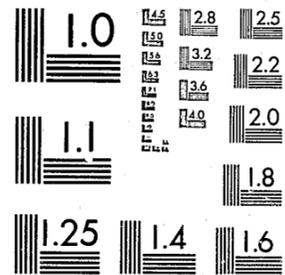


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National Institute of Justice  
United States Department of Justice  
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3/1/84

# ACCREDITATION PROGRAM BOOK



October, 1983

926460

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for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc.\*

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# ACCREDITATION PROGRAM BOOK

92646

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October, 1983

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\*As of October 3, 1983.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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## PREFACE

This *Accreditation Program Book* is one of four major publications prepared by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (hereafter, the Commission).

The *Accreditation Program Book* is the principal source of information about the law enforcement accreditation program. Major emphasis is devoted to the accreditation process—from the time that an agency applies for accreditation until it is accredited. Post-accreditation activities are described, including the process of reaccreditation. The *Accreditation Program Book* is designed to provide information not only for law enforcement agencies that are involved in the accreditation program but also for those that may be interested in eventually applying for accreditation.

The Commission's other three major publications focus on the standards and two important parts of the accreditation process.

- The *Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies* (the Commission's Standards Manual) is the Commission's principal publication. More than 940 standards have been prepared by the four major law enforcement executive membership associations, the

- International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP);
- National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE);
- National Sheriffs' Association (NSA); and the
- Police Executive Research Forum (PERF).

The completed standards were then presented to the Commission, which reviewed each standard at quarterly meetings held in many parts of the country. Following a field review of the standards in several hundred law enforcement agencies, the standards were adopted by the Commission in April, 1983.

- The *Self-assessment Manual* is intended as an agency guide to a most important aspect of the accreditation process—the agency's self-assessment. The *Self-assessment Manual* is intended for two audiences: first, for the agency's accreditation manager, as he or she manages the program and provides orientation and training for other agency personnel; and second, for agency personnel who may be asked to undertake assignments with little or no knowledge about the nature and scope of the accreditation program—including the standards and the process.

- The *Assessor's Manual* is designed as a guide for Commission assessors who are assigned to confirm, during an on-site assessment, whether an agency is in compliance with standards that are applicable to that agency. (Although a major Commission publication, the *Assessor's Manual*, is not available for general distribution; it is provided to assessors during training and is retained by them as a guide for their on-site assessment activities.)

A final note: An *Accreditation Program Overview* is also available from the Commission. This brief description of the program provides general information about: the background of law enforcement accreditation; the Commission and the Commissioners; goals, objectives, and policies of the Commission; the standards; the accreditation process; the benefits of accreditation; costs of accreditation; eligibility for accreditation; who may apply; and how to apply. Single copies of the *Overview* are available from the Commission without charge; multiple copies may be ordered at a nominal charge from:

Accreditation Program Overview  
Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc.  
4242B Chain Bridge Road  
Fairfax, Virginia 22030

or you may call (703) 352-4225

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**CHAPTER I**

**BACKGROUND AND BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT ACCREDITATION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION**

This introductory chapter is intended to cover a wide range of topics: accreditation generally; law enforcement accreditation in particular; objectives, organization, and operation of the Commission; and a listing of the contents of this publication.

**A. Accreditation Generally—Uniquely American.**

The accreditation concept has been described as unique to the United States, emphasizing as it does a voluntary, self-motivated approach by which organizations seek to achieve, objectively verify, and maintain high quality in their operations through periodic evaluations conducted by an independent, nongovernmental body that has established standards for its "clientele."

This approach is a direct outgrowth of the concern by the nation's founders about the possibility of a too powerful central government and of the concrete expression of that concern in the first ten Amendments. The Tenth Amendment, for example, gave the states "general powers" and the federal government "limited powers." The Tenth Amendment also reserved general powers to the citizens of the states. Given this climate, voluntary enterprise (in contrast to private enterprise and government) flourished and performs many functions on which Americans have come to depend—not the least of which is accreditation.

The accreditation movement had its origins in this country when the New York State Regents were established in 1787. The mission of the Regents was to determine whether colleges in New York State met minimum standards; legislation required the Regents to visit and review annually the work of every college in the state and to submit a report to the legislature.

From education, accreditation spread to other settings, such as hospitals (because medical schools wanted a way to ensure that their interns would be provided with a good learning environment). Since the early 1950s, accreditation has extended to many more disciplines and professions. For example, accreditation spread to criminal justice agencies with the establishment of the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections (CAC) in 1974.

In simple terms, "to accredit" means to recognize or vouch for an agency or institution as conforming to a body of standards related to a specific discipline—in this instance law enforcement.

Perhaps the best and most complete definition of accreditation is noted in Fred F. Harclerod's *Accreditation: History, Process, and Problems*.<sup>1</sup> Harclerod reports that, "In 1980, after six intense years as COPA's [Council on Postsecondary Accreditation] first president, Kenneth E. Young proposed that 'voluntary accreditation' should be defined in terms of a *concept*, a *process*, and a *status*." (Emphasis added.)

Young's three-part definition of accreditation (quoted on page 12 of Harclerod's book):

... a *concept*... unique to the United States by which institutions of postsecondary education or professional associations form voluntary, non-governmental organizations to encourage and assist institutions in the evaluation and improvement of their educational quality and to publicly acknowledge those institutions, or units within institutions, that meet or exceed commonly agreed to minimum expectations of educational quality.

... a *process* by which an institution of postsecondary education formally evaluates its educational activities, in whole or in part, and seeks an independent

judgment that it substantially achieves its own objectives and is generally equal in quality to comparable institutions or specialized units. Essential elements of the process are: (1) a clear statement of educational objectives, (2) a directed self-study focused on these objectives, (3) an on-site evaluation by a selected group of peers, and (4) a decision by an independent commission that the institution or specialized unit is worthy of accreditation.

... a status of affiliation given an institution or specialized unit within an institution which has gone through the accrediting process and has been judged to meet or exceed general expectations of educational quality. (Emphasis added in each paragraph.)

It is relatively simple to recast these definitions within a law enforcement context. But it is perhaps more important to point out that (1) "voluntary accreditation" is uniquely American—in most other industrialized countries, it is done at the direction of the central government; and (2) accreditation is done by a nongovernmental organization designed "to encourage and assist institutions in the evaluation and improvement of their... quality and to publicly acknowledge these institutions..."

Law enforcement accreditation has been designed and developed as a voluntary, nongovernmental concept, process, and status.

#### B. The Road to Law Enforcement Accreditation.

Early thoughts about law enforcement accreditation were expressed by those who had observed the beneficial impact of the fire rating system on the quality of the fire service and the positive effects of the old National Safety Council ratings on traffic enforcement. The Wickersham Commission report in 1929 and various authorities—such as August Vollmer (1936)<sup>2</sup> and O.W. Wilson (1950)<sup>3</sup>—who wrote on the need to improve policing also helped create an environment compatible with the notion of accreditation.

So did the many national assessments of law enforcement made since the 1960s, such as those by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, and the American Bar Association Project on Standards for Criminal Justice. The work of these groups was both a reflection of, and stimulant to, heightened public concern about crime and citizen complaints about the operation of the criminal justice system.

During this period, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) was funding many organizations and projects in an attempt to improve the nation's crime fighting ability. One such organization receiving LEAA funding was the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections, which has achieved considerable success. The work of the CAC is, in part, modeled after elements of the accreditation process in other fields, such as hospitals, higher education, etc.

Subsequently, LEAA allocated about \$1.5 million as seed money to initiate standards development and an accreditation process for law enforcement. With LEAA funding, IACP, NOBLE, NSA, and PERF proceeded to achieve this goal—in conjunction with the Commission.<sup>4</sup>

#### C. General Information About the Commission.

Since the initial LEAA grant to the four associations (and subsequent grants by LEAA's successor agency: OJARS—the Office of Justice Assistance, Research, and Statistics—of the United States Department of Justice), attention has been focused on the establishment of the Commission and on the development, approval, and testing of standards and the accreditation process.

The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies was formed in 1979 by the four associations to establish a body of standards designed to: (1) increase law enforcement agency capabilities to prevent and control crime; (2) increase agency effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of law enforcement services; (3) increase cooperation and coordination with other law enforcement agencies and with other agencies of the criminal justice system; and (4) increase citizen

and employee confidence in the goals, objectives, policies, and practices of the agency. In addition, the Commission was formed to develop an accreditation process that provides state and local law enforcement agencies an opportunity to demonstrate *voluntarily* that they meet an established set of law enforcement standards.

Whereas the recommendations of previous standards-setting efforts have not been adopted by law enforcement agencies on anything approaching a systematic basis, the Commission—as an ongoing accreditation organization—is in a position to supply a number of critical and heretofore missing ingredients that enhance the prospects of widespread acceptance of its standards.

First, the Commission can keep the standards up to date by adding new standards or changing or deleting old ones in response to new technology, new procedures, new research findings, and continued feedback from accredited agencies.

Second, realizing that not all standards are applicable to all agencies, the Commission introduces needed flexibility by identifying those standards that are not applicable to a given agency due to its size or functions performed.

Third, the Commission serves as an independent means by which agencies can verify, and receive appropriate recognition for, compliance with the standards.

Finally, with its creation and with standards originating from within the law enforcement community, the Commission is a central source and catalyst that provides appropriate encouragement and support both for agencies exploring the desirability of complying with the standards and for those actively pursuing accredited status.

Appointed by the four law enforcement associations, the Commission's 21 members include the following: eleven law enforcement professionals and ten representatives from the public and private sectors, including (at this writing) a state supreme court chief justice, state senator, county administrator, mayor, city council member, and professor, among others. The Commission reflects broad representation from state and local levels as well as from many regions of the United States.

Following its first organizational meeting in December, 1979, the Commission turned its attention to the consideration of standards drafted by the four associations. Meeting quarterly in different parts of the country, the Commission reviewed, revised, and ultimately approved 1,012 standards—addressing topics from entry-level recruit training to information systems and records. The final chapters of draft standards were approved on May 1, 1982.

During this 28-month time frame, there were organizational changes. The four associations incorporated the Commission as an independent, nonprofit corporation in October, 1980. In March, 1981, an Executive Director was employed to begin work on program implementation; since then, other staff has been employed. (See accompanying organizational chart of the Commission—Exhibit 1.1—especially the note about appointment of Commissioners.)

Following approval of the draft standards, the four associations and the Commission's staff turned their attention to a field review of standards and to the development of the accreditation process, including policies, procedures, manuals, and forms. Much of 1982 and early 1983 were taken up in field testing the standards and the accreditation process.

