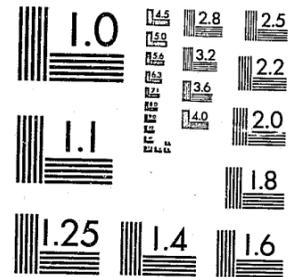


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CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

ENHANCING POLICE
OPERATIONS AND
MANAGEMENT

RESULTS OF A
COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT
STUDY OF THE SAN ANTONIO
POLICE DEPARTMENT

JULY 1982

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U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

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IV. RELATIONSHIPS AND ATTITUDES

A police department does not exist in a vacuum but rather exists as part of a social and organizational environment. While a police department is somewhat autonomous, it is also one of the departments of a city government. This means that a police department is in constant interaction with individuals, families, groups, and organizations; that there are multiple expectations about how a department should conduct its charge; and that a police department has multiple roles with which to contend.

Like other police departments, the San Antonio Police Department's operations and functioning are impacted by its social and organizational environment. The Department is affected by the relationships its members have developed with the City Council and the city staff with whom they must work and with the groups and individuals out in the community where they must work. These relationships are determined by many factors including the attitudes of both the members of the Department and of those outside of the Department.

In this chapter we discuss the following police department relationships:

- Relationship with other city departments
- Relationship with the media
- Relationship with other criminal justice agencies.

Additionally, we discuss the findings of the following studies:

- Two community attitude surveys
- A survey of attitudes of police department employees.

1. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS

Presented following are findings and recommendations with respect to the San Antonio Police Department relationship with other city departments.

(a) Findings

The relationship between the Police Department and other operational departments of the City (e.g., Fire Department and Traffic Engineering) which work closely with the police are generally good. The relationship, however, between

the Police Department and those city agencies that provide support to the Department are strained. We found that suspicion, mistrust, an absence of communication, and lack of confidence exists between the police and city departments providing personnel, budget, maintenance, legal, and data processing support.

We view these strained conditions as critical and believe they have an impact on morale and productivity in the Police Department, and adversely effect the delivery of police services in San Antonio.

It is difficult to fix responsibility for these poor relationships, as there are a number of factors that have contributed to this deteriorating condition. These include:

- Face to face collective bargaining has left a bitterness on the part of some police officers.
- Some services have been performed without agreed to performance standards or evaluation plans.
- Roles have not been well defined and responsibilities for maintaining good relationships have not been assigned.
- Coordinated plans for resolving mutual problems and achieving goals are not developed.

These strained relationships have resulted in near paranoid reactions within the Police Department and a lack of confidence by some in the management abilities of police department administrators.

(b) Recommendations

All municipal employees should work together as a team in delivering city services in a community. Diverseness and mistrust will ultimately effect the quality and efficiency of service delivery, directly impacting community members. The following recommendations are presented to improve relationships and build a team concept.

- City employees interacting with the Police Department should understand police goals and objectives

This can be accomplished through interdepartmental meetings and presentations by police personnel at staff meetings held by other city departments.

- Joint planning efforts should be conducted

Police personnel should meet with representatives of other city departments to develop coordinated plans to deal with specific problems. For example, a plan should be developed jointly by the Police Department, the Personnel Department, and Equal Employment Opportunity personnel to deal with present personnel shortages.

- City staff roles should be defined

City departments that support the Police Department should consider the Police Department as a customer or client, and their role should be defined to reflect that customer relationship.

- Responsibility for relationships should be fixed

Responsibilities for maintaining good relationships should be fixed and personnel should be evaluated, in part, on their ability to maintain good relationships.

- Close personnel relationships should be encouraged

Employees of both the Police Department and other city agencies should be encouraged to develop personal relationships, even if this amounts to no more than having lunch together periodically.

2. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MEDIA

Presented following are existing conditions and recommendations pertaining to police-media relations.

(a) Existing Conditions

Members of the media expressed some frustration in obtaining adequate information on a timely basis. Relationships were variously described as "poor", "weak", and "distrustful". Concerns were stated about the accessibility of police personnel authorized to release information. The reasons for these conditions include:

- Some officers do not feel confident in providing information to the media, fearing they might release unauthorized information or be improperly quoted.

- Some officers, while involved in an investigation, do not want to take the time required to meet with media representatives.
- There is no specialized public information function in the Department.

(b) Recommendations

Police-media relationships in San Antonio represent a sensitive concern. The community is very media oriented, and a high level of media competition exists.

