

LAW ENFORCEMENT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

A DETAILED WORK PLAN FOR A STAFFING ANALYSIS OF  
THE SNYDER POLICE DEPARTMENT

A LEARNING CONTRACT  
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
MODULE I

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION..... 1

CURRENT STAFF..... 2

JOB DESCRIPTIONS..... 3

    Chief of Police..... 3

    Police Lieutenant..... 4

    Police Sergeant..... 4

    Police Patrolman..... 5

    Dispatcher..... 5

    Animal Warden..... 6

    School Crossing Guard..... 6

WORK SCHEDULE..... 6

STAFFING MODELS..... 8

IDENTIFY AND INVENTORY FUNCTIONS  
PERFORMED BY THE POLICE DEPARTMENT..... 10

    Patrol..... 10

    Investigations..... 11

    Animal Control..... 11

    Dispatch..... 11

    School Crossing Guard..... 11

TIME REQUIREMENTS..... 12

PERSONNEL AVAILABILITY..... 12

    Employee with less than 10 years service..... 12

    Employee with more than 10 years service..... 12

    School Crossing Guard..... 13

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS..... 13

    Patrol..... 13

    Response time..... 13

    Priority of calls..... 14

PROCEDURE FOR STAFFING ANALYSIS..... 14

CONCLUSION..... 16

END NOTES..... 17

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 18

A DETAILED WORK PLAN FOR A STAFFING ANALYSIS OF  
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INTRODUCTION

The major responsibility of the Snyder Police Department is to patrol city streets, respond to emergency calls from citizens, and investigate criminal offenses and complaints. The facts are that small cities are not all alike, yet city councils and citizens expect "full" police service the same as provided in larger cities.<sup>1</sup>

In September 1989, when the fiscal year closed, the Snyder Police Department had received more than 26,730 phone calls into the dispatch office. Of these calls, officers were dispatched 11,091 times. To meet this demand, a police agency, large or small, should be properly staffed. Organizing a small police department is probably the most difficult task confronting a chief of police. Organizational theories seem to defy application, yet the tendency is to look to the textbooks, professional associations, or state police officer commissions for "boiler plate" answers.<sup>2</sup>

Cities with populations up to 25,000 normally have from 5 to 45 personnel, with a minimum of 12 to 15 officers. Cities from 25,000 to 50,000 will have from 45 to 120

personnel for a reasonable capability for providing adequate 24-hour service.<sup>3</sup> Snyder's estimated population is 14,000.

#### CURRENT STAFF

The Snyder Police Department is currently staffed with a total of 27 personnel. Of this staff, 16 are certified police officers. The remaining 11 civilian personnel are charged with the responsibility of animal warden, dispatchers, and school crossing guards . The Snyder Police Department is structured in the following manner:

Chief of Police	1
Lieutenant	1
Sergeant	5
Officer In Charge	3
Patrolman	6
Dispatcher	4
Animal Warden	1
School Crossing Guard	6

Past experience has demonstrated shortages of personnel. This shortage is created by a number of events. The most repeated incident would be employees absent from his/her duty for one or more shifts. To remedy this problem on short notice, a patrolman will usually fill this vacancy. Legal constraints and job descriptions, for the most part, dictate who can fill in a vacancy. Basically, all field officers are "generalists" in small departments with responsibility for performing all types of police duties-thus a team approach prevails.<sup>4</sup> However, when officers are used to fill vacancies created by civilian personnel, it hinders the team concept and affects moral. Officers are employed to be police officers,

not dispatchers or dog catchers; therefore, morale can suffer if they are assigned to such duties for extended periods.

In the early 1980s, the City of Snyder developed a management tool known as the "Job Classification and Compensation Plan". All jobs performed by civil servants were identified and classified under "Job Descriptions". This not only aided management, but helped define each employee's role.

## JOB DESCRIPTIONS

### Chief of Police

The police chief should be free from day-to-day operational issues, as feasible. It is his job to see that the department is well-managed, but not to manage it except in times of crises or disasters. The chief of police should be free to spend most of his time in communications with the citizens of the city, and coordination with municipal officials. He should periodically meet with every field group. His emphases should include community interaction, long-range plans, research and university liaison, policy issues, establishing a clear sense of direction, endowment liaison, leadership for setting the course toward organizational goals, oversight of operations, and the maintenance of integrity throughout.<sup>5</sup>

### Desirable Education and Experience

Bachelor's degree in Law Enforcement or closely related field; advanced certification; seven to ten years progressively responsible experience which includes supervisory or management positions.

