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IMPROVING 21ST CENTURY POLICING THROUGH PRIORITY RESEARCH: THE IACP'S NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT RESEARCH AGENDA



SEPTEMBER 2008

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- RAC Co-Chairs Chief Ronal Serpas (Nashville Police Department) and Professor Charles Wellford (University of Maryland) for their diligence in leading the RAC, and their constant attention to the quality of work accomplished by RAC members.
- And most importantly, we thank each of the members of the RAC for their spirit of service, and their substantive contributions that resulted in the creation of the NLERA. A full list of all members is included at the end of the document.

All committees and sections of the IACP are assigned an IACP staff member to support their activities. The Staff Liaison to the RAC is John Firman, Director of the Research Center Directorate. In addition and through the auspices of the NIJ grant to the RAC, Eleni Trahilis serves as the IACP Project Assistant to the RAC.

For further information about the RAC, the NLERA or the Research Center of the IACP, please contact Eleni Trahilis at 800-THE-IACP, extension 392 or at trahilis@theiacp.org.

SECTION I:

What Is The National Law Enforcement Research Agenda (NLERA)?

The National Law Enforcement Research Agenda (NLERA) is a product of the IACP's Research Advisory Committee (RAC). Inaugurated in 2006 in partnership with, and through a grant from, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the RAC's mission required the immediate creation of a National Law Enforcement Research Agenda (NLERA). This agenda is a list of priority research topics for law enforcement aimed at, 1) promoting research on these topics, 2) encouraging police/researcher partnerships to conduct that research, and 3) ensuring that research topic selection results in relevant policy to assist the law enforcement community. The NLERA is the first research agenda issued by the RAC. This document should be seen as a "living document" and will likely be amended and updated in the future.

Why Was The NLERA Created?

Both the IACP and the NIJ strongly believe that America's law enforcement and university based research communities struggle constantly to ascertain which law enforcement issues are of the highest priority and require immediate research support. The NLERA presents, for the first time in the history of both the NIJ and the IACP, a nation-wide, survey-based, focused research agenda to guide both police leaders and researchers as they undertake research initiatives.

How Was The NLERA Created?

The IACP quickly realized why a national research agenda had not previously been developed. Given the breadth and diversity of law enforcement in the United States—18,000 federal, state, county, local, tribal, and other types of agencies—it is simplistic to try to identify a "top ten" issues list that resonates with all 18,000 agencies. The variety of issues facing large, medium, and smaller agencies, urban vs. rural ones, or a university police agency vs. a transit one, make the creation of a simple "top ten" list impossible.

In the face of this complexity, the IACP sought to create a NLERA that would encompass and articulate the broader nature of all issues facing U.S. law enforcement. To understand the needs of the field better, the IACP undertook several actions to gather critical information on national police research priorities, including:

- A representative survey of 1000 IACP members was conducted to examine the core research needs of the field. The results of that survey were used as

the foundation for several RAC subcommittee meetings to begin the creation of the NLERA. Survey results were determined to accurately represent the target market within +/- 3 to 5 percentage points with a 95% confidence interval.

- Outreach to other major law enforcement organizations to ascertain their views on national research priorities and how these organizations might support the NLERA once it is published.
- Assessment of existing literature on research priorities in policing, including a literature survey and review by a designated subcommittee of the RAC.
- Study of other IACP surveys and polls (for example, research priorities of the State and Provincial Directorate and the most recent Police Chief Magazine's reader's poll) to understand how these areas of concern ranked.

Using all of the above information as baseline, the RAC then made final decisions on the core topics and research issues that would be included in the NLERA. The makeup of the RAC lends itself well to the task of creating the NLERA. Membership is balanced between law enforcement leaders and recognized academic researchers, creating a powerful dynamic and ensuring that final decisions represent the best thinking of both law enforcement and those who conduct police research.

How Accurately Does The NLERA Represent Local Law Enforcement Concerns?

In preparation for development of the NLERA, the IACP conducted a representative survey of its some 22,000 members. To ensure success, the IACP partnered with HCM Marketing Research of Baltimore, Maryland to complete this critical task. The survey was initially piloted at the IACP's annual conference in Boston, Massachusetts in October of 2006. The goal of the survey was to understand and prioritize the issues facing the law enforcement community now and in coming years. Eight broad categories of research topics were identified in the pilot survey. Using the broad categories that emerged as a guide, the RAC, the IACP staff, and consultants then conducted the full survey of the IACP members. All survey data was gathered electronically, using a web based design. In total, over 1,000 IACP members from all sizes and types of law enforcement agencies completed the survey.

The eight primary research categories identified through the survey were:

- Training,
- Leadership
- Technology
- Funding,

- ❑ Staffing,
- ❑ Crime Response,
- ❑ Policies and Procedures
- ❑ Intelligence and Information

The survey results revealed that resources are police leaders' most critical need. Respondents defined resources as sufficient talent and capacities such as leadership, training, technology, funding, and staffing. Resources are necessary before law enforcement leaders can adequately and effectively meet their responsibilities to manage their agencies (policies and procedures), protect their citizens (crime response), and gather and share useful knowledge with their colleague agencies (intelligence and information).

Respondents also were asked to drill down and provide further information on what aspects of each top issue were most important to them:

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Highest Rated Concerns</u>
Training	Officer Safety, In-Service Training
Leadership	Supervisory Skills, Leadership Training
Technology	Keeping Current, Finding Money
Funding	Identifying Resources, Funding for Specific Needs
Staffing	Supervisor Accountability, Recruitment/Retention
Crime Response	Drugs, Violence Against Women
Policies and Procedures	Use of Force, Updating Procedures
Intelligence and Information	Strategies for Sharing, System for Sharing

What Does The NLERA Contain?

