

Portsmouth, NH Police Department Organizational Review



Prepared by

The Public Safety Strategies Group

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Portsmouth, New Hampshire Police Department Organizational Review

Project Report

Prepared for:

The Portsmouth Police Commission

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Executive Summary

The following provides an overview of the Portsmouth, New Hampshire Police Department Organizational Review requested by the Portsmouth Police Commission.

Background

In March of 2011, the Portsmouth, New Hampshire Police Commission (the Commission) contracted with Public Safety Strategies Group LLC (PSSG) to review the operations of the Police Department. The Commission established a seven-member Steering Committee (the Committee) consisting of members of the Commission, police department, City Council, and community members that participated in the selection of PSSG, developed research questions and provided general oversight during the review.

The objective of this project was to review the operation of the department and make recommendations for the future of policing in Portsmouth.

About the City of Portsmouth

The City of Portsmouth is 16.8 square miles. Multiple roads, including Interstate 95, Route 1, Route 4/16 (Spaulding Turnpike), Route 1A, and Route 33, transect the community. Portsmouth frequently wins awards for being one of the best small cities in which to live.

The 2010 United States Census reports that there are 20,779 residents in the city. Despite the downturn in the economy nationally, Portsmouth has maintained its property values. The city has an AA+ bond rating and continues to invest in community development and infrastructure.

The walk-able downtown is vibrant with residents and tourists visiting downtown shops and restaurants. There are several historical properties, along with waterfront parks, that draw visitors to the city. Several hotels, with 1,713 overnight rooms, support tourists, business gatherings and social events. Special events, such as Market Square Day, air shows, road races, festivals and restaurant week are frequent and draw large crowds. There are 151 liquor licenses in the town, heavily concentrated in the downtown area.

About the Portsmouth Police Department

The Portsmouth Police Department has 62 full-time sworn members and 21 civilian members. Supervisors consist of the administration (chief and deputy chief), superior officers (captains and lieutenants) and first-line supervisors (sergeants). The patrol division has 33 officers inclusive of two canine officers. The detective division has nine

detectives with one officer from the detective division assigned as a School Resource Officer (SRO).

The department coordinates a Citizens Police Academy and participates in the Seacoast Emergency Response Team. It also has an explorer program, auxiliary program and honor guard.

The chief reports directly to the Commission who receives budget approval from the Council. The Commission holds meetings monthly to review operations and the budget.

The police station occupies one section of the municipal building. The facility has offices, training rooms, a dispatch center, a records office, administrative offices, locker rooms, a physical fitness room, an evidence room, a booking area and the Commission office.

The FY11 budget for the department was \$8,518,412¹ and the FY12 budget is \$8,438,675.

Methodology

PSSG conducted an extensive review of the police department through internal and external interviews, community and law enforcement surveys, ride-a-longs, data analysis, review of records, organizational charts, policy and procedures, and other material as presented by the department.

PSSG meetings with members of the police department, community members, civic leaders and town officials, along with data analysis, surveys, and review of department information informed the recommendations.

The report provides a comprehensive objective review of the Portsmouth Police Department, including the organizational design, capacity, capabilities and effectiveness of department operations.

The study approach ensured review of all information available and provided interview and survey opportunities to stakeholders.

The research conducted during the study revealed a variety of perceptions and opinions locally regarding the Portsmouth Police Department. The stakeholder input, along with the information gleaned from written material and direct observations, informed the research findings.

¹ The approved budget for the council was \$8,438,675, with the actual budget \$8,518,412 due to contractual obligations with funds derived from the collective bargaining contingency account.

The Commission and Committee generated several questions that they wanted the study to answer; they appear below in broad categories:

Operations

- What is the overall culture of the organization?
- Is the organizational structure the most effective for the department?
- Are the communication channels internally and externally effective?
- What is the status of the current strategic plan?
- Does the department's day-to-day operation reflect the mission of the organization?
- Are the policies and procedures up to date and enforced?
- Does the training reflect both the mandatory training for certification and the mission of the department?
- Does the training plan support the goals and objectives?
- Does the department have the proper equipment and facilities to be effective?
- Are grant programs effective?
- Is the budget appropriate for the operations?

Staffing and Crime Trends

- Do the department staffing levels and shift assignments match the crime trends?
- Is the current staffing level appropriate?
- What are the future staffing level requirements?
- Is the span of control appropriate?
- What is the current workload?
- What are the crime trends?

Community Satisfaction

- Is the community satisfied with the services of the police department?

Future of Policing

- What are the future needs within the department and community?
- Are there additional opportunities for regional services?

The following summarizes the steps PSSG completed during the study:

Interviews

The PSSG team conducted over 50 interviews with members of the Commission, police department, Town Council, City Manager, town department heads, community members, civic groups, members of the media and residents of the town.

Surveys

PSSG developed two surveys, one for distribution to the members of the police department, and one for members of the community. The Committee reviewed and approved the surveys.

Data Analysis

PSSG reviewed the calls for services/incident data for a five-year period from January 2006 – April 2011.

Department Records

The department supplied reports and internal documents for review during the study. Below is a representative list of materials provided by the department:

- Policies and procedures
- Training records
- Fleet information
- Budgets
- Grant information
- Strategic plan

In addition to the documents, the department assigned a member to act as a liaison to the project and answer any questions that arose during the study.

Comparison Community Review

At the request of the Committee, PSSG reviewed community and police data for a variety of communities that had either features or data similar to Portsmouth. Reviewing comparison community information allows for the development of general assumptions; however, specific conclusions are impossible, as the level of information required is not readily available. Each community has a varying level of data and information publicly available, and it is unrealistic that a true comparison can occur with limited data. In addition to the secondary research, PSSG conducted limited primary research as appropriate. PSSG cautions readers of the report that the study was on the City of Portsmouth, and it is impossible to gather all the required information unless a full study is also conducted on the comparison communities. Often people refer to ratios, or the “officer per 1,000” method of calculating staffing. PSSG, like many other consulting firms rejects this strategy for several reasons. Use of a ratio does not take into account the approach to policing, special enforcement strategies, community-based programming, use of civilian staffing, community demographics, tourism, industry and business located in the community and the geographic features of a community.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The Portsmouth Police Department is well run, well trained, professional, and has a high approval rating from community members. Morale of the department is high and there appears to be a great deal of organizational pride. Department members are competent at their jobs.

The recommendations of this report include many small changes to enhance the operation of the department along with the more significant reorganization strategies. Below is a list of areas reviewed during the study and the overall recommendations for each area.

Organizational Structure

- Reorganize the chain of command and structure of the department to create a flatter organization.
- Civilianize functions that do not require sworn personnel. These would include administration, training, front desk staffing, event planning and grant management, allowing sworn personnel to focus on activities that civilian personnel cannot perform.
- Maintain the current staffing (as of November 1, 2011) and reevaluate after the organizational changes are in place.
- Increase the number of uniform sergeants through attrition from those at the rank of captain and lieutenant.
- Move the lieutenant and officer in training to patrol functions² and replace with civilians to coordinate activities not requiring sworn status.

Organizational Culture

- Maintain the positive culture that exhibits pride in the organization.
- Officers assigned to details need to focus on the safety concerns of the work area and direct vehicle and pedestrian traffic in a professional and safe manner.
- Communication needs improvement with active participation from administration and department members.
- The department needs to renegotiate how officers bid for shifts. This will allow assignments of teams of officers to the same patrol area for an extended period. Staggered rotations will provide a consistent presence in the patrol area.
- Training and program investments need to align with community programming, officer safety as well as well protection of critical infrastructure.

Strategic Planning

- Update the current strategic plan ensuring input from department members at all levels. The department needs to create a plan detailed in scope and direction, has specific measures in place and meets the needs of the community and the department.

² Sworn officers will still provide training in specialized areas; only the management will be civilianized.

- Ensure there is strategic vision for community policing, crime prevention and community engagement.

Community Policing / Community Engagement

- To ensure efficient and effective operations, the department needs to use data to drive decision-making.
- The department needs to use proven strategies when developing programs.
- Programming needs to address community issues.
- Community engagement needs to occur at all levels of the department.

Website and Social Media

- Update the website.
- Ensure the website portrays department messages.
- Balance the content to include more general police services.
- Investigate a process for timelier updating and input from the department.

Policies and Procedures

- The department should conduct a yearly review of policies and procedures and update as needed.
- Department members should continue to receive updates on changes and the administration needs to continue to document receipt of the updates by each department member.
- New officers should continue to receive training on the policies and procedures.

Job Descriptions

- Updated job descriptions based on the revised organizational structure.

Dispatch

- Continue to staff the dispatch center with civilians.
- After the department restructures, review call volume and adjust staffing as needed.

Patrol

- Use data-driven strategies for deployment.
- Add additional sergeants to the patrol supervision.
- Put sergeants and lieutenants on a "5 and 2" schedule to match patrol.
- Make foot patrols a permanent function in the downtown area.
- Ensure traffic safety is a priority.
- Eliminate the "six" car, reassigning the staff to general patrol or into single backup cars.
- Make longer-term zone assignments.

Seacoast Emergency Response Team

- Maintain SERT involvement, but decrease the number of members over time.

School Resource Officer

- Revisit the partnership with the schools to include payment of the SRO position.
- Incorporate other members of the department into school-based programming.
- Investigate the potential of a 32-hour week position staffed by a retired officer.

Administrative Staff

- Hire an additional support staff person that will be cross-trained and provide backup for all records and business office functions.

Prosecution

- Maintain the current staffing level.
- Continue pre-trial negotiations when practical.
- Continue to apply for grant funding for the victim advocate while having a plan in place to maintain the position if grant funding is unavailable.

Facilities

- Make repairs as appropriate, such as repairing leaks and soundproofing.
- Reorganize space to ensure the space is used to its maximum capacity.

Equipment

- Continue to track vehicles and other equipment.
- Continue to invest in equipment to ensure technology is up to date.

Training

- Ensure all training focuses on state mandated training, training that assists with career development and training that contributes to the strategies and goals of the department.
- Determine the goals of the agency and review curriculum to align training with the department goals.

Budget

- Monitor the budget and reevaluate any further staff reductions after the department implements the recommendations.

Grants

- The department should continue to seek grants.
- Outside departments should help support ICAC³.

³ Federal funding supports staffing however there are indirect costs for which member communities of the task force should contribute.

Findings and Recommendations

A summary and recommendation for each area that PSSG reviewed appears below.

Department Organizational Structure

The department has too many supervisors⁴, given the number of sworn personnel. Supervisors consist of the administration (chief and deputy chief), superior officers (captains and lieutenants) and first-line supervisors (sergeants). While the department has reduced the number of police officer positions through budget cuts, the number of supervisors remains consistent. Based on the current staffing, the department needs to eliminate supervisors; reallocate positions to patrol; and then, after reorienting the focus of the department to community issues, reevaluate the number of patrol positions. There are complications related to reducing the number of supervisors through demotions; morale would decrease, and this step would require that the department lay off newer patrol officers. Given the amount of money, time and effort required to train an officer, the recent staff reductions and number of unfunded patrol positions, PSSG suggests eliminating the positions through attrition.

The deputy chief and one captain appear at the same level on the organizational chart, with both reporting to the chief of police. It is important that the reporting structure be streamlined, reflecting the appropriate chain of command.

Sworn personnel perform functions that a civilian can manage. For example, a captain currently handles grants, and another oversees special event planning;⁵ neither of these functions requires sworn status. Currently, there is a lieutenant and an officer assigned to training. Monitoring and scheduling training do not require sworn supervisors.

The span of control in detectives is too small with a captain, lieutenant and sergeant overseeing the detectives. The Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) unit has a sergeant overseeing two detectives. The sergeant also reviews ICAC cases from other police departments. A federal grant supports the salaries of the ICAC personnel; however, the structure of ICAC creates an anomaly on the organizational chart. The ICAC sergeant reports to a captain. The captain also oversees a lieutenant who supervises the detective sergeant. While the ICAC funding supports 25 percent of the captain's time, the structure is misaligned with the organizational chart.

⁴ The span of control in Portsmouth is narrow creating unnecessary layers of supervisors. In the aggregate, of the 62 sworn members, 18 are supervisors creating a 2.4:1 department member to supervisor ratio. This does not include civilians or part time staff. When inclusive of all member the ration is 3:1 department members to supervisor ratio.

⁵ The department feels strongly that a captain needs to attend special event planning meetings as the request comes from the office of the city manager. Changing the culture of this process requires acceptance from the city administration.

The department staffs the main desk and window with sworn personnel. This is not efficient, and the department should consider civilianizing this position.

The span of control in patrol is adequate, although supervision on the street level is not always present, as the sergeants often respond from the building rather than from the street.

