THE BILL BLACKWOOD
LAW ENFORCEMENT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PROBLEM ORIENTED SYSTEM IN THE MIDLAND
POLICE DEPARTMENT

A Policy Research Project
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Professional Designation
Graduate, Management Institute

by
Richard Candelaria

Midland Police Department
Midland, Texas
August, 1996

#281

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to gather information which would assist in implementing a problem oriented policing policy in the Midland Police Department. The information gathered will add to officers knowledge and understanding of, use of, acceptance of, and problems associated with problem oriented policing.

A survey was conducted involving 148 sworn police officers. These findings show that only a limited number of police officers received POP training in 1995. The data suggest that generally officers feel they understand problem oriented policing. The data, however, showed only 42% of the respondents were able to correctly define the term " Problem Oriented Policing ". The findings indicate a need for ongoing training, better communications between officers and increased knowledge of available community resources.

Introduction

Problem oriented policing (P.O.P.) has been defined as a department wide strategy aimed at solving persistent community problems.

The intent of this research is to implement and develop a policy in problem oriented policing that will increase the overall interaction of the community and police department. The research will provide patrol officers, supervisors and administration with accurate and relevant information regarding P.O.P. The study will provide information on how officers can utilize their patrol time, reduce calls for service and improve attitudes.

The past three years the Midland Police Department has initiated a new philosophy in policing referred to POP. This strategy as developed by Goldstein(1990), suggest that police officers join forces with the community. The officer will deal with problems that underline the conditions that cause them. Midland Police Department needs to be more proactive instead of reactive to which communities are accustomed too.

Some of the problems or issues that are of concern in the past three years in problem oriented policing are;

- Not all officers have the proper training in how POP is use,

1

its advantages and disadvantages.

- Encouraging all patrol officers to utilize the SARA model as guideline in the decision making process.

- Motivation, getting the officers involved in POP, not only from the officers, but also the support from the supervisor and command level.

Problem oriented policing presents an alternative approach to policing that has gained attention in recent years. It enables police agencies to be more effective. Problem oriented policing offers police agencies a model by addressing the underlying conditions that create crime and cause other problems of concern in the community. A combination of patrol officers experience and training officers are able to study problems and develop creative solutions. Officers involved in P.O.P. have expressed greater job satisfaction and a higher level of interest in their work (Eck and Spelman 1987).

This research is conducted primarily to benefit the Midland Police Department. However, the results of the research can be useful to other agencies that use P.O.P. The results of this study will be presented to the department heads of the Midland Police Department. After the research is reviewed by the department an established policy will be submitted to the Chief of Police for

final approval and implementation. The methodology used during the research will be preserved and used to periodically review the policy.

There are several sources of information that will be used for the research. A review of current P.O.P. literature from appropriated books and journals, an internal study done by the Midland Police Department on the knowledge and understanding of POP, and a survey conducted on how other departments similar to size and configuration of the Midland Police Department are managing the concerns of P.O.P.

A review of all the information gathered will provide several essential, or at least common elements of an effective problem oriented policing policy.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The origin of the modern municipal police department in the British-American tradition can be traced back to 1829, when Sir Robert Peel established the London Metropolitan Police. When the London Metropolitan Police was formed, Peel set a number of principals. One of the principals could be considered the foundation for community policing: "the police are the public and the public are the police" (Braiden 1992). The police have lost sight of this relationship as the central organizing concept for

3

police service. In the early 1900's the separation of the police from the community began. Police officers were assigned to rotating shifts and moved from one geographical location to another in order to eliminate corruption (Bocklet, 1989).

In 1960 the public began to protest discrimatory and arbitrary police actions. Many police administrators acknowledged the importance of controlling discretion (Brown, 1989). In 1960's and 1970's researchers and police administrators tried to find ways to prevent abuses, while granting line officers the decision making authority needed to get the job done (Fogelson, 1977). Management instituted a centralized control policy, designed to comply with standard operating procedures and to encourage professionalism and impartiality.