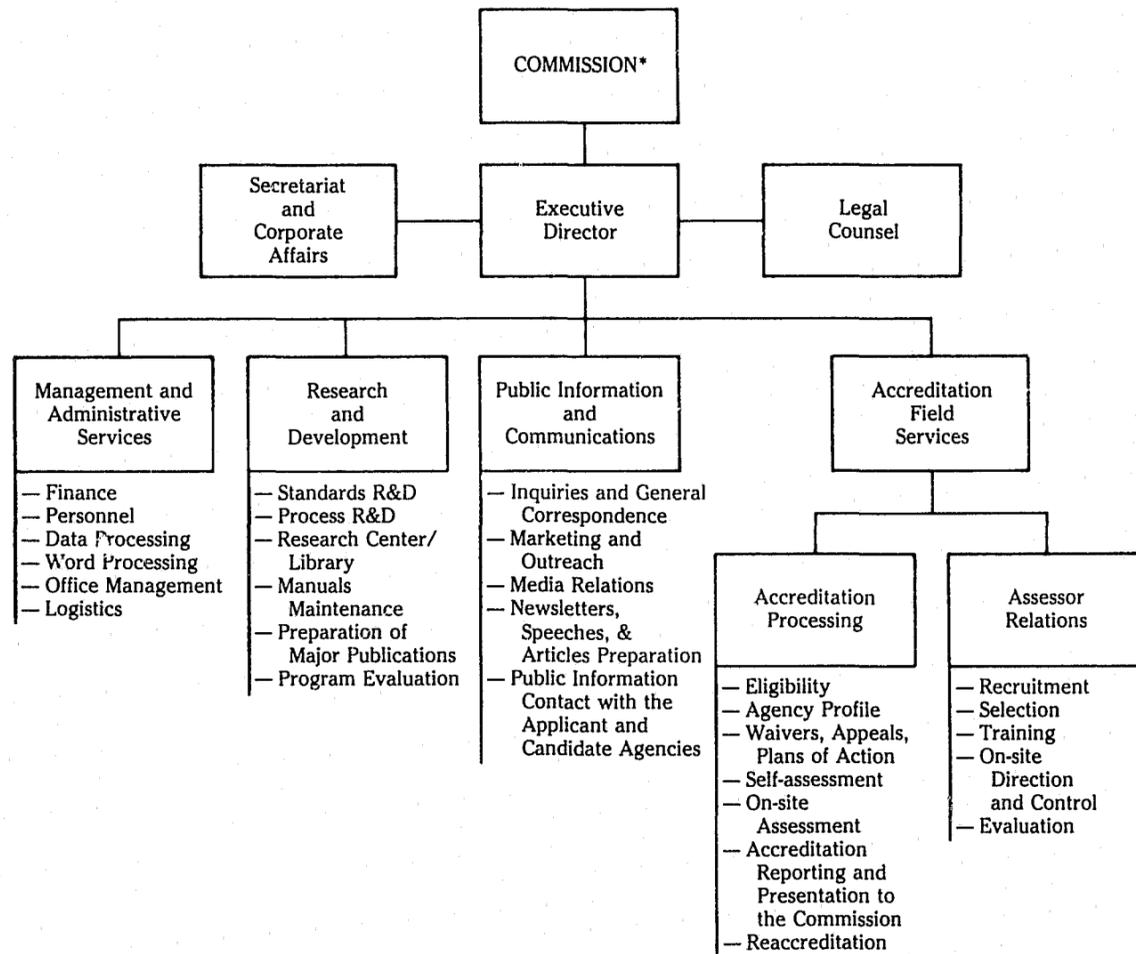
Amendments to the draft standards were approved by the Commission on April 30, 1983. The amendments reduced the number of standards from 1,012 to 944; all amendments to the standards and to the accreditation process have been incorporated into this and other Commission publications.

#### D. Contents of this Accreditation Program Book (APB).

As the "principal source of information about the law enforcement accreditation program," this book contains basic information about the Commission, the standards, and the accreditation processes—including reaccreditation.

- *The Commission.* Section C immediately above describes the work of the Commission with regard to the standards and the accreditation process. Commission members are identified on the inside front cover of all major Commission publications.
- *The Standards.* Chapter II of this APB is devoted to an exposition of the standards. All 944 standards are included in the Commission's Standards Manual. (The full title is: *Standards for*

**EXHIBIT 1.1  
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE  
COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**



\* Members of the 21-person Commission are appointed for three-year terms by the Presidents and Executive Directors of the IACP, NSA, NOBLE, and PERF; Commission Bylaws require the unanimous consent of the appointing association representatives. Of the 21 members: 11 are law enforcement practitioners and 10 are nonpractitioners.

*Law Enforcement Agencies: The Standards Manual of the Law Enforcement Accreditation Program.*)

- *The Accreditation Process.* Chapter III, provides an overview of the accreditation process with additional information about the self-assessment, the on-site assessment, and the Commission's public information policy requirements. Details of the accreditation process may be found in Appendix A—"Steps in the Accreditation Process." The steps are depicted in the form of flow charts; a narrative description is included with each flow chart. In addition to the topics mentioned above, Chapter III contains information about applying for accreditation, agency eligibility criteria, and the agency's profile questionnaire.
- *Maintaining the Agency's Accreditation Status.* Chapter IV is a discussion of "what happens after award of accreditation" in terms of agency responsibilities to report continuing compliance annually and to inform the Commission if it cannot maintain compliance with one or more mandatory standards.
- *Review and Appeal of Commission Decisions.* Chapter V outlines the review and appeal processes—what can be appealed and how to go about it.
- *Reaccreditation.* Chapter VI is concerned with reaccreditation; every five years an agency is required to undergo reaccreditation, complete with a review of its continuing compliance with applicable standards, including standards that may have been published since the agency was accredited initially. An on-site assessment by Commission assessors is also required at this time.
- *Benefits of Accreditation.* Information on the benefits of accreditation is included as Appendix B.

<sup>1</sup>Harclerod, Fred F., *Accreditation: History, Process, and Problems*. Washington, D.C., American Association for Higher Education, 1980.

<sup>2</sup>Vollmer, August, *The Police and Modern Society*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1936.

<sup>3</sup>Wilson, O.W., *Police Administration*. New York, McGraw-Hill, 1950.

<sup>4</sup>To mid-1983, federal support, totals nearly five million dollars.

## CHAPTER II THE STANDARDS

This chapter is intended to provide the reader with basic information about the standards: how they were developed; the nature and scope of the standards—format, applicability of standards, and types of standards; gaining compliance with the standards; and what the Commission has set forth as policy with regard to the standards.

### A. Standards Development.

The Commission, at its inception, defined 48 topics that the standards would address. From that point in time, one of the four associations researched each topic and drafted standards. The standards drafted by each association were submitted to the other three for their review and comment prior to submission to the Commission. Typically, standards were reviewed by committees of the Commission before presentation to the full Commission. Each standard was acted on individually; three elements were approved—the standard statement, the commentary, and levels of compliance. Following approval of the final chapters in early May, 1982, the draft standards were submitted to a field review by several hundred law enforcement agencies in the second half of 1982. The Commission approved modifications to the draft standards at its meeting in late April, 1983. The final Standards Manual<sup>5</sup> was published in August, 1983.

### B. Nature and Scope of the Standards.

#### 1. Standards Format.

Each standard is composed of three parts: the standard statement, commentary, and levels of compliance.

The *standard statement* is a declarative sentence that places a clear-cut requirement, or multiple requirements, on an agency. Many statements call for the development and implementation of a policy or procedure in the form of a rule, regulation, or written directive. Other standards require an activity, a report, a procedure, or other action.

The *commentary* is designed to explain or expand upon the standard or to provide guidance with regard to gaining compliance with the standard. (It should be noted that the commentary is *not* binding; only requirements included in the standard statement are binding on the agency.)

The third and final part of the standard is *levels of compliance*. Levels of compliance match mandatory, nonmandatory, and not applicable standards to agency size. Agencies are separated into six categories according to *total number of full-time personnel employed*:

A	1 to 9
B	10 to 24
C	25 to 49
D	50 to 199
E	200 to 999
F	1,000 and over

The level of compliance indicates whether a given standard is mandatory (M) for an agency of a given size; whether the standard is nonmandatory (O—for “other than” mandatory); or whether the standard is not applicable (N/A).

## 2. Mandatory, Nonmandatory, and Not Applicable Standards.

There are 944 standards, about 60 percent of which fall into a "mandatory" category—mandatory in the sense that all accredited agencies must comply with all mandatory standards that are applicable<sup>6</sup> to the agency. The balance of the standards are either "nonmandatory" or, in a few instances, "not applicable" to certain agencies—principally agencies with fewer than 25 members.

Agencies applying for accreditation will be expected to comply with: (1) all applicable mandatory standards, and (2) at least 80 percent of applicable nonmandatory standards. An agency is free to select the 80 percent of nonmandatory standards with which it chooses to comply.<sup>7</sup>

a. **Mandatory Standards.** In the development and categorization of standards, the Commission was guided by three basic criteria in designating a standard as "M"—i.e., mandatory:

- *Standards That Deal with Health, Life, or Safety.* Standards that fall in this category are required of all agencies regardless of size or the functions they perform.
- *Standards That Pertain to Constitutional Issues or Are Matters Covered by Applicable Law.* While it is expected that all law enforcement agencies conduct their activities in accord with constitutional dictates and applicable law, certain standards focus on specific activities agencies must perform to be in full compliance with the law. Standards in the recruitment, selection, and promotion areas fall into this category.
- *Standards That Specify Essential Operational or Administrative Policies.* Generally, standards in this area pertain to activities that are indispensable to the effective and efficient delivery of law enforcement services and/or that are directly related to professionally-accepted practices. In an operational sense, all law enforcement agencies must have mutual assistance pacts with neighboring agencies; in an administrative sense, all law enforcement agencies must maintain records centrally.

b. **Nonmandatory.** These standards are designated as "O"—for other than mandatory. Two criteria guided the Commission in designating a standard as nonmandatory:

- *Standards That Specify Desirable Practices.* Standards in this category enhance the delivery of services through the use of generally accepted practices and procedures.
- *Standards That Deal with Exemplary Activities.* Standards in this category include innovative practices, new technologies, or advanced professional concepts that achieve desirable or worthwhile objectives.

c. **Not Applicable.** Standards in this category are indicated by an "N/A"—and are those standards that have been determined as being not applicable to an agency on account of its size. For example, a standard that governs the establishment of a SWAT team would not be applicable to agencies with fewer than ten employees. As a general rule, "N/A" standards relate to smaller agencies; i.e., those in the A and B categories (fewer than 25 employees).

## 3. Levels and Degree of Compliance and Applicability of Standards.

In terms of the nature and scope of standards, three aspects should be clearly understood.

- *Levels of Compliance* match mandatory, nonmandatory, and not applicable standards to agency size (A through F) as explained above.
- *Degree of Compliance* refers to the percentage of applicable nonmandatory standards with which an agency must comply—as indicated the minimum percentage to achieve compliance is 80 percent.
- *Applicability of standards* is determined by an applicant agency's legally mandated responsibilities as well as by the functions the agency does and does not perform. If a municipal police agency does not have a holding facility, it is not bound to comply with mandatory or nonmandatory standards of the chapter on holding facilities. If a sheriff's office does not provide basic uniformed patrol services, then it is not bound by the standards in the patrol chapter. The Commission reserves the right, however, to make certain standards applicable without regard to whether the

agency currently performs the function. A municipal police department without crime analysis or crime prevention activities could not claim exemption because these activities are not being performed. Such determinations are made on the basis of a set of Commission approved "guiding principles."<sup>8</sup>

During the course of standards development, it became clear that certain stipulations would have to be formulated to govern the applicability of standards. For that reason, the guiding principles were developed. These principles are intended to explain the applicability of certain standards, clarify the intent of others, and amplify actions that assessors may take in verifying an agency's compliance with standards.

