How Can Police Departments Better Apply Management-By-Objectives and Quality Circle Programs?

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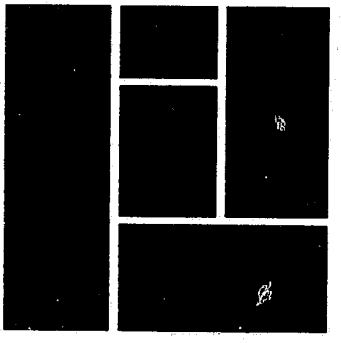

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Project Report

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PART I

INTRODUCTION, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction and Scope

This report examines the practical issues facing police departments when deciding about the adoption and form of selected types of motivational programs, particularly management-by-objectives and quality circle programs. The report discusses the major issues involved, the conditions that appear to be associated with successful implementation of these motivational approaches, and their impacts thus far in police departments.

The information currently available on police motivation programs has rarely examined motivation from the standpoint of improving agency performance and productivity. Texts on police administration do consider motivational issues but often indirectly, e.g., within the context of leadership styles, personnel management practices, and the like.[1] Of even more importance, this information has often emphasized negative incentives (such as internal inspection procedures and disciplinary actions) rather than positive motivators for police personnel.

This work focuses on two particular "positive" motivational approaches, management-by-objectives (MBO) and quality circles, as being two of the most promising police motivational efforts now being tried by police departments in the United States -- and which represent a substantial departure from

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1. For example, see O.W. Wilson and Roy C. McLaren, Police Administration, Third Edition, McGraw-Hill (New York, 1972); Paul M. Whisensand and R. Fred Ferguson, The Managing of Police Organizations, Prentice-Hall (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1973); and Bernard L. Garmire (ed.), Local Government Police Management, Second Edition, International City Management Association (Washington, D.C., 1982).

traditional police practices. MBO is primarily aimed at motivating managerial personnel; quality circles are primarily focused on non-managerial personnel.

MBO is a process in which individual managers identify specific objectives for the coming performance period (usually for the coming year). Performance against those objectives is then periodically reviewed to determine the extent to which the managers have met their objectives. MBO has a long history in the United States, having been promulgated nearly 30 years ago by such well-known management experts as Peter Drucker. It was first used in private, for-profit firms. Government use of MBO was especially active during the late 1960's, a period when the Nixon administration pressed for its use in Federal Government agencies and a number of local governments also adopted it. Police department use of this approach is now receiving additional encouragement from the "Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies" recently issued by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. These standards call for written directives and evaluations involving input from all levels within the agency concerning goals and objectives for the agency and progress towards the attainment of those objectives by each organizational component.[1]

Quality circles represent a participatory approach in which small groups of employees, primarily non-management personnel from the same work unit, meet regularly to identify, analyze, and recommend solutions to problems relating to their work unit.[2] Quality circles have received a great deal of notoriety

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1. See Standard 1.1 in "Standards Manual for Law Enforcement Agencies," Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (Fairfax, Virginia, August 1983).

2. Adapted from definition included in The Quality Circles Journal, Vol. 6-3 (September 1983). This Journal is published by the International Association of Quality Circles.

in recent years because of the apparent success of the Japanese in applying quality circle concepts to the work place. Many industrial firms in the United states began to apply the quality circle concept in the late 1970's. A number of local governments have also begun to experiment with quality circles since about 1978.

Methodology

Our main thrust in this work has been to identify and illuminate key issues that could help police departments in their own MBO and quality circle implementation decisions. For this examination, we undertook the following principal steps:

- o A review of the literature on MBO and quality circles, particularly as it pertains to governments and police departments. (Unfortunately, however, although such literature is widely available on applications to the private sector, it is quite sparse when it comes to reporting on activities in government, with very little material specifically related to police departments.)
- o A mail survey of police departments in all cities with populations of 50,000 or more and all counties with populations of 100,000 or more. The survey identified the extent of police department usage of a variety of motivational approaches, including candidates for more in-depth examination later in our work. The survey was conducted by the International City Management Association. ICMA received a total of 300 usable responses for a 37% response rate (211 from cities and 89 from counties).

- Telephone interviews with department personnel responsible for the motivational programs in 17 police departments. These interviews were approximately 45 minutes to one hour in length.
- Review of materials provided by over 30 police departments in response to the ICMA survey and our telephone interviews.
- On-site field work in five locations: Dallas, Texas (to examine its quality circle program and, secondarily, its MBO program); Orlando, Florida (to examine its quality circle program and, secondarily, its MBO program); Mesa, Arizona (quality circles); Newport News, Virginia (MBO); and Hampton, Virginia (MBO). In addition, we drew on work that we had previously undertaken on police MBO systems in the cities of Charlotte (North Carolina), Dayton (Ohio), and Montebello (California) during 1979-1980.

Our site visit procedures included three major data collection efforts:

1. In-person interviews of approximately one hour each with a number of police personnel at various levels of the organization to obtain their experiences and perceptions on the program and its pros and cons. These generally included interviews with the police chief, one or more majors or assistant chiefs, several captains, several lieutenants, a few sergeants, and in sites with quality circle programs, a small number of non-supervisory personnel. These interviews were semi-structured.
2. A self-administered questionnaire for all employees that had participated in the program and, for quality circle programs, a random sample of personnel who had not participated in the

quality circle program. For quality circles, these surveys were primarily administered to non-supervisory employees plus some sergeants (who were included because they either were circle leaders or had been promoted since the time of their membership in a circle). For MBO sites, the questionnaire was administered to all managerial employees covered by the program. The questionnaire solicited perceptions as to the extent to which improvements had occurred with regard to the work unit's effectiveness, efficiency, morale, interpersonal relationships, and innovativeness. Participants in the program were also asked various questions regarding their perceptions of selected aspects of the MBO or quality circle program, e.g. the training received, the way objectives were established, and the feedback received on accomplishment of objectives.

3. An examination of available documents and data regarding the programs (including such elements as quality circle minutes and attendance figures) and information, when available, on performance indicators for the department for periods before and after implementation of the program.

It is very difficult to provide definitive evidence on the impacts of these types of programs, especially for MBO. After implementation of an MBO or quality circle program, many other changes inevitably take place in the department that can affect performance. We have, however, obtained some indications of program impacts from department performance data and from the in-person and self-administered surveys. Participants (and in the case of quality circles, non-participants) were asked various questions about the level of and recent changes in service quality, efficiency, morale, and

interpersonal relationships for their work group since the time the program was implemented. With quality circles, we asked similar questions of a sample of non-participants. We also asked both quality circle and MBO participants for their judgments as to the specific effects of the particular motivational program and for particular examples of work changes that resulted from the quality circle or MBO effort.

Taken together, this material provides information as to specific ways to best apply MBO and quality circle programs in police departments and indications of their likely outcomes.

Incidence of Usage of Various Motivational Approaches by Police Departments

Although the emphasis in our work was on MBO and quality circle programs, in our mail survey of police agencies we also asked about the use of a number of other motivational approaches. Exhibit I-1 presents the number and percentage of departments that reported having used each type of program during the past three years.

Remainder of Report

Part II presents our findings and recommendations on management-by-objectives programs. Part III gives our findings and recommendations on Quality Circle programs.

EXHIBIT I-1

Incidence of Usage of Motivational Programs by Police Agencies in the Past Three Years[1]

	Number	Percent
Management by Objectives	141	47
Quality Circles	48	16
Labor-Management Committees	112	37
Other Formal Programs to Increase Employee Participation	87	29
Pay-for-Performance Plans	72	24
Educational Incentives	160	53
Neighborhood Team Policing	49	16
Generalist Officers	142	47
Formal Job Rotation Programs	92	31
Task Forces/Special Problem-Solving Teams	185	62
Public Safety Officers	15	5
Career Development Programs	76	25
Suggestion Awards	77	26
Safety Awards	63	21
Attendance Incentives	74	25
Exceptional Service Awards	22	7
Other Programs	36	12
TOTAL RESPONSES	300	

1. These findings are from a mail survey in early 1984 of police agencies in cities with populations of 50,000 or more and counties with populations of 100,000 or more.

PART II

THE USE OF MANAGEMENT-BY-OBJECTIVES IN POLICE DEPARTMENTS

What Is MBO?

Management-by-objectives (MBO) is a process for motivating management employees to improved performance. It is the principal form of a general motivational techniques sometimes called "performance targeting" that is being widely used by police departments in the United States.[1] Of the 300 police agencies responding to our survey, 47% (141) reported using some form of MBO system sometime over the past three years. Of these, about 40% began before 1980, reflecting the early interest in MBO (since the early 1970's) by local governments. Only a few of these departments (6) reported having terminated their MBO program.

MBO is commonly defined as a process in which management employees identify specific measurable objectives for themselves prior to the beginning of a specific performance period. Subsequently, actual progress in meeting those objectives as measured, and feedback on objective achievement is provided to the manager responsible for each objective.

Typically the objectives for a given manager are established by the manager with some degree of participation by the manager's supervisor. MBO proponents strongly encourage interim feedback during the performance period to let the manager know how he is doing on his objectives in order to identify

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1. Another form of performance targeting sometimes used by police departments is the use of work standards to establish the specific amount of time that particular tasks should require, with subsequent comparisons to the actual time staff takes to do those activities. This procedure, however, is usually limited to routine tasks such as fingerprinting, clerical tasks, and vehicle repair activities. Its focus is primarily on efficiency improvement. However, the approach does not appear to be applicable to many police activities.

whether actions are needed to increase the likelihood of achieving the objectives during the remainder of the performance period. Other activities often suggested for MBO systems are (a) periodic person-to-person discussions between the manager and his supervisor on the manager's achievements to date, perhaps quarterly and at the end of the performance year, and (b) preparation by the manager of action plans containing specific steps needed to achieve the objectives and a schedule for these steps.

An "objective" represents a precisely stated condition or end product to be achieved. Each objective should be clearly defined as to what specifically constitutes its achievement, such as a specific performance level, a specific percentage improvement, or a specific due date. Thus, MBO systems encourage planning for the next performance period and require a process for tracking achievements that provides periodic, reliable feedback on each manager's progress towards each objective.

Police departments usually have ongoing data collection procedures that can be readily adapted to track some objectives, such as objectives on numbers of arrests, clearances, response times, reported crimes of various types, etc. For some objectives, new or revised data collection procedures will likely be necessary, for instance if objectives are specified on citizen feeling of security (which might require a survey of citizens) or in more detail than the current data collection procedures provide (e.g. if objectives are established for individual watches and beats for which breakouts are not currently provided).

The underlying concept of MBO is that having managers establish their own objectives and subsequently receive periodic feedback on their progress towards them will provide substantial additional motivation for managers to achieve the objectives. The managers would then be much more likely to plan

and act in ways leading to a successful achievement of the objectives. If the objectives are appropriate and important for the department, this then should lead to improved performance with regard to department objectives and public purposes. (If the objectives and targets are inappropriate, then the process would not be useful and perhaps even counterproductive.)

MBO has some other potential problems such as additional paperwork and the time required to undertake the various MBO tasks. Also some additional time and expense may be required to modify the department's information systems to obtain information on progress towards objectives.

In our examination, we identified a number of issues that police departments need to consider in implementing and utilizing MBO systems successfully. Exhibit A summarizes these issues. Each of these is discussed in the following sections.

Exhibit A

Management-By-Objectives Isuses

Issue 1. What Personnel Should Participate?

Issue 2. What Objectives Should Be Used?

Issue 3. Should Objectives Be Established for Individual Watches and Geographic Areas?

Issue 4. What Types of Performance Targets Should Be Used?

Issue 5. Should Objectives Represent Minimum, Average, or High Levels of Performance?

Issue 6. Should There Be Interim Targets During the Year?

Issue 7. Should There Be a Provision for Interim Revision of Objectives?

Issue 8. How Should Coordination Be Handled When an Objective Is Affected by More Than One Unit?

Issue 9. Should the Department Require Action Plans to Support Objectives?

Issue 10. What Type of Feedback on Objective Achievement Should Be Provided To Managers?

Issue 11. What Should Be the Degree of Central Review, Oversight, and Support?

Issue 12. What Type and Extent of Training is Desirable?

Issue 13. What Impacts Should Be Expected of Police MBO Efforts?

ISSUE 1: WHAT PERSONNEL SHOULD PARTICIPATE?

Police departments designing an MBO effort need to determine how broadly the program will be applied in the department. Which organizational units and which types and levels of employees will be included in the program: both civilian and sworn personnel? Which levels of managers? What organizational units? In principle, there is probably no reason not to cover all units and all management personnel in an MBO effort. The sections below first discuss which types and levels of employees and then which organizational units should be included.

(1) Employee Types and Levels Covered. Of the 141 police and sheriff's department that reported use of MBO in our 1984 survey, 82% reported that middle and/or top level management (lieutenants and above) participated in the program. Seventy-two percent reported participation by sergeants, and 57% reported participation by civilian personnel. More than 70% covered all supervisory and management personnel.[1]

In Hampton, Virginia, the target-setting effort goes down to the lieutenant level and -- in some cases -- to sergeant. Patrol officers and investigators are also assigned MBO targets. In Newport News, Virginia, program coverage extends to the lieutenants and some sargeants; efforts are currently underway in some divisions (especially patrol) to extend the coverage to line officers. In governments where MBO plays a major role in the budgetary process (e.g., Orlando, Florida and Virginia Beach, Virginia) program coverage focuses on individuals responsible for units that are

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1. These survey findings, however, are ambiguous. Participation may have been interpreted by some respondents to mean being in a unit covered by MBO objectives or contributing to the specification of such objectives, rather than being assigned personal responsibility for one's own objectives.

identified in the budget. In Orlando, this includes captains and lieutenants that are section heads (but not the watch commanders). In Virginia Beach, only eight to twelve top level department managers (with line budget responsibility) are covered by the MBO effort. San Jose, California, focuses its MBO effort on program and sub-program managers, usually captains, lieutenants, and some sergeants. On the other hand, the MBO effort by the Dallas Police Department is limited to seven top level managers serving at the pleasure of the city manager: the police chief, the executive assistant chief, and the five assistant chiefs.

Several factors can limit coverage. These include the following:

- Employee unionization: police departments may choose to restrict the coverage of their MBO efforts to non-union managers if they involve monetary incentives for performance achievements as done in Dayton, Ohio and Montebello, California. In the case of Dayton, this limited the program to the top 13 sworn and civilian managers within the department.
- Rotating Shifts: Rotation of managers from one shift to another, especially when that rotation is fairly frequent (e.g., monthly), can make it difficult or impossible to maintain the accountability needed for an MBO effort. Fixed shifts (e.g., in Newport News and Hampton) and stable responsibilities facilitates the MBO process. (Even with fixed shifts, there may be a few "floating" managers who fill in on several shifts. Assignment of distinct objectives for these managers may be especially difficult.) Of respondents to our 1984 survey, 44% of police departments reported having shifts that did not rotate. (Another 16% reported shifts which rotated but all employees, both supervisory and non-supervisory, rotated as a unit.)

- Status of Sergeants: Whether or not to include sergeants in the MBO effort has produced differing responses from differing departments. In many of the departments we examined, sergeants had their own MBO objectives when responsible for a distinct program or a unit. However, in Orlando sergeants are not considered managers and were excluded from coverage under MBO. Other departments have noted that the frequency with which they transfer sergeants makes it difficult or impossible to assign and hold them accountable for the annual targets which are the basis of their MBO systems.

(2) Organizational Coverage: Of the police departments in our 1984 survey who are using MBO, 70% reported that the program covered all units within the departments; 16% excluded patrol unit; 19% excluded traffic (or had no traffic division); and 25% excluded various other units (crime prevention, records, dispatching). Most departments appear to use their organizational charts as the basis for defining program coverage. Thus, for instance, Montgomery County, Maryland included all "charted" units (a total of 50 to 60) in its MBO effort. Virginia Beach -- which links MBO to zero-based budgeting -- focused on the eight to twelve budget units.

MBO procedures provide an opportunity for drawing mid-level and first-level managers--and even line personnel--into the planning and decision making process. Even if some personnel, such as non-supervisory employees, do not have their own individual performance targets, they can still take part in identifying objectives, examining progress, and suggesting changes for their unit to meet their supervisor's objectives. Such opportunities, however, have not always been utilized to the fullest. In most of the programs we examined, though managers down through the level of lieutenant were actively involved in specifying objectives for the year, participation of lower level employees

varied. In Newport News, an intensive effort has been made this year to actively involve line personnel--patrolmen and investigators--in the specification of objectives under the department's MBO system.

In most cases, the participants appear to be given wide flexibility in developing objectives. While upper level management usually reviews the objectives, they seldom appeared to intrude upon the objective development process. At most, a superior officer will specify one or two objectives for inclusion in his subordinate's goals and objectives for the year. In our surveys of employees covered by MBO programs in Hampton and Newport News, only about 15% of the respondents indicated that their objectives were selected primarily by their supervisor; most (72%) reported that the selection process was a cooperative effort between themselves and their supervisor. In a few cases--e.g., Dallas--many of the chief's objectives were subsequently assigned to lower level managers. In San Jose, program managers have an additional opportunity to participate. When their performance during a given four-month period falls below the targeted level, they are expected to propose one or more suggestion for overcoming the problem. While potentially complicating the administration of the program to some extent, such efforts are likely to pay off in terms of motivational and productivity improvements.

Much less clear, however, is the question as to whether watch commanders and beat supervisors should have their own objectives. This is currently rare. The key issue here is whether it is possible to hold such persons accountable for appropriate beat and watch objectives. This is discussed in more detail under Issue 2.

> Recommendation: Managers/supervisors of all units should be included in the MBO effort, whether sworn or civilian personnel, and regardless of the rank of the head of the unit -- even though it is difficult to specify objectives for some units. This comprehensive coverage will avoid resentment by some supervisory personnel that would feel singled out for attention and make the most of the opportunity to benefit from the

application of MBO within the department. The department should also encourage each manager responsible for a set of objectives to encourage participation by that manager's staff (whether the staff are supervisory or non-supervisory employees) in helping to define the unit's objectives and the action plan to achieve those objectives (as is discussed later). We believe it is possible to establish reasonable objectives for individual watches and beats, and thus, recommend that departments attempt to include such personnel in their MBO process.

