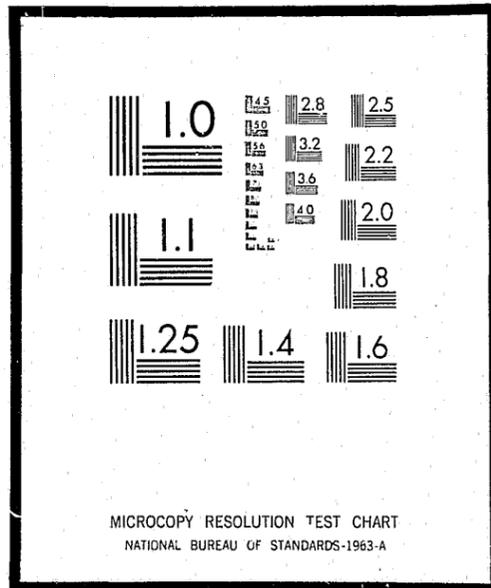


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LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION  
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FINAL REPORT  
PROGRAM EVALUATION UNIT

LEAA GRANT NUMBER  
73-DF-04-0035

JULY 1974

32568

READING ROOM

Program Evaluation Unit  
Administration Bureau  
Police Operations Department  
St. Petersburg, Florida

JAN 15 1976

## EVALUATION REPORT FOR THE PROGRAM EVALUATION UNIT

### I. INTRODUCTION

Police administrators are at the top of the chain of command and make most major policy decisions in police departments. These decisions are often difficult to make because the flow of information must pass through all of the links in the chain of command before reaching the top. Demanding schedules necessitate that administrators leave many details up to their subordinates, and because details often determine the context of a problem, decision-making becomes difficult.

The Program Evaluation Unit was designed to aid in the decision making process by alleviating blind decision making through professional program evaluation. Highly developed research methodologies are utilized to extract objective data and compile concise reports. These reports can then be used by administrators to review all facets of a problem or policy before making decisions.

A secondary function of the Program Evaluation Unit is to develop methodologies for extracting and analyzing data in criminal justice research and evaluation. The experimental nature of the Program Evaluation Unit promotes the trial and development of research methodologies. An expansion of methodological knowledge will increase the experience and expertise of the Program Evaluation Unit and so their effectiveness.

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Program Evaluation Unit in accomplishing its goals and objectives.

### II. RESOURCES COMMITTED

Since the inception of the Program Evaluation Unit the St. Petersburg Police Department has incurred major administrative and structural changes. The Program Evaluation Unit is attached to the Administrative Bureau, one of three branches of the Department.

LEAA Grant number 73-DF-04-0035 provides approximately 62% of the funds for the Program Evaluation Unit. The total budget for the unit was \$40,644; \$25,545 of this allotment was provided by the LEAA grant.

#### Personnel

Three people are assigned to the Program Evaluation Unit; the Evaluation Coordinator, Research Assistant and a Secretary. Each of these persons serves a different function and is necessary to the efficient operation of the unit. \$17,508 in LEAA funds and \$8,200 in city funds were budgeted for personnel costs. All but \$1,231 has been spent.

#### Equipment

\$1,766 has been spent on equipment and office furniture for the Program Evaluation Unit. Originally \$2,512 was budgeted in this category.

The furniture purchased included three desks, three chairs, two side chairs, a file cabinet and a book case.

A "Canon" calculator and an "IBM Selectric" typewriter were also purchased. The IBM Selectric typewriter is not being used by the Program Evaluation Unit, however; an "Olivetti," editor model, was substituted.

## Travel

One of the purposes of the Program Evaluation Unit was to contact and exchange information with others who are conducting research and evaluation in the law enforcement field. For this reason \$1,160 was allotted to cover travel expenses to conferences and workshops. However, there were no opportunities during the past year to attend any workshops or conferences. Only \$149 of the travel allotment was spent.

## Professional Services

Frequently in the course of criminal justice research or evaluation, expert consultants in various fields must be contracted to maintain high quality and retain the confidence of the affected audience. The engagement of a consultant becomes necessary particularly where man-power resources or detailed knowledge of the subject is limited.

\$2,400 was originally budgeted for this category; however it was found to be insufficient and an additional \$1,500 was supplemented. \$3,500 of this has been encumbered to date.

## III. PROCEDURES.

All the evaluation reports and designs done by the Program Evaluation Unit are assigned by police management personnel. Although the goals of the unit clearly state that "x" number of reports will be completed, the content of the reports is dependent upon current priorities.

Originally the unit was designed so that any police personnel from patrolman to administrator could initiate an evaluation. However, in fact, all assignments have come from the Deputy Director of the Administration Bureau, with the approval of the Administrator.

Initially, the unit is given an assignment to design an "evaluation plan" for a specific problem, policy or procedure. This design clearly indicates what measures will be used and how the program will be evaluated. After the design is approved the assignment to do the evaluation is issued by the Deputy Director of Administration, to whom the Program Evaluation Unit reports.

The evaluation is conducted according to a prearranged time schedule. Evaluations which require a long period of time to complete (six months or more) may necessitate an interim report. Monthly progress reports are also submitted to the Deputy Director of the Administration Bureau.

It was originally intended that completed evaluation reports would be freely distributed to any interested police personnel. This practice, however, has been terminated and now reports are released only with the approval of the Director of Police Operations.

#### IV. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

At the inception of the Program Evaluation Unit, specific measurable goals and objectives were proposed to help evaluate the unit's effectiveness. Changes in administrative policy and structure altered the priorities of the Program Evaluation Unit, somewhat; but the basic goals remain unchanged.

- A. Develop evaluation criteria and research methodologies for all police projects currently in operation as well as those implemented throughout the year.

Evaluation criteria and research methodologies were developed for all police projects in operation as well as those implemented throughout the year with the exception of the Crime Analysis Unit. There were a few smaller projects such as the "pawn shop detail" which were not included primarily because they were not assigned.

- B. Conduct evaluations and prepare reports on at least six police projects.

Evaluations were undertaken on nine police projects and subsequent reports were submitted for eight of these evaluations.

