

WORKSHOP IN POLITICAL THEORY
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**Police Services Study
Fact Sheet**

F-8

THE INTRA-COUNTY MAJOR CASE INVESTIGATION
UNIT OF DANE COUNTY (b)(1)

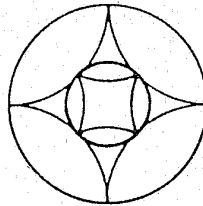
by

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THE INTRA-COUNTY MAJOR CASE INVESTIGATION UNIT OF DANE COUNTY

Local law enforcement agencies recently formed an interjurisdictional cooperative unit to deal with major crimes in the Dane County, Wisconsin, metropolitan area. In 1970, Dane County had a population of 290,000, 60 percent of whom lived in the city of Madison, the state capital.

There are 23 municipalities within the county, including Madison, providing either full or part-time police service. Three incorporated towns also have police forces, as does the University of Wisconsin. At the county level, both the Dane County Sheriff's Department and the Dane County Traffic Police Department produce police services. Four other law enforcement agencies -- the Wisconsin State Patrol, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the State Capitol Police, and the Veterans' Administration Hospital Police -- also operate within the county. Police manpower varies from part-time in some departments to the specialized ranks of the 286 officers in the Madison Police Department. The character of the municipalities also varies, from suburbs adjacent to Madison to small rural centers; however, only Madison had a population of more than 10,500 in 1970.

Representatives of the Madison Police Department, the Dane County Sheriff's Department, and the Dane County Chiefs of Police Association, recognizing the overload problems faced by smaller police departments in the event of a major crime, had frequently discussed the possibility of establishing an organized unit for dealing with such crimes. After study by a special task force and by the City-County Liason Committee, the Major Case Investigation Unit was approved and declared operational on March 1, 1975.

Purpose

The Intra-County Major Case Investigation Unit was designed to deal with any serious crime or threat to the community. The Unit is activated only when saturation-type investigation is deemed necessary. The by-laws list five advantages of an interjurisdictional investigative unit:

- Unity and continuity of investigation.
- Unity and continuity of command responsibility.
- Ability to commit specific personnel to an investigation without jeopardizing daily routine investigations.
- Avoiding duplication of effort, providing an organized system of report writing, indexing, and filing.
- Accountability of all reports and their duplication and distribution.

Membership

Although any police force from within Dane County can request the assistance of the Major Case Investigation Unit, the 21 officers available for assignment to the Unit represent only the two largest departments --

the Madison Police Department and the Dane County Sheriff's Department. Four officers are assigned to command positions within the Unit, two from each of these departments. Seventeen investigators are available, 11 from the Madison Police Department and six from the Sheriff's Department. Additionally, the department in whose jurisdiction the crime occurs assigns as many men as possible to the Unit. These assignments reflect the founders' belief that smaller departments have few, if any, men to lend full-time to a major investigation without jeopardizing routine departmental activities.

While only 21 officers are available at any time for assignment to the Unit, expert specialists may become involved as needed. Squad membership is predicated on knowledge of investigative techniques, ability to secure citizen cooperation, skill in report writing, and willingness to function as a team member. While no specific provision is made for training, in-service training courses will be held from time to time to keep members abreast of recent developments in criminal investigation. Members are instructed to adhere to prescribed policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of their respective departments while serving with the Unit. In cases of conflicting rules and regulations, the Commanding Officer determines appropriate procedure. Any member desirous of removal from the Unit must submit a written request to any member of the Board of Administrators.

Board of Administrators

The Board of Administrators is responsible for the activation and overall supervision of the Major Case Investigation Unit. It determines policies, establishes operating principles, and has authority for assignment or withdrawal of Unit personnel from any case. The Board consists of:

William H. Ferris, Sheriff, Dane County
David C. Couper, Chief, Madison Police Department
Stanley J. Klein, Chief Deputy, Dane County Sheriff's Department
George Schiro, Inspector, Madison Police Department
Kenneth Bram, Chief, Monona Police Department (representing Dane County Chiefs of Police Association)
Alternate (representing agency in whose jurisdiction major crime occurs)

Procedures for Activation of the Unit

The by-laws state that the request for activation of the Intra-County Major Case Investigation Unit should come as soon as practical after the requesting jurisdiction learns of the crime. Additional justification may be required for requests received in excess of 12 hours after discovery. After initial investigation by the agency in whose jurisdiction the crime occurs, the head of that agency must contact the Board of Administrators. The Board determines the seriousness of the crime, the current status of the investigation, and the amount of follow-up investigation required. It then votes to determine whether or not to activate the Unit, with decisions governed by majority rule.

Role of Requesting Agency's Ranking Officer

The by-laws recognize that the requesting agency will be in full charge of any investigation arising from its jurisdiction. Once the Board has voted to accept a case, however, the Chief of the requesting agency effectively relinquishes authority to the Unit. As a member of the Board, the Chief is involved in major decisions affecting the investigation but does not actually direct the Unit members assigned to it.