We believe it is essential that the Police Department maintain good relationships and establish a mechanism to facilitate release of information to media representatives.

- Establish a Public Information Unit

We recommend the Department establish a Public Information Unit staffed with three sworn bilingual officers. These officers should respond to major crime locations to work with media representatives in obtaining required information. Additionally, unit personnel should be available to respond to telephone requests for information, assist in obtaining public information from police reports, and arrange interviews with police department representatives.

Public information officers should receive training in media presentation and should become knowledgeable of media deadlines. Their duty shifts should be arranged to meet media needs.

Implementation of this recommendation should be done in such a way as to ensure access to information and police personnel is not restricted or made more cumbersome.

- Issue identification cards to media representatives

Although television representatives are usually easily identifiable because of the equipment carried, representatives of the printed media and radio are less likely to be identified and may experience problems in gaining access to information. Although some media representatives do have identification cards furnished by the Police Department, issuance of identification cards to all media representatives will help to alleviate this condition.

3. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER CRIMINAL JUSTICE AGENCIES

As a part of this study we interviewed chiefs of police from communities near San Antonio, prosecutors, judges, and representatives from other criminal justice agencies. In addition, the confidential police questionnaire contained questions regarding police relationships with other criminal justice agencies.

Relationships with other police agencies were found to be good. A high level of cooperation and coordination exists, and no problems were identified.

Members of the Police Department did report some concerns about relationships with courts and with some prosecutors. Issues, however, related to concerns about plea bargaining and the failure to accept complaints or pursue prosecutions. These conditions exist in most police departments throughout the country and we do not believe a critical problem exists in San Antonio. These concerns usually relate to frustration on the part of police officers and a lack of understanding about the role each component of the criminal justice system fills.

4. COMMUNITY ATTITUDE SURVEYS

The City Council of the City of San Antonio requested that surveys of San Antonio residents be included in the police management study in order to ascertain and assess the quality of police-community relationships, community perceptions of and attitudes toward the police, and the needs for police services perceived by the residents. It was believed that the information generated by the surveys would augment the police management study by providing an understanding of the police service needs of San Antonio residents and by making it possible to evaluate how well the Police Department is meeting those needs. Moreover, the community surveys would provide information about the status and quality of police-community relations.

(a) Survey Samples

To make the community assessment as requested by the City Council, two surveys were conducted in which data were gathered from samples representing a cross-section of San Antonio residents and the diverse geographic, ethnic, socioeconomic, and age differences found in the City. The first survey, the Telephone Survey, consisted of telephone interviews with a sample of 968 randomly selected San Antonio residents who represented the demographic diversity found in San Antonio. In the second survey, the Survey of Groups and Organizations, we gathered information from 39 organizations including, neighborhood and resident associations, social service agencies, business organizations, and interest groups.

In the Telephone Survey, 968 residents were interviewed over the telephone by nine bilingual students or recent graduates who were selected with the assistance of a faculty member at the Worden School of Social Service of our Lady of the Lake University. The Survey was conducted over a three week period from late February through the middle of March. Most respondents were interviewed in the evening or during the weekend. The questionnaire used was written in both English and Spanish so that respondents could be interviewed in the language they preferred. In order to be able to quantify the survey results, questions on the questionnaire were structured, that is they allowed the interviewee to select from a list of predetermined answers. The last question on the questionnaire was open-ended which allowed the respondent to express any views he or she had about the police.

The process by which persons were selected for the Telephone Survey consisted of selecting telephone numbers from the current San Antonio telephone directory through the use of a list of random numbers generated by a computer. To be eligible to participate in the Survey the person called had to live in the city limits and be at least 16 years of age. The interviewers were willing to interview whomever answered the telephone as long as they met the qualifications. Prior to the beginning of the survey the City sponsored radio and television announcements notifying the community of the survey and asking those called to cooperate.

In the Survey of Groups and Organizations we gathered data from members of groups, and organizations that appeared on a list provided by the City Council. The information we gathered was usually provided by the leadership of the group or organization, or by someone with special responsibilities for police or crime prevention programs. In this survey we invited the approximately 90 groups or organizations which appeared on the list to participate in the survey. The groups and organizations which chose to participate are shown in Exhibit IV-1.

In this second Survey, we gathered information from respondents through personal interviews, telephone interviews, meetings, or a questionnaire which was mailed out. Both the questionnaire and the interviews were open-ended, that is we asked general questions so that respondents could answer the question with as much depth and detail as they wanted.

