

EVALUATION REPORT

OF

(CPA)
NORRISTOWN'S HIGH CRIME PATROL

By

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19328

EVALUATION LOAN

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Sub-grant
SE-302-73/A

Introduction

Norristown is a city having a population of about 38,000, covering an area of 3.7 square miles. The community is typical of many on the East coast, old and perhaps a bit tired.

Norristown is policed by a department of about 70 sworn personnel. The Department operates out of a dingy, dilapidated building in the center of the downtown area. The Chief, as is the entire Department, is under civil service. It appears that the Chief is subjected to little or no outside pressures. The mayor and city council do, however, have a strong voice in any disciplinary action the Chief may wish to implement.

During the late 1960's Norristown faced a series of civil disorders. These events apparently encouraged the city fathers to provide the Department with funds needed to update and expand the Department's physical and personnel resources.

Early in 1973 Norristown applied for a grant from the Governor's Justice Commission to implement a "High Crime Patrol." This Patrol was to be deployed in the center of the city which had been experiencing an inordinate amount of violent street crime.

In mid-1973 Norristown was awarded the grant. The funds cover salaries, equipment, and fringe benefits for five policemen, one sergeant, and in addition, two patrol cars and six mobile radios. The unit became operational in July of 1973. This report is an evaluation of the project through mid-April 1974.

Evaluation Procedures

In the proposal for the sub-grant, the Department stated that the objective of the program is to:

...mold a special unit....who will be assigned to the high crime areas. This unit will be specially trained in preventing and apprehending individuals involved in the commission of crimes. It is hopeful that this added trained police concentration....will reduce the number of incidents and instill confidence of the community in the police force and in safety on the streets. The effect of this program can be measured directly in the number of incidents which occur.....

The Norristown Police Department's objectives are clearly to reduce crime in a specified area and to reduce the public's fear of criminal attack.

The program objective of reducing crime in the area, while laudable, is quixotic and unrealistic in the short-term sense, for several reasons.

First, there is sufficient evidence now available to indicate that the use of reported statistics to measure the amount

of crime that actually occurs is not valid.* It appears that only 50-60 per cent of the crime that is actually perpetrated is ever brought to the attention of the police. Thus the Norristown "High Crime Patrol" could be very effective in reducing crime by perhaps 20-30 per cent, but because reported crime is inaccurate by 80-100 per cent, such an improvement might not be detected.

One of the reasons that a significant amount of crime is not reported is that citizens have lost confidence in their police in the sense that they feel that the police will, or cannot, do anything effective about the crime.* Thus, they do not report it. If the Norristown High Crime Patrol is successful in their second objective, i.e., increasing the public's confidence in the police, then this success may have the effect of increasing the amount of reported crime.

The final reason that reported crime is not a satisfactory measure for the program is that the "High Crime Patrol" is apparently intended to be an aggressive unit in the sense that it searches for crime. If it is successful in doing this then many of the crimes it detects may well be those which would not be reported to the police. Once again, increasing the amount of reported crime

*See for example, President's Commission of Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, Task Four Report: A Report of a National Survey, Field Surveys II. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., May 1967, p. 9. Also, Crime in the Nation's Five Largest Cities, Advanced Report; LEAA, U. S. Department of Justice, April 1974.

which would indicate that the "Patrol" was unsuccessful in meeting its first objective of reducing crime.

The amount of actual crime can be measured using survey techniques. However, the cost of such measurements is far beyond the resources available for the evaluation of this program.

The second objective of increasing the confidence in the police, or of reducing the fear of criminal attack, is of course one which is of extreme importance to all police organizations. Fear of criminal attack and the degree of confidence in the police can also be measured by survey techniques, but the resources required would again be beyond those available. In addition, there would be the further problem of determining what portion of any change in these parameters could be attributed to the "High Crime Patrol" operation.

Direct measures of how well the "High Crime Patrol" is meeting its objectives are therefore not within the scope of the resources of this program.

The proposal for evaluating the Norristown program upon which the evaluation grant was awarded suggested a different philosophy for measuring the success of the project.

The reason that the Norristown Police Department suggested the "High Crime Patrol" is that a tactical patrol (which is the recognized police terminology to describe the "High Crime Patrol")

is a recognized police tactic. The justification for using tactical patrol tactics is the same as that for using any other police tactic, be it investigative, interception patrol, or the preventive patrol tactic. It is simply a fact that no tactic exists at the present time that can be demonstrated to have a direct effect on the amount of crime occurring. Until such time that such a demonstration is available, police administrators must use whatever tactics they feel are effective. Thus, resources should be made available to police administrators so they can implement such units.

From this point of view then, this program should be evaluated in terms of how well the Department implements its "High Crime Patrol" as measured as to how well it compares to recognized tactical patrol (TP) standards.

An evaluation program based upon this approach would involve the following tasks.

The first task would be to firmly fix the type of TP that Norristown has in mind. Essentially, this means that the administration must make a clear commitment regarding the general complexion of their TP. This, then, is the first point of evaluation: Have the resources been used as made in this commitment?

A second task is for each department to prepare a plan describing how their unit will be deployed and controlled throughout the year. This plan also contains a list of problems that must be addressed, with priorities assigned.

A second point of evaluation, then, is the planning that has been devoted to the expenditure of this resource.