1. Public Safety Cadet Program - This program was terminated during the evaluation and therefore the evaluation was never completed and a report not submitted.
2. Instruction Technology Workshop - This workshop was attached to the Training Division and was evaluated in

in October of 1973.

3. Public Safety Agents Program - The Public Safety Agents Program was also terminated during the evaluation; however, a final report was prepared and submitted in January of 1974.
4. Charlie Team Prevention Program - This program was evaluated in two segments and reports were submitted in December, 1973, and February, 1974.
5. K-9 Unit Evaluation Report - The K-9 Unit report was a major, in-depth evaluation of an ongoing 3 year old program. The final report was delivered April, 1974.
6. Aviation Unit Evaluation Report - The Aviation Unit report was also a major evaluation of a functioning unit; however it had been operating less than 6 months when the evaluation was begun. The report was submitted in May, 1974.
7. Crime Deterrent Section Effectiveness Report - The Crime Deterrent Section is a new concept in police work. Its effectiveness will be measured through evaluation and a final report will be compiled at the conclusion of data collection. An interim report was submitted in May, 1974.
8. Marine Patrol Unit Evaluation Report - The evaluation design for the Marine Patrol Unit has been written and data collection will begin as soon as the Unit begins operations.

9. Evaluation Unit Program Evaluation Report - This report summarizes the activities of the Program Evaluation Unit.

C. Gain support and cooperation of field and operational personnel through orientation sessions, workshops, and provision of technical assistance.

This objective was not fulfilled to the desired degree. Only three orientation sessions were held and technical assistance was provided on the Report Procedures Audit for the Criminal Investigation Division. It is felt by the Unit that these efforts were not sufficient to gain the support and cooperation of a majority of field and operational personnel. Specifically, more training and orientation sessions are needed to illustrate the usefulness of the Program Evaluation Unit as a resource.

D. Assist in project design and evaluative planning for all projects in the planning stage.

The Field Testing of Offense Report Forms was the only project the Program Evaluation Unit assisted in during the planning phase. Originally the Program Evaluation Unit was attached to the Planning and Development Division which has subsequently been changed to the Administration Bureau. Planning is not a major function of the Administration Bureau and the lack of coordination between the several divisions precluded Program Evaluation Unit participation in the planning process.

E. Perform at least three studies of a general nature which will assist with problem definition and program planning.

Five studies of a general nature were completed and an additional

major work is in the process of being completed at the present time.

1. Merchants Survey - Christmas Season 1973 - This report discussed the St. Petersburg's Merchants' perception of the police protection received during the Christmas Season and how it was affected by the presence or absence of the helicopter or a K-9 team. This report was completed in January 1974.

2. Beat Patrol Activity Report - The activities of patrol officers during 1973 were categorized and summarized by crime codes using the computer printouts in a report submitted May, 1974.

3. Use of Firearms - Evaluation Report - With the objective of isolating any consistent variables, an analysis of the use of firearms by police officers in 1973 was performed. This report was submitted in April, 1974.

4. Resisting Arrest and Resisting Arrest With Violence Charges 1973 - Evaluation Report - This report, similar to the use of firearms report, attempted to isolate variables which might affect the utilization of these charges against a suspect April 1974.

5. Investigative Procedures for Rape Cases - An evaluation design was prepared and submitted during May of 1974; however, an assignment to proceed is still pending.

6. Citizen Survey - This survey is directed at measuring the attitudes of the receiving public toward the St. Petersburg Police Department. The survey is underway and due to be completed by July 15, 1974.

- F. Establish contacts with others performing criminal justice research to share techniques and compare results.

Unfortunately, there were no seminars or workshops in related fields that the Program Evaluation Unit staff were able to attend. However, the Program Evaluation Unit Coordinator viewed the Atlanta Regional Impact Program to examine their programs and evaluation methodologies.

In addition to these twelve assignments a Program Evaluation Manual has been completed as described in the grant proposal. The manual is designed to aid evaluators and decision makers in all phases of program evaluation from design to basic statistical analysis. The manual will be especially beneficial to those with a basic knowledge of program evaluation or social research.

## VI. USER ATTITUDES

All of the Lieutenants, Chiefs, Deputy Directors and Directors on the St. Petersburg Police Force were polled to determine their attitudes toward the Program Evaluation Unit. Twenty-two responded to the questionnaire, which was distributed in June of 1974. (A copy of this questionnaire appears as Appendix A.)

Despite their positions at the top of the chain of command, many of these persons had relatively little knowledge of the functioning of the Program Evaluation Unit.

Twenty-three percent (5) of the respondents had "no contact" with the Program Evaluation Unit at all; only 27% (6) had "quite a lot" or "extensive" contact. Less than half (41%) of the respondents had ever read a report by the Program Evaluation Unit. Of the nine who had read a report by the Program Evaluation Unit, however, only one felt that the information was not valuable, reliable or valid.

Fifty percent (11) of the respondents said they were familiar with the methodologies used by the unit, and two of these did not approve of them. Only one comment was made about methodology: one respondent felt that a "cost-volume-profit" format should be used.

When asked if there were any programs or projects they would like to see evaluated, a list of eighteen different suggestions were given by the respondents (See Figure 1) indicating that the respondents do see some use for the Program Evaluation Unit. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents said they would like to see the Program Evaluation Unit continue functioning.

Emergency Communications Center  
Natural Disaster Programs and Procedures  
Removal of Barricaded Suspects  
Field Training Officers  
Marine Patrol  
Communications Center  
Vice Section  
Court Liaison Unit  
Pawn Shop Detail  
Monthly Report Procedures for C.I.D.  
Traffic Section  
Aviation Unit  
Districts/Teams Effectiveness  
Booking Procedures  
Crime Analysis  
Criminal Justice Planning  
Crime Deterrent Section

Figure 1. Suggestions of programs, projects and police operations for evaluation by the Program Evaluation Unit.

