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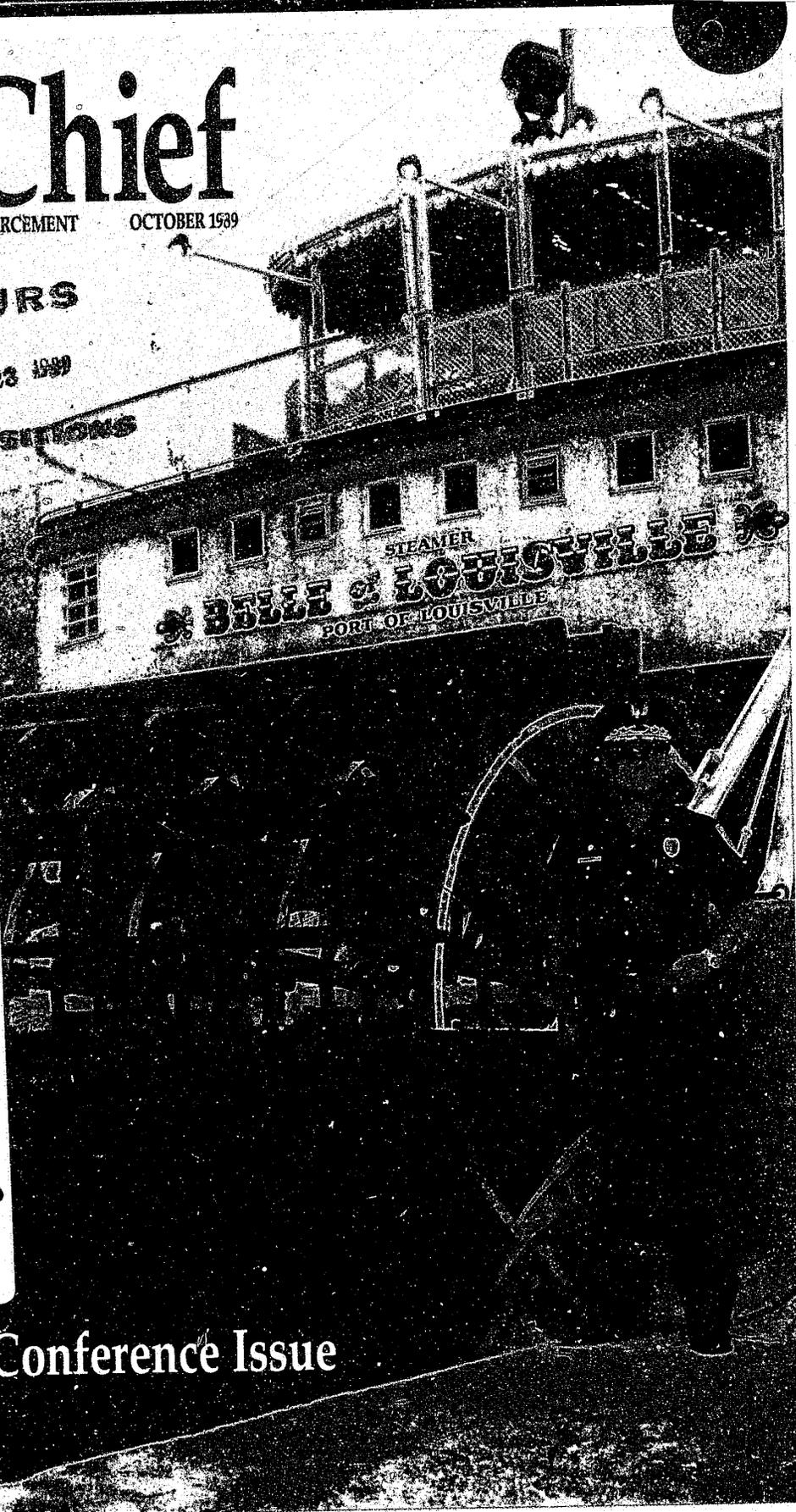
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IACP Annual Conference Issue

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TABLE OF CONTENTS



IACP "Down Under" 17



Conference Exhibitor List 44



Police Facilities 119

HIGHLIGHTS

On the Cover

Louisville Chief of Police Richard L. Dotson will host the IACP 96th Annual Conference from the 14th to the 19th of this month. See you there!