The NLERA attempts to organize research issues around eight core topics. Using the information gained from all prior work, particularly the survey of IACP members, RAC members agreed on a final set of eight research areas that function as the core elements of the NLERA:

- ❑ Leadership
- ❑ Management and Administration
- ❑ Training and Education
- ❑ Systems Approaches
- ❑ Technology
- ❑ Response to Crime and Victimization
- ❑ Emergency Preparedness
- ❑ Emerging Issues

For each of these eight overarching policy issues facing local law enforcement, the NLERA presents 15 to 20 specific research questions. These questions are by no means meant to be an exhaustive list of topical issues under each core issue header. Rather, these questions are meant to promote thought, and set an inquisitive and demanding tone for the NLERA. We fully anticipate that NLERA readers will add their own unique research questions to those already listed.

Who Is The NLERA For?

The two primary audiences for the NLERA are police leaders and university based researchers. These two entities often team up to conduct law enforcement research. Through the NLERA we hope to develop a consensus about which research issues are most pertinent, and which ones would be best for the partnership to undertake. Beyond police and researchers, the NLERA is available for any organization or individual who has a stake in excellence in police research, including federal justice agencies like the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), state and local governing body leaders, community leaders, the business community, private philanthropic organizations, research organizations, and citizens who want to see their local police agencies addressing and solving critical policing issues through careful research. The IACP believes that the NLERA will influence both law enforcement and academic research agendas across the country.

How Can The NLERA Be Used?

Readers should use the NLERA first to promote discussion on what local research needs to be undertaken, using the NLERA as a foundation for that discussion. Once a core research area (of the eight core areas) has been prioritized, then the research topic or question can be identified. The final selected research question may be one from the NLERA subtopic list or it might be an entirely new one. In either event, we believe the use of the NLERA as a guideline will help jurisdictions make rational and considered decisions about what to research.

What Can We Do To Assure The NLERA Impacts Police Research?

In recent years, as the need for police research has become more evident to police leaders, funding for NIJ has decreased or been dedicated to other areas of emphasis. The IACP should inform Congress of the importance of police research and ask Congress to provide sufficient funding for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) dedicated to accomplishing the goals of the NLERA. Through its collaboration with the IACP, and support of IACP's RAC, the NIJ has unlimited access to the research concerns of law enforcement leaders across the country, aiding NIJ staff as they make decisions on what police research to fund. Now it is up to Congress to provide the support necessary to make progress in doing the research called for by

police leaders. We should encourage Congress to pay close attention to this nationwide research need as they make decisions regarding the funding of NIJ.

Is The NLERA The Only National Research Agenda?

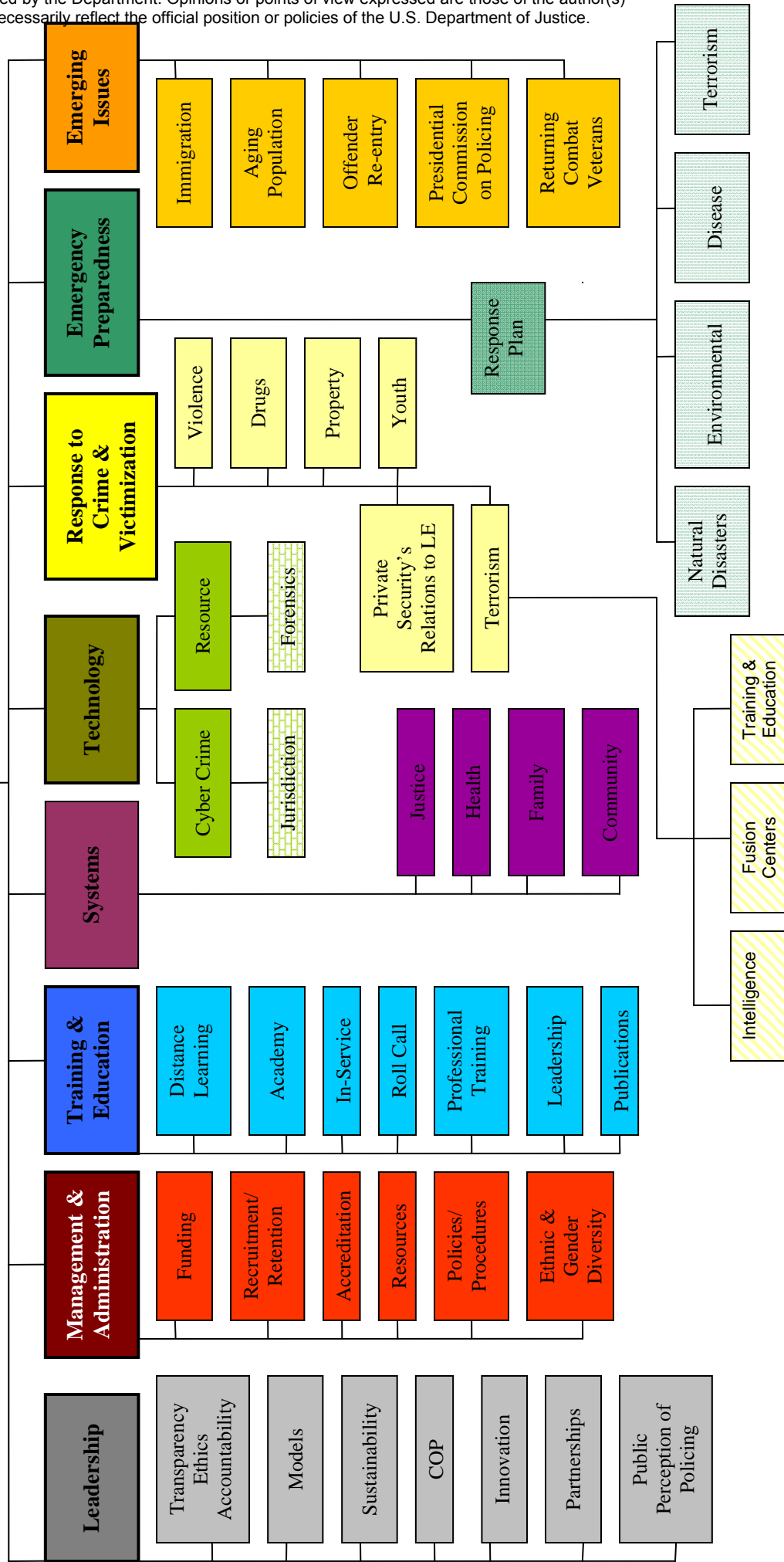
The simple answer is no. Literally hundreds of organizations strive annually to understand and report out on policing and justice research and policy priorities. One very good example is the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). Each year NAS staff identify and then promote (or conduct) research on a variety of law enforcement and justice topics. Beyond the NAS, police leadership organizations, police foundations, philanthropic foundations, and America's academic community all publish suggested research topics. The IACP's NLERA is an important addition to this literature, since it is a research agenda based on current law enforcement feedback and tightly focused on emergent policing issues.