ISSUE 2: WHAT OBJECTIVES SHOULD BE USED?

The type of objectives established for the MBO effort play a vital role in the effectiveness of MBO. An objective should be a measurable, precisely stated condition or end product to be achieved--and by a certain time. (Many departments also specific "goals". These, generally, are broad, general, statements of a unit's mission. The unit's goal statement may require one, or several objectives.) Each objective contains a "target" selected, signifying what specifically constitutes the achievement of the objective — e.g., a specific due date, a specific level, a specific percentage improvement, etc. We found a number of units in some departments with objectives worded in such general terms that it would be difficult, if not impossible to tell subsequently if the objective had been met or to what extent e.g., "Begin organizing businesses into organizations similar to neighborhood watch groups" (What does "begin" mean?) and "Improve quality and quantity of police records information available to investigators" (How would you know of this had been done?).

Which Type(s) of Objectives Should Be Used.

In addition, a key question for a police department is to decide whether its managers should focus on process objectives, outcome objectives, efficiency objectives, or some combination of these particular means to an end rather than an end in itself.

Process objectives. Process objectives focus on the means to an end, i.e., an action or activity to be undertaken rather than a result (outcome) to be achieved. Thse are usually specified in terms of the workload to be completed or activities to be undertaken. Examples include: "Conduct at least 8 major studies impacting procedural, operational, or managerial decision-making

policy," and "Continue inspections of bars, liquor stores, adult book stores, and cardrooms, making approximately 1500 inspections."

Project objectives may focus on stimulating new efforts and initiatives, e.g., the accomplishment of special projects, or may focus on maintaining current activities. We found that several police departments began to de-emphasize the inclusion of objectives focusing on current activities after a number of years in MBO and to stress the use of those with a new project focus. For instance, in the last several years, the Hampton, Virginia Police Department has directed managers to emphasize new projects in specifying goals and objectives, while de-emphasizing objectives on "routine" activities. New activities are likely to be more eye-catching and stimulate excitement in a department. The danger here is that too much emphasis on new projects can divert efforts from vital day-to-day operations to specialized projects.

Another form of process objective we found were objectives that focused on activities explicitly intended to produce improved service outcomes, such as the identification and implementation of actions to improve productivity. An example is the Montebello objective: "Identify four improvements in operation's effectiveness or efficiency during the year." A similar objective was used for patrol units in Newport News: "District patrol officers will identify two problem areas in their districts from weekly administrative analysis reports and develop a plan to address the problems." Both jurisdictions found these objectives to be effective in stimulating innovative projects and to have a high probability of improving service outcomes. This type of process objective appears to have particular promise in producing desirable results. Another example: patrol units can be given the objective to identify a certain number of problems within their beat during the next quarter, implementing directed patrol activities to address those problems.

Outcome objectives. Outcome objectives focus on the results of an activity. Examples include "Maintain a clearance rate for index crimes 4% above the state average for cities of comparable size," "Maintain an average response time of 8 minutes or less for priority calls," "Reduce burglaries in District A by 2%," and "Decrease the number of vehicles in violation of speeding laws by 5% at identified locations with a history of numerous speeding violations." The latter objectives focus on the end result of an action, rather than the means used to achieve it.

Cost and efficiency objectives. Efficiency objectives focus on reducing department expenditures. Such objectives can be expressed as specific expenditure reductions for certain activities as specific reductions in cost-per-unit of some output (such as cost of patrol cars per vehicle-mile), or as reductions in certain cost-affecting activities such as reductions in absenteeism, etc. However, few of the objectives used by the police departments we examined focused on cost or efficiency issues. For instance, only one of the 46 performance objectives used by Pompano Beach, Florida, addressed efficiency; 2 of the 33 objectives utilized by the Mansfield, Ohio, Police Department and 3 of the 36 objectives used by the Rockford, Illinois Police Department in 1984. The Lakewood Police Department included numerous efficiency measures among its indicators of police performance included in the budget document (e.g., cost per patrol hour, cost per traffic accident response, cost per month for communications services, etc.), but such objectives were not included in managers' MBO objectives.

The Compton, California Police Department placed more emphasis on cost and efficiency objectives in its MBO effort than the other agencies we examined. Five of the Department's 13 major objectives address cost and efficiency issues. Examples include "Reduce the previous year's expenditure on

fuel and major utilities by 10%," "Reduce sick and injury time by 20%," "Provide those services and efforts that will translate into a 6-9% return on the general fund portion of the department's budget," "Maintain an operative minimum 'downtime' fleet of department vehicles," and "Make expenditures as projected." The Montebello, California Police Department included the objective "Identify four improvements in operation effectiveness or efficiency annually, two improvements to be approved and implemented annually."

Process vs. Outcome vs. Efficiency Objectives.

The degree of emphasis of process vs. outcome vs. efficiency objectives is a controversial issue for police departments, as it has been elsewhere in the public sector. Some departments provide a balance among them. Some agencies tend to prefer one or the other type of objective for various reasons.

The interest in outcome objectives arises from the concern for results, which are the primary interest of citizens and elected officials. In addition, some recent findings indicate that productivity improvements are more likely to be associated with the use of outcome oriented objectives than with process objectives in an MBO effort.[1] These findings suggest that the MBO objectives with the greatest likelihood of fostering productivity are those that focus specifically and explicitly on productivity--e.g., outcome measures employing effectiveness or efficiency targets.

However, by far the greatest proportion of objectives in the police MBO programs we examined were process objectives. In some departments virtually all of the objectives were process oriented; in most of the others, the proportion of process oriented objectives ranged between 50% and 70%. In a

1. Hatry, Greiner, and Gollub (1981), p. 46-47.

number of cases, the proportion of process objectives appears to be increasing over time. Most departments had at least a few outcome objectives, especially those relating to criminal apprehension and crime reduction. One department, Compton California placed more emphasis on efficiency and cost savings than any other we examined with five of thirteen objectives.

The following factors appear to account, in part, for the emphasis on process measures in police MBO programs:

- Ease of measurement. Respondents in several cities observed that their selection of objectives was strongly influenced by the requirement that those objectives be readily measurable. The absence of a good data base in several police departments greatly hampered the use of outcome oriented objectives. Process oriented objectives, however, could usually be readily measured from existing workload data or self reports of individual accomplishments.
- Process measures simplify the management process by clearly specifying the actions to be taken and holding a manager accountable for those actions.
- Preferences of top management. Police chiefs and other high level officials in several of the police departments we examined expressed strong personal preferences for process as opposed to outcome measures. The latter were often characterized as an over emphasis "on the numbers" and linked to over zealous efforts to rate police officers on the number of arrests or the number of summons issued. Police in both Hampton and Newport News stressed the re-orientation of their departments towards "service delivery" i.e., the provision of non-crime related services to citizens in response to their requests. Such an emphasis was felt to be more compatible with

process than with outcome objectives. (Note, however, that outcome measures, such as response times to call (perhaps as compared to the promised time) and citizen satisfaction with the police response can be used to set outcome objectives, but such objectives were not often included even in these departments).

- Controllability. Outcome objectives are frequently criticized for lack of controllability. It is difficult to tell unambiguously whether or not a manager should be credited with meeting or not meeting crime reduction or criminal apprehension targets because of confounding factors. Managers will usually have a variety of credible excuses in explaining their underachievement of outcome objectives. Thus, it can be difficult to hold managers responsible for underachieving them. In addition, some managers feel threatened by outcome objectives because of their lack of control over the outcomes that will be used as the basis for judging their performance.

On the other hand, process oriented objectives have their own problems.

- Some process objectives -- especially those focusing on the workload to be processed -- are just as uncontrollable as are outcome oriented objectives.
- Process-oriented objectives can distort the emphasis and activities of managers in undesirable ways. For instance, they may emphasize running up large tallies of certain types of activities (e.g., inspections, field interviews, traffic tickets, etc.) without any thought to the effectiveness of what they are doing and overall departmental objectives.
- A process focus to MBO can lead to less flexibility then does an emphasis on outcomes. Managers once they have chosen the process

objectives for the period (e.g., for the year) are somewhat locked in to that particular strategy. An end-oriented objective has the advantage of permitting managers to alter their strategy during the performance period without having to attempt to formally change their objectives.

- Perhaps most importantly, the linkage between process and outcomes is usually uncertain and imperfect, especially in a complex activity such as police work. If it is clear that the process objective is closely related to outcomes this criticisms does not apply. However, where the linkage is unclear (the majority of the cases), it is difficult to justify an emphasis on process objectives as being anything more than expedient. Their contribution to improved productivity -- efficiency and/or effectiveness -- remains questionable.

Among the reasons cited by police department officials for not making greater use of cost and efficiency objectives were the following:

- The lack of resource problems was cited by officials of several departments as the primary reason they did not place more emphasis on cost and efficiency objectives.
- Other agencies made a conscious emphasis on effectiveness and delivery of services rather than efficiency in the provision of those services. These agencies felt it more appropriate to target improvements in service quality than service efficiency.
- The absence of adequate accounting information was widely cited as hampering the introduction of cost and efficiency measures. Most agencies lacked the ability to determine the expenditures associated with specific police functions.

- Others argued that many police services are demand driven. They must handle the demand they encounter with the staff and other resources available. Hence, productivity and unit cost levels will fluctuate over the short-term due to changes in demand that are beyond the control of the agency.
- In the provision of some services (e.g., traffic control), the lines of responsibility in police departments become tangled. Multiple units and agencies become involved in the provision of such services at any given time. This complicates the ability of the department to provide meaningful measures of the unit cost associated with the production of such services.

What Particular Forms of Outcome Objectives Are Most Appropriate?

If outcome objectives are to be included, which ones should be used and in what form? This question was a major one underlying many police managers' concerns about outcome objectives. On the surface, it seems appropriate for police departments to focus on several traditional and important outcome measurements that are regularly conducted by most police departments: crime rates, clearance and arrest rates, and response times. Many departments have been reluctant to focus on these in their MBO objectives. Some departments have begun to use less traditional outcome measurements The reasons are discussed in the following paragraphs. For example, the San Jose Police Department employs in its objectives indices designed to capture trends in the quality of service including a crime enforcement index (arrests plus citations) divided by (number of crime related calls for service) and a traffic enforcement index (number of citations per injury of fatal accident, also used by some other department) to monitor trends in traffic safety.

Crime Rates. Some police departments include objectives focusing on the number or rate of reported crimes. Examples include, "Reduce the incidence of commercial robbery in Division 2 by 5%" (Dayton), "Prevent any increase in incidents of burglary over the 1983 rate of 1,556 incidents" (Hayward, California), and "Reduce the crimes of robbery, burglary, aggravated assault, larceny and auto theft by an aggregate 10% overall" (Compton, California). Some jurisdictions have linked crime reduction objectives to specific programs, such as the use of directed patrol, e.g., "In each precinct, identify two subdivisions in which burglaries will be reduced by 25%" (Virginia Beach).

On the other hand, some departments that once used crime related objectives (e.g., Newport News) recently de-emphasized such objectives. Other departments (e.g., Lakewood, Colorado) include no crime reduction targets in their objectives for patrol units.

We found a number of factors behind the decisions of police officials to de-emphasize crime rate objectives in their MBO efforts. These included:

- Lack of Controlability. The level of reported crime bears a quite uncertain relationship to police activities. Moreover, crime levels and crime rates frequently exhibit unexplainable monthly and quarterly fluctuations of several percentage points. Such "noise" makes it difficult to identify reductions at the two to five percent level commonly used in police crime control objectives. Police managers are thus reluctant to "promise" to make reductions in crime rates, when, in fact, they are not sure they can deliver on such promises. They often object to being held accountable for such objectives unless the objectives are associated with an action plan (e.g., directed patrol) in whose effectiveness the manager has considerable confidence.

- o The shift in emphasis to providing other services to the public. Departments such as Newport News and Hampton now put heavy emphasis on how well they serve the community and its needs.
- o Use of crime rates in earlier, discredited, MBO efforts also appeared to bias some officials against their use, even though the problems associated with those programs often had nothing to do with the use of crime control objectives.

On the other hand, police departments, such as Dallas, include crime reduction objectives, while recognizing their potential deficiencies. Dallas police officials have observed that such targets must be included to satisfy city hall and the general public, even though their inclusion (like that of traffic fatalities and similar measures) is risky for the managers involved.

Note that in the examples of crime rate objectives given above that these, when used, are generally expressed in terms of specific, and relatively preventible, crimes. They minimize the use of highly aggregative crime figures such as overall city crime totals, focusing rather on specific types of cirmes, in specific locations, and perhaps as related to specific crime deterrance activities.

Arrest and Clearance Rates. Objectives involving arrest and clearance rates appear more controllable to police managers than crime-count related objectives. Arrest-related objectives are common for investigative units. Examples include: "Increase auto theft arrests by 5%" (Montgomery County, Maryland), "Obtain a clearance rate of 10% on all burglary cases with low solvability factors during FY 84 in the Rockville District" (Montgomery County), "Increase felony criminal/vice/narcotics arrests" (Lakewood, Colorado), and "Achieve a 42% clearance rate on Part I crimes investigated by the investigative services bureau" (Dayton).

Nevertheless, some police officials have expressed reluctance towards using arrests and clearances in connection with MBO objectives. They cite following reasons:

- An emphasis on increasing the number of arrests can encourage personnel to excessive numbers of inappropriate arrests. (Most departments do not track the number of arrests that were subsequently dropped, such as for lack of evidence, to produce a count of "productive" arrests. The new accreditation program for law enforcement agencies may provide a stimulus for the improved availability of quality of arrest information. Standard 5.1.2 calls for agencies to review all cases which the prosecutor declines to prosecute or dismisses because of mishandling by the law enforcement agency.[1]
- Multiple and exceptional clearances, a situation especially common with regard to burglaries, can create inequities and "windfalls" for investigators, thus damaging the value of clearances and clearance rates as a measure of performance.
- Similarly, unless the difficulty of cases is considered (e.g., the amount and quality of evidence available when the case is opened), credit may not be deserved if incoming cases are relatively easy to clear, or, on the other hand, undesered blame may be placed on an investigation's unit if the actual case mix received by the unit contains a large proportion of difficult cases.
- A few police chiefs have questioned whether arrest levels actually constitute an outcome measure. They argue that arrests represent a form of process measure and should not be viewed as an end in

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1. Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies, Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (Fairfax, Virginia, August 1983), p. 5-1.

itself. These officials argue that an arrest too often is an intermediate response; the outcome should properly be viewed as the solution of a particular social problem.

Response Times. Response times are used as objectives in the MBO systems of some police departments -- e.g., "Maintain an average response time of three minutes or less for all priority one emergency calls" (Hayward), "Reduce first district response time to 14 minutes" (Dayton), "Improve response time to call for services by a 5% reduction" (Compton). Other agencies, however, have avoided or oscillated with respect to the inclusion of response time objectives. For instance, Lakewood avoids response time objectives for patrol units, although they are used for other police functions. Newport News once utilized response time objectives, but has stopped.

The departments have given a number of reasons for their reluctance to use response times in their objectives. These include the following:

- Absence of necessary information. Agencies without computer-aided dispatch, relying on manual dispatcher records, would have to conduct special analyses of those records to monitor average response times. In some agencies that have computer-aided dispatching, the response time data are not disaggregated in ways appropriate for monitoring the performance e.g., by call priority.
- On the other hand, the use of call prioritization has, in the opinion of some department officials, made response time measures less meaningful. Top priority calls virtually always receive expedited treatment with the result that there is very little variation from one period to the next in the average response time for such calls. Low priority calls can be stacked up to 45 minutes in some departments with longer times not being important.

- The argument is also made that response times represent process rather than outcome measures and that their relationship to crime control effectiveness if tenuous. The relation between response times and the ability to make apprehension is not linear but probably diminishes substantially after the first few critical minutes.
- Some departments argue that it is possible to maintain public satisfaction with police services without providing a rapid response if the caller is treated properly. It is argued that the public will be just as satisfied if told when to expect a police officer to appear and if the officer appears at that time or earlier, even if a substantial delay is involved.

On the other side, many police agencies argue that response times represent an important aspect of service quality in the eyes of the public and are an indication of the responsiveness of a police agency. The views of the Dallas police department are perhaps typical of this argument. Police officials there maintain that response times must be highlighted as part of an agency's objectives. Continuing efforts to reduce or maintain low response times are important from the standpoint of identifying witnesses, rendering aid to those in need of it, and living up to citizen expectations.

Despite these problems, the lack of attention to cost and efficiency control on the part of most police MBO systems means that an important aspect of the agency's performance is not considered, an aspect that is becoming increasingly important for department in a time of steady or shrinking resources.

> Recommendation: Police departments should use a combination of process, outcome, and cost savings/efficiency objectives. We recommend that the process objectives not be workload objectives of the form, "process 139 citizen complaints", but rather call for satisfactory completion of special efforts, or new projects, explicitly aimed at improving some specific aspect of performance. A detailed emphasis on process concerns

should probably be made part of the units work plan rather than a major part of its objectives.

Despite the problems with outcome objectives, at least some outcome objectives should be included as part of a unit's MBO submission. Efforts should be made to improve the controllability of those outcome objectives by disaggregating the objectives geographically and by specific type of crime and their deterrability or solvability. That is, outcome objectives should focus on the controllable aspects of concern (e.g., repressible crimes), and by appropriately weighting the results to reflect case difficulty and other external factors.

Finally, police departments should include some attention in their overall set of objectives to expenditures with selective attempts to identify and reduce unnecessary or marginal costs.

ISSUE 3: SHOULD OBJECTIVES BE ESTABLISHED FOR INDIVIDUAL WATCHES AND GEOGRAPHIC AREAS?

If separate objectives can be developed for individual watch and included districts commanders, this would enable the department to involve more supervisors in the MBO process and to tailor the performance targets to specific characteristics of specific watches and areas, such as its mix of crimes, population characteristics, service needs, etc. For instance, it is likely to be more appropriate to focus objectives of an early morning watch on the identification and prevention of business break-ins, while day watch objectives emphasize prevention of home burglaries and the effective movement of traffic.