## 4. Types of Standards.

There are many different types of standards that agencies are expected to meet. The more common types of standards are discussed in this section.

a. **Written Directive Standard.** The most common type of standard is a "written directive" standard. Agencies are asked to comply with a standard and to document compliance by means of a written directive. (A written directive can take many forms: rule, regulation, general or special order, or training materials. In some instances, an ordinance, law, or statute can serve as a written directive.)

The first standard in the Standards Manual requires a written directive:

- 1.1.1 *A written directive requires the formulation, annual updating, and distribution to all personnel of written goals and objectives for the agency and for each organizational component within the agency.*

b. **Policy or Procedure Standard.** Certain standards require the existence of a policy or procedure without specifying the nature and scope of the policy or procedure. (As noted below, the standards as a whole are designed to reflect "what to"—leaving the "how to" up to the agency.) Standard 1.3.14 requires a "procedure" to review use of force by agency personnel, but it does not specify the nature or scope of the review.

- 1.3.14 *The agency has a procedure for reviewing incidents in which there is application of force through the use of a weapon by agency personnel.*

c. **Linking Standard.** There are many instances of one standard "linking" to another. For example, the procedure required in standard 1.3.14 (above) must include a report of findings to the agency's chief executive officer as follows:

- 1.3.15 *The procedures required in standard 1.3.14 include a report of findings to the agency's chief executive officer.*

d. **Standards with Multiple Requirements.** In the earliest stages of standards drafting, a limitation of one requirement was placed on any given standard. After field review and reconsideration, multiple requirements were allowed—as long as the requirements concerned a single topic. In the following standard (2.1.9), three requirements are expressed in the three "bullets" or bulleted items:

- 2.1.9 *The agency's mutual aid agreement addresses the use of outside personnel in:*
- *mass processing of arrestees;*
  - *transporting prisoners; and*
  - *operating temporary detention facilities.*

e. **"If" or Conditional Standards.** There are a number of standards that are conditional. Many of these contain the word "if" in the standard, such as in standard 2.2.1.

- 2.2.1 *If a statewide law enforcement radio system exists, the agency has access to the system by radio.*

If there is not a statewide law enforcement radio system, the standard does not apply even though it is a mandatory standard.

A similar situation is encountered in the mutual aid area. If the state does not mandate mutual aid agreements, then agencies must enter into written agreements with neighboring law enforcement agencies.

2.1.4 *In the absence of controlling legislation governing mutual aid, the agency has written agreements with neighboring law enforcement agencies to provide mutual aid in emergency situations.*

f. **Standards That Require Organizational Components and/or Staffing.** There are several standards that require a component and/or staffing. The first one to be encountered is in Chapter 14—Planning and Research.

Standards 14.1.1, 14.1.2, and 14.1.3 require respectively, (1) that larger agencies (sizes E and F) have a planning and research component; (2) that functions are established; and (3) that the component employs at least one full-time staff member. (For "D" agencies the standards are nonmandatory; for smaller agencies—A, B, C—the standards are not applicable.)

14.1.1 *The agency has a planning and research component.*

14.1.2 *A written directive establishes the functions of the planning and research component.*

14.1.3 *The agency employs at least one full-time planning and research staff member.*

g. **Standards That Require a Function.** In certain instances a standard specifies the establishment of a function. For example in the same planning and research chapter, standard 14.2.1 specifies that each agency establish a planning and research "function."

14.2.1 *A written directive establishes the agency's planning and research function.*

Inasmuch as the function (by the way of a "component") is required of sizes E and F agencies (in standard 14.1.2), this standard is aimed at A- through D-size agencies. (However, it should be noted that the above standard is nonmandatory for all agencies; therefore, the planning and research function is not mandated per se for agencies A, B, C, or D.)

h. **Other Types of Standards.** There are many other types of standards. Four have been selected for purposes of exposition: the first requires an "estimate"; the second requires maintenance of "liaison"; the third addresses organizational subdivisions (not applicable to A-size agencies); and the fourth requires a plan (also not applicable for A-size agencies). The following four standards are nonmandatory for all agencies excepting A-size agencies as noted:

2.1.5 *The mutual aid agreement includes an estimate of the amount of aid available from provider agencies.*

4.1.3 *The agency maintains liaison with local fire department officials and emergency medical services.*

11.1.2 *The organizational subdivisions within the personal span of control of the agency's chief executive officer are grouped by function.*

14.2.4 *The agency has a multiyear plan which includes the following:*

- *goals and operational objectives;*
- *anticipated workload and population trends;*
- *anticipated personnel levels; and*
- *anticipated capital improvements and equipment needs.*

### C. Gaining Compliance with the Standards.

Agencies document their achievement of compliance with the standards during the self-assessment process.<sup>9</sup> At that time, agencies must ask themselves whether they comply with *all applicable mandatory* standards. If an agency determines that it is not in compliance with a particular mandatory standard, it must take appropriate action to bring itself into compliance. If an agency is prohibited from complying by statute, case law, court order, or other compelling reasons, the Commission may entertain a request to waive a given standard. The Commission has indicated that granting waivers will be a rare event—only granted in the most exceptional circumstances.<sup>10</sup>

In the case of nonmandatory standards, if an agency finds that it is not in compliance with a particular standard, it may choose one of the following courses of action:

- Take action required to come into compliance.
- Request a waiver if compliance is prohibited, as noted immediately above.
- Take no action to come into compliance. In this case, the standard would fall outside the 80 percent of nonmandatory standards required of the agency.

When the agency's self-assessment is completed and all Commission supplied forms and logs are returned to the Commission, the Commission's staff begins a review that seeks answers to the following questions:

- Does the agency indicate that it is in compliance with all applicable mandatory standards?
- If not, is action being taken to bring it into compliance? If action is being taken to gain compliance, has the agency filed a "plan of action?" Does the plan of action indicate that compliance can be achieved within six months?
- If not, has the agency filed a waiver request? Has the request been approved or disapproved?
- Is the number of nonmandatory standards with which the agency has indicated it is not in compliance greater than 20 percent of the total number of such standards that are applicable to the agency?

To summarize, an agency gains the opportunity to have an on-site assessment by Commission assessors when it indicates that it (1) complies with all applicable mandatory standards excepting those few that may be waived and (2) complies with at least 80 percent of applicable nonmandatory standards.

### D. The Commission's View of the Standards.

The Commission's view of the standards is summarized in five policy statements:

- The standards are designed to reflect the best professional practices in each area of law enforcement management, administration, operations, and support services.
- The standards are designed to reflect "what to"—leaving the "how to" up to the agency.
- The standards are designed so that compliance is "attainable." Compliance may not be an easy matter for some agencies. The standards are not considered to be an unreasonable burden for any well-managed law enforcement agency.
- Every accreditation is also a test of the standards—as it is a test of the entire accreditation process. The Commission considers reevaluation of standards as an ongoing process.
- New or revised standards reflecting new or improved practices are developed from time to time; these standards are developed with the advice and counsel of agencies already accredited, as well as with the advice and counsel of the four participating law enforcement executive membership associations. The inclusion of new or revised standards will be an *orderly process*.

<sup>5</sup>The full title is: *Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies: The Standards Manual of the Law Enforcement Accreditation Program*. The short title used in this and other Commission publications is the Standards Manual.

<sup>6</sup>"Applicability of standards" is explained in the next section—A.3.

<sup>7</sup>Applicant agencies, however, are encouraged to comply with as many of the nonmandatory standards as possible. Over the course of time, accredited agencies are expected to increase their percentage of compliance with nonmandatory standards from this base percentage.

<sup>8</sup>The full text of the Commission's guiding principles may be found in Appendix C of the *Self-assessment Manual*.

<sup>9</sup>Self-assessment is discussed in Chapter III, Section B.

<sup>10</sup>See Step 11 in Appendix A—The Steps in the Accreditation Process.

## CHAPTER III THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The sections that comprise this chapter—together with Appendix A—spell out the details of the accreditation process:

- The first section presents the process in overview; five phases are described—from initial application to the award of accreditation. Details of the accreditation process are found in Appendix A entitled "Steps in the Accreditation Process." There, graphic and narrative descriptions of each step in the process may be found. In most of the 23 steps in the process, agency options are presented as are processing options of the Commission. Section A and Appendix A provide basic and detailed information for agencies interested in a full understanding of the process.
- The succeeding sections (B and C) highlight two of the major parts of the accreditation process—the self-assessment and the (Commission's) on-site assessment. Section D addresses the Commission's public information requirements for participating agencies.

Before a review of the "phases," two Commission policies in this regard should be highlighted. Both policies fall under a heading entitled "On Relations with Agencies Seeking Accreditation."

- The Commission's relations with agencies applying for accreditation will be nonadversarial; the Commission will be responsive to inquiries posed by applicant agencies.
- The Commission does *not* plan to render on-site technical assistance aimed at the development of plans or tasks to gain compliance with individual chapters or standards. The Commission intends to offer orientation assistance and training, if necessary, for accreditation managers and agency employees in subjects related to the standards and the accreditation process—essentially an exposition of materials already published by the Commission.

### A. The Accreditation Process—Five Phases and 23 Steps.

There are five accreditation process phases; the five phases and 23 steps are shown on Exhibit 3.2. Details of the 23 steps are shown in Appendix A.

#### 1. Application.

The accreditation process begins when an agency applies to the Commission for applicant status. The application form requires the signature of the agency's chief executive officer (and that of the agency's chief civil authority, if necessary). Once agency eligibility\* has been confirmed, the agency and the Commission sign a contract that identifies what is expected of each party. (The application process is detailed in Steps 1 through 6 of Appendix A.)

#### 2. Agency Profile Questionnaire.

The agency completes and files an Agency Profile Questionnaire (APQ), thereby providing information that the Commission uses to determine the standards with which the agency must comply. The APQ asks about agency size, mandated responsibilities, and functions performed—the primary determinants of the standards an agency must meet to be accredited. (The agency's profile questionnaire is discussed in Steps 7 and 8 of Appendix A.)

#### 3. Self-assessment.

After the Commission determines which standards an agency must comply with, those standards are sent to the agency. The agency then initiates the self-assessment process, which involves

\*Commission eligibility criteria are included in Exhibit 3.2.

examination by the agency to determine whether or not it believes that it complies with all applicable standards. "Proofs of compliance" are prepared and documentation is assembled to facilitate the on-site assessment. (Self-assessment is detailed in Steps 9 through 14 of Appendix A, additional information about self-assessment can be found in Section B, below).