SECTION II: THE 2008 NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT RESEARCH AGENDA

The next several pages of this document present the full content of the 2008 NLERA, including the eight core research issue areas, and the list of potential research questions in each of the eight core areas. The chart presents each of the suggested research subcategories under each of the eight core areas. Following the chart is a narrative description of each core topic area, and a list of suggested or potential research questions within each core area.



IMPROVING POLICING IN THE 21ST CENTURY: PRIORITIES FOR RESEARCH



Leadership

Leadership is the ability to articulate a principled vision, obtain and keep organizational buy-in, and then develop and lead the organizational effort to achieve the vision. Larger agency chiefs may only have a few years to establish their vision and work to achieve it. Smaller agency chiefs may have more time, but may be challenged with a culture that is wary of change. Chiefs face both national and global issues (emergency preparedness, terrorism, interoperability), and local issues (shrinking resources, greater expectations in the face of fewer resources) and therefore must be informed, innovative, and efficient. They must develop their subordinates to assume leadership roles within their agencies, often on limited training budgets. Finally, the chief is expected to set the standard for professionalism, accountability, and ethical conduct in his or her agency. Leadership is not defined by one person at the top; rather, leadership should transcend all ranks where first line supervisors are as engaged as the head of the agency. Enlightened leadership is critical to guide agencies through organizational and cultural challenges.

Why is leadership included in this list of research topics? In the IACP's survey, respondents ranked leadership as one of the top four issues, regardless of agency size. Further, the three greatest areas of concern about leadership included developing supervisory skills, enhancing staff morale and staff satisfaction, and providing adequate and affordable leadership training. There is a vast difference between leadership and supervision. Because police chiefs will face a variety of social, personnel, and technology issues of the 21st century, they need to be more than managers. Police chiefs must work to improve their own leadership skills and nurture the leadership skills of their staff.

Exemplary research questions might include the following:

- ❑ What are the core skills required for leadership?
- ❑ How should leaders approach any issue of change in their agency?
- ❑ How do leaders create an agency that values accountability, transparency, and integrity?
- ❑ Are there different models of leadership? Does one model fit an individual agency and/or leader better?
- ❑ Do agencies with vision and mission statements and identified goals work better?
- ❑ Does how an agency develops its mission and vision statements make for greater buy in and success?
- ❑ Who keeps the department on course or recognizes the need for change to stay on mission?
- ❑ Can a leader lead without a strategic plan?
- ❑ How does community oriented policing influence leadership?

- ❑ Can technology like “remote sensing and GIS” be effective tools to measure both officer performance and programs like community oriented policing
- ❑ How do recruitment and retention policies impact the future leadership of a department? How can they be improved to promote future leadership?
- ❑ How can leaders change agency culture?
- ❑ How should police leaders adjust to, address, and fully engage new generations of officers and civilians?
- ❑ What core supervisory skills are required at all levels of leadership?
- ❑ How well does the Internal Affairs department function address the core issues of accountability, transparency, and ethics/integrity?
- ❑ How does mentoring influence new leaders?
- ❑ Does a strategic plan promote/facilitate strong leadership?
- ❑ How can leaders directly influence staff morale?
- ❑ How can continuity-leader succession be ensured?
- ❑ What role do private/ public partnerships play with agency leaders?
- ❑ How do strategic partnerships with other organizations (government, private, business, community) relate to leadership?
- ❑ What is global policing and how do leaders approach this concept?
- ❑ How does a leader measure success?

Management & Administration

Management and administration covers a broad range of interests in policing research. This research area includes funding, planning, equipment issues, development and implementation of policies and procedures. It also includes all aspects of human resources: from recruiting and selection to diversity, retention, evaluation, promotion, health and fitness.

How do agencies pay for the resources they need? Effective planning, budgeting, and political astuteness all play a role for the police chief. A guide to funding sources would be useful. Certainly information on federal grant sources plus private foundations and corporate donors would be useful. For example, do local police foundations provide innovative funding opportunities for local law enforcement?

Planning, implementation and performance measurement are also important. An agency must have long-term strategic guidance, usually expressed as its mission and strategic goals, and shorter-term operational guidance, such as goals and objectives for the year and/or for components of the organization. Part of this should be a review of how decisions are made at the management and leadership levels. The process and outcomes of police decisions can positively or negatively impact internal and external stakeholders. Inclusion of these stakeholders is an important area of consideration in the planning and evaluation

of organizational goals and practices. It is most important to monitor and measure operational goals and objectives. This should include a mechanism of internal and external individuals to monitor and measure. Yet many important areas are difficult or expensive to measure, such as the implementation of community policing. Moreover, planning and evaluation are not typically incorporated into in-service training nor are they a focus of academic programs. It would be helpful to understand how these skills are developed and if and how they are valued by police and community leaders.

