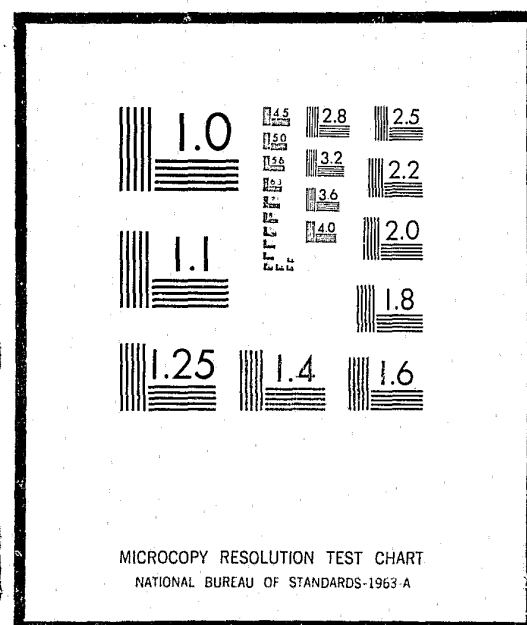


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LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFERENCE SERVICE
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LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION POLICE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REPORT

SUBJECT: Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Training Evaluation
REPORT NUMBER: 76-54
FOR: Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Police Training Academy

CONTRACTOR: Westinghouse Justice Institute

Norman E. Pomrenke

BER: J-LEAA-003-76

May 1976

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Final Report

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FOREWORD

This request for Technical Assistance was made by the Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Police Training Academy. The requested assistance was concerned with providing the Academy with guidance in curriculum development, teaching methodologies, and the mechanism for assessing the performance of police officers who attend the Academy at either the entrance or in-service level. Because other problem areas had direct bearing on the problems to be studied, the required technical assistance had to be expanded.

Requesting Agency: Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Police Academy, Mr. Neil W. Sullivan, Director

State Planning Agency: Massachusetts Committee on Criminal Justice, Mr. Clifford L. Karchmer, Police/Crimes Specialist

Approving Agency: LEAA Region I (Boston), Mr. John M. Keeley, Police Specialist

1. INTRODUCTION

So that the Consultant could understand and analyze the problems associated with the Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Police Training Academy and perform the requested technical assistance, an onsite meeting was held at the Regional Academy in Fall River, Massachusetts. In addition to the Consultant, the following individuals were in attendance:

- Mr. Neil Sullivan, Director, Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Training Academy.
- Mr. John W. Toulon, Jr., Coordinator of Police Training, Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Police Training Academy.
- Mr. Raymond J. Lavertue, Director of Law Enforcement Programs, Bristol Community College, Fall River, Massachusetts.

All of these individuals admitted that there were problems and that they were concerned with the future of the Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Police Training Academy. However, the meeting attendees were extremely enthusiastic about what the Academy could eventually do for the Southeastern Massachusetts area relative to entrance-level, in-service, and eventually, supervisory and management training.

The primary problem they perceived, exclusive of curriculum development, teaching methodologies, and recruit performance assessment, were the futures of the Academy and minimum standards of police training under Massachusetts law.

These areas had to be addressed because the development of curriculum objectives, teaching methodologies, and assessment of systems for recruit performance creates a tendency to put the horse before the cart. In essence, this means that the minimum standards of training law is the future of the Southeastern Massachusetts Training Academy. If this is jeopardized, then all the curriculum development, teaching methodologies, and performance assessment systems for entrance-level training becomes meaningless.

2. UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEM

Three primary questions evolved from this request for technical assistance:

- What is the curriculum, and is it sufficiently developed to afford the entrance-level and in-service officer a path to being professionally trained and able to handle police contingencies by virtue of this training?
- Is the system of teaching and learning for the police officer consistent with appropriate methodologies, and are all resources being used?
- Is there a better system to assess the performance of the officer after he completes the training afforded by the Regional Academy?

In trying to assess and analyze the above questions, other areas had to be considered. These areas are:

- The status of the Massachusetts-mandated standards of training law.
- The relationship of the State Planning Agency (Governor's Committee on Criminal Justice) to the Regional Academy.
- The relationship of the Massachusetts Council on Criminal Justice Training to the Regional Academy.
- The relationship of the Regional Academy to the approximately 71 police jurisdictions it serves.