8 **President's Message: The Year in Review**
By IACP President Charles D. Reynolds

10 **From the Director: Compiling Law Enforcement Statistics: From the 1920s to the 21st Century**
By William S. Sessions, Federal Bureau of Investigation

14 **Governing Body Report: August 1989 Meeting — Arlington, Virginia**

16 **IACP Supports White House Drug Control Strategy**

17 **IACP Reaches "Down Under" for Second Pacific Basin Seminar**

1207 1320 **International Policing: Policing Remote Areas — Difficulties and Initiatives**
By Michael J. Palmer

143 **Models for Management: Soft Body Armor**

144 **Legislative Analysis: Bennett's Anti-Drug Strategy**

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

37 **Tentative Schedule**

41 **Educational Opportunities**

44 **Exhibitors' List**

55 **Louisville's History of Service**

61 **Committee Acknowledgements**

FEATURES

120714 62 **Satanic, Occult, Ritualistic Crime: A Law Enforcement Perspective**
By Kenneth V. Lanning

120715 86 **Implementation of DNA Analysis in American Crime Laboratories**
By David Bigbee, Richard L. Tanton and Paul B. Ferrara

120716 92 **DNA Analysis: The Challenge for Police**
By Tod W. Burke and Walter F. Rowe

96 **IACP's Radar Testing Program is Alive and Well**
By Brian Traynor, Ronald Sostkowski and Marshall Treado

101 **Sentencing Guidelines: The Pendulum Swings**
By Paul William Brown

138 **Law Enforcement's Proud Display of Old Glory**
By G.H. Kleinknecht

140 **Progress Through Military-Civil Cooperation**
By Edward C. Conroy and Carl L. Lockett

DRUG ENFORCEMENT

120717 103 **Narcotics Investigations in Smaller Agencies**
By Michael F. Brown

120718 113 **Combating Street-Level Narcotics Sales**
By Michael A. Cushing

117 **Auxiliary Police and Drug Abuse Prevention**
By Martin Alan Greenberg

FACILITY DESIGN

120719 119 **Designing a New Police Facility**
By John A. Kaestle

127 **Facility Design: Planning for the Next 20 Years**
By Leslie Rebanks

120720 130 **Dramatic Underground Facility Completed for MECC**

120721 132 **The Successful Quest for a New Facility**
By Wade Goolsby

135 **Facility Expansion in Tempe Provides Greater Coordination of City Functions**
By John Heinrich

120722 136 **Expectation and Opportunity in the Planning and Design of Police Facilities**
By Herbert B. Roth

DEPARTMENTS

142 **Survivors' Club**

146 **Product Update**

152 **New Members**

154 **Index to Advertisers**

The Successful Quest for a New Facility

By Sergeant WADE GOOLSBY, Patrol Supervisor, Arlington Police Department, Texas

Currently, there are more jails and law enforcement facilities being built in this country than at any time in our history. For most law enforcement administrators, the construction of such a facility will be the only major development project they will be involved with during their careers, and the success of that project could determine the success of the career. Many elements affect the ultimate success or failure of the project, and the architect is one of the primary factors in the final outcome. From initial selection to the completion of construction, the architect's role is crucial. For those who have never worked with an architect, an understanding of the procedural aspects involved is essential in successfully concluding a construction project.

The first task in the construction process is the selection of an architect. There are several options available to the administrator to aid in this selection process, and he must determine which option is best suited for his project and circumstances. Of course, legislation may restrict the method of selection used by a governmental agency.