An agency's organization and its allocation of resources will affect how well it carries out its mission and may be a major factor in its need for resources. How agencies monitor their workload, prioritize tasks, and reallocate resources are important aspects of management. Program evaluation may assist an agency in its allocation, including shutting down specialized units that are no longer effective. Once completed and shared in a research setting, these evaluations will assist other agencies in determining whether and how to implement a new program. The ongoing evaluation of tactics can assist an agency in determining the best response to a particular kind of problem.

Human resources make up the largest portion of an agency's budget and are essential to achieving its mission. It is critical for agencies to recruit, select, train, and promote quality officers, dispatchers, and others who serve important roles. Governmental authorities often decide pay levels and benefits and this determines whether the agency can retain its productive, experienced employees. It is also important to consider how the management of human resources (HR) is changing, or needs to change with time. For example, what policies might be changed to support more effective and satisfied employees? Do current HR policies offer ALL employees work-life balance, and does that matter to management and to employees. This matters as we consider how the workforce is changing (e.g. aging of the population, diversity, globalization of the work environment, etc).

In addition to human resources, agencies need research guidance on the equipment that is vital to officer safety and effectiveness. Cars, radios, and weapons are all essential and expensive tools. Uniforms must be comfortable and durable while presenting a professional image. Newer necessities include cell phones, laptops, and handheld units that integrate telephone service, digital pictures, texting, and the Internet.

Exemplary research questions might include the following:

Management and Administration

- ❑ What are the best practices in communicating policies and procedures to employees?
- ❑ What are the best practices in developing and implementing goals and objectives?
- ❑ How do and how should agencies measure achievement of their individual-and agency-level objectives and goals?
- ❑ How do agencies define community policing and measure its implementation and effectiveness?
- ❑ What is the impact of accreditation on an agency? How can the accreditation process be more effective?
- ❑ Is COMPSTAT effective? What variations of the concept are most effective and for which types of agencies? Can COMPSTAT accommodate community policing?
- ❑ What recruitment issues are agencies facing and what strategies have agencies successfully employed to overcome them?
- ❑ What programs and selection procedures are effective to recruit officers in agencies with various missions? What selection procedures are effective in identifying officers who stay with the profession and perform well?
- ❑ What are the costs and benefits of enhanced career paths or career ladders for developing and retaining effective employees? What alternative structures work well in various settings?
- ❑ What issues arise with combat veterans returning from active duty to policing? What methods are effective in facilitating that transition?
- ❑ What are the best practices in evaluating the performance of individuals to correct poor performance and encourage good performance?
- ❑ What agency interventions/policies promote the health, wellness, and physical fitness of employees?
- ❑ To what extent have agencies achieved ethnic diversity? How does this impact their relationships with their communities?
- ❑ To what extent have agencies achieved gender diversity? How does this impact their relationships with their communities?
- ❑ What are the best practices in fleet management? How are agencies controlling or reducing soaring gasoline costs? What are the costs and benefits of take-home patrol car policies; various engine and body styles; and ancillary equipment such as rear seat enclosures, lights and sirens, GPS and AVL, computers and computer mounts?
- ❑ Where is outsourcing effective? What controls must be in place to maintain effectiveness and cost containment?
- ❑ Are policies/procedures perfected or evolving?
- ❑ How well are agencies addressing officers' employee assistance program (EAP) needs?
- ❑ How well are agencies using volunteers in police services? What is the impact?

Funding Issues:

- ❑ How should agency leaders address (or not address) unfunded mandates?
- ❑ How should agency leaders determine/prioritize core budget expenditures and allocation decisions?
- ❑ How should agency leaders defend budgets, show where funds are needed and how added funds will decrease crime, improve efficiency, and improve community policing?
- ❑ How can leaders gain full understanding of the politics of funding and use that knowledge to increase potentials for funding support?
- ❑ What do police foundations do? What role do they- and can they - play in the support of local law enforcement budgets?
- ❑ In what circumstances is the pooling of resources, and/or consolidation of services appropriate and cost effective for local law enforcement?
- ❑ What is the impact of reduced federal support to law enforcement?
- ❑ How do governing bodies pay for police services? What are the sources of funding for police services?
- ❑ Do local agencies understand and make use of private sector funding resources?
- ❑ How do national crime/victimization trends affect or not affect local law enforcement budgets?
- ❑ How can police become experts at generating new funding sources?
- ❑ How effectively do local agencies allocate funds through prioritization of issues?

Training & Education

Police departments are in a constant state of evolution. Agencies require new perspectives in human resource development and performance, in both theory and practice in human resource and organizational development. These new perspectives should explore all aspects of the profession – from performance management to organizational culture.

Identifying, and evaluating training and educational needs within the law enforcement community are essential components of overall police performance. This requires the ability to assess which elements of the human resource development system are related to one another and to determine which inputs, processes, and outputs interact productively. Traditionally the terms training and education overlap. It's hard to draw a clear line of demarcation between the two. Training generally aligns itself to organizational needs while education to the needs of the individual.

Training can best be described as a needs driven process, typically directed to the learner by the organizational side of the equation. As such the performance objectives are designed toward task completion and acquiring specific job-related skills within a particular occupational set. Education on the other hand is foundationally self-directed by the learner and driven by intrinsic needs. Through education the learner moves beyond the utilization of job-specific tool adaptation into the cognitive realm of theory, constructive analysis, and critical thinking/problem solving. This provides the learner with the ability to recognize that there are multiple options along an entire spectrum of choices.

Law enforcement basic-training academies are organized much like their military counterparts; they are functionally designed to meet the extrinsic needs component. Like any preparatory course work, they are simplistic in nature and structured to deliver rudimentary task information along with contiguous processes toward delivery of services. They are predominately skill-based, addressing a series of very specific and structured activities that are related to the achievement of clearly stated performance objectives which are typically relegated toward the objectives of foundational policing. This approach in the long term is less than adequate in today's law enforcement environment; training alone is not appropriate in a complex performance environment. If individual departments are to achieve top-level performance, all the components of their human performance system must be optimized.

