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REWARDS

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IN THE

BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Boston Police Department Planning and Research Division

23

537

September, 1974

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Ordinary organizations doing ordinary work operating with ordinary personnel systems, have many ways of rewarding their employees. An especially successful insurance agent can be paid higher and higher bonuses or be promoted to manager of an office or an administrator of the home office. U.S. Steel gives monetary bonuses for suggestions valuable to the company, as do other corporations and companies. The federal government has a successful employee incentive program and, more fundamentally, promotes its productive employees to new civil service grades or gives them salary increases within grade. In practically every organization and institution of our society, people get rewarded for the work they do. Rarely is it so in local government; almost never is it so in police departments.

One of the characteristics of police departments is that, like many other organizations which function under rigid civil service laws and rules, we have difficulty rewarding people for the work they do. The most basic and meaningful rewards of the organization -- any organization -are money, status, and position; none of these is ours to confer. Money is granted according to a principle of "fairness" in which people doing the same work get paid the same salary. Deviations from that principle, according the the theory, are debilitating to everyone else at that level. So the only monetary progress available to people in the organization is made by moving up in "grade" or "step" or whatever advancement is called.

Status in the organization is determined by a promotional system which emphasizer objective written examinations. In many police departments, performance does count; but those which do count it make it a relatively small contributor to the decision to promote. Position, unlike status, is generally available to the police department but is rarely used as a reward. The most familiar use of it is in the detective units of police departments which traditionally have been used to reward the heroic and the politically potent. Rarely have departments used other functions which could be considered rewards -- data processing, ballistics, budgeting, and personnel assignments -- as rewards to those who perform well as patrol officers.¹

Although rewards have been few, punitive measures have been plentiful. Police departments which have not learned how to reward have learned to punish with skill, precision, and imagination. Indeed, "rewards" in some departments have consisted largely of avoiding punishments given to officers who have been unable to stay in favor with those who have organizational power.

Transfer is a good example. Police departments could transfer people to districts of their choice because their performance merits it. But on the whole, they do not. Instead they choose to transfer those whose performance does not measure up.

The negative uses of rewards are well developed in police departments. But other organizations, supported by psychological research, have found

¹One could argue that to do so -- to reward patrolmen by removing them from patrol is contrary to the interest of an organization which delivers services -- the purpose for which it exists -exclusively from the patrol position.

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that organizations get far more from their employees by rewarding good performance than they do by punishing bad performance.

None of this is meant to imply that the negative half of a reward system is unimportant. In fact, for people and units to be able to distinguish between good and bad performance, the police department should spell out both. People should know that a citizen commendation for a police officer's performance will be rewarded; and they should also know that citizen complaints will, if substantiated, lead to punishment. The Homicide Unit should know that high rates of clearance will redound to the credit of the Unit, and that low rates will lead to serious questions about its competence.

The absence of clear reward systems is a symptom of a more fundamental problem in the field. The Good Humor Company has no questions about criteria to use for rewarding its employees. The amount of ice cream it makes and sells and the size of its annual profit can be the sole critieria for rewarding. But complex organizations like police departments have multiple, competing, and often conflicting goals, and deciding what people ought to be rewarded for is a problem. Crime prevention sometimes conflicts with apprehension; law enforcement sometimes conflicts with order maintenance. These are realities of policing, and the organization must deal with them in its reward system.

Traditionally, preference has been given to crime and traffic. Rewards have been based on the assumption that what is important about the police is arresting law-breakers and giving traffic citations. One reason is that these are easily quantifiable, and people can be evaluated on the basis

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of production. They did not even have to be judged on the quality of their arrests or the importance of their traffic work; their supervisors could simply submit totals.

But there was another reason for their use. They were based on a traditional, narrow definition of police work, one which emphasized crime. Arresting bad people, stopping traffic violations, performing heroic acts of citizen service -- these were easy to recognize and there was little controversy about their importance. A recent appreciation of the broader police role has led to questions about the traditional measures of performance. If the police responsibility includes provision of emergency service, can measures be developed which will evaluate the quality of emergency response -- successful reference of alcoholics to rehabilitative programs, mediation between family disputants which encourages troubled couples to get help, reference of problems (code violations, unemployment) to appropriate agencies. If a department were measuring properly the full range of what police officers do, it would have to find ways of measuring officers' skills in resolving situations without the use of arrest and of how citizens evaluate the quality of services provided to them.