A prequisite for setting objectives by watch and/or geographical area is a certain amount of stability in the shifts or areas to which a police officer is assigned. Thus, agencies that do not employ fixed watches (or whose watches rotate relatively frequently -- e.g., quarterly or more often -- will have more difficulty setting objectives by watch or geographical area. Officers with such assignments may not have the necessary accountability to make the application of such procedures practical. Note, however, that if the department is able to track at least some key objectives by shift or area commanded by specific officers, even though the shifts or areas change, accountability on at least these objective could be preserved. In fact, direct comparison could potentially be made across watch commanders if each had the same percentage of time on each shift. The limitation, here, however, is that the instability prevents a particular watch commander from instituting longer term activities, such as a long-term crime prevention program and its associated objectives, that are solely the responsibility of the one commander.

The watch commanders, however, could share a long-term crime prevention program objectives.

We found few examples of police departments that established difference performance targets for different watches or geographical areas. In most cases, all patrol units were jointly responsible for the same objectives, such as in Newport News, Orlando, and San Jose. A few agencies have broken out their patrol objectives in one or both ways.

For example, the Pompano Beach, Florida Police Department included an objective focusing on the reduction of daytime burglaries. Largo, Florida and Mansfield, Ohio both prepare separate objectives for each shift. For instance, the objectives for Mansfield's first watch included ones on the reduction of commercial burglaries and the number of motor vehicle accidents; second watch targets emphasized the reduction of overall crime and accident rates; and the third watch focused on traffic accident reduction and increasing the number of arrests for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Each watch included an objective concerning the reduction of traffic accidents, but the specific targets (percentage decreases) differed from watch to watch reflecting different traffic patterns among the watches.

A few police departments employ basically the same objective but with different performance targets for different geographical areas. For instance, the Charlotte, North Carolina police department developed different performance targets for each police team when it was employing team policing. (Each team was responsible for a different geographical area.) The Montgomery County Police Department employs different patrol and investigation objectives for each of its five districts, e.g., "Successfully clear 35% of assigned robbery cases reported in the Weaton District" and "Reduce burglary in the Bethesda District of 2% for FY 84 over FY 83".

The Hampton Police Department uses a single set of objectives covering jointly all watches; however, some of the patrol objectives are clearly more relevant to some watches than others. The aggregate objectives incorporate the different expectations for each watch, so the aggregate objective is more meaningful and there is some degree of accountability for the individual commanders. For example, an objective focusing on the identification of business burglaries applies primarily to the early morning watches, while a crime prevention objective that involves the distribution of literature clearly is more relevant to the day watches. The watch commanders are aware of the differing applicability of these objectives.

Some police administrators have argued against efforts to target specifically by watch or geographical areas. In addition to the extra complexities that such a procedure offers, administrators worried about the potential of such targets for introducing devisive competition among watches, especially if the process focuses on comparisons among watches. In one city where a watch lieutenant emphasized the comparison of achievements between watches, the result was reported to us to be greater output by the watch in question but accompanied by considerable resentment from other watch commanders. To avoid such problems, police officials in some departments were reluctant to target by watch or geographical area. It, of course, can also be argued that if police officials handle the process properly that such competition can either be avoided completely (by emphasizing that different watches and different districts are different from each other and do not allow meaningful comparisons) or made constructive and not distructive.

> Recommendation: Police departments, if their watches or beats are reasonably stable should seek to include watch and beat commanders in the MBO process by encouraging them to develop objectives that are relevant to their own time and geographic coverages. In establishing the specific performance targets for these objectives, the managers should give

explicit consideration to the service demand characteristics of their own particular shift or area.

ISSUE 4: WHAT TYPE OF PERFORMANCE TARGETS SHOULD BE USED?

Each objective should contain a performance target, a specific, measurable criterion. Such targets can be expressed in terms of: (a) a level, (b) a percentage change from a previous level, (c) a percentage difference from some "norm" or standard, or (d) a due date for a specific activity. Examples of such targets include "35% of the citizens surveyed will report that they are satisfied with police department performance," "A 10% reduction from the previous year in repressible Part I crimes" "A five percentage point higher percent of clearances in burglaries than other cities in the same population group," or "The completion and acceptance of a given task on or before its due date."

Without such explicit targets, an objective is relatively meaningless. There is no way to track the manager's progress in meeting the objective. Several of the police MBO programs we examined incorporated large numbers of objectives that did not include performance targets. For instance, about 75% of the objectives specified by one police department did not include specific targets or due dates. In some cases, the absence of explicit performance targets apparently reflected the police chief's distaste for "using a lot of numbers." Nevertheless, the absence of an explicit performance target can greatly hamper the application and motivational effectiveness of an MBO program. The department is then left with very vague, general objectives of the form "Administer the financial and manpower resources of the department" or "Dispatch police responses and coordinate communications on all calls for service."

> Recommendation: All objectives included in police MBO programs should be stated in specific terms so that the manager and manager's supervisory can track progress and clearly determine the extent to which each objective was met.

ISSUE 5: SHOULD OBJECTIVES REPRESENT MINIMUM, AVERAGE, OR HIGH LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE?

The specification of specific quantitative levels, or due dates, for a target can be difficult and potentially controversial for police departments. The department, and its individual managers, can emphasis objectives that:

(1) emphasize minimum levels of performance. Performance below the targeted level, therefore, represents unsatisfactory performance,

(2) use a group "norm" as the performance target. This corresponds to using past average performance as the standard for comparing performance in the next performance period. Agencies that base performance targets in their objectives on the previous year's average performance or, perhaps, on a statistical regression analysis of prior performance (as in the case of San Jose) are, in fact, using a norm, i.e., past average performance, as the standard of comparison.

(3) emphasize targets that press for performance above average historical performance, e.g., standards of excellence.

Whichever of the above levels, a department chooses to use, there is some danger that some individuals may associate them with quotas. The manager may be perceived as pushing his officers to meet specific quotas. This could result in overzealous behavior and interfere with the discretion and judgment officers would normally exercise in doing their work. Public criticism of such "quotas" by politicians or the press can sharply undermine support for an MBO system. Note that this danger is more likely to occur where the target for the unit is subsequently split out into specific targets for individual

first-line patrol officers. And it applies primarily to certain objectives, such as those that specify the number of tickets or number of arrests.

> Recommendation: Each police department, and manager, will need to decide for itself at which performed levels the objectives should be targeted. For work units that have had performance problems, the objectives might, initially be set at lower levels. Managers of work units that are already perceived to be performing well, probably need to have objectives that push more towards excellence.

ISSUE 6: SHOULD THERE BE INTERIM TARGETS DURING THE YEAR?

Objectives in MBO systems are usually specified in terms of a 12-month period. However, intermediate targets can also be used to provide meaningful short-term goals and, thus, permit interim performance reviews. Objectives expressed in the form of counts of some product such as the number of arrests could be split into, say, quarterly targets that take into account seasonal differences. Objectives expressed as percentages might be the same for each quarter or, if seasonal differences exists, could be expressed as different percentages for each quarter. Objectives expressed as project due dates could be represented each quarter by some intermediate step planned to be accomplished each quarter.

Only a few of the police MBO programs we examined explicitly employed intermediate targets.[1] (Managers usually receive regular feedback on certain of their objectives as part of the department's reporting process, but those reports do not compare the period's actual performance to a target for the period.) In San Jose, managers of each police program specify annual targets but intermediate targets are specified for the first four and first eight months of the year. Actual performance is compared against these intermediate targets. The Honolulu Police Department reported the development of a new MBO system that provides for intermediate targets at three and six-month intervals.

> Recommendation: Departments should require interim targets, probably quarterly or every four months, with the interim targets selected after considering seasonal factors. Actual performance should be reviewed

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1. Note that intermediate targets should be distinguished from short-term objectives. A few police departments, e.g., Montebello, California, specify objectives that only last for a given 3-month period. New objectives must be specified after that period.

against targeted performance after each period. By so doing, police departments will take advantage of an important element available to an MBO system, the encouragement of managers to mid-course corrections if they find their achievements in a given period to be below their plan for the year.

ISSUE 7: SHOULD THERE BE PROVISION FOR INTERIM REVISION OF OBJECTIVES?

Some police department achievements can be greatly affected by external factors that change during the year, such as economic factors (that might increase or reduce criminal activity or affect the prices of supplies and materials used by the department), and the particular mix of types and difficulty of the calls and cases encountered. Revision of a manager's objectives can be a sensitive issue, especially if performance appraisals and/or rewards are linked to the amount of achievement of the manager's objectives. How a police department handles such adjustments can be important in shaping employee attitude towards, and acceptance of, the MBO effort.

Virtually all of the police MBO programs we examined allowed managers to adjust their objectives after the performance period had begun. The only exceptions were San Jose and Virginia Beach. In San Jose, those objectives that were published in the city budget were viewed as a commitment to the city council for the fiscal year and could not be altered during that period. In Virginia Beach, objectives were closely linked to the city's zero base budgeting system. The police department's objectives (each of which corresponded to a particular ZBB package) were closely linked to the funds budgeted for the department for a given year; a change in objectives thus would necessitate a change in the department's budget. Consequently revisions of the objectives during a fiscal year was not allowed.

In most cases where revisions were allowed, all that was necessary was a discussion of the reasons with higher level management, possibly including the chief. In the case of San Jose, reasons for requesting a change in objectives (thos most published in the city budget) must be spelled out in the quarterly management report on objective achievement. (This report is circulated to all

program managers.) The need for such changes may also be discussed in periodic review meetings between top department management and program managers.

In most departments, however, procedures and groundrule for revising objectives appeared lacking. (However, officials from several departments reported that they could not recall an instance when there was need to revise an objective during the performance period.)

Other procedures then changing the objective in mid-year are available to help compensate for the effects of external factors. At the time of initial selection of the performance target to include in each objective, if the manager identifies key external factors that can have major impact on performance, these could be incorporated by using some form of a variable target. The final target for the year would depend on the actual value of the external factors by relating the expected performance level judgmentally statistically to such factors as unemployment rates, the level of incoming case difficulty, or a local price index. But this relationship would be determined at the beginning of the year not during it, thus avoiding criticisms that the objectives have been manipulated. On the other hand, this techniques--especially the use of statistical means to establish the relationship between performance and external factors are somewhat uncertain and--require technical skills that may not be available in many police departments.

A second major reason for mid-year adjustments was the transfer of managerial personnel. Frequent transfers of personnel can create a need for frequent target revision. In a few cases, departments cited the frequency of transfers for sergeants as a reason for excluding them from the MBO effort. We found three principal procedures used for dealing with frequent transfers:

(1) Specify objectives for relatively short periods of time, consistent with supervisory rotations periods. We encountered one police department--Montibello--that provided for the development of new work objectives each quarter.

(2) apply the existing objectives for a given unit to the manager no matter who is supervising the unit. The objectives for a unit would not be revised when a transfer occurs; new managers adopt the objectives of their predecessors. While this is expedient, it is likely that the objectives will be less motivational than if the new manager establishes his own objectives. (If the new manager has not participated in their establishment, he will have less of a sense of "ownership" of them.)

(3) Allow incoming managers to develop their own objectives for the remaining portion of the performance year. This approach is probably most consistent with the motivational theme of MBO. However, in most cases, a brand new manager will have difficulties selecting meaningful objectives (unless he has has previous direct experience with the work of his new unit). Thus, this first year in the new position, will be more experimental for the manager than being a serious attempt at accountability.

Recommendation: Where important external factors, and their relation to performance levels can be at least roughly identified prior to the beginning of the performance year, variable targets should be considered. In most cases, however, changes in objectives should be permitted only in instances where major changes in circumstances have occurred. And even though a new target is set during the year because the initial one has been determined to be no longer appropriate, the initial targeted performance level should continue to be recorded in performance reports for the year. If it is too easy for managers to revise their objectives, this is likely to dilute the motivational effectiveness of those targets.

ISSUE 8: HOW SHOULD COORDINATION BE HANDLED WHEN AN OBJECTIVE IS AFFECTED BY MORE THAN ONE UNIT?

Sometimes the objectives specified by one unit will depend on the actions and resources of other units. Most of the departments we examined did not provide formal procedures for coordination between units when objectives interacted. In some cases, the coordination was conducted informally whenever a need was present. In one instance, the investigation's bureau coordinated with the patrol's bureau in the establishment of patrol objectives designed to improve burglary reports. This goal also required coordination between the patrol division and the training bureau.

Other departments employed more formal procedures for coordinating objectives impacting on other units. The Newport News police department relies on a meeting of its management committee (which includes the chief and managers of all major units) to review all goals and objectives proposed for the coming year. A major purpose of this review is to identify and agree on the coordination needed between units.[1] A primary purpose for this emphasis on coordination is to ensure that a unit cannot use lack of cooperation on the part of other units as a reason for excusing itself from achieving an objective.

The Montgomery County, Maryland police department formally addresses inter-unit coordination needs during the process of establishing unit objectives. The action plan that must be prepared for each objective must identify any coordination with other units that is required. Thus, the coordination effort is an integral part of the department's objective-development process.

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1. This same practice was recently used to identify coordination needs in an entirely different setting: an MBO process in the State of Oklahoma's Department of Human Services. Department managers found the meeting to help resolve many coordination problems.

Recommendation: To maximize the likelihood of coordination on objectives that involve more than one organizational unit, police departments should (a) require identification of coordination needs as part of their action plans for each objective (see Issue 9) and (b) hold management meetings to work out coordination issues that are identified. In some instances, more than one work unit might have to be held jointly responsible for a particular objective.

ISSUE 9: SHOULD THE DEPARTMENT REQUIRE ACTION PLANS TO SUPPORT OBJECTIVES?

In principle, the specification of a performance objective should be sufficient to stimulate management action. Many MBO experts, however, feel that the effectiveness of the approach is greater enhanced if the objectives specification process includes the identification of the steps by which those objectives will be achieved. This means specifying a "action plan" for the accomplishment of each objective, including the identification of specific activities to be undertaken to meet the objective and the dates on which each activity will occur.

Most of the police MBO programs we examined did not include a formal provisions for the preparation of action plans. Most departments that did have action plans appeared to be making major use of their MBO program for motivating managers, and their programs appeared to have resulted in extensive action towards productivity improvement.

Some police departments placed heavy emphasis on the preparation of action plans. The Montgomery County police department requires that an action plan be prepared for each objective. The action plan must include a list of the activities to be undertaken to achieve the given objective, the person responsible for each activity, any persons or units with which coordination will be necessary in undertaking the purposed activities, a completion date for each activity, and an estimate of the resources needed to carry out the action plan. Hampton requires action plans for most objectives in the form of milestones that must be achieved for implementing the objective. Other police departments that require the preparation of action plans with MBO submissions include Newport News, San Jose, and Compton.

The preparation of action plans can require considerable work. Their preparation requires the manager to think through carefully in advance the strategies and activities to be tried in achieving each objective. In addition, the preparation of an action plan has the important advantage of translating each objective, whether a process or outcome objective, into a set of explicit, readily observable and evaluatable management actions. The requirement to prepare action plans can counteract some of the objections against the use of outcome objectives, that they may not be related to feasible police actions.

> Recommendation: Action plans spelling out specific steps and milestones for each step should be required as part of the objective-setting process. Reviews of progress on these action steps should be part of the periodic interim reviews of progress. Given the apparent predilection of police officials for process objectives, a requirement for action plans for each objective could well be a major need for a highly effective police MBO effort.

ISSUE 10: WHAT TYPE OF FEEDBACK ON OBJECTIVE ACHIEVEMENT SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO MANAGERS?

Two types of feedbacks are generally suggested for MBO managers: (1) regular formal reports on achievement to-date, and (2) person-to-person reviews of progress between each manager and his supervisor. Each of these is discussed below.

1 Reports on Achievement.

The provision of periodic feedback on target achievement is an essential element of MBO, distinguishing it from other goal-setting efforts. The provision of regular feedback on objective achievement has been showned to be a motivator in and of itself.[1] We found that in some police departments (e.g., Newport News, Hampton, and San Jose) the preparation and circulation of regular (quarterly or every four months) reports on objective achievement plays a central role in the MBO effort.

Program managers in the San Jose police department prepare extensive reports on objective achievement every four months. These reports are compiled by the Chief's office and circulated to all managers within the police department. Each manager's report must include, for each objective, a restatement of the objective, measurement data indicating progress in meeting the objective, key highlights and problems encountered during the previous four-month reporting period, comments and explanations from the manager with regard to his performance, the authorized and actual staffing of the unit and a report on the fiscal status of the unit as compared to budgeted expenditure levels. The measurement data on target achievement includes, for each

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1. See for instance the references cited in Greiner, Hatry, et. al., Productivity and Motivation, pages 158-159.

objective: the cummulative level of achievement through the reporting period, the targeted level of achievement through that period, the percentage by which actual achievement exceeds or falls below the targeted level, the achievement level for the previous year, and the target for the full year. Other departments with extensive reports on target achievement include Newport News and Montgomery County. On the other hand, some police departments--e.g., Orlando and Rockford, Illinois--provide little or no formal feedback on target achievement before the end of the fiscal year.

Police departments developing an MBO effort will need to resolve a number of questions in providing feedback: (a) the frequency of feedback, (b) the content of the report, (c) the source of the data, and (d) the individuals to whom the information is provided. These questions are discussed below.

a. Frequency. Nearly all the police MBO program we examined used a three-month period for reporting target achievement. There were a few exceptions. The Honolulu police department provides feedback at six month intervals. San Jose requires reports on target achievement every four months. The Montebello police department initially required monthly reports, but this proved to be too onerous in terms of paper work. The reporting schedule was reduced to quarterly. The Charlotte police department had to cope with several different reporting periods at the same time. The city's budget office requires submissions on objective achievement at intervals of five, eight, and twelve months. The police department has required monthly reports on target achievement by its police teams (these reports focus on the achievement of targeted reductions in specific crimes and traffic offenses), while quarterly reports on objective achievement are required of other managers within the department.

b. Report Content. We found considerable variation in the formats used by police departments for reporting on achievement of objectives. The preparation of extensive quarterly "program management reports" is a central feature of the San Jose police department's MBO effort and is given considerable emphasis by the police department. The periodic reports prepared by program managers in San Jose, as indicated earlier, are quite extensive. The reports include: objective statements, measurement data, a list of key highlights and problems, additional comments on objectives and the reasons for achieving or under achieving those objectives, staffing available, and resources available and consumed. In San Jose, the manager also must suggest corrective procedures where a target is under achieved. Each report often includes considerable additional information on work load and achievements. As noted previously, each report includes both annual targets and cummulative interim targets for each objective as well as cummulative achievement levels and the level relative to the interim target. The complete report with all forty programs and subprograms runs to nearly two hundred pages.