City of San Antonio

Enhancing Police Operations and Management

Participating Community Groups

C.O.P.S.
 R.O.B.B.E.D
 C.A.S.A.
 O.U.E.D.
 Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce
 Southside San Antonio Chamber of Commerce
 Alamo City Chamber of Commerce
 Downtown Incorporated
 Centro 21
 G.I. Forum
 St. Ann's Parish Council
 Alazan-Apache Courts Resident Association
 Victoria Courts Resident Association
 Lincoln Heights Courts Resident Association
 Spring View Apartments Resident Association
 Victoria Plaza Resident Association
 Fair Avenue Apartments Resident Association
 Kenwood North Resident Association
 Wesley Community Centers
 Mexican-American Business and Professional
 Women's Club of San Antonio
 Good Samaritan Center
 Mahncke Park Neighborhood Association
 Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education
 Centro Del Barrio, Inc.
 Oak Park Northwood-Northwood Neighborhood Association
 South Texas Association for Minorities Progress
 Big Brothers and Sisters
 United Citizens Project Planning and Operating Corporation
 Senior Citizen Services Incorporated
 Women's Shelter of Bexar County, Incorporated
 St. John's Senior Center
 Goodwill Rehabilitation Service
 Tobin Hill Neighborhood Association
 Mission Road Developmental Center
 Family Services Association
 Halfway House of San Antonio, Inc.
 San Antonio Neighborhood Youth Organization
 Bexar County Mental Health Mental Retardation Center

(b) Survey Findings

The findings of the two surveys indicated that generally citizens of San Antonio are supportive of their Police Department. Other general survey findings about San Antonio citizens were the following:

- They are very interested in the quality and quantity of police services they receive
- They have a desire to have a high quality police force
- They are committed to provide the resources required to improve the Department
- They are concerned that some of the problems they perceive are not being resolved.

While there was general consensus throughout the community regarding the perceptions about and attitudes toward the San Antonio Police, Blacks and Mexican-Americans identified some problems which the rest of the community did not identify. These differences will be discussed in the paragraphs which follow.

The findings reported here include both the results of the Telephone Survey and the Survey of Groups and Organizations. The findings of the Telephone Survey are reported in the percentages of respondents choosing particular answers to some specific question. The percentages have been standardized to adjust the sample to a representative proportion. These findings, because they are quantifiable, are precise but not comprehensive. In contrast, the findings of the Survey of Groups and Organizations give an in-depth view of the attitudes and perceptions that some segments of the community have; however, this view cannot be measured. In reporting the results of the latter Survey, we have attempted to indicate the extent to which a particular view or attitude was reflected or the frequency with which comments were made. In reporting the findings of the Telephone Survey, differences in the responses of Blacks and Hispanics are noted only when they have a statistically reliable margin, that is, differences unlikely to occur by chance.

The findings of both surveys have been integrated and organized into a number of topics. We will discuss the findings by topic in the paragraphs which follow.

• Quality of police protection/law enforcement

The findings reported in this section relate to the community's perception of how well they are protected from crime and how well laws are being enforced.

- Police department effectiveness

On the overall question of how they would rate the effectiveness of the San Antonio Police Department, 63 percent of those interviewed gave a rating of excellent or good with a greater percentage of Anglos giving this rating than Blacks or Hispanics. When asked how they compared the San Antonio Police Department with the police departments of other large cities, 33 percent said it was better, 22 percent said it was the same, and only 5 percent thought it was worse.

In the Survey of Groups and Organizations approximately 85 percent of those responding stated that they thought the Police Department was effective and that overall service was satisfactory. Some went on to qualify their answer by remarking that the Department is as effective as can be expected given the perceived problem of understaffing.

- Patrol

Insufficient patrolling was one of the problems of most concern to San Antonians. Of the citizens who were interviewed in the Telephone Survey, just over 40 percent believed that the police patrol just enough and 50 percent believed that the police do not patrol enough or never patrol. However, Hispanics indicated greater dissatisfaction with police patrolling. In the Survey of Groups and Organizations close to 100 percent of those responding stated that the police do not patrol their area or neighborhood enough. Most felt that while police cannot control or prevent crime, patrolling serves as a deterrent to criminal activities.

- Patrolling is a police activity which is looked on most favorably by citizens because of their concern about crime. In the Telephone Survey 84 percent of those responding said that they consider crime to be a serious problem.

