

LAW ENFORCEMENT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

A RESEARCH PAPER  
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE LAW ENFORCEMENT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

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McALLEN, TEXAS

JANUARY 1994



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

During the past decade many articles, books, magazines, and periodicals have been written on styles of policing. To my knowledge nothing has been published on what might happen if two or more styles were incorporated. This paper seeks to find out about the incorporation of these styles. The research combines "Community Policing" and "Problem Oriented Policing" into a single combined concept: "Community Oriented Policing" or "C.O.P." It has always been the author's position that if these two main styles were combined they would be effective for improving the quality of life for the community, than either of the notions alone. Both styles are vehicles that, if implemented properly, serve to improve the quality of life but only in limited aspects. Incorporating these styles is warranted for three reasons. The first reason is that either style by itself is not totally effective, since neither style totally addresses the community's concerns/problems. The second reason deals with the fact

that it is not always possible to operate two styles at the same time due to lack of availability of community resources. The third reason was for the community to benefit from the work product of the police department's Field Operations Division, the division had to be moving in the same, singular direction. This third reason was important since it directed the Field Operations Division to properly plan and invest its resources towards obtaining the largest return possible from the least amount of effort.

It should be understood that the plurality of "community" is extremely vast and may not apply to every entity. Yet, there are properties that are applicable to the majority of communities. These include elements such as; geographical locations, demographics, reason(s) for community existence, types of businesses, neighborhood make-up, and classes of people. Within each of these properties are ethnic, educational, and social make-up, along with the daily needs of each respective neighborhood or business area that are to be addressed by the program. All of these combine into the sociological profile of a community. In "Communities, Crime, and Neighborhood Organization"<sup>1</sup>, Wesley G. Skogan states that, "...the impact of crime upon the collective capacity of communities to exercise control over local conditions", is a determining

factor on the successful use of police power. It is this sociological concern that the C.O.P. style encompasses in the effort to improve the quality of life for the community. C.O.P. can not operate if the needs, opinions, and concerns of the community are not taken into consideration, prior to implementation.

Because of the vast areas that each of these needs encompass and for the purposes of this paper, it will be understood that these areas were considered and analyzed prior to implementing the objectives that will be outlined. To address these needs in depth would require another research paper along with the fact that the demographics and sociological concerns from the City of McAllen, Texas in no way effect the manner in which the C.O.P. style can be implemented by another police department, once the sociological concerns are taken into consideration. This paper will outline the primary goal of improving the quality of life for the McAllen Police Department's North-East District's residents, two of the objectives implemented to attain the goal, the means taken for achieving results, and the follow-up of implementing the C.O.P. style of policing.

## CHAPTER 2

### DEFINING COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

The concepts of several policing styles will be described first to provide a definition of Community Oriented Policing. The C.O.P. style combines Community Policing and Problem Oriented Policing into one style.

Community Policing as outlined by Robert Trojanowicz and Bonnie Bucquerouz in their book, "Community Policing - A Contemporary Perspective", involves changing the way police think. There are ten principles of Community Policing.<sup>2</sup> These principles, primarily, deal with the philosophy and organizational strategies that can be implemented to bring the community and police organization together. The majority of this effort is established through Community Police Officers, (C.P.O.), that are stationed in local neighborhood police sub-stations.<sup>3</sup> Community Policing and Problem Solving Policing also known as Problem Oriented Policing are compatible but different.

Problem Oriented Policing outlined by Herman Goldstein in his book, "Problem-Oriented Policing",<sup>4</sup> states that an in-depth study of an identified problem is required. The cause of the problem, not the symptoms of the problem, needs to be studied and corrective actions taken. This concept does not revolve around a C.P.O., or police sub-station but involves the total resources of the police department and the community as a whole.

Problem Oriented Policing outlined by John E. Eck and William Spelman in their book, "Problem-Solving, Problem - Oriented Policing in Newport News"<sup>5</sup>, states that within each underlying condition is a problem. Within each problem are incidents which may result in the need for police responses. If the problem can be identified and corrected the incidents for police response will be reduced or eliminated. The underlying condition can not be eliminated, in all cases, due to reasons involving legal matters. However the incidents and their problem can be impacted.