In the higher (college-based) educational processes, scholastic offerings dedicated to criminal justice coursework are provided to enhance the intrinsic needs component. Like training academies they too are primarily mono-functional, dealing primarily with problem-solving while building knowledge about facts, events, principles, and concepts. Particular organizational needs such as predominately skill-based activity are rarely factored into such educational-based curricula. The standards of professional development would best be served as a product of both training and education, drawing on the multiple philosophies to inform both theory and practice - adopting a holistic approach that serves to increase departmental wherewithal and eliminate performance breakdowns.

The law enforcement community faces a continuing dilemma: an organizational preparatory system that dedicates itself solely to entry-level standards, measurements, and training. This is a process that seems more interested in skills than in principals, in means than in ends, in details than in the total picture. Such a system by its very nature creates a one size fits all mentality, addressing at best a minimum level employment approach; a formulary that acts to impede both substantive individual growth and departmental productivity. Therefore a bifurcated approach seems a more reasonable methodology in creating the type of performance-based operation needed in today's professional policing atmosphere.

On the educational plane, current college-level offerings in justice/law enforcement curricula are structured toward administrative functions vs. a focus on day-to-day 'street level' issues. While such coursework has an important place in the overall growth of the individual, it serves to cloud the nature of fundamental policing, creating a gap between the vision and operational reality. Thus one can become disheartened, uncertain, or even cynical, leading to a decline in enthusiasm with the daily routines associated with normal patrol operations. In addition, many training curricula are designed specifically to provide a cursory overview of a variety of subjects, which includes such areas as introduction to policing, corrections, juvenile justice, and criminal investigations.

Exemplary research questions might include the following:

- ❑ Is basic recruit training curricula nationally achieving objectives?
- ❑ Is in-service training linked to basic training and how effective is it?
- ❑ How effective is long distance learning? Are their certain content areas and/or skills for which this method is most effective?
- ❑ How do agencies pay for/select specialized training?
- ❑ Can we/do we measure effectiveness of training?
- ❑ What performance measures are used in that evaluation?
- ❑ How dynamic is current academy/in-service/Field training officer training?
- ❑ Does training adhere to adult learning principles?
- ❑ Who should conduct curriculum review?
- ❑ Who is getting trained? How receptive are they to it?
- ❑ What kind of training is being provided, by whom?
- ❑ Do we/should we provide different training for different stages of careers?
- ❑ Where is training best delivered?
- ❑ What methods of training are most effective and for what topic?
- ❑ Why do training standards differ from agency to agency? Should they?

Systems

Law enforcement organizations can, and have always, on their own made changes in mission, vision, goals, and objectives to enhance their abilities to serve and protect the public. But law enforcement is only one component of the larger justice system. Thus it is critical that the entire justice system embrace change as well. Otherwise discrete changes in one of its components (in this case law enforcement) become extremely limited, or destined to fail.

In many instances, law enforcement has led the way, through innovative changes that were later adopted by others in the justice system. Community policing is a good example. Other aspects of the system have, in the past several decades, recognized the value of a community oriented approach- yielding subsequent programs like community prosecution and community courts.

More recently, law enforcement has begun to understand the value of collaboration with all other systems outside of justice. Other systems include the health, education, employment, community, faith, and family domains. There is a clear need for this collaboration- the police alone cannot and should not, address or solve systemic issues. The police can facilitate a systems approach to myriad community problems.

Gun violence is an excellent example of how a multi-system approach can yield much greater benefits to both the police and communities they serve. For the nation to recognize and address our growing gun violence problem, the justice system must back law enforcement through aggressive prosecution and swift sanctions for those who commit gun violence. The health system must (and does) view and treat this violence as an epidemic. The educational system must do as much as it can to educate youth about this issue and decrease gun violence in their institutions. The employment system must work with others to ensure access and opportunity for economic success. Lastly, family systems must change as well by limiting access to guns by those who 1) have intent to harm, 2) are abusing drugs/alcohol, and 3) have a mental illness that can cloud reasonable judgment. In this model, law enforcement can aggressively address gun violence in the community knowing that all larger systems are supporting their ground level efforts.

There are a variety of other issues of concern to police that are best addressed through a collaborative systems approach. For example, offender reentry requires participation of the police, behavioral and public health, education and employment systems in the successful transition for an offender back into the community. Gang violence is also ripe for systematic problem solving by all justice and social service providers in a community. In fact, most issues facing the police are well suited for a more comprehensive, systems approach.

Exemplary research questions might include the following:

- ❑ Has the justice system kept pace with law enforcement in the fight against crime?
- ❑ What changes has the educational system enacted that support law enforcement and justice initiatives to reduce crime?
- ❑ What can family systems do to show support for crime reduction—particularly support for local law enforcement initiatives?
- ❑ Are systems (justice, health, education, family) working in a coordinated, cross-system fashion, or are they making discrete, uncoordinated changes?
- ❑ What community concerns are well-suited to a systems approach?
- ❑ What processes are most effective in developing, implementing and evaluating system change and system strategies that address community concerns?

Technology

A focus on law enforcement technology reflects the growing role all forms of technology in the commission and control of crime. This area addresses the many forms of technology that both criminals and law enforcement agencies deploy to accomplish their goals and missions. The primary focus areas are information technology and sharing, communications, less lethal weapons, CCTV, GPS tracking, DNA use, computer forensics, vehicle design and control, assisting agencies with technology procurement, and cyber crime and investigations as well as information security. In addition to these focus areas a technology research agenda should also include the issues of integration of technologies and the ways new technologies alter operations and management of law enforcement agencies.