- In the interviews many citizens agreed that it would be ideal to have a police officer who patrolled a neighborhood on foot, came to know the residents, and was a positive influence on the youth. But most of these persons were realistic enough to realize that it is not possible to achieve this ideal in neighborhoods because they are spread over such large areas. Since the downtown area is much smaller and more concentrated, the continued use of foot patrols was supported by persons interviewed. Most respondents agreed that in neighborhoods, it is sufficient to have patrol officers who get to know their patrol areas, who patrol frequently, and who can be counted on to come quickly when called on in emergency.

The downtown business groups were interested in having more foot patrols, not only in the River Walk area, but throughout the downtown. They felt that foot patrols act as a deterrent to various types of street crime and make people feel safe. The perception of downtown San Antonio as a safe place to be a night is important in revitalizing the downtown area.

One of the perceptions which was reported consistently was that one reason that there was not sufficient patrolling is that the patrol areas are too large for too few officers making it impossible for an officer to come by frequently. Another perception which was reported by a few persons was that police patrols are not deployed equitably throughout the City. Some residents of the older sections of San Antonio felt that as the City grows north, police officers are pulled from their sections and deployed to the newer areas. In contrast, it is perceived by some that the area north of Loop 410 does not get their proportional share of police patrols because they are deployed to the older sections where the crime rate is higher.

The residents of public housing projects explained that they are in dire need of patrolling because of the high crime rate in the projects, but that they are not getting enough. They said that officers patrol around the project, but do not ride through the projects where their presence is badly

needed. Like residents in other sections of the City, they feel safer when police are close by and thus they want to see more officers around.

A complaint that was made frequently by the respondents in both surveys was that too often police officers congregate at restaurants and coffee shops in groups for long periods of time instead of being out patrolling their areas. The residents felt that this social activity of police officers only makes the problem of insufficient patrolling worse. They very much want officers out doing the job that they are paid to do -- to be out patrolling so they can be visible in the neighborhoods and thus can be deterrents to crime.

- Response time

Closely related to the problem of police patrol is the problem of response time. The response of those surveyed by telephone indicated that approximately 55 percent were satisfied with the promptness of the police responding to calls. However, Hispanics indicated a greater percentage of dissatisfaction with police response time. Most of those in the Survey of Groups and Organizations complained that the response time when police are called is too long, and a few complained that at times the police must be called more than once or that at times they do not come at all. The residents indicated that they understand that the reason that response time is long is that the patrol areas are too large. That means that officers have to drive a long way to answer a call and that the calls may back up because there may be more calls than the assigned officers can handle promptly.

- Law enforcement

When asked how satisfied they were with the way San Antonio police were carrying out law enforcement activities, those interviewed in the Telephone Survey responded as follows: Approximately 75 percent were satisfied with the job they are doing in enforcing traffic laws, about 64 percent were satisfied with the enforcement of laws involving crime, and 60 percent were satisfied with the amount of crime investigation. However, Blacks indicated greater dissatisfaction with the

way of police enforce laws involving crime. In the Group and Organization Survey, several respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the enforcement of crime related laws. They felt that the police do not apprehend enough criminals and that they do not recover stolen articles frequently enough. A community leader who was interviewed had been burglarized twice recently and had found that there was little if any interest in or effort to follow through with an investigation.

• Quality of community police relations

In the paragraphs which follow we report the findings related to San Antonio residents' perceptions of the quality of community-police relations.

- Evaluation of community-police relations

Of the respondents in the Telephone Survey, 51 percent reported that they consider the relationship between the San Antonio Police Department and the residents of San Antonio to be good or excellent, 26 percent thought it was fair, and 11 percent thought it to be low or bad. Interestingly, the Anglo responses were more positive than the Black and Hispanic responses. In this same Survey, 92 percent of those interviewed agreed that San Antonio Police deserve the respect of the San Antonio community.

In the Survey of Groups and Organizations the perception of the police-community relationship varied. Of those responding many referred to the relationship their particular organizations had with the police. Of these, most reported that their organization had an excellent, ideal, or positive rapport with the Police Department. Several interviewees or respondents referred to the relationship of the police with the larger community to which they relate. These persons perceived that the relationship is less than ideal and that improvements are needed.

- Quality of police assistance

Of those interviewed by telephone, 83 percent were satisfied with the assistance the police give the public and 90 percent said they would have confidence in calling the police if they needed assistance and that they

believed they would do what they could to help them. However, Blacks reported a lower percentage of satisfaction with the way police provide assistance to the public and a greater percentage of Blacks indicated lack of confidence in calling the police.