From the outset, it should be noted that a very real need exists in Southeastern Massachusetts for this Police Training facility. Furthermore, this concept has been accepted and is contained in the National Standards and Goals for Police. Since the concept has been accepted nationally, there seems to be little need to discuss the necessity of the Regional Academy.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

The Consultant's primary method of analysis was to discuss the total problem areas with Messrs. Sullivan, Toulon, and Levertue. It was necessary to consider the Bristol Community College because of the natural carryover and relationship between the Regional Academy and the Law Enforcement program at Bristol Community College, where an excellent relationship now exists.

In trying to analyze the problems, the Consultant was continually confronted with the vagueness of the Massachusetts' Law relative to mandated police training and attendance by police officers. The law specifically states, "a regular police officer on a permanent full-time basis, in any city or in any town in Massachusetts, shall, within nine months of the date of his appointment, be assigned to and shall attend a police training school approved by the Massachusetts Criminal Justice Training Council for a course of study lasting at least six weeks and shall satisfactorily complete such course." The vagueness of the law, as determined by the Consultant, is that even though the training is considered mandatory, there is no provision under Massachusetts law requiring the police agencies to comply. For example, if a Chief of Police does not send personnel to the Regional Academy, there is no sanction under the law for mandatory attendance. This is one of the major hurdles for the Regional Academy to overcome regarding its future and schedule maintenance.

Another key problem is the relationship of the Massachusetts Council on Criminal Justice Training to both the Governor's Committee on Criminal Justice and the Regional Academy. In essence, the Regional Academy should draw assistance and budget considerations from the Massachusetts Council on Criminal Justice Training. However, at the time of this technical assistance, the Massachusetts Council on Criminal Justice Training was not in a position to offer aid. It is the Consultant's understanding that a director had just been hired for the Massachusetts Council on Criminal Justice Training but that the Council's budget primarily reflected salaries and did not allow or provide for assistance to the Regional Academy. The Consultant was unable to determine the philosophy toward the Regional Academy. These two items must be clarified before operation can be implemented relative to the performance of the Regional Academy.

Another method used in the analysis was to equate the functioning of the Regional Academy to the recommendation of the National Advisory Commission for Standards and Goals for Police.

4. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The primary finding of this study is that there is a tremendous amount of confusion from the standpoint of the Regional Academy regarding its future and the future considerations from both the Massachusetts Council on Criminal Justice Training and the Governor's Committee on Criminal Justice. This primary finding will have great bearing on the future of the Regional Academy relative to the professional growth of the concept and, indeed, upon its operations in relationship to its objectives.

Very little consideration has been given by the Regional Academy regarding the recommendations of the National Advisory Commission for Standards and Goals for Police.

There appear to be a number of additional considerations that bear upon the Consultant's findings and conclusions:

- The existing physical facilities are inadequate for the concept of training objectives, planning, and day-to-day operations.
- Physical facilities have a direct bearing on student and faculty perception of training objectives and goals.
- The Consultant has some doubt about the commitment of the Southeastern Massachusetts Chiefs of Police toward the Regional Academy. This appears to be proven by attendance roles, making personnel available to lecture, and retaining the Regional Academy.
- There is not a real system in which entrance-level and in-service training can be scheduled due to the lack of apparent commitment by both State and the Southeastern Massachusetts Police Agencies.
- There appears to be very little real State support for the Regional Academy.
- There is not a system at this time to coordinate the training at the Regional Academy with the Law Enforcement program at Bristol Community College. However, the College is trying to hire another individual to assist the program

Director. Part of the assistant's duties and responsibilities would be to coordinate the activities of the Regional Academy with the Law Enforcement program at Bristol Community College.

- The budget does not and cannot reflect a professional approach to the Regional Training concept. Outside the permanent staff, there is no method to pay lecturers at the Academy. Without payment scheduling is haphazard and will continue to be so.
- The system for curriculum development seems adequate. Instructors are basically developing a training-by-objectives system, whereby their primary consideration is, "What should the student know and retain from this material."
- Teaching methodologies are rather conventional and most are the lecture system. Considerable thought could be taken to redefine these techniques.
- The system of entrance-level assessment of student performance should be the primary priority of the Regional Academy. Credibility must be sought between the practitioner and the Regional Academy.