Thirty-eight percent of the 16 comments made on the questionnaire were positive, expressing confidence in the Unit and reasons for its continuation. Two comments (12%) expressed negative responses to the unit, one concerning the subjectivity of the reports submitted by the Program Evaluation Unit and the other, mentioned earlier, concerning methodology. Of the eight neutral comments made (50%), six expressed ignorance of the Unit's procedures and uses and a desire for more information about the Program Evaluation Unit.

## SUMMARY

The Program Evaluation Unit has been in operation for a full year and has met all of the originally established goals with the exception of "gaining support and cooperation of field and operational personnel through orientation sessions, workshops and provision of technical assistance." The inadequacy of the procedures designed to meet this goal is apparent in the results from the user questionnaire. It is evidently necessary to increase the number of orientation sessions and workshops substantially to meet this goal. Although only nine evaluation reports were required to meet the goals of the Program Evaluation Unit, sixteen will have been completed by July 15, 1974. In addition, an Evaluation Manual will be ready for distribution to all interested personnel.

The importance of having an evaluation staff within a police department has demonstrated itself through the usefulness of the reports this unit has produced. It is evident that with increased exposure and formal instruction, police officers, supervisors and administrators will incorporate evaluation into their realm of duties and find ways to utilize the talents of this professional evaluation team.

APPENDIX A

The Program Evaluation Unit is a federally funded project designed to aid police administrators in policy making decisions. This unit has been in operation for 11 months. The questionnaire below is designed to determine the perceptions and attitudes of the policy makers affected by the unit. Please return this as quickly as possible in the enclosed envelope through interoffice mail.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

RANK OR POSITION \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you had any contact with the Program Evaluation Unit?  
 None at all  
 Some  
 Very little  
 Quite a lot  
 Extensive contact
2. Has your contact with the Program Evaluation Unit been in connection with the evaluation of a program or project in which you were involved?  
 No       Partially       Extensively
3. Have you ever read a report done by the Program Evaluation Unit?  
 Yes  
 No
4. Which Reports have you read?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did you feel this report yielded valuable information?  
 Yes  
 For the most part  
 Partially  
 No
6. Do you feel the Program Evaluation Unit reports yield usable data?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Only in some cases
7. Do you feel the Program Evaluation Unit reports yield reliable and valid data?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Only in some cases

8. Are you aware and familiar with the methodologies used by the Program Evaluation Unit?  
 Yes  
 No
9. Do you agree with the methodologies employed by the Program Evaluation Unit?  
 Yes  
 No
10. Have you made any policy decisions as a result of information given in a Program Evaluation Unit report?  
 Yes  
 No  
 I have not been in a position to do so.
11. Do you feel the researchers are competent and thorough in their research (work)?  
 Yes      If no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
 No
12. Have you any programs or projects you would like to see evaluated?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
13. Are there any programs, projects or on going procedures you would like to see evaluated?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
14. Would you like to see the Program Evaluation Unit continued?  
 Yes  
 No
15. Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



July 12, 1974

PUBLICS' ATTITUDE TOWARD ST. PETERSBURG

POLICE AGENCY PROGRAMS

Mack M. Vines  
Director of Police Operations  
Public Safety Agency  
1300 1st Ave. N.  
St. Petersburg, FL 33705

Dear Mr. Vines:

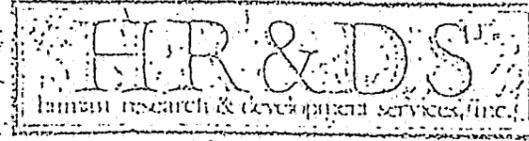
On behalf of Human Research and Development Services, Inc., I am pleased to submit to you the report Publics' Attitude Toward St. Petersburg Police Agency Programs: Police Agency in General, K-9 Unit, Helicopter Unit, and Crime Deterrent Section.

Human Research and Development Services is pleased to have had this opportunity to work with you and the Police Agency, and through the L.E.A.A. Grant provided by them, to serve the city of St. Petersburg.

Sincerely,

Blondel E. Senior, Ph.D.

BES:gs



PUBLICS' ATTITUDE TOWARD ST. PETERSBURG

POLICE AGENCY PROGRAMS:

POLICE AGENCY IN GENERAL

K-9 UNIT

HELICOPTER UNIT

CRIME DETERRENT SECTION

JULY 1974

Blondel E. Senior, Ph.D.

Peter J. Hunt, Ph.D.

HUMAN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES, INC.

P.O. Box 13116 St. Petersburg, Florida 33733  
Phone: 813-867-4572

This survey was made available by  
L.E.A.A. Grant # 73-DF-04-0035

This study was conducted by Cynthia Vetere of the St. Petersburg Police Department Administration Bureau. Blondel E. Senior, Ph.D., Director of Human Research and Development Services, provided consultation services, and with Peter J. Hunt, Ph.D., analyzed the data and wrote this report. Jack Vernon, Director of Suncoast Opinion Survey, collected the data.

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PUBLICIS' ATTITUDE TOWARD ST. PETERSBURG

POLICE AGENCY PROGRAMS:

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

In an effort to more effectively curb the rate of crime in St. Petersburg, Florida, the police department of this city has established three units; the K-9 Unit, the Helicopter Unit, and the Crime Deterrent Section. The purpose of this paper is to report and synthesize the results of a survey designed to measure the publicis' attitude toward the police in general, and each of these three units in particular.

The K-9 Unit has seven German Shepherd dogs and an individual police handler assigned to each dog. Their major objective is to serve as a deterrent to specific types of criminal behavior by giving the police officer a greater psychological advantage.

The helicopter unit was initiated to provide more complete patrol coverage of the city. It is reported that helicopters can patrol up to 35 times as much territory as a cruiser in a given time period and, because of their greater visibility, act as a deterrent to poten-

tial criminals.

The Crime Deterrent Section was organized in response to recent increases in the number of serious offenses occurring within the city. Their methods of operation include various covert and overt surveillance techniques, use of decoys, and "baited" situations.

Chapter II  
METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this survey were to measure and evaluate the public's attitude toward the St. Petersburg police. Emphasis was given to measuring attitudes toward three police units; the K-9 Unit, the Helicopter Unit, and the Crime Deterrent Unit.