The plan would be evaluated on:

Its flexibility

The degree to which it is followed

The degree to which it is updated

A TP uses different tactics than a conventional patrol. Therefore, the third task to be accomplished is that each department prepare a training program. The third point for evaluation then is the quality of the training. Specifically, it would be evaluated for its:

Pertinence

Completeness

Quality of instruction

Effectiveness of instruction

One of the dangers of implementing units such as a TP is that they often cause divisions within departments because, either by statement or implication, the impression is given that the TP personnel form the elite of the department. Thus, those who are not in the unit are made to feel that they are second-class policemen. This division is often increased because the TP units are not as closely supervised as the regular patrol, and they do not need to respond to the many non-criminal service requests, which many policemen feel does not fall in the category of police work. The

magnitude of this division can be used as a measure to evaluate the department's managerial ability to implement change.

TP's are most effective when they are assigned to specific problems (purse snatches, commercial burglaries, residential burglaries, etc.). Thus, another point of evaluation is to determine the number and quality of individual problems addressed, and how many of these were successfully solved.

Another measure of operational effectiveness is the normalized arrest rate for the TP unit, which would be compared to a similar measure for conventional patrol units.

The final point of evaluation addresses the question of whether the TP was actually used as intended. This judgment can be made by examining the actual deployment scheme to see if it matches the geographic and temporal occurrence of crime in each of the communities.

The proposal submitted by the Norristown Police Department to the Governor's Justice Commission stated as a secondary goal of the program the reduction of the public's fear of criminal attack. As noted above, a determination of whether or not the program has been successful in meeting this goal requires resources far beyond those available. Nevertheless, the Governor's Justice Commission requested that it be provided with whatever information

was readily available that addresses this goal. The evaluator agreed to seek out and report such data, as long as it was understood that its validity would be questionable.

The evaluation program, of course, must not be limited to the points suggested above. They are noted at this point only to outline a suggested approach for evaluating the program. Certainly, if this approach is to be used a more detailed plan for evaluation, which would specify the evaluation details after consultation with the Commission and the project director of the police department involved, would be generated.

While the use of crime and arrest statistics as measures of the effectiveness of the program has been de-emphasized, such data, for a number of reasons (e.g., convention and political) cannot be ignored. Therefore, it is necessary that such data be acquired. It is equally important that some indication be obtained regarding the accuracy of this data.

In summary, the evaluation of the Norristown High Crime Patrol consists of three areas.

1. A pre-program evaluation of the accuracy of Norristown's crime, arrest, and clearance statistics.

2. The generation of a document between the evaluator and the Norristown Police Department outlining the objectives of the program and specific items and measures to be used for the evaluation.
3. The obtaining of data and information required to make the evaluation as stated in document that is generated.

At this point, some ten months into the program, the three tasks listed above have been completed. The remainder of this report discusses these matters in detail.

PRE-PROGRAM EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

In order that there be complete agreement between the evaluator and the Norristown Police Department about such matters as to the nature and objectives of the planned program (The Norristown High Crime Patrol), and the specific points and measures to be used in the evaluation of the program, several meetings with the Norristown Police Department personnel were held prior to the program becoming operational.

These meetings resulted in a document which specifically defines and/or describes how the High Crime Patrol will be deployed, the problems it will address, and how it will be controlled.

In addition, a list of tasks was generated. The degree to which these tasks are accomplished by the Norristown Police Department is to be the principal measure used to evaluate the Norristown High Crime Patrol program.

The Norristown Police Department has indicated their acceptance of both the program description and objectives, and the task list.

During these pre-operational visits the accuracy of Norristown's crime reporting and clearance rate was evaluated. The results of this evaluation are summarized here.

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The Norristown High Crime Patrol will be crime oriented. That is, its objectives will be limited exclusively to preventing crime, intercepting crime while it is in progress, making apprehensions of the perpetrators of crime and for the control of civil disorders. Only under unusual circumstances will the manpower of the Patrol be committed for supplying police responses for non-criminal requests for service.

The Patrol will use a variety of tactics for preventing and intercepting crime and for apprehending perpetrators; these will include preventive and interception patrols, surveillance, community relations, initial investigations, as well as others.

It is realized that the effectiveness of the Patrol will depend upon, among other things, the planning of its operations in both the short and long range sense and upon its flexibility. For this reason, the commander of the Patrol will be given the authority and hence held accountable for such matters as personnel selection, training, deployment, selection of problems and the maintenance of suitable records which can be used to review the detail activities of the Patrol during the course of the program.

EVALUATION

The evaluation of the Program will be made upon the degree to which the following tasks are accomplished.

I. Management

- A. Development of a plan for the general deployment and control of the unit.
 - 1. A list of problems to be addressed and priorities.
 - 2. Flexibility of the plan.
 - 3. The degree to which it is followed.
 - 4. The degree to which it is updated.
- B. The development of a procedure for controlling the Patrol in the field.
- C. The development of a procedure dispatching of units of the Patrol by the communications section.
- D. Moral effect of the Patrol on other elements of the Department.

II. Training.

- A. Development of training schedule.
- B. Training for:
 - 1. Pertinence
 - 2. Completeness
 - 3. Quality of instruction
 - 4. Effectiveness

III. Results

- A. Problems addressed
 - 1. Of highest priority
 - 2. Successful solution

- B. Generalized deployment corresponds with the temporal variation of the occurrence of crime.