#### **4. On-site Assessment.**

After the agency is satisfied that it has achieved compliance with all applicable standards, it notifies the Commission. The Commission then identifies a team of assessors, allows the candidate agency to review the team makeup to avoid conflicts of interest, and dispatches the team to the agency. The assessors examine proofs of compliance to determine if the agency complies with all applicable standards. (See Steps 15 through 20 in Appendix A; also, see additional information about this topic in Section C below.)

#### **5. Commission Review and Decision.**

The on-site assessment team submits a report to the Commission, whereupon the Commission grants full accreditation or defers accreditation status. In the case of the latter, the Commission advises the agency of the necessary steps to gain accreditation. (See Steps 21 through 23 of Appendix A.)

It is important to note that inasmuch as accreditation is *voluntary*, an agency may withdraw at any step along the way. In addition, the agency can ask for a time extension at any step, except at the application stage.

Although timing is not noted in the steps, an agency is expected to return the Agency Profile Questionnaire (Step 8) in one month; the agency is expected to complete its self-assessment (Steps 10 through 13) within six months; Plans of Action (Steps 11 and 12) may require up to an additional six months to complete. Commission policies in this regard are as follows:

- The Commission encourages agencies to become accredited in a reasonable period of time—within one year from the time of application.
- The Commission will suspend accreditation activities for any agency not making a good faith effort to gain compliance within a reasonable period of time.

### **B. Self-assessment.**

As noted in the Preface, the agency's self-assessment is a most important aspect of the accreditation process. Self-assessment has two basic purposes: (1) to establish proofs of compliance with applicable standards; and (2) to facilitate the on-site review by the Commission's assessors.

Self-assessment provides an opportunity for an agency to conduct a review of its organization, management, operations, and administrative activities to determine if it believes it meets the requirements of applicable standards. A systematic approach identifies the requirements of all applicable standards and determines how compliance can be verified. It also reveals those areas in which the agency does not meet the requirements of the standards—and provides some guidance about what can be done to meet the requirement and verify compliance.

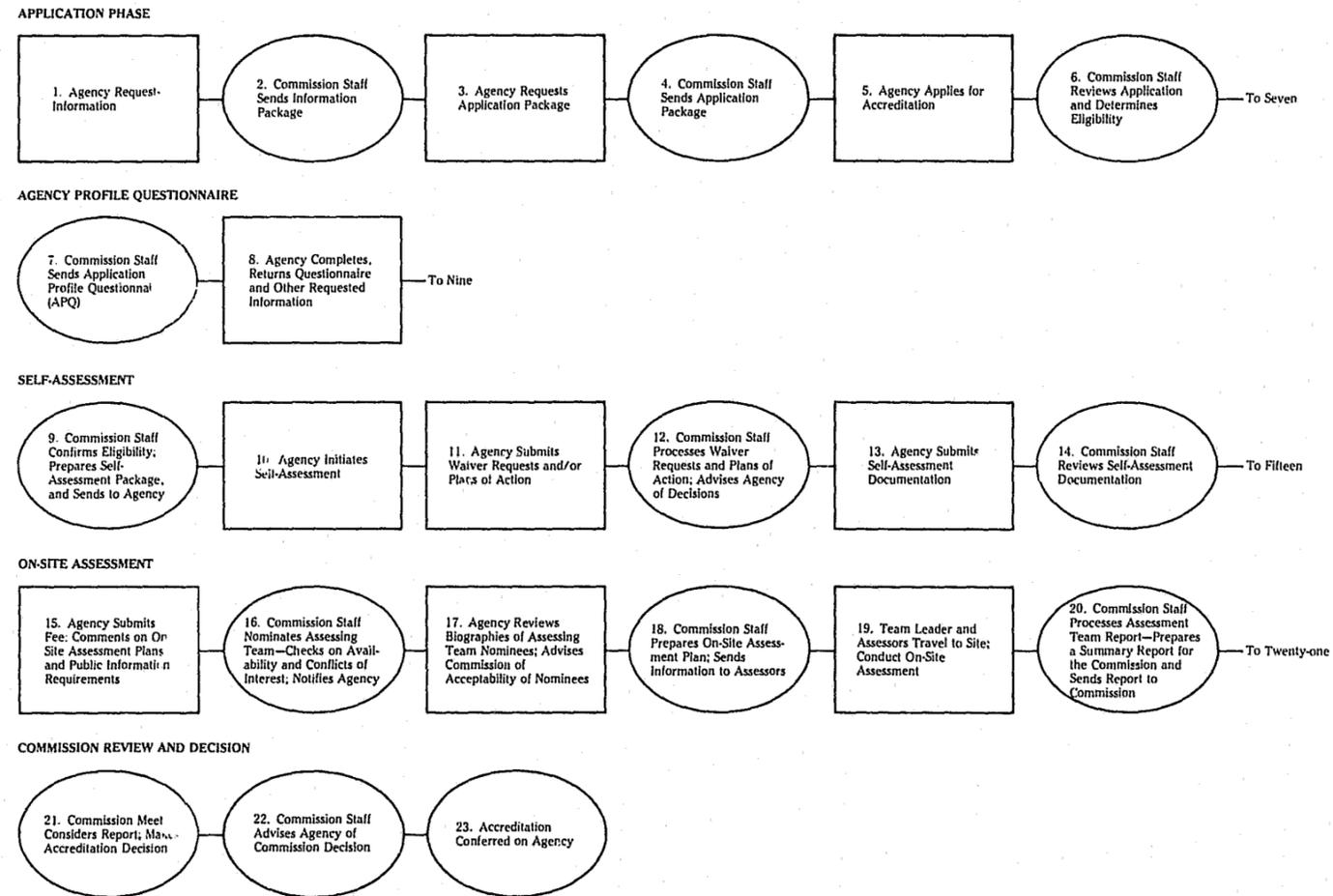
#### **1. Steps in the Self-assessment Process.**

The Commission does not specify how an agency conducts its self-assessment, although it does require two forms<sup>11</sup> to be used. A typical self-assessment might include the following steps, including Commission actions immediately preceding the process:

- The Commission reviews the agency's profile questionnaire and selects the standards applicable to the agency.
- A list of applicable standards is sent to the agency, along with the *Self-assessment Manual* and a supply of forms.
- The agency receives the self-assessment package, confirms that all items are received, and develops its own plans to conduct the self-assessment.
- The agency's plans to conduct the self-assessment are communicated to all agency personnel; training is held for personnel who will participate in the self-assessment.
- The agency establishes a master file that contains a copy of the standard, the Individual Standard Status Report (ISSR), Self-assessment Log, and proof or proofs of compliance or references to those proofs.

EXHIBIT 3.1

THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS IN OVERVIEW: FIVE PHASES AND 23 STEPS



## EXHIBIT 3.2

### COMMISSION-APPROVED ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Law enforcement agencies that are eligible to apply for and to become accredited through participation in the accreditation program are defined as: (1) those whose eligibility is derived from legal authority; and (2) those whose eligibility is verified by the Commission. More specifically, eligible law enforcement agencies are defined as:

1. A legally-constituted governmental entity having mandated responsibilities to enforce laws and having personnel with general or special law enforcement powers. Examples of these powers include:

- State police
- State highway patrol
- State departments of law enforcement
- County law enforcement agencies
- Sheriffs' departments and offices
- Municipal law enforcement agencies
- Specialized law enforcement agencies (e.g., university, transit, port authority, park, fish and game, housing, etc.)

2. Agencies providing law enforcement services whose eligibility is verified by the Commission.

- Agency personnel initiate the self-assessment process utilizing the forms and procedures outlined in the Commission's *Self-assessment Manual*.
- Waiver requests and/or plans of action are submitted to the Commission over the signature of the agency's chief executive officer.
- The agency's chief executive officer reviews the completed self-assessment report and signs each Self-assessment Log. Originals of all required documents are assembled; when all requirements are fulfilled, the package is sent to the Commission with an indication that the agency is in full compliance and is ready for the Commission's on-site assessment.

The Commission's staff reviews submissions and initiates further contact with the agency to develop the Commission assessment schedule and/or seek additional information or clarification, if necessary. (Decisions of the Commission's staff are subject to review and appeal to the Commission if an agency does not agree with a decision. Reviews and appeals are discussed in Chapter V.)

#### 2. Products or Outcomes of Self-assessment.

There are three anticipated products—or outcomes—of the self-assessment; they are:

- *Package for Transmittal to the Commission.* This package includes a letter of transmittal from the agency's chief executive officer together with: (1) completed Self-assessment Logs for each applicable chapter and/or subchapter of the *Standards Manual*; (2) completed ISSRs<sup>12</sup> for all applicable standards; and (3) supporting documentation, if deemed necessary by the agency's accreditation manager.<sup>13</sup>
- *Agency Master File.* The agency's master file is organized by chapter and/or subchapter beginning with the first chapter. The file includes a copy of the Self-assessment Log together with associated ISSRs. Supporting documents (written directives, etc.) must be either included with the ISSRs, if feasible, or references made to their location (such as in policy manuals or in rules and regulations).
- *Agency Waiver Requests/Plans of Action File.* The agency maintains a separate file of correspondence with the Commission relating to waiver requests. As approvals are

received, the file is reduced accordingly; if rejections are received, reviews are requested and/or appeals are filed or work undertaken to gain compliance. If a plan of action to gain compliance is prepared and forwarded, this too would be filed therein. In other words, this file is used to retain correspondence relating to waiver requests or plans of action during the process of self-assessment.<sup>14</sup>

#### C. On-site Assessment.

Once the self-assessment is completed by the agency and reviewed by the Commission's staff, and the agency has indicated it believes it is in compliance with all applicable standards, the Commission's staff and the applicant agency develop a schedule for the on-site visit. The Commission's staff then chooses assessors who are qualified to assess the candidate agency in question and who are not subject to conflicts of interest. The applicant agency has an opportunity to review biographical data on the selected assessors and is directed to notify the Commission's staff, within ten days, if the agency believes a conflict of interest exists. Questions regarding a conflict of interest are addressed by the Commission's staff.

When the Commission's staff and the applicant agency complete all arrangements concerning the on-site visit and preparations, the assessors are provided with the *On-site Document*, which contains schedules and materials for the on-site assessment and the materials necessary for the completion of previsit activities. Previsit activities include the review of agency background materials that may come from (1) the agency's profile questionnaire; (2) information the agency has supplied to the Commission; (3) published newspaper articles; (4) agency documents and publications; or (5) other sources. Also, assessors review the agency's self-assessment to see how the agency indicated its compliance with standards and what listing of documents consisting of proofs of compliance the agency has compiled.

Prior to beginning the on-site assessment, the assessment team leader and the assessors meet as a team. At this time, the team leader determines the division of assessment responsibilities and establishes a schedule for the review of written documentation as well as a preliminary schedule for on-site interviews, observations, and the public information session.<sup>15</sup>

On the first morning of the assessment, the assessment team meets with the agency's chief executive officer, the agency's accreditation manager, and other agency personnel as determined by the agency's chief executive officer to discuss the nature and scope of the on-site assessment activities and to confirm interview and observation schedules. Following this initial meeting, the assessment team tours the agency's facilities. After the agency tour, the team leader conducts a public information session open to the community, agency employees, the press, and other interested individuals.<sup>16</sup> The session is intended to hear comments concerning agency policies or procedures that bear upon the Commission's consideration of the agency's accreditation—that is, the agency's compliance or noncompliance with applicable standards.