Recommendations:

- Reorganize the chain of command and structure of the department to create a flatter organization.
- Civilianize functions that do not require sworn personnel. These would include administration, training, front desk staffing, event planning and grant management. This would allow sworn personnel to focus on activities that civilian personnel cannot perform.
- Maintain the current staffing (as of November 1, 2011) and reevaluate after the organizational changes are in place.
- Increase the number of uniform sergeants through attrition from those at the rank of captain and lieutenant.
- Move the lieutenant and officer-in-training to patrol functions (assigning officers to teach classes as needed).

Reorganization examples:

Table 1: Reorganization Examples⁶

Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
Maintain the position of deputy chief and eliminate the three captain positions, having one level of superior officers that command divisions within the department and report to the deputy chief.	Increase to two deputy chiefs, with one in command of operations and the other in command of support services, and eliminate the rank of captain. ⁷ Assign a lieutenant in command of detectives and patrol with sergeants as the first-line supervisor.	Maintain one deputy chief position and two captains, and eliminate the rank of lieutenant.

The reorganizational steps and civilianization will require negotiations with the union and, therefore, will need to take place over time. Implementation of these recommendations through reassignment of personnel and attrition will result in more officers on the street without additional hires. After the reorganization of the command staff and supervisors, the department should review staffing at the patrol level and redeploy as appropriate.

⁶ PSSG provides three examples on reorganization of the management functions. The department can choose many possible reconfigurations to facilitate the goal of reducing the number of managers.

⁷ Operations consist of patrol, detectives and specialized programming. Support services would consist of all other areas to include administration, dispatch, training, grants, fleet and facilities and other non-operational areas.

Department Culture

Organizations strive for a healthy and productive organizational culture as a means to increase productivity, growth, efficiency and effectiveness and to reduce employee turnover.

According to Schein,⁸ several key factors contribute to a healthy organization. This list, while not exhaustive, provides key indicators of a positive organization:

- Acceptance of and appreciation for diversity
- Regard for and fair treatment of each employee, as well as respect for each employee's contribution to the organization
- Employee pride and enthusiasm for the organization and the work performed
- Equal opportunity for each employee to realize their full potential within the organization
- Strong communication with all employees regarding policies and organizational issues
- Strong leaders with a strong sense of direction and purpose
- Ability to use innovation to meet demands
- Appropriate turnover rates
- Investment in learning, training and employee knowledge

Overall, the department has a positive organizational culture. Positive aspects of the department culture show in well-dressed, fit, professional and well-trained officers. The facility, although in need of repairs, is neat, clean and well equipped. The department is proud of its history and the display of positive artifacts throughout the department attests to this.

Negative aspects of the culture appear in the sense of entitlement portrayed by the recent flagger controversy surrounding outside details, and officers' lack of attention to duty while engaged in outside detail work.

Communication is an area also in need of improvement. An earlier surveys conducted by the department prior to this study and the results of the department survey implemented as part of the study point to issues with communication. While the administration believes that they do communicate with the rest of the department, it appears department members have not heard and internalized the information. Department members must be active in the communication process, participating as requested, reading department bulletins and memos, and providing feedback as appropriate.

⁸ Edgar Henry Schein (born 1928), a former professor at the MIT Sloan School of Management, has made a notable mark on the field of organizational development in many areas, including career development, group process consultation and organizational culture.

The bifurcated core missions of the department causes confusion and does not provide a clear path for service delivery focusing on the needs of the community. Bidding for shifts occurs quarterly; this process detracts from officers' becoming invested in supporting a particular neighborhood, which prevents long term problem solving. Another issue affecting the connection with the community is the time at which the department hired newer members. Thirty-six members of the department have joined since 2000. The national focus of policing, including federal grants, changed from community-based policing to homeland security affecting not only how those officers were trained but the focus of training throughout the department.. Deployment, training and emphasis on security are evident by the large number of participants in the Seacoast Area Response Team (SERT), rather than by community issues. While the administration of the department talks about community policing, the department adopts strategies that are supportive of a security focus, with limited programming and training related to community programs, which is not in line with the needs of Portsmouth.

Recommendations:

- Maintain the positive culture that exhibits pride in the organization.
- Officers assigned to details need to focus on the safety concerns of the work area and direct vehicle and pedestrian traffic in a professional and safe manner.
- Communication needs improvement, with active participation from administration and department members.
- The department needs to renegotiate how officers bid to allow assignments of teams of officers to the same patrol area for extended periods, with staggered personnel changes to provide a consistent presence in the patrol area 24 hours a day.
- Training and program investments need to align with community programming, rather than security.

Strategic Planning

At different times, the department states two very different core missions. In the strategic plan, the department expresses that community policing is the mission; however, during budget hearings the department stated that responding to calls for service would be the core mission, based on the budget and the number of unfilled positions. Department training records show that training does not reflect a community policing focus. The department recently cut community-based programming, including the foot patrols, traffic enforcement and the number of SROs.

The department's strategic plan is limited in scope, lacks specific measure and reads more like a vision statement than a strategic plan. Interviews revealed that the department members feel that the administration did not consult its officers in the

development of the strategic plan, and 80 percent of the department indicated they did not receive a copy of the strategic plan. The administration feels differently in that it did include department members in the process and that it provided a copy of the plan to every member. It is important for the department to determine why there are differing opinions and to create communication channels that are effective for administration of the officers

Recommendations:

- Update the current strategic plan, ensuring input from department members at all levels. The department needs to create a plan that is detailed in scope and direction, has specific measures in place and meets the needs of the community and the department.
- Ensure there is strategic vision for community policing, crime prevention and community engagement.

Community Policing/Community Engagement

The department has a limited strategic plan and, while there is reference to community policing and problem solving, there is not a problem-solving process articulated in the plan. The plan is general in nature and does not provide any data-driven strategies or strategies that address community-based issues. The strategic plan lacked measures, and the department did not implement many of the strategies.

There are important operational goals imbedded in the plan, such as providing outstanding service through a highly trained police department, valuing world-class leadership and cultivating a safe and healthy work environment; however, goals do not reflect the philosophy of community policing, but rather are steps that support community policing.

The department runs a Citizens Police Academy that appears to be a positive program, as does the involvement in Crime Stoppers, the Explorer program and the Child Passenger Safety Program. Department members also serve on a variety of community based boards and committees.

While the individual efforts of the department are positive, the department lacks an overall approach and framework; future efforts need to be structured using proven strategies and based on problems in the community. Attachment B provides an overview of Community Policing considerations described by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Recommendations:

- To ensure efficient and effective operations, the department needs to use data to drive decision-making.

- The department needs to use proven strategies when developing programs.
- Programming needs to address community issues.
- Community engagement needs to occur at all levels of the department.

Website and Social Media

A website is a tool for the department to use to communicate messages and portray its operations to the community. Social media is widely popular, how the department uses the tools needs to be well thought-out and tied to its mission.

The department website does not reflect a community policing effort. The site emphasizes specialty units but does not highlight general community services. Material on the site is out of date. A complication with the website is that the city owns and maintains the sites. Either the department needs a role in the management of the site, or they need to have a site that is linked to the main site but that can be maintained and updated on a regular basis.

Recommendations:

- Update the website.
- Ensure the website portrays department messages.
- Balance the content to include more general police services.
- Investigate a process for timelier updating and input from the department.

Policies and Procedures

In general, the policies and procedures are up to date. There is some variation in form and style; however, in general the department has well written policies. During department interviews members did not express concerns with the policies, nor did supervisors suggest that department members did not follow policy with any level of regularity.

Recommendations:

- The department should conduct a yearly review of policies and procedures and update as needed.
- Department members should continue to receive updates on changes, and the administration needs to continue to document receipt of the updates by each department member.
- New officers should continue to receive training on the policies and procedures.

Job Descriptions

The department has job descriptions for each department position. The department needs to update job descriptions to reflect current responsibilities. During the review of the job descriptions, the department needs to ensure the workflow is streamlined and duties appropriate for civilian staff no longer appear in the sworn job descriptions.

Recommendations:

- Updated job descriptions based on the revised organizational structure.

Dispatch

The department staffs the dispatch center with civilians, along with a civilian manager. The dispatch center appears well run and has reliable and up-to-date equipment. The civilian manager is up to date on technology and contributes to planning for purchases.

The department also dispatches for the fire department and, to a limited degree, the public works department; neither agency compensates the department for this role. While all funds dedicated to this function are city funds, the city needs to recognize that personnel at the police department perform outside functions for other city departments and are responsible for Code Red call outs for all city emergencies.

Members of dispatch expressed the need for an additional position, and the administration should continue to track call volume and consider this need in the future. As with the patrol staffing and budget, the administration must monitor the dispatch function and make adjustments based on increase of calls.

Recommendations:

- Continue to staff the dispatch center with civilians.
- After the department restructures, review call volume and adjust staffing as needed.

Patrol

The department has cut important areas of patrol, including downtown foot patrols and traffic officers. The department bases its traffic safety initiative on the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP). The STEP program focuses on changing behavior and decreasing risk-taking traffic safety behavior to decrease injuries and deaths caused by traffic crashes.

Current challenges such as decreased budgets, staffing and changing community expectations affect police deployment. Controlling crime is a primary concern for communities. Traffic safety, complaints about speeding cars and other unsafe behaviors normally top the list of community concerns as well. Efficient use of resources and

effective deployment strategies focusing on both traffic safety and crime is a strategy to combat decreasing budgets.

The use of Data-Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS), integrating local data on the location of crime and traffic violations contributes to community safety in a cost-effective manner. Mapping both issues provides a visual, data-driven tool that defines areas for enforcement activity. The dual approach of DDACTS drawing on the proven strategy of highly visible traffic enforcement and the knowledge that crime is often location-driven and involves the use of motor vehicles maximizes the resources of the department.

Patrol supervisors, sergeants and lieutenants work a four-day-on and three-day-off schedule (4 and 3). The workweek consists of four ten-hour workdays followed by three days off. This results in the supervisors having the same days off each week as well as an overlap on many shifts.

The patrol officers work a five-day-on and two-day-off schedule (5 and 2). The workweek consists of five eight-hour workdays followed by two days off. This results in the officers having the same days off each week.

The supervisors' hours and assigned days off result in one day a week when all three lieutenants are off duty, leaving a sergeant as the senior officer on duty. There are two days a week when only one lieutenant is on duty for the entire day and two other days when there are two lieutenants. There are only two days a week that all three lieutenants work. This schedule results in a sergeant being the senior officer on duty during seven shifts a week. This results in the sergeants handling duties inside the department that take them away from their primary responsibility of supervising the patrol force. This is the best-case scenario and does not account for vacations, sick leave, training or other excused absences.

The different scheduling between the patrol supervisors (4 and 3) and the patrol officers (5 and 2) creates a work schedule where the supervisors do not supervise the same group of officers on a consistent basis. Having patrol supervisors working the same shift would allow for better supervision and more accountability of the patrol division.

In the patrol division, there is a two-person "six" car. The "six" car responds as a backup on most calls. Having a two-person car is resource-dependent and the department can use staffing for deployment in a strategic fashion.

The continual changing of shifts prevents members of the department from taking ownership of a zone. Officers should stay on an assignment longer and work as part of a team in a zone. This strategy will allow officers to problem-solve, work with the community and address community-based issues. Officers can also work on routine cases normally assigned to detectives.

The department cut foot patrols and dedicated traffic cars. Foot patrols and presence in the downtown area is important to the city. Traffic safety, as discussed previously, is a basic function of a department. The reorganization will allow the department to incorporate these areas in the strategic plan and ensure they are part of daily operations.

Recommendations:

- Use data-driven strategies for deployment.
- Add additional sergeants to the patrol division.
- Put sergeants and lieutenants on a “5 and 2” schedule to match patrol.
- Make foot patrols a permanent function in the downtown area.
- Ensure traffic safety is a priority.
- Eliminate the “six” car, reassigning the staff to general patrol or into single back up cars.
- Make longer-term zone assignments.

Seacoast Emergency Response Team

The goal of Seacoast Emergency Response Team (SERT) is to resolve critical incidents by quickly utilizing tactical operations and strategic maneuvering. There are 31 members of the SERT team representing 11 departments. The Portsmouth Police Department is the largest participant in the regional team. SERT provides many positives for the region; however, the number of members participating from Portsmouth is high. Training is intense and time consuming, occurring twice per month along with a weeklong training program each year. The number of SERT call outs is small, but the team is still valuable to maintain. PSSG suggests that over time, through attrition, the number of Portsmouth officers on the SERT team needs to decrease overtime. Arbitrarily pulling members from the team is likely to decrease morale and be counterproductive.

Recommendation:

- Maintain SERT involvement, but decrease the number of members over time.