IV: Records

- A. Plans and procedures
 - B. Manpower deployment
 - C. List of problems addressed and the results of the police response
 - D. Arrest and clearance data
- V. Reduction of the Public Fear of Criminal Attack

ACCURACY OF NORRISTOWN'S UNIFORM CRIME REPORTING

METHODOLOGY

The means of accessing the accuracy of a city's crime reporting system consists of extracting a sample of requests for service which appear to be of a criminal nature, and examining this sample in some detail to determine if in fact a crime did occur, and if it did, whether it was entered into the UCR tally.

In order to determine if there is any under-reporting of crime, it is necessary to extract the sample from the point that the police first make a written record of the request for service (a radio log or complaint card). This first record contains all the information that is available at the time.

As the log or complaint card is used by the dispatcher it will usually contain some notation if the complaint clerk has any indication that the request for service is of a criminal nature.

The accuracy of a department's clearance rate can also be estimated by using a sampling technique. The sample of cleared crimes is examined to see if they meet the definition of a cleared or exceptionally cleared crime.

CRIME DATA FOR NORRISTOWN

A schematic outline of Norristown's record system and the means by which information is entered and correlated is shown in the accompanying diagram.

The radio log contains an indication of the nature of the request for service and whether or not a report was written on the incident. From the logs for July and August a sample of 100 incidents was selected, which appeared from the log to be of a criminal nature. From this sample, 18 incidents appeared to warrant closer examination. All the incidents in the sample from the radio log that appeared to be burglaries (9) were included. (This particular crime was singled out as it is an easy one for the police to down-grade.) All of the apparent burglary incidents, with one exception, were eventually classified as a burglary. The one exception was not classified as a burglary or for that matter as a crime. The rationale for this action was that the victim did not wish to prosecute. The Norristown Police Department is clearly in error here for not recording the incident as a crime.

Those of the remaining questionable incidents involved a man beating a woman. In none of these incidents was a report filed indicating that no crime had taken place. Upon questioning individuals in the Norristown Police Department further, it was learned that in incidents of this type (confrontation between husband/wife, girlfriend/boyfriend, etc.), the Norristown Police Department does not in general consider a crime has occurred unless it is a first degree assault. While it was not possible to verify that assaults of a lesser degree had taken place in these three

incidents, the practice of the Norristown Police Department would indicate that if they had they would not have been considered crimes and hence entered into the UCR system.

The remaining two incidents were clearly petty thefts. However, again because the victim did not want to prosecute, the Norristown Police Department did not enter the incidents into the UCR system.

This survey would indicate that the Norristown Police Department is undercounting the total amount of crime by about six per cent. (It is important to note that most of the incidents which were not counted as crimes were Part II crimes. The under-reporting of Part I crime is probably considerably less.)

While there appears to be no conscious effort in the Norristown Police Department to undercount crime, there is no way to check absolutely that this impression is correct. The trouble lies in the system used to arrive at the final tally of crime. This is done by an accumulative check system. Thus there is no means to establish by documents that a particular crime has been entered into the tally.