Direct Selection

In a direct-selection process, the architect is selected on the basis of a number of factors including reputation, past experience and individual recommendations. Although this type of relationship usually begins with an attitude of trust and confidence, the project often ends unsatisfactorily. This occurs because the architect is chosen not necessarily for his knowledge or ability to design a specialized facility, but because of friendships or political connections. Additionally, when the direct-selection process is used, there is a tendency on the part of the administrator to get less involved in the design process since he unduly trusts the architect to do a good job. This lack of involvement can lead to disappointment in the final product.

Comparative Interviews

The most common method of selection is comparative interviewing. In this process, the administrator issues a Request for Proposals (RFP), and conducts

The chief drawback to the design/build option is that there is reduced administrator representation. Normally, the architect is a representative of the administrator, but in a design/build operation, the architect is related to the contractor and the administrator must either hire a construction manager or rely upon his own knowledge to protect his interests.

interviews with those architectural firms that submit proposals. There are two major objectives to these interviews. First, even though a definition for the project has been included in the RFP, the administrator should use the interview to clarify that definition and identify any unique aspects of the job. Second, during the course of the interview, the administrator should investigate the qualifications and abilities of the architectural firm as thoroughly as possible. Previous experience on similar projects should be examined and the identities of these projects and their owners should be obtained. The current—and anticipated—workload of the architectural firm should be examined, with the objective of determining the firm's ability to handle an additional job. The administrator should be provided with the identity of the primary designer for the project and should insist on interviewing that individual. The architect should also identify the nature of the design team that will be involved with the project. This could range from an individual effort by some-

one within the firm to a joint venture or limited partnership with a specialist firm.

Finally, prior to selection, the administrator should consider visiting the architect's office to observe the working atmosphere. Although the final selection is still a somewhat subjective decision, careful evaluation and examination of the firm submitting proposals will provide a solid foundation for decision making.

Design/Build

With the design/build option, the same company or team performs the design and construction of the project. This team could consist of a firm with the capability of performing both functions, or it could be a joint venture by two firms—each with their own specialty. This option does hold some advantages. In most jobs, time delays occur in the shop-drawing approval process. (The contractor must submit the shop drawings to the architect, who then reviews the drawings or forwards them to one of his consultants for approval. After approval, the drawings are returned to the contractor.) This process is streamlined when the same team is providing both the construction and the design. Confusion in the interpretation of some of the design elements or drawings is also minimized by having the contractor and architect working together on the same team. The drawback to this option is that there is reduced administrator representation. Normally, the architect is a representative of the administrator, but in a design/build operation, the architect is related to the contractor and the administrator must either hire a construction manager or rely upon his own knowledge to protect his interests.

Design Competition

This method involves a competition, which can either be limited to a select number of architectural firms or left open to any interested firm. The advantage to this option is that the administrator can obtain detailed conceptual drawings at a comparatively small cost. The disadvantage is that he must invest considerable time and effort in defining the project, setting time schedules and identifying budget limitations, which can

offset any potential savings. In some cases, the design team that submits the preferred design can be commissioned to carry the project through to completion. However, if this is not possible, it will be necessary to hire a second architectural firm to complete construction documents and monitor the construction. If a second firm is used, further complications can occur when questions arise regarding certain design elements, since the original design team is no longer involved in the project.

Once the architect has been selected—by whatever method—the design process begins. This process can be divided into four phases: program development, schematic design, design development and construction documents. Each of these phases is a progressive step toward the finished design and the acceptance of bids for construction.

Program Development

It is during this initial phase that the philosophy of the project and the needs of the administrator are identified. This step is often performed by a consultant or architectural firm other than the one selected for the design of the project. The scope of the program will vary according to the size and complexity of the project, but its primary function is to project space needs. Included in the program are the data and methodology used to obtain these space requirements. The following is a partial list of factors that should be considered in the needs-assessment portion of the program:

- Population growth trends
- Budget requirements
- Hiring trends
- Desired staffing ratios
- Managerial philosophies
- Changing demographics
- Crime statistics

This list is merely representative of the issues that should be addressed in the program; each agency should determine the specific issues that affect it. The finished program is then used for providing the basis of the initial design of the project and for determining funding needs. This phase in the design process is crucial because a poorly developed program can lead to inadequate funds for completion of the project.