All of this makes rewarding police officers far more difficult than it has been in the past. It is a problem which is just beginning to be addressed by the field. Rewarding prevention is impossible except in the aggregate. It is not possible to recognize and reward single incidents which do not happen. It is, however, possible to reward prevention over a long period, and especially the preventive skills of units. If, for example, the Department wanted to reduce family violence in District Two,

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it could begin a program in which referrals would be rewarded, officers on family calls would be given time to stay with the family to discuss its problems, they would be given time on subsequent tours to return to that house, and check the family's progress. One could then say over a period whether, in the aggregate, family violence had been reduced, and people could be rewarded accordingly.

Because police departments have suffered from these two major handicaps, insufficient control over the instruments of real reward and uncertainty about what ought to be rewarded, they have tended to focus on two kinds of rewards: single acts of unusual service, and organizational conformity. Awards for single acts serve a valid purpose. Police officers are called upon to act with great bravery; they ought to be recognized for risking their lives to save others or to protect the community from a particularly dangerous person. They ought to be rewarded for diving into icy ponds and crawling out onto ledges.

But one of the characteristics of a police officer is that he routinely does things which others would regard as requiring exceptional courage and skill. But because the police organization, accustomed to such acts, does not treat them as exceptional and worthy of attention; they tend to be overlooked. Thus, every day, police officers perform extraordinary services in the course of their tours which the organization does not recognize.

When the acts of bravery or service do get recognized by the organization, they are recognized in a heavily military manner. Citations, medals of henor, distinguished service awards, cortificates of valor -- police departments abound with such awards which tend to be thought of by the police

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officer in much the same way as soldiers feel about the award to an infantryman who gets decorated for holding off a battalion of the enemy, or, John Wayne style, throwing the grenade back. The Los Angeles Police Department, for example, awards its Medal of Valor to "officers who distinguish themselves by conspicuous bravery, heroism, or other meritorious action." It has been awarded since 1925 when Sergeant Frank S. Harper won it "after a gun battle with a gangland hoodlum."

Rewarding organizational conformity has been the unanticipated consequence of efforts by the police field to come to grips with the problem of performance evaluation. During the past decade, following the lead of businesses, corporations and other organizations, police departments have attempted to cope with the debilitating effects on people of a job without rewards. Recognizing that organizational advancement does not depend on performance, nor does tenure, nor does salary increase, police departments have begun to require evaluation of patrolmen by their immediate supervisors. Sergeants have tended to use evaluation as a weapon to enforce obedience to their commands and deference to their position. This inclination has been aggrevated by the nature of the evaluation used in most departments -- emphasizing, as it does, appearance, ability to follow instructions, comportment and conduct.

Thus the matter of rewarding police performance is a particularly complex one. Even if one can ignore the issues of performance evaluation -and we are doing so in this paper -- one is attempting to find means of giving personal satisfaction, organizational attention, and peer respect for good performance. We are attempting to reinforce a job well done without changing the organizational status of the person doing the job. We are

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attempting to find non-material rewards in a highly materialistic department.

REWARDS IN BOSTON

Two kinds of rewards are currently given in the Boston Police Department. Major awards are conferred annually at the Relief Association Ball. These awards,² like the awards given by other police departments, emphasize courageous performance, exceptional valor, heroism, and the like. Recommendations are submitted by district or unit commanders, through the chaim of command, to the Police Commissioner. Those recommendations are held in the Commissioner's office until shortly before the Policeman's Ball when an ad hoc awards committee, comprised of several deputy superintendents, is appointed to consider them. This committee selects the winners of the Medal of Honor, the Walter Scott Medal for Valor, the Thomas F. Sullivan Award, and the Boston Police Relief Association Memorial Award.

The second type of reward made to officers in the Department is a commendation. Here too, recommendations are submitted by district or unit commanders to the Commissioner. These recommendations are acted upon by the Commissioner; and when approved, they are issued in Personnel Orders, distributed to the Department, and a report made part of the personnel folders of officers recognized.

²They are listed fully in Appendix A.