School Resource Officer

The School Resource Officer position is important to the community. There should be an SRO/community services position operating year-round, separate from detectives. The SRO should be a liaison between the school and department, coordinating programs that include other officers and taking part in providing education programs, both at school and in the community. There is community support for the position and a desire for an additional SRO in the school. At this time, PSSG does not recommend a

second SRO, but rather that the SRO incorporates and facilitates programs that would include other officers with presentations, outreach and attendance at events. If there is criminal activity at the school, a detective or the zone car should support the SRO with the case. A SRO position does take an officer from the street; in the future, the department may want to consider additional an SRO position as a part time position for the daily interaction at the school. Full-time officers will supplement the SRO by conducting presentations or participating in programs as needed.

Recommendations:

- Revisit the partnership with the schools to include payment of the position.
- Incorporate other members of the department into school-based programming.
- Investigate the potential of a 32-hour week position staffed by a retired officer.

Administrative Staff

Administrative staff supports the daily functions of the department. One drawback is that there is no redundancy in the positions, with each position functioning independently. If a person needs to take a day off work, their job is not done.

Recommendation:

- Hire an additional support staff person that will be cross-trained and provide backup for all records and business office functions.

Prosecution and Court

The department prosecutors handle all cases brought by the department at the district court level this includes representing the department at administrative motor vehicle hearings. A legal assistant and a victim advocate support the prosecutors. One of the two prosecutors is a member of the City Attorney's office and the other is a sworn police officer who is an attorney. Grant funding pays for the salary of the victim advocate's.

Prosecutors review cases and attempt to negotiate cases prior to trial.

Findings:

- The current staffing is appropriate based on the amount of cases.
- The pre-trial negotiation of cases reduces officer overtime.

Recommendations:

- Maintain the current staffing level.
- Continue pre-trial negotiations when practical.
- Continue to apply for grant funding for the victim advocate while having a plan in place to maintain the position if grant funding is unavailable.

Facilities

The police station occupies one section of the municipal building. The facility has offices, training rooms, a dispatch center, a records office, administrative offices, locker rooms, a physical fitness room, an evidence room, and a booking area.

Not built as a police facility, the station layout is less than desirable and the department is lacking secure storage space. In addition to the physical layout, there are environmental issues with the building; the windows are loose and rattle constantly, and one side of the building leaks, causing mold. Administrative offices are not soundproof. The building does not have adequate storage for evidence.

While a new building would be ideal, given the current economic times, it is unlikely. As a stopgap, at the very least, the city needs to make repairs, and increased evidence storage space is required. In the future, if the city determines it can fund a new building, may want to consider an integrated public safety facility to include the fire department if practical.

Despite the age and complexities of the building, the city keeps the building clean and in good day-to-day repair.

Recommendations:

- Make repairs as appropriate, such as stopping leaks and soundproofing.
- Reorganize space to ensure the space is used to its maximum capacity.

Equipment

Up-to-date, well-functioning equipment enhances the operations of the police department. Overall, the department has good equipment, and internal and external resources contribute to the acquisition of equipment.

Vehicles

The department has a fleet consisting of thirty vehicles and two motorcycles. The following table shows the deployment of the fleet:

Table 2: Fleet Information⁹

Vehicle Use	Quantity
Patrol	13
K9	2
Patrol Supervisor	1
Unmarked	8
Unmarked Van	2
Animal Control	1
Administration	1
Evidence Van	1
Parking Enforcement Van	1
Motorcycle	2

The fleet ranges in age from model year 2001 to 2010, all but five being model year 2006 or newer. The department has a maintenance and replacement plan in place that provides for the replacement of five vehicles and one motorcycle per year, starting in FY2013 and extending through 2022, with an expected average cost per year of \$209,000.

It appears the department maintains the fleet, ensuring proper care and repairs as needed.

Telephones, Radios and Computer Systems

The department monitors and creates strategies for telephone, radio and computer equipment upgrades. Civilian managers are current in technology and the latest updates required for the department.

The department is well equipped, and appropriate tracking and monitoring procedures are established.

Recommendations:

- Continue to track vehicles and other equipment.
- Continue to invest in equipment to ensure technology is up to date.

Training

The department invests in training and hosts training to reduce course fees. While the department emphasizes training, and there is a training matrix that provides an

⁹ SERT vehicles are not included in the fleet table.

overview of the type of training that will occur at different phases of employment, there is not an individualized training or professional development plan. The department participates in several different leadership-training programs, but does not have a strategy or vision of what types of training are required to reach the organizational goals.

Participation in SERT requires a great deal of training. The SERT training increases the skills of the department and fosters teamwork; however, the SERT training is resource-dependent and does not align with the general delivery of police services.

Recommendations

- Ensure all training focuses on state-mandated training, training that assists with career development and training that contributes to the strategies and goals of the department.
- Determine the goals of the agency and review curriculum to align training with the department goals.

Budget

A summary of the 2010 through 2012 budgets appear in the table below. At the request of the City Council for the department to create a 2012 budget at the 2011 funding level, the department presented a budget of \$8,438,675. This budget reflects a generally consistent budget when compared with prior years. With FY12 contractual obligations, the department experienced a reduction of department members.

Table 3: Police Budget 2010 – 2012

Budget Summary of Expenditures					
	Fy10 Budget	Fy10 Actual	Fy11 Budget	Fy12 Department Request	Fy12 City Manager Actual
Salaries – Uniform	3,581,950	3,350,632	3,520,436	3,372,330	3,372,330
Salaries – Civilian	915,070	909,932	895,415	925,969	925,969
Shift Differential	23,140	12,663	22,968	23,901	23,901
Part-Time Salaries	119,404	111,164	110,771	107,317	107,317
Commissioner Stipend	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600
Overtime	510,339	572,843	485,584	501,783	501,783
Holiday	152,819	140,977	149,231	139,781	139,781
Longevity	27,951	24,427	26,492	25,712	25,712
Special Detail	47,667	26,327	44,708	46,240	46,240
Retirement	677,949	673,422	725,171	795,660	795,660
Health Insurance	1,409,250	1,409,250	1,422,531	1,379,099	1,379,099
Dental Insurance	93,284	84,177	88,890	91,810	91,810
Insurance Reimbursement	3,664	3,055	0	0	0
Leave At Termination	155,203	155,203	158,423	158,868	158,868
Life and Disability	6,723	4,676	6,690	4,948	4,948
Workers' Compensation	168,019	168,019	127,471	138,373	138,373
Other Benefits	207,409	194,775	202,490	195,692	195,692
Total Contractual Obligations	8,103,441	7,845,142	7,990,871	7,911,083	7,911,083
Training / Education	45,613	50,857	38,207	37,461	37,461
Utilities	85,000	83,690	86,700	86,700	86,700
Contracted Services	28,613	90,889	25,695	26,208	26,208
Other Operating	388,229	397,716	376,999	377,223	377,223
Total Other Operating	547,455	623,152	527,601	527,592	527,592
Total	8,650,896	8,468,294	8,518,472	8,438,675	8,438,675¹⁰

The department needs to continually evaluate staffing and the budget after the department implements the recommendations to reorganize and redeploy personnel, monitor personnel and overtime cost. The most recent budget created five vacancies in

¹⁰ The approved budget for the council was \$8,438,675, with the actual budget \$8,518,412 due to contractual obligations with funds derived from the collective bargaining contingency account.

the department, resignations decreased the number patrol officer and this report suggests significant redeployment with increased services. PSSG does not suggest further cuts at this time. The report covers staffing in several other sections of the report including organizational structure and patrol. The department should focus on the integration of civilian support staff during the next budget cycle and eliminate supervisors in the future.

Recommendations:

Monitor the budget and reevaluate any further staff reductions after the department implements the recommendations.

Grants

The department secures grants for various purposes: equipment, training, overtime and the ICAC program. The department does a good job implementing the grants, and it is appropriate for the department to seek grants. The department is not charging an indirect¹¹ rate on any of the grants, which it should consider on grants that allow that charge.

The ICAC grant is one that generates attention. The grant pays for two detectives and supervisory staff; however, services provided by the department support efforts for the region. ICAC would be better suited as a statewide function. However, while it exists in Portsmouth, the officers assigned to ICAC should not be counted as part of the detective division. Should funding cease, the department should eliminate the positions. In the near future, the department should seek additional funding from the participating agencies, as is the model with the SERT, while creating strategies to transfer the ICAC program to a state-level organization.

Recommendations:

- The department should continue to seek grants.
- Outside departments should help support ICAC.

¹¹ Indirect provides reimbursement for support services such as payroll, office space, use of phones, computers and copiers. Not all grants allow an indirect charge.

Data Collection

The study included several strategies to collect both primary and secondary information, including review of calls for service and incident data, interviews, focus groups and surveys, each of which are described in this section.

Calls for Service

There were 272,316 records contained within the database for the period between January 1, 2006, and April 28, 2011. The records total 199,039 separate calls.

Table 4: Total and Unique Calls and Activity Levels 2006 – 2010

	Total	Unique	Percentage
CAD Calls	272,316	199,039	73%
Arrests	12,671	7,337	58%
Accidents	18,669	3,912	21%
Citations	29,134	28,798	99%
Incidents	19,285	16,625	86%

Between 2006 and 2010, the number of calls decreased by 14 percent, from 42,083 to 35,961. Low double-digit decreases occurred in both 2007 and 2009, while 2008 and 2010 posted increases. There was a seasonal effect on the number of calls, with decreasing calls occurring between January and March each year. Likewise, the months of June through September typically produced higher volumes of calls each year.

The total numbers of calls increased by six percent in 2010, but still remains 14 percent lower than 2006. The first four months of 2011 recorded a five percent gain over the equivalent period of 2010. In each year, there were fewer calls logged in the winter months than the summer months.

Calls by Month, Day and Hour

Over the entire period of the analyzed records, from January 1, 2006, to April 28, 2011, officers responded to an average of 127 calls per month, and an average of three calls per day¹².

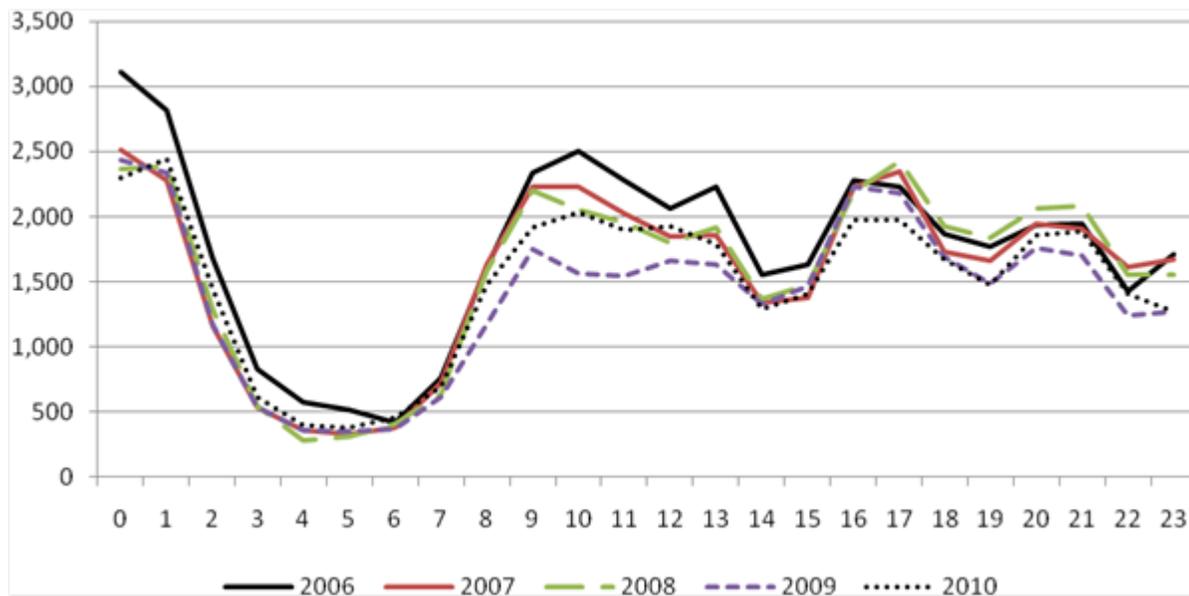
Friday and Saturday are slightly busier than the other days of the week for calls (accounting for a 16 percent each on average, versus 14 percent each on Monday through Thursday), while Sunday is slightly more quiet (accounting for 12 percent on average).

¹² This is calls only, not inclusive of crashes, traffic stops, citations, report writing, court time and other administrative duties.

Although the period between midnight and 2am is particularly busy, the activity quickly decreases to reach a lull between 4am and 6am. Secondary peaks are visible during the 8am and 9am hours as well as the 4pm and 5pm hours.

The morning and evening commuter periods are the busiest during the regular day, although there is the greatest need for officers in the two hours following midnight.