### Police Lieutenant

A Police Lieutenant holds senior level responsibility for Investigation, Detective and/or Juvenile activities. Tasks performed include:

1. Conducts field investigations and prepares report on same.
2. Responds to calls for criminal investigation and aid.
3. Provides technical expertise in criminal investigations.
4. Conducts public relations work.
5. Enforces all laws and ordinances.
6. Performs other duties as required.

#### Desirable Education and Experience

High school diploma or equivalent with intermediate certification as a law enforcement officer; three years of progressively responsible work as a Police Officer or Police Sergeant, knowledge of criminal law, investigation and crime prevention methods.

### Police Sergeant

A Police Sergeant holds supervisory level responsibility for providing leadership and participating in the work of police officers in patrol or specialized police work. Tasks performed include:

1. Assigns and supervises the work of police officers engaged in patrol.
2. Instructs subordinates in police work.
3. Prepares and reviews reports in matters under his jurisdiction.
4. Has shift responsibilities for receiving and releasing prisoners.
5. Conducts specialized police work as assigned.
6. Performs other duties as required.

#### Desirable Education and Experience

High school diploma or equivalent with intermediate certification as a law enforcement

officer; two years as a Patrolman, preferably as officer in charge of a shift; knowledge of criminal law, investigation and crime prevention methods.

#### Police Patrolman

Patrolmen hold responsibility for general patrol duties, preliminary investigations, and traffic control. Tasks performed include:

1. Patrols an area to direct traffic and enforce traffic regulations.
2. Answers calls and complaints involving misdemeanors and felonies.
3. Secures the scene of crimes, conducts investigations and makes arrests.
4. Gives advice concerning laws and ordinances.
5. Testifies in Court.
6. Performs other duties as required.

#### Desirable Education and Experience

High school diploma or equivalent with basic certificate as law enforcement officer; no experience for probationary Patrolman, knowledge of police methods and laws.

#### Dispatcher

A Dispatcher is responsible for operating base radio equipment to transmit information and messages regarding public safety operations. Tasks performed include:

1. Operates base radio and maintains contact with mobil unit.
2. Receives public requests and transmits messages in response to requests.
3. Logs information received from various sources.
4. Monitors activities of other agencies.
5. Types reports and informational material, files data and materials.
6. Performs other duties as required.

### Desirable Education and Experience

High school diploma or equivalent; training in operating police radios in technical school or on-the-job-training.

### Animal Warden

An Animal Warden is responsible for the enforcement of city ordinances pertaining to leash laws. Tasks performed include:

1. Picks up stray animals.
2. Removes animal carcasses from roadways.
3. Investigates animal bites.
4. Responds to citizen complaints concerning animals.

### Desirable Education and Experience

High school diploma or equivalent.

### School Crossing Guard

A School Crossing Guard is responsible for protecting school children at crossings. Tasks performed include:

1. Halts traffic by hand signal.
2. Conducts children safely across the street.
3. Signals for traffic to resume.
4. Reports loiterers to police.
5. Reports license numbers of traffic violators.
6. Checks area for safety hazards.

### Desirable Education and Experience

No specific education required; no experience required.<sup>6</sup>

### WORK SCHEDULE

In order to provide "round the clock" service, all law enforcement agencies must operate within a schedule. Work



schedules used by law enforcement agencies reflect their individual work load patterns, local traditions, and specific management objectives. No two organizations are exactly alike; nor their needs; nor their goals. As a result, it is impossible to determine the most effective schedule for all police agencies, or even ideal types of schedules for agencies of varying responsibilities or size.<sup>7</sup> All police agencies use work schedules to provide adequate staffing levels, proper supervision, and an effective patrol force.<sup>8</sup>

Most would agree that an effective work schedule can produce:

- .reduced sick leave,
- .increased incentive to work,
- .less wasted effort,
- .more efficient use of equipment,
- .reduced overtime,
- .increased public service with consequent improved community relations,
- .more leisure time,
- .higher morale, and
- .enhanced recruitment capabilities.<sup>9</sup>

The Snyder Police Department currently uses the fixed days off schedule. The following are some of the advantages and disadvantages as cited by William Stenzel.

#### Advantages

- .seven-day coverage.
- .proportional staffing levels.
- .weekly bracket cycles.
- .fixed days off.
- .simplicity of design.