Among those interviewed in the Groups and Organizations Survey, two persons indicated that it was their perception that there were some residents in their communities who feared the police and would be afraid to call them. This view was the exception since most persons interviewed in both surveys said that they and/or their communities want more police involvement and more positive personnel interaction with the police.

Police attitudes toward and treatment of residents

In the Telephone Survey 57 percent of the respondents agreed that San Antonio Police treat all residents equally, 65 percent agreed that police officers treat all residents fairly, and 67 percent agreed that police officers treat residents courteously. Although, among Blacks and Hispanics, a greater percentage did not believe that all residents are treated equally, and a greater percentage of Hispanics indicated they believe that all residents are not treated fairly and courteously.

Of the 968 residents interviewed, 476 had had contact with the San Antonio Police in the last two years, and of these 84 percent said the police had conducted themselves in a professional manner, 86 percent said the officer was courteous, and 85 percent said that the officer had explained himself clearly enough so that all the people present were able to understand what he was going to do. There were 188 respondents who stated that they had received a traffic ticket from a San Antonio Police Officer within the last two years. Of these 61 percent said that the officer explained what they should do in order to handle the ticket.

The respondents to the Telephone Survey were also asked if they had relatives or friends who were police officers. There were 104 (10.7 percent) who reported they have police officer relatives, and 340 (35.2 percent) respondents said they have friends who are police officers. This high number of interviewees who know police officers in their

personal lives must be taken into account when interpreting the responses to the questions discussed above. The data in this Survey does not distinguish whether the contact that respondents had with police was official or personal. Therefore, it would not be reasonable to conclude that the responses given to the questions on the officer's professional manner, courtesy, and clarity in explaining themselves referred to a police officer in his official role or function. It is likely that in some cases the respondents were referring to the officers in an official role and in other cases respondents were thinking of officers they know personally when answering those particular questions.

In the Survey of Groups and Organizations there was a clear indication that many members of the Black and Mexican American communities of San Antonio perceive that the police do not understand their culture, have negative stereotypes of their culture, and act harshly toward members of these ethnic groups. The interviewees explained that not all Blacks and Mexican Americans are treated this way, but that members of these ethnic groups who live in poverty or in improvised conditions, and who have no power, are treated harshly. One specific example which was cited in at least seven interviews with Black or Mexican American groups was that the police use excessive force when arresting a poor, ethnic person, going far beyond what is needed when arresting a person who is not resisting or what is needed in order to subdue a person who is resisting. These groups felt that law breakers need to be treated humanistically as guaranteed by law. It was mentioned also by at least ten groups that overall, in the improvised areas the police treat persons without respect. Some persons responding in the open ended questionnaire said that police should not bring race into every arrest and that police use a double standard of justice in dealing with the community.

The residents of the public housing complained that the police are abusive and harsh in treating persons that live in these projects.

A problem which was identified by persons interviewed from a least 12 groups or organizations was stereotyping. These persons said that a very serious problem of the San Antonio Police Department is that officers have stereotypes of Blacks, Mexican-Americans, poor people, and teenagers. The respondents said that they believe that it is these stereotypes which lead to the harsh and insensitive treatment that these groups of people receive from the police.

Another problem that was identified was that because officers do not understand the ethnic groups, they are fearful and therefore overreact or act defensively. Some said that it is their perception that police get emotional and too involved in conflicts. They said that because being a police officer is stressful and because they do not know how to handle the stress, they take it out on those around them.

The complaint process

Several persons interviewed in the Survey of Groups and Organizations said that making complaints about police officers is an intimidating experience for residents. It was reported that some people in the community, usually those who are poor, not knowledgeable and skillful in dealing with bureaucracies, and who are likely to be victims or witnesses of police misbehavior are fearful of making complaints because the Internal Affairs Section requires so much information from them, including a notarized statement. They fear that the police will get their names and "get back at them" later. Because they feel they have no protection in making complaints, they are reluctant to do so. They also feel that making complaints is useless because there is no follow through. They feel the officers are not disciplined about misbehavior in the community because no one cares how police treat the people.

Accessibility of channels of communication

A problem which several groups identified is the way the Department handles crisis situations and the community's lack of access to channels of communications to the Department. Some of

these interviewed complained that instead of honestly admitting that police sometimes make errors in using their judgment, that the Department leadership tries to cover up their mistakes. They felt that the Department takes the position that they are never wrong and that the community never has reason to be dissatisfied with the way an incident is handled.