The quarterly reports prepared by managers from the Montgomery County police department also provide considerable information but in a more concise format. A one page report is issued on each objective. The report includes a statement of the objective, the relevant department goal, an indication of whether the objective has been achieved, a brief explanation of the achievement or non-achievement of the objective, statistical information on the relevant performance indicators during the current performance period, a comparison with the previous year (usually the same months but one year earlier), an indication as to whether or not the objective will be modified and why, and a section for any other remarks concerning the unit's performance during the given period.

As noted previously, provision of such feedback has been found to have motivational value in and of itself. Hence, it seems important to design the feedback material so that a manager can readily discern his performance relative to his objectives. As noted in Issue 6, many police departments reported on objective achievement without indicating targeted levels, or without clearly comparing performance to targets (e.g., the percentage over or under the target). In some cases, current levels of performance were compared to annual targets but not with targets for the year to date. Several managers reported to us that in order to find out where they were, they had to take the additional step of mentally pro-rating the annual target. Some managers did not even do this and thus had little explicit information on where they stood relative to their target until the end of the fiscal year. In other cases, information on target achievement was submerged beneath a great deal of information on activity levels. Thus, the feedback read more like a monthly activity report rather than as part of an MBO system.

c. Sources of data on target achievement. For many objectives, especially process objectives, information on target achievement was obtained from self-reports provided by the relevant managers. Most departments also made use of existing sources of statistical information: complaints files, crime data, and arrests. This latter information often came from the department's monthly statistical reports. The Hampton police department modified its monthly statistical reporting system to ensure that the information needed for assessing target achievement was routinely included. This made it possible for managers to obtain interim readings during a performance period on where they stood relative to achieving their objectives. A similar approach was used by police teams in Charlotte; the first page of the monthly report prepared by each team summarized the actual and targeted levels of the five

suppressable part one offenses that were the focus of the teams' crime control objective.

The reliance on self reporting raises questions concerning possible biases or misrepresentation of the performance data. Such distortion is minimized when progress is reported in terms of the achievement of really identifiable milestones or comes from information widely available from sources such as monthly statistical activity reports (e.g., crime, arrest, case closure, and accident data). In one city, however (Virginia Beach), the city manager's office has implemented periodic audits of the performance agencies MBO reports. These audits (which are not conducted by the agencies themselves) cover all city departments, not just the police department. Other cities (e.g., Charlotte) also periodically audit agency performance reports as part of the city's MBO effort.

d. Recipients of Feedback on Target Achievement. The extent of distribution of information on target achievement varies among departments. In one department (Orlando), these reports were not circulated within the department; instead, they were compiled and forwarded to the Assistant City Manager. While the quarterly progress report for the Newport News police department is also sent to the Assistant City Manager, the report is widely distributed within the department, with copies going to all lieutenants (including the watch commanders). In Dallas, the reports on police executive performance receive a limited circulation, being confined primarily to the Chief, the Assistant City Manager, and the city's Office of Management and Budget.

Several of the managers whom we interviewed reported that the knowledge that others--including their peers--would see how well they had performed was a powerful motivational stimulus in and of itself. Wide circulation of

information on achievement of objectives appears to be important if the MBO process is to achieve its full motivationally potential. This means ensuring that all managers receive a copy of the target achievement reports for the entire department. This means including some--and perhaps all--sergeants in the distribution, especially if target achievement levels are disaggregated to highlight the performance of individual units commanded by sergeants.

In most cases, the work required of individual units in reporting on their progress towards target achievement is small, especially since each unit usually has no more than five or six objectives on which to report, though extensive reporting such as required for San Jose can require considerable managerial time (the major reason it went to these reports per year rather than quarterly).

2. Person-to-Person Reviews of Target Achievement.

The second major form of feedback in MBO systems are periodic meetings between a manager and his supervisor to review achievements towards the manager's objectives. Such meetings have the advantage of underscoring the interest and concern of higher level management for the MBO effort and provide an opportunity for managers to receive guidance and credit concerning the achievement of their goals.

We found that such meetings were not often used in a formal way by police departments. The only instances in which we found regular one-on-one reviews of target achievement were those where the primary use of MBO was for purposes of management performance appraisal. An example is Dallas, where formal thirty minute reviews of target achievements are conducted annually. In a few other departments, individual managers have made it a practice to review target achievements with the managers who report to them. Examples included

individual commanders in Newport News and Charlotte. In these instances however there was no agency wide policy requiring periodic one-on-one reviews.

A much more common approach was the use of informal reviews between a manager and his or her superior. Many management personnel reported a high degree of daily interaction with their superior officers. They noted that as part of this interaction, their superiors would from time to time ask them how they were doing with regard to specific performance objectives. This reportedly provided a periodic stimulus (although at no fixed frequency) towards achieving one's objectives. In other departments, the widely acknowledged interest in and emphasis by the Chief with regard to the achievement of certain objectives served as the primary source of pressure on lower level managers and supervisors to achieve their objectives.

By far the most common approach to providing management review of target achievement in the police departments we examined was the use of group meetings, but not ones scheduled solely for the purpose of these reviews. Frequently, a review of a unit's or division's target achievement was included as part of a regulary scheduled staff meeting, e.g., between the Chief and his top managers, squad meetings, etc. The frequency of such meetings ranged from weekly to quarterly. In some investigative units, we found weekly review and discussion of the degree to which each squad (burglary, crimes against persons, etc.) achieved its targeted clearance rate level. The department's quarterly report on MBO results were discussed at the staff meetings, which served as a source of recognition for high achievers as well as remedial suggestions in cases of under achievement. While the discussions of objective achievements in such meetings do not take place within one-on-one reviews, they are, for the most part, more frequent than is the case with the (generally annual) one-on-one meetings we encountered.

The San Jose police department uses a variation of the group meeting approach. After the issuance of the reports (every four months), the Chief holds a formal "management report review" meeting to address the results. The participants include the Chief and other managers. A formal agenda is prepared for the meeting, which covers both instances of under and over achievement. Managers who have succeeded their objectives are sighted for praise. Cases where project managers have encountered problems in achieving their objectives are explained by the managers in questioned. As a group the members of the meeting decide and authorize appropriate corective actions. The meeting usually lasts about two hours. Note the time limitation does not permit careful attention to more than a few areas.

A few departments reported no review of target achievement whatsoever. Most often this occurred when the MBO process was mandated by city hall and appeared to be executed primarily with the objective of satisfying city hall requirements. Such departments appeared to make no effort to take advantage of the time spent selecting and reporting on agency objectives; no coordinated effort was made by these departments to draw on these results to manage and motivate police employees. (Although, in a few case, lower level managers did attempt to make use of the objectives that had been established.)

> Recommendations: Police departments should include both (a) regular reports on progress towards accomplishment of objectives, and (b) regular in-person meeting between a manager and his supervisor to review that progress. These reports and meetings should probably be held 3-4 time during the year to permit timely feedback (that encourages corrective action when needed).
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> The reports should explicitly compare actual performance, both for the period and year-to-date, to the performance targeted for these same periods. Significant deviations, both under and over achievements should be highlighted by the responsible managers in the reports. For objectives with major under achievement, the responsible manager should provide a discussion of reasons for the problem and the steps he proposes to correct it. Extraneous information on unit activities should be left for other monthly progress reports and not included in feedback on target achievement. In general, the report should kept as brief as possible to

encourage its use but without omitting essential information such as reasons for over or under achievement of targeted levels (and actions planned to get back on schedule). The achievements reports should be given wide circulation to managers thoughout the department to encourage consideration and use of the findings.

The in-person reviews should be constructive, with credit given for significant accomplishments. Supervisors should focus on ways to correct performance problems and generally not be punitive. Because of their importance, and difficulty of making such in-person reviews constructive, special training is likely to be needed for supervisors.

In some cases, a group meeting, such as that used in San Jose, might substitute for the one-on-one review sessions. However, despite its advantages of high frequency and the value of receiving group inputs where corrective actions are needed, such groups should not be used to replace the one-on-one review as a means for more careful attention to a specific manager's achievements.

ISSUE 11: WHAT SHOULD BE THE EXTENT OF CENTRAL REVIEW, OVERSIGHT, AND SUPPORT?

Police departments have used varying degrees of "infrastructure" in administering their MBO programs. Some police departments (such as Orlando, Dallas, and Virginia Beach), have little in the way of an administrative structure to coordinate and assist in the preparation and review of agency objectives. These objectives are prepared relatively independently by the various managers. In Orlando which has a citywide objective-setting process, the captain responsible for the department's budget submissions collects the objectives prepared by the various units, files the necessary forms, and forwards them to city hall. While he provides assistance in preparation of objectives if requested by a unit, there is virtually no central review and coordination of the department's objectives except what emerges as a result of budgetary reviews.

San Jose's MBO effort also functions with minimum administrative structure. Preparation of objectives and progress reports are handled largely by the program managers without central coordination. There is, however, some degree of central review and coordination by staff from the office of the chief and the assistant chief after the objectives have been prepared. These units examine the submissions from the program managers concerning objective achievement during the previous four months and prepare the agenda for the department's management report review meeting. The latter meeting, held every four months, is designed to review instances where managers have been unable to achieve their objectives and to adopt strategies for remedying those deficiences.

Police departments in Montgomery County, Hampton and Newport News are examples of a moderate degree of central coordination, support, and review of

the MBO effort. In Montgomery County, each bureau commander reviews the objectives of the units under him for compatability and signs off on them. Additional review (e.g., for the measurability of the objectives) is exercised by the planning and research division. In Hampton, the planning unit within the administrative services division reviews all the goals and objectives purposed for a given year for measurability and achievability. This review process is conducted jointly with the relevant managers. Help is provided to those managers if they ask. The review process has been used to provide some central direction to the objective setting efforts of the various units (e.g., by directing the units to emphasize new project initiatives in the establishment of objectives for the coming year). The administrative services division serves as a central point for preparing the quarterly reports on objective achievement. In Newport News, the administrative services division plays a less central role in administering the MBO effort. Quarterly reports are prepared by the individual units and then assembled by administrative services for circulation. The primary focus for coordination and review of the objectives is the Chief's management review committee, which includes most top and middle managers. This group reviews all proposed goals and objectives for a given year and explores the resource coordination needed between units for achieving objectives. Additional review and coordination is provided by the Chief.

MBO efforts in Dayton and Charlotte are examples of strong citywide central administrative control with regard to the administration of the department's MBO effort. In both cases, city budget offices (and in the case of Dayton, the assistant city manager) pays close attention to the goals and objectives prepared by police department units. The objective setting and achievement reporting processes are part of strong citywide MBO efforts. In

Charlotte, a management analyst from the planning bureau has been assigned to coordinate the department's MBO submissions. (It has been a policy of Charlotte's budget office to encourage, and provide funds for, each agency to have an analyst who can provide support and assistance for that agency's MBO effort.) In Dayton, considerable central coordination and direction comes from outside the department--e.g., from the Office of Management and Budget and the assistant city manager's office. Both of the latter work closely with the chief to provide overall coordination and quality control for the objectives and to ensure the quarterly reporting of objective achievements. In most cases, administrators of police department MBO efforts had to consider and coordinate with city officials in the major's or city manager's office.

The need to coordinate the MBO effort with city hall--and the role of city hall in that effort--appears to affect different police departments in different ways. For some, the strong emphasis placed by city hall upon MBO and the strong influence of city hall upon the department's MBO efforts have served to improve the quality of the police department's MBO program and to ensure that that program is taken seriously by the department managers. On the other hand, in some agencies, city hall may actually serve as a negative influence. By imposing its own requirements on the MBO effort, the initiative is taken away from the police department. Police emphasis on and support for the MBO effort is undermined. In such cases, the department's MBO effort has become merely an exercise designed to satisfy city hall rather than a tool for managing police activities and motivating police personnel.

> Recommendations: Departments should provide a central focus for overseeing the administration of its MBO effort: to provide assistance and retraining as needed, and to provide regular review of the objectives specified to ensure consistency among units in terms of target difficulty and the quality of the objectives established. Without such attention and review, the quality of the objectives specified is likely to deteriorate over time with managers moving more towards a process-oriented and easier-to-achieve set of objectives. While the objective setting process

should probably begin at the lower levels and managers should have considerable autonomy in establishing their own goals, we found in several agencies that complete decentralization of the objective setting process led to less consequential objectives.

A balance between decentralized origination of objectives and some central oversight and coordination of the entire MBO process should be maintained. However, an extensive administrative structure should not be necessary. A single individual with the authority and expertise to review and counsel department's managers with respect to submissions of objectives should be adequate in most departments. A mechanism such as the extensive review provided for all objectives in Newport News' management committee meeting also seems to be a useful approach for ensuring the equitableness, and feasibility of the proposed objectives.

Finally, the role of city hall should remain relatively unobtrusive; police departments should be allowed to utilize their MBO effort for their own purposes. Operation of dual MBO efforts, especially when it is difficult to cross walk from one system to the other, is counterproductive.

ISSUE 12: WHAT TYPE AND EXTENT OF TRAINING IS DESIRABLE?

Training need to be considered in implementing and sustaining an MBO effort at each of three stages: (1) the initial introduction and orientation of department's managers to MBO procedures; (2) subsequent refresher training for department managers; and (3) orientation and training in MBO procedures for new managers.

Efforts by police department to provide training for any of these stages appears sparse. Hampton placed relatively heavy emphasis on training between 1977 and 1980. The department's training manual was prepared by police officers. (They adapted manuals prepared by professional consultants to the needs of the police MBO effort.) Subsequently, however, training has been limited to a few in-service meetings and suggestions and feedback to managers from the planning and analysis unit when the latter meets with the department managers to review the objectives for the next year. Most of the younger officers we interviewed reported that they had received little or no training in connection with the MBO effort, and that their primary source of training was on the job. Nevertheless, eighty percent of the managers responding to our survey in Hampton rated the training they had received as good or excellent.

One department, which has undertaken a major effort to recast and rejuvenate its MBO program within the last year, has nevertheless provided little MBO training to police managers. Managers were provided with forms and materials and instructions for filling them out; however, no formal training was provided. A number of top and middle level managers that we interviewed in the department questioned the need for formal training in MBO. Some had already been exposed to the process in connection with college level management courses they had taken. Others felt that the procedure was relatively

straight forward and that the chief has been clear in communicating what he wanted. However, a survey of police department managers who participated in the MBO effort indicated that the department's inattention to training had been received negatively by department personnel: while fifty-four percent of the respondents rated the training good or excellent, nearly as many (forty-six percent) rated the amount and quality of their training as fair or poor.

Other cities reported similar experiences. Police officials in Virginia Beach indicated that little training had been provided, especially recently. Most of their training was on the job. Dallas had relied on a set of instructions and a brief introductory meeting to training top level managers in the preparation of their executive performance plans. Management training for MBO in Orlando was quite similar: a set of written instructions coupled with a two hour introductory meeting with representatives from the city Office of Management and Budget.

Few departments reported much of an effort to provide refresher training or training for new managers. In Hampton, the annual meetings with the planning and analysis unit to review the objectives for the next year did serve to provide some refresher guidance to management personnel. However, top agency officials in Hampton noted that new managers tended to "fall through the cracks" and expressed concern about the need for providing adequate training in MBO procedures for their newer managers.

> Recommendations: Police departments undertaking MBO should provide time and resources to provide initial training in MBO procedures for all managers, utilizing materials adapted to the needs of police MBO programs. They should also provide periodic refresher training for seasoned managers (probably at least every other year) and a complete orientation to, and instruction in, MBO techniques for new management personnel. This training should include information and practice in: (a) identifying objectives, (b) establishing targets and action plans for each objective (including ways to obtain participation from the manager's own staff in establishing these), (c) identifying valid data collection procedures for tracking progress on the objectives, and (d) ways to provide

constructive feedback to subordinate managers during periodic (e.g., quarterly) reviews of progress towards objectives.

ISSUE 13: WHAT IMPACTS SHOULD BE EXPECTED OF POLICE MBO EFFORTS?

The literature on management by objectives suggest a variety of potential benefits associated with the use of MBO programs: improved productivity, greater individual accountability, benefits to morale and job satisfaction, enhancement of management ability to plan and control operations, better budgeting and resource management, and improved labor management relations. Unfortunately, factual information on the impacts of police and other MBO efforts is scarce. In many instances, municipal managers have had little beyond the testimonies of consultants and users of MBO (many of them from the private sector) in deciding whether or not to adopt such an approach for their own agency. In this section, we review the available information on the actual impacts of MBO programs on police--and a few other public sector--departments.

Changes in Work Procedures.

For an MBO program to affect service productivity, it must either stimulate managers (and through them, line personnel) to apply more effort or encourage greater ingenuity to the completion of work assignments. The most immediate manifestation of such a result is a change in the way work is done, that is, in the practices and procedures used to complete ones day to day assignments.

Our examination suggests that such programs can be and have been responsible for changes in the way work is done at least in police departments with well designed programs (that is, with many of the basic MBO elements left intact) such as clearly defined objectives, specific targets--with at least some that are outcome oriented, regular feedback on target achievement, and reviews of target achievement with supervising officers. In our survey of

police managers in Hampton, sixty percent reported that because of the MBO program, their unit had made "two or more small changes" or "at least one major change" in the way it did its work. Only sixteen percent of the respondents in Hampton reported no changes in work procedures attributable to the MBO effort. In the Newport News seventy-two percent reported two or more small changes or at least one major change in the way work was done because of the MBO program. Only twelve percent reported no effect at all on work procedures or methods in response to the MBO effort.