Societies have changed dramatically in the past century though the functions of the police have remained basically the same. The problem is that the modernization of society and the problems associated with change have created a public demand for change in the way the police do their job. The public is demanding police departments to be more responsive to the needs of the community (Reid, 1993).

Changes in policing have been slow. The police have evolved from being a night watch, responsible for being vigilant of certain

buildings to crime fighters charged with solving crimes. Most police are reactive; that is, the police respond to a crime after it has occurred. This manner of responding to calls focuses on the incident after the fact, not on the conditions or the cause of the incident (LaGrange, 1993).

Policing is dominated by a work style that may be called "incident-driven". Incident-driven policing is a set of work habits, standard operating procedures and management practices that guides the activities and the perceptions and attitudes of the police officers who practice it. Nevertheless, research conducted over the last twenty years shows that incident-driven policing is a severely limited means of controlling crime and meeting the demands of the public (Bocklet, 1989).

According to Herman Goldstein, in the past three decades, policing has received more attention than in all the previous years of organized police service. Goldstein attributes this to openness within the field, a greater willingness to critique police work, to support research, to experiment, and to debate more freely the merits of new proposals for change. At the same time, the police has been criticized for their inability to accept that traditional police methods are ineffective (Goldstein, 1990). In 1979, Goldstein developed and advanced the concept of Problem Oriented

5

Policing which encourages police to begin thinking differently about their purpose. Goldstein suggested that problem resolution constituted the true, substantive work of policing and advocated that police identify and address root causes of problems that lead to repeat calls for service. POP required a move from a reactive, incident oriented stance to one that actively addresses the problems that continually drained police resources (Goldstein, 1979).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE OR PRACTICE

Survey's were mailed to various police agencies that are involved in problem oriented policing. The survey asked questions concerning the effects of problem oriented policing within the departments. Only one department responded to the survey. The department was Newport News Virginia Police Department and they responded by sending a copy of their policy.

In addition there was an internal study conducted by the Midland Police Department asking question about the officers knowledge and understanding of the principles of P.O.P. In addition, officers were asked their opinion about accepting P.O.P. as a viable policing technique, and to identify problems in the implemention of P.O.P. in the Mildand Police Department. A total population survey of 147 sworn officers of the Midland Police

6

Department was conducted in May, 1994. Participation in the survey was voluntary with all 147 police officers responding. The officers completed a six page survey solticing information on demographic characteristics and attitudes toward problem oriented policing. The survey in its original form is located in Appendix A. The information obtained from the group included age, sex, race, education level, length of time in law enforcement, length of time with the Midland Police Department, rank, and current job assignment. In addition officers were asked questions regarding their knowledge, understanding and use of problem oriented policing. Scaled questions were asked to measure perceived understanding of problem oriented policing, perceived usefulness of POP to the department; whether officers felt they were doing something worthwhile or felt satisfied when using problem oriented policing, and whether officers believed P.O.P. promoted a team effort. Frequency distributions on the variables used in this survey are presented in Appendices B, C, D, and E. By conducting the survey in the Midland Police Department, it was hoped that the data would provide better understanding of how officers might deal with the introduction of a modern policing philosophy (Urby, 1995).

In 1992, the decision was made by the Midland Chief of Police that the department would embrace the problem oriented policing

philosophy. The philosophy was growing in popularity across the country as communities voiced increased expectations of the police. The decision to implement P.O.P. was made with little research and no feasibility study. This is why the present study is valuable.

The Newport News Police Department has institutionalized a system to identify, analyze and resolve crime problems affecting the public (Newport News PD, 1993). The policy was developed so that problem solving becomes a routine part of police activities. This approach involves police personnel and citizens in the delivery police services consistent with organizational values. Their purpose of the policy was to provide guidelines for the use and administration of problem solving. The policy defines a problem as "a group of incidents, similar in one or more ways, that are of concern to the police and/ or the public" (Newport News PD, 1993). The problem solving process comprised of four stages; scanning, analysis, response and assessment,(SARA). The policy also provides a set of guidelines to be used in the analysis stage of problem solving. These guidelines are contained in a three part checklist; actors, incidents and responses. The policy outlines the procedures to be used from administration down to the police officer. Administration establishes a problem analysis advisory committee that can guide and support individual and group efforts in using

the problem solving process. The implementation of the policy is through bureau and division commanders who oversee the problems in their areas. This can be accomplished by officer initiated projects, citizen complaints, supervisors and the Crime Analysis Unit.