DATA COLLECTION

Fifteen paid interviewers, hired and trained by Suncoast Opinion Surveys, recorded responses of St. Petersburg adults whose households composed the sample. None of the respondents received inducements or rewards for his or her cooperation in this survey. Their names and addresses were recorded and follow-up efforts were made to verify the interview.

The interviews were given between May 28 and June 4, 1974. Interviewing was concentrated in the late afternoon and early evening. Interviews were also given all day on weekends to insure representation of working persons.

SAMPLE

The sampling was a probability design based on clusters,

with interviews obtained in 125 out of 3,011 blocks. Blocks were pre-selected within each area using tables of random numbers, and interviews were obtained in every "nth" household on those blocks. Clusters were limited to three interviews per block to allow maximum exposure to specified study areas. The area designated as "downtown" was the primary study area because of present law enforcement methods used there. The "northeast" area was included to provide a comparison with the primary "downtown" study area. Two hundred and nine interviews were completed in the "downtown" area and 151 were completed in the "northeast" area.

The findings of this survey pertain to all adults (18 years of age or older) who reside in specific sections of downtown and northeast St. Petersburg.

Chapter III  
FINDINGS

PUBLICS' ATTITUDE TOWARD POLICE

Those interviewed were asked a series of questions designed to measure how they perceived the St. Petersburg Police Department. These were general questions, many of which elicited open ended responses. Responses to these questions were generally favorable and reflected positive public attitudes.

Neighborhood Protection.

Fifty percent of those questioned felt police protection in their neighborhood, as compared to other parts of St. Petersburg, was good. An additional 13% felt protection was excellent. These two groups, representing almost two-thirds of the sample, were supportive of the police. They felt the policemen's pay was too low and if a higher budget for the police department could reduce crime they would be willing to pay additional taxes. They called for police services less and were much more satisfied with the police response when they did call.

The remaining third of the sample said that police protection in their neighborhood was fair or poor. Their responses to other questions were not supportive of the

police. They felt the crime rate in their neighborhood was higher than elsewhere in the city, called for police services more frequently, and were often dissatisfied with police response. (A feeling of weak neighborhood protection is generally associated with people who live in the downtown area.)

Analysis of how safe people felt they were when walking alone in their neighborhood revealed two distinct groups; those who felt fairly safe and those who did not feel safe at all. Table 1 shows that of the four responses 49% of the people felt safe and 51% felt unsafe.

Table 1. How safe would you feel walking alone in this neighborhood at night?

Very Safe	Fairly Safe	Not Very Safe	Not Safe at all
15%	34%	14%	37%

Analysis of this question by sex showed that 64% of males and 37% of the females felt safe walking in their neighborhood at night. Older people felt less safe than younger people. Sixty-two percent of those 18 to 25 years old said they felt fairly safe to very safe. Only 36% of those over 65 years old gave one of these responses.

Law Enforcement and Safety.

The respondents were asked what they thought was the most serious law enforcement problem in St. Petersburg.

today. Their responses are tabulated in Table 2. Robbery and burglary of homes and businesses was seen as the most serious problem, crimes related to drugs as the second most serious problem, and unsafe streets as the third most serious law enforcement problem. Fifty-four percent of the responses

Table 2. What do you think is the most serious law enforcement problem in St. Petersburg today?

Percentage of Responses	Most Serious Law Enforcement Problem
24%	Theft, burglary or robbery of homes and businesses
19%	Drugs and related crimes (muggings, breaking and entering, etc.)
11%	Not safe to walk streets
9%	Rape
8%	Youth problems (racing cars, noisy mufflers, etc.)
8%	Traffic violations
3%	Police force should be enlarged. They need more authority and support from the courts.
5%	No answer or don't know
13%	Other responses

to this question were one of these three responses. When this question was further analyzed by race it was found that Blacks felt crimes related to drugs were the most serious law enforcement problem. Those who felt the police had too little power were very supportive of the police department in their response to other questions.

#### Attitudes Towards Police

Police Power - Few respondents thought police had too much power. Table 3 shows that 81% felt that police had the right amount or too little power.

Table 3. Do you think the police today have too much power, too little power, or the right amount?

Percent of Responses	Police Power
9%	Too much
34%	Right amount
47%	Too little
9%	Don't know
1%	No response

Police use of Time - When asked how they thought a police officer's time is best spent, 59% said patrolling the streets in cars and 22% said patrolling the streets on foot. Clearly the majority of people (81%) felt that patrolling the streets was most important. Table 4 shows the distribution of responses to this question.

Table 4. Do you think a Police Officer's time is best spent ...

Percent of Responses	Officer's time best spent
59%	Patrolling the streets in cars
22%	Patrolling the streets on foot
7%	Answering calls for service
3%	Investigating cases
5%	Other
4%	Don't know

If a higher budget for the police department could reduce crime, 68% said they would be willing to pay additional taxes, 24% said they would not be willing to pay additional taxes, and 8% said they didn't know or gave no response. Further analyses of who would and who would not be willing to pay additional taxes revealed race to be a related variable. Table 5 shows that 74% of the whites said yes, but the Blacks were split with 51% saying yes, 42% no, and 7% don't know.

Table 5. In your opinion, if a high budget for the police department could reduce crime, would you be willing to pay additional taxes?

Race	Response		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
White	75%	17%	8%
Black	51%	42%	7%

ATTITUDE TOWARD POLICE SERVICES

Public Usage of Police Services :

Several questions designed to measure the services rendered and the impressions made on those receiving these services were asked. As shown in Table 6, 59% said they did not call the police in the past year, 26% said they called once, and only 15% called more than once. Their reasons for calling and satisfaction with the police response are given in Tables 7 and 8 respectively.

Table 6. During the last year, have you called the St. Petersburg Police for any reason?

Percent of Calls	Number of Calls
59%	None
26%	One
8%	Two
4%	Three
1%	Four
2%	Five or more

Table 7. What was the reason for calling the Police?

Percent of Responses	Reason for Calling
31%	To report a criminal offense
22%	To report a noise or other disturbance in the neighborhood
17%	To request help for a non-criminal matter
11%	To report a suspicious person
19%	Other reasons

Table 8. Were you satisfied with the police response to your call?

