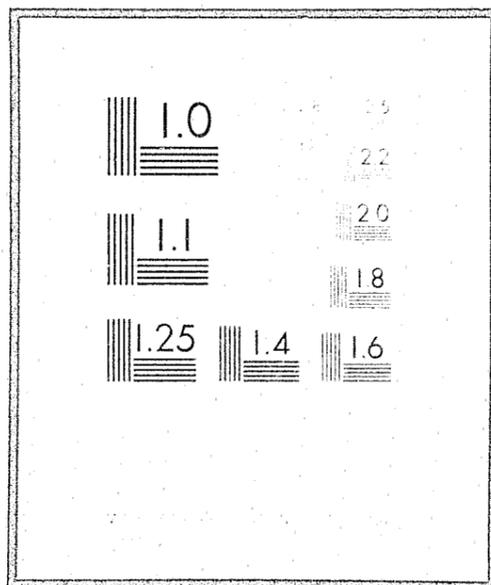


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LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION (LEAA)

POLICE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REPORT

SUBJECT: Rural Law Enforcement Program:
Seminar on Crime Resistance and the
Elderly in Rural Areas.

PROJECT NUMBER: 76-171-01

FOR: National Academy of the Federal Bureau
of Investigation and
The National Retired Teachers Association/
American Association of Retired Persons

CONTRACTOR: Public Administration Service
1776 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036

CONSULTANT: Charles M. Girard

CONTRACT NUMBER: J-LEAA-002-76

DATE: September, 1976

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ACQUISITIONS

A REVIEW OF A SEMINAR ON CRIME
RESISTANCE AND THE ELDERLY IN RURAL AREAS

FOCUS OF THE CONFERENCE

The conference focused on rural crime with a particular emphasis on the elderly. Conference subjects included the identification of problems, presentations on crime statistics; special problems of rural investigations; the roles of such organizations as the American Farm Bureau Federation, The National Farmers Union, and the National Retired Teacher's Association/American Association of Retired Persons in relation to fighting rural crime.

The conference was co-sponsored by the National Academy of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Retired Teacher's Association/American Association of Retired Persons. The conference took place on September 1, 2 and 3rd, 1976, at the FBI National Academy.

ROLE OF THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONSULTANT

Three basic tasks were carried out by the technical assistance consultant during this assignment. First, the consultant served as a resource specialist on rural law enforcement throughout the seminar. Second, a formal presentation concerning rural law enforcement problems, needs and alternative solutions was given by the consultant.^{1/} Third, by monitoring the activities of the conference the consultant identified various issues, problems, etc. that will be used to enhance the value of LEAA's Discretionary Program Concerning Rural Law Enforcement.

THE RESULTS OF THE SEMINAR PROCEEDINGS

Throughout the seminar a variety of findings pertinent to rural law enforcement in general and the LEAA Discretionary Program specifically were presented. Relevant aspects of these proceedings follow.

^{1/}See attachment A for an outline of this presentation.

Problem Identification

Crime Analysis and the Nature of Rural Offenses. It was generally agreed that the crime analysis function is a "weak link" in the rural law enforcement process. Similarly, it was agreed that up-grading and improving this process would be a difficult task. No specific recommendations were offered by those in attendance as to how this could be accomplished.

A number of questions were also reviewed which related to the nature of crimes in rural areas. Each is presented below along with the responses offered by the conference participants.

- o What crimes cause the most financial loss in rural areas? In terms of agriculturally related crimes, larceny, burglary and vandalism of gasoline, equipment and antiques were cited as the most costly. Among non-agricultural (suburbanite) populations, burglary and vandalism were said to be the most costly.
- o What crimes produce the most fear? Farm families, as well as non-farm rural families, allegedly are traumatized most by "home intrusion crimes."
- o What data elements should be collected to properly assess rural crime? Among the data elements which were suggested for inclusion in rural crime reporting were: the types of items stolen, i.e., chemicals, farm machinery, etc.; the value of the various items stolen, and whether the crime was committed by "professionals," amateurs and so on.

Problems Faced by Rural Officers. Three problems were identified as unique to rural law enforcement personnel. These were identified as:

- o The time lag between the commission of a crime and an officer's response to a call for service. This situation was attributed to such factors as expansive rural areas and the time lag between the commission of a crime and its reporting by rural area residents.
- o Due to the nature of the time lag it was noted that witnesses often leave the scene of rural crimes making proper reporting and investigation difficult.