Law enforcement leaders across all agency size categories and regions of the country indicate that technology is important. The RAC unanimously concluded that technology issues are an important piece of the future of law enforcement. The NIJ's Office of Science and Technology has made substantial research progress in this area, however the relatively lower levels of their funding and the variations in funding that have occurred in recent years have resulted in a less than optimal technology research progress. Similarly, efforts by other federal, state, tribal, and local agencies have been modest. The result is an uncoordinated and incomplete program of research in law enforcement technology. Our call is to elevate technology research to a high priority level. If this happens and the principles of the National Law Enforcement Research Agenda discussed earlier are implemented we will see rapid advances in the ability of law enforcement agencies to deploy technologies effectively to control crime.

There are at least three primary functional areas in this area of research: 1) assessing current technologies, 2) developing evidence based procedures for the use of technologies in crime control, and 3) establishing effective technology training and certification for law enforcement personnel. An assessment function would provide an objective source for law enforcement when they are procuring technology (a "consumer reports" type capability). All agencies, but especially smaller ones, report the need for such assistance because larger portions of their budgets are devoted to technology. Similarly, all agencies need research to improve their abilities to address a number of technology enabled crimes including identity theft, child pornography, drug sales, and domain name system attacks and system security more generally. Integrating technology into procedures and management is a high priority for this research effort. Finally, training and certification are critical if law enforcement agencies are going to use existing technologies more effectively and utilize emerging technologies to fight crime.

Exemplary research questions might include the following:

- ❑ Is there clarification about cyber crime jurisdictional issues?
- ❑ Is there clarity of terms- cyber crime, electronic crime, etc.?
- ❑ What progress is there towards understanding/investigating identity theft?
- ❑ Child Pornography: Are these crime trends down or up, and why? What are effective deterrent and enforcement methods?
- ❑ Fraud/ Phishing: How well does law enforcement understand/investigate these crimes?
- ❑ Viruses/ Malware: Are agencies protected? Is evidence protected?
- ❑ What level of education, prevention, and intervention skills should the patrol officer have?
- ❑ What is the effective law enforcement response to businesses as victims? As perpetrator?
- ❑ How many illegal drugs are sold over the net? How can sales be slowed/stopped?
- ❑ How equipped (resources) is law enforcement for investigating technology crimes?
- ❑ Do departments share information effectively intra and inter agency-wise?
- ❑ Have police agencies kept pace with advances in the use of forensics?
- ❑ How does DNA impact both violent and property crime investigations?
- ❑ Do agencies have adequate technology evidence retention/storage policies?
- ❑ Do officers know how to interrogate newer technologies (Blackberrys, Play Station, etc.)?
- ❑ Do agencies track and study emerging technologies at an early stage to help police understand their value (for example, surveillance technology, voice recognition, and other investigative tools?)

Response to Crime & Victimization

Central to the mission of policing is the prevention, intervention, and response to crime. Responses to crime include both reactive responses to crime incidents and proactive responses to crime types and crime patterns. The reactive response to crime is critical to the administration of justice and to meeting the needs of victims of crime. Proactive responses to crime build on police practices that have evolved through problem-oriented and community-based policing. Enhancing the response to crime is critical for addressing public safety concerns at neighborhood, community, regional, and national levels. Homicide, gun violence, sexual assaults, stalking, intimate partner violence, gang and drug related crime and disorder, child abuse, elder abuse, property crime, and youth crime reflect concerns of police executives, officers, and citizens alike. Further, crime interacts with citizen fear and neighborhood disorder to affect the quality of community life and perceptions of the police and justice system. Of similar

concern are emerging crime issues including domestic and international terrorism, computer and cyber-crime, and transnational crime and criminal organizations.

As the National Academies of Science review of policing research has shown, the more focused and tailored police interventions are to specific crimes and crime contexts, the more effective they are in preventing and controlling levels of crime (National Research Council, 2004).¹ Critical to problem solving and focused interventions is research and the insights about crime available by linking crime analysis and research. This research can include a basic understanding of crime trends and patterns as well as applied research on local crime patterns. Also included is evaluation research on the implementation and impact of police prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies.

The need exists for timely research on trends in violent crime and violence against women, drug distribution and abuse, youth crime, gangs, and property crime. Understanding these trends, their regional variation, and differences across rural areas, small towns, suburbs and metropolitan areas, can provide useful strategic understanding for responding to crime. An example over the last decade is the geographic spread of methamphetamine moving from the West Coast through other regions of the country. Similarly, research that increases police and community partners' understanding of the migration of gangs and the mimicking of gang life in rural, small town, and metropolitan jurisdictions can assist in preventing and more effectively responding to gang crime.

Moving to an applied level, research conducted as a basic step in problem solving to understand specific crime types and patterns can better inform prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies. Thus, understanding the local level factors that influence the decision of a victim of domestic violence to call the police and/or to seek other resources of protection and support can be critical to developing an array of victim-centered strategies designed to prevent and reduce levels of victimization. Similarly, understanding the dynamics of local gun violence is critical to responding effectively. Research can help determine to the extent to which gun violence is driven by gangs and by drug market activity. Further, it can add insight about the role illicit firearms markets play in driving this violence.

Research also is critical to moving police strategies toward evidence-based practice. Thus, to what extent do community policing, problem solving, COMPSTAT, and other police innovations lead to reduced levels of crime, reduced fear, and enhanced perceptions of the police? Do policing practices associated with the emerging concept of intelligence-led policing build the capacity of police to respond to crime, to terrorism, and to all hazards?

¹ National Research Council. 2004. *Fairness and Effectiveness in Policing: The Evidence*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

Evaluation research can assist police departments in assessing the impact of particular interventions. Which youth prevention strategies reduce levels of involvement in crime? Are arrest policies governing the police response to violence against women increasing the safety of victims? Ultimately, the goal of this type of information is to provide police executives and their local partners the information they need to invest in strategies and programs that are most likely to prevent and control levels of crime, reduce victimization, and enhance the quality of community life. Formally incorporating these practices into the management and operations of police organizations supports a more informed and systematic approach to public safety. It helps the police focus not solely on content, but also the key aspects of process for more effective services.