Percent of Responses	Satisfaction with Police Response
56%	Yes, entirely satisfied
15%	Mostly satisfied
9%	Could have been improved
18%	Dissatisfied
2%	Don't know or no answer

Blacks call the police slightly more often than whites and 39% of their calls were to report a criminal offense. Only 28% of the whites called for this reason. Blacks were much more dissatisfied with the response of the police to their call. Seventy-eight percent of the whites and 57% of the Blacks reported that they were either entirely satisfied or mostly satisfied with the way police responded to their call. Thirty-three percent of the Blacks, in contrast with only 12% of the whites, said they were dissatisfied.

## Publics' Complaints

Several general questions were asked that related to respondents' complaints about the police service. The distribution of responses elicited is given in Table 9. When asked to make general comments about the police, those comments shown in Table 11 were given.

Table 9. Do you have any complaints about police service in St. Petersburg?

Percent of Responses	Complaint
63%	No complaints
10%	Delay in responding to calls
8%	Need more policemen; more patrolling
3%	Poor attitude; not interested
15%	All other complaints
1%	Don't know or no answer

## Publics' Commendations

Table 10 shows the responses when asked what they liked best about the police.

Table 10. What do you like best about police service in St. Petersburg?

Percent of Responses	Like best about Police Service
29%	Efficient; competent; doing the best they can
18%	Good at answering calls; came quickly
15%	Are polite, courteous, fair, cooperative
8%	They patrol often on foot and in cars
3%	Like helicopter and K-9 units
8%	All other positive comments
19%	No answer; don't know; don't like them

Table 11. Would you like to make any general comments about the police here in St. Petersburg?

Percent of Responses	General Comment
31%	Good police force; there when you need them
9%	Police are underpaid, overworked, understaffed
5%	Police are friendly, polite, courteous
3%	Police should be given more respect, authority, leeway.
2%	All other positive comments
10%	Negative comments
33%	No answer; don't know
7%	All other answers

Generally the police are seen as efficient, competent, and available when they are needed. Only 10% of the general

comments made were negative in nature. Most of the responses in Tables 10 and 11 refer to politeness, courtesy, competency, friendliness, respect, authority, etc. These responses, the researchers believe, indicate those things which the public sees in police officers. This indicates that police/public face-to-face contact is important in shaping public's attitude to the police.

#### K-9 UNIT

##### Public Awareness

The K-9 Unit is well-known in St. Petersburg. Ninety-three percent of those questioned knew that specially trained dogs were used by the police agency. When asked how often they had seen a K-9 Unit dog in the past six months, their responses varied. Thirty-one percent said they had seen none, 24% had seen K-9 once or twice, 21% said three to five times, and 21% had seen them five or more times. Three percent were unsure.

##### Approval

The respondents showed strong approval of the use of dogs in police work. Only 4% said they disapproved (see Table 12). When those who approved were asked why, they gave the responses shown in Table 13. The K-9 dogs were seen as an aid to the policeman, able to do things he couldn't.

Table 12. Do you approve or disapprove of the use of K-9 dogs in police work?

Percent of Responses	Approval of Using K-9 Dogs
90%	Approve
4%	Approve in certain cases
4%	Disapprove
2%	Don't know

Table 13. Why do you approve of the use of K-9 dogs in police work?

Percent of Responses	Reason for Approval of use of K-9 Dogs
28%	Dogs can do things a man can't; senses are keener; good at tracking down people, drugs, etc.; are fast
23%	Dogs help police do a better job and protect the policemen
15%	Very helpful tool; effective in catching criminals, holding them at bay.
9%	People fear and respect well-trained dogs
6%	We need more to protect people and things; use dogs not guns
5%	Dogs are good crime prevention tool
4%	Other positive comments
2%	Negative comments
4%	Other answers
4%	No answer, don't know

Eighty-nine percent felt K-9 dogs should be used to apprehend a fleeing suspect. Seventy-seven percent of

those approving of their use would approve of allowing the dog to bite if it was necessary to apprehend a fleeing suspect. This approval is especially strong among whites, 81% of which approved of a K-9 dog biting as contrasted with 60% of the Blacks who approved.

Although 85% said they would not become apprehensive if they met a police officer with his K-9 dog on the street, further analysis showed that Blacks would be much more apprehensive of such a situation. Forty-three percent of the Blacks said they would become apprehensive in contrast to only 5% of whites.

Each person was asked if he had any complaints about St. Petersburg's K-9 Unit. None were expressed.

#### HELICOPTER UNIT

##### Public Awareness

Almost all (98%) of those questioned were aware that St. Petersburg uses a helicopter for police patrol. When asked how often they had seen or heard it in the past month, 70% said more than 15 times. Only 3% had not seen or heard it.

##### Approval.

Strong approval was expressed for the use of helicopters in police work. Eighty-eight percent approved, 4% approved in certain cases, 6% disapproved and 2% didn't know how they felt when asked.

Their responses when questioned why they felt as they

did, are given in Table 14. Forty percent approved of the use of helicopters because of the ease and speed with which they can patrol large areas and the difficulty criminals have in running from them. Only 6% gave negative comments, such as, it is noisy or interferes with T.V. reception.

Table 14. Why do you approve or disapprove of the use of helicopters for police work?

Percent of Responses	Approval of use of Helicopter
40%	Helicopter can cover wider territory, can see more; criminals can't lose a helicopter
14%	Helicopter can follow suspects better and direct patrol cars to suspect
10%	Very quick in spotting and reporting incidents; quick results
8%	Feel protected and safer with helicopter above
7%	Good idea; effective; saves time and leg work
6%	Effective crime deterrent
5%	Other positive comments
6%	Negative comments
3%	All other answers
1%	Don't know; no answer

Although most people approved of the use of police helicopters, they did not agree on how much patrolling by helicopters they wanted in their neighborhood (see Table 15).

Table 15. Would you like to have more or less helicopter patrol in your neighborhood?