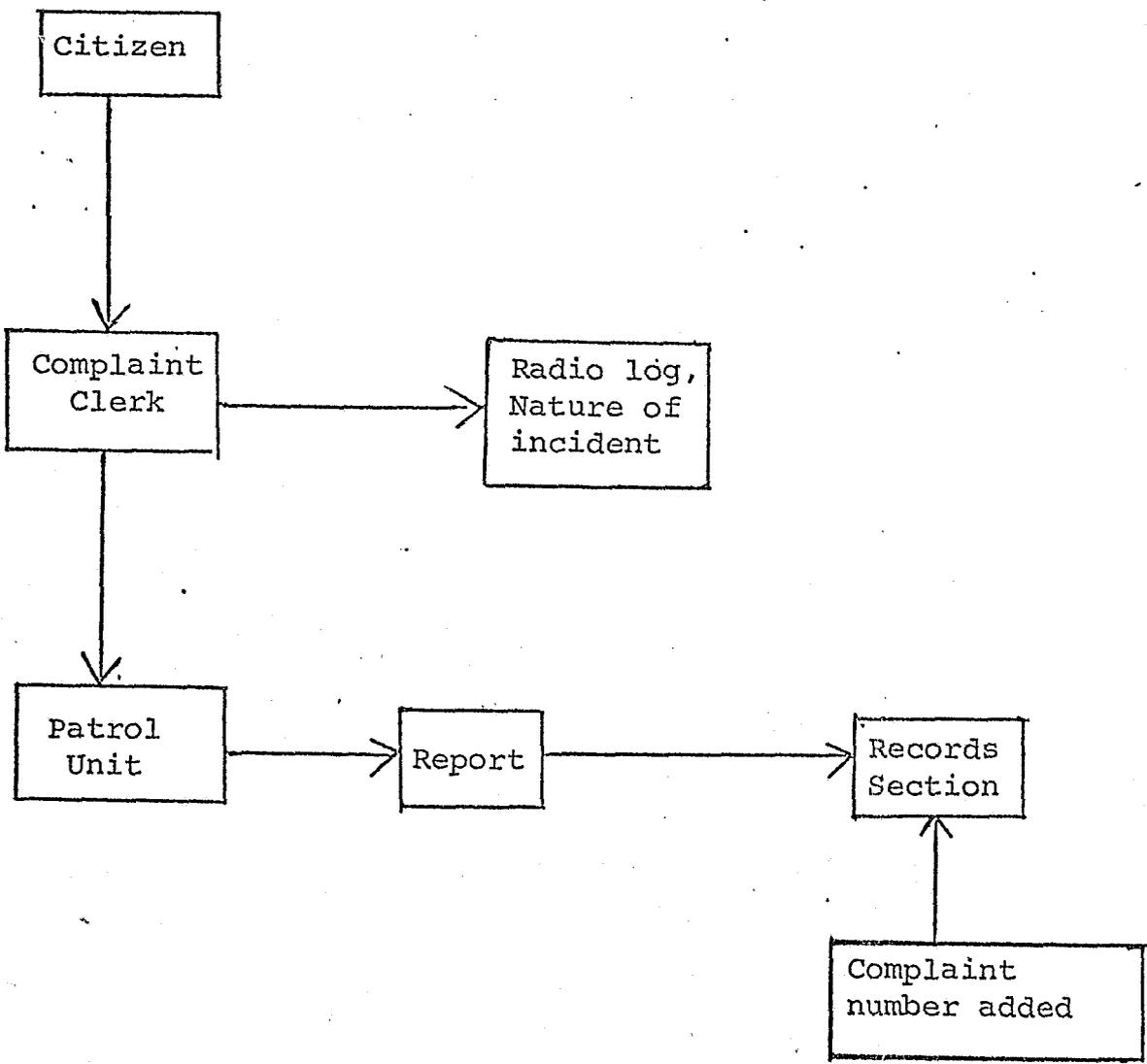
CLEARANCE RATE

The Norristown record system also does not permit any single means of examining the accuracy of their clearance rate.

When a crime is cleared it is also entered in an accumulative check system. Thus it is not possible to correlate a particular check with a particular incident so that it can be examined to see if the crime was actually cleared.

These problems have been pointed out to the Norristown Police Department and they are taking corrective measures.

NORRISTOWN RECORD SYSTEM



RESULTS*

The Norristown High Crime Patrol has been operational approximately ten months at the time of this report. Insofar as the data and/or information is available, it is displayed in the following pages.

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

I. MANAGEMENT

I-A. Development of a Plan for the General Deployment and Control of the Unit.

The High Crime Patrol (HCP) is under the command of a Sergeant who selected the personnel for the unit from among volunteers. A generalized statement of the duties of the HCP as seen by the Commander are:

- .. To patrol high crime areas at high crime times.
- . Surveillance work and to assist the Detective Division in controlling vice.

*The interim report submitted in February raised several questions which were made known to the evaluator by a letter from Mr. Tomas Quinn of the Governor's Justice Commission. Mr. Quinn's letter and the comments made in response to it are contained in the Appendix to this report. Since some of the points raised are perhaps of interest to these other readers, notations are made in this report to refer to the Appendix. The notations are in the form of a footnote which refer to Mr. Quinn's comment by question number and the evaluator's response by the same number.

- . Assist in civil disorder.
- . Patrol shopping areas during holidays and big sale days.
- . Assist at sporting events.
- . Form granny, or similar, patrols when necessary.

The Sergeant appears to have been given the responsibility and authority required to deploy the unit effectively. That is, he can deploy the unit as he sees fit in a temporal sense and can select specific problems to address.

There seems to be some confusion as to the flexibility of deploying the unit geographically. The Sergeant does not feel he has the authority (although he sees the need) to deploy the unit outside of the area specified in the grant proposal.

The unit appears to have settled into a rather fixed routine as to temporal deployment and tactics used. If they exist, neither long nor short range plans were made available to the evaluator. (It is questionable if such plans are pertinent for such a small unit.) In general, any problem that requires specific variations in the routine is addressed as the problem arrives.

I-B. Control of Unit in the Field.

In general, the complete unit is committed at one time, as two-man patrol units in unmarked vehicles. Thus, control of the unit is simplified as the Sergeant is in the field at the same time. Control is accomplished by briefings before going into the field, and by maintained portable radios.

I-C. Development of Dispatching Procedure.

The unit has no responsibility for handling crimes reported through regular channels. Thus there has been no need for developing a dispatching procedure.

I-D. Morale Effects on Other Elements in the Department.

Two actions were taken to minimize any such problems. The Sergeant purposely selected his people from a variety of units within the Department in hopes that this would lessen the chance for contention between the units. The other action consisted of briefing command officers by the Chief and the patrol division by the commander as to the purpose and value of the HCP.

At present, it does not appear that there is any morale problem existing. At least none of the members of the HCP feel that if it exists, it has not been serious enough to have any effect upon the HCP operation.

II. TRAINING*

II-A Training Schedule

The training schedule developed consisted of:

20 hours of orientation, and of outlining duties and responsibilities of the unit.

20 hours of the use of the machuk stick.

2 field trips to observe other TP units in operation.

*See Appendix question #3

This training would seem to have been minimal. However, since the officers in the unit are all experienced, there might not have been any need for training the areas of surveillance and intelligence.

Because of the limited training it is not feasible to evaluate the quality or effectiveness of the training.

III. RESULTS

III-A. Problems Addressed

(See Quantitative Results)

III-B. Deployment Matches Temporal Variation of Crime*

The unit is routinely deployed from 1800 to 0200, Tuesday through Friday. The unit's rest days are Saturday and Sunday. This deployment was selected upon the following reasoning. Sunday evening has the minimum of criminal activity in the area. Thus, this should be one of the rest days. The choice of the second day is then between Saturday and Monday. Saturday was selected because criminal activity on that night is somewhat less than on Monday night.