In comparing the survey done with the officers of the Midland Police Department and those that participated in the survey from outside, showed most of the Midland Police Department officers were familiar with POP. Some of the officers had a good knowledge and understanding of POP. It also indicated most officers participated in POP in one way or another. Officers also suggested they needed more training in P.O.P. and more support from their supervisors (Urby, 1995).

DISCUSSION OF RELEVANT ISSUES

One of the main issues is how to broaden the role of the individual police officer. As the public is making new demands, the police are finding it difficult to meet those demands with their current organizational structure. As the line officer responds to incidents or neighborhood problems, they need a great deal of discretion to handle serious situations.

As Midland Police Department began to draw up policies and procedures, it became clear just how little was known about police

effectiveness. Of the research that has been done it has shown the ineffectiveness of traditional and incident driven policing. Incident driven policing fails to motivate many police officers because it fails to present a limited opportunity for meaningful work, responsibility and feedback (Radlet and Carter, 1994).

In 1979, Goldstein developed what was called problem oriented policing. On developing the concept of P.O.P. it helped police agencies to be more effective. By using this concept the police officers would be indentifing what the real problem is. These problems were identified as "any group of similar incidents that the public expects the police to handle" (Goldstein, 1979). By collecting the data and analyzing the problem it would give police the most appropriate and effective way to respond. Police department structures need to change so officers can have more authority in problem solving. In order for officers to get away from traditional policing and become more pro-active, the officer needs to broaden his or her focus to addressing community concerns and view their job as problem solvers (Goldstein, 1990). Officers need to monitor calls for service to see if two or more recurring incidents exist where problem solving would be effective. Officers need to work hand in hand with the community where these problems are occurring so a solution can be found. If the recurring problem

can be solved, it will allow the officer to be available for other call for service.

In 1987 the SARA model was introduced to police officers. This model guides officers through a decision making process. The SARA acronym stands for;

S= Scanning: involves looking for and identify problems and identifying problems and bring them to attention of a supervisor;

A= Analysis: police officer ask questions about who, what, why, and how;

R= Response: a tailor made solution is chosen that addresses the problem;

A= Assessment: insure that original problem was addressed (Eck and Spelman 1987).

By using the SARA model in problem solving the organization gives officers more leeway, and time for problem solving. This promotes interaction between officers.

The cost to implement P.O.P. in the Midland Police Department will be minimal. By using P.O.P. during normal working hours city government will not need to increase salaries or equipment. Training on P.O.P. should be given to all officers in the Midland Police Department, including administrators and supervisors. The

training should be scheduled during normal working hours, to eliminate paying overtime to officers who are off duty. By training all officers on P.O.P. they will be better able to solve recurring problems in the area they patrol, decrease the number of calls, and reduce crime.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this research is to assist the implementation of a problem oriented policing system within the Midland Police Department. This research will provide the officers and administrators with accurate and relevant information regarding the implementation of problem oriented policing. It will also help the Midland Police Department in developing a workable policy that can reduce calls for service and improve the attitudes of officers by getting them involved in P.O.P.

The realization that the police have become alienated from the public, and that quick response and preventive patrol have little affect on crime, prompted research to address the isolation and ineffectiveness of the present traditional model of policing. The research has revealed that the officer needs to interact with the citizens. The philosophies of P.O.P. have identified specific goals and concerns to bring police officers close to community. The P.O.P officer will project a positive image while getting involved in

12

problem solving to better enhance the quality of life for all citizens. This concept of P.O.P. will be the thing of the future for all police agencies. It addresses many aspects of how to assist the community in solving problems and to creat a good atmosphere for the police and public. With the help of the public, the police will project that image and confidence that some control of crime in our society is possible.