Innovative Police Programs can be categorized under Problem Oriented Policing since they operate under the same primary philosophy. The Innovative Law Enforcement Program is outlined by Chris Braiden in two published articles. In "Community Policing: Nothing New Under The Sun"<sup>6</sup> he states

that Community Policing actually is found in item seven of Sir Robert Peel's principles for policing which states:

To maintain at all times a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and that the public are the police. The police being only members of the public that are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.<sup>7</sup>

Sir Robert Peel's principle so clearly states what police agencies are concerned with today. This supports the concept that there are no new ideas, just new approaches.

In "Policing: Time For A New Winejug"<sup>8</sup> Braiden concerns himself with three categories. The first is that the basic unit of work in policing must move from responding to a call to solving a problem. The second concerns doing the right thing while becoming more customer driven. The third addresses that allegiance must shift to the community and away from the police organization. He further states that present conditions directly influences the actions of others.<sup>9</sup> This is best described by the article "The police and neighborhood safety: Broken Windows"<sup>10</sup>, written by James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling. If a broken window is allowed to exist in a structure, this broken window serves as a sign to others that the conditions that brought about the window being broken are acceptable. That adverse



condition(s) fosters the development of another adverse condition(s).

The Innovative Law Enforcement Program described by Reuben M. Greenberg in his articles, "Reuben Greenberg Takes Back The Streets"<sup>11</sup>, and "What You Can Do To Fight Crime"<sup>12</sup> states that new ideas to policing are needed if problems are to be reduced or eliminated. Traditional policing does not always hold the answer. When this occurs, innovative thinking is the key. Reuben M. Greenberg and Chris Braiden both share this philosophy on innovative approaches to policing.

Community Oriented Policing takes these concepts and combines them into one. Problems are first identified, researched, and potential solutions implemented through the C.P.O.s, the officers and community resources. The solutions are then followed up to evaluate their effectiveness along with insuring that the problem does not re-occur. Full utilization of all possible avenues and resources required to reach a successful conclusion encompass innovative policing. The McAllen Police Department has been involved in each of these policing concepts since their beginning and can be found in the book, "Community Policing: A Contemporary Concept"<sup>13</sup>, by Trojanowicz and

Bucqueroux. The McAllen Police Department followed the outline of separation of patrol responsibilities into Beat (C.P.O.s) and Response Officers. This separation caused us to experience the problem of having animosity in the patrol force brought about by having officers assigned as C.P.O.s and Response Officers. This animosity was caused from the difficulties involving calls for police service because the Response Officers felt that they were having to take all of the calls within the entire beat, while the C.P.O.s had to only worry about calls within the immediate area of their respective sub-stations. If the C.P.O. was not available, then the calls were shifted to the Response Officer.

This separation caused the citizens to be adversely impacted since the officers efforts were being channelled, at times, into several directions at once. The implementation of the C.P.O.s caused a reduction in manpower for the beat since the C.P.O. was only responsible for one small area. This left the rest of the beat to be addressed by one less officer. In addition, citizens for the most part were expected to come to the local sub-stations to obtain assistance for their problems. There is a stigma associated with coming to a police sub-station for the majority of persons residing in it's service area. All of the sub-stations are located in impoverished neighborhoods,

where coming to a police station can create peer problems for the individual. What caused this type of implementation to fail was that the philosophy of the organization never considered the individual/group elements of the persons providing the service and those being served. Robert Trojanowicz states in an article, "Building Support for Community Policing: An Effective Strategy"<sup>14</sup>, that a successful Community Police Program requires building consensus, trust by empowering average citizens to make them a part of the process, upper command input and decision making, support, and input from all levels of the police organization. An educational program is the foundation for Community Policing. The educational program must be implemented so the justifications, reasons for existence, goals, and any fears can be addressed. This process must continue through a mentoring and follow-up. Finally, it involves a team effort. For the most part these are all long-term processes that the majority of communities are not willing to accept. Today, the average person expects immediate remedies. This expectation of immediate remedies causes the police organization to be continually reactive and therein lies the problem of Community Policing standing on it's own.