While it would perhaps be desirable to deploy this unit on Saturday night in preference to, say, Tuesday or Wednesday, such a split rest schedule would not be beneficial to the morale

*See Appendix question #5

of the unit. Thus, the HCP is well deployed within the constraints placed upon the deployment schedule.

IV. RECORDS

IV-A Plans and Procedures

(See I. above)

IV-B. Manpower Deployment

The daily log of deployment of the HCP has been examined.

The patrol is being deployed as stated in III-B.

IV-C and IV-D. List of Problems Addressed, and Results: Arrest and Clearance Data.

The Sergeant in charge of the HCP has been given the chore of maintaining the records of the unit. As of May 1974, he has done a very commendable job. Of particular interest is that he has seen fit to classify crimes into "detectable" and "non-detectable" categories. A "detectable" crime is one which occurs at a location that could have been observed by a policeman, and hence could have implemented an immediate response. A "non-detectable" crime is one that occurs at a location where a policeman has no legitimate right to be in the course of his patrol duties.

Because the HCP feels it can only be directly effective against "detectable" crimes, such a scheme of classification has some meaning.

Arrest data for the HCP is available in detail. Since the HCP does not respond to crimes that have been completed before being brought to the attention of the police (i.e., the HCP does not become involved in investigating crimes) clearance data is not germane.

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

ROBBERY

	<u>HCP Area</u>	<u>Remainder of the City</u>
August 1973	1	-
September	0	0
October	3	0
November	0	2
December	8	7
January 1974	9	2
February	1	2
March	0	2
April	0	2

BURGLARY

September 1973	10	23
October	11	30
November	20	39
December	20	39
January 1974	15	40
February	19	35
March	15	25
April	17	36

REPORTED CRIMES AGAINST THE PERSONin the HCP AREA

	1972-73 (# Each Month)	1973 - 1974		Cleared **
		Total*	Detectable	
September	16 (1972)	10	8	5
October	14 "	14	8	3
November	5 "	8	7	3
December	16 "	18	17	5
January	11 (1973)	11	8	1
February	9	9	4	1
March	14	13	7	1
April	14	16	9	0
May	12	-	-	-
June	8	-	-	-
July	15 (1972)			
August	14 "			

*This number is the total of crimes against the person plus any purse snatches that occurred (purse snatches may, depending upon the circumstances, be classified as a crime against property).

** This is the total number of crimes against the person cleared, both detectable and non-detectable.

ARRESTS
(1973)

	Drugs	Homicide	Child Abuse	DWI & Underage Drinking	Involuntary & Deviate Sex Acts	Stolen Cars	Rape	Assault Robbery	Other	Warrant	Total
July 1973	1		2	1	13						17
Aug.				1	2	2				2	7
Sept.	1		1	1				1	6	2	12
Oct.	2			3				1	2	2	10
Nov.		1	1	2					1		5
Dec.	9			2				1		1	13
Jan. 1974						1		2	1		4
Feb.	1										1
March	3								5*	1	9
** April	3					2			2		7

*Four of these were attempted burglaries

** It should be noted that in April 1974 there was a mass arrest on drug charges throughout the county as a result of the grand jury returning true bills. It is estimated that the HCP either made the total case or substantially contributed to about half or three-fourths of these 70 some indictments.

V. REDUCTION OF THE PUBLIC'S FEAR OF CRIMINAL ATTACK

A secondary goal of the HCP program is to reduce the fear, among the citizenry, of criminal attack. The degree to which this goal is met depends to a large extent upon a public relations effort. That is, fear can only be reduced if the public can be convinced that there is nothing to fear. One approach is, of course, an educational program. Others would be to provide for high police visibility (i.e., saturation patrol, using marked automobiles and uniformed officers); or by having a highly publicized clearance rate.

The resources available to the HCP severely limit its ability to conduct a significant educational program.

For strategic and tactical reasons, the visibility of the HCP and the touting of its operational successes have been intentionally kept to a minimum.

There are two strategies available to the police for attacking street crime. The first is to attempt to interrupt the crime while it is in progress or to identify the perpetrator using the investigation tactic (i.e., a reactive strategy). The second strategy is based upon the assumption that most street crimes are caused by heroin addicts. The tactic used is to remove the addict from the street (via a drug charge) before he can commit

the crime (i.e., a proactive strategy). The implementation of this second strategy of course implies a covert operation.

At the start of the program the Norristown Police Department made the decision that the HCP would use this latter strategy. Thus, the fielding of the HCP and its area of operation were not made public knowledge. Likewise, any operational successes the unit has obtained have not been publicly attributed to the HCP. This decision reduces the amount of police operation information available to the criminal element in the area.

The particular strategy selected in effect said that the secondary objective of the program (i.e., the reduction of fear of criminal attack), would not be addressed immediately.

Since this objective was not addressed deliberately by the current program, there is little point in attempting to evaluate the degree to which this objective was obtained. Nevertheless, the evaluator contacted three store owners in the area and the editor of the local newspaper with the objective in mind of finding out how aware they were of the HCP and/or its operation. None of these individuals were more than vaguely aware of the existence of the unit; and none had any knowledge of its area of operation nor of its operational successes. What knowledge they did have seemed to stem from the newspaper articles announcing the awarding of the grant to the city for the formation of the HCP.

Whatever tactical advantage there was for maintaining the HCP as a covert operation has probably been dissipated some time ago. Hence, it is time that this secondary objective be addressed.