#### Disadvantages

- .lack of schedule equity.
- .difficulty of use in rotating multishift schedules.<sup>10</sup>

After looking at several different schedules, the current schedule of fixed days off best serves the police department and the City of Snyder. With this schedule the city is able to provide 7-day 24-hour coverage for the citizens. The employees of the police department are satisfied with the schedule which affords ample time off and an opportunity to fulfill long-rang goals. To counter the disadvantages, "lack of schedule equity," officers are given an opportunity to change days off which they believe is fair and satisfactory to each individual. As for the disadvantage of "difficulty of use in rotating schedules," we simply do not rotate shifts. However, if two officers wish to change shifts, this is usually permitted.

#### STAFFING MODELS

After reviewing numerous publications concerning the methods of manpower allocation, and conducting a phone survey of cities comparable to Snyder, the methods examined fell mainly into two categories: 1) the primarily manual methods which used a limited number of factors and parameters and very simple formulas to determine manpower needs, and 2) computer models, often based on queuing theory.<sup>11</sup>

The Snyder Police Department has considered using a computer model. However, as stated in Patrol Deployment, careful forethought is required by a police department before it decides to use the computer approach. A key consideration

is whether the department has the technically qualified staff, or can acquire the staff, to run the model.<sup>12</sup>

The chief's of police in area cities were contacted in a phone survey to determine their staffing methods and level. In order to make a comparison of the Snyder Police Department to other cities, a standard method of officers per 1,000 inhabitants was used. The ratio of officers per 1,000 inhabitants is based on the city population and allotment of certified officers, which is reflected below:

Cities	Population	Staffing	Ratio
Andrews	13,000	14	1.0
Brownfield	10,500	14	1.3
Fort Stockton	9,000	10	1.1
Lamesa	11,000	16	1.4
Levelland	14,000	20	1.4
Snyder	14,000	16	1.1
Sweetwater	13,000	24	1.8

Of the cities surveyed, the average ratio is 1.3 officers per 1,000 inhabitants. Snyder would need to increase the staff by three officers to meet this average.

After discussing the staffing methods used by the chiefs, it is evident the economy is playing a major role in their ability to maintain their current staff.

Gary Buchanan, Fort Stockton chief of police, is the only chief using a formula to determine staffing needs. Chief Buchanan cited the 50-50 formula which he uses from the text, Local Government, Police Management. All other chiefs indicated they inherited the current staffing level and

maintain this level by justifying their needs based on historical data and calls for service.

Taking into consideration the size of Snyder and its geographic location, a manual model is best suited to local needs. Manpower requirements will be based on calls for service and average time spent on calls.

IDENTIFY AND INVENTORY FUNCTIONS PERFORMED  
BY THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Every department should be aware of what functions their agency is actually performing and the time spent to perform these functions. The Snyder Police Department has identified and labeled five areas for determining workload, patrol, investigation, animal control, dispatch, and school crossing. The five workload areas, along with associated tasks, are as follows:

Patrol

Administrative  
Answer burglar alarms  
Assist motorists  
Bank escorts  
Building checks  
Deliver emergency messages  
Funeral escorts  
Investigate accidents  
Investigate driving while intoxicated  
Investigate initial criminal complaints  
Issue citations  
Junk vehicle program  
Routine patrol  
Secure park rest rooms  
Vacation home checks  
Verbal warnings

Investigations

Crime prevention programs  
Follow-up on criminal offenses  
Investigate criminal offenses  
Juvenile investigations  
Narcotic investigations

Animal Control

Issue citations  
Investigate animal bites  
Investigate animal complaints  
Pick up animals at large  
Pick up dead animals  
Routine patrol  
Verbal warnings

Dispatch

Answer telephone  
    A. Ambulance after first ring  
    B. Assist sheriff department after 5:00 p.m. and weekends  
    C. Crime stoppers  
    D. Family violence on weekends  
    E. Monitor fire department calls  
    F. Police department  
File reports  
Handle dog pound fee and licensing  
Maintain petty cash fund  
Maintain recording equipment  
Monitor airport beacon  
Monitor burglar alarms  
Operate TLETS II equipment  
Prepare monthly police reports  
Prepare payroll  
Prepare Uniform Crime Reports  
Radio dispatch  
    A. Dispatch highway patrol  
    B. Dispatch police department  
    C. Dispatch part-time for ambulance  
    D. Dispatch part-time for sheriff department  
Search female prisoners  
Type police blotter  
Type reports

School Crossing Guard

Assist Pedestrians at Crosswalks

### TIME REQUIREMENTS

At the present, the Snyder Police Department does not have in place the required database or procedures to collect data to determine time spent on each of the functions performed. There is one exception to this condition. The school crossing guards are assigned 2 1/2 hours per school day (175 days per year), or 437.5 hours. When they cannot man their fixed post, an officer is dispatched to replace them.