Immediately following the agency tour, the assessors begin the first stage in verifying agency compliance with standards. The agency provides the assessment team with all primary and secondary proofs of compliance, a place to work, and other materials necessary for this task.

During the review of written documentation, as well as during the entire on-site visit, daily meetings are held between the assessment team leader and the agency's accreditation manager to discuss the progress of, the findings to date, and any problems with the assessment. If it is discovered that the indicated documentation does not prove compliance, the agency's accreditation manager is notified of the problem and may receive *suggestions* from the team leader on how to solve the problem. The agency's accreditation manager must then gather written documentation or arrange interviews or observations by the time the assessment team nears the completion of its review of compliance. (However, these proofs of compliance must already have been in existence, i.e. pre-existing, when the on-site assessment began.)

Upon completing review of initial written documentation, the assessment team focuses on interviews and observation as proofs of compliance, and reviews additional material gathered by the agency's accreditation manager at the request of the assessors. Assessors record their findings on the self-assessment form, notify the agency's accreditation manager of any problems associated with the proofs of compliance, and suggest a time frame by which additional proofs, including documentation, may be submitted to the assessing team.

Prior to leaving an agency, the assessment team meets with the agency's chief executive officer, the accreditation manager, and other agency staff that the agency's chief executive officer deems important to the outcome. During this summation conference, the assessment team presents the agency with a verbal summary of its findings, including the results of the review of written documentation and the conduct of interviews and observations. When completed, a copy of the assessor's report to the Commission on the summation conference is provided to the candidate agency's chief executive officer.

#### D. Public Information Requirements.

An important aspect of the law enforcement accreditation program is its public information requirements. The Commission's public information policy<sup>17</sup> addresses those public information requirements each agency must meet to be accredited and those requirements that the Commission assumes with regard to agencies participating in the program. Highlights of the policy include the following elements:

##### 1. Confidentiality.

The Commission observes a strict policy of confidentiality on information received from an agency during the accreditation process. Results are not released by the Commission without the prior consent of the agency's chief executive officer. The Commission will, however, confirm whether a specific agency is accredited as well as the effective date and terms of award for that accreditation.

##### 2. Public Input.

It is the policy of the Commission to encourage public input, comment, and involvement at all levels of the program. The public is invited to attend Commission meetings. The Commission encourages public comments on (a) proposed changes to the standards, (b) changes in the accreditation procedures or policies, and (c) the candidacy of individual agencies.

##### 3. Applicant and Candidate Agencies.

The Commission distinguishes between agencies in the accreditation process before and after the agency's self-assessment is approved by the Commission. Before the self-assessment is approved, the agency is considered an "applicant" for accreditation. Following approval of the self-assessment, the agency becomes a "candidate" for accreditation.

a. **Applicant Agencies.** There are no specific public information requirements for applicant agencies *per se*. Applicant agencies are *not* required to announce (1) their application for accreditation; (2) their self-assessment activities; or (3) their withdrawal from the program, if that should occur.

b. **Candidate Agencies.** There are several public information requirements applicable to candidate agencies—again, those agencies that complete their self-assessment and receive Commission approval. A candidate agency must:

- Make a public announcement of its candidacy for accreditation through the media in its service area;
- Maintain a file, available to the public, containing a list of standards applicable to the agency, the contract with the Commission, name of the accreditation program manager for the agency, self-assessment report, and the agency's accreditation certificate, if accredited;
- Post public notices of the assessors' projected on-site assessment schedule; and
- Participate in a public information session, if there are interested persons from the agency's service area or agency employees who wish to be heard.

##### 4. The Public Information Session.

One of the requirements for candidate agencies is to conduct a public information session, if interest exists, during the assessors' visit. The purpose of this session is to provide the opportunity to hear comments from the general public and agency employees regarding the agency's compliance with the standards for accreditation.

Thirty-day public notice of the session is required. The notices advise those wishing to speak that they must request to do so in writing to the Commission at least seven working days prior to the arrival of the assessing team.

Comments must only pertain to agency policies and/or procedures bearing on Commission consideration of an accreditation application. The session *does not* consider other matters. The session is conducted by the assessment team leader, and each oral statement is limited to no more than ten minutes.

<sup>11</sup>The Commission provides a supply of both forms as part of the accreditation process.

<sup>12</sup>The two Commission-mandated forms are the Self-assessment Log and the ISSR—the Individual Standard Status Report.

<sup>13</sup>The agency is not required to submit proofs of compliance (orders, manuals, rules, etc.); the assessing team examines proofs in the course of its on-site assessment.

<sup>14</sup>Waivers and plans of action are discussed in Steps 12 and 12 of Appendix A.

<sup>15</sup>See Section D.4 below.

<sup>16</sup>The public information session may be scheduled on the first or second day, and it could be scheduled during the day or in the evening.

<sup>17</sup>The full text of the Commission's Public Information Policy is available from the Commission.

## CHAPTER IV

### MAINTAINING THE AGENCY'S ACCREDITATION STATUS

[A *Commission Note*: At this writing (August, 1983), the Commission is nearly one year away from awarding accreditation to an agency. Therefore, the policies and procedures in this section are preliminary.]

[The Commission expects to enter into a partnership with accredited agencies; the Commission plans to provide information about exemplary programs and projects and information about new standards. At the same time, it is expected that accredited agencies will increase their degree of compliance from 80 percent for applicable nonmandatory standards to a higher percentage.]

[Once accreditation is awarded to an agency, the Commission requires that an agency file a "Memorandum of Noncompliance" whenever it is aware that it cannot maintain compliance with an applicable mandatory standard. In addition, the Commission requires that agencies file a brief annual report. The purpose and scope of the memorandum and the annual report are spelled out below.]

[These requirements are detailed within the context of accreditation as a *voluntary* program. Agencies may withdraw at any step in the process, including after award of accreditation or before reaccreditation. The following policies and procedures are presented with full recognition of the *voluntary* nature of the program.]

This chapter addresses three post-accreditation topics: (A) What is Expected of Accredited Agencies; (B) Agency Reporting Requirements; and (C) Dealing with Violations of Commission Policies or Procedures.

#### A. What Is Expected of Accredited Agencies?

In response to that question, the Commission has said the following:

- Simply stated, accredited agencies are expected to maintain their compliance with those standards under which they were accredited.
- Accredited agencies will be expected to file an annual report that testifies to continuing compliance; every five years accredited agencies will be reaccredited—which includes an on-site assessment by Commission assessors.

In Chapter II, two other "expectations" were noted:

- Accredited agencies are expected to come into compliance with more of the applicable nonmandatory standards, thereby increasing their degree of compliance from 80 percent to a higher percentage.
- With respect to *new* standards . . . accredited agencies will be expected to come into compliance with new mandatory and nonmandatory standards at the time of reaccreditation.

#### B. Reporting Requirements.

At the time of accreditation, agencies are required, as a condition of accreditation, to adhere to certain conditions throughout the five-year period of award. Two of these conditions include reporting requirements.

##### 1. Memorandum of Noncompliance.

If an accredited agency is aware that it cannot maintain compliance with an applicable mandatory standard, the agency is required to report that fact to the Commission, within 30 days, in

an informal memorandum of noncompliance—a report from the agency's chief executive officer to the Commission.

The memorandum should include, at a minimum, the standard number, short title, reason for noncompliance, and what the agency can or cannot do with regard to regaining compliance. If it is impossible to regain compliance, the Commission should be advised of the reason or reasons. If it is possible to regain compliance, the agency should file a document similar in purpose and scope to a plan of action.

Upon receipt of the memorandum, the Commission's staff ensures that the matter is fully explained and documented and that the agency's position is clearly stated. Once all details are known, a report is prepared for and presented to the Commission for consideration at its next meeting.

## 2. Annual Report.

Annually, on the anniversary of its accreditation award, an agency is required to report on major developments that may affect accreditation. Included would be such items as:

- increases or decreases in the total number of agency personnel (that, e.g., may change an agency's size category—A, B, C, etc.);
- factors that have affected compliance with standards and/or delivery of major services; e.g., newly enacted legislation, a newly negotiated collective bargaining agreement, a court order, among others;
- progress toward raising the degree of compliance (upward from the 80 percent level); and
- new projects and programs that deserve the Commission's attention as candidates for exemplary status.

## C. Dealing with Violations of Commission Policies and Procedures.

The Commission has *not* addressed the matter of agencies found in violation of Commission policies and procedures.

If such violations are encountered, they will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. When, or if, a body of precedents is established, Commission policies will be developed and published as part of a revised version of the *Accreditation Program Book*.

## CHAPTER V

### PROCEDURES FOR THE REVIEW AND APPEAL OF COMMISSION DECISIONS

Despite plans to enter into a partnership with applicant, candidate, and accredited agencies and a desire to make the accreditation process nonadversarial, there may be times when an agency disagrees with a decision made by the Commission's staff or by the Commission itself. Therefore, participating agencies may ask that a decision be reviewed; if the review does not elicit a decision to the agency's liking, an appeal may be instituted.

*Black's Law Dictionary* makes the following point about an "appeal" as opposed to a "review."<sup>18</sup>

The fundamental difference between an "appeal" and an action to "review" is that in the case of *appeal*, the tribunal by which the first determination was made is not a party to the proceeding to appeal, while, in an action to *review*, the tribunal which made the determination is a party to the proceeding to review. (Emphasis added.)

This chapter outlines review and appeal policies and procedures applicable to decisions made by the Commission's staff and those made by the Commission.

#### A. Review and Appeal of Commission Staff Decisions.

Inasmuch as the Commission meets only three or four times per year, the Commission's staff is required to make decisions on a number of matters that regularly come to its attention. However, it should be noted that staff decisions are always *conditional*. They are conditional to the findings of the assessing teams's on-site assessment report. They are also conditional to the appeal process whereby agencies may appeal to the Commission for relief from a staff (conditional) decision.

Certain decisions are reserved for the Commission; they are discussed in Section B, below.

##### 1. Commission Staff Decision Areas.

The Commission's staff may make many decisions in the course of an accreditation, but it is anticipated that requests for reviews and appeals will be prompted by decisions in one of five areas:

- agency eligibility;
- selection of standards with which an agency must comply;
- certain waiver requests;
- adequacy of an agency's self-assessment documentation; or
- findings in the Commission's on-site assessment report—the "Assessors' Report."

a. **Agency Eligibility.** The criteria for eligibility are outlined in Exhibit 3.2. It is anticipated that eligibility will be obvious and automatic for a vast majority of agencies. However, some few agencies may be indicated as ineligible. If an agency is judged ineligible, it can initiate a review and, later, an appeal.

