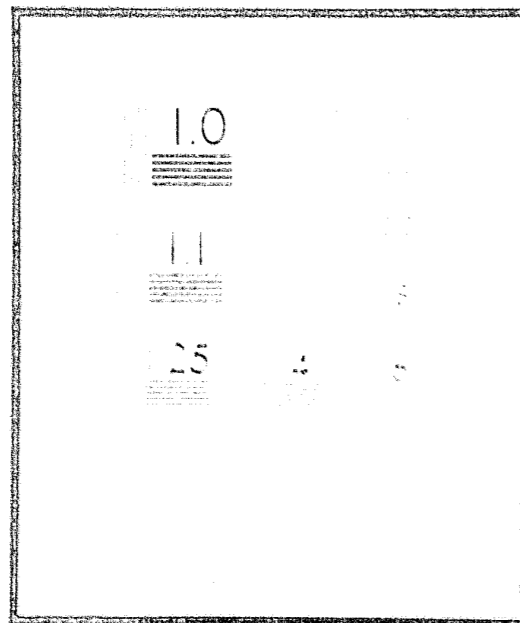


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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
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THE Police Chief

THE PROFESSIONAL VOICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

OCTOBER 1975

DIRECTORY
OF IACP
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THE ANNUAL IACP
POLICE MEMBERS' GUIDE

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RESPONSE TIME in our department has been reduced substantially in the past year by a device which allows our mobile units to carry on quality telephone conversations with citizens requesting police service.

Early in 1974, William West, an electronics expert residing in Willingboro, approached our department with an invention which would allow telephone lines to be connected to the radio system. Its cost was only \$500. Believing that this was a small price to pay for a telephone discussion from any telephone directly to our patrol car units, we placed an order for one unit. Our reasoning was that if it would be useful only six times a year in various emergency situations, the expense would be justified.

To our surprise, it has proved to be a much more usable tool than either Mr. West or we expected. Its value has been proved many times over.

The unique concept of this manual connect patch is its engineering to respond to the voice frequency of the civilian caller. It is able to sort out the incoming (caller's) signals from the outgoing (mobile unit's) signals. The caller's voice triggers an automatic switch in the phone patch unit, thereby almost totally eliminating the delay caused by conventional switch-over mechanisms. Because delay becomes almost nonexistent, the confusion in the transfer of messages between the two communicating parties is eliminated.

The unit we tested is a TSD Model PPT 2000—a manual connect patch. Some time ago telephone regulations were changed so that there is no legal problem in attaching the equipment to phone lines. In fact, there are now precise tariffs for this particular purpose. We found that the telephone company knew exactly what to do about the installation; therefore, we had no difficulty in ordering the service. The procedure, from the initial call to the telephone company until the unit was attached, took only two weeks, and the actual installation was completed in just a few hours.

The phone line input is hooked up to the phone patch in such a way that we can put any telephone line into any radio channel on our Motorola console. This flexibility makes our patch available to our ambulance and fire department also.

Operation is simple. The conversation is free-flowing and two-way even though, in actuality, it goes through a radio console. The dispatcher selects the proper telephone line and radio channel and then turns on the phone patch. The dispatcher can monitor the

Reducing Response Time By 50% With A Single \$500 Expenditure

phone line side of the conversation by listening to the speaker on the patch. This allows him to disconnect the patch if any problems or misuse of the patch occur. Thus, control of the radio system is always under the supervision of the dispatcher.

Here are some of the situations in which we use this unit. Generally speaking, it is used in instances of crimes and/or problems in progress. When the dispatcher's telephone rings and the dispatcher, who has had special training, realizes the call is about an incident in progress at that moment, he informs the caller that he is going to be allowed to speak directly with the mobile patrol officer who will be enroute to assist him. The dispatcher asks the caller to relate to the police unit what is happening, to give a description of the person(s) involved, if any, location, etc. Then via console switch, the dispatcher connects the caller with the field police unit. While the caller and the police unit are communicating through the phone patch, the dispatcher is writing into the log the record of the occurrence at the same moment the information is being transmitted.

A few actual cases will illustrate why we are enthusiastic about the device:

- A citizen called to report she had observed an individual donning a face mask and was trying to break into a house across the street. The caller was put on the phone patch and asked to describe what she was seeing. The patrol units asked questions and thus were able to approach the house without alerting the intruder. They were not only successful in catching the criminal in the act, but did so within seconds of the time he had entered the house.

- A detective at the bedside of a

shooting victim and the patrol car unit on the road were able to get critical information and questions back and forth. The result was an efficient transfer of vital information that allowed us to do a better job.

- In several emergency situations, a patrolman on the scene was able to contact a doctor or the police chief's office for advice on how to handle the problem until medical or supervisory personnel were on the scene.

- There were a number of occasions when people called in to report disturbances. They were put on the patch to give the information to the patrol cars. If he misunderstood the caller, the patrolman was able to ask that the information be repeated—easily and with no confusion.

In these and similar cases, we began to perceive certain patterns and results emerging that pointed to the value of the unit: Patrol cars had a more complete picture of the situation to which they were responding, of what and who they are looking for, thus enabling them to approach the scene according to the circumstances of the situation; the patrol officer could ask questions and receive the answers directly from the caller with no resultant confusion; and as a result of the foregoing, our response time was sufficiently reduced to enable us to impede or apprehend suspects who might otherwise have escaped.

The dispatcher can save valuable time on the job. Instead of having to write the report on the call after the fact, he is free to write it up as it is happening since he is now only indirectly involved. He is also able to answer other incoming calls and carry on other activities. Of course, the dispatcher is always in control of the situation via the phone link connect/disconnect switch on the patch.



BY ROBERT A. ROSELL

The psychological effect of speaking directly to the officer coming to his aid is a soothing action on the person seeking help, especially if he is in a state of near-hysteria. The quickness of the police response calms and impresses the caller. Having a direct input with the action appears to give some confidence to the civilian. This situation, as it is publicized, has also served to demonstrate how we are always trying to improve our quality of service to the taxpayers of our community.

I have found that the patch makes it possible for me to be more available to my staff and personnel and to deal more immediately with the questions they have from time to time. When situations occur in which the supervisor must be contacted, time is cut down by being able to talk directly to the patrol unit and the problem is quickly solved. Because I can be reached easily via the phone patch connection, incidents of confusion and mistakes have been reduced.

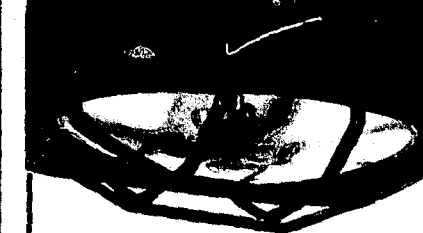
Now, to some of the complications we expected to have. Some never occurred; others were easily rectified. We anticipated some difficulty with the civilian dispatchers' supervision of the patch and control of the conversations. However, we found that after a short time of adjustment our dispatchers learned to discipline themselves and answer callers efficiently and professionally. In addition, our dispatchers find that the patch helps them to do their jobs more easily since they can handle other things while the patch is in progress.

Another of the areas in which we originally thought there would be trouble was the additional air time that could be used by patching incoming calls into the radio. Because the dispatcher controls and monitors the situation, and since he has been trained

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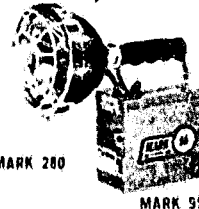


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