### PERSONNEL AVAILABILITY

Working under ideal conditions, fully staffed by current allocations, the following identifies potential duty time for Snyder Police officers based upon a 40 hour work week.

#### Employee with less than 10 years service

	Hours
Gross annual hours per employee	2,080
Less time lost from duty:	
Holidays - 6 days	48
Vacation - 13 days	<u>104</u>
Total potential duty time	1,928

#### Employee with more than 10 years service

	Hours
Gross annual hours per employee	2,080
Less time lost from duty:	
Holidays - 6 days	48
Vacation - 18 days	<u>192</u>
Total potential duty time	1,888

School Crossing Guard

	Hours
Gross annual hours per employee	<u>438</u>
Total potential duty time	438

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Patrol

Current patrol practices should continue as they have in the past. The current structure that is in place has been to maintain a minimum of two patrolmen on duty around the clock with a dispatcher. This is the staffing level regardless of the workload on any shift or day of the week. There is one exception to this minimum of two patrolmen seven days a week requirement and that is on weekends. If a patrolman, or dispatcher, is absent from duty, only one patrolman is available for all calls, with no backup. It is recommended that no shift, regardless of the day of the week, operate with only one patrolman.

Response Time

To develop an average overall response time that is acceptable to the citizens, city council, and police department, the availability of the current staff will have to be computed. The Snyder Police Department's goal is an immediate response to all calls. This goal is acceptable and has become expected by those who call on the police department for service. However, this goal is increasingly difficult to

maintain due to increased calls for service and personnel shortages. To lessen the average response time, more staff may be needed. "This in turn allows more street time which is a policy decision which should be made by the chief of police in consultation with the city council and city manager or administrative officer."<sup>13</sup> With more street time the availability of an officer increases. This would enable the department to fulfill the goal of immediate response to all calls.

#### Priority of Calls

The priority of calls should be handled with the most life threatening occurrences first, and proceed down from that point. The dispatchers who normally receive this information and dispatch the calls should be trained and given the latitude to make these decisions.

#### PROCEDURE FOR STAFFING ANALYSIS

One of the first steps to take into consideration and to be implemented is a program designed to retrain the current staff of the Snyder Police Department. A retraining program with new departmental goals will help to eliminate most of the resistance to change that can be expected. In order to start a staffing analysis there will have to be more data which means more record keeping and accountability on each employees part. Once the employee understands the importance of his/her



role in helping collect the data needed to establish a working data base, the program will be off to a good start.

Collecting data can mean only one thing, more accurate record keeping. New forms will have to be drawn up to cover the activities of patrol, dispatch, investigation, and animal warden. These forms will need to be understandable and easy to complete. The forms with changes should not be introduced all at one time. However most of the data collected will come from a revision of the following:

- Call sheets
- Dispatcher activity reports
- Field interrogation cards
- General information reports
- Incident reports
- Investigator activity reports
- Officer daily activity reports
- Offence reports
- Radio logs

The data which will be gathered from these revised forms should include:

- Date
- Time call received
- Time call dispatched
- Time arrived
- Time call completed
- Type of call received
  - A. Priority 1 emergency
  - B. Priority 2 non emergency
  - C. Priority 3 call for service
  - D. Administrative
  - E. Routine patrol
- Job assignment
  - A. Routine duties
  - B. Overtime
  - C. Dispatch
  - D. Animal control

Once the data base has been established, using calls for service and average time to perform the task, a proper evaluation for staffing requirements will be determined.

#### CONCLUSION

The Snyder Police Department has attempted to maintain two officers on duty with a dispatcher at all times as the criteria for staffing. After reviewing numerous staffing methods, there are possibly as many different staffing models as there are police agencies. The city auditor of Portland, Oregon stated, we conclude that there is no definitive method or generally accepted standard for projecting staffing needs. Past practices nationally have attempted to justify personnel increases on factors such as staff to population ratios, increases in crime rates, and response times. Such methods are generally viewed as outmoded or at least of limited value in determining staffing levels.<sup>14</sup>

As of April 1987, there are indications that staffing levels should be determined by assessing public expectations, establishing agreed upon service levels, and determining staffing levels needed to accomplish service levels based on workload and performance standards.<sup>15</sup>

END NOTES

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3. Ibid., 68.
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