Exemplary research questions might include the following.

Crime:

- ❑ What interventions are most effective in controlling the proliferation of illegal weapons?
- ❑ Are we reducing levels of violence against women? What mechanisms are most effective?
- ❑ Is stalking fully understood and aggressively investigated?
- ❑ Are hate crimes on the rise or lessening?
- ❑ Do departments fully understand and aggressively investigate crimes of human trafficking?
- ❑ How effectively do agencies address sex crimes?
- ❑ How effectively do agencies respond when an officer is injured in the line of duty? Are protocols in place or is the response reactive?
- ❑ Do officers treat domestic violence incidents differently than a decade ago? If so why?
- ❑ Is sexual assault on the rise? Lessening? Do we know why?
- ❑ What works better, prevention or intervention?
- ❑ Can we measure impact and value of police-youth outreach?
- ❑ Are the goals that were set for school partnerships being achieved? Are goals being set? Are they measurable?
- ❑ How effective are school based education programs in reducing gang violence and drug use?
- ❑ How prevalent is sexual abuse in the school? In the home?
- ❑ Teenage drinking: Are we making progress?
- ❑ Has the juvenile justice system improved in the last ten years?
- ❑ Is youth victimization on the rise, stable, or heading down?
- ❑ Do we agree on outcome measures when looking at youth and crime?
- ❑ Has the declaration of a gun violence epidemic by the health system aided law enforcement in their work to reduce that violence?

Gangs

- ❑ How have youth gangs changed in the past five years?
- ❑ How international are gangs?
- ❑ Are guns, drugs, and human trafficking, related to gangs, isolated or dependent on one another?
- ❑ What are the organizational characteristics of gangs?
- ❑ Gang migration: do we know where gangs are going?
- ❑ Recognition issues: what if a gang member does not look like a gang member?
- ❑ Where and how do gangs start? Why?
- ❑ How do they grow?
- ❑ Gang turf: how do jurisdictional boundaries arise or change?

Drugs

- ❑ Are we still in a war against illegal drugs? Are we winning or losing?
- ❑ What role do prescription drugs play in the overall drug abuse picture?
- ❑ Are departments competent to address meth lab issues safely?
- ❑ How effective are intervention programs?
- ❑ What are the implementations of decriminalization of policing?
- ❑ Drug distribution patterns: do we understand and interdict them?

Firearms

- ❑ What law enforcement interventions are most effective for reducing firearms violence?
- ❑ Is firearm stamping effective?
- ❑ Do we fully understand gun trafficking and gun markets?
- ❑ Are we reducing the number of illegal firearms available to criminals?
- ❑ Can we measure effectiveness of gun violence reduction programs?
- ❑ Do we pay enough attention to officer safety?
- ❑ ATF E-Trace: Are we maximizing this database to solve crimes/identify suspects?
- ❑ Buyer evaluations: Good idea?

Terrorism/Intelligence Sharing

- ❑ How far have we come since the September 11, 2001, attacks in improving our intelligence sharing capacity?
- ❑ Are fusion centers working? Do they help with all crimes?
- ❑ Are federal agencies working effectively with one another?

- ❑ Are state, local, and tribal agencies working effectively with federal agencies?
- ❑ Are guidelines for intelligence sharing agreed upon?
- ❑ Are we training officers to understand and use intelligence?
- ❑ Are smaller law enforcement agencies engaging the terrorism/intelligence initiatives already in place?
- ❑ Are agencies of all sizes prepared for and aware of terrorism threats (domestic/international)?
- ❑ Are fusion centers working? How?
- ❑ Do all 18,000 state, local, and tribal agencies understand what intelligence is?
- ❑ Has the concept of Intelligence Led Policing (ILP) been embraced/adopted by local law enforcement? If not, why not?
- ❑ Who is (or should) provide training and education on terrorism to the 18,000 U.S. law enforcement agencies?

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Preparedness, in the context of the NLERA, is defined as preparation for any natural emergency. While many justice and law enforcement models add homeland security and terrorism under this heading, RAC members did not choose to do so. Instead, RAC members included all homeland security/terrorism/intelligence sharing issues under crime and victimization. The logic was clear- any act of terrorism is a crime, and the many actions taken to reduce terrorist threats are related to police investigation and intelligence. From a research standpoint, there is a clear demarcation between preparation for natural disasters and those created by individuals whose intent is to commit a crime.

Exemplary research questions might include the following:

- ❑ Are agencies ready for natural disasters (hurricanes, floods, fires)?
- ❑ Are agencies ready for mass disease (Avian flu, staph infections, etc)?
- ❑ Do agencies have carefully constructed emergency response plans?
- ❑ Do agencies have in place crisis response teams?
- ❑ Are agencies prepared in the event that emergency evacuation will be needed?
- ❑ Are officers sufficiently trained in search and rescue?
- ❑ Are officers sufficiently trained for crowd and traffic control?
- ❑ Is the cooperation/collaboration among law enforcement, fire and EMS staff sufficient to allow for a fully coordinated response to any natural emergency?
- ❑ Have agencies provided the necessary personnel protection equipment to ensure officer safety?

Emerging Issues

Many of the issues law enforcement faces can be sorted and placed in categories- as this NLEA has done with its eight core areas of research. The last of the eight core areas is Emerging Issues. This category allows for presentation of those law enforcement related problems that are new enough to make classification difficult.

Examples of recent emerging issues are plentiful, starting with homeland security, terrorism, and intelligence sharing. Each of these topics is relatively new, having become critical areas of focus only after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. From these emerging issues, newer ones arise, such as the growth of the fusion center concept and its viability for local law enforcement. Another excellent example is immigration. While immigration policy has become a 'hot topic' among governing bodies and law enforcement leaders, there is a dearth of solid policy recommendations to guide those discussions.