Role of Investigation Commanding Officer

At the time of the official activation of the Unit, the Board of Administrators designates in writing the Commanding Officer in charge of the investigation. His selection is dependent upon the jurisdiction in which the crime occurs; if it occurs within the city of Madison, an officer from the Madison Police Department is designated as Commanding Officer, but if it occurs anywhere else in Dane County, an officer from the Sheriff's Department is placed in command. The Commanding Officer's duties and responsibilities are as follows:

- He will be in full charge of Unit members assigned to the investigation.
- He will retain this authority throughout the investigation unless he relinquishes it in writing and with the approval of the Board of Administrators.
- His supervision is absolute; all assignments given unit members are to be treated as if the order came from the Unit member's home agency head.
- He may appoint supervisory personnel as he deems necessary for proper handling of the investigation.
- He may bring to the attention of the Board of Administrators any incompetency or misconduct of any member.

Role of Unit Officer in Charge

Lieutenant James McFarlane of the Madison Police Department has been designated as permanent Officer in Charge of the Major Case Investigation Unit. He assists the Commanding Officer, in effect functioning as investigation supervisor by assisting in selecting, training, and coordinating Unit members. He serves as liason between the Board of Administrators, the Commanding Officer, and the members of the Unit. Other duties of the Officer in Charge include:

- Arranging for office quarters for the squad.
- Providing necessary equipment for the investigation.
- Establishing liason with crime laboratories and other public or private firms that can aid in the investigation.
- Preparing reports of administrative, legal, or logistical problems encountered and providing them to the Board of Administrators.
- Arranging for periodic meetings or using other appropriate means to brief personnel on the progress of a case.

- Ensuring that no member initiates investigation of a new suspect or lead without first receiving approval for such action.
- Preparing case progress resumes for presentation to the Board of Administrators and staff personnel for briefing and discussion.

Role of Personnel, Press, and Equipment Supervisor

Sergeant Lawrence Larson of the Dane County Sheriff's Department has been designated as permanent Personnel, Press, and Equipment Supervisor for the Unit. He is responsible for selecting and dispatching squad members to the Unit's command post. He must also notify all support personnel not specifically assigned to the Unit. Other duties include:

- Advising the Officer in Charge of each new arrival and of his duty status and availability. Vacation, regular duty hours, and days off must be recorded.
- Reporting to the Commanding Officer and coordinating press relations with the hosting agency.
- Serving as historian for the entire case.
- Handling personal problems of squad members.
- Aid in mobilizing personnel for conferences or other purposes.
- Assisting Officer in Charge or Report and Records Supervisor as necessary.
- Arranging for motor vehicle maintenance and repair, and for special equipment as needed.

Role of Report and Records Supervisor

Investigator Robert O'Neill of the Dane County Sheriff's Department has been designated the Report and Records Supervisor for the Unit. He is responsible for receiving, editing, filing, summarizing, and reviewing all case reports and for supervising clerical personnel. Additionally, he must:

- Require each investigator to complete a standardized reporting form.
- Ensure that copies of all reports are forwarded to appropriate agencies and to the Commanding Officer.
- Ensure that each lead and tip is assigned to one investigator to eliminate duplication of effort.
- Prepare a daily general progress report as directed by the Commanding Officer.

Role of Alternate Unit Officer in Charge

The Alternate Unit Officer in Charge, Lieutenant Leroy Williams of the Madison Police Department, assumes command in the absence of the permanent Officer in Charge or in the event simultaneous incidents occur. He must

be thoroughly familiar with all aspects and operations of the Unit and perform the duties of Records or Personnel Supervisors if necessary.

Jurisdictional Authority

Since the Dane County Sheriff is a member of the Board of Administrators and is also the top law enforcement officer in the county, he has the power to deputize all members of the Unit to minimize problems of investigators working outside their normal jurisdictions. In cases where dual federal-state violations occur, the Unit will consult with federal authorities but normally will be allowed to continue its investigation.

Liability and Disability Insurance

All officers assisting in a Unit investigation are covered by their home agency's liability and disability insurance.

Overtime

All officers subject to regular call-up on a major case investigation have signed a waiver allowing them to be assigned on eight-hour shift; the first eight hours worked, regardless of starting time, is considered a normal day. Any time worked beyond the first eight hours is considered overtime. All support or specialized personnel called into the investigation receive overtime for any time worked outside of normal duty hours.

Other Costs

The requesting agency is not required to bear other costs involved in the conduct of the investigation. All salaries and costs are borne by the departments assigning men to the case.

Support

The Unit receives no support, public or private, apart from the in-kind services provided by each member department.

Cases Handled

The Intra-County Major Case Investigation Unit has handled three cases since its March 1 inception. One murder and one case of multiple rape have been solved, and a second homicide investigation is currently in progress. Of the two cases completed, Unit officials believe that one would not have been solved without the intervention of the Unit.

END

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