This matter was discussed with the Sergeant and the Chief in April and they accepted this comment.

As a first step, opportunities are to be sought for discussing the HCP in public at local service and social club meetings. The evaluator is aware that within the past several months the HCP has been discussed publicly at several service club meetings.

While such speaking engagements are of use, it should be clearly understood by the Norristown Police Department that to effectively address the secondary objective it is necessary to develop a plan, and to see that the plan is implemented. That is, the secondary objective cannot, and will not be obtained, unless a planned, concerted effort is directed towards its attainment.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It would be premature to draw any but the most generalized conclusions about the HCP program. At the time of this writing the unit has been operational for approximately ten months, a major portion of which must be regarded as a shake-down period.

With this statement in mind, then, the following can be said:

The managerial tasks concerned with the administration and operational procedures appear well in hand by the HCP. The commander of the unit is a capable leader and has apparently received sufficient authority. The mode of operation has been set and sufficient procedures developed to allow its implementation.

The morale of the unit seems extremely high. The commander of the unit, as well as his people, are eager and appear to have a personal interest in the TP mode of policing. The unit seems to be perfectly capable of independent operation and officers who have this facility should be encouraged to exercise it to the limit.

FIRST RECOMMENDATION

All the evidence which has been made available to this evaluator indicates that the Governor's Justice Commission should look with favor on a proposal to continue the HCP program.

SECOND RECOMMENDATION*

There seems to be confusion within the unit as well as within the administration as to whether or not the grant, either by intention or implication, limits the operation activities of the HCP to a specific geographical area within the City of Norristown. While this area clearly contains the bulk of street crime, crime does occur in other areas and the HCP could be effective in addressing the problems. The Governor's Justice Commission should make its intent clear as to whether or not it intended to limit the HCP's operational activities to a specific area of Norristown.

The Governor's Justice Commission should make it clear to the Norristown Police Department that no restriction exists upon the geographical operational area of HCP. The administration of the Norristown Police Department should give the Commander of the HCP the authority necessary to become operational in any area of Norristown as he sees fit.

THIRD RECOMMENDATION**

The effectiveness of the HCP unit could be seriously eroded due to vacations and sick leave because of its small size.

* See Appendix 6A

** See Appendix 6B

Its size further limits the unit to addressing only one problem at a time and to deploying the unit to only a 40-hour per week time span.

The size of the HCP unit should be increased to at least eight officers.

FOURTH RECOMMENDATION

The HCP has become active in the intelligence area. This sort of activity should be encouraged. It is at present limited by a lack of funds within the Norristown Police Department.

If the program is to be continued, the new budget for the unit should contain an item of \$300 - \$600 for intelligence purposes. These funds should be expended and accounted for according to the LEAA guidelines.

FIFTH RECOMMENDATION

At the present time it appears that the Commander of the HCP is overburdened with menial administrative chores (e.g., maintaining data which is required for program evaluation). Consequently, his time in the field is curtailed. Many of these time-consuming chores could be accomplished by a civilian clerk.

If the program is to be continued, the new budget should contain an item which will provide a clerk for approximately one-quarter time.

SIXTH RECOMMENDATION

The unit is becoming active in areas which involve surveillance and/or intrusion detection. The Department has no equipment to aid in these activities.

If the program is to be continued, the new budget should contain an item which provides for the purchase of surveillance and intrusion detection equipment (i.e., on the order of \$1,000).

SEVENTH RECOMMENDATION

At the present time the HCP unit operates both in and out of uniform. The officer is issued one type of firearm, either a regular service revolver or a small automatic. Neither of these weapons is satisfactory for both modes of operation.

If the program is to be continued, the new budget should contain an item which provides for the purchase of an additional weapon for each of the HCP officers (i.e., approximately \$1500).

EIGHTH RECOMMENDATION

It is clear that the advantages of keeping the HCP a covert operation have been dissipated. Therefore, there is no reason why the secondary objective of the program (i.e., the reduction of the public's fear of criminal attack), should not be addressed. In this evaluator's opinion, the importance of addressing and meeting this objective cannot be overstressed.

Therefore, this program should be continued only if the
Norristown Police Department submits to the Governor's Justice
Commission a detailed plan as to how the HCP intends to attack
this objective.



GOVERNOR'S JUSTICE COMMISSION

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

SOUTHEAST REGION

214 WEST FRONT STREET, MEDIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19063

March 22, 1974

Milton J. Shapp
Governor

Israel Packel
Attorney General
Chairman

E. Drexel Godfrey
Executive Director

SOUTHEAST REGIONAL COUNCIL
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Dear Dr. Elliott:

Please excuse the delay in responding to your Interim Evaluation Report for Norristown Borough High Crime Patrol (HCP) (SE-302-73A/S). I have discussed the report with our Harrisburg staff, and the following points need further explanation at this time or should be included in the Final Report:

1. Although your uneasiness with the use of existing data bases was made very clear in your original Evaluation Plan, subsequent correspondence resolved that the traditional statistics would be addressed, with appropriate qualifying statements, in your evaluation. To this end:
 - A. The charts on Pages 18-19 are not very clear. Are quantitative results reported crime? (You tentatively indicated by phone on March 18th that they were.)
 - B. Under "Detectable Crimes Against the Person" (p. 18), what is the "Remainder of the City?" (You indicated tentatively on March 10th that they were "arrests.") If they are arrests, what kind of arrests; if they are not "detectable," why are they presented in this comparison format?