Percent of Responses	Amount of Helicopter Patrolling Desired
35%	More
23%	The same amount
19%	Less
21%	Don't know
1%	No response

#### CRIME DETERRENT SECTION

The Crime Deterrent Section is composed of police officers who do not patrol or answer calls as do regular patrolman. Instead, they concentrate their efforts on apprehending persons who have committed serious street crimes such as mugging and purse snatching. Ninety-two percent said they approved of having a specialized unit like the Crime Deterrent Section. However, as shown in Table 16, if having this unit meant removing men from regular patrol assignments, 45% said they would not approve. Differences were found when this question was analyzed by race. Fifty-nine percent of the Blacks and 31 percent of the whites would approve if it meant reducing the number of police on regular patrol assignments.

Responses from other questions relating to the public's approval of certain aspects of the Crime Deterrent Section are given in Table 16. As shown, one-third of those ques-

Table 16. Would you approve of a Crime Deterrent Section under the following conditions?

Condition	Approve	Disapprove	Don't Know	No Response
a. if it meant removing men from regular patrol assignments?	38%	45%	16%	1%
b. placing police officers on tops of buildings to watch activities below?	59%	33%	7%	1%
c. rooftop surveillance if it meant removing men from regular patrol assignments?	28%	61%	11%	0%
d. using a police officer as a decoy - such as dressing him up as a little old lady in order to catch a purse snatcher?	90%	8%	2%	0%
e. using police as decoys if it meant removing men from regular patrol assignments?	52%	40%	8%	0%
f. paying informants to give information to the police which will aid in the apprehension of serious offenders?	57%	34%	9%	0%

tioned did not approve of placing police officers on tops of buildings to watch activities below and almost two-thirds opposed it if it meant removing men from regular patrol assignments.

Most (90%) approved of using police officers as decoys.

This approval was stronger among whites (94% approved) than Blacks (77% approved). However, if police had to be taken from regular patrol assignments to be decoys, approval dropped to 52% of all those questioned.

Fifty-seven percent approved of paying informants. As with decoys, whites expressed stronger approval. Sixty-two percent of the whites and 44% of the Blacks approved of paying informants.

Generally, strong public approval for a Crime Deterrent Section was found only for police officer decoy activities and only if it did not remove police from regular patrol assignments. Perhaps public approval of a Crime Deterrent Section is less than for the helicopter or K-9 units because its activities are less visible to the public and not related to their most frequently expressed need, patrolling the streets (see Table 4).

Chapter IV  
CONCLUSIONS

Responses to questions were generally favorable and reflected positive public attitudes toward the police department and its law-enforcement activities. Sixty-three percent of those surveyed felt police protection in their neighborhood was good to excellent. They were supportive of the police in their responses to questions and would be willing to pay more taxes if a higher budget for the police department could reduce crime. Sixty-three percent had no complaints with police service. When asked what they liked best about police service only 19% didn't answer or gave a negative answer. In comparison, 62% said the police are efficient, competent, good at answering calls, polite, and fair.

Robbery and burglary of homes and businesses was seen as the most serious law enforcement problem by 25% of the respondents. Crimes related to drugs was seen as the second most serious problem, and unsafe streets as the third most serious law enforcement problem. These three problems were given as most serious by 50% of the respondents.

Analysis of how safe people felt they were when walking alone in their neighborhood revealed two distinct groups;

those who felt fairly safe (34%) and those who did not feel safe at all (37%). The majority of those who felt unsafe were women.

The analysis revealed that the public is most desiring of police or patrol duty. Eighty-one percent of the respondents said a police officer's time is best spent patrolling the streets either in cars or on foot.

Strong approval for the use of K-9 dogs was found. Only 4% disapproved of their use and no one expressed any complaints about the unit when asked. Seventy-seven percent of those approving of their use would approve of allowing the dog to bite if it was necessary to apprehend a fleeing suspect. This approval was stronger among whites, 81% of which approved of K-9 dogs biting as contrasted with the Blacks of which only 60% approved.

Strong approval was also expressed for the use of helicopters in police work. Only 6% disapproved. Although most people approved of the use of police helicopters, they did not agree on how much patrolling by helicopters they wanted in their neighborhood. Some appear to view the helicopter with its obtrusive search light as imposing on their privacy. In spite of the public desire for more patrolling by policemen, and very few negative comments when asked if they approved or disapproved of helicopter patrolling, only 35% said they wanted more helicopter patrol. Almost one-fourth of those sampled didn't know if they wanted more or less helicopter patrol in their neighborhood.

Ninety-two percent of those surveyed said they approved of having a specialized unit like the Crime Deterrent Section. However, closer analysis revealed that strong public approval for such a unit was found only for police officer decoy activities and only if it did not remove police from regular patrol assignments. Public approval would drop sharply if staffing the Crime Deterrent Section meant removing men from regular patrol duty.

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human research & development services, inc.

July 12, 1974

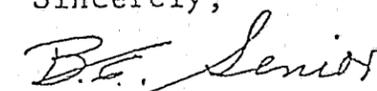
Mack M. Vines  
Director of Police Operations  
Public Safety Agency  
1300 1st Ave. N.  
St. Petersburg, FL 33705

Dear Mr. Vines:

On behalf of Human Research and Development Services, Inc., I am pleased to submit to you the report Publics' Attitude Toward St. Petersburg Police Agency Programs: Police Agency in General, K-9 Unit, Helicopter Unit, and Crime Deterrent Section.

Human Research and Development Services is pleased to have had this opportunity to work with you and the Police Agency, and through the L.E.A.A. Grant provided by them, to serve the city of St. Petersburg.

Sincerely,



Blondel E. Senior, Ph.D.

BES:gs



HR & DS  
human research & development services, inc.

PUBLICS' ATTITUDE TOWARD ST. PETERSBURG

POLICE AGENCY PROGRAMS:

POLICE AGENCY IN GENERAL

K-9 UNIT

HELICOPTER UNIT

CRIME DETERRENT SECTION

JULY 1974

Blondel E. Senior, Ph.D.

Peter J. Hunt, Ph.D.