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It had been practice prior to the beginning of the "Four and Two" for commanding officers to reward meritorious police service by giving two or three days of extra leave time. The number of days was determined by the captain's judgment of the incident to be rewarded. On rare occasions, a one week additional vacation was granted by the Police Commissioner; but this required an extraordinary act of heroism.

What is most important about the Department's rewards is not what has been given, but how the judgments have been made. Typically, a district captain learns about a superior arrest or high quality performance from a subordinate officer and decides to submit a name and story for commendations. He instructs a district clerk to gather the facts and writ. them in a recommendation for commendation. The clerk takes the facts from the officers involved in the incident, and writes a report which is signed by the captain and forwarded through the Deputy Superintendent to Headquarters. There it is endorsed by the Bureau of Field Services and submitted to the Commissioner.

There are a number of problems with this process. In the first place, recommendations for commendation are made on the basis of individual judgments that a superior piece of police work was done. So far as we have been able to learn, there are no criteria for making these judgments. Nowhere has the Department defined superior police work, so what is relatively routine in one instance might be considered worthy of commendation in another.

Second, nowhere in the process does anyone verify the facts of incidents deemed worthy of commendation. Recommendations are sent through the chain of command, each commander making his evaluation on the basis of the report originally submitted. It is widely believed in the Department that many of

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the reports submitted do not reflect accurately what really happened in the incidents described.

Third, because there are no criteria for giving awards, because some districts appear to make more recommendations for commendations than others, the entire process is hit-or-miss. If the act worthy of commendation is called to the attention of a captain, it may be submitted for commendation. If, as is the case in some districts, people have no faith in the commendations system, few acts may be called to the attention of the captain; and therefore few people may be recommended. In nearly all cases, recommendations for commendation result in commendation, there being no genuine review of those recommendations. In all cases the commendation consists solely of a piece of paper, there being no other tangible recognition available to the Department.

Over an eight month period, this Division reviewed all of the recommendations which have been sent to the Commissioner. In total there were only 31. A total of 115 officers of various ranks were commended in those recommendations for performing acts which their superiors thought worthy of commendation.

These acts divide into bravery and heroism, or keen observation and investigation, or a combination of both. Of the 31 commendations submitted, 19 were for keen observation and investigation, six for bravery and heroism and six for a combination of both.³

 3 A further analysis of the recommendations -- who made them and for what acts -- is contained in Appendix B.

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The rank of officers recommended is as follows:

Rank			Number	of	Recommendations	
Lieutenant					2	
Sergeant					б	
Detective				4	2	
Patrolman				6	3	

The superiors of these officers recommended various types of recognition:

a. Officer be commended and it be noted in his personnel file.

b. Officer be commended.

c. Officer be commended in an order.

d. Officer be considered for "Cop of the Month" award.

e. Officer be honored with official Departmental commendation and acknowledgement.

The recommendations themselves raise many questions. Althouth we made no effort to verify the facts reported, we conducted a content analysis of the reports; and among the questions raised are:

- <u>Item</u>: Ten officers are involved in the apprehension of two armed and dangerous felons; but only two are recommended for commendation. The report does not explain why.
- Item: A young man is murdered, and a sergeant and detective respond, take reports, and turn in description of the suspect which is disseminated in the usual manner. Later that night, two patrolmen spot the suspect and arrest him. Everyone is recommined for containdation, including the sergeont and detective who did no more than they ordinarily do.-- take a report.

- <u>Item</u>: Forty-five police officers and a civilian from the State Department of Mental Health took part in an effort at the State Hospital to persuade an armed patient to come out of the room in which he had locked himself. Presumably some are involved in the effort of persuasion; others must have been deployed in the halls of the hospital, and others must have remained outside. But all 45 and the civilian get recommended for commendation.
- Item: Nine officers are involved in the arrest of three teen-aged handbag snatchers. Three are recommended for commendation, two are mentioned in the report and not recommended, and four are not mentioned in the report but are recommended. There is no explanation for this anomaly, and it is difficult to understand why the routine arrest of three handbag snatchers is worthy of commendation anyway.
- Item: Two officers are recommended for having gathered information about a dissident group which hoped to disrupt the visit to Boston of then Vice President Ford. They took no unusual risks in gathering the information; they simply did what they are assigned to do.
- Item: Two observant patrolmen arrested a man wanted in a hitchhiker shooting. They turned him over to a detective and the booking process was coordinated by a sergeant. All are recommended for commendation.