In Newport News, procedural changes in response to the MBO program included the following: increased attendance at crime watch meetings and other efforts to enhance community involvement, more defensive driving on the part of patrol officers, the establishment of K-9 sectors in the city with priority assignments in the higher crime area, additional operational training efforts, increased follow-ups of investigations by supervising officers (resulting in an improvement in the quality and quantity of evidence recovered and in the reports provided), changes to improve the efficiency and convenience of record keeping (e.g., color coding systems), and increased emphasis by patrol officers on identifying and solving problems. Similiar changes in response to the MBO program were reported by respondents to our Hampton survey. Among the reported changes were: increased operational training of police officers, greater emphasis on--and improvements in--the keeping of adequate records, devotion of more time to complete activities properly, and a focus on identifying and resolving problems in a timely and orderly fashion.

In both sites (and in other police departments we examined), many of the changes in response to the MBO effort were closely linked to the departments directed patrol activity. The objectives were frequently transmitted to sergeants and line personnel involved in directed patrol efforts and served to

guide these personnel in the identification of problems and other activities suitable for directed patrol. Directed patrol efforts appear to be quite compatible with--and to benefit from--an MBO approach, serving as an appropriate mechanism for translating unit objectives into specific actions.

On the other hand, respondents from several other departments felt that little was being done differently because of the MBO effort. They often noted that their managers always strove to do the best job possible, and that the MBO program had not--and could not have--an effect on their activities or how they did their work. Many of the agencies reporting little impact on work procedures, however, provided little or no follow-up on objective achievements. Where, however, there was regular reporting of target achievements and and effort to review progress with managers, procedural changes in response to the MBO effort appear to have been frequent.

Service Productivity.

Evidence on the impacts of MBO programs on police productivity are extremely scarce. Such information is highly confounded by the effects of innovations and programs other than the MBO effort (e.g., directed patrol initiatives unrelated to the MBO effort, special programs, external factors, etc.). Nevertheless, there are indications that well designed MBO efforts are responsible for modest improvements in the efficiency and quality of police services. We found this to be the case in connection with MBO efforts in Charlotte, Dayton, and Montebello.[1] In addition, several managers in Orlando who had made intensive use of the MBO approach reported substantial improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of their units. For instance, one unit was reported to have exhibited more efficient use of an officer's time

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1. Hatry, Greiner, and Gollub, "An Assessment of Local Government Management Motivational Programs," op. cit.

(eighteen percent of that time was spent on "productive" activities prior to the use of MBO; fifty-three percent after the introduction of MBO) and a reduction in crime related calls for service. In Newport News, ninety-four percent of the respondents to our survey reported that the MBO program had made their work unit somewhat or much more efficient, while ninety percent of the respondents reported improved quality of service as a result of the MBO effort. (None of the Newport News respondents reported a decrease in efficiency or quality of service as a result of the MBO effort.) Interviews of managers in Newport News indicated that much of the credit for such results was related to the effects of the MBO program on the city's directed patrol efforts. In particular, the objective of identifying and addressing two problem areas on each beat had resulted in a number of beneficial effects. While the relationship between the MBO effort and crime was unclear to many respondents in Newport News (some felt that MBO had had a positive impact, others felt it had had little or no impact), there was widespread agreement that services had improved and complaints against police officers had decreased in the wake of the departments rejuvenated MBO effort.

Hampton's MBO effort also appears to have had positive effects on service producitivity. Eighty-four percent of the respondents to our survey of Hampton police officials reported that their unit was somewhat or much more efficient as a result of the MBO program; eighty percent felt that the quality of service provided by their unit had improved because of the MBO effort. Among the improvements reported as a result of the MBO effort were higher clearance rates, improved arrests rates, and fewer complaints especially by businesses (because of objectives designed to increase the number of burglaries identified by patrol officers rather than by the businessmen themselves).

Not all departments reported improved service efficiency and/or effectiveness as a result of the MBO effort. One department established as a prime objective the reduction of energy costs; during the next twelve months, only mixed successed was achieved in this regard. And several managers in the departments where target achievements was linked to salary increases reported that there had been no effects on service productivity as a result of the MBO effort.

Impacts on Morale and Job Satisfaction.

In principle the increased participation of managers (and their personnel) potentially possible with MBO (in establishing their own objectives and subsequently in constructive reviews of their achivements) could provide improvements in employee mdrale and job satisfaction. Alternatively, if implemented badly, decreases in morale and job satisfaction could occur.

While the evidence is sparce, the indications are that well designed MOB programs do not adversely affect morale and job satisfaction. This was found previously in connection with police MBO efforts in Charlotte, North Carolina; Dayton, Ohio, and Montebello, California.[1]

Similar findings emerged from our surveys of employees covered by MBO in the Hampton and Newport News police departments. In Hampton, fifty-six percent of the respondents reported that the department's MBO program had improved morale; sixty percent reported improvements in their own job satisfaction as a result of the MBO effort. In Newport News, where the MBO effort included extensive participation by line employees at the patrol and investigator level, sixty-eight percent of the managers reported that the MBO program had improved the morale of the people in their work group; sixty percent

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1. Hatry, Greiner, and Gollub, "An Assessment of Local Government Management Motivational Programs," op. cit.

reported improvements in personal job satisfaction. In both cities, very few managers reported a worsening of morale or job satisfaction in connection with the MBO effort.

Among the reasons given for the increase in morale and job satisfaction were greater involvement in decision making and increased pride in their job as a result of participation through individual and unit objectives. In another department, officials reported that their officers especially appreciated being given additional responsibility for solving the problems they encountered.

It appears therefore that police MBO programs can contribute to enhance morale and job satisfaction, especially when participation at all level is encouraged. The ramifications of morale improvements may be wide reaching; they can lead to better personal performance and savings from reduced turnover.

Impacts on Relations With Peers.

It is sometimes suggested that an MBO program can improve communications and relationships between managers and their peers. Such appears to have been the case in Hampton and Newport News. Sixty percent of the respondents to our Hampton survey and eighty-eight percent of the respondents to our Newport News survey of MBO participants reported that the MBO program had improved relations among individuals in their work group; very few respondents reported a worsening of relations as a result of the MBO effort. Among the reported benefits were greater team work and cooperativeness within a unit, improved communications, and generally better coordination and relations between patrol officers and detectives. Similar, officials of the San Jose police department reported improved communications between department personnel as a result of their MBO effort.

Relationships Between Supervisors and Line Employees.

Because the MBO approach requires dialogue between a manager and his supervisor, it will likely affect the relationship between such individuals. In Newport News, sixty-six percent of the respondents reported improved relationship between themselves and their supervisors as a result of the MBO program (while thirty-four percent reported no change). In Hampton, thirty-six percent of the respondents reported improved relations with supervisors, while sixty percent reported no change. In neither department were there reports of a worsening in relationship as a result of the MBO effort. The primary source of the reported improvement in relations with supervisors was apparently the enhancement of communication between top and middle level management.

Program Costs.

We found few out-of-pocket costs associated with the MBO efforts we examined. The primary cost for these programs was for specialized activities taken at the initiative of agency managers and line officers in response to objectives set in connection with the MBO effort. There were some, but small, expenses for training and/or program administration. In most of the departments we examined, MBO had been utilized in one form or another for several years. Any training costs associated with the introduction of the MBO effort had occurred several years in the past. In those cases where the MBO program was part of a citywide effort, training costs were borne by the city managers office.

MBO programs require the commitment of time on the part of agency managers. In Orlando, managers reported about one hour per year per person supervised for the MBO effort. It was noted that administration of the MBO program there required a certain amount of discipline on the part of management

personnel; if they did not keep up with it, the time requirements would catch up and become onerous. In Dallas, managers reportedd spending approximately eight hours per year in connection with their MBO program. Planning and research staff in Dallas, who are responsible for drafting objectives and reporting achievements for three top department managers, required additional time. In Newport News, Virginia, managerial personnel generally reported that the MBO effort required several days per year. In most departments we examined, however, managers did not degrudge the time associated with the MBO effort. They felt that such time was well used and would have been applied to similar activities in the absence of a formal MBO program. It was just part of their basic job as a manager.

Another cost associated with MBO is the paperwork required. Here, the assessments were mixed. In our surveys of managers in Hampton and Newport News, paperwork was rarely cited as a problem. Both cities require extensive quarterly reports on target achievement. Managers generally reported that the preparation of such reports was not in itself a burden. Since managers were able to use information from their monthly activity reports in preparing information on quarterly MBO target achievement, the MBO program did not imposed much additional effort in these two cities.

Other departments, however, offered a different perspective. In Orlando, police officials reported that some police managers have accepted the paperwork associated with the MBO effort (which in Orlando is imposed by city hall), while others dislike and resist the program. Concerns in connection with paperwork were also reported to us by Montgomery County and Dallas.

Thus, on the whole, police departments have incurred little in the way of additional cost. In fact, we suspect that the cost is too little. The need to provide training for new managers and refresher training for current

managers, and the likely need for revisions to police information systems (such as to obtain feedback on citizen satisfaction with "other police services" suggests that departments will likely need to incur some additional costs (though probably still small) for a fully developed MBO process.

Miscellaneous Problems.

Some other problems were reported in connection with the MBO effort. Some managers reported a lack of consistency between management decisions and the material developed in the MBO program. In both Orlando and Montgomery County there was some discontent over the fact that important decisions by department managements (e.g., in terms of consolidation, rewards, etc.) were sometimes inconsistent with the results documented in connection with the MBO effort. For instance, decisions concerning consolidations and elimination of units were reported in some cases to ignore the achievements of those units under the MBO program. Such decisions tended to undermine the confidence in, and creditability, of the departments' MBO programs.

Other problems reported to us in Hampton and Newport News included inadequate manpower to meet prescribed objectives, the difficulty of prescribing goals and objectives for very small (e.g., one-man) units, and in some cases, a lack of "closure" with regard to the objective setting process (e.g., managers sometimes reported that they felt as though they never completed their objectives; instead, they merely carried them over to the next year).

Miscellaneous Benefits.

The following additional benefits were reported by managers we interviewed:

- Improved creativity and innovativeness on the part of management and line personnel (e.g., Newport News).
- Improved information on department and unit performance for all agency managers. For instance, in Newport News the quarterly report on objective achievement is provided to all managers

within the department; each manager, therefore, knows how well other managers in the department are doing with regard to their established objectives.

- Better knowledge of what is expected. Several departments reported that the MBO effort serves as a remainder to managers of the expectation of higher lever management. Managers as a result are reported to be more sensitive to their own responsibilities and the objectives of their programs.
- Increased consensus. The MBO effort--and in particular, the increased participation of lower level and line personnel in connection with the establishment of agency goals and objectives--were reported in some cases to have improved the degree of consensus on decisions by top level department managers. Lower level management personnel were reported to be more receptive to such decisions when they had some degree of participation in the decision process.

- Problem identification. San Jose police officials felt that a major benefit of the MBO process was the identification of problems and the timely development of strategies to address them. Other agencies (e.g., Orlando) reported that the MBO program had help them identify and document the extent to which they were limited by the resources provided by the city.

- Improved management. Several police departments indicated that their MBO program has resulted in better management of agency activities. In the words of one manager, MBO "concentrates the mind" and encourages a manager to stay with a problem. In Orlando, MBO efforts within the department were credited with helping some sergeants "learn to manage." Another related benefit was the development of a long range outlook in connection with agency activities.

- Increased recognition. San Jose, California the departments MBO process was credited with allowing managers to highlight areas of success and to document their unit's progress. In Hampton, several managers were greatful for the opportunity that MBO allowed them to demonstrate their ability to manage effectively.

- Improved relationships with other agencies. A number of respondents to our survey of MBO participants in Hampton reported better working relationships with other agencies as a major additional benefit to the MBO effort. Examples included improved relations with the commonwealth attorney and the social services bureau.

- Improved Public Relations. Officials of several departments credited their MBO effort with showing the public clearly where the department had been and where it planned to go. Department officials felt that the result had been a demonstration to the public that the department was serious about change. As a

result, the community reportedly views the police department as a more professional organization than it had in the past.

- Improved ability to justify the departments budgets. One department reported an instance in which it was able to demonstrate that a division could not take on a special project requested by the city's council without an increase in personnel or cutbacks in certain other services.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ON POLICE MBO SYSTEMS

MBO systems appear to have considerable potential for helping police departments motivate management employees to improve both service outcomes and service delivery efficiency. A properly designed MBO effort incorporates a number of motivational strategies, each of which has been shown to be an effective motivator in its own right: the setting of objectives and performance targets, feedback of results, increased participation by mid- and lower-level managers (and perhaps line personnel as well), and--to some extent--a corresponding enrichment of the jobs of those employees. Taken in combination, such procedures could potentially constitute an important motivational tool for police management.

Several police departments, but a minority of those we examined, have preserved most of the basic motivational elements noted above and have begun to achieve the hoped-for benefits. By and large, however, most departments using MBO did not appear to take advantage of the motivational potential associated with such programs. Police department MBO practices exhibited the following major problems:

a. Objectives were often vague and not measurable. Often there was an excessive emphasis of process objectives, especially ones that focused on workload counts or on doing a specific task without any clear link to desired results. There were not enough outcome or efficiency improvement objectives. This has probably occurred at least in part because where outcome objectives have been used, they have tended to be so highly aggregated that individual managers often have little control over the results.

b. Lower-level supervisors sometimes were not included in the process. If the types of objectives recommended below are used, coverage can be expanded to include most, if not all, personnel with supervisory duties, including watch and district or beat commanders.

c. Reporting systems sometimes did not explicitly compare actual performance to targets on a regular (e.g. quarterly) basis. (This is a basic element of MBO systems but, surprisingly, is often neglected in police department MBO procedures.)

d. Specific action steps, with milestones for each step, that constitute a plan for achieving each objective, frequently were not required.

e. Often lacking were regular in-person performance reviews between a manager and his supervisor to discuss (in a constructive way) the manager's performance with regard to his objectives for the most recent performance period.

f. Training for new managers and periodic refresher training for existing managers were usually lacking. The apparent simplicity of the MBO process is somewhat misleading; the tasks are more difficult than they appear. Most police managers (and probably, most public sector managers from other departments) need help with these tasks.

Summary of Major Recommendations

Police departments can and should make better use of the motivational potential inherent in a well-designed MBO effort, whether they are establishing a new MBO program or modifying their existing program. We recommend that police departments include the following elements in their MBO programs:

1. Sergeants and other first-level supervisors should be included to the extent possible. Meaningful participation by first-level supervisors and even line personnel in the establishment of objectives and action plans should be encouraged. (Issue 1)
2. Individual objectives should reflect a balance between outcome, process, and efficiency objectives. Departments should make greater use of objectives relating to crime solution and crime deterrence by focusing on specific crimes at specific locations and specific times during the week -- so they can be used by individual watch, district, and even beat commanders. These objectives should include specific performance targets that more explicitly consider the deterrability and solvability of specific types of crimes. The objectives should be linked to specific action steps, such as directed patrol actions, to make the objectives more controllable, more meaningful, and therefore more acceptable to police managers. The department's set of objectives should also include objectives that focus on citizen satisfaction (especially for other police services to the public) and on selected cost savings/ efficiency improvement needs. (Issues 2 and 3)
3. Managers should receive periodic (e.g. quarterly) information on their progress towards achievement of their objectives. For each objective, such feedback should explicitly indicate the target for the year and interim targets for the given period and for the year-to-date, these should be compared to the actual level of achievement for the period and for the year-to-date. (Issues 6 and 10)

4. An action plan should be developed for each objective detailing specific strategies and activities designed to achieve the specified objective and giving the time schedule for the relevant steps. (Issue 9)

5. Formal, periodic one-on-one reviews should be conducted between each manager and his supervisor to discuss achievements for the previous reporting period. Such discussions should be constructive (and, generally, non-punitive) and should address the need for remedial actions where targets are not being achieved. Staff meetings to review target achievements can be advantageous from time to time, but they should not be used as substitutes for one-on-one reviews. (Issue 10)

6. Departments should provide training in the elements of MBO for new managers and refresher training for others. This includes training in such areas as: (a) the identification of objectives and specific targets, (b) appropriate data collection procedures, (c) the development of action plans relating to each objective, (d) how to encourage participation by a manager's own staff in the development of objectives and action plans, and (e) for those managers that have other manager's reporting to them, how to hold constructive one-on-one feedback meetings with their subordinates on progress in achieving objectives. (Issue 12)

7. Finally, no MBO effort can work unless it is "taken seriously" by management personnel at all levels. This means that top management, and especially the Chief, needs to clearly convey their support, and use, of the MBO effort. This can be done by (a) requiring and reviewing the periodic reports on MBO results, (b) signalling that

such reports and remedial actions are being reviewed (e.g., by commenting on achievements at staff meetings, or as is done in one department, by sending letters to all managers after each reporting period commenting on their target achievements for the period), and (c) where appropriate, basing decisions clearly and consistently on information developed on the basis of the MBO effort (e.g., budget decisions, promotions, program expansion, rewards and citations, etc.). By making it clear that the department's MBO program is viewed as important by top-level management, regardless of whether or not it was originally imposed by sources outside the department, police officials can take a large step towards encouraging their personnel to take the program seriously.

MBO principles appear to be basic principles of management regardless of the acronym used for the process. Furthermore, the MBO approach appears to require little added cost. Much of the time needed by managers to develop their objectives and action plans and to participate in performance reviews can and probably should be considered as basic management duties. However, if police departments follow the above recommendations, they will likely incur some added cost for new or modified data collection procedures and for additional training of managerial personnel.

Though many MBO systems have thus far fallen far short of their potential for improving police department performance, interest in and sophistication about these procedures appears to be an important and rapidly growing trend in police work. We hope that improvements such as those suggested above can be incorporated into many of these MBO-like procedures to help police departments realize the maximum potential of these techniques for motivating managers and improving department performance.

PART III

THE USE OF QUALITY CIRCLES BY POLICE DEPARTMENTS

What Are Quality Circles?