In conclusion, one should consider that nothing works in isolation--the total operation of the Academy must be considered. The operation of the Regional Academy must be successful so that officers in small jurisdictions are given the opportunity to be trained to cope with contemporary society and the demands for police services.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Governor's Committee on Criminal Justice and the Massachusetts Council on Criminal Justice Training should give the Regional Academy the necessary assistance to operate as a Regional Academy for Southeastern Massachusetts. There is little doubt that this is necessary to ensure the future operations of the Regional Academy.
- There should be an amendment to the Massachusetts Statutes that mandates training and requires attendance. This would ultimately ensure that the citizens are afforded a level of protection and service that is current with the needs of society by upgrading police personnel through entrance and in-service training.
- A feasibility study should be made to move the Regional Academy from its present location, on an old campus of Bristol Community College, to the new Bristol Community College facilities. This would enable professional interaction between the Law Enforcement program at Bristol Community College and the Regional Academy and afford police officers a professional level of training. If the movement cannot be made, extensive remodeling of the existing facilities should be considered.
- The Regional Academy, as it now exists, should develop a curriculum system that is primarily based on the objectives for such training. In essence, this means to develop, in conjunction with the Southeastern Massachusetts Chiefs of Police, a meaningful curriculum that addresses the needs of the law enforcement officers who will attend. To do this, certain budget considerations must be made available to the Regional Academy. Regional Academy personnel must have the funds to visit many of the jurisdictions, where personnel could discuss the jurisdictions successes and failures as they presently relate to police performance. An interview system should be established with the operating agencies to give the Regional Academy

representatives the framework and views on actual police performance in the jurisdictions. This would not only give the Academy staff insight into police problems, but assure input from participating police agencies. Curriculum development must have the approval of the Academy staff and jurisdictions they serve and be based upon objectives.

- A two-day seminar should be held at the Regional Academy, in cooperation with the Law Enforcement program of Bristol Community College, to train instructors for future classes in curriculum objectives and teaching technologies. The curriculum for this program should, again, have the endorsement and commitment of the Southeastern Massachusetts Chiefs of Police for they are a part of the Regional Academy concept. The majority of the guest lecturers should come from the jurisdictions they serve. It is extremely difficult to do any lecturing from the standpoint of the Academy when the selection of instructors is based on a hit-and-miss proposition. Usage of Bristol Community College staff should be sought.
 - Funds must be made available to the Regional Academy so that the lecturers can be compensated for travel and instruction. This is paramount if continuity of instruction and objectives is to be maintained.
 - An assessment system should be developed during the seminar regarding performance after the training cycle. The expertise should be available in a class such as this.
- The Regional Academy should develop a system through fiscal support by the Massachusetts Council on Criminal Justice Training to give onsite consultations to those jurisdictions that have sent personnel to the Regional Academy. Onsite visitation should be the responsibility of the Regional Academy to discuss and evaluate with the Chief of Police the individ-

uals' performance after returning from the training cycle. The present system of evaluating the student is to send a typical performance evaluation to the Chief of Police 6 months after the student has completed the training and ask the Chief of Police to return the performance evaluation to the Regional Academy. This system is vague and cumbersome since general questions are asked for which the Chief of Police has very limited response capabilities. The assessment of officers by the Regional Academy and the Chiefs of Police should start with the basic assessment system now used and build into a system of what exactly the officer does during his performance. The present system for assessment is too general, and a system can only be worked out by using the Regional Academy staff, the Chiefs of Police, and the individual officers from the jurisdictions. There is no "cook book" approach. The system must be built.

- The Regional Academy should adopt Standard 16.6, entitled "Instructor Quality Control." This Standard is part of the National Advisory Commission on Standards and Goals for Police. It states, "Active student involvement in training through instructional techniques such as role playing, situation simulation, group discussion, reading and research projects, and utilization of individual training response systems: passive student training, such as the lecture presentation should be minimized." Using this as a guide will assure keeping teaching methodology current.

END

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