The recommendations for commendation suffer from the absence not only of standardized criteria for giving awards, but as well from the absence of a standardized form used by officers making recommendations. The absence of such a form means that the about of information varies from report to report. Sometimes the actions of individual police officers are fully described; sometimes not. Sometimes terms used in the report are specific and clear; sometimes they are vague, and the reader cannot really understand what happened in the incident.

The commendations system also suffers from an obvious congruence between the publicity given to an event and recommendations for commendations. It appears that crimes which receive a good deal of publicity nearly always result in a recommendation that someone be commended; while events less publicized are far less likely to be recognized.

A third characteristic of the commendations recommended in the Department is that they place a great deal of emphasis on the value of recovered goods, rather than on the quality of the work which led to their recovery. For example, one commendation was recommended for officers who stopped a truck which turned out to be loaded with stolen goods. It appears that the officers were recommended because there was so much stolen property on the truck.

Finally, there appears to be a tendency to recommend officers who make arrests in a particularly short time. If an assailant is arrested within a few hours of the assault he commits, the arresting officer is more likely to receive a commendation than if he makes the arrest several weeks after the assault -- even though an arrest which occurs far after the event obviously requires more skill than one made within a few hours of the event.

There is one additional thing to be said: Nothing reflects as strongly the values and objectives of an organization as the things it rewards. One can tall and talk down the incontance of, say, nen-crime related police services; but lifthe organization rewards only "bravery under fire," no one in the organization can be persuaded that the non-crime services are truly

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important. If they are really important to the organization, the organization will reward them. The commendation recommendations contained in Appendix D are overwhelmingly biased toward the criminal enforcement activities of the Department.

A NEW REWARDS SYSTEM

The Planning and Research Division, recognizing the problems of rewards in the past, is recommending a radical revision of the matters which are rewarded, in the method by which the Department determines what to reward, and in the kinds of rewards given. The system would work as follows:

Each district and Headquarters would form Awards Boards, presided over by the district captain (Headquarters would be chaired by the commander of CID). Serving on each board would be one of the district shift representatives of the Patrolmen's Association, a representative of the Superior Officers Federation, two additional patrolmen, and one patrol supervisor. (The three latter members would be elected by their peers.)

The boards would be responsible for evaluating recommendations for commendations made to them by any officer of any rank or by a citizen who witnessesd a police act which, in his judgment, was worthy of commendation. In addition, the boards themselves would have authority to initiate recommendations for commendations to recognize people who had not otherwise been recommended for commendation.

Officers would be eligible for correndation for a wide variety of accomplishments including services in any of the following categories:

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- 1. Identification of criminal offenders and criminal activity
- 2. Apprehension of offenders
- 3. Crime prevention activities
- 4. Assisting individuals in danger of physical harm
- 5. Protecting constitutional rights of individuals or groups
- 6. Traffic services
- 7. Assisting people who cannot care for themselves
- 8. Resolving conflict
- 9. Identifying problems which are potentially serious law enforcement or governmental problems
- 10. Providing miscellaneous services

The second category of acts for which awards would be given is acts of conspicuous bravery in performing any of the services listed. A third category for which awards would be given would be services to the Department, including suggestions for improvement in the functions of the Department, service in the administration of the Department over a long period (including civilian service). And the final category of awards would be given for skills in firearms use, driving, and other functions which can be tested and/or measured.

A recommendation for commendation -- made by an awards board or to a board by an individual commander, officer, or citizen -- would be initiated on a special department form.⁴ The District Awards Board would verify the facts reported on the form, and <u>would make</u> a recommendation -- either that

⁴See Appendix C.

the act be rewarded or that it not be. Whatever its recommendation, the report would be submitted to the District Commander who would indicate, in the space provided, his recommendation.

The recommendation would then be forwarded to Headquarters where it would be reviewed by a Headquarters review committee consisting of the Administrative Assistant to the Commissioner (Chairman), the Deputy Superintendent of the Staff Inspections Division, the Director of Informational Services, and one field deputy selected by the Commissioner to serve for a term of six months. The responsibility of this committee would not be to make a final recommendation to the Commissioner, but to select from among the rewards available one appropriate to the act or service for which a reward is being recommended. This board would have the further responsibility of selecting annually the recipients of the Department's major awards.