- o Rural victims frequently "clean-up" the crime scene and thereby destroy evidence.

Crime Prevention Problems Unique to Rural Areas. The following were cited as aspects of rural law enforcement which precipitate crime problems.

- o The remoteness of residents and structures in many rural areas make them vulnerable targets.
- o The lack of financial resources has prohibited rural areas from acquiring such law enforcement tools as modern communications equipment. Further, in that the local government administrative structures are staffed by part-time personnel who are not aware of how to apply for and/or ascertain state and federal funds to support such equipment none is requested. Thus, poor communication systems have made rural areas vulnerable to the "mobile" criminal.
- o A number of community development problems were also cited as factors which make rural law enforcement difficult. These included the proliferation of housing in rural areas; the difficulty in finding people, homes and buildings due to improperly mapped roads and un-numbered structures; and, the lack of building codes which promotes the erection of structures which are easy to vandalize and/or burglarize.

Problem Solutions

Recommendations in terms of solutions to problems faced by rural law enforcement were few. Nonetheless, the following were offered as solutions and/or points that should be remembered when dealing with rural law enforcement matters.

- o Rural citizens should be advised to watch for and report strange vehicles and citizens;
- o Groups of rural citizens might be organized to monitor citizen band radio communications;

- o Rural citizens should be educated in various ways to identify and mark their property;
- o When a law enforcement agency is prosecuting a defendant, special attention should be paid to the fact that farmers and ranchers do not have time to waste in playing the attorney's game of constant "continuances;"
- o Such interested groups as the Future Farmers of America, the 4-H, and County Agents should be involved in the rural law enforcement process; and,
- o Rural law enforcement agencies should investigate the potentials inherent in adding staff through the utilization of such funds as the Concentrated Employment Training Act (CETA) and the Summer Youth Corps Program.

THE UTILIZATION OF ELDERLY CITIZENS IN RURAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

Presented below are a variety of tasks that the seminar participants noted might be filled by elderly volunteers.

General Tasks

General activities that were suggested follow.

- o Perform house and camp ground checks.
- o Reside in seasonal/vacation homes as "house sitters" when they are not being used by owners.
- o Serve as police resource personnel in elementary schools e.g. retired teachers.
- o Assist officers in the delivery of death messages and help the families of the deceased, i.e. baby-sitting, cooking, etc.
- o Serve as consultants for police officers in such areas as personal financial management, marital counseling, and so on.

- o Perform typing and records keeping functions.
- o Perform clerical work concerning scheduling and roster preparation.
- o Check motor vehicle examinations.
- o Serve as advocates for victims and witnesses by keeping them informed of what is happening in terms of their cases.
- o Provide an interface between the community and the law enforcement agency by communicating with habitual elderly complainants through the organization of a telephone network or senior citizen "buddy" system.
- o Assist the law enforcement agency in informing merchants, banks and so on when gypsies, bad check artists, etc. are discovered in town.

Court Assistance

The following activities were identified as potential ways to involve the elderly in the court process.

- o Name them as bailiffs.
- o Use the elderly as work release monitors.
- o Organize elderly court watcher programs.

Crime Prevention

The following activities were cited as potential roles that the elderly could play in relation to community crime prevention strategies.

- o Pass out literature.
- o Retired police officers following appropriate training could conduct residential security surveys.

- o Following the completion of crime prevention training the elderly could serve as spokesmen in their portion of the community (i. e. block, senior home, etc.) to continually emphasize steps their peers can take to protect themselves against victimization.

Miscellaneous Functions

The following miscellaneous functions were also cited as potential activities for the elderly.

- o Assist in traffic control at schools.
- o Provide assistance in jails, i. e., matrons, cooks, booking and records clerks.
- o Become involved on a law enforcement committee as "senior advisors" to inform the police administrator about the needs of the elderly.

Attachment A
PRESENTATION OUTLINE

PRESENTATION

Rural Law Enforcement: The Dark
Continent of Police Operations

I. Crime and the Population

A. Crime

1. Contrary to popular myths that crime and social problems do not exist in the countryside, index crimes in rural areas increased by more than 10% between 1972 and 1973 and more than 20% between 1973 and 1974. And, as you know from recent reports, there doesn't appear to be any changes occurring in this pattern.

B. Where Americans Live

1. About 27.2% of the population lives on 86.2% of the land areas outside the 267 Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas in the U.S.
2. The majority of this population lives in small towns and rural counties.