? } Also, what was the occurrence of crimes for the remainder of the city, as well as arrests, so it might be clearer how effective this unit is compared to general patrol?

- C. On the "Arrests" chart (p. 19) (which, I assume, is the HCP area), figures are presented which do not make sense in light of the "Detectable Crimes" chart (p. 18). For example, "December" under "Detectable Crimes" indicates there were 17 arrests, but on Page 19 there are 13 total arrests for December. How can there be more "detectable crime" arrests than arrests, since the former is more exclusive?
 - D. In general, there is no analysis of data. This should be provided, with whatever qualifications you prefer. For example, is there any spillover effect? How many arrests are for violent street crimes, explicated in the "Problem Statement" of Norristown's grant contract?
 - E. Will it be possible to include as a control measure reported crime and arrests for this HCP area prior to implementation of this unit?
 - F. It might also be helpful if you determined number of crimes reported by citizens in this area versus detected by police; also, if some comparison were made of crimes detected per man in HCP versus general patrol.
2. Stated objectives of the applicant, in addition to decreasing crime and increasing apprehension, are to increase community relations and increase confidence in police. While you did not provide for such analysis in your original Evaluation Plan, we did indicate a need for some effort in this regard, perhaps a telephone survey or interview with community leaders. Will this be provided on the Final Report?
3. There is no analysis of the training provided, other than an indication that the training was minimal and the officers were experienced and perhaps did not need much training. From your experience with tactical units in the past, you should be able to determine whether or not the men have the requisite skills to take part in the project with their existing experience and training.
- A. There were 20 hours of training with the machuk stick. Is it often needed or used?

March 22, 1974

4. Has the unit been deployed to prevent certain types of crimes, such as purse snatching or robbery? If so, is there any indication that response time for crimes in progress in this area vary from some in other areas or during a prior time period?
5. The men are not deployed on Saturday night, since it is indicated that criminal activity is somewhat less than on Monday night. I find this surprising. Are the target crimes in the HCP area actually occurring less on Saturday night than Monday night?
6. Concerning your recommendations:
 - A. The grant contract, as written, does limit the unit to the designated area. However, the applicant may request a subgrant modification which would permit re-deployment if the target crimes become a serious problem in another area of the city. I would prefer, however, that this re-deployment be justified by data and approved by our office prior to its implementation in each case. We would provide an expeditious review and minimize delay. I have notified Chief Interrante of this by letter.
 - B. You recommend increasing the unit to eight men. Can this be achieved through re-deployment of existing personnel in the Norristown Police Department? If no grant funds are available for a personnel increment, would you still recommend an increase in the size of the unit from existing resources?
 - C. How often has there been need for the men to use their weapons?

Please respond at your earliest convenience to the above areas of concern.

In regards the Final Report due date, Norristown is attempting to meet our submission deadline for April (April 3rd - April 12th). The committee consideration of that application would be late April or early May; Council consideration on May 20th, and Commission final consideration on July 1st.

Dr. James F. Elliott

March 22, 1974

If it is possible to have a Final Report available by May 1st, that would be most preferable. However, given the short period between now and then, it may not be possible. If not, the second preference would be for you to appear at the Committee meeting to present a verbal update of your Interim Report; less desirable would be an appearance at the May 20th Council meeting. The Final Report date could not be delayed beyond June 3rd. I would appreciate an early response on your flexibility of scheduling this report or appearance.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,



THOMAS J. QUINN
Evaluation Coordinator

TJQ/mmr

cc: Robert E. Masters
Chief Joseph Interrante
Christine Fossett
Evaluation File
Application File (SE-302-73A/S)

April 9, 1974

Mr. Thomas J. Quinn
Governor's Justice Commission
214 West Front Street
Media, Pennsylvania 19063

Dear Tom:

Below are my comments on your letter of 3/22/74, regarding Norristown High Crime Patrol (SE-302-73 A/S) Interim Report.

1.A. The figures in the top two tables on page 18 are reported crime.

1.B. The column labels of the table at the bottom of page 18 have been completely mistyped. This table should read:

Reported Crimes Against the Prison in HCP Area

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Detectable</u>	<u>Cleared</u>
September 1973	10	8	5
October	14	8	3
November	8	7	3
December	14 ⁸	<u>17</u>	<u>5</u>
Totals	46	40	16

There is still an error in this table as it indicates the number of detectable crimes for December was greater than the total. I have consulted my original notes and the inconsistency also exist there. I will have to leave this in abayance until I get back to Norristown so I can locate the source of the error.

1.C. There is no inconsistency in the Table on page 19 in light of 1.B. above.

1.D. I had not intended to make any data analysis for two reasons. (a) As I've pointed out several times before and is quite clear in my proposal -- any analysis based upon reported crime is useless except as an academic exersize. Your suggestion that I comment on, for example, the spillover effect is definitely in this catagory, even assuming one knew how to measure it, and had the resources

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available. (b) The meagerness of the data at the time the report was written, and I would think for sometime into the future would include any meaningful conclusions.

Your question as to arrests for violent street crimes would seem to be answered by the Table at the bottom of page 18 (as corrected in this letter.)

1.E. I have requested the Sgt. in charge of the HCP unit to furnish me with such data. He has indicated he will meet this request.