HUMAN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES, INC.

P.O. Box 13116 St. Petersburg, Florida 33733  
Phone: 813-867-4572

This survey was made available by

L.E.A.A. Grant # 73-DF-04-0035

This study was conducted by Cynthia Vetere of the St. Petersburg Police Department Administration Bureau. Blondel E. Senior, Ph.D., Director of Human Research and Development Services, provided consultation services, and with Peter J. Hunt, Ph.D., analyzed the data and wrote this report. Jack Vernon, Director of Suncoast Opinion Survey, collected the data.

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PUBLICS' ATTITUDE TOWARD ST. PETERSBURG  
POLICE AGENCY PROGRAMS:

Chapter I  
INTRODUCTION

In an effort to more effectively curb the rate of crime in St. Petersburg, Florida, the police department of this city has established three units; the K-9 Unit, the Helicopter Unit, and the Crime Deterrent Section. The purpose of this paper is to report and synthesize the results of a survey designed to measure the publics' attitude toward the police in general, and each of these three units in particular.

The K-9 Unit has seven German Shepherd dogs and an individual police handler assigned to each dog. Their major objective is to serve as a deterrent to specific types of criminal behavior by giving the police officer a greater psychological advantage.

The helicopter unit was initiated to provide more complete patrol coverage of the city. It is reported that helicopters can patrol up to 35 times as much territory as a cruiser in a given time period and, because of their greater visibility, act as a deterrent to poten-

tial criminals.

The Crime Deterrent Section was organized in response to recent increases in the number of serious offenses occurring within the city. Their methods of operation include various covert and overt surveillance techniques, use of decoys, and "baited" situations.

Chapter II  
METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this survey were to measure and evaluate the public's attitude toward the St. Petersburg police. Emphasis was given to measuring attitudes toward three police units; the K-9 Unit, the Helicopter Unit, and the Crime Deterrent Unit.

DATA COLLECTION

Fifteen paid interviewers, hired and trained by Suncoast Opinion Surveys, recorded responses of St. Petersburg adults whose households composed the sample. None of the respondents received inducements or rewards for his or her cooperation in this survey. Their names and addresses were recorded and follow-up efforts were made to verify the interview.

The interviews were given between May 28 and June 4, 1974. Interviewing was concentrated in the late afternoon and early evening. Interviews were also given all day on weekends to insure representation of working persons.

SAMPLE

The sampling was a probability design based on clusters,

with interviews obtained in 125 out of 3,011 blocks. Blocks were pre-selected within each area using tables of random numbers, and interviews were obtained in every "nth" household on those blocks. Clusters were limited to three interviews per block to allow maximum exposure to specified study areas. The area designated as "downtown" was the primary study area because of present law enforcement methods used there. The "northeast" area was included to provide a comparison with the primary "downtown" study area. Two hundred and nine interviews were completed in the "downtown" area and 151 were completed in the "northeast" area.

The findings of this survey pertain to all adults (18 years of age or older) who reside in specific sections of downtown and northeast St. Petersburg.

Chapter III  
FINDINGS

PUBLICS' ATTITUDE TOWARD POLICE

Those interviewed were asked a series of questions designed to measure how they perceived the St. Petersburg Police Department. These were general questions, many of which elicited open ended responses. Responses to these questions were generally favorable and reflected positive public attitudes.

Neighborhood Protection.

Fifty percent of those questioned felt police protection in their neighborhood, as compared to other parts of St. Petersburg, was good. An additional 13% felt protection was excellent. These two groups, representing almost two-thirds of the sample, were supportive of the police. They felt the policemen's pay was too low and if a higher budget for the police department could reduce crime they would be willing to pay additional taxes. They called for police services less and were much more satisfied with the police response when they did call.

The remaining third of the sample said that police protection in their neighborhood was fair or poor. Their responses to other questions were not supportive of the

police. They felt the crime rate in their neighborhood was higher than elsewhere in the city, called for police services more frequently, and were often dissatisfied with police response. (A feeling of weak neighborhood protection is generally associated with people who live in the downtown area.)

Analysis of how safe people felt they were when walking alone in their neighborhood revealed two distinct groups; those who felt fairly safe and those who did not feel safe at all. Table 1 shows that of the four responses 49% of the people felt safe and 51% felt unsafe.

Table 1. How safe would you feel walking alone in this neighborhood at night?

Very Safe	Fairly Safe	Not Very Safe	Not Safe at all
15%	34%	14%	37%

Analysis of this question by sex showed that 64% of males and 37% of the females felt safe walking in their neighborhood at night. Older people felt less safe than younger people. Sixty-two percent of those 18 to 25 years old said they felt fairly safe to very safe. Only 36% of those over 65 years old gave one of these responses. Law Enforcement and Safety.

The respondents were asked what they thought was the most serious law enforcement problem in St. Petersburg.

today. Their responses are tabulated in Table 2. Robbery and burglary of homes and businesses was seen as the most serious problem, crimes related to drugs as the second most serious problem, and unsafe streets as the third most serious law enforcement problem. Fifty-four percent of the responses

Table 2. What do you think is the most serious law enforcement problem in St. Petersburg today?

Percentage of Responses	Most Serious Law Enforcement Problem
24%	Theft, burglary or robbery of homes and businesses
19%	Drugs and related crimes (muggings, breaking and entering, etc.)
11%	Not safe to walk streets
9%	Rape
8%	Youth problems (racing cars, noisy mufflers, etc.)
8%	Traffic violations
3%	Police force should be enlarged. They need more authority and support from the courts.
5%	No answer or don't know
13%	Other responses

to this question were one of these three responses. When this question was further analyzed by race it was found that Blacks felt crimes related to drugs were the most serious law enforcement problem. Those who felt the police had too little power were very supportive of the police department in their response to other questions.

#### Attitudes Towards Police

Police Power - Few respondents thought police had too much power. Table 3 shows that 81% felt that police had the right amount or too little power.

Table 3. Do you think the police today have too much power, too little power, or the right amount?