**Figure 1: Unique Calls for Service by Hour of the Day,
January 1, 2006 – April 28, 2011**

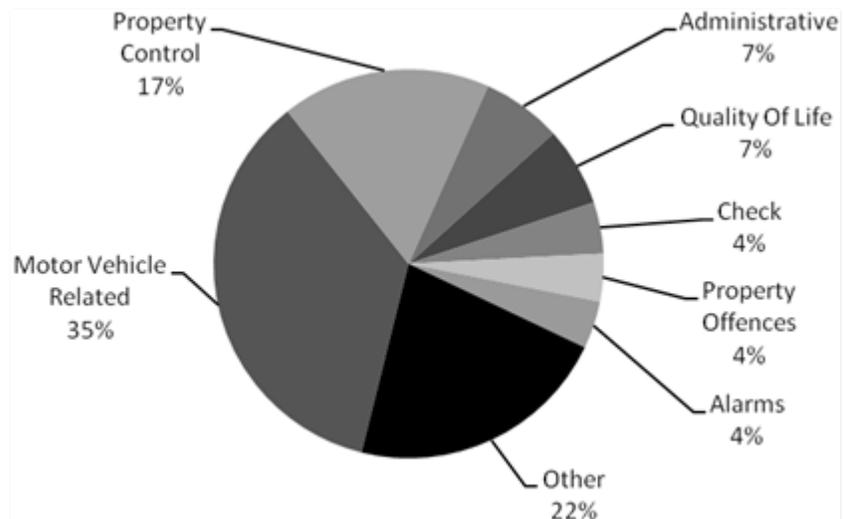


Calls by Category

The top seven call category groups accounted for 78 percent of the calls made between 2006 and 2011. Motor vehicle-related incidents dominate the number of calls for services and incidents, with over one-third of the total calls, while property calls account for a further 17 percent.

Figure 2: Division of Total Calls by Category Group

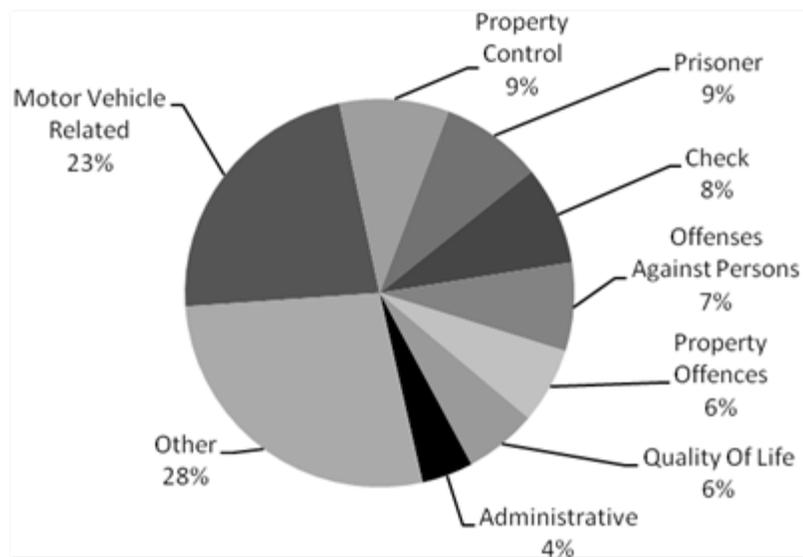
January 1, 2006 – April 28, 2011



Motor vehicle-related calls required almost one quarter of the total amount of time officers spent dealing with calls over the study period. The average motor vehicle-related call required 15 minutes of officer time.

Figure 3: Division of Total Time by Category Group

January 1, 2006 – April 28, 2011



Incidents and Citations

Total Incidents

Between 2006 and 2010, the number of calls that generated a incident report increased by one percent, from 3,195 to 3,220. The distribution of incidents by month is similar to that of the distribution of calls by month.

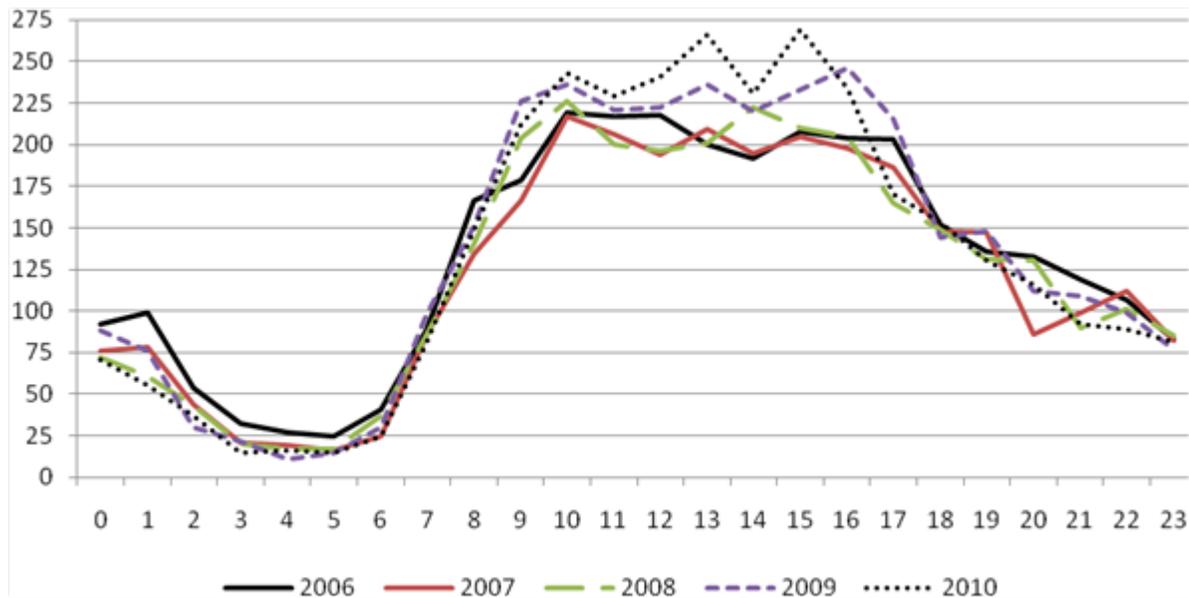
Incidents by Day and Hour

Thursdays are slightly busier than the other days of the week (accounting for a 16 percent each on average, versus 15 percent on each other weekday), while Saturday and Sunday are slightly more quiet (accounting for 13 percent and 11 percent, respectively).

Incidents primarily occur during the regular hours of a day, ramping up at 7am before decreasing slowly from 5pm to 8pm. A slight increase is visible in the 9pm and 10pm hours.

Figure 4: Total Incidents by Hour of the Day by Year

January 1, 2006 – April 28, 2011

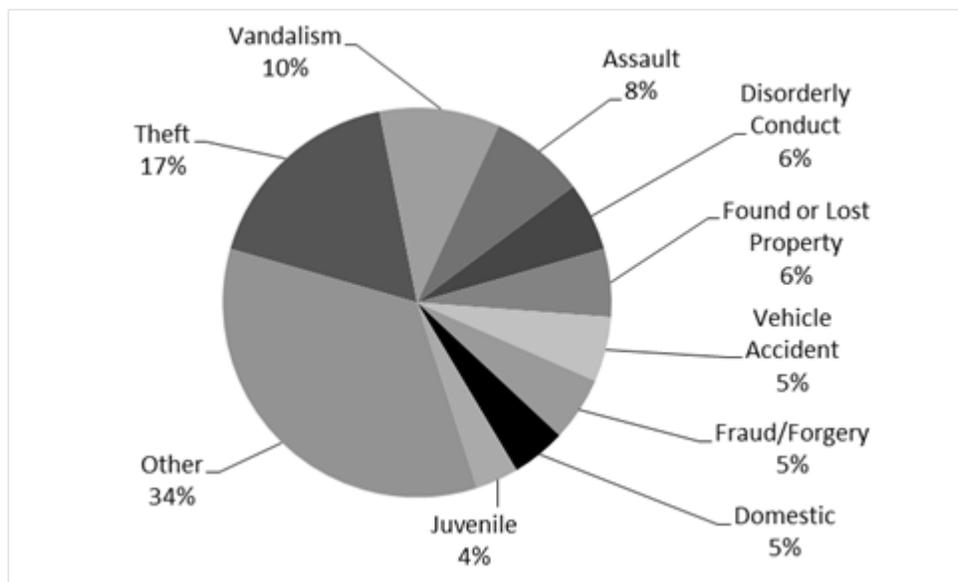


Incidents and Citations by Category

Theft and vandalism are the two largest single groups in the study period, accounting for 17 percent and 10 percent of the total, respectively.

Figure 5: Distribution of Incidents by Group

January 1, 2006 – April 28, 2011



Vehicle-related issues, with vehicle operation, speeding, and licensing and registration infractions, were the most frequent citations, accounting for 91 percent of the total. Arrests varied to a greater degree, although vehicle-related incidents account for a significant percentage, including DWIs, reckless driving and speeding, which account for 12 percent of the total, and vehicle licensing and registration, which account for seven percent.

Geographic Distribution of the Calls

Over the 2006 to 2010 period, Zone 3 accounted for the most calls with one quarter of the total, while Zone 4 accounted for the least with 15 percent of the total. Zones 1, 2, and 5 accounted for between 19 and 21 percent of the total each.

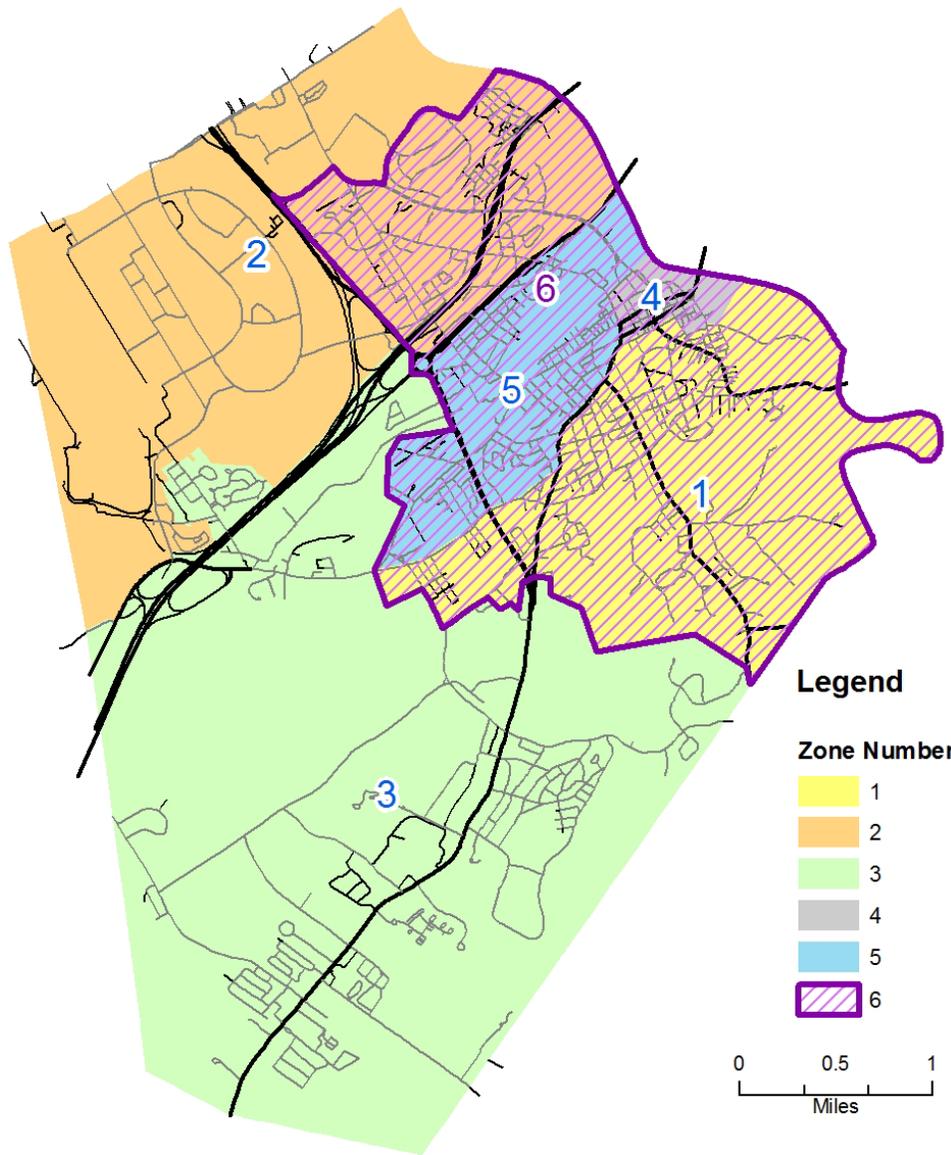
With an average of 30 hours per week across the 2006 to 2010 period, Zone 4 required the fewest number of hours per week of the five zones, while Zone 3, with 53 hours, required the most.