A related problem which exists is that there are no channels of communications to the department leadership available to some segments of the community. When these persons are not satisfied with something the police are doing routinely or with the way a crisis situation was handled, there is no acceptable way for these citizens, usually poor Blacks or Mexican Americans, to make their views known or to feel like they are being heard. Others from these groups said that as a result of the one-way communication from the Department, they feel disenfranchised, helpless, and angry. Others said they want some way to keep informed about department polices and procedures.

Those responding to the Survey of Groups and Organizations made several suggestions regarding ways to open communications. The suggestions made include establishing a citizen liaison committee to handle the interface between the community and the Department and establishing a special citizen task force to handle crisis situations. Several groups volunteered to serve on these committees or to appoint citizens to be representatives on these committees.

Community relations programs

The findings in the Survey of Groups and Organizations indicated that the community has a strong interest in having community relations programs. Almost 100 percent of the respondents in that Survey expressed a need for programs that open communications and increase understanding between the community and the Police Department. The survey respondents commented on and shared ideas about the kinds of community relation activities needed in the community. Examples follow:

- We need community relations programs which are more than giving toys at Christmas.
- We need police presence in the community; we need police to relate to groups and to network together.
- We want police to be involved directly with the people in the community in a positive way: police shouldn't wait until they have to arrest someone.
- We want outreach everywhere, but particularly in high crime areas.
- We want the police to talk to schools and organizations; we want them to work closely with our organization.
- We want police to be involved with all segments of the population, not just the law breakers.
- We want to exchange ideas and information with the police.
- We want the police to take an interest in the good things our agency is accomplishing.
- We want the police to have a positive influence on the young people and to be models for them.
- We want the police to have more communications with, comprehension of, and community activities with the poor.
- We want more positive police involvement in the barrio.
- Community relations should be a continuing project, not just a way of handling crisis.

These comments describe the types of community relations programs and activities that will begin to build a two-way channel of communication between the Police Department and the individuals, groups and organizations in San Antonio.

Overall, the community wants police officers to be out in the community getting to know and understand the people, the conditions under which they live, and the stresses which are part of their lives. The community wants police officers to come to their group meetings, to the schools, and to be seen in business places. They said that while police are frequently seen in restaurants, generally they are there in groups and talk only to one another instead of using the time to get to know the other people who are around.

Crime prevention programs

In the Telephone Survey approximately half of those interviewed said that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the way the Police Department is providing crime prevention programs. The respondents in the Survey of Groups and Organizations said that they want more crime prevention programs such as Neighborhood Watch. The members of at least one group said they realize that the police alone cannot prevent crime, so they would be willing to get involved with the police to do crime prevention activities in their own area. They felt that the crime problem has gotten so out of hand that the police need to use community resources such as their group to assist in protecting the community.

Police department's employment and management practices

The findings reported in this section are related to the community's perception regarding the police department's employment and management practices.

Quantity of police officers

The issue about which there was the most agreement and consensus in the community was that there are an insufficient number of police officers to do the job in San Antonio and that there is a dire need to hire more officers as quickly as possible. Of those interviewed in the Telephone Survey two-thirds agreed that there are not enough officers in San Antonio. Of those interviewed in the Survey of Groups and Organizations almost all expressed concerns about the insufficient number of officers. Some considered the problem to be of crisis proportion given both the growth of crime and the growth of population.

Many of those interviewed could not understand why sufficient police are not hired and expressed frustration with city officials for not resolving the problem.

Those interviewed said they want more police hired in order to resolve the problems of having police spread so thinly over such large areas, to lessen the burden and stress of officers already employed; and to have police more readily available to answer calls.

- Quality of police officers

The issue of the quality of police officers was one about which those interviewed had many and strong opinions. Overall, those interviewed want high quality, professional level officers. The characteristics that were associated with high quality were many, such as having a balanced personality, being college educated, having high intelligence, understanding cultural differences, having no prejudice against Blacks and Chicanos, having been reared in South Texas, being able to communicate well, being emotionally stable, knowing or willing to learn Spanish, having sense of community responsibility, being sensitive, and being honest. These characteristics describe the types of persons that the community wants to see on their police force.

The respondents expressed the view that since so many officers need to be hired that it is a good time to bring the high quality type person onto the police force so that police service and police treatment of residents can be improved and so that police discipline problems can be reduced.