Until a body of precedents is established, it is anticipated that most of the eligibility review submissions will be presented to the Commission for its consideration and decision.

b. **Selection of Standards.** As described in Chapter III, an agency is provided a list of standards with which it must comply based on its size and the functions it performs (and in some cases functions that it should be performing). Standards selection is made on the basis of information provided by the agency at the time it prepares its Agency Profile Questionnaire (APQ). If an agency believes that it has been provided standards concerning a function or activity that it does not perform and is not required to perform, and wishes redress from the Commission's staff, then it should request a review.

c. **Waiver Request.** On occasion, an agency may request that a particular standard, or group of standards, which it otherwise would be required to meet, be waived for reasons that it sees as valid and in consonance with established Commission policy. It is anticipated that most waiver requests will be referred to the Commission during the first year or two—until a body of precedents is firmly established in many areas.

d. **Adequacy of the Agency's Self-assessment Documentation.** Before the on-site assessment can be scheduled, the Commission's staff must certify that the self-assessment documentation is complete for every applicable standard. If staff determines that the self-assessment documentation does not meet requirements, then a review may be instituted until the matter is resolved.

e. **Commission On-site Assessment Report.** The product of the on-site assessment will be a report of findings about agency compliance with applicable standards. During the process of the on-site assessment, it is expected that agency officials are made aware of the assessors' findings, to a large extent. If the agency feels that the assessing team's findings, with regard to specific standards are in error, it may file for a review of those findings.

## 2. Review Procedures.

a. **Agency Initiation of the Review.** Staff decisions are based on information supplied by participating agencies as well as information supplied by assessors. The application form, the Agency Profile Questionnaire, waiver request, the self-assessment documentation, and the report by assessors are the principal information transmittal documents. In all cases, judgments are formulated and decisions made after a thorough review of all available information. Therefore, a request for review should be accompanied by new or additional information and/or clarification of information previously supplied that have a bearing on the matter for which the review is being requested.

Generally, the agency initiates a review by preparing a letter addressed to the Executive Director over the signature of the agency's chief executive officer. The letter should state the nature and scope of the review, giving reference to correspondence from the Commission advising of its decision.

The body of the letter, or attachments thereto, should address the following seven items:

- agency identification (name, address, identification numbers);
- statement of the problem (identification of the decision or decisions to be reviewed);
- synopsis of information previously submitted;
- clarification or expansion of information previously submitted;
- new or additional information not previously submitted;
- other facts bearing on the problem; and
- action requested of the Commission's staff.

b. **Commission Staff Actions.** Upon receipt of the request for a review, the Commission's staff assembles all existing correspondence together with the newly received letter. A review of the situation is made on the basis of the new or additional information supplied. If the review is "positive"—i.e., staff finds for the agency—a letter is drafted for the Executive Director's signature and the matter closed, subject to the on-site assessment and confirmation by the Commission.

If the finding is negative, staff prepares a report outlining the reason or reasons for the negative finding. As appropriate, previous Commission actions or decisions on similar matters are cited as part of the brief. For all negative findings, a staff committee meets to consider the matter before it is sent to the Executive Director for review. If the Executive Director concurs, a letter is sent advising the agency of the results of the review. An attachment to the letter outlines instructions for filing an appeal.

## 3. Appeal Procedures.

Appeal procedures are very simple. The agency may turn its review request around for submission to the Commission with or without additional information. A cover letter addressed to the Commission will suffice to place the matter before the Commission. Action by staff is also viewed as

minimal inasmuch as its position is a matter of record and in writing. Once the Commission has met and made its decision, the agency is notified as soon after the meeting as possible.

## B. Review and Appeal of Commission Decisions.

### 1. Commission Decision Areas.

It is anticipated that Commission decision areas—apart from matters generated from the preceding five staff decision areas—involve:

- the Commission's deferral of accreditation; and
- the Commission's suspension or revocation of accreditation.

a. **Deferral of Accreditation.** If the Commission decides to defer accreditation, an agency may ask for a review of that decision or subsequently appeal the decision.

b. **Suspension or Revocation of Accreditation.** The Commission has the authority to review the status of an accredited agency with respect to its certification. If the Commission decides to suspend or revoke accreditation, the agency may wish to seek a review of the action.

### 2. Review Procedures.

a. **Agency Initiation of the Review.** An agency seeking a review of a Commission decision should follow the procedures in Section A.2.a above, in terms of drafting a letter that includes all particulars.

b. **Commission Review.** Once the request for review is received, the Commission's staff undertakes a full file review of information regarding the agency and the subject matter of the review. Reports regarding the issue, including any precedents, are assembled. Transcripts of the minutes of the Commission are supplied as well as recommendations of the staff and legal counsel, if appropriate.

The matter is presented to the Commission at its next regularly scheduled meeting, which may be attended by agency representatives. Agency representatives will be allowed to address the Commission, if arrangements are made in advance, about the number of spokespersons and approximate time requirements.

Following the Commission meeting, staff advises the agency by letter of the decision and the reasons therefor.

### 3. Commission Appeals.

It is the intent of the Commission to refer appeals to a voluntary arbitration authority acceptable to both parties. This may be a single arbitrator from a body such as the American Arbitration Association or it may be a panel of three—one chosen by each side and a third person chosen by the first two.

All costs incident to voluntary arbitration are borne jointly by the two parties.

In summary, it is anticipated that the review and appeal procedures outlined above will *not* play a prominent part in the accreditation process. The policies and procedures described ensure that (1) Commission decisions are taken after due regard and deliberation and (2) the agency's interests and views are part of the process—at each stage and at all times.

<sup>18</sup>Black's Law Dictionary, Revised Fourth Edition (St. Paul, West Publishing Company, 1968) p. 124.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PROCESS OF REACCREDITATION

[A *Commission Note*: At this writing (August, 1983), the Commission is over five years away from the time that an agency will apply for reaccreditation. Therefore, the policies and procedures set forth in this section are preliminary. For this reason, reaccreditation policies and procedures are outlined briefly in this first edition of the *Accreditation Program Book*. Future editions will address this topic in more depth.]

#### A. Reaccreditation Policies.

There are several existing policies that bear on reaccreditation.

*First*, accreditation is for a five-year period; therefore, an agency should aim at achieving reaccreditation on or before its fifth anniversary of accreditation. The process should get underway sometime after the fourth anniversary and be completed on or before the fifth.

*Second*, to maintain accreditation during the five years, an agency is expected to remain in compliance with those standards under which accreditation was awarded. To gain reaccreditation, an agency is expected to come into compliance with new, applicable mandatory standards; an agency is also expected to increase its degree of compliance with nonmandatory standards from 80 percent to a higher percentage.

With respect to new standards, and especially new, mandatory standards, the Commission has established the following policy:

New or revised standards reflecting new or improved practices are developed from time to time; these standards are developed with the advice and counsel of agencies already accredited, as well as with the advice and counsel of the four participating law enforcement executive membership associations. The inclusion of new or revised standards will be an *orderly process*. Accredited agencies will be expected to come into compliance with new standards at the time of reaccreditation. (Emphasis as in the original text.)

*Third*, the reaccreditation process is expected to mirror the accreditation process in several respects. There will be (1) a contractual agreement; (2) an agreed upon set of standards with which the agency must comply; (3) a self-assessment; (4) an on-site assessment; (4) Commission consideration of the assessing team's report; (5) award or deferral of reaccreditation; and (6) upon award, an awards ceremony.

#### B. A Possible Reaccreditation Scenario.

Following execution of the reaccreditation contract, the reaccreditation process might follow the steps outlined below.

*Step 1. Commission Confirms Agency Data.* The first step is for the Commission to confirm existing data on agency size, mandated responsibilities, functions performed—and any changes thereto during the past four years. The agency's original Agency Profile Questionnaire (APQ) and subsequent annual reports should provide an adequate data base. If not, the agency is contacted via phone or letter to confirm existing data or to request new or corrected data, as necessary.

*Step 2. Commission Prepares Agency Reaccreditation Requirements.* On the basis of agency data, a requirements specification is prepared and sent to the agency. The specification includes a listing of new mandatory standards and a new, higher target for degree of compliance with nonmandatory standards (higher than 80 percent).

*Step 3. Agency Considers the Requirements Specification.* The agency is allowed up to 30 days to review and consider its reaccreditation requirements and to negotiate amendments, as appropriate.

*Step 4. Agency Confirms Requirements and Notifies the Commission.* When agreement has been reached, the agency submits a signed copy of the specifications. When received, the Commission notifies the agency to proceed with the development of a self-assessment plan.

*Step 5. Agency Prepares a Self-assessment Plan to Achieve Reaccreditation.* At a minimum, the agency defines:

- *Goals and Objectives* (what the agency plans to achieve during the course of reaccreditation).
- *A Program Plan* (how the agency plans to achieve its goals and objectives, in what order, and in what time frame).
- *Management and Staffing* (who will manage the process and who will work on the various identified tasks).
- *Financing* (how much plan fulfillment will cost and what resources will be allocated).

*Step 6. Agency Begins Work to Fulfill Plan and Submits Monthly Progress Reports.*

*Step 7. Agency Certifies that Plan Is Fulfilled—Submits Documentation to Commission.*

*Step 8. Commission Reviews Documentation and Schedules On-site Assessment.*

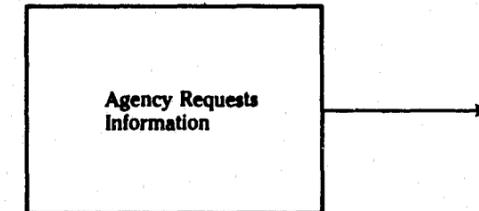
*Step 9. On-site Assessment Is Conducted.*

*Step 10. Commission Considers Assessing Team's Report.*

*Step 11. Reaccreditation Awarded.*

*Step 12. Reaccreditation Award Ceremony.*

## APPENDIX A STEPS IN THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS



### STEP ONE: THE AGENCY REQUESTS INFORMATION CONCERNING THE ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies makes information available about the accreditation program to the law enforcement community, in various ways. An agency, desiring to become an applicant for accreditation may not have access to sufficient information concerning the program. In this case, a letter addressed to the Executive Director of the Commission, or a request by telephone to his office, will elicit information about the program.

Letters should be addressed to the Executive Director at:

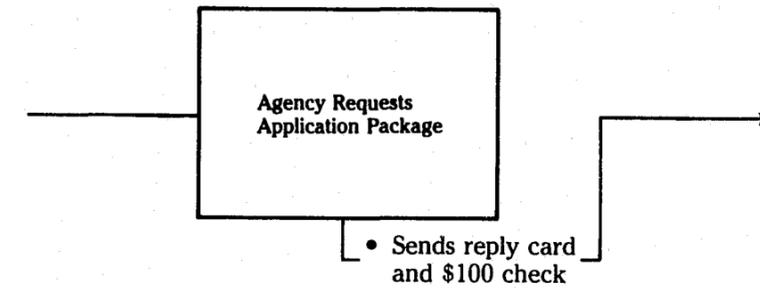
4242B Chain Bridge Road  
Fairfax, Virginia 22030  
(703) 352-4225



**STEP TWO: COMMISSION STAFF SENDS AN INFORMATION PACKAGE TO THE AGENCY**

The Commission's staff sends an information package to the requesting agency. The package contains:

- A cover letter
- An order form for obtaining Commission publications and an "application package." The order form indicates prices for all publications including the \$100 charge for the application package.
- The *Accreditation Program Overview*—a brief booklet about the Commission, the standards, the accreditation process, and the benefits of accreditation. Those agencies eligible for accreditation is also addressed.