Although Zone 3 accounts for the largest share of the calls, Zone 1 is the busiest zone between 10am and 2pm, while Zone 4 is busiest between 8pm and 10pm, and Zone 5 is busiest between 11pm and midnight.

The maps, figures and tables on the next pages show the following:

- Map 1: Patrol Zones
- Figure 6: Percentage of Calls by Patrol Zone 1 through 5 by Hour
- Table 5: Percentage Change in Number of Calls by Patrol Zone Between 2006 and 2011
- Table 6: Top Call Categories by Zone, January 1, 2006 – April 28, 2011
- Table 7: Top Citation Categories by Zone, January 1, 2006 – April 28, 2011

Map 1: Portsmouth Patrol Zones¹³



¹³ Zone 6 is not an actual zone, but rather the area that the “6 car” a two person back up car responds to calls.

Figure 7: Percentage of Calls by Patrol Zone 1 through 5 by Hour

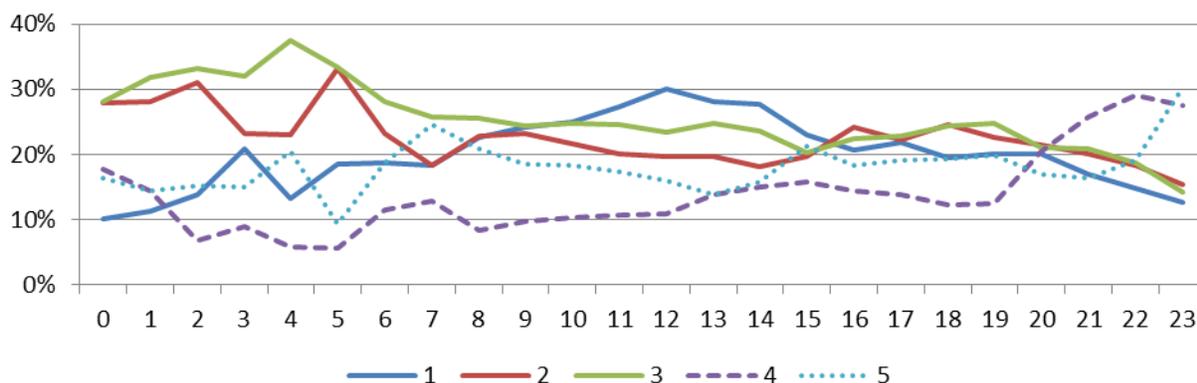


Table 8: Percentage Change in Number of Calls by Patrol Zone Between 2006 and 2011

	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5
12:00 am to 12:59 am	-5%	4%	1%	-3%	3%
1:00 am to 1:59 am	-6%	7%	3%	-5%	0%
2:00 am to 2:59 am	-7%	9%	-2%	1%	-1%
3:00 am to 3:59 am	0%	-1%	-5%	2%	3%
4:00 am to 4:59 am	-8%	6%	0%	-1%	3%
5:00 am to 5:59 am	-8%	19%	-7%	-2%	-2%
6:00 am to 6:59 am	0%	3%	2%	2%	-7%
7:00 am to 7:59 am	-1%	2%	4%	3%	-7%
8:00 am to 8:59 am	4%	4%	2%	-2%	-9%
9:00 am to 9:59 am	-1%	4%	2%	-2%	-3%
10:00 am to 10:59 am	6%	4%	-1%	-3%	-6%
11:00 am to 11:59 am	10%	1%	-2%	-3%	-6%
12:00 pm to 12:59 pm	13%	-1%	0%	-3%	-8%
1:00 pm to 1:59 pm	9%	-2%	-3%	-1%	-3%
2:00 pm to 2:59 pm	8%	2%	-3%	-4%	-3%
3:00 pm to 3:59 pm	4%	0%	-2%	-1%	-2%
4:00 pm to 4:59 pm	3%	2%	-4%	2%	-2%
5:00 pm to 5:59 pm	4%	2%	-6%	1%	0%
6:00 pm to 6:59 pm	2%	5%	-8%	2%	0%
7:00 pm to 7:59 pm	0%	2%	-1%	-1%	1%
8:00 pm to 8:59 pm	2%	3%	-3%	-1%	-1%
9:00 pm to 9:59 pm	-1%	3%	-4%	2%	-1%
10:00 pm to 10:59 pm	1%	5%	0%	-5%	-1%
11:00 pm to 11:59 pm	1%	1%	-5%	-3%	6%
Total	1%	2%	-2%	-1%	-1%

Table 9: Top Call Categories by Zone, January 1, 2006 – April 28, 2011¹⁴

Zone	Group	Count	Percentage
1	Motor Vehicle Related	9,593	30%
	Property Control	7,177	23%
	Administrative	2,504	8%
	Quality Of Life	2,124	7%
	Prisoner	1,251	4%
	Check	990	3%
	Misc	983	3%
	Offenses Against Persons	975	3%
	Property Offences	930	3%
	Alarms	786	2%
	Other	4,175	13%
	Total	31,488	100%
2	Motor Vehicle Related	10,632	32%
	Property Control	7,897	23%
	Administrative	2,425	7%
	Alarms	1,854	6%
	Quality Of Life	1,816	5%
	Property Offences	1,491	4%
	Misc	1,316	4%
	Check	1,154	3%
	Offenses Against Persons	1,003	3%
	Theft	725	2%
	Other	3,319	10%
	Total	33,632	100%
3	Motor Vehicle Related	13,642	34%
	Property Control	7,744	19%
	Administrative	3,089	8%
	Alarms	2,275	6%
	Quality Of Life	2,130	5%
	Property Offences	1,866	5%
	Misc	1,579	4%
	Check	1,314	3%
	Investigative	1,006	3%
	Offenses Against Persons	1,002	2%
	Other	4,492	11%
	Total	40,139	100%

¹⁴ The calls are ranked and based only on geocoded calls.

Zone	Group	Count	Percentage
4	Motor Vehicle Related	8,787	36%
	Alcohol Related	3,186	13%
	Quality Of Life	2,863	12%
	Alarms	1,557	6%
	Property Control	1,510	6%
	Property Offences	914	4%
	Administrative	887	4%
	Misc	719	3%
	Check	645	3%
	Investigative	583	2%
	Other	2,909	12%
	Total	24,560	100%
	5	Motor Vehicle Related	13,219
Property Control		4,234	14%
Quality Of Life		2,491	8%
Administrative		2,228	7%
Property Offences		1,286	4%
Check		876	3%
Alarms		858	3%
Offenses Against Persons		758	2%
Misc		714	2%
Alcohol Related		705	2%
Other		3,327	11%
Total		30,696	100%

Table 10: Top Citation Categories by Zone, January 1, 2006 – April 28, 2011

Zone	Group	Count	Percentage
1	Speeding	1,616	44%
	Vehicle Operation Related	1,313	36%
	Licensing/Registration	394	11%
	Vehicle Related	202	6%
	Animal	39	1%
	Misc	23	1%
	Quality of Life	21	1%
	Alcohol Related	17	0%
	Disorderly Conduct	8	0%
	Tobacco	8	0%
	Other	10	0%
	Total	3,651	100%
2	Speeding	1,957	47%
	Vehicle Operation Related	1,407	34%
	Licensing/Registration	503	12%
	Vehicle Related	229	5%
	Misc	25	1%
	Animal	13	0%
	Quality of Life	13	0%
	Alcohol Related	6	0%
	Disorderly Conduct	6	0%
	Pedestrian/Cyclist	4	0%
	Other	4	0%
	Total	4,167	100%
3	Speeding	2,750	52%
	Vehicle Operation Related	1,561	29%
	Licensing/Registration	576	11%
	Vehicle Related	255	5%
	Misc	60	1%
	Alcohol Related	39	1%
	Animal	35	1%
	Quality of Life	26	0%
	Disorderly Conduct	7	0%
	Trespass/Robbery	7	0%
	Other	17	0%
	Total	5,333	100%

Zone	Group	Count	Percentage
4	Vehicle Operation Related	1,444	60%
	Licensing/Registration	473	20%
	Vehicle Related	176	7%
	Speeding	106	4%
	Quality of Life	78	3%
	Alcohol Related	39	2%
	Disorderly Conduct	32	1%
	Misc	16	1%
	Pedestrian/Cyclist	13	1%
	Animal	6	0%
	Other	14	1%
	Total	2,397	100%
5	Vehicle Operation Related	2,848	55%
	Speeding	1,192	23%
	Licensing/Registration	653	13%
	Vehicle Related	261	5%
	Misc	69	1%
	Animal	44	1%
	Alcohol Related	31	1%
	Quality of Life	29	1%
	Disorderly Conduct	10	0%
	Pedestrian/Cyclist	9	0%
	Other	11	0%
	Total	5,157	100%

Community and Department Survey Findings

Three separate surveys were conducted, one each for sworn and civilian department members and one for the community.

Thirty-three sworn officers participated in the survey:

- Ninety-four percent had less than 20 years' experience in public safety.
- Over 27 percent had less than five years' experience.
- Of those answering the sworn survey 15 were officers, 5 were detectives and 13 were sergeants.

Fourteen civilian members of the department participated in the survey.

Almost 86 percent had less than 15 years' experience, and almost 29 percent had less than five years' experience.

Two hundred and sixty-seven members of the public participated in the community survey.

Seventy-six percent were only full-time residents in Portsmouth, almost two-thirds of who had been residents for more than 10 years.

Thirteen percent of residents were also business owners.

Over half were aged between 41 and 60 years of age, with only 15 percent aged 30 or younger and 18 percent aged 60 and older.

Fifty-nine percent of respondents were male, 41 percent were female.

Community Perception of Safety

There is a positive feeling of safety in the community:

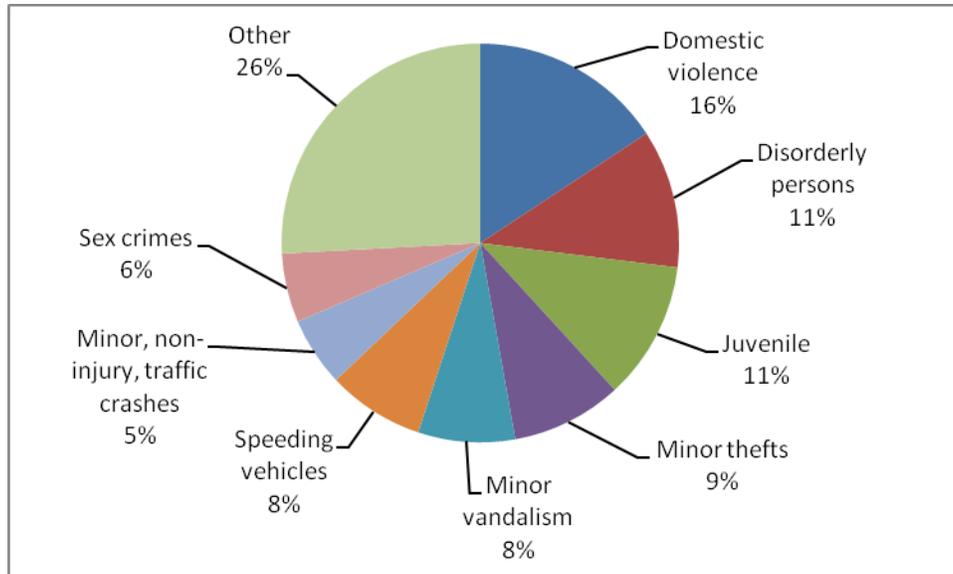
- Ninety-nine percent feel very safe or safe walking in downtown or in neighborhoods during the day, while 94 percent feel very safe or safe at night.
- One half of respondents believed that if the number of police officers on the Portsmouth Police Department were to decrease, the crime rate would increase, while almost all of the other half of respondents believed it would remain the same.
- Although 55 percent of the public felt that it was important that an officer greet them upon arrival at the front desk of the station, 87 percent believe that it is important to have an officer called to meet them at the front desk if needed¹⁵.

¹⁵ This supports a change from sworn personnel to a civilian at the front desk.

