The selection of the F.T.O's through a selection process, evaluating their strengths and willingness to become role models for the new police trainees.

The F.T.O's should also be evaluated when a recruit is not meeting its required performance. F.T.O's should be retrained with important topics after two years to make sure they still understand the importance of teaching a new recruit.

(2) F.T.O. Programs should be required in all police departments and sheriffs departments throughout the state, because it prepares a recruit to be more effective and proficient. Instead of just putting the recruit out on the street without the proper training. the training will turn out an effective member of the police department.

Liability becomes a strong issue when recruits don't get proper training and the recruit encounters negative consequences while learning on his own.

(3) The F.T.O. program should be carefully monitored by the F.T.O. supervisor to make sure the F.T.O. and the recruit are doing their best. The F.T.O. supervisor should be given ample time to monitor the entire F.T.O. program in order to be successful. Therefore, the F.T.O.'s should be part of the hiring process, since they know the expectancies of new recruits, and there should be no political influences in the hiring process. Always keeping in mind the liability issues at all times!

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