Quality circles are a major form of "problem-solving work group" in use in United States public agencies. Quality circles are usually defined in this way: quality circles are small groups of workers, usually between six and twelve persons, from the same work unit, who voluntarily meet on a regular basis to identify, analyze, and recommend solutions to problems relating to their work unit.

Of the 300 police departments responding to our mail survey, 16% (48) reported having used quality circles sometime over the past three years. (Based on our telephone interviews with some of these departments, this percentage is probably high.) (Some of these programs did not have enough of thed ingredients of quality circles, but rather were some form of committee.) As expected, the great majority of these, (82%) had begun in 1980 or thereafter, with almost half having begun in 1983. Only two of the departments reported having had a program that had been terminated.

How Do Quality Circles Work?

The quality circle is typically comprised of non-supervisory employees with a circle leader who usually is the first line supervisor for the work unit, such as patrol sergeant or communications supervisor (but some other person, such as another member of the work unit could be the leader). Circle members are provided training, particularly in techniques for group interaction and for problem solving. A quality circle "facilitator," chosen by the department from outside the work unit, provides the training, helps the circle get under way, and provides continuing help and guidance to the circle

on any problems it may have. The facilitator assists the circle leader to ensure that the circle remains focused on the problem and that is is developing feasible solutions. The facilitator also acts as liaison between the circle and technical staff of other units when the circle needs information external to its own area. Circles typically meet weekly for one or two hours to select the problems the group wants to examine and to work on those problems.

In addition, quality circle programs generally have an overall "coordinator" who oversees the operation of the circle's program and is responsible for the training of facilitators and circle leaders. (In some police departments the coordinator is active in the dual role of facilitator and coordinator.) In addition, quality circle programs may have a "steering committee" that sets the policy and goals for the program and may select the coordinator and facilitators. Usually the committee consists of upper management personnel in the department and, in a local government where there is a city-wide program, from the chief administrator's office.

Though there is no general consensus on the objectives of quality circles, objectives usually include: the improvement of the services provided by the members, work unit, improved worker morale, personal development of the members, and improved communication within the organization.

Typically, quality circles work in the following manner. Members are given training in group interaction and problem-solving techniques. They generlly meet during working hours, usually one hour each week near the work site. The circle leader conducts the meeting and guides the circle through the problem-solving phase. Another circle member records the minutes. The group meets weekly to choose problems they wish to work on, to analyze them, and to develop solutions to those problems. The product of the process is a

presentation to department management, in police departments the Chief and perhaps his management team. All the circle members participate in the briefing in which they explain their proposed solution, how they arrived at it, and their estimates of its cost. If they receive approval of their proposal soon and it is within their expertise, they start to implement the idea. If the response is delayed, or implementation must be done by others, the circle goes to another problem.

Some Special Characteristics of Police Departments

Our examination identified a number of police departments characteristics that have important implications for quality circles. These includes the following:

- The use of different shifts or watches (particularly for field operations and for communication), changing work hours, the geographical dispersion of field officers, and the unpredictability of service demands. These make scheduling of circle meetings difficult and can lead to attendance problems at circle meetings. Scheduling of circle meetings involving shift personnel becomes especially difficult if shifts rotate.
- The hierarchal para-military (rank) structure. This tends to encourage a more authoritarian management style, whereas quality circles represent a form of participative management. In some cases, this has led to persons involuntarily participating in circles and other strains in circles.
- The action orientation and desire for quick results on the part of police officers. This tends to make some officers impatient if circle activities involve "research" and paperwork analysis,

particularly where these activities extend over many weeks or months.

- o Frequent and widespread turnover, especially due to transfers of sworn personnel from one work unit to another. This has created difficulties in maintaining continuity in circle membership for any length of time.

Issues in Applying Quality Circles to Police Departments

There has as yet been only a relatively small amount of experience with the use of quality circles for police employees, with both experiences being in the 1980's. In our examination, we found a number of important issues that individual police departments need to address when considering the use of quality circles. Exhibit B lists these issues. Each is discussed in the following sections.

While we offer recommendations on each issue, these should be viewed as preliminary. Most programs have not been operating long enough for these issues to be adequately observed over the long run.

Exhibit B
Quality Circle Issues

Issue 1. What Types of Problems Should Be Addressed By Police Quality Circles?

Issue 2. How Can Attendance Be Maintained?

Issue 3. How Can Middle Management Concerns Be Allayed?

Issue 4. What Should Be the Involvement of Other (Non-Supervisory) Members of the Work Unit Who Are Not in the Quality Circles?

Issue 5. What Should Be the Role of the Quality Circle Facilitator?

Issue 6. What Training Is Needed for Quality Circle Participants?

Issue 7. Should Participation in Quality Circles Be Completely Voluntary?

Issue 8. How Can and Should Recognition of Circle Members Be Provided?

Issue 9. What Tracking Should Be Done on the Impacts of Quality Circles?

Issue 10. To What Extent Does Management Style of Police Departments Affect Successful Quality Circle Implementation?

Issue 11. How Long Should Individual Circles Be Expected to Last?

Issue 12. What Have Been the Impacts of Police Department Quality Circles?

ISSUE 1: WHAT TYPES OF PROBLEMS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED BY POLICE QUALITY CIRCLES?

We found that quality circles focused much of their attention on problems associated with the quality of the working environment, rather than the quality, effectiveness, or efficiency of the services delivered. Examples included such problems as office lighting and appearance, washroom deficiencies, advance posting of monthly detail rosters, relocation of shotgun lockers, improved security for police substations, and the need for better parking facilities near central headquarters. Even the suggestions that addressed service delivery issues often tended to be somewhat minor and to be indirect in their impacts on service quality. Examples included improvements in patrol vehicle spotlights (which had been giving officers considerable trouble, a review of the equipment carried in the trunks of patrol cars, and preparation of crime information books to give new or temporary officers a quick and up-to-date introduction concerning the problems of a given beat.

A few police quality circles have tackled issues with potentially important ramifications for police service delivery. Examples included better prioritization of calls for service (Dallas), alterations in shift staffing and manpower allocation policies (Orlando airport security unit), policies to reduce the number of legitimate citizens complaints (Dallas Communications Units), and procedures designed to provide better service to citizens using the customers service desk (Dallas Property and Evidence Division).

On the other hand, while the topics addressed often appeared to be relatively narrow in scope, they were usually viewed as important by the quality circle participants. The quality-of-the-working-environment problems often represented minor irritants and inconveniences whose cummulative effect on line personnel (who had to face them every day) was significant, but

routinely ignored by management personnel. Many of the quality circle participants we interviewed--and some mid-level managers--noted that such problems would probably never had been addressed without the quality circle.

Considerable concern, however, was expressed by some top-level police department officials that the quality circles were not tackling problems of much importance, i.e., problems that could lead to substantial work performance improvements. While most upper level officials agreed that it was appropriate for the circles to address the narrower issues described above, and that these were important to line personnel, concerned that given the amount of time invested in quality circles, the circles should occasionally address problems with potentially significant service improvement impacts.

Concerns were sometimes also voiced by non-management, non-members of the circles concerning the limited scope and potentially insignificant nature of the problems adddressed by the quality circles. Several non-participating line personnel responding to our surveys in Orlando and Dallas indicated dissatisfaction and/or disillusionment with the scope of the problems addressed by the quality circles. And in one city a substantial number of those that had dropped out of circles give as the major reason the lack of importance of the problems addressed by their circles.

Basic to the quality circle concept is that circle participants choose for themselves the problems they wish to work on. This emphasizes to circle members the responsibility, respect, and freedom accorded them by management, and enhances the feeling of "ownership" of their effort and the solutions the circle purposes. The dilemma here is that if upper management (or, for that matter, any level of management) appears to circle members to be overly authoritarian in mandating topics for the circles to work on, this can undermine the morale and interest of quality circle members. (This appears to

have happened in one patrol circle in one of the sites we examined. The circle members were turned off by the authoritarian nature. Subsequently attendance fell way off, and the circle was abandoned.)

Quality circle concepts generally do not restrict the nature of the problems a circle can choose to address. Instead, we found the following three factors contributing to the limited scope of the problems selected by circles:

(1) Emphasis on beginning each circle with easily solved problems. The circle facilitators generally encouraged the circles to focus on easier-to-resolve problems in their initial problem selection. For example, the selection criteria used by quality circles in Dallas included: (a) can be solved with modest amounts of resources, (b) solutions can be approved and implemented by the team leader (or, at most, one level above the team leader), (c) do not require highly complex or techical solutions, and (d) can be solved in a relatively short time period. Problems with these characteristics were given the highest priority and addressed first by the quality circle. In Orlando, while the formal training in problem selection did not preclude the selection of more important and/or complex problems, quality circle facilitators usually initially tried to steer the circles (with varying degrees of success) towards the simpler, more readily solved issues.

(2) Limited circle duration. The rather limited life times of many police quality circles (see Issue 11) often militated against the selection of more substantive problems.

Problems addressing service delivery issues are often quite complex, requiring considerable time and considerable analysis. The relatively short life time of police quality circles, e.g., six to eight months, militates against the selection of more complex problems. The short life police circles combined with the policy of initially focusing on the easier problems has meant in a number of cases that the circles did not last long enough to get to deal with the more important and difficult issues.

(3) Difficulty of coordinating with other organizational units. The more significant problems involving service delivery often affect more units than those represented in the quality circles and require approvals by several echelons. Thus, strategies to address crime control problems may affect or involve other watches and/or geographic patrol districts. They may also require the assistance of, or changes for, units other than patrol (for instance, investigations, research and analysis, etc.). As noted previously, quality circles in Dallas were urged to avoid tackling issues that involved the approval of anyone other than the next level or two of supervision. In those cases in Dallas where police quality circles attempted to address the problems that involved other units, their efforts were often frustrated by delays and a lack of cooperation from the management of those other units. In order to address the patrol issues of larger scope, Dallas' southwest patrol quality circle joined with the central

division quality circle to form a single combined effort designed to address mutual problems.

Patrol quality circles in Orlando addressed the issues of improving spotlights used on patrol vehicles, improving flashlights, and selection of emergency equipment carried in the trunks of patrol cars. The recommendations, when implemented, affected all patrol units, not merely the division whose members participated in the circles. One major step these circles took was to survey all patrol officers on these issues as a central part of their problem solving effort. This could have helped allay the concerns of others since they used the survey results in developing their recommendations. On the other hand, the circles in Dallas were generally precluded from addressing issues that affected other units within the department. Suggestions emerging from the quality circles in Dallas generally addressed issues involving one geographic sector only; rarely were the solutions applicable to, or enacted by, other units.

Finally, there is the question of how important the scope of the problems addressed, and their potential for improving productivity, is. This will depend on management's goals in establishing the quality circle effort. If the emphasis is on improving job satisfaction and morale, the significance of the problems addressed by the circles will be less important.

Departments, however, should be cautious in dismissing the importance of having quality circles address significant problems involving service delivery issues, even if the emphasis is on improving morale and job satisfaction. Even in such cases, single-minded emphasis on minor, quality of work environment issues can undermine the credibility of the quality circle effort. We found in both our interviews and surveys of quality circles participants and non-participants alike, and both managers and non-managers, that the

relatively limited scope of the problems addressed by quality circles is often used as a reason to discount the importance of quality circle efforts. This can affect the long term viability of the effort if work performance improvements are not explicitly considered.

Recommendation: The long term viability of quality circles is likely to be endangered if the circles are not able, at least periodically, to address important service delivery problems. To help encourage such efforts, we suggest the following:

- Circle training should include material illustrating how the circle might tackle significant large service delivery problems.

- Priority-setting procedures used in connection with the selection of quality circle topics should be altered so that important service delivery problems are not automatically pushed to the bottom of the list. While a few easy problems should probably be attempted first, important service delivery issues should be allowed early in the circles' deliberations. The strategy used in Orlando (e.g., to consider the frequency and scope of the problem as an important factor positive in its selection) appears to be a useful strategy.

- Constraints due to the difficulty of surmounting organizational barriers in investigating problems solutions should be alleviated. Thus, quality circles should not be precluded from dealing with other shifts or other organizational units. This process might be facilitated by given the circle leader explicit power to bypass the chain of command in consulting with other units (as was sometimes done in Dallas) or, perhaps, by using the facilitator and/or a steering committee to smooth the way and provide the necessary contacts and coordination needed to gain cooperation.

- The facilitator might be encouraged to provide gentle guidance of a quality circle towards important service delivery problems. For instance, the circle facilitator could indicate to circles during the training process that the problems they tackle should and could include important service delivery problems facing the unit.

- Management also could tactfully suggest to the circle service delivery issues that might be addressed. This should be done with care and in a constructive manner that does not put pressure on circle members. In all cases, the final responsibility for selection of a problem should rest with the circle members.

ISSUE 2: HOW CAN ATTENDANCE BE MAINTAINED?

A number of police quality circles, especially those involving patrol personnel, were plagued by low attendance and absenteeism (sometimes as high as forty percent).

Such problems frequently resulted when a department tried to include persons from all watches as members of the circle in order to maximize the circle's representativeness. While commendable, this led to considerable scheduling problems. Thus most departments have tried to rely on circles with membership drawn from single watches. (Each police circle in Dallas now consists of persons from a single watch.) This strategy is not always feasible however, especially in small units where the number of volunteers from a single watch would be too few to staff a circle. In such cases, the problems of multi-watch scheduling have been alleviated somewhat by scheduling meetings to overlap two watches and by compensating officers who must come in on their off-duty hours. Nevertheless, attendance problems have persisted.

A related dilemma is the need to periodically get field officers together at one time. Taking them off field duty can be looked on by other officers or by the public as diminishing field coverage and the level of service. Therefore, a few circles have tried to schedule meetings on off-duty hours. Even with compensatory time off or overtime pay, attendance has been a problem for these circles. And some circle members become restive when they felt too much time was taken for training with perhaps several weeks passing before the problem began tackling problems.

Another problem we observed, was that after a period of intense activity in the months immediately after being established, circles frequently eased off or even slipped into a dormant period. The energy that marked the initial

few months of the circle, however, was gone. This was often accompained by a decrease in the frequency of circle meetings.

Recommendation: For units with multiple shifts, circle members will probably have to be drawn from one shift only. For small units, no more than two shifts should probably be included. The meeting time probably should be scheduled formally as part of the watch, perhaps as part of formal training time (as was done in Mesa, Arizona). Circles should begin working on problems as soon as possible, with training interspersed at times when it is needed, rather than given all at once and possibly causing a fall off in member interest. To counteract fall offs in circle energy after the initial months of the circle, special effort by the circle leader and facilitator will be needed. They should review the circle's particular situation to determine whether the circle can be rejuvenated or should be terminated.

ISSUE 3: HOW CAN MIDDLE MANAGEMENT CONCERNS BE ALLAYED?

The quality circle literature (which deals mostly with the private sector) indicates that a common problem in connection with quality circles has been negativism by middle management employees who feel threatened and bypassed by the circles. Circle procedures call for as independent selection of problems, independent determination of solutions and circle member briefings directly to the top level management of the organization (i.e., the Chief) on the circle's recommendations. Potentially, this can bypass middle management. Our examination confirms this to be an important problem for police quality circles, although it did not yet seem to have become a major issue for the departments we examined.

A considerable part of the threat seems to come from the opportunity to present recommendations directly to the chief. This opportunity for circle members to brief the chief lends considerable stature to the circle's activities, assures a high-level audience for the circle's recommendations, and can be a major recognition and morale-building factor for circle members.

We found that police department using quality circles were experimenting (informally) with a variety of ways to reduce the threat to, and hostility of, middle management. These include the following:

(1) The most frequent approach we found was for the quality circle leader, normally a sergeant, to informally keep his lieutenant and captain apprised of the circle's activities.

(2) One circle (in Orlando) gave an advance briefing concerning their suggestions to their own chain of command (e.g., the lieutenant and captain). This appeared to have worked well. The captain provided constructive and non-hostile suggestions

to the quality circle members for improving the circle members' subsequent presentation to the Chief, and the Captain's recommendations were well-received by the circle members.

(3) Another frequent approach was to provide copies of the minutes of the circle meetings to supervisors in the chain of command (as well as to other members of the work unit not included in the circle). This can help keep supervisors informed of the group's activities and avoid major surprises.

An important question for all three of these procedures is how middle managers will react and the extent to which, if they disagree with the circle's selection of topics to examine or their subsequent recommendations, how strongly and negatively they will react.

Recommendation: Police departments should take steps to reduce the natural fear and hostility of middle management towards circles under their jurisdiction. Sending copies of minutes of circle meetings and providing advance briefings to middle-level managers in the circle's chain of commend prior to briefing the Chief seem appropriate. A major additional need is to provide training to middle management (both sworn and civilian) in participative management, and to encourage them to be constructive and resist the temptation to react negatively towards circle choices and recommendations with which they disagree. Thus we suggest that the following be done:

a. Minutes be sent to the mid-level managers (e.g., lieutenants and captains) in the immediate chain of command;

b. The circle leader provide informal periodic reports to the supervisor at the next level to apprise the supervisor of the projects that are being examined and their status; and

c. Preliminary briefings be provided to middle managers in the chain of command prior to formal presentations of circle recommendations to the chief and his staff (but any critique by those middle managers should be constructive);

d. Training in participative management be provided for police middle managers (both sworn and civilian).

ISSUE 4: WHAT SHOULD BE THE INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER (NON-SUPERVISORY) MEMBERS OF THE WORK UNIT WHO ARE NOT IN THE QUALITY CIRCLES?

Only rarely (e.g., in small units) will all members of a work unit be included in a quality circle. In units with shift work, such as field operations and communications, large numbers of persons can be affected by the circle's recommendations while not being included in the circle. Also, as discussed earlier, some problems and their resolution, that the circle may examine can affect other work units in the department.

A department can expect that personnel not directly participating in the quality circles will tend to be highly skeptical of the circles, at least during the early years of their existence. A certain degree of needling of circle members by non-members was often reported to us. How then can these other personnel be encouraged to be interested and more supportive of the quality circle's activities, even though they are not directly participating?