Use of Time

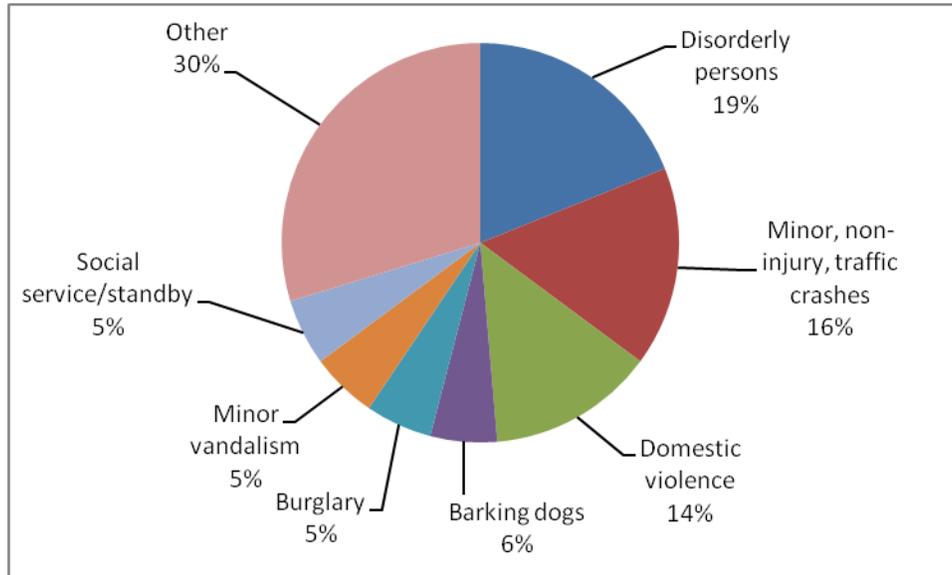
The primary calls for service that officers believe consume patrol time appear in the chart below. Domestic violence (16 percent), disorderly persons (11 percent), juvenile issues (11 percent) and minor acts of theft and vandalism (nine percent) account for the largest amount of time.

Figure 8: Officers Perception of Calls Requiring the Most Time



The most common types of calls for service, according to sworn department members, are depicted on the chart below. Disorderly persons (19 percent), minor traffic accidents (16 percent) and domestic violence (14 percent) are the type of calls officers believe happen the most frequently.

Figure 9: Officer Reported Most Frequent Type of Calls

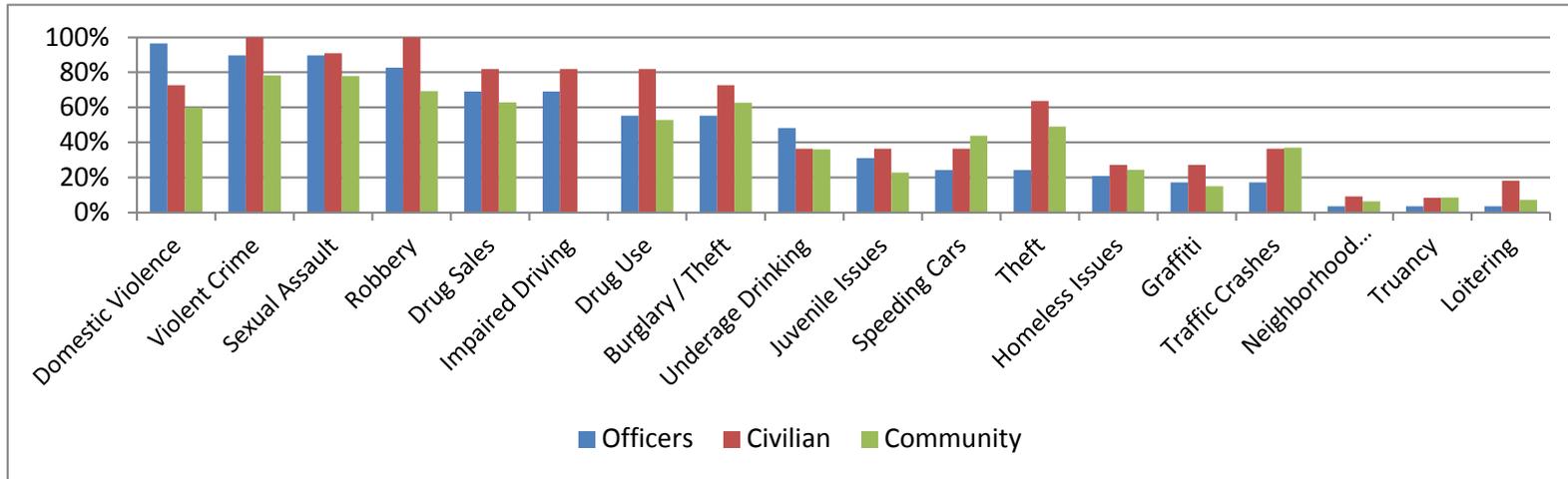


Priority Issues

The survey asked all three groups to prioritize a number of issues as either low priority, medium priority, or high priority. Police officers prioritized domestic violence above all other call types with 97 percent indicating it was a high priority, while 90 percent indicated that both violent crime and sexual assault were a high priority. Every single civilian employee believed that violent crimes and robberies were high priority, while a further 91 percent stated that sexual assaults were high priority. Members of the community were more divided, with just 78 percent indicating that they felt violent crime and sexual assaults were high priority. Police officers and civilian employees felt that truancy and loitering were the two least important crimes, although the civilians thought that neighborhood disputes were just as unimportant. Members of the public believed that loitering and neighborhood disputes were the two least important crimes.

The following percentages of each group rated each of the following issues as being high priority:

Figure 10: Community and Department Perceptions of Priority / Areas of Importance



Perception of Staffing

The following provides insight on staffing levels and the perceived value of civilian members:

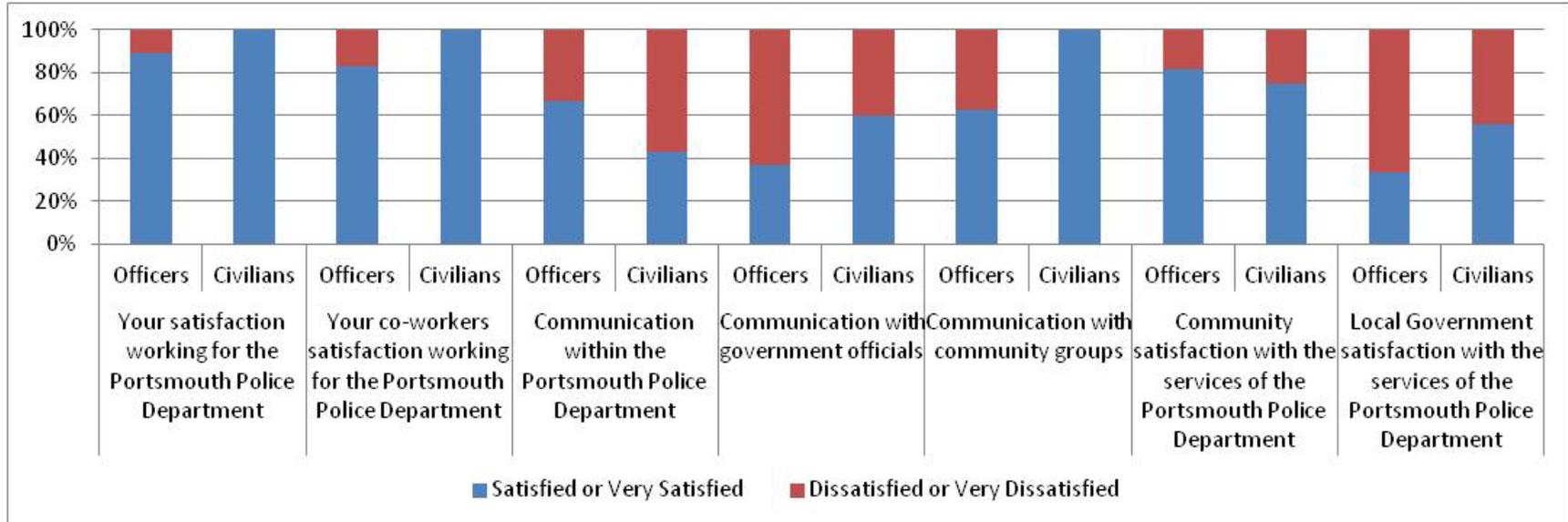
- One-third of sworn officers believe the sworn staffing level of the Portsmouth Police Department is too low, while 55 percent feel it is appropriate.
- Almost 46 percent of the community participants feel that the current number of police officers in Portsmouth is appropriate, while equal numbers (27 percent each) feel there are too many officers or too few officers.
- Almost two-thirds of sworn officers feel that the current command structure is appropriate for the size and makeup of the department, as do 58 percent of civilian support staff.
- Over 86 percent of sworn officers feel that there are enough civilian support staff at the Portsmouth Police Department, compared to just eight percent of the civilian support staff.
- The support staff in general (83 percent) feels that they are valued members of the Portsmouth Police Department.

Department Satisfaction

The following three figures detail the level of satisfaction of Police officers and civilian staff regarding job satisfaction, communication efforts and external satisfaction. While both sets of employees are satisfied with their jobs and perceive their colleagues are also satisfied, they feel that the local government does not share their sense of satisfaction. Both groups believe that the community is satisfied or very satisfied with their efforts.

The survey results suggest that communication efforts, both internal and external, fall short of where they could be, with civilians least satisfied with communication within the department while police officers are least satisfied with communication with local officials.

Figure 11: Department Members Perception of Satisfaction

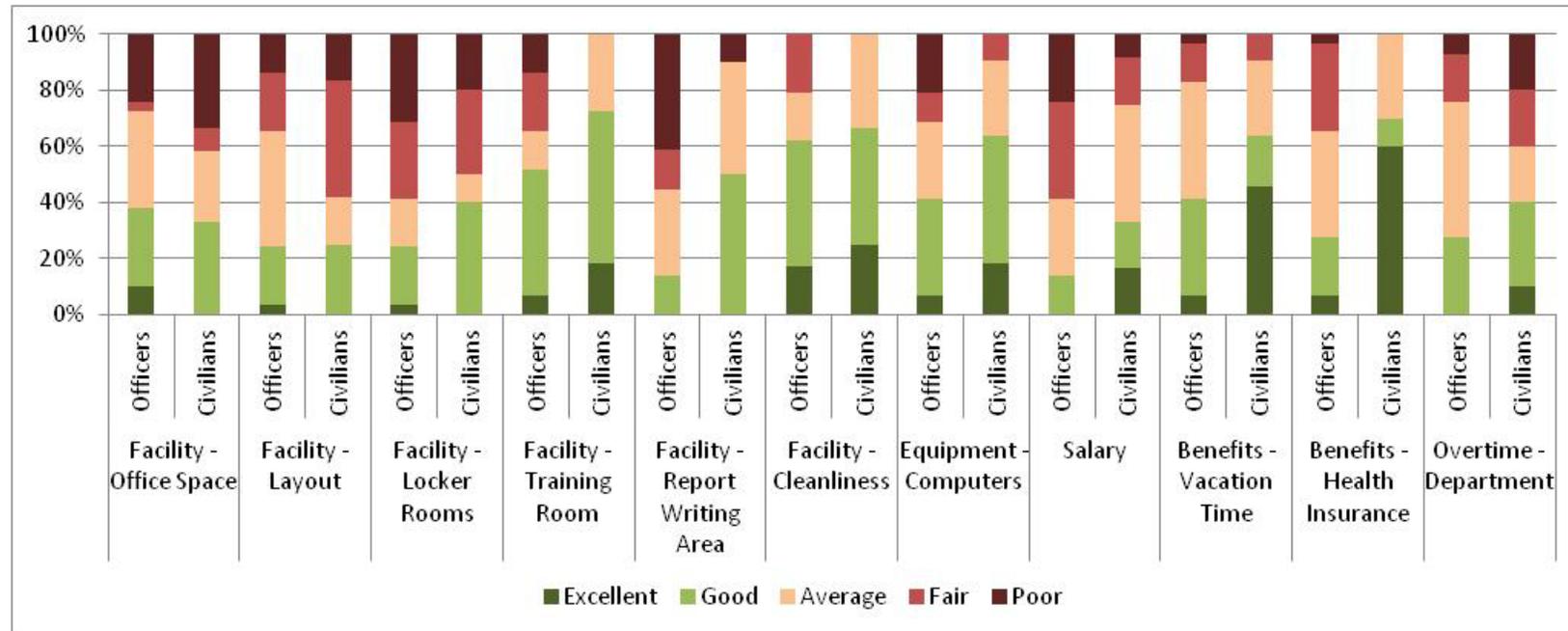


Satisfaction with Current Situation

The next chart depicts opinions of police officers and civilian support staff on a number of infrastructure, equipment, training and benefits within the department. A few key findings include:

- Both officers and civilians believe that training room facilities are good or excellent.
- Civilians are much happier with health insurance and vacation benefits than the police officers.
- Civilians are much happier with their salary than the police officers.
- More civilian staff than the police officers believe that opportunities for overtime is poor.
- Significant numbers of both officers and civilians believe that training opportunities are good or excellent.

