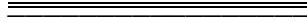
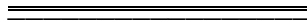


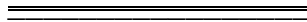
**The Bill Blackwood
Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas**



The Use of Citizens on Patrol



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



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ABSTRACT

The use of citizens on patrol volunteers is relevant to law enforcement for various reasons. Law enforcement needs to find ways reduce crime and save cost at the same time. In an era where crime is high and funds are short, volunteers play a vital role in meeting the needs reducing crime and cost.

There is significant documentation that citizen volunteer programs play a vital role in communities where they are used, such as the reduction of crime and saving lives (Mountain Home Police Department, n.d.; Greco, n.d.; National Association Citizens on Patrol, 2005). Crime has been reduced by up to 50% while using volunteers. It has been shown that citizen volunteers aid in cost savings of the agency they are assisting. Agencies have reported that thousands of dollars have been saved due to law enforcement agencies utilizing citizen volunteers. This project also addresses the benefits and concerns of using police volunteer programs. The study revealed that the benefits of such programs outweigh the concerns that officers and agencies have.

There are a number of agencies across the United States utilizing law enforcement citizen volunteers. The National Association Citizens on Patrol is active in supporting numerous law enforcement agencies police volunteer programs. Law enforcement agencies should use citizens on patrol programs to better serve the citizens of their community.

There were several different types of literature used in this project in support of the researcher's position. The literature included Internet sites, articles, journals, and other research papers on the subject of citizen volunteers in law enforcement. Based on

the findings of this research project, it is recommended that law enforcement agencies not using citizen volunteer programs take a close look at what they offer and strongly consider implementing this program.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract	
Introduction	1
Position	2
Counter Position	3
Recommendation	7
References	9
Appendices	

INTRODUCTION

This research project will look at citizens on patrol programs and their benefit to the law enforcement community. Citizens on patrol is a generic name used to describe law enforcement volunteers (Illinois Citizen Police Academy Association, n.d.). The volunteers are sometimes referred to as Volunteers in Policing, Police Auxiliary Citizens Teams, and Volunteers in Patrol, to name a few. They began being used in the United States approximately 20 years ago. These citizens assist law enforcement by being extra eyes in the community (National Association Citizens on Patrol, 2005). They commonly drive marked patrol vehicles. The vehicles will have markings identifying them as citizens or volunteers rather than an officer (Seago, 2003). The volunteers for Allen Texas Police Department log over 6,000 miles each year (City of Allen, 2009). The citizens assist with office work and other various tasks such as staffing the department information desk (Farmers Branch Protect, 2010).

Citizen volunteer programs are beneficial to law enforcement and should be used whenever feasibly possible. This study will show officers, agencies, and local governments how these volunteer citizens actually aid in the reduction of crime. This is reason enough for law enforcement to seriously consider utilizing these groups.

Research will show that negative ideas of these programs are unwarranted. The longevity of citizen volunteer programs is an indicator of just how important volunteers are to local law enforcement agencies. This information supports the position that these citizen programs are highly beneficial. Law enforcement agencies should use citizens on patrol programs to better serve the citizens of their community.

POSITION

Implementation of citizen on patrol volunteer group's aids in the reduction of crime in areas where they are utilized. The City of Burleson, Texas reported that on the biggest shopping day of the year, November 23, Citizens on Patrol (COP) volunteers from Burleson Police Department aided in patrolling parking lots and various stores. The areas were patrolled for six hours. During that time, Burleson police officers only responded to one shoplifting report. There were no vehicle burglaries reported during the six hour block (City of Burleson, 2010).

In Gold Canyon, Arizona, the sheriff's office is reported to be over 100 deputies short. To compensate for the shortage of deputies, the sheriff's office utilizes citizens on patrol. Sheriff Vasquez stated that the citizen patrol volunteers have been credited with the reduction of crime by 50% (Greco, n.d.). The National Association Citizens on Patrol (2005) reported that crime has been reduced an average of 20% when using volunteer citizen patrol programs. The Fort Worth, Texas police department has also credited the citizens on patrol in being a factor in the reduction of crime in the City of Fort Worth. Fort Worth Police Department reported that citizens on patrol have played a vital part in the reduction of crimes, such as theft, burglary, and auto theft (Fort Worth Police Department, 2009).

Citizens on patrol volunteer groups allow for the community to play an active role in supporting local law enforcement. Fort Worth Police Department's Citizens on Patrol Code Blue program has a set of goals. One of their goals is to increase citizen involvement in the prevention of crime (TELESMAP, 1994). The National Citizens on Patrol reported that their organization supports more than 5,000 citizen patrol volunteers

in 80 cities and 18 states (National Citizens on Patrol, 2009). It appears, by the large number of citizen volunteers who are assisting law enforcement across the United States, that communities are supporting their local law enforcement by being involved in aiding law enforcement.