There were many opinions expressed about whether a police officer should be required to have a college degree. Approximately three-fourths of those interviewed in the Survey of Groups and Organizations said that having college educated police is very desirable. When questioned about whether such a requirement would work to eliminate minorities, most expressed the opinion that it would not because there are sufficient college graduates of all ethnic groups and of both sexes. Since most of the

respondents were not confident that college graduates would be hired, they said that the Police Department should require two years of college or at the very minimum a number of college courses in psychology and sociology.

- Employment of minorities

Of those interviewed in the Telephone Survey 60 percent believed that the San Antonio Police Department employs a sufficient number of persons of the ethnic groups found in San Antonio. One-third of those interviewed believed that the proportion of police officers of different ethnic groups should be changed and 69 percent believed that the San Antonio Police Department attempts to hire police officers of all ethnic groups. In contrast to the overall response, Blacks reported a much greater dissatisfaction with the hiring patterns of the Police Department. This was not the case with Hispanics.

The findings of the Groups and Organizations Survey supported the findings of the Telephone Survey. The respondents of the former Survey elaborated on the minority hiring issue with many supporting the idea that the Police Department should have an adequate representation of females, Mexican Americans, and Blacks on the force. Respondents representing groups from the Black community expressed concern about the insufficient number of Black officers; respondents representing the Hispanic community did not express that concern about the number of Hispanic officers.

The persons that discussed this issue explained that they did not mean that they wanted persons of any group to be hired if they were not qualified. There was consensus among those interviewed that the most important quality an officer should have regardless of his ethnicity or color is a humane attitude. Assuming there are humane persons in all groups, they felt that an effort should be made to hire adequate numbers of minorities and women.

In the interviews several respondents representing Black and Mexican American groups complained that the majority of the minorities in the Department are at the lower ranks and that there is not a sufficient

representation of minorities in the higher ranks that make up the power structure of the Department. Some expressed the view that since there is such a large percentage of Mexican Americans in San Antonio, that having a Mexican American Police Chief would go a long way in promoting positive police-community relations.

Training

The training police officers receive or should receive was of concern to most of those responding to the Survey of Groups and Organizations. As we discussed in the subsection on the Quality of Officers, many respondents want police officers to have a college degree; to have at least two years of college; or at the minimum, to have some college courses in sociology or psychology, when they are recruited. These respondents want the Department to have some educational standard beyond high school so that those officers who are not up to that standard can be required to take college courses. This view is based on the assumption that college education is instrumental in making a person a better officer.

In addition to formal education the respondents expressed the view that police cadets should get as much training as possible in working with people. They said cadets should receive classes aimed at understanding aggression, rage, and violence; at understanding social relations and human behavior; at understanding how to deal with people humanely and how to use sound judgment in emergencies; and at understanding the cultures and lifestyles of the people with which they will be dealing.

Additionally, most respondents said that officers should have continuing in-service training throughout their careers to help them deal with the stresses they face daily and to keep them from becoming insensitive in the way they treat people.

Working conditions

In both surveys the interviewees indicated sensitivity to the stresses of police work and supportiveness to improvement of working conditions. When asked if they thought police officers were paid enough, only 15 percent of those interviewed in the Telephone Survey said that they thought they were and 56

percent said that police do not get paid enough. Sixty-nine percent said that they would be willing to have more tax dollars allocated to the Police Department, although Blacks reported less willingness to do so.

In the Survey of Groups and Organizations almost all of the respondents agreed that the City of San Antonio should increase the pay of police officers. The respondents explained that a community cannot expect to have a quality police force if they are not paid adequately because they will not be able to attract and recruit quality candidates, because they will not be able to retain the quality officers that they presently have, and because morale is higher and persons are more committed to producing quality work when they are paid adequately.

A related view which was expressed was that increased pay would mean that more qualified cadets could be hired so that the police force could be up to authorized strength. This would mean that service could be improved, and that the present officers would have a reduced work load. This in turn, would reduce stress and improve work conditions generally.

Management

Most persons responding to the Survey of Groups and Organizations reported that they could not comment on police supervision because they had no awareness of this aspect of the police force. A few persons interviewed commented that they were dissatisfied with present police management. One person believed that police management is politically influenced in deciding on priorities. Two other respondents commented that the Chief seems to be working for the City Manager, that he should be supportive of both the Police Department and the community, and that he should speak honestly, stress accountability, and treat officers with respect.