Figure 12: Department Satisfaction with Current Situation



Department Obstacles to Productivity

When asked if there were obstacles to productivity, police officers noted that they faced a wide range of challenges and roadblocks in the performance of their duties, with the most frequent being:

- As a group, officers were most concerned by the role of management within the department, with over 40 percent of respondents suggesting that the oversight of both senior officers and councilors was overbearing, inconsistent, and unhelpful.
- Over a quarter of respondents stated that there was an insufficient amount of time to deal with their workload.
- Several responses noted that budgetary issues and concerns about the future weighed on the department's mind.
- Communication was flagged as another area of concern, both between the officers and the civilian support staff as well as between officers and their supervisors.

Of the third that believe there were too many supervisors, they also believe this is an obstacle to productivity.

Training for Department Members

Although only half of officer respondents suggested training programs that would support the mission of the Portsmouth Police Department, the suggestions they made covered a wide array of topics:

- Almost a third of those who responded suggested leadership training courses would be useful.
- There was also support for courses that focused on interview techniques, internet safety and searches and team building.

Staffing

Although the split between community participants who believed that there were too few officers and those who thought that there were too many was virtually identical, a significant number of respondents indicated that they also felt that there were too many supervisors. Those who indicated that they believed there were too few officers noted that they wanted to see their presence, suggesting that it was less an issue of numbers and more an issue of deployment.

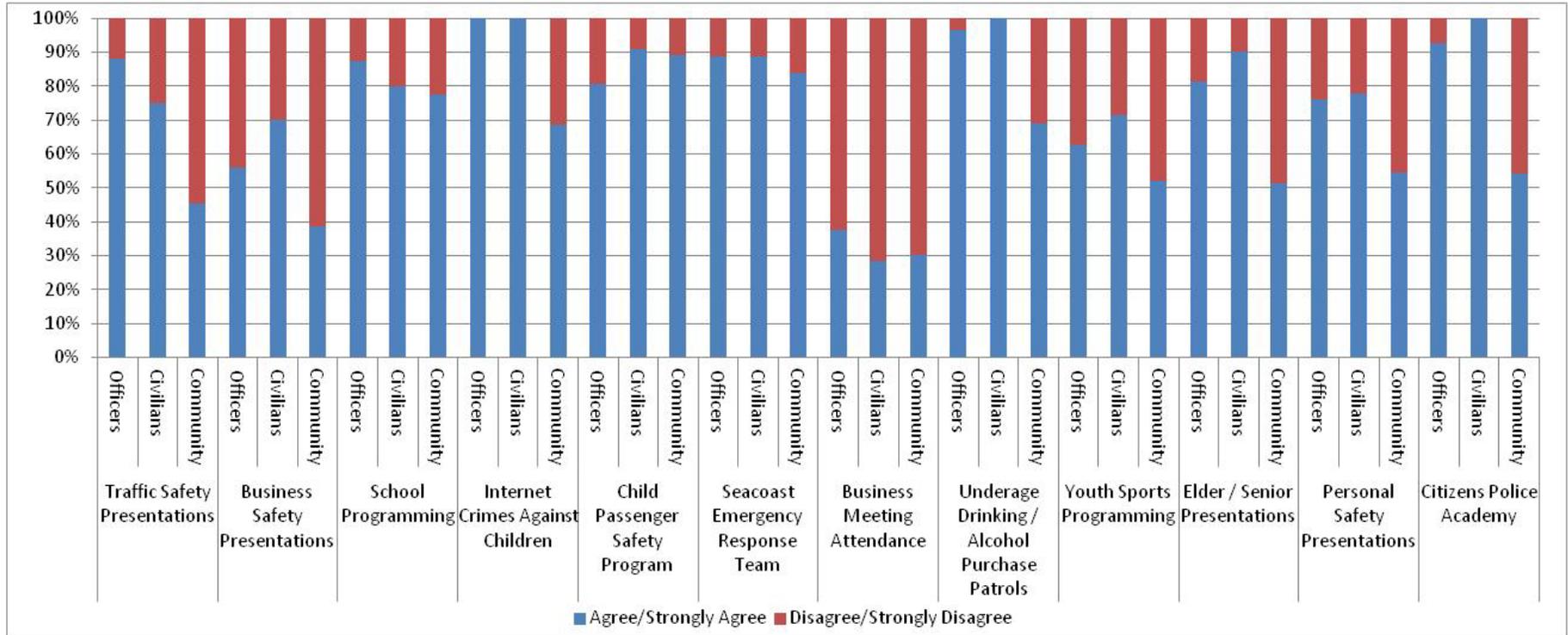
The primary complaints from members of the community revolved around a relative level of disinterest from officers, a lack of professionalism and inadequate people skills; however, it should be noted that of the 267 members of the community who participated

in the survey, typically fewer than 30 (or less than 12 percent) volunteered specific responses.

Priority Areas for Police Department Programming Efforts

The percentage of police officers and civilian support staff who strongly agree or agree that the Portsmouth Police Department should provide or participate in specific focal areas appear in the two charts below. The areas that received the strongest support from both groups include internet crimes against children, underage drinking issues, the citizen police academy and the seacoast emergency response team. Those areas that had the highest number of respondents disagree or strongly disagree that the police department should support them include business meeting attendance, business safety presentations, and youth sports programming.

Figure 13: Priority Areas for Programming



Community Calls for Service

- Forty-two percent of respondents indicated that they had at some point called the police for an emergency issue.
- Of those who called, 77 percent were either satisfied or very satisfied with the service provided by the dispatcher answering their call, while just seven percent were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Just fewer than three-quarters were either satisfied or very satisfied with the service provided by the police officer who responded to the call, while fewer than nine percent were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.
- For calls from home, over one-third indicated that for their most recent call, police had responded within five minutes, while just over half had a response within 30 minutes. For calls from work, over one-half indicated that for their most recent call police had responded within five minutes, 38 percent had a response within 30 minutes.
- The most frequent reasons for calls from either home or work have been to report disorderly people, report a non-serious traffic incident, and to request information.

Police Department Openness to Change

Police officers indicated that the areas least likely impacted by cuts were supervisors and patrols, although several suggested reducing the number of detectives and training patrol officers in their place.

Three areas in which police officers would like to see change include a more thorough performance evaluation process (with promotion linked to the results), better pay and having a contract. However, department members raised several areas consistently:

- Better communication throughout the department
- Improved facilities
- More opportunities for training
- Optimizing schedules

Civilian staff indicated two key areas of concern, which included facility improvement and more staff or to enable the workload to be handled properly. There were several responses noting that the civilian staff felt under-appreciated by the police officers, and that better communication in general between the two groups was necessary.

Other comments received from civilian staff included the opinions that:

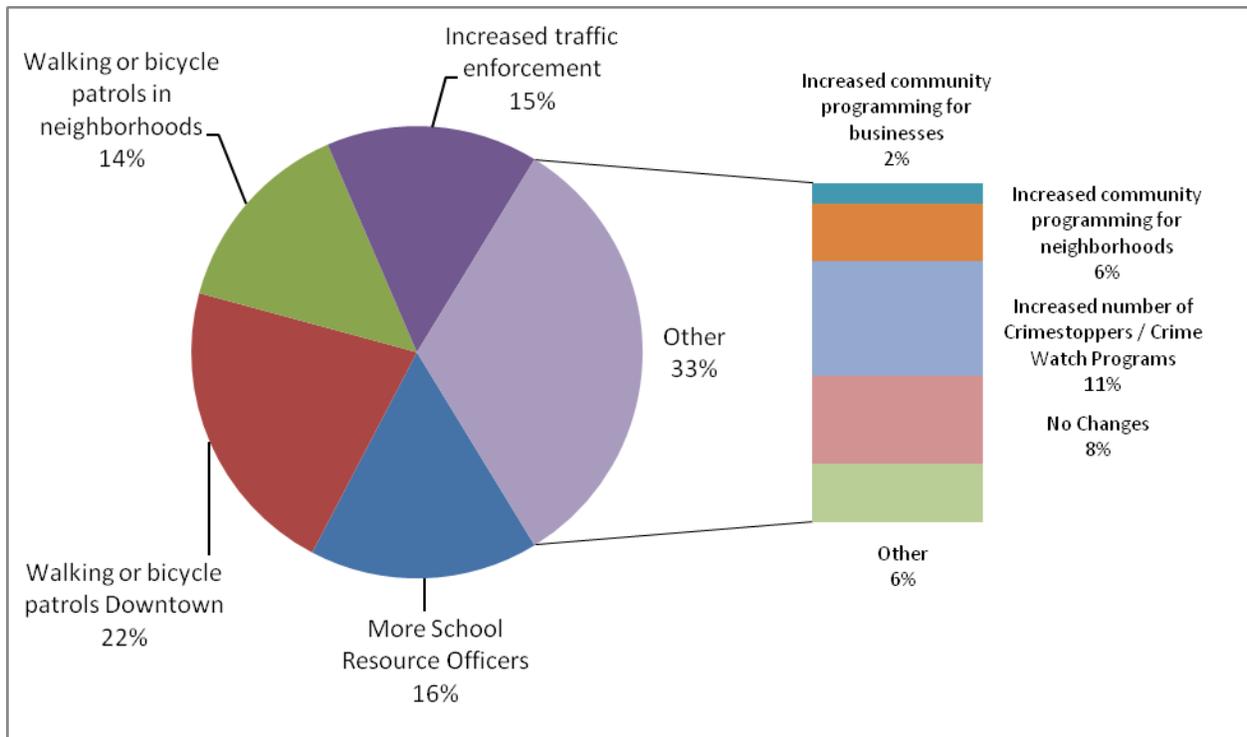
- Recent retirements amongst the police officers had led to many green officers.
- Bad decision making within the department had led to low morale.
- The city council does not respect the police department.

Community Openness to Change

Almost three-quarters of community participants would be willing to submit an online report for minor incidents with no suspects, no personal injury or minor property damage at home, while only 57 percent would be willing to do so at work.

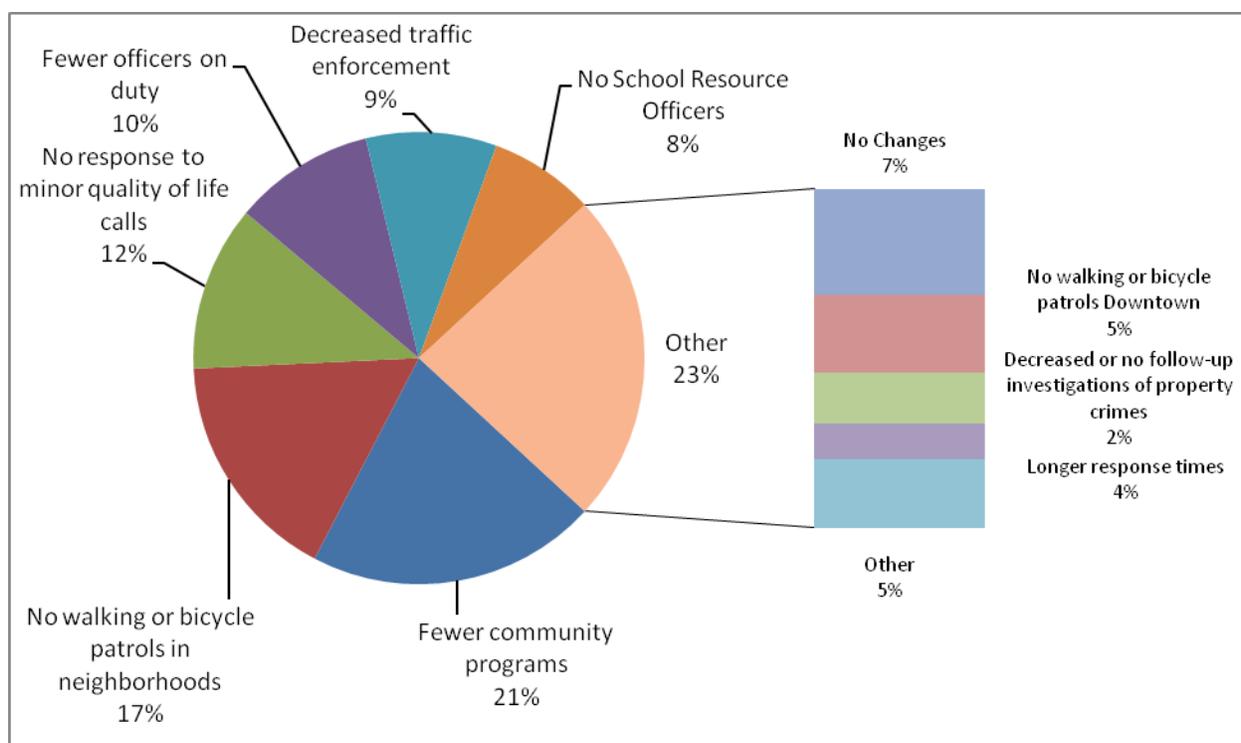
When asked about what additional services they would like to see if the current number of police officers were to be increased or remain at the current level, the community noted an increased desire for higher visibility of officers (with 22 percent requesting additional walking or bicycle patrols downtown and a further 14 percent requesting patrols in neighborhoods). Additional school resource officers and more school officers were also popular, with 16 percent and 15 percent, respectively.