Roselle Illinois Police Department is using a program named Citizen Assisted Radar Enforcement. Roselle police allows citizens to use radar to track the speed of vehicles. Roselle Police Chief James Kruger Jr. reported that this is an excellent tool to establish collaboration between the police and residents (as cited in Kanable, 2009). Dallas Police Department has a program called "Citizens Offering Police Support." Dallas Police Department reported that this program provided the citizens an opportunity to work hand-in-hand with police officers (Dallas Police, 2009). The idea of citizens working hand-in-hand with one another allows for both groups to support each other.

Citizens on patrol programs allow for a reduction in crime in communities where they are used. The citizen programs allow for positive interaction between citizens and law enforcement, which help to build citizen support of law enforcement. If a community has a reduction in crime with citizen/law enforcement support, the community is better as a whole. Law enforcement agencies should use citizens on patrol programs to better serve the citizens of their community.

COUNTER POSITION

There are issues that have to be addressed when utilizing citizen volunteers. A few of the issues or barriers that have to be overcome are cited in a study completed by Kessler and Wartell (1996). To realize the benefits of citizen volunteers, law

enforcement agencies must overcome barriers (Kessler and Wartell, 1996). There are three barriers that will be addressed in no certain order: cost, confidentiality, and officer resistance.

One barrier to overcome is cost. This is the idea that a citizen volunteer program may be too costly for a department. An analysis was conducted of registered Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) programs in 2009. Respondents to the analysis were asked to rate the importance of several different factors. One of the factors that respondents were asked to respond to was the cost to administer a volunteer program. Out of those who responded, 63% stated cost was important (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2004). This high percentage indicated that agencies are not only concerned with costs of volunteer programs, but it may also be a barrier.

The costs to support a citizen volunteer program are minimal, but an agency must identify potential costs (Kessler & Wartell, 1996). The City of Irving, Texas utilizes a citizen on patrol program. They reported that their program saved the city almost \$50,000 through volunteers and \$76,000 in mileage over one year (City of Irving, 2009). That is a total savings to the city of \$126,000.

The Fort Worth, Texas police department's citizens on patrol program is funded by the use of asset forfeitures (TELESMAP, 1994). There are other means utilized to fund volunteer police programs. They can be funded by using grants, donations, and fundraising (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2004). The National Citizens on Patrol reported that it is not uncommon for volunteer groups that consist of 50 members to save a department's budget several hundred thousand dollars (National Citizens on Patrol, 2005). Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, located in Tampa,

Florida was faced with budget cuts. To compensate for the budget cuts, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office will utilize citizens on patrol volunteers. The volunteers will aid the office by doing business contacts, vacation watches, schools crossings, and special events (Greco, n.d.).

Hillsborough County Sheriffs Office in Tampa, Florida conducted a survey, and one agency that responded to the survey reported that volunteers had, in one year, served 32,042.75 hours, which saved the agency \$601, 442 (Greco, n.d.). In an effort to keep cost low, Mountain Home Police Department, in Mountain Home, Idaho used retired police vehicles with "Citizen on Patrol" markings (Mountain Home Police Department, n.d.). Two different methods were used in these two cases to save costs. Using volunteers to fill manpower roles and reusing vehicles both aided in saving costs.

Another area for concern for many agencies is confidentiality. In the analysis completed on Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) programs in 2009, the area of confidentiality was addressed. Agencies were asked to respond by rating the importance of several factors of volunteers in policing, including confidentiality. Out of those who responded, 81% felt that confidentiality was important (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2004). This high number indicated that this is a barrier that has to be overcome by agencies implementing such programs.

Kessler and Wartell (1996) addressed the issue of confidentiality in their study of volunteers in policing. They suggested that agencies should provide instruction and training of those who will be volunteers. Additionally, they suggested that agencies follow procedures in managing information, which will help safeguard against breaches of confidentiality (Kessler & Wartell, 1996). In this research, it was found that agencies

have background checks and training for volunteers. In addition to background checks and training, one article suggested drug testing and polygraph examinations of potential volunteers (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2004).

Citizen volunteers must be a minimum age of 18 years old. Depending on the assignment, there is apparently no maximum age of volunteers. In addition to a background check of potential volunteers, most agencies require volunteers to attend Citizen's Police Academy as part of their training (Seago, 2003). Fort Worth Police Department provides volunteers with ongoing training. Two times a year, volunteers attend a workshop where various topics are covered. Gang recognition and enforcement, radio protocol, and legal considerations are among the topics that are covered (TELESMAP, 1994). The initial training and ongoing training of volunteers will help lessen the likelihood of a breach of confidentiality.

Officer resistance is another area of concern with citizen on patrol programs as "Many sworn officers don't understand or have the patience required to work with volunteers" (Seago, 2003, p. 10). Kessler and Wartell (1996) noted that the law enforcement community is often closed to the inclusion of the community and volunteers in their activities. They suggested ways to lessen the resistance by officers. Citing the success of other programs, bringing staff in on planning, and educating the staff on the role and benefits of the volunteers are ways to gain more acceptance by the officers (Kessler & Wartell, 1996).