**STEP THREE: THE AGENCY REQUESTS AN APPLICATION PACKAGE**

By returning the order form and a check for \$100, the agency thereby requests an application package.

It should be noted that the full amount of the application package fee (the \$100) will be credited to the agency's total accreditation fee mentioned below. If the agency decides not to apply for accreditation, the \$100 fee is not refundable.

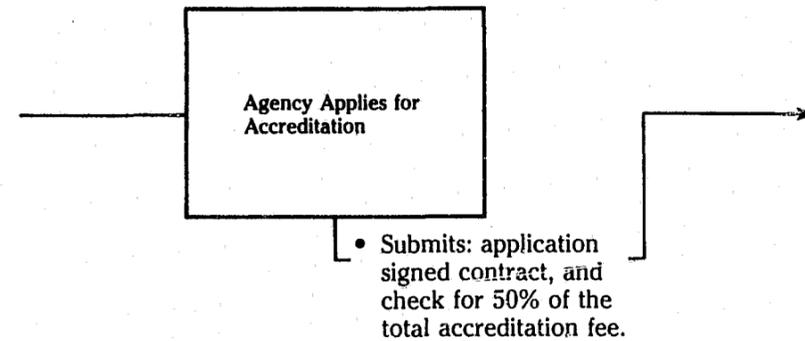


**STEP FOUR: COMMISSION STAFF SENDS AN APPLICATION PACKAGE TO THE REQUESTING AGENCY**

The application package consists of seven documents:

- A cover letter that contains: (1) descriptive information about the other six enclosures; (2) information about eligibility for accreditation—essentially, the types of law enforcement agencies that are eligible for accreditation; (3) instructions for completing the application and the contract, and (4) information about fees.
- Application Form
- Unsigned Contract
- *The Accreditation Program Book for Law Enforcement Agencies* (this document—the *APB*)
- *Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies* (the Commission's Standards Manual)
- Invoice for 50% of the accreditation fee
- Order form and price list of other program documents

The \$100 application fee also entitles the agency to a two-year subscription to the Commission's Newsletter and its innovative project bulletins.



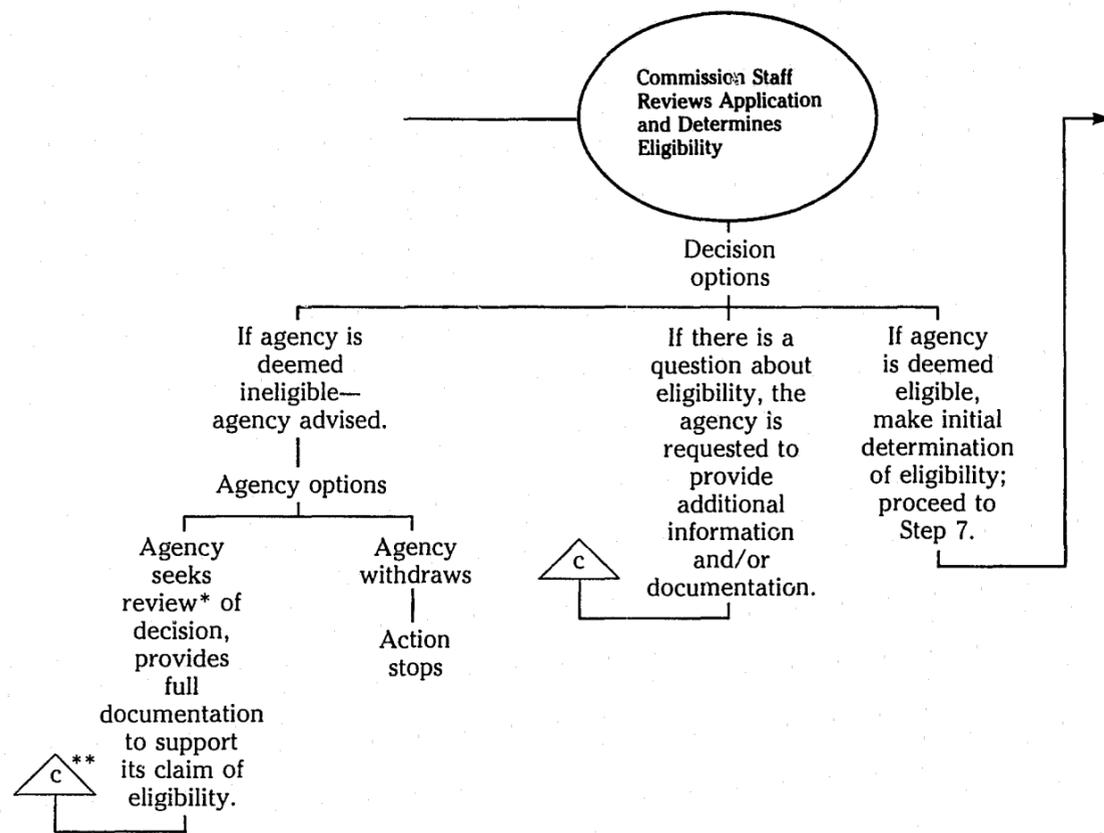
**STEP FIVE: THE AGENCY APPLIES FOR ACCREDITATION**

There are at least three major factors involved in the agency's decision to apply for accreditation. These would include: (1) whether or not the agency is eligible for accreditation; (2) whether or not the agency is able or willing to commit resources to the various required tasks; and (3) whether or not funds are available to pay the accreditation fee.

Assuming that the agency decides to apply for accreditation, it prepares and submits a formal application for consideration as an "applicant" for accreditation. One aspect of this submission is a form letter addressed to the Commission, which is signed by the agency's chief executive officer. The application assures that the criteria for eligibility are understood and that, from the judgment of the agency, the agency falls within the eligibility criteria that are specified in this *APB*.

The contract is signed by the agency's chief executive officer and by any other official required by the governmental entity within which the agency is located. Where questions arise, or where changes in the contract language are desired by the agency, a letter is sent to the Commission staff setting forth those matters in full.

The application, signed contract, and check for 50 percent of the total accreditation fee are sent to the Commission. An order form is included if additional copies of program documents are desired.



\* Review and appeal procedures are discussed in Chapter V; see especially Section A.1.a.

\*\*  $\triangle_c$  is the symbol for the "Commission"; the symbol denotes that information or documentation is sent to the Commission.

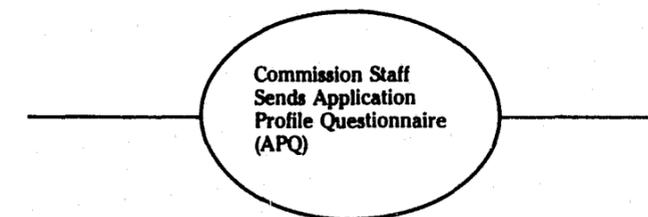
**STEP SIX: COMMISSION STAFF REVIEWS THE APPLICATION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS TO DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY**

The Commission's staff makes a preliminary determination whether or not the agency is eligible for accreditation, based on the information provided by the agency in its application. Additional information may be requested. (Final eligibility is determined during Step 9.)

If, after receiving needed information, the Commission's staff determines that the agency does not appear to be eligible, the agency is so advised and the accreditation fee is refunded. The agency may then withdraw its application or seek a review of the decision by the Commission.

If an applicant agency is considered to be eligible for candidacy, the Commission's staff proceeds to Step 7 by sending the applicant\*\* agency an "Agency Profile Questionnaire Package."

\*\* An agency is designated as an "applicant" agency until it completes the self-assessment—Step 13. When scheduled for on-site assessment, the agency is designated as a "candidate." The distinction is important only in relation to the Commission's Public Information Policy. See Chapter III, Section D.

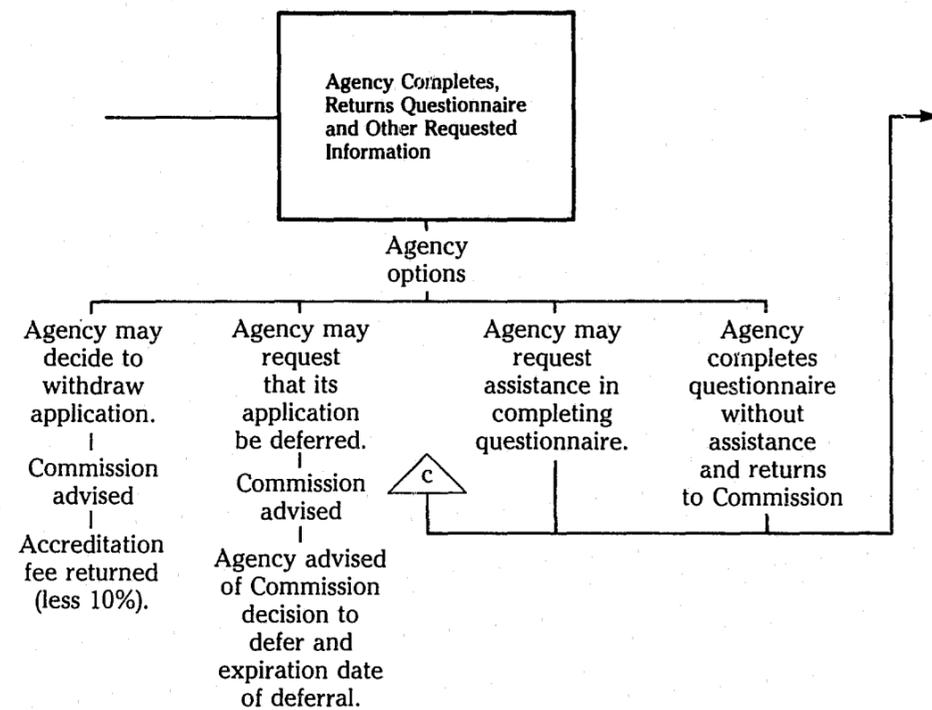


**STEP SEVEN: COMMISSION STAFF SENDS THE AGENCY PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE PACKAGE TO THE AGENCY**

The Agency Profile Questionnaire (APQ) Package is sent to agencies whose eligibility has been initially confirmed. (During Step 9, eligibility is reconfirmed once the APQ is returned.)