Because of these errors/problems another course of action was required. The officers had to be reunited as a solidified working unit and the stigma on everyone's part had to be removed. We could not take the time or be burdened about worrying about the different classes of people. We had to just worry about all the people, period. The separation of patrol officers, into C.P.O.s and Response Officers, was eliminated. Officers were assigned to a stationary beat and shift within a particular patrol district. The patrol districts were then responsible for directing their resources in the implementation of the defined goals of the organization on a twenty-four hour basis. With the exception of major crimes, the problems of each district were it's concern. This instilled a true sense of ownership by the officers. The accomplishments or failures became a reflection on the actions of the officers. From this came the team concept. The concept of a team effort improved the morale of the district officers. The districts were permitted to incorporate all of the policing concepts instead of using just one. The utilization of the combined police concepts lead to an increase in activities directed at improving the quality of life for the district's inhabitants.

United States President Ronald Reagan in his Inaugural Address of January 20, 1981,<sup>15</sup> best described the path that must be taken by the American public if positive, corrective change was to occur. He stated, "We must act today in order to preserve tomorrow." That, "... government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem." That, "All of us together, in and out of government, must bear the burden. The solutions we seek must be equitable, with no one group singled out to pay a higher price." Of significant importance was his statement:

Well, our concern must be for a special interest group that has been too long neglected. It knows no sectional boundaries or ethnic and racial divisions, and it crosses political party lines. It is made up of men and women who raise our food, patrol our streets, man our mines and factories, teach our children, keep our homes, and heal us when we're sick - professionals, industrialists, shopkeepers, clerks, cabbies, and truck drivers. They are in short, "We the people," this breed called Americans.<sup>16</sup>

The McAllen Police Department chose to follow this philosophy.

## CHAPTER 3

### ESTABLISHING THE GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The first step in developing any program is the establishment of goals and then identifying the objectives for each goal that will bring about their successful attainment. This same procedure applies to development of a C.O.P. program.

Several goals had been outlined by the McAllen Police Department.<sup>17</sup> One concerned improving the quality of life for the citizens. This is a goal of many police organizations concerned with the welfare of their citizens. This goal was the most important and served as the foundation from which the other goals would be supported. With this goal in place, the next step was to identify the means in which the goal would be accomplished. For the period of January 1, through October 20, 1992, a total of twelve objectives were outlined. To accomplish these objectives, eighty-seven means were performed by the district's officers, personnel from other agencies/private

companies, and local citizens.<sup>18</sup> The results show the impact a police organization can have when Community Policing and Problem Oriented Policing are incorporated into a single concept, namely, Community Oriented Policing, C.O.P.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF C.O.P.

The McAllen Police Department decided to implement a team concept. The District Commander would serve as the facilitator while the other members of the district identified the objectives and the manner in which the objectives would be accomplished. For the C.O.P. to work, all of the personnel assigned to patrol had to follow the same path. The Laws of Physics teach that for energy to be effective, it must be applied in the same direction. When the energy is applied in several directions at the same time, the effect is reduced.<sup>19</sup> This law of physics was used in the implementation of the C.O.P. program. We wanted the most impact for each action that was taken and to reduce the amount of effort that had to be expended on our part. To accomplish this each of the three shifts worked as a team.

The Night shift's primary objective was to identify the problem areas. The officers on this shift because of their work hours, 11:00 p.m. through 7:00 a.m., and the shift's primary responsibility of security, were best situated to identify problems such as: inadequate lighting, security,



and potential health and safety dangers. The Day shift's primary objective was to follow-up on the items forwarded from the night shift.

The Day shift because of their work hours, 7:00 a.m. through 3:00 p.m., was best suited to contact the proper agencies that could assist in improving or eliminating the identified problems. The Day shift also had the responsibility to identify problems such as: graffiti, potential health and safety dangers, traffic concerns, and other needs that may need to be addressed for a particular neighborhood or business district.

The Evening shift's objectives involved the same areas as the Day and Night shifts plus they provided the services needed for the Neighborhood Watch Programs. The Evening shift's work hours meant they had less time than other officers, for problem solving, due to the higher volume of calls for service. Yet, because of their work hours, 3:00 p.m. through 11:00 p.m., they were in the best position to contact the families wanting to implement a Neighborhood Watch Program.