Percent of Responses	Police Power
9%	Too much
34%	Right amount
47%	Too little
9%	Don't know
1%	No response

Police use of Time - When asked how they thought a police officer's time is best spent, 59% said patrolling the streets in cars and 22% said patrolling the streets on foot. Clearly the majority of people (81%) felt that patrolling the streets was most important. Table 4 shows the distribution of responses to this question.

Table 4. Do you think a Police Officer's time is best spent ...

Percent of Responses	Officer's time best spent
59%	Patrolling the streets in cars
22%	Patrolling the streets on foot
7%	Answering calls for service
3%	Investigating cases
5%	Other
4%	Don't know

If a higher budget for the police department could reduce crime, 68% said they would be willing to pay additional taxes, 24% said they would not be willing to pay additional taxes, and 8% said they didn't know or gave no response. Further analyses of who would and who would not be willing to pay additional taxes revealed race to be a related variable. Table 5 shows that 74% of the whites said yes, but the Blacks were split with 51% saying yes, 42% no, and 7% don't know.

Table 5. In your opinion, if a high budget for the police department could reduce crime, would you be willing to pay additional taxes?

Race	Response		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
White	75%	17%	8%
Black	51%	42%	7%

## ATTITUDE TOWARD POLICE SERVICES

## Public Usage of Police Services

Several questions designed to measure the services rendered and the impressions made on those receiving these services were asked. As shown in Table 6, 59% said they did not call the police in the past year, 26% said they called once, and only 15% called more than once. Their reasons for calling and satisfaction with the police response are given in Tables 7 and 8 respectively.

Table 6. During the last year, have you called the St. Petersburg Police for any reason?

Percent of Calls	Number of Calls
59%	None
26%	One
8%	Two
4%	Three
1%	Four
2%	Five or more

Table 7. What was the reason for calling the Police?

Percent of Responses	Reason for Calling
31%	To report a criminal offense
22%	To report a noise or other disturbance in the neighborhood
17%	To request help for a non-criminal matter
11%	To report a suspicious person
19%	Other reasons

Table 8. Were you satisfied with the police response to your call?

Percent of Responses	Satisfaction with Police Response
56%	Yes, entirely satisfied
15%	Mostly satisfied
9%	Could have been improved
18%	Dissatisfied
2%	Don't know or no answer

Blacks call the police slightly more often than whites and 39% of their calls were to report a criminal offense. Only 28% of the whites called for this reason. Blacks were much more dissatisfied with the response of the police to their call. Seventy-eight percent of the whites and 57% of the Blacks reported that they were either entirely satisfied or mostly satisfied with the way police responded to their call. Thirty-three percent of the Blacks, in contrast with only 12% of the whites, said they were dissatisfied.

## Publics' Complaints

Several general questions were asked that related to respondents' complaints about the police service. The distribution of responses elicited is given in Table 9. When asked to make general comments about the police, those comments shown in Table 11 were given.

Table 9. Do you have any complaints about police service in St. Petersburg?

Percent of Responses	Complaint
63%	No complaints
10%	Delay in responding to calls
8%	Need more policemen; more patrolling
3%	Poor attitude; not interested
15%	All other complaints
1%	Don't know or no answer

## Publics' Commendations

Table 10 shows the responses when asked what they liked best about the police.

Table 10. What do you like best about police service in St. Petersburg?

Percent of Responses	Like best about Police Service
29%	Efficient; competent; doing the best they can
18%	Good at answering calls; came quickly
15%	Are polite, courteous, fair, cooperative
8%	They patrol often on foot and in cars
3%	Like helicopter and K-9 units
8%	All other positive comments
19%	No answer; don't know; don't like them

Table 11. Would you like to make any general comments about the police here in St. Petersburg?

Percent of Responses	General Comment
31%	Good police force; there when you need them
9%	Police are underpaid, overworked, understaffed
5%	Police are friendly, polite, courteous
3%	Police should be given more respect, authority, leeway.
2%	All other positive comments
10%	Negative comments
33%	No answer; don't know
7%	All other answers

Generally the police are seen as efficient, competent, and available when they are needed. Only 10% of the general

comments made were negative in nature. Most of the responses in Tables 10 and 11 refer to politeness, courtesy, competency; friendliness, respect, authority, etc. These responses, the researchers believe, indicate those things which the public sees in police officers. This indicates that police/public face-to-face contact is important in shaping public's attitude to the police.

#### K-9 UNIT

##### Public Awareness

The K-9 Unit is well-known in St. Petersburg. Ninety-three percent of those questioned knew that specially trained dogs were used by the police agency. When asked how often they had seen a K-9 Unit dog in the past six months, their responses varied. Thirty-one percent said they had seen none, 24% had seen K-9 once or twice, 21% said three to five times, and 21% had seen them five or more times. Three percent were unsure.

##### Approval

The respondents showed strong approval of the use of dogs in police work. Only 4% said they disapproved (see Table 12). When those who approved were asked why, they gave the responses shown in Table 13. The K-9 dogs were seen as an aid to the policeman, able to do things he couldn't.

Table 12. Do you approve or disapprove of the use of K-9 dogs in police work?

Percent of Responses	Approval of Using K-9 Dogs
90%	Approve
4%	Approve in certain cases
4%	Disapprove
2%	Don't know

Table 13. Why do you approve of the use of K-9 dogs in police work?

Percent of Responses	Reason for Approval of use of K-9 Dogs
28%	Dogs can do things a man can't; senses are keener; good at tracking down people, drugs, etc.; are fast
23%	Dogs help police do a better job and protect the policemen
15%	Very helpful tool; effective in catching criminals, holding them at bay.
9%	People fear and respect well-trained dogs
6%	We need more to protect people and things; use dogs not guns
5%	Dogs are good crime prevention tool
4%	Other positive comments
2%	Negative comments
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Eighty-nine percent felt K-9 dogs should be used to apprehend a fleeing suspect. Seventy-seven percent of

those approving of their use would approve of allowing the dog to bite if it was necessary to apprehend a fleeing suspect. This approval is especially strong among whites, 81% of which approved of a K-9 dog biting as contrasted with 60% of the Blacks who approved.

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**END**