Schematic Design

In order to acquaint the architect with the operation of the agency and the working relationships within that agency, there must be a great deal of interaction between administrator and architect to develop an accurate schematic design. This also affords the administrator an opportunity to examine and evaluate his operation to assess any changes or improvements that could be facilitated through the design. With the operational information provided by the administrator, accompanied by any

philosophical or operational changes, the architect begins studying spatial relationships and adjacency needs. This is usually performed through the use of "bubble diagrams" or other graphic methods illustrating the relationships. Evolving from these spatial relationship studies, schematic floorplans are developed, illustrating the basic arrangement of work spaces and the size relationships. This initial design should also address the criteria of the program and fall within the parameters set by that program.

Design Development

This phase can be divided into two

parts: design refinement and needs identification. Design refinement begins with the architect working with various members of the organization to clarify specific needs and adjust the design accordingly. In conjunction with the architect, the users of a particular space examine each area in the design applicable to them, and adjustments are made to better meet the users' needs. This process of refining, reviewing and further refining continues until the design meets both the needs of the agency and the criteria of the program, and falls within the limits of the project budget. Occurring concurrently with the design refine-

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ment is the needs identification study, which addresses the needs of each room or space in the building and identifies the furnishings, wall coverings, floor coverings and ceiling types needed. Also included in this study are electrical needs, heating and air conditioning requirements, lighting needs and any other special requirements.

Construction Documents

The project design has now been completed and work can begin on the documents necessary for the project's issuance for bid. This includes specifications, fully developed floor plans and structural, mechanical and electrical drawings. Depending on the magnitude and complexity of the project, this phase could take several months. During this process, the administrator will have only limited contact with the architect, discussing updated construction cost estimates.

When all specifications, plans and drawings have been completed, the contractor selection process begins. This may have already occurred if the design/build method was used. If not, the administrator again has the option of direct selection or comparative interviews, or he can utilize a competitive bid process. However, legal restraints usually dictate that in a project involving the construction of a jail or police facility, the selec-

If it is a jail or police facility being constructed, legal restraints usually dictate that the selection of a contractor be done by bid process.

tion of a contractor be done by bid.

If this is the case, the prospective project is advertised and drawings are made available by the architect to interested contractors. The architect should identify qualifications that the contractor must meet before being eligible to bid. These may include, but are not necessarily limited to, previous experience and/or the ability to obtain performance bonds, payment bonds and maintenance bonds in specified amounts. Once the contractor obtains the plans and bids are prepared and submitted, they are opened at a predetermined time and date. If the architect has completed the design process according to the administrator's needs and specifications, and construction cost estimates are accurate, all sub-

mitted bids should be close to the amount budgeted for the project. If the bids range far above or below this amount, they may have to be rejected. The design, specifications and materials are reevaluated with the necessary modifications made, and the project is rebid. In cases where the bids are too high but are still close to the budgeted amount, negotiations can sometimes be made with the bidding contractors, and agreements reached without rebidding the project. If any or all bids are accepted, the job will normally be awarded to the contractor submitting the lowest bid, providing he meets all the qualifications of the architect and the administrator. In cases of disqualification, the job is awarded to the next lowest qualified bidder.

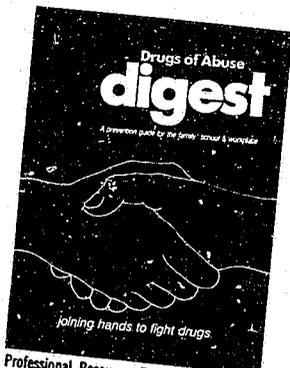
Once a bid is accepted, construction begins and the duties of the architect change from those of a designer to a monitor of the construction. The AIA document B141, Standard Form of Agreement Between Owner and Architect, outlines the duties and limitations of the architect and the administrator and should be carefully reviewed by the administrator and his legal counsel. Understanding these duties and limitations, along with the various aspects of the design process, will assist the administrator in assuring a successful project that meets the needs of his organization. ★

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