With the responsibilities for each shift in place and the freedom to implement a variety of police concepts, the district was ready to address the goal of improving the quality of life for it's citizens.

To maintain the integrity of C.O.P. the District Commander held meetings with both supervisors and patrol officers on a regular basis. No set times were arranged for meetings. The meetings were held on a "need" basis. The needs were based upon the individual or combined projects. The meetings served as a means to monitor the actions being taken, identifying problems, developing courses of remedy. The meetings also ensured that we were all moving in the same direction, not duplicating efforts, misapplying techniques, or straying from the objectives.

A variety of objectives were developed by the district's personnel working in a team effort. The objectives ranged from having street lights repaired or installed to obtaining teddy bears to help distraught children. These corrective actions were brought about by the combined efforts of the personnel from the district, other city agencies, private or corporate companies, and the citizens.

The following objectives and the means are in the 1993 annual report for the McAllen Police Department's North East Patrol District.<sup>20</sup>

## PARK OBJECTIVE

The first objective concerned a city park that had long been forgotten and served as a gathering area for users of alcohol and drugs, lovers, and a gang meeting place.<sup>21</sup> The playground equipment was in extreme need of repair or replacement. It had long been abandoned by the neighborhood children due to the problems. The North East District determined that the children are our primary concern as a society. The quality of our children lives directly impacts the direction our community will take in the future. We felt that if the use of the park could be returned to the children they would have a lawful means to expend their energy rather than in some form of criminal activity. This also permitted a place for interaction between the children and the officers. To accomplish this several means for completing this objective were identified and corrective actions taken. It was determined that the park would serve as the location for a "National Night Out", a Community Policing event held in August of each year.<sup>22</sup> To accomplish this Community Policing concept we would have to implement

Problem Oriented Policing concepts. The National Night Out event could not be held if conditions at the park were not improved.

Means/Corrective Actions:

1. The park was extremely dark. The lights were inadequate or in need of repair. This provided an environment for persons to hide or conceal their activities. To correct this the local electric company was contacted along with the city's Parks and Recreation department.
  - a. New poles and lights were installed where none had been.
  - b. Inadequate or inoperative lights were replaced.
2. Playground equipment was in need of repair or replacement. In addition, the park was never completed as originally designed. The Parks and Recreation department was contacted.
  - a. All of the playground equipment that was in place was repaired or replaced.

- b. New playground and other equipment was erected in addition to those items repaired.
  - c. Items needing to be repainted were painted.
- 3. Extensive trash, tree cuttings, and rubbish existed both within the park and along avenues surrounding the park. This was not only urban blight but a health and safety problem. The city's Park and Recreation and Sanitation departments were contacted. It should be noted that during this course of remedy, some of the local children pitched in to help. They were so glad to see the changes taking place that they wanted to assist.
  - a. All of the trash, tree cuttings, and other materials were removed.
  - b. New trash receptacles were placed within the park and a large trash receptacle was placed outside the fence area.
  - c. Trash was picked up on a regular basis.

4. Identification of problem individuals.

No one was going to use the park if the undesirable individuals or groups still exercised control.

- a. Extra patrol was maintained by the beat officers. Officers used the park for a location to do their paperwork or for meeting with their supervisor or other officers. The presence of officers had a tremendous impact as the criminal element did not want to be in the same area as the officers. This strategy was learned from Chief Rueben Greenberg of the Charleston (South Carolina) Police Department.<sup>23</sup>
- b. Persons found to be in violation of local state, or federal laws were issued citations or arrested.
- c. Local families returned to the park since the criminal element had been displaced.

Each of the above means displaced the criminal activity that had been occurring in the park and allowed the

residents to utilize the park's facilities. The park's improvements have been maintained through continued extra patrol and routine maintenance.

National Night Out<sup>24</sup> is an event held yearly throughout the United States. It involves neighborhood residents planning, directing, and implementing a neighborhood party that is held during one night in the month of August. It is designed to serve as a means for neighborhood residents to form bonds that can be used to reduce crime through the development of Neighborhood Watch Program where the police serve as the facilitators not the hosts.