Law enforcement also faces a host of 'old yet new' issues in the emerging category. For example, the substantial increase in the use of conducted energy devices (CEDs) has enhanced interest in: in-custody deaths. More than 300 individuals in police custody have died after a CED was used. Police need to understand why and how this might affect their policies, procedure and training with respect to the use of this less lethal weapon.

Exemplary research questions might include the following:

- Will the rapidly aging population necessitate change in police performance?
- Do law enforcement leaders fully understand the link between offender re-entry and new crime? Do they have a plan to address this?
- How do the various law enforcement policies on the enforcement of immigration laws impact on the victimization of, reporting of crime by, trust of police on the part of illegal immigrants?
- Do we aggressively research emerging technologies (like CEDs) to help police manage and use them effectively?
- What is the credible role of local law enforcement in the absence of national policy on immigration? How do immigration policies differ across US law enforcement agencies? How do immigration patterns affect local law enforcement agencies? Does illegal immigration impact or affect crime levels? How does response to illegal immigration affect law enforcement budgets?
- How are community relations affected by immigration approaches?
- Are law enforcement recruitment policies influencing or enhancing diversity in the sworn ranks?
- What additional resources do local law enforcement agencies need?

- How do illegal immigrant housing issues affect local law enforcement?
- How many sanctuary cities are there? What impact do they have on the local law enforcement agency?
- Are sanctuary policies unfair to legal residents/citizens immigrants?
- How are police leaders institutionalizing better decision-making and evaluation practices?
- In what ways are police agencies implementing more formal research and planning activities? Will these activities increase with the increasing focus on evidence-based and information-led policing?
- What is the future of crime analysis units? What areas of policing (administrative, strategic, operations) are most affected by crime analysis? Are there other data-driven processes that need attention from leaders, managers or those on the street?

SECTION III:

Principles of Successful Research

Beyond development of the NLERA topic areas, the IACP RAC also spent a good deal of time sorting out the principles that must be observed to ensure successful research outcomes. RAC members urge all police leaders and researchers to embrace these principles as they partner to undertake new research initiatives:

- *Commitment: Be prepared to engage fully in the research effort, work through difficulties or obstacles, and embrace results as guides to policy improvement*
- *Support: The IACP and police leaders will need to seek congressional support for expansion of the National Institute of Justice and the creation of centers of excellence to accomplish the goals of the NLERA*
- *Partnerships/Collaboration: Strengthen each research effort through partnerships with law enforcement leaders and academic researchers who you trust and respect*
- *Resources/funding: Make sure that you have sufficient backing (funding and resources) to undertake and complete the research you have envisioned*
- *Quality: Work toward a high quality research effort, focusing on the quality of your methodology, approach, staffing, data collection and analysis, and creation of actionable recommendations*

- ❑ *Policy Relevance: Pick research topics that will predictably result in policy relevant findings that you can use to improve the quality and capacity of your agency and your staff*
- ❑ *Portability/Replication Potential: Think through how your research might be replicated and support other agencies across the US—a local idea should have resonance everywhere if it is well thought out*
- ❑ *Comprehensiveness: Step back and look at your research design to ensure that it encompasses all of the concerns you want to gain information on*
- ❑ *Independent Review: Continually seek review and input on your research- from start to finish- from independent sources that can provide input and redirection to ensure success*
- ❑ *Actionable Findings/Implementation Potential: Demand that the research team conclude the project by using all findings to create a set of actionable recommendations that you can use to improve the leadership, management, and capacity of your law enforcement agency*
- ❑ *Prioritization of Urgent Issues: If you have a list of research topics, work hard to select the most important one for your initiative, so that scarce research funding and resources are used to a maximum benefit*
- ❑ *Narrowing/Focusing Scope: Broad brush research yields little in the way of actionable recommendations- focus the research project so that it drives at a key issue, answers pertinent questions, and results in usable findings*
- ❑ *Speaking to Multiple Audiences: Good research, ending in actionable recommendations, is a useful tool not just for the police, but for the governing body, the community, and a host of other professions. Craft a final report that will speak to multiple audiences and give them direction on what they should do as a result of the findings*

SECTION IV:

IACP/RAC Role in Supporting Local Research

Beyond publication of the NLERA, and developing research principles, the RAC has every intention, in partnership with NIJ, to support emerging local research on law enforcement issues. Here are some of ways we intend to help:

- Encouraging/Supporting Partnerships

Police agencies have little or no dedicated resources and staffing to conduct serious research. The RAC will work with local agencies to help them launch serious research efforts

- Helping Identify Resources/Funding

Even after achieving a viable partnership, local agencies will still need sufficient funding to accomplish their research. The RAC will provide advice and direction on likely sources of funding from local, state, federal government, the business community, and philanthropic organizations

- Reviewing/Critiquing Methodologies:

At the request of the law enforcement agency or its research partner, the RAC will provide independent, critical methodological review to aid the researchers in fine-tuning their research approach

- Promoting a Systemic View/Approach:

The RAC will also, when advising local agencies, advice on how the research can and should link to other systems including justice, education, government, the community, and health/mental health

- Facilitating Data Transfer from Law Enforcement to Researchers:

The RAC can provide guidelines for data security, anonymity, storage, and agreements relating to release of data to other entities, to ensure that sensitive law enforcement information is handled properly by the research partners

- Sharing Results:

The RAC will help local agencies, once they have completed their research and have actionable recommendations, share their findings when appropriate: IACP Info (bi-weekly email), Police Chief Magazine,

our Web site, IACPNET, and potential workshops at the IACP's annual conference

□ Serving as a Clearinghouse for Completed Research:

The RAC will work with the IACP and the NIJ to ensure that all new research is readily available to all 18,000 state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies through an IACP Law Enforcement Research Clearinghouse, maintained and operated by the IACP's Research Center

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