The most important recommendation is for the Midland Police Department to consider the implementation of P.O.P. Once the decision is made to implement P.O.P., training should be the next issue. Officers should learn that P.O.P. and traditional policing each contribute to crime reduction. The best way to insure officers acknowledge on P.O.P. is to continue with annual or semi-annual training.

Another factor to consider is communications. Officers should get together during working hours, in the same beat, and discuss problem areas where P.O.P. could be applied. Officers who use P.O.P. should be used as examples to motivate and assist other officers. Accomplishments should be showcased to other officers as well as the community through the use of the media.

The public is demanding more accountability from the police. P.O.P. is a philosophy that promotes a team effort between the

public and the police. The most important thing police must take is the initiative and demonstrate to the public compassion, caring, and concern of the community's needs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bocklet, Richard. Problem Oriented Police. New York: Crowell, 1989.

Brown, Michael K. Working the Street: Police Discretion and the

    Dilemmas of Reform. New York: Russell Sage Foundation,

1989.

Braiden, Chris. "Enriching Traditional Police Roles". Police

    Management Issues and Perspectives. Washington D.C.:

Police   Executive Research Forum, 1992.

Cordner, G.W.. Fear of crime and the police. Chicago: Journal of

    Police Science and Administration, 1986.

Earle, Howard H. Police Community Relations: Crisis in our time.

    1994.

Eck, J.E. and Spelman, W.. Problem Solving: Problem Oriented

    Policing in Newport News. Virginia: PERF, 1987.

Fogelson, Robert M.. Big City Police. Massachusetts: Howard

    University Press, 1977.

Frederickson, H.G.. "On organizations of the future." California:

    Sage Professional Paper in Administration and Policy Studies,

    1973.

Goldstein, Herman. Problem Oriented Policing. New York: McGraw-

    Hill, 1990.

Greenberg, R.. Let's take back the streets. Chicago: Contemporary,

1989.

Geller, William A. and Swanger, Guy. " Managing Innovation in

   Policing": The Untapped Potential of the Middle Manager.

   Washington: PERF, 1995.

Hewitt, William H. and Newman, Charles C.. Police Community

   Relations an Anthology and Bibliography. Boston, 1970.

Kelling, G.L., et al., ed. The Kansas City Prevention Patrol.

   Kansas City; 1974.

LaGrange, R.L.. Policing American Society. Chicago: Nelson-Hall,

   1993.

Murphy, P.V.. Perspective: The Patrol Function. Washington: FBI Law

   Enforcement Bulletin, 1991.

Newport News Police Department. Problem Oriented Policing.

Virginia: Policy and Procedure, 1993.

"Pros and Cons of Community Policing." Editorial. Texas Police

Journal July 1995, sec. 2: 5.

Reid, S.T.. Crime and Criminology. Ft. Worth, 1993.

Rosenbaum, Dennis P.. Challenge of Community Policing. Arizona,

   1994.

Radlet, Louis A. and Carter, David L.. The Police and The

Community. New York: MacMillan College Publishing Co., 1994.

Toch, Hans and Grant, J. Douglas. Police as Problem Solvers. New

York and London: Plenum: 1991.

Urby, J.. <u>Survey of Officers Knowledge and Attitudes about P.O.P.</u>.

Midland, Texas: Midland Police Department, 1995.

Wilson, J.Q.. "The Police and Neighborhood Safety." <u>Atlantic

Monthly</u> March 1982: 29-38.

APPENDIX A

14

PROBLEM ORIENTED POLICING
SURVEY

The purpose of this survey is to evaluate the training and use of problem oriented policing in the Midland Police Department. The results may be used to formulate changes to the current training curriculum. Your responses will be confidential.

Instructions: Please mark an **X** in the box that corresponds with your response. On those questions which require an explanation, please take your time and write legibly. Thank you.