Neighborhood Watch Programs<sup>25</sup> are designed around the concept of developing neighborhood partners. That is, I'll watch your home while you're away if you will do the same for me. In addition, it serves as a means for allowing neighbors to meet each other. This then leads to a network system between the neighbors and the police.

The next step was to have the neighborhoods, surrounding the areas of the sub-station and the park, arrange for separate National Night Out events. These two areas are one-half mile apart.



During the preceeding years, National Night Out had been held at the local sub-stations throughout the city. They were intended to be implemented through community involvement but were actually planned, directed, and implemented by the Police Service Officers, (P.S.O.), a civilian assistant position within the organization. The event of 1991, for the same sub-station had witnessed several problems. The majority of the residents residing within the service area of the sub-station were accustomed to receiving public assistance and expected to continue to do so. Their perception appeared to be that they felt no reason to contribute anything to the betterment of the whole and that they were entitled to receive but not provide. Minor distubances occured due to not enough ballons or hot dogs for everyone that attended, yet none of the residents assisted in the planning and implementation of the event. All of the items provided to the participants had been obtained through local donations.

For the National Night Out event of 1992, we were going to ensure that the problems of the past did not repeat themselves. In each of the two areas, the neighborhoods surrounding the sub-station and the park, the sector officers contacted the residents in May of 1992. The residents were informed about National Night Out and what

avenues were available to them for assistance from our organization, and that we would serve only as facilitators. By the date of the event, August 1992, the persons residing in the area serviced by the community police sub-station had not planned any activities, with no event being held. Those persons residing in the area of the park had planned a neighborhood picnic with approximately seventy-five (75) to one hundred (100) persons attending. The residents had sought and obtained hotdogs and drinks through donations. They served the donated items along with assorted pastries and other food items, provided by the residents. Adults socialized with each other while the children played on the park's equipment. This event strengthened neighborhood bonds, which is the true purpose of National Night Out.

One year later the park continues to be a nice recreational area for the residents and again served as the meeting place for the 1993 National Night Out, event. The criminal element has not returned. Maintaining the improvements and gains made at the park, requires continued monitoring by the city's Park and Recreation, Sanitation, and Police departments along with local residents. Again, moving in the same direction means the least amount of resistance/problems in the future.

## GRAFFITI OBJECTIVE

The second objective concerned the problem of displayed gang graffiti within several sections of the district. This served as boundry markers for the gangs while creating urban blight, which reduces the property values.<sup>26</sup> This area of concern was a good place to apply the concepts of Chris Braiden and Reuben Greenberg on innovative police techniques.

Three shopping centers, four other business buildings, three city bridges, and all of the trash dumpsters within a thirty block section were to have the graffiti painted over. The team felt that this was a community problem and that it required their help.

The McAllen Police Department's juvenile detentions indicated that the offenders responsible for the graffiti were between the ages of 10 and 17 years.<sup>27</sup> Because of this, they would be the targeted group to provide the labor for correcting the problem.

Juvenile offenders that went through our Teen Court, were afforded the opportunity to provide labor in exchange for payment of fines. The fine was reduced in direct relationship to the number of hours worked. The rate of pay was set at minimum wage.

The Teen Court is a system that permits juvenile offenders charged with Class C Misdemeanor offenses to have a trial by their peers. Their peers hear the case, determine guilt, and if the offender is determined to be guilty, access punishment.

The Juvenile Court for the county was also contacted. The juvenile investigators requested that juvenile offenders found guilty of minor, non-violent infractions be assigned to community service. Community service was explained to the court that it would involve the painting over of graffiti.

Those assigned to the community work detail did not have to agree to community service. Each was informed that it was being offered in lieu of a paid fine or detention time and that they were free to refuse. Those that refused would be referred back to the appropriate court for their review and action.

Some might argue that this was forced labor since the offenders were not truly free to make another decision because of other legal actions should they refuse. The court systems had several options in sentencing the offenders and chose the one that best suited all concerned. For the majority of minors who are not gainfully employed or financially well off, this was an alternative method that permitted them to take responsibility while returning something positive back to their community. The action fosters responsibility for one's actions, which brings about maturity, while benefiting the community. It is a win/win situation.