1.F. (a) A general comparison such as you suggest would not be possible, as only crimes against the person have been classified as detectable or non-detectable (that is property crimes have not been so classified). Some idea of the comparison you suggest can be obtained from the Table on page 18 (as corrected). Since the HCP does not respond to reported crimes, the number of crimes cleared is a measure of the number of the HCP detected. This number subtracted from the total is the number detected by citizens.

(b) It would not be possible to make a comparison between the detection ability of the HCP and the regular patrol as crimes in the remainder of the city are not classified as detectable or non-detectable. The comparison you suggest would only make sense if it were based upon detectable crimes.

2. This will be provided in the final report. I did not do it for this report because, (a) the HCP had only been operational for a short time, and (b) I still have the serious question as to what possible system could be used that would have any real meaning.

3. I pondered on whether or not to comment on the training when I wrote the report and decided against it. I reasoned as follows -- the HCP seems to be taking on the complexion of a covert operation and appears to limit its tactics mainly to patrol, and intelligence gathering. I think it is reasonable to assume that an officer who has had several years in patrol knows how to patrol. I do not feel that when the team was in training that they realized the emphasis they were going to put on intelligence, hence they did not recognize the need for training. But even if they did recognize the emphasis and needs -- where they could have obtained such training is an unanswerable question. At least in the

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six years I have been concerned with intelligence, I have not found a suitable method of training.

My personnel feeling is that if I were running the show I would not have permitted it to take such a covert posture nor would I have allowed so much emphasis to be placed upon developing hard core informer information sources. But such matters as the selection of posture and tactics can not be justified on the basis of factual data. Furthermore, I do not feel it is my place as an evaluator to comment on such matters, nor do I feel it is right that my personal opinions in these matters be made known to the department unless I am asked to do so.

To answer your point directly -- yes they do have the necessary skills to function effectively in the type of operation into which the HCP has developed.

3.A. I consider the machuk stick very much an overkill weapon and to have replaced the night stick with this to have been a poor decision or someones part. But once again, it is not my place to comment on such decision -- as it is value judgment. This decision having been made then obviously training was required.

Asking such questions as how often is it needed or used is not a fair question. First of all, the need is a value judgment. Second, whether its used or not used is beside the point. The only justification for giving a policeman any weapon is that if he does need it to defend himself, it is available. Weapons are not given to policemen with the expectation that they will be used.

4. The unit when it is deployed as a patrol -- is deployed to intercept street crimes. Response time is not measured by the department. Even if it were it is extremely difficult to obtain accurate measurements for crimes in progress. In addition, I would suspect that the total number of such events is not sufficient to be of statistical significance -- nor would it be within the near future.

5. I, of course, pursued this question in some depth -- although not to the extent of going to a record search. The Sgt. explained it as follows. The HCP area is not heavily residential. People are drawn into the area for shopping and by the mortuaries which have viewing hours in the evening. The shops close

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at six on Saturday, and the mortuary activities are at a minimum. According to the Sgt., the streets are deserted by seven on Saturday night. This I am willing to accept the fact that there is no significant difference in the crime rate between Saturday and Monday. Perhaps I accepted this too readily -- but the same was true in Syracuse. Monday night was a real problem there.

Incidentally, we are not the only ones concerned about this. The last time I was there, I spent several hours with the Mayor. He was quite upset that the HCP was not deployed on Saturday. He was so disturbed that I was sure he's going to get the data; so he can prove his point. Thus I should have the facts the next time I go there.

6.A. No comment required.

6.B. (a) I can't answer such a question. It is not my function to comment upon whether or not the department is using all of its resources efficiently.

(b) Yes; I believe the reasons given in the report were objective.

(c) What weapons and how do you define use?

a

General Comment -- While I appreciate the concern evidenced in your questions, their general tenor disturbs me a bit. To answer many of them would require an elaborate data gathering effort, and to have any faith in the data it would be necessary to implement much more elaborate controls. There are two ways this can be done, (a) put pressure on the department to keep such data in implement such controls, (b) significantly increase the financial commitment to the programs so that the department can hire the necessary man-power. The first alternative would seem to defeat the purpose of the program as it would dissipate a significant portion of the manpower the program has added to the department. The second alternative would, at least to me, raise the question as to whether acquiring such data was worth the cost. My recommendation that a part-time clerk be added to the program seems to me to be reasonable compromise. The Sgt. of the HCP area is already spending too much of his time on record-keeping. If the were available it would be possible to at least extend the scope of the data (i.e.,

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to city-wide), although the quality of the data might not be improved.

As to the final report I will have it available by May 1st -- assuming that by the term Final Report you mean just an updating of the interim Report.

Sincerely,

J.F. Elliott
Assistant Professor

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MAJOR EVALUATIONS UNDERWAY OR COMPLETED IN YOUR SPA

Project or Program being Evaluated:

Grant Title: SE-302-73AS High Crime Patrol - Norristown
(include grant number)

Grantee: Norristown

Brief Description: A high crime patrol to strengthen the police
(both project and evaluation effort)
forces in areas with highest crime rates.

Scheduled date of final Evaluation Report: 7/26/74

Person to contact concerning the Evaluation:

Christine A. Fossett, Chief, Evaluation & Monitoring Unit
(name)

Governor's Justice Commission, Department of Justice

(address)
Box 1167, Harrisburg, PA., 17120

717-787-1422
(telephone)

If completed, is Evaluation Report on file with NCJRS? yes no

Please mail completed form to:

~~Keith Miles~~
Office of Evaluation
LEAA-NILECJ
Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20530

END

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