Agencies must convey to the paid staff that volunteers are there to assist them. Involving officers from the beginning will help convey this message (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2004). Fort Worth Police Department is a good

example of an agency that had officer rejection at the beginning of the program. There were officers who personally relayed to the department that they did not support the program. After the program began, officers began to recognize the value of citizens on patrol. Fort Worth reported that at the beginning, only 20% of the officers supported the program. They now estimate that 80% of their officers support the program (TELESMAP, 1994).

RECOMMENDATION

Law enforcement agencies should use citizens on patrol programs to better serve the citizens of their community. Citizens on patrol are citizen volunteers who are used by law enforcement agencies in several different ways. They are used to patrol neighborhoods as extra eyes and ears of law enforcement. Additionally, they assist with other various duties, allowing the commissioned officers to deal with more urgent issues. Citizen volunteer programs have been found effective in the reduction of crime. Agencies using these programs have reported a reduction of crime from 20% to 50% (Greco, n.d.; National Association Citizens on Patrol, 2005). These numbers are significant and should not be overlooked.

Citizen on patrol volunteer groups allow for the citizen to become involved in what the law enforcement is doing to help make the communities better places to live. The citizens begin to support their local law enforcement. The National Association Citizens on Patrol (2009) reported that it alone supports 5,000 volunteers in 80 cities. That would indicate that the volunteers are supported by law enforcement. Law enforcement needs to keep the idea of using citizen volunteers a priority. They improve law enforcement and community relations.

There are others reasons law enforcement needs to keep volunteers involved. Most law enforcement agencies are always trying to make the most out of their limited budget. This research has shown that citizen volunteers save agencies money. It has been shown that they do aid in the reduction of crime. Agencies can save on investigative costs due to citizens patrolling areas, and, by doing so, crime is reduced. With fewer crimes being committed, there is less cost for investigations. The City of Irving, Texas reported a total savings of \$126,000 in one year's time. Those types of figures are crucial to most agencies. There are others that reported even more savings.

These volunteers are trained and educated as to what they are supposed to do. Background tests are also conducted to help in the area of confidentiality concerns. In addition to the initial training, there is periodic training to update volunteers on procedure/policy changes.

The counter claims that have been addressed are cost, confidentiality, and resistance from officers. These claims overlook the history and results of volunteer programs. There are costs, but they are minimal to the agencies. There are confidentiality issues with paid staff as well as volunteers. The key to reducing the charge of breaches in confidentiality is training. There are also officers who resist law enforcement volunteers. However, when officers see the benefits reaped from having these volunteers, they began to lessen their resistance.

Law enforcement has to be open to ways of reducing crime and saving money. Citizen volunteers are a perfect way to accomplish these goals. Law enforcement agencies should use citizens on patrol programs to better serve the citizens of their community.

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APPENDIX A



(Allen Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association, February 18, 2010)

APPENDIX B

FORT WORTH POLICE DEPARTMENT CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY

APPLICATION FOR ENROLLMENT

Please print or type the following information:

DATE: _____

NAME: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY/ZIP: _____

BUSINESS ADD: _____ OCCUPATION: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

DRIVERS LICENSE: _____

COMMUNITY GROUP AFFILIATION: _____

WHY DO YOU WISH TO ATTEND THE CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY? _____

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY? _____

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ARRESTED OR CONVICTED OF A CRIME? IF SO,
EXPLAIN.

GIVE THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES/PHONE NUMBERS OF TWO REFERENCES:

1. _____

2. _____

-----FOR DIVISION USE ONLY-----

CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK --- ATTACHED --- NONE (CIRCLE ONE)

NPO: _____ DIVISION: _____ NPD: _____

SIGNATURE OF NPD COMMANDER/SUPERVISOR APPROVING APPLICATION:

X: _____ DATE: _____

WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

THE STATE OF TEXAS)

COUNTY OF TARRANT)

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

That I, the undersigned _____, for and in consideration of the privilege of being a participant in the Citizen Police Academy of the City of Fort Worth, and allowed use of City of Fort Worth property, equipment and services, including but not limited to the weapons firing range, and recognizing that such activity involves certain inherent risks and dangers to my property and person, do hereby agree to assume the risks attendant to such activity, to include property damage and physical injury from such service, and do hereby release and hold harmless the City of Fort Worth, its' Police Department, agents, and employees, in both their public and private capacities, from any and all liability, claims, suits, demands or causes of action which may arise.

It is further agreed that the execution of this release shall not constitute a waiver of the City of Fort Worth of defense of governmental immunity, where applicable, or any other defense recognized by the Courts of this State.

Signed, this the _____ day of _____, 20____, A.D.

Signature: _____

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this the _____ day of _____

_____, 20____, A.D.

Notary Public, State of Texas