5. POLICE EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES

As a part of this study, a confidential questionnaire was provided to all police department employees. Responses were received from 106 civilians (40 percent) of total civilian employees and 688 sworn officers (62 percent) of total sworn personnel. Presented in the following paragraphs are our major conclusions.

(a) Morale

Less than ten percent of total respondents reported morale on the overall department as good or excellent and approximately 60 percent reported overall department morale as low or bad. Thirty-nine percent reported morale in their unit as good or excellent and only 26 percent reported unit morale as low or bad. We interpret these results as reflecting a perception that morale is much lower than it actually is. Despite this factor, we believe the expressed level of morale should be of concern and has been influenced by the following conditions:

- Officers do not believe they are supported by the city administration or City Council.
- Many officers are concerned about the quality and effectiveness of leadership on the Department.
- Little formal attention is given to individual officer's career or personal goals.

(b) Leadership

Only 17 percent of the respondents characterized management as good or excellent, while 41 percent rated department management as low or bad. Supervision on the department was characterized somewhat higher (41 percent good or excellent and 35 percent low or bad). Fifty-eight percent of respondents characterized supervision within their unit of assignment as good or excellent.

These results should be of concern to departmental managers. In our judgment, the relatively low confidence expressed in management stems from the following conditions:

- There is a communications gap between management and operational level personnel.

- Many officers feel disciplinary practices are not consistently or uniformly applied. Sixty-eight percent of all respondents believe the system for selecting personnel for special assignments is not fair. Sixty-five percent of all respondents reported this belief.
- The management processes in the Department are weak. This condition is discussed in the management chapter of this report.
- The system for promotion to managerial positions is inadequate. Written tests and seniority have been the sole criteria used for promotion. As a result, employees who are good at taking tests are those promoted to managerial positions. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents reported this condition.

(c) Opportunity

Sixty-three percent of all respondents indicated there were too few opportunities for advancement on the Department. This condition, coupled with concerns about the fairness of the promotional system and the method for selecting personnel for special assignments presents a significant problem which may effect morale, productivity, effectiveness, and attitudes.

In this report we have made recommendations designed to facilitate career growth and improve promotional and selection procedures for special assignments. Although implementation of these recommendations will improve conditions, it should be recognized that on any police department promotional opportunities will be limited.

(d) Training

Although only 18 percent of all respondents characterized entry level training as low or bad, 34 percent gave low ratings for supervisory training, and 42 percent rated advanced and management training as low or bad. These results reflect the inattention the Department has given to training beyond the entry level.

(e) Effectiveness

Coordination between patrol and investigative units of the Department was characterized as low or bad by 42 percent of the respondents; however, patrol, investigative and overall police department effectiveness received relatively high marks. This, we believe, demonstrates a certain degree of pride in the Department and in departmental activities.

(f) Relationships

A majority of the members of the Department characterized the relationship between the San Antonio Police Department and the city administration and elected officials as low to bad (53 percent with respect to the city administration and 58 percent for elected officials). This condition may relate to the fact that our survey was conducted shortly after collective bargaining was completed and that officers do not feel they received support from either group.

Relationships with community groups were rated as fair, good, or excellent, with no unusually low or bad characterizations. We did find, however, that Black officers indicated relationships with the Black community somewhat lower than did other officers. Interestingly, Hispanic officers' responses were almost identical to those of Anglo officers with respect to community relationships.

(g) Equipment

With the exception of vehicles, which were given low or bad ratings by 37 percent of the respondents, the quality of equipment used for operational activities was rated high. We believe the low ratings for vehicles reflects concerns about maintenance levels and concern that vehicles available for police work today are not as powerful as those available in past years.

(h) Staffing

Seventy-five percent of the respondents reported the patrol function was understaffed, a result that is consistent with the results of our analysis of patrol operations. Forty-nine percent of the respondents indicated the investigative functions were understaffed. Only in the area of traffic did respondents indicate staffing levels were about right or overstaffed; 50 percent of all respondents reported this condition.

(i) General Comments

The confidential questionnaire contained an open-ended question for general comments. The majority of written comments were critical of management on the Department. Many officers took the time to prepare lengthy type-written responses and, taken collectively, many of the problems presented in this report were pointed out in these officers' responses.

(j) Summary

The percent of officers and employees who completed the confidential questionnaire was considerably higher than we normally find in large police departments. This fact, plus the number and nature of written narrative responses, causes us to believe there is a high level of concern about conditions on the Department, and a disposition for affecting improvements and change.

END