Many circles have made their minutes available to others in their work units, such as by posting them on the bulletin boards. Most departments with quality circles require each circle to prepare minutes for each of its meetings. Such minutes can be quite short, but they should contain key information such as the problems being considered by the circle, the steps taken to analyze those problems, and the circle's subsequent findings and recommendations.

An additional technique used by Orlando's two patrol circles was to survey all police officers regarding the officers' usage of, and experience with, certain equipment (patrol car spotlights, personal flashlights, and the emergency equipment contained in the trunks of patrol cars). This information became a major input into the circles' deliberations as to future equipment needs. The survey technique, usually included in quality circle training

programs, can be a very effective way to obtain input from other personnel. Surveys can be used both to obtain suggestions as to problems the circle should examine and, subsequently, to obtain input from other personnel in a work units affected by the problem the circle is examining. A relatively easy survey procedure is to prepare a questionnaire that is distributed to the other employees for them to fill out and return. A more time-consuming, but at times more informative, approach is to have circle members conduct in-person interviews with relevant personnel using a structured or semi-structured questionnaire. The latter takes more time and effort, but may be practical where few persons need be covered.

Another possibility, but one we did not find in use, would be to brief other affected personnel on the circle's recommendations prior to briefing the Chief. This would give others the opportunity to make suggestions on their recommendations.

Recommendations: Three steps should be undertaken to obtain inputs from other, non-supervisory, personnel, both to increase the quality of circles' products and to increase the degree of support of these other personnel: (1) Concise minutes of circle meetings should be provided to non-circle members in the work unit, preferably individual copies, but at least posted in a readily available location; (2) Circles should formally survey their fellow workers both (a) to help identify problems that the circle should examine, and (b) to obtain relevant information on those problems from all persons in the department affected by the problem; and (3) The briefing to the Chief might, when possible, be presented first to these other, affected, personnel to give them opportunity to review the circle's findings and make suggestions for modifications prior to the Chief's briefing.

ISSUE 5: WHAT SHOULD BE THE ROLE OF THE QUALITY CIRCLE FACILITATOR?

The facilitators we interviewed were of high caliber and quite successful in motivating circle members and circle leaders. We found, however, that the time spent by the facilitator with circles dropped substantially a number of weeks after the circle got started. (In Dallas and Orlando, this was partly by design; the circles were supposed to operate substantially on their own after solving their first problem.)

The extended absence of facilitator assistance (in one case because of illness) appeared to coincide in many of the quality circles with a substantial decline in interest and activity by their members. It appears to be important that the facilitator continue to closely monitor circle activity (even if the facilitator's time spent at circle meetings lessens) and be readily available to help sustain quality circles when, and if, they have difficulties or otherwise falter. (For example, a circle generated considerable controversy by by-passing its supervisor with a memo on smoking; local personnel felt this would probably not have occurred if the facilitator had been able to participate in the sessions leading up to the memo.)

Recommendations: The facilitator's role is important not just at the beginning of a circle (e.g., for training) but also to provide support on a continuing basis. Even if they reduce their attendance at individual circle meetings as the circle matures, facilitators should nevertheless carefully monitor the activities of the circles at least via the minutes and periodic discussions with circle leaders. They should take steps if absenteeism seems high, meetings become infrequent, the sessions appear to be slacking off in their productivity, or other problems arise. The facilitator's attention is especially important for sustaining a circle at the following times: (a) in the weeks immediately after it solves an important problem (to help the group determine what happens next); (b) when the circle has been hard hit by transfers (especially that of the circle leader); or (c) when the circle is having difficulty coping with the attendance problems that arise from scheduling around different shifts and days off. Quality circles are, in a large part, a creation of management. Management needs to provide adequate nurturing of the circles by making the facilitator's services readily available as needed.

ISSUE 6: WHAT TRAINING IS NEEDED FOR QUALITY CIRCLE PARTICIPANTS?

Typically, formal training on group interaction and problem-solving techniques are provided to circle members when the circle first starts. The training, in the departments we examined, was the major item on the circles' agendas for the first several meetings of the circles.

Several of the facilitators whom we interviewed indicated that when they started up the quality circle program they found the available training materials not sufficiently oriented to police department work to provide effective training. In some cases, these facilitators subsequently supplemented existing, more general materials, with materials they themselves developed that they felt was more relevant to police work (e.g., that dealt with police service delivery rather than factory production problems.

Some facilitator and circle personnel also expressed concern about the length of the training period. Interest, particularly of sworn personnel, tapered off when the training lasted for several weeks before the circle turned to actual problem solving.

We also found a tendency for the amount of training provided after the first year or so of the program to taper off. Circles periodically had some turnover of personnel, but new circle members did not receive the same training. (In one department, 30 percent of the quality circle participants we surveyed reported that they had received no training for the quality circle program.) As the circles matured, there appears to have been less reliance upon the more diverse analytical and problem-solving tools taught in the original quality circle training. As time passed, in fact, management has shown a tendency to apply the term quality circle more loosely to a wide variety of endeavors, including regular staff meetings, task forces,

representative committees, etc. Furthermore, new "unauthorized" quality circles (in the sense that they were established at the initiative of a single manager, with little preparation and assistance on the part of the facilitator) came into being. These efforts often involved little special training and a more non-voluntary approach to the selection of members and leaders. Loose usage of the term "quality circle" sometimes raised expectations, only to dampen them later with disappointing results. The results appear to weaken overall confidence in the quality circle concept.

Lack of training particularly appears to have been a problem for new personnel entering the circles. Even long-time members, however, probably need refresher training periodically on the various problem-solving techniques.

> Recommendations: (a) Quality circle training materials should be adapted for use by police personnel, e.g., by including police-related examples and by avoiding the overly simplified approach that seems to characterize some of the readily available training materials. (b) The training process should not be dragged out. Spending all the members time in "classroom training" for several weeks dampens the enthusiasm and interest of even the most ardent supporters of quality circles. Training should be introduced periodically as the need arises and be spliced into sessions devoted to actual problem-solving activities. (For example, detailed training on data collection procedures such as surveys could be provided at the time when the circle determined that they needed to consider such procedures.) (c) Formal training should be provided in both group interaction and problem solving skills for new circle members as they transfer in. Refresher training should be provided periodically (probably at least annually) for members of long-life circles.

ISSUE 7: SHOULD PARTICIPATION IN QUALITY CIRCLES BE COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY?

Quality circle concepts call for circle participation to be completely voluntary. While we found this principle generally carried out, in many of the police department programs we examined it was not done for all circles. Participation was sometimes handled in a heavy-handed way with considerable pressure from middle management. This seemed to be especially common later in the life of a quality circle program, e.g., for the second wave or circles or as circles "matured" and new leadership and management took over. In one city the Chief of Police included objectives for the establishment of quality circles as part of his MBO contract with the City Manager. The result was increased pressure on the Bureaus to establish quality circles, frequently on orders of commanding officers. This heavy-hardedness seemed to cause substantial problems. In another case where pressure was exerted on officers to join a circle, the circle experienced problems with attendance and was disbanded. In another instance, the existing leaders resigned rather than "be used." We suspect that the movement towards less voluntary circles occurred, in part, because of the absence of close oversight by the quality circle facilitator and the corresponding withdrawal of the voluntary nature of circle membership that characterized the initial circles.

There is, of course, a gray-zone where a supervisor gives encouragement to join his circle to one or more personnel that work for him, but in such a way as to leave the choice essentially a free one.

Recommendations: It seems essential that the voluntary nature of quality circles be maintained to achieve the participatory management character of quality circles. Special attention should be given after the first year to ensure that this is not compromised. The department's quality circle facilitator(s) should have responsibility for overseeing the voluntary nature of the program. (Note that for other forms of problem-

solving work groups, the voluntary nature of the participation is often not as important.)

ISSUE 8: HOW CAN, AND SHOULD RECOGNITION OF CIRCLE MEMBERS BE PROVIDED?

Recognition can be an important motivator of department employees, not only to stimulate those in the circles but to indicate to others the department's support of, and interest in, the program.

Circle members that provided briefings to the Chief were generally pleased by this interaction. On the whole, however, we found lack of adequate recognition to be a problem (though not a major problem) in the departments we examined.

Letters of commendation from the Chief to individual circle members were sometimes used to provide recognition, though in one case these were signed in such a way that it was clear that the letter had actually been prepared by the circle facilitator and not the Chief himself, diminishing the impact of the letters. One department entered a circle's cost-saving recommendation into the citywide employee suggestion system to permit circle members to receive cash awards. However, several upper-level managers and even circle members did not feel this was appropriate.

Given that most circle recommendations were not aimed at major service level improvements or significant cost reductions, the scarcity of explicit provisions for recognition was, perhaps, justified. Over the long-run, however, assuming that circles explore more substantial improvements, more recognition will likely be needed.

> Recommendation: Care should be taken to ensure that both informal and formal recognition is provided to circle members for their efforts. If the group has done a good job and useful recommendations are made, the Chief and Chief's staff should provide appropriate recognition such as letters of commendation. Middle managers from the circle's chain of command are also important potential sources of recognition; these managers should also be encouraged to provide recognition, if only verbally, of the group's work. If the agency tracks circle impacts (see Issue 9), the reports of the progress being made by each circle could also be an important motivating factor, especially if names of the circle

members are included in the reports and the reports are widely disseminated.

ISSUE 9: WHAT TRACKING SHOULD BE DONE OF THE IMPACT OF QUALITY CIRCLES?

This issue involves two separate questions: (1) What should be a circle's responsibility for tracking the results of its own recommendations? (2) Should the department as a whole track the results of its quality circle program? We discuss each of these questions in turn.

(1) To What Extent Should a Circle Track the Results of Its Own Recommendations?

Most of the police quality circles we examined did not attempt to follow up on their recommendations once they had been accepted. (An exception occurred in Orlando, where the Chief requested two circles to evaluate the results of their suggestions 3 to 6 months after implementation.) Recommendations may be implemented poorly, and in any case, the results may be not what the circle expected. For example, problems occurred in Orlando in implementing its circle's recommendations regarding rechargeable flashlights. (Some of these units turned out to be unreliable.) Though our interviews indicated that, nevertheless police officers in the department felt that they were better off with the change, the circle's recommendations did not achieve all the results that the circle had expected.

Project evaluation is usually discussed in quality circle training materials, but we seldom found quality circles undertaking this task on completed projects. Nor did we find any examples of circles establishing specific targets for their expected impacts of their recommendations.

> Recommendation: We suggest that circle members be given explicit responsibility for monitoring the implementation of their recommendations for a period of time (such as six months to a year depending on the nature of the changes). The circle should examine the results, suggest mid-course corrections that might be needed, or if the recommendation turns out to have been a mistake), recommend that the changes be dropped. Circle members may be somewhat dispersed by the time their recommendations have been implemented, but it would probably be useful

for the department to call the group together to review the implementation effort and results. The circle should also be given responsiblity for setting targets as to what it expects its recommendations to accomplish and to suggest ways to monitor the achievement of those targets (as was done in Orlando in a few cases). This task should also be a learning experience, not only for the members of the given quality circle, but for other circles as well by providing feedback and indicating mistakes or steps that the circle should have taken and that future circles should pursue. (For example, in one instance it was learned only after implementation of a circle's recommendation that the circle had not considered certain important cost factors.)

(2) What Should the Department Do About Tracking the Impacts of All Its Circles?

A quality circle program requires time and resources, including the time of circle members and facilitators, training materials, secretarial help, and the like. Thus, it is legitimate for the department to ask if it getting adequate value in return for these resources. We found no formal tracking by any of the departments of the impacts of the department's quality circle program. Facilitators and top management generally felt that tracking/evaluation was unnecessary during the first year or two of the program, when the program should be nurtured and not evaluated. We found, however, in a number of instances that by the second or third year, department heads and, for circle programs that were citywide, the city manager's office were beginning to be concerned about whether the quality circle program was paying off.

Recommendations: To sustain a quality circle program over the long run, a department will want to determine that it is producing enough worthwhile results to justify its existence. Without periodic information that provides evidence that the program is producing useful results (whether of improvements in service effectiveness, reduced costs, or improved morale), the agency is likely to experience difficulties in mobilizing and retaining support for the program, both internally and externally. Thus, we recommend that shortly after beginning its quality circle program, a department begin to develop a process for obtaining information to track: (a) the recommendations, if any, made by each quality circle; (b) the disposition of each recommendation; (c) the expected impacts of the individual recommendations, and when the information becomes available, the actual impacts.

Many of a circle's initial recommendations are likely to involve primarily morale-related issues, such as the improvement of working conditions. Morale improvements are legitimate benefits for a department and for some departments have been the primary purpose for their program. But some evidence that morale has in fact improved is desirable, such as by conducting annual attitude surveys of affected employee.

The impacts of circle recommendations should be compared with the estimated cost of the circles to provide perspective on the program's overall value (including consideration of such intangibles as improved morale). This tracking-evaluation process should, and can, be kept simple so that it requires little additional cost. These "progress" reports on circle activities should be circulated throughout the department as a stimulus to, and recognition mechanism for, circle members.

ISSUE 10: TO WHAT EXTENT DOES MANAGEMENT STYLE OF POLICE DEPARTMENTS AFFECT SUCCESSFUL QUALITY CIRCLE IMPLEMENTATION?

Our findings, based on quite limited information, indicate that, as expected, authoritative approaches to management do not encourage quality circle membership or sustain effective quality circle participation. But it is not necessary for all, or most, department managers to exhibit a participative style for quality circles to take root. We found that there were usually enough police officials ready and willing to try a more participative management approach for quality circles to be feasible in the departments we examined.

In general, the initial circles were introduced in divisions that were more open and interested in the participative approach. On the other hand, many of the more participative managers felt that the older, more tenured police officials tended to be more resistant and skeptical about quality circle opportunities and thus much less supportive. It does, however, seems essential that the Chief be comfortable with, and actively support, the more open, participative style associated with quality circles. The Chiefs of the departments with the active programs that we examined, by and large, were quite supportive of the quality circle program.

There appears to be growing familiarity with participative management concepts on the part of police managers. Although there clearly remains considerable skepticism, management style seems to be diminishing as a major obstacle toward the introduction of quality circle programs in police departments.

Recommendations: We cannot recommend quality circles in departments or divisions where management wants to keep a tight rein on authority. Quality circles should probably be introduced only in departments, and divisions within those departments, where upper management and a reasonable number of middle managers are willing to experiment with

participation and are not afraid to give some additional responsibility to lower-level personnel or feel threatened by the possibility that recommendations made by the circles will not agree with their own beliefs and will be presented directly to the Chief. Thorough exposure, preferably via a training program, of middle and upper police department management to participative management concepts should be provided whenever possible.

ISSUE 11: HOW LONG SHOULD INDIVIDUAL CIRCLES BE EXPECTED TO LAST?

Of the police quality circles with programs in existence over a year, we seldom found them lasting more than six to twelve months. In Orlando, circles lasted only long enough to complete action on one major problem, after which they disbanded. Circles in Dallas tended to treat a great number of minor problems but still rarely lasted beyond six to twelve months.

There were some exceptions. The communications circle in Orlando has been in continuous operation for three years. During that period, it has undergone several changes: splits, restructurings, and changes in leadership. However, this civilian circle has exhibited a staying power unique among the police quality circles we have seen. In Dallas' southwest police district, where the department's quality circle program originated, the initial circle went through a number of major changes while retaining at least some of its original identity (e.g., the circle leader) over a period of more than a year. Originally, the circle focused only on patrol officers assigned to a specific geographic sector within the southwest district. After a period of several months, the circle expanded to include representives from all sectors in the district (in both cases, however, all members were drawn from the same shift, the day watch). Finally, in an effort to address problems that extended beyond the district, the southwest patrol circle merged with the quality circle for the day watch in Dallas' central patrol district. The merged circles continued to address problems, suggest solutions for several months. Both circles have, however, ceased operation as of this time.

Our review of police quality circles has identified a number of reasons contributing to the limited lifetime of police quality circles:

- Frequent transfers of circle members, leaders, or facilitators. This has in many cases been accompanied by the disillusionment of the remaining circle members. In some cases, circle members who were transferred were not replaced, depleting circle membership. In one instance, after the leader of a patrol circle was transferred, no further volunteers could be found to take over the leadership of the circle. Turnover of the circle leader does not, however, seal the doom of the circle. For instance, the circle in Dallas' northwest patrol district was able to survive the transfer of the circle leader who had started the circle.
- Problems in scheduling meetings of circle members. This contributed to the death of several circles in one department. However, attendance problems were rarely cited as a difficulty in connection with quality circles in Dallas. This appears to reflect Dallas' police of drawing all circle members from the same shift and the relatively large sizes of the units involved (which made it easier to select circle members with compatible schedules).
- "Running out of gas". Circle leaders and Facilitators in both Dallas and Orlando indicated that circles frequently "ran out of gas" after a number of months. Circle members apparently had addressed all of the issues that were of interest to them and that seemed feasible and new ideas were not forthcoming. It seemed common for circles to enter a "dormant period" of several months, perhaps later to be re-energized as new problems, and in some cases, new members emerged.
- Lack of interest in the circle's specific activities. Though most members of the Dallas and Orlando circles whom we surveyed who had

dropped out of their circle cited transfers or personal problems as the reason, there were substantial minorities who gave as their reason for leaving frustration over the ineffectiveness of the circle (e.g., limited importance of the problems the circle tackled, especially in Dallas) or, in Orlando's communications circle, impatience with the speed at which the circle moved towards problems resolution. (It took about a year for the communications circle to complete work on its first problem.)

Despite the limited lifetimes of most police circles, the important question is whether this is a sign of ineffectiveness or is it a reasonable lifetime for individual police department circles. The coordinator for Dallas' city-wide quality circle effort reported that the lifetime of police quality circles did not differ appreciably from those in other city departments. However, the short life span or, at best, episodic existence of police quality circles we have seen can detract from their value as a participative mechanism. An important aspect of the quality circle concept is the status of the circle as a regular, even routine, opportunity to draw on the talents of line personnel in solving work problems and in making decisions about their work. Clearly the great majority of the police quality circles we have examined have not been able to achieve the status of an institutionalized mechanism providing regular opportunities for increased participation.