All work (Means/Corrective Actions) was monitored by either the beat officer or by the P.S.O. assigned to the sub-station.

#### Means/Corrective Actions

1. All three shopping centers and the four other businesses were determined by the district that the graffiti needed to be removed.
  - a. Paint was donated by a local paint store and by one of the shopping centers that were to be repainted.

- b. Two shopping centers and one business were repainted by the assigned teenagers.
  - c. One of the business owners and one owner of a shopping center supplied the materials with the labor performed on their own.
  - d. Two businesses were not repainted. The business owners did not return telephone calls and were not able to be contacted in person. The failure of these owners to respond prompted another course of action that will be explained in means #4.
2. There were three city bridges that needed to be repainted. The bridges are single span made of concrete, steel and asphalt construction. The graffiti was along the concrete dividers that separate vehicle and pedestrian traffic. Each of the bridges are located near the same high school. The bridges had originally been painted white which served as a blank canvas for would be artists. It was decided that a dark grey color would be

used since most paints do not show well on grey. In addition, a paint was found that when correctly applied, graffiti could be removed with just water. The paint was expensive, five to six times more than normal, but it eliminated the need for future purchase and application of additional paint.

- a. The required paint was purchased by the police department.
- b. The bridges were then painted by the assigned teenagers.

3. All of the trash dumpsters within a thirty block section of one street needed to be repainted.

- a. The required paint was obtained from the city's Sanitation department.
- b. The dumpsters were then painted by the assigned teenagers.

4. Because of the lack of cooperation on the part of the two business owners it was determined that a city ordinance might be the answer, since voluntary compliance could not be obtained.

- a. The Chief of Police was informed that voluntary compliance could not be obtained and that a city ordinance might be necessary. The Chief agreed that the problem concerned the entire community and that a city ordinance would compel compliance.
- b. The Chief of Police referred the matter to the City Attorney's Office for consideration and possible action.
- c. The City Attorney recommended to the City Commission that a city ordinance was in order.
- d. The City Commission enacted a city ordinance.<sup>28</sup>

Each of the means implemented brought about a successful conclusion to the objective of removing the graffiti. One year later the areas that were repainted have yet to have graffiti reapplied. The teenagers that served as the work force began understanding the seriousness of the problem, as they were now faced with it's correction. The city ordinance has caused those that are not concerned about urban blight to be held responsible and accountable.



## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSION

The community has benefited from the actions previously described in a variety of ways. First, only a substantially small capital outlay was required for the purchase of materials. Second, the city's labor force was not taken away from their regular duties, as the work was performed by juvenile offenders. Third, the appearance of the community was improved which serves to foster favorable opinions about the city since the distractions have been reduced.

This paper has shown the impact that a police organization can have upon the community if Community Oriented Policing is implemented. The C.O.P. style incorporated two policing styles, Community Policing and Problem Oriented Policing. The benefits of this approach has brought about a variety of positive improvements for the community.

The positive improvements are supported in a variety of ways. The first was an increase to the tax base, normally required to pay for similar corrective actions from the past, was not required. In addition, the financial resources that were being wasted, through poor management of the city park, were corrected. Second, urban blight was substantially reduced which improved the image of the community.

The program improved the quality of life for the residents and others who visit the community. This goal of McAllen P.D. was accomplished. Finally, the need for police action in the areas described was reduced. This permits officers to dedicate their time in other areas of concern while utilizing the same amount of manpower.

The attainment of the goal for improving the quality of life would not have been possible without combining the policing concepts addressed in this paper. The goal was achieved because those involved in it's attainment were free to use all methods and resources available. Community Policing and Problem Oriented Policing, with assorted innovative policing techniques brought about the successful attainment of the department's and district's goal.

It is recommended that a police organization, concerned about improving the quality of life for their community, consider the lessons learned and actions taken by the McAllen Police Department's North East Patrol District, prior to implementing a similar program. The Community Oriented Policing style works.

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