1.   Have you ever been trained in **P**roblem **O**riented **P**olicing (POP)?

      [ ] Yes
      [ ] No

           If yes, what type of training did you receive? (mark an X on as many as apply)

           [ ] A.   Police Academy (Rookie School)
           [ ] B.   In-Service Training
           [ ] C.   Supervisory Instruction
           [ ] D.   Self Training (explain):_____

                 _____

                 _____

           [ ] E.   Other (explain):_____

                 _____

                 _____

2.   Do you think the department has provided adequate POP training?

      [ ] Yes
      [ ] No

      Explain:_____

      _____

      _____

3.   How well do you understand POP?

      [ ] A.   Very well
      [ ] B.   Well
      [ ] C.   Not very well
      [ ] D.   Not at all

4.   Have you ever used POP?

      [ ]   Yes
      [ ]   No

      If yes, describe one of the situations in which POP was used and the steps you
      followed.

      POP Project: _____

      step _____

      _____

      step _____

      _____

      step _____

      _____

      step _____

      _____

      step _____

      _____

5.   How many times in the past year have you used POP?

      [ ]   A.   10 or more   List projects:_____
      [ ]   B.   7 to 9
      [ ]   C.   4 to 6   _____
      [ ]   D.   1 to 3
      [ ]   E.   Not at all   _____

6.   In your own words, explain POP.

      _____

      _____

      _____

      _____

      _____

      _____

      _____

7.   POP is useful to **ME** as a policing technique.

      [ ] A. Strongly agree
      [ ] B. Agree
      [ ] C. Disagree
      [ ] D. Strongly disagree

8.   POP is useful for the Midland Police Department.

      [ ] A. Strongly agree
      [ ] B. Agree
      [ ] C. Disagree
      [ ] D. Strongly disagree

9.   Which of the following do you believe are problems associated with POP?   (mark an X
      on as many as apply)

      [ ] A. The training is too complex and difficult to understand.
      [ ] B. POP is designed to replace traditional policing.
      [ ] C. Management does not reward the use of POP.
      [ ] D. It is not included as part of our yearly evaluation.
      [ ] E. It requires too much work to use.
      [ ] F. Some officers resent it when I use POP.
      [ ] G. If there are other problems, please specify:_____

            _____

            _____

            _____

10.   At what point should an officer **FIRST** consider using POP? (mark only one)

      [ ] A. While en route to a call
      [ ] B. While on scene
      [ ] C. At briefing the following day or during other formal meeting
      [ ] D. At informal meetings (e.g., lunch, breaks, etc.)
      [ ] E. Some other time (explain): _____

            _____

            _____

            _____

11. Have you personal knowledge of any other officers using POP?

[   ]   Yes
[   ]   No

If yes, describe:

      when was the project: month _____ year _____

      who was involved: _____

      _____

      what was the project: _____

      _____

      _____

      _____

      where did it take place:_____

      _____

12. What do you believe would help you to improve the use of POP within your department?
(mark an X on as many as apply)

[   ]   A.   Management support
[   ]   B.   Training
[   ]   C.   More time to problem solve
[   ]   D.   More knowledge of available community resources (eg., Zoning,
            Health Dept., Code Enforcement, etc.)
[   ]   E.   Other; please specify:_____

13. Do you believe the administration of the Midland Police Department can improve the
use of POP?

[   ]   Yes
[   ]   No

Explain why._____

_____

_____

_____

_____

14. When using POP, I feel I am really doing something worthwhile.

   [ ] A.   Strongly agree
   [ ] B.   Agree
   [ ] C.   Disagree
   [ ] D.   Strongly disagree

15. When I use POP I feel more satisfied with my work than when I use methods which I used before learning about POP.

   [ ] A.   Strongly agree
   [ ] B.   Agree
   [ ] C.   Disagree
   [ ] D.   Strongly disagree

16. The use of POP promotes a team effort within the department.

   [ ] A.   Strongly agree
   [ ] B.   Agree
   [ ] C.   Disagree
   [ ] D.   Strongly disagree

17. Do you feel the department is applying too much pressure on the officers to use POP?

   [ ] Yes
   [ ] No

   Explain: _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

THIS INFORMATION WILL BE USED FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES ONLY:

18. Age: _____

19. Sex:

     [ ] Male
     [ ] Female

20. Race:

     [ ] A. White
     [ ] B. Black
     [ ] C. Hispanic
     [ ] D. Other (specify): _____