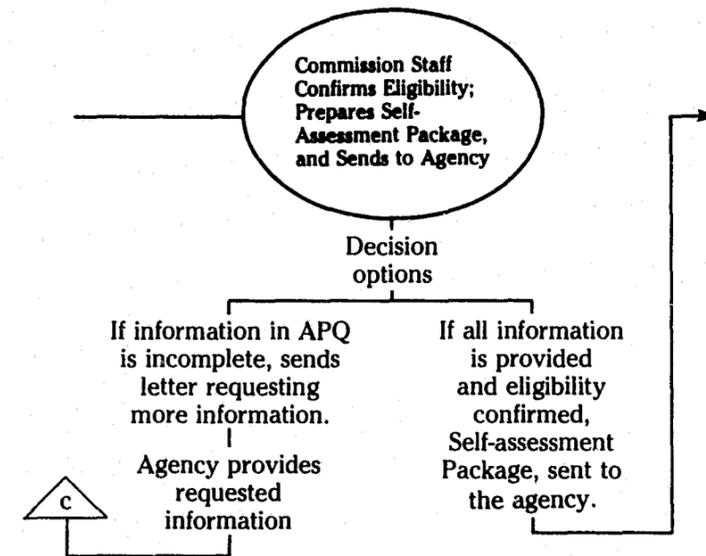
The APQ Package contains five documents:

- A cover letter that: (1) describes the content of the Package and (2) contains instructions for completing the APQ and for moving onto the next steps in the process.
- A signed copy of the executed contract, returned to the agency for its files.
- The APQ—a questionnaire designed to elicit information about the agency: its size, legally-mandated responsibilities, and the functions it performs. This information is required for two purposes: (1) to reconfirm eligibility and (2) to determine which standards are "relevant" to the agency on the basis of its size, responsibilities, and functions performed. The APQ also requests other information about the agency (its organization, management, and operations) and about the environment in which it works (population, land use, etc.).
- *Standards Manuals* and *Accreditation Program Book*: additional copies of these two Commission documents are sent to the agency—for the personal use of the agency member to be designated as the agency's "Accreditation Manager." Two copies of the standards are sent: (1) a regular bound version and (2) a loose leaf three-hole punched edition to facilitate copying and/or distribution to agency units and components.



**STEP EIGHT: THE AGENCY COMPLETES AND RETURNS THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND PROVIDES OTHER REQUESTED INFORMATION**

While instructions will be provided regarding the filling out of the questionnaire and for the development of other information that is needed, agencies may require assistance. The Commission's staff responds to the agency's requests, either by letter or telephone.



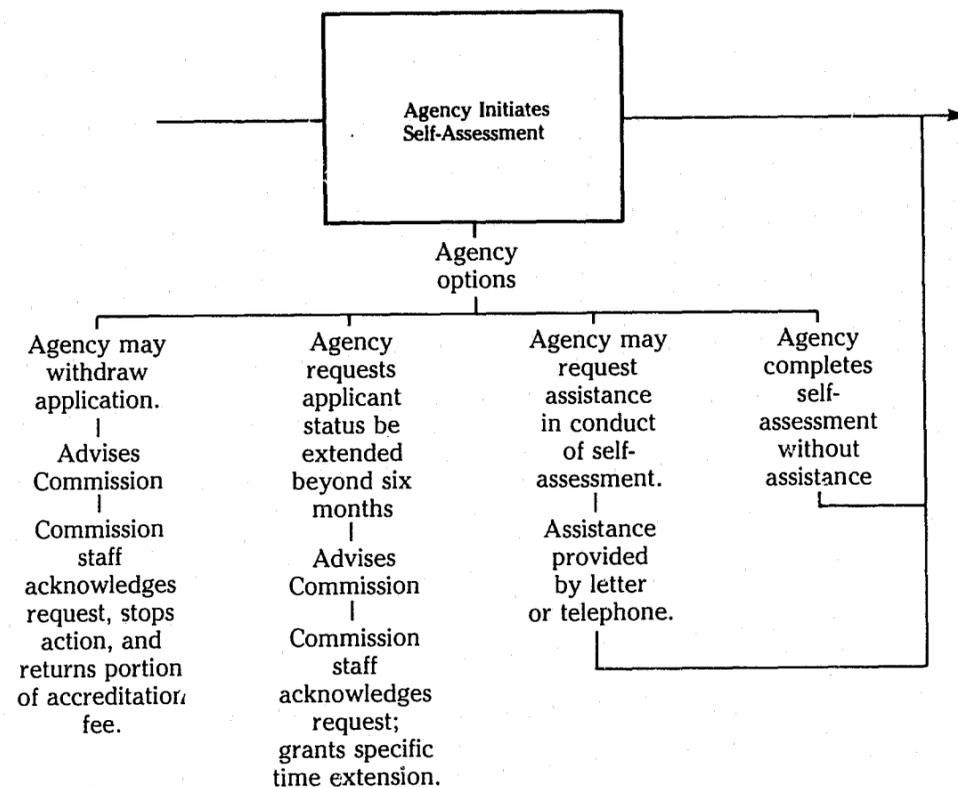
**STEP NINE: COMMISSION STAFF REVIEWS ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED, CONFIRMS ELIGIBILITY, PREPARES SELF-ASSESSMENT PACKAGE, AND SENDS THE PACKAGE TO THE AGENCY**

If, from a review of all information submitted, more data are required, this is requested in a letter to the agency. The Commission's staff withholds further processing until all requested information is received.

The Commission's staff makes a final confirmation of the eligibility of the agency. The agency is then sent four documents, which constitute the Self-assessment Package.

- A cover letter that describes the other documents in the package and explains how to proceed with the self-assessment;
- The *Self-assessment Manual for Law Enforcement Agencies*—designed to guide the agency through the self-assessment process;
- A supply of self-assessment forms; and
- An agency-specific listing of applicable standards.\*

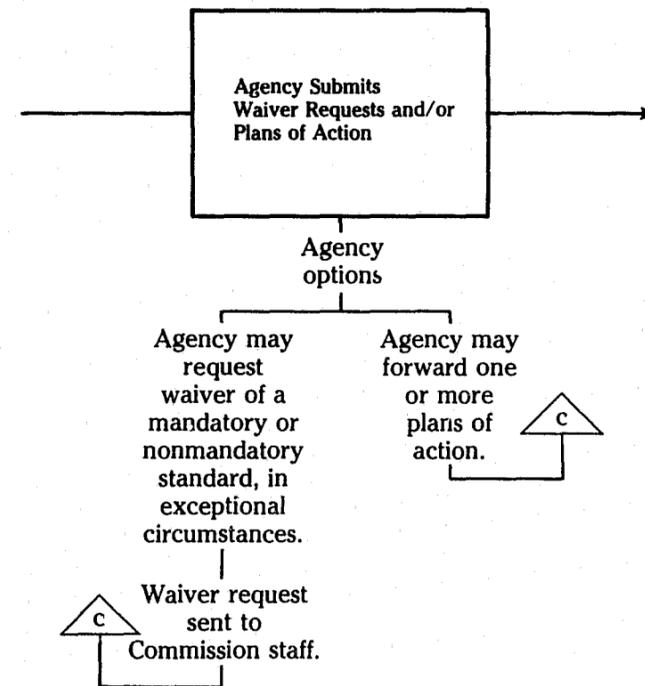
\*An agency may seek a review of the inclusion of one or more standards in the listing; see Chapter V, Section A.1.b.



**STEP TEN: THE AGENCY INITIATES THE SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

This may be the first time that the agency has an opportunity to examine itself with respect to applicable standards. This may lead to a decision to withdraw the application for accreditation, or to request a time extension for completion of the self-assessment beyond six months. In either case, the agency advises the Commission in writing regarding its decision to withdraw or to defer completion of the self-assessment to a later time. In the case of withdrawal, the Commission stops further action and refunds a portion of the accreditation fee. In the case of deferral, the Commission advises the agency how long it may defer action.

While the agency will be provided detailed instructions for conducting the self-assessment, some agencies may require assistance. This may be requested of the Commission's staff by letter or telephone.



**STEP ELEVEN: AGENCY SUBMITS WAIVER REQUESTS AND/OR PLANS OF ACTION TO THE COMMISSION**

If an agency finds that it cannot comply with a mandatory or nonmandatory standard for cause, it may request that the standard be waived. The *Self-assessment Manual (SAM)* has this to say about Waivers (Chapter III, Section B.4.b):

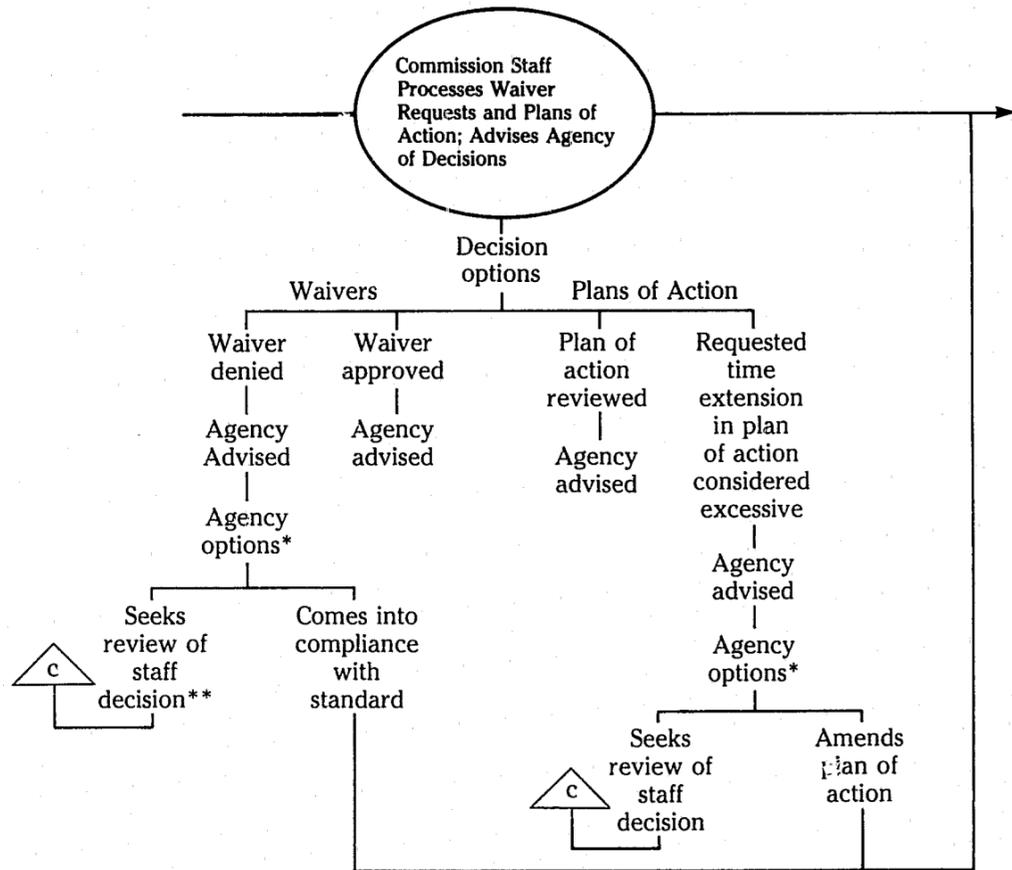
**Waivers.** On rare occasions, the Commission may waive a requirement of a standard at the request of an agency. Requests for a waiver are considered if an agency is prohibited from complying with a standard. The Commission advises the agency of whether the waiver is granted prior to the initiation of the on-site assessment activities. The Commission staff should be notified if waivers are to be submitted, as soon as possible. Waivers might be approved if an agency was prohibited from complying with a standard on account of one or more of the following: Legislation, Labor Agreement, Court Order, or Case Law