Finally it would be the responsibility of the review committee to monitor and perfect, on a continuing basis, the rewards system -- to verify the integrity of the system through periodic checks by the Staff Inspections Division, to recommend new actions and services for which rewards ought to be made, to refine critieria for which awards are made, and to adopt new methods of awarding officers.

THE NEW REWARDS

We suggest that the Department establish the broadest conceivable range of awards for service. Specifically, we recommend a hierarchy of awards which would begin with:

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Under the syster we prepare, there would be three types of commandations

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possible.

Commendations could be made at the district or unit level by decision of the District Awards Board. The nature of that commendation would be entered in the personnel record of individuals so commended.

Commendations could also be made by civic or neighborhood associations or individuals; these too would be made part of the permanent personnel records.

Departmental commendations would be made only through the screening process described earlier. They would not only result in a personnel record entry, but would be sent in a personnel order to the Department. Cash Awards:

The 100 Club of the Department would be asked to raise from private sources funds which would be made part of a Department Award fund under the exclusive control of the Department. From this fund, the Commissioner, after receiving recommendations through the award review process, would be able to make cash awards to individual officers, scholarships to their children, paid sabbatical leaves for officers to travel and/or study here and abroad.

The Department would encourage other organizations, e.g., the American Legion, the Family Service Agency, the NAACP, the Red Cross; to develop police awards consistent with their own interests (first aid, family crisis skills) and officers would be eligible to receive those prizes through the normal processes.

Publicity:.

The Informational Services Division will develop a program of systematic publicity (or police officers was perform unusual service. First, the Division will monitor the release of information about acts which the press considers newsworthy, and attempt to ensure that those who receive public credit are the ones who have performed the acts worthy of attention.

Secondly, the Division will develop a more professional stock of police officer photographs so that the photos released to the press are of higher quality.

Third, whenever awards are made news releases and photographs will be issued to the press.

Fourth, regular feature stories will be arranged to report in the Sunday supplements and other appropriate journals the achievements of Boston police officers.

Fifth, a Department magazine will feature stories on those who receive awards.

Sixth, regular periodic ceremonies will be held with the Mayor in which awards are given by him.

Seventh, the Division will seek to arrange a semi-annual television special in which the excellent work of Boston police officers is dramatized on television.

Relief Days:

A modest restoration of days off as rewards will be made by the Department. Days off, which must be given sparingly as long as the Department's manpower shortage continues, will be granted by the Commissioner on recommendation of the Headquarters Review Committee; and officers receiving them will be able to take them at their discretion (with appropriate notice to their commending efficers.)

Improved Working Conditions:

It will be clearly understood in the Department that henceforth the

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"favors" of the Department will go to the individuals and units which perform. New automobiles will be given to the units which have good driving records. Budgetary increases will be given to the units which perform. Choice of assignment (district, shift, specialties) will be given to the officers whose performance in the Department makes them deserving.

In addition to the rewards we have recommended, we suggest that the Department begin immediately to establish with the Civil Service Division an understanding that we shall seek to create a system of "real" rewards in the Department. First of all, as we develop our program of performance evaluation, we shall expect the Civil Service Division to grant points toward promotion for those officers whose records in the Department are good ones. Secondly, we shall investigate with the Civil Service Board, as well as with the BPPA, creation of a pay scale within the patrol rank which will allow patrolmen to remain in the patrolman rank and be rewarded monetarily for service within that rank.

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Appendix A

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AWARDS PRESENTLY AVAILABLE TO BOSTON POLICE OFFICERS

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AWARDS PRESENTLY AVAILABLE

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TO BOSTON POLICE OFFICERS

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Appendix B

Eight - Month Analysis

of Recommendations for Commendation

December 1, 1973 through July 31, 1974

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All recommendations for commendation submitted to the Commissioner between December 1, 1973 and July 31, 1974 were reviewed and the data obtained was tabulated for presentation as follows.