II. The Status of Rural Law Enforcement

A. A recent report by the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations pointed out that rural law enforcement is:

1. Highly decentralized.
2. Makes excessive use of part-time personnel.
3. Has limited areawide capabilities.

B. Highly decentralized condition is documented by the small size of rural departments.

1. U.S. Census Bureau has reported that there are upwards of 30,000 non-metropolitan local governments in the U.S.
2. They employ on the average only one full-time policeman each.
3. Among those that actually have full-time police, forces average between three and five men.

C. Utilization of Part-time Personnel

1. In at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of the states, 20% or more of their policemen are part-time.
2. Nationally, the number of part-time policemen in rural areas has been estimated at more than 20,000.

D. Rural Area problems complicated due to fact that a significant lack of police protection has been documented.

1. Approximately 96% of the 2,400 + non-metropolitan counties have police forces of less than 25.
2. Further, 78% of these have less than ten (10) full-time officers.
3. Thus, rural county forces are in a poor position to coordinate or strengthen police protection within their jurisdictions.

E. Consequences of this situation are only too apparent.

1. Many so small they can provide only minimal basic services -- if that.
2. Use of part-time personnel lowers the quality of these minimal services.
3. As a result, the lack of adequate police protection means that many have difficulty in controlling crime.

III. An Inventory of the Problems and Needs of Rural Law Enforcement Agencies

A. Personnel Needs

1. Need adequate manpower to provide accessible, 24-hour law enforcement service.
2. Need better trained and more professional law enforcement personnel in rural areas.
3. Need access to specialized law enforcement personnel such as investigative specialists, prevention specialists, etc.
4. Need to identify manpower alternatives for tasks that non-law enforcement personnel can do with equal effectiveness.

B. Training Needs

1. Need to provide training to widely dispersed law enforcement personnel in small agencies.
2. Need for evaluation of existing training and development of new training specific to the rural area.

C. Equipment and Facilities Needed

1. Need for physical facilities that meet minimum standards for effective law enforcement.
2. Need for basic law enforcement equipment as well as specialized equipment to meet rural demands.
3. Need electronic communication equipment for processing information and interagency communications.

D. Fiscal Needs

1. Need for fiscal alternatives to support law enforcement services in the face of constricting local tax base.
2. Need for adequate salary and benefits.

E. Data

1. Need assistance in the development and use of adequate records systems to maintain crime data and record

operational activities.

2. Need straight forward answers as to the effectiveness of alternative service delivery systems, e.g., consolidation, contract law enforcement, etc.

F. Cooperation and Coordination

1. Need for cooperation, coordination, and resource sharing between law enforcement jurisdictions.
2. Need to resolve conflicting interagency goals that waste scarce rural resources and harm the rural client.
3. Need to find effective means whereby citizens can participate in crime prevention and abatement.

IV. One Alternative: The Area Resident Trooper Program

A. The Focus of the Program

1. Provide full-time "resident professional" to a community.
2. This trained officer lives, eats, breathes and sleeps in the rural area.
3. His job is to upgrade the existing situation by providing:
 - a. expertise
 - b. physical presence
 - c. coordination between the various levels of the law enforcement community

B. The Massachusetts Situation

1. Problems as noted earlier
2. Specific objectives
 - a. To provide a full-time, trained law enforcement specialist who will live and work in the area.
 - b. To upgrade local law enforcement operations through the development and implementation of:

- (1) training programs;
- (2) a uniform record system; and,
- (3) the initiation of standardized procedures for investigations, evidence selection and property control.

- c. To strengthen the liaison, coordination and communications among and between the towns and the state police in terms of law enforcement administration.
- d. To increase the presence of police resources in each town during all hours of the day; i. e., provide day-time preventive patrol.
- e. To increase calls for services and crime reporting due to the availability of the resident trooper.
- f. To stabilize the rate of increase in index crimes.

3. The job that lies ahead for the Resident Trooper -- over and above standard duties.

- a. Educating citizens to use the law enforcement system:
 - (1) call police because they will be available;
 - (2) don't wait until tomorrow or be afraid to bother someone because he is a part-timer.

B. Upgrading the existing participants in the system.

1. Provide in-service training.
2. Develop information to provide basis for the development and support of a stronger system; e.g., crime data, services rendered, calls for services, etc.
3. Design improved systems to aid in the delivery process; e.g., investigations, evidence and property control, records, manpower distribution, and so on.

END

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