21. Education level:

     [ ] A. High School
     [ ] B. Some College
     [ ] C. Associate Degree
     [ ] D. Bachelors Degree
     [ ] E. Graduate Degree

22. Length of time in law enforcement:

     [ ] A. Less than 2 years
     [ ] B. 2 to 6 years
     [ ] C. 7 to 10 years
     [ ] D. 11 to 15 years
     [ ] E. 16 to 20 years
     [ ] F. Over 20 years

23. Length of time with the Midland Police Department:

     [ ] A. Less than 2 years
     [ ] B. 2 to 6 years
     [ ] C. 7 to 10 years
     [ ] D. 11 to 15 years
     [ ] E. 16 to 20 years
     [ ] F. Over 20 years

24. Rank:

     [ ] A. Management (Chief/Deputy Chief)
     [ ] B. Mid-Management (Lieutenant)
     [ ] C. First-Line Supervisor (Sergeant)
     [ ] D. Line Officer (Detective/Patrol//DARE/Crime Prevention/Others)

25. Current job assignment:

     [ ] A. Administrative Bureau
     [ ] B. Field Operations Bureau
     [ ] C. Investigative Services Bureau
     [ ] D. Support Services Bureau

Appendix B

Responses To Questions Regarding Training

Training Questions	Responses			
	Yes		No	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Have You Ever Been Trained In POP?	115	79	31	21
If Yes, What Type Of Training Did You Receive? (Mark An X On As Many As Apply)				
Police Academy	11	8	135	92
In-Service Training	97	66	49	34
Supervisory Instruction	22	15	124	85
Self Training	21	14	125	86
Other	9	6	137	94
Do You Think The Department Has Provided Adequate POP Training?	77	56	61	44

	Very Well		Well		Not Very Well		Not At All	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
How Well Do You Understand POP?	18	12	100	69	24	16	4	3

Appendix B (Continued)

	Yes		No	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
In Your Own Words, Explain POP.	51	42	69	58

At What Point Should
An Officer First
Consider Using POP?
Mark Only One)

	Freq.	%
While En Route to a Call	15	11
While On Scene	57	40
At Briefing The Next Day	12	8
At Informal Meetings	18	13
At Any Time	6	4
When Problem Is Identified	9	6
Other	26	18

Appendix *C*

<u>Responses To Questions Regarding The Use Of POP</u>

Use Of POP Questions	Responses			
	Yes		No	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Have You Ever Used POP?	74	52	68	48
If Yes, Were The Officers Able To Describe A POP Project?	26	39	40	61
Have You Any Personal Knowledge Of Any Other Officers Using POP?	107	73	39	27
If Yes, Were The Officers Able To Describe A POP Project?	46	50	47	50

Appendix D

<u>Responses To Questions Regarding The Acceptance Of POP</u>

Acceptance Of POP Questions   Responses

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
POP Is Useful To ME As A Policing Technique.	25	17	101	70	15	10	3	2
POP Is Useful To The Midland Police Department.	30	21	96	67	14	10	3	2
When Using POP I Feel I Am Really Doing Something Worthwhile.	25	19	91	68	16	12	1	1
When I Use POP I Feel More Satisfied With My Work Than When I Use Methods I Used Before Learning About POP.	20	16	60	48	41	33	4	3

Appendix E

Responses To Questions Regarding Perceived
Problems Implementing POP

Problem Implementing POP	Responses	
	Freq.	%
Which Of The Following Do You Believe Are Problems Associated With POP? (Mark An X On As Many As Apply)		
Training Is Complex And Difficult To Understand	5	3
POP Is Designed To Replace Traditional Policing	44	31
Management Does Not Reward The Use Of POP	26	19
It Is Not Included In Yearly Evaluations	20	14
It Requires Too Much Work To Use	15	11
Some Officer Resent It When I Use POP	49	35
Officers Listed Other Problems	59	42
What Do You Believe Would Help You To Improve The Use Of POP Within Your Department? (Mark An X On As Many As Apply)		
Management Support	33	23
Training	70	48
Time To Problem Solve	67	45
Knowledge Of Available Community Resources	88	60
Some Other Assistance	31	21