DISTRICTS AND UNITS FROM WHICH

RECOMMENDATIONS WERE MADE

District/Unit

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Number Submitted

	number	
1		9
2		1
3		1
		–
4		4
- 1 5		1
6		1
		
7		0
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	an a	2
13		1
14		1
15		0
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Traffic		1
		<u>^</u>
Housing		2
Patrol Area B		1
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Patrol Area D		1
CID		2
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TOTAL		31
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OFFICERS MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

Capt. James McDonald, CID
Capt. Frances Devin, Housing
Deputy Supt. John Doyle, Intelligence
Supt. John Lynch, Traffic
Capt. Joseph Rowan, TPF
Deputy Supt. Joseph Saia, Area B
Deputy Supt. Leroy Chase, Area D
Capt. Henry Coughlin, Dist. 1
Lt. Michael O'Malley, Dist. 1
Capt. Joseph McCormack, Dist. 2
Capt. William O'Brien, Dist. 3
Capt. Albert Flattery, Dist. 4
Capt. Morris Allen, Dist. 5
Capt. John Bradley, Dist. 6
Capt. Daniel McDonald, Dist. 11
Capt. Lawrence Quinlan, Dist. 13
Capt. Walter Rachalski, Dist. 14

TOTAL

ON-DUTY ACTIONS

Police Action:	NUMBER OF ACTIONS	NUMBER OF OFFICERS COMMENDED
Investigation of a murder with no arrest	1	4
Investigation and arrest for murder	2	4
Investigation and arrest for shooting incidents at an occupied building	1	2
Investigation and arrest of persons involved in assasination plot on police officers and judges	1	3
Investigation and arrest for rape	1	5
Investigation and arrest for armed robbery	3	6
Investigation and arrest for handbag snatch	1	3
Investigation of dissident group threatening schedule of Vice President of U.S.	1	2
<u>On Sight</u> :	n san sin di di sin si di di sin Referenzi di sin si sin si sin si sin si Referenzi di sin sin sin sin sin sin sin sin sin si	
Arrest for mayhem and A&B D.W.	1	2
Arrest for armed robbery after vehicular pursuit	2	4
Arrest for armed robbery	2	3
Arrest for murder	1	2
Arrest for receiving stolen goods	Î.	2
Arrest for B&E	3	6
Arrest handbag snatch after vehicular pursuit	I	2
Arrest handbag snatch	1	2
Rescue at fire	i de les elles de les Referenc <mark>ia</mark> de la companya	3
Arrest of armed drug addict under the influence of narcotics holding child as hostage	1	- 4
Police officer shot while attempting to	1	1

	NUMBER OF ACTIONS	NUMBER OF OFFICERS COMMENDEL
Arrest for A&B D.W. on a police officer, burglary, and possession of burglary tools, and using without authority	1	2
Arrest for A&B D.W.	1	2
<u>Other</u> :		
Taking a murder report	1	2
Displaying exemplary courage and professional conduct in handling an armed mental patient who had already shot and wounded a doctor	1	44
TOTAL ON DUTY	30*	110

* total number of police actions, on duty and off duty exceeds total number of incidents since some incidents involved several actions

OFF-DUTY ACTIONS

POLICE ACTION	NUMBER OF ACTIONS	NUMBER OF OFFICERS COMMENDED
Investigation and arrest for armed robbery	1	2
Investigation leading to recovery of stolen goods	1	1
On sight-armed robbery arrest	1	1
On sight-B&E arrest	$1_{1_{2}_{2_{2}}}}}}}}}$	1
On sight-handbag snatch arrest	1	1
On sight-rescue at fire	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
TOTAL OFF DUTY	6	7

Appendix C

Recommendation for Award Form

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BostonPolice

RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE) (FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE SIDE)

	Name	Rank		ID #	District/Unit	Date
	Name (list	Rank further indi	ividuals	ID # s on reve	District/Unit rse side)	Date
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District/Unit	Date	C.				
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INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE.
- 2. BE SPECIFIC. When such phrases as "upon information received" or "upon investigation" are used, specify exactly how and when the information was received or how the investigation initiated the action being commended. Confidentiality of informants need not be broken; it is not necessary to name sources of information.
- 3. In citing more than one officer for commendation, specify exactly what commendable actions were taken by each officer during the incident.
- 4. Attach copies of all relevant reports.
- 5. List all police personnel who can document the incident.
- 6. Give a copy of this report to each officer recommended.

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