Figure 14: Future Areas for Emphasis with Current Staffing



When asked about what additional services they would like to see if the city council decreased the number of police officers that the department could fund, the community indicated that they would be most willing to cut community programs. Interestingly, despite the desire for more community programming including foot patrols, the second most popular selection was for a decrease in the number of neighborhood walking or bicycle patrols. A further 12 percent suggested that the police not respond to minor quality of life calls. As noted above, almost half of the police officers indicated that quality of life calls for service were the group that took up most of their patrol time.

Figure 15: Future Areas to Decrease Emphasis with Less Staffing



Specific areas that the community sought improvement included dealing with traffic violations and noisy motorcycles.

General Observations

The community and the police department have different views regarding pay and benefit levels. Officers frequently noted that they felt their pay and benefits were too low, while the community felt that either their pay or benefits were too high, or that the officers did not do enough to justify their pay.

Members of the public were worried about the loss of School Resource Officers.

There were large numbers of community responses, suggesting either that the department was too large or that it should not be cut, indicating that any decisions would have to be clearly explained to foster an understanding by the community of the deployment of resources.

Using police as road flaggers was a cause of irritation amongst many members of the public, who felt it was a misuse of their tax dollars.

Focus Groups, Community Meetings and Interviews

During the course of the study, PSSG conducted several meetings with business owners, residents and city employees. Stakeholder input informs the results but does not solely shape the recommendations.

Each segment of the community has differing expectations related to police services. Business owners in the downtown area of the city desire highly visible patrols and participation in business meetings, while residents living in the less populated neighborhoods did not view participation in meetings as a police priority. Residents believed that the police department was overly involved in issues related to youth, especially incidents involving alcohol. When talking with parents, PSSG discovered that parents thought that the department should be tolerant of underage drinking and allow parents to “deal with the matter” rather than a child being taken into protective custody or arrested, as their impression was that would harm the child in the future.

Many of those interviewed described Portsmouth as a crime-free community but believed that the police department was too large based on its population and crime. Often individuals did not connect the high number of tourists, dignitary visits, community events and high number of liquor licenses as reasons for police patrols.

Given the disconnect between the perception of community members and need for police services that extend beyond responding to calls for service, the police department needs to consistently communicate with and inform the public of its activities. Community members should consider enrolling in the Citizen Police Academy to learn more about the role of the police in the community.

Comparison Communities

PSSG reviewed community and police data for Portsmouth and four other municipalities. The comparison communities have similar demographics and/or policing needs. Information compiled by PSSG is from secondary sources regarding population, crime data, liquor licenses and number of employees. Reviewing comparison community information is illustrative only; specific conclusions are impossible, as the level of in-depth information required is not readily available.

The table below shows the following:

- For the five communities, Portsmouth has the second lowest in population.
- Portsmouth has the second lowest number of sworn officers, tied for the second highest number of civilians (although the chart does not appear to separate dispatchers from the total) and second lowest number of overall employees.
- Portsmouth has the second highest number of liquor licenses.
- When compared to the community with the closest population, Portsmouth had 392 more larceny / thefts and 429 more incidents of property crime.

Table 11: Comparison Community Data¹⁶

City-Town	Population	Total Liquor Licenses	Total Law Enforcement Employees	Total Officers	Total Civilians	Violent Crime	Forcible Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Property Crime	Burglary	Larceny/Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft	Arson
Portsmouth	20,281	151	84	65	19	28	5	6	16	615	68	523	24	6
City-Town #1	22,167	330	113	88	25	186	21	63	101	1,709	363	1,224	122	2
City-Town #2	19,705	33	39	31	8	26	2	2	22	186	42	131	13	0
City-Town #3	27,242	85	87	68	19	14	2	5	7	393	78	299	16	0
City-Town #4	23,173	49	97	79	18	138	11	18	109	1,011	213	755	43	18

Data source: 2010 Uniform Crime Report as created by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

¹⁶ Non-negligent homicide and manslaughter do not appear on the table. Portsmouth and City – Town # 1 each had one homicide related incident in 2010.

Conclusions

The Portsmouth Police Department is well run, well trained, professional, and has a high-approval rating from community members. Morale of the department is high and there appears to be a great deal of organizational pride. Department members are competent at their jobs. The recommendations of this report include many small changes to enhance the operation of the department along with the more significant reorganization strategies.

There are two main areas of disconnect between some community members and the department. They are pay and the number of officers. The department has lost several positions in recent years due to budget and three from resignations since January of 2011 and given that this report is suggesting significant changes in deployment, PSSG does not recommended additional cuts for the near future.

Keys areas for immediate changes include:

- Fix the reporting structure related to both the deputy chief and administrative captain reporting to the chief
- Update the strategic plan
- Use data to drive deployment and decision making
- Deploy of permanent foot patrols
- Refocus on traffic safety
- Refocus on community policing
- Create longer term zone deployments
- Refine the training to align with the strategic plan and department mission
- Update the website

Other changes, while important need to occur overtime as they affect existing contracts. As stated, morale is high and the department is functioning well; too much change at once can cause disruption.

Appendix A: Patrol Allocation

The following provides contextual information regarding the process of patrol staffing allocations.

Agencies countrywide undertake the process of reviewing district boundaries and patrol allocation for a variety of reasons ranging from changing demographics, rising crimes rates, dwindling forces, equalizing workload and stabilizing span of control.

Across the United States, there is not a rational basis that establishes the ratio of police officers to citizens; those that are reported are based on the jurisdiction's estimated residential population, which does not account for fluctuations in population from tourists, businesses and seasonal populations. As a means of measurement, the ratio is of interest; however, it should not be the only qualifier when staffing and deployment.

Often the single point of comparison is population size. This strategy provides a descriptive analysis, but does not allow for a prescriptive analysis. Population alone should not drive staffing levels, as it does not provide enough information about a community, its unique needs or the use of department members from a patrol allocation perspective.

For example, a department that reports a high ratio of officers per 1,000 may have a higher proportion of officers performing non-patrol functions within the department. Conversely, a department with a lower ratio of officers per 1,000 could potentially be allocating a greater number of resources directly to patrol.

Moreover, a small geographic area may be densely populated or a community might have a mix of industrial and residential uses greatly impacting day and nighttime populations. A geographically smaller community might have the ability to respond more quickly to calls, but if it also has a high population density, calls might be of the nature requiring longer time to clear. Fluctuations in daily population caused by tourists, conventions and business workforce must be considered. Much of the changes seen in crime rates have less to do with number of officers per 1,000 residents and more to do with events in the community or special circumstances that face a community at any given time.

A.1 Workload Assessments

The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA)¹⁷ believes the most common mistake made by agencies is to review only patrol divisions and

¹⁷ The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc., (CALEA®) was created in 1979 as a credentialing authority through the joint efforts of law enforcement's major executive associations

ignore other integral divisions of an agency such as community policing or investigative units.

CALEA stresses the importance of reviewing workload demands in total to prevent under- or overstaffing. Staffing specific to the patrol division will differ from other sections of the department, and there is a need to consider policing strategies that place varying demands on officers' workload.

The assessment of workload for patrol considers a multitude of factors, including calls per officer, time on calls, percent of time on patrol and elements, such as sick/injury leave and discretionary leave (vacation or compensatory leave.)

An assessment of locations and types of incidents, along with geographic distribution and time of day that calls occur should be included in attempting to balance the workload.

The International Association of Chief of Police report "Patrol Staffing and Deployment Study," outlines the process of assessments, supporting the view that conducting an assessment assists the department to achieve the appropriate staffing levels.

Through the assessment process, a department can determine the required number of patrol officers and supervisors required to effectively:

- Respond to emergency and non-emergency demands of citizens in a timely manner.
- Conduct prevention and other proactive patrol tasks effectively, including community-oriented policing and problem solving.
- Conduct all other patrol tasks effectively, including traffic control and special missions work.
- Allow officers to meet all administrative requirements satisfactorily, including report writing, training, court and personal needs.
- Promote the safety of the public and police officers.¹⁸

The plan developed will create a strategy for deploying department resources in a cost-effective manner with consideration of shifts, patrol area, temporal and geographic incidence of crime, demands for non-crime services and policing strategies in place.

A.2 Time Allocation

Different patrol tasks and policing strategies require different levels of time commitment. A widespread and standard practice among many agencies is to allocate one-third of an officer's time for response to calls for service, one-third of the time for crime prevention/community policing and other proactive strategies and one-third for

¹⁸ IACP Patrol Staffing and Deployment Study – no author or date cited

administrative duties. While this has become a standardized way to allocate time, police departments should not just routinely divide the workday in that manner, as communities engaged in crime prevention need to cognitively consider the mission, vision, values and patrol strategies employed.

Jurisdictional considerations for time allocation include such issues as the prevalent patrol strategies in place, budget issues that may affect staffing levels and current environmental conditions, when considered, change the amount of time required for specific activities. Moreover, within a single jurisdiction, several allocation models for time may be in place to account for strategies such as Data Driven Policing, Problem Orientated Policing, Community Orientated Policing or Directed Patrol. It is not uncommon for a department to apply several strategies, each requiring different staffing levels.

A.3 Response Time Standards

There is much discussion on a national level regarding response times for calls for service. There is agreement that high-priority calls require a rapid response. High-priority calls are those that immediately threaten the life and safety of community members and officers. Additionally, if there is a high probability of apprehension of the perpetrator, that call is a high-priority call. Departments need to recognize that, on average, in less than three percent of all calls, an officer immediately makes an arrest. Communities often over-emphasize the response time as a factor in evaluating effective police services. When the Community Orientated Policing philosophy was emerging, many communities determined that law enforcement officers should not actually answer many calls traditionally thought of as police calls, as they were social service related calls.

A.4 Supervision Style/Requirements and Span of Control

The span of control for “flat,” decentralized organizations tend to have a greater number of subordinates per supervisor while “tall” hierarchy organizations tend to have a small number of subordinates per supervisor. CALEA promotes that a supervisor be responsible for no more than 12 officers or eight beats. Nationally, averages range from 1:4 – 1:7 with high spans of as many as 1:15. There is considerable debate around the span of control in the law enforcement. As police organizations are paramilitary, there is a tendency toward tall organizations. On a universal level, businesses have realized the benefit of high spans of control and there are lessons to be learned for law enforcement agencies related to this approach.

In *Police Chiefs*, October 2006 article, "Span of Control for Law Enforcement Agencies,"¹⁹ there are several factors that are attributed to both high and low spans of control; they are Simplicity of the Work:

- Efficient use of Technology
- Quality, Skills and Capabilities of Subordinates
- Skills and Capabilities of the Supervisor
- Quality of the Training in a Department
- Harmony of the Workforce

¹⁹ Span of Control for Law Enforcement Agencies, Troy Lane, Assistant Chief, Kansas State University Police Department, Manhattan Kansas. *The Police Chief*, vol. 73, no. 10, October 2006. the International Association of Chiefs of Police, 515 North Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 USA

Appendix B: Community Policing Strategy Overview

When developing the strategy, the department needs to consider the critical components of Community Policing as presented by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Policing.

Community policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues, such as crime, social disorder and fear of crime.

Community policing comprises three key components:

1. Community Partnerships

Collaborative partnerships between the law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve to develop solutions to problems and increase trust in police:

- Other government agencies
- Community members/Groups
- Nonprofits/Service providers
- Private businesses
- Media

2. Organizational Transformation

The alignment of organizational management, structure, personnel and information systems to support community partnerships and proactive problem solving:

- Agency Management:
 - Climate and culture
 - Leadership
 - Labor relations
 - Decision-making
 - Strategic planning
 - Policies
 - Organizational evaluations
 - Transparency
 - Organizational Structure
- Geographic assignment of officers:
 - Despecialization
 - Resources and finances

- Personnel:
 - Recruitment, hiring, and selection
 - Personnel supervision/evaluations
 - Training
- Information Systems (Technology):
 - Communication/access to data
 - Quality and accuracy of data

3. Problem Solving

The process of engaging in the proactive and systematic examination of identified problems to develop and rigorously evaluate effective responses:

- Scanning: identifying and prioritizing problems
- Analysis: researching what is known about the problem
- Response: developing solutions to bring about lasting reductions in the number and extent of problems
- Assessment: evaluating the success of the responses