On the other hand, given the action orientation of police officers, perhaps police departments should plan for relatively short lives for individual circles (e.g., 6 months to 1 year) but activate replacement circles in the department to give many different persons an opportunity to participate at least once.

Recommendations: Greater effort appears needed to ensure the longevity and continuing presence of police quality circles. While a six to twelve

month lifetime may be a fundamental characteristic associated with police, and perhaps all public sector, quality circles, efforts should be made to explore procedures that would contribute to lengthening their lifetime. We suggest greater participation on the part of the facilitator to maintain the circle, timely "restocking" of the circle to make up for transfers of the circle members, and special efforts to maintain continuity of the circle leadership and to ease periods of transition between circle leaders (e.g., by planning to have the old and new leaders jointly conduct the quality circle for a number of meetings).

ISSUE 12: WHAT HAVE BEEN THE IMPACTS OF POLICE DEPARTMENT QUALITY CIRCLES?

We found little available information in the literature on the effects of public sector quality circles, and none on the effects of police circles, although a number of positive experiences have been reported by companies using them in the private sector. In the following paragraphs, we review the results we found in our examination of several police department quality circle efforts. This information should be considered preliminary, however. Most of these efforts have not been underway for more than a year or two. Also, there has been little systematic, in-depth assessments of the impacts of these programs. Thus, the effects reported below are in need of further substantiation. We describe these effects under the following headings:[1]

1. Changes in working conditions and procedures
2. Service productivity (efficiency and effectiveness)
3. Morale and job satisfaction
4. Relations with supervisor
5. Program costs
6. Miscellaneous effects

1. Changes in working conditions and procedures.

Do quality circles lead to changes in the departments? We found that most circles did affect numerous improvements in either working conditions or

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1. The "Quality Circle Program Charter," City of Hayward (Hayward, California, January 1984), page 2, identified the following objectives of the quality circle process: 1. Promote personal and leadership development, 2. Instill self pride and performance, 3. Inspire more effective team work, 4. Promote job involvement, 5. Increase employee motivation, 6. Create a problem-solving capability, 7. Build an attitude of "problem prevention," 8. Improve communications, 9. Develop harmonious manager/employee relationship, 10. Enhance service quality, and 11. Improve the work environment.

operating procedures. The great majority of these were small, minor changes (and were generally characterized as such by police officials.) A number of these have already been described. Other examples are: reestablishment of private rooms for client interviews (Hayward), improved standards and procedures for evidence collection (Hayward), consolidation of neighborhood watch pamphlets and the redesign of neighborhood watch window signs (Mesa, Arizona), alphabetizing internal telephone directories to facilitate the location of police officers by communication division staff (Mesa), development of an additional promotional step for dispatchers (Hampton), clarify the rules for issuing citations to shoplifters (Dallas), defining of no smoking areas (Dallas, Texas), coordinated crime control efforts between city security forces responsible for public buildings and public housing complexes (Dallas), and cutting down on unnecessary radio chatter (Dallas traffic division).[1]

Personnel in Dallas reported some net improvements in working conditions in the two years since quality circles were initiated; of the quality circle

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1. Evidence that the circles helped bring about improvements in working conditions or operating procedures comes from our surveys of police personnel in Dallas and Orlando. In Orlando, only 12% of the respondents to the survey reported that their quality circles had been responsible for no changes in procedures or work methods, 19% for one or two small changes, 22% for more than two small changes, and 35% for at least one major change. In Dallas these percentages were 21%, 45%, 22% and 12%, respectively. In Orlando, patrol personnel not associated with the quality circle efforts were surveyed about the effects of specific changes that had occurred as a result of the quality circles. 75% reported that the changes in patrol vehicles spotlights constituted an improvement (versus 6% who regarded it as a worsening), 84% viewed the introduction of rechargeable flashlights as an improvement (versus 7% who viewed it as a worsening), and 62% of those surveyed rated the changes brought about by the quality circle in the emergency equipment carried in the trunk of patrol vehicles as an improvement (versus 3% who viewed it as a worsening). However, respondents from Orlando's airport and communication divisions were generally mixed or negative in their ratings of the changes in shifts and manpower allocations brought about through the efforts of the quality circles for those groups.

participants we surveyed, about thirty-five percent reported working conditions in their unit somewhat or considerably improved over the past twenty-four months, as opposed to about fifteen percent who rated them somewhat or considerably worse. Similar results were reported by persons who had not participated in Dallas' quality circles.

2. Service productivity (efficiency and effectiveness).

Our examination indicates that in many instances, police quality circles led to small, but identifiable, improvements in service efficiency and/or effectiveness, at least over the short run. Because of the limited scope of most of the problems tackled to date by police quality circles, major changes in service delivery outcomes were not found and can not be expected, at least over the short term. Experience with quality circles has been relatively limited, as is the information available on their impacts. However, the following results are indicative of the improvements that have been (and can be) realized:

- The introduction of a new manpower allocation procedure, including a four-shift approach, for the airport security division of Orlando police department resulted in a better allocation of manpower and more complete coverage of high crime areas and time periods. The result has been a slight decrease in reported part one crimes, and a substantial increase in traffic enforcement (and tickets for traffic offenses). However, no lasting effect on arrests could be discerned, and there was a major increase in the number of suspicious persons reports.
- Overall, the Orlando police department showed a considerable decrease in complaints by citizens against officers during

1983, the second year of the quality circle effort. However, it is difficult to isolate the extent to which the quality circle effort contributed to the reductions in these complaints.

Police officials in Dallas indicated that the changes in call prioritization and increased training in legal considerations improved services to the public in that city's southwest patrol district. In addition, they reported that changes in the procedures used by the property bureau in dealing with the public had reduced waiting time and increased service.

Quality circle participants in Orlando generally reported improved efficiency and quality of service during the twenty-four months that followed the introduction of the quality circle effort. Non=participants, however, wer less positive.[1] In Dallas, participants and non-participants alike generally indicated an improvement in the quality and efficiency of police services during the previous twenty-four months.[2]

We also surveyed quality circles participants and non-participants in Dallas about their perceptions of changes in the innovativeness of their work

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1. 64% reported efficiency somewhat or considerably improved, and 60% reported quality of service somewhat or considerable improved. Moreover, 60% and 70% of the participants reported that efficiency and quality of service, respectively, had improved because of the quality circle effort. Non-participants, however, were less positive: 32% reported improvements in efficiency and quality of service, while 44% reported no change and 45% reported a worsening since the program had been introduced.

2. In Dallas efficiency was rated somewhat or considerably improved by about 37% of the quality circle participants and 47% of the non-participants; quality of service was rated somewhat of considerably improved by about 36% of the participants and 38% of the non-participants in Dallas. On the other hand, only 7 to 14% of the participant and non-participants reported a worsening in service quality or efficiency during that period. Of the quality circle participants, 39% felt that service efficiency was somewhat or much more efficient because of the quality circle effort, and 34% felt that service quality had improved because of the quality service effort (versus 2 to 6% who felt that the quality circle had had a negative effect).

units. In general, higher proportions of participants and non-participants reported improved innovativeness than reported worsen innovativeness in the twenty-four months following implementation of the quality circle effort.[1]

In summary, the quality circle efforts in the two cities were perceived as having improved service efficiency and effectiveness, at least to some extent. The limited factual data available appears to support this, although with some qualifications (e.g., the increase in "suspicious persons" reports by Dallas airport security personnel).

We found little evidence that the quality circles had themselves caused problems. At worst, the circles had not had much impact on the positive side. Quality circles seem to have the potential for making small scale improvements in productivity, but based on the evidence available, they should probably not be expected to have a major impact on a police department's service delivery unless substantial changes are made such as discussed under Issue 1.

3. Morale and job satisfaction.

An evaluation of its citywide quality circle programs, six months after implementation, by the city of Hayward found no change in the area of job satisfaction.[2] (One of the four quality circles included in this evaluation involved police personnel from the detective division.) Similar results were found for participants and non-participants in the quality circle effort.

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1. 28% of the non-participants reported somewhat or considerably improved innovativeness (versus 6% who reported a worsening), and 21% of the quality circle participants reported improved innovativeness (versus about 6% who reported a worsening).

2. Quality Circle Steering Committee, "Pilot Quality Circle Program Evaluation," Office of the City Manager (Hayward, California, November 16, 1983), page 2. Separate data are not provided on the police department.

In both Dallas and Orlando, our surveys produced similar findings. Participants in the Orlando police department quality circle effort reported mixed results with regard to changes in morale and job satisfaction during the twenty-four months after the program was initiated.[1]

In Dallas, perceptions of changes in morale and job satisfaction by quality circle participants were also mixed. While a larger proportion of participants reported improvements than worsening in their job satisfaction, there was generally no perceived net improvement in overally morale during the twenty-four months after the introduction of quality circles.[2]

Some other, related, benefits for employees were reported by various managers in connection with the programs we examined. Examples include valuable training in problems-solving techniques and how to make presentations to top-level management, experience with the problems management has in achieving a concensus, and better understanding of the reasons for supervisory actions.

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1. 38% reported improved morale versus 32% who reported worsened morale; similarly, 45% reported improved job satisfaction, versus 29% who report a worsening. It appears, however, that the reported worsening in morale and job satisfaction had little to do with the quality circle effort. 60% of the participants surveyed reported that quality circles had improved morale (versus 6% who said the circles had worsened morale), and 44% reported that the circles had enhanced job satisfaction (versus 3% who reported worsened job satisfaction because of the quality circles). On the other hand, non-participants in Orlando quality circles were somewhat more negative towards changes in morale and job satisfaction. However, 13% reported improved morale, versus 39% who reported a worsening; 26% reported improved job satisfaction, versus 19% who reported a worsening. And 31% and 37% reported no change at all in job satisfaction and morale, respectively.

2. When asked about the impacts of the quality circle effort on their overall job satisfaction, about 30% of the Dallas participants reported an improvement, while about 15% reported a worsening; the majority indicated no change whatsoever. Similar results were reported for changes in morale due to the quality circle effort.

The evidence to date, while mixed, suggests that quality circles have, on balance, had a neutral to positive effect on the employee morale and job satisfaction. While some negative impacts were noted, these were usually fewer than reports of improved morale and job satisfaction. Nevertheless, the results were mixed and were not substantial. Given the small magnitude of the circle efforts in the departments we examined relative to the overall size of the police department (less than 10% of employees have circle experience in these departments), major overall improvements in morale and job satisfaction probably shouldnot be expected.

There was also evidence that the power of quality circles to address major personnel problems is limited. Quality circles in Mesa and Orlando that attempted to address substantial interpersonal problems were unsuccessful. (For such problems, it is probably more appropriate to use some other approach--e.g., team building or personal counseling--before initiating the circle.)

4. Relations with supervisor.

Another benefit expected from the use of quality circles is improved relationships between employees and supervisors. Such improvements were reported in Hayward, California's assessment of the first six months of their quality circle effort.[1]

In Orlando, quality circle participants and non-participants alike reported a net improvement in relationship with supervisors in the twenty-four

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1. Quality Circle Steering Committee, "Pilot Quality Circle Program Evaluation," op. cit., page 2.

months since the establishment of the quality circle effort. Over one-third of the participants attributed the quality circle effort with improvements.[1]

We found similar results in Dallas. Substantially larger proportions of both quality circle participants and non-participants reported improved relations between themselves and their supervisors than reported worsening relations in the twenty-four months following implementation of the quality circle effort. As in Orlando, however, a majority of quality circle participants attributed no changes in relations with their supervisors to the quality circle effort itself.[2]

Thus, in all three cities, the quality circle effort was associated with a period of improving relationships between employees and their supervisors.

5. Program costs.

The out-of-pocket costs of police department quality circle programs appears to be modest. In the case of Orlando, out of pocket costs came to about $1,500 (primarily for training materials). In Dallas, the costs of the citywide effort was $211,000 in salaries for training meetings but these are not "out-of-pocket" cost and $21,313 for materials. The city program coordinator estimatesd that approximately one-third of these costs were for start-up of the police department effort. On the other hand, the total out of

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1. Thus, 45% of the quality circle participants and 22% of the non-participants reported improved relations with supervisors, versus 3% and 15% respectively that reported a worsening of relations. 35% of the participants and 48% of the non-participants reported no change in relations with supervisors during that period). The quality circle participants were somewhat subdued in terms of attributing the quality circle effort with improvements in supervisory relations; 38% reported that relations with supervisors had improved because of the quality circle effort while 61% reported no change attributable to the quality circles.

2. About 33% reported that the quality circles had positively affected relations with their supervisors with about 7% reporting they had worsening relations.

pocket expense for the city of Hayward, California citywide quality circle effort (including one police department circle) was $5,500.

A number of other "costs" need to be considered. These include the time spent by employees in meetings (averaging about one hour per week for each quality circle participant), additional time spent by circle leaders and facilitators in tasks for the circles' secretarial, reproduction costs for minutes and reports, and the time required by top agency management to review progress reports and attend presentations of quality circle suggestions. Most of the agencies we examined provide overtime or compensatory time for quality circle members who had to come in during their regular time off. This adds out-of-pocket expense for the program. Finally, there are the costs associated with implementing the suggestions which are adopted, but presumably these costs are lower than the value of the changes. No tally of the foregoing expenditures is available at this point, but they are not likely to be insignificant for a program of any size. Furthermore, they do not appear to have been offset by savings or cost reduction suggestions emerging from the circles we examined.

6. Miscellaneous effects.

Police personnel identified some indirect and secondary benefits. In Orlando, the circles prodded mid-level managers to take the initiative in solving persistent work problems. When quality circles posted the list of problems they had identified their meeting rooms, supervisory personnel frequently scanned those lists and proceeded on their own initiative to alleviate some of the problems identified.

Another "spillover" effects have been the spreading use of quality circle concepts to other applications, wider use of the problem-solving techniques and participative focus associated with quality circles. This, however, could

cause problems; without proper controls and training, such "unauthorized" implementations of quality circles can, and on occasion did, have lead to disappointment and disillusionment with the quality circle approach.

Other benefits noted by survey respondents in Dallas and Orlando included: additional training, the chance to provide an input on something important to the individual, and greater authority for line personnel.

Survey respondents also noted a number of problems. These included: difficulties that emerged from the changes implemented by the circles, additional work with no immediate benefits for circle participants, fear that management would view the circle members as "complainers", and increased dissatisfaction with management in the face of rejections of quality circle recommendations.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ON POLICE QUALITY CIRCLE PROGRAMS

The use of quality circles in police departments appears to have a reasonable potential for producing a number of small-scale service improvements and to help somewhat in improving morale in work units with such circles. The introduction of quality circles does not appear to have much likelihood of producing major negative side affects, so there do not appear to be many dangers or risks to police departments in their use. A quality circle program can, however, be expected to require some modest expenditure outlays for such items as training and overtime relating to circle participation.

However, we have seen no evidence thus far that quality circles produce major improvements in service delivery or productivity. The focus of such circles has generally been on improvements in working conditions and on relatively small-scale, narrowly specified operating problems. There are also indications that quality circles require continuous, careful attention. However, in practice there has been a tendency to cut back on the amount of training and other circle pre-requisites such as voluntary participation, adequate amounts of facilitator time, and continued explicit support and recognition from upper-level management. There, thus appears to be a strong tendency for the program to deteriorate after the initial one or two years of enthusiasm.

Police departments probably have somewhat greater problems with quality circle concepts because of their more authoritarian management style and hierarchical rank structure. Despite this tendency, we found surprising numbers of police officials who were willing to try participatory techniques. Thus, management style appears to be less of a problem than we had expected. The action orientation of police officers (leading to

impatience with "preliminaries" such as extensive quality circle training and pencil and paper "studies") was also only a minor problem in the examples we examined. Of more concern, however, were the practical difficulties of scheduling circle meetings for patrol officers and other work units operating on a shift basis. This created difficult operating problems for some circles in each department we examined.

Our main concern at this time is the need for quality circles to achieve greater impacts in terms of police department productivity improvements. This seems necessary to achieve greater credibility and long-term viability.

Summary of Major Recommendations

The above concerns lead to the following major recommendations:

1. Department management, facilitators, and circle leaders should encourage police quality circles to include operating problems involving significant service delivery issues to a greater extent in their agendas--even if the issues also affect other work units. (Issue 1)
2. The circles should use techniques such as surveys of personnel in other work units to bring inputs from these other work units into their problem solutions. (Issue 4)
3. To reduce absenteeism from circle meetings, circle membership should be limited to one or at most two shifts. The facilitator should carefully monitor the circles to determine when circle activities are being affected by absenteeism and non-productive meetings and to set in motion corrective actions. (Issues 2 and 5)
4. To allay middle management fears, circles should keep middle-level managers in their chain of command informed as to the

subjects they are examining and subsequently, as to their recommendations (e.g. by providing minutes of their meetings and preliminary briefings on their recommendations to these managers before the circle presents them to the Chief). Mid-level managers, however, need to be encouraged to be constructive and helpful in their reactions to this information, even if they disagree with a circle's findings. (Issue 3)

5. Formal training should be provided to new circle members and refresher training to longer-term members to maintain skills and help rejuvenate circles. (Issue 6)

6. Departments should track the progress of the various circles, especially the status and impacts of circle recommendations. This information should be reported regularly and widely disseminated within the department. It can enable the department to demonstrate the value of the circles while giving encouragement to circle members and recognition to successful circles. Quality circles require sustained commitments of time and effort by a number of people. For long-term viability, a quality circle program will need to demonstrate that it is, indeed, having substantial benefits for the department. (Issue 9)

Given the national trend towards encouraging greater participation by non-management employees in decisions concerning their own work, quality circles appear to be a promising approach for police departments. Thus far, however, they have not yet demonstrated an ability to generate significant improvements in agency performance, in part because of the topics selected and

in part because the circles have covered only a very small proportion of the work force in any one police department.

Perhaps substantial service delivery improvements should not be anticipated for quality circles, and they should be expected to produce only small-scale work improvements and enhancements in the working environment of their work unit. However there seems to be no inherent reason for limiting quality circles to such a role. Police quality circles can--and should--try to focus on more substantive service delivery problems facing the individual work units If this can be successfully accomplished, the long term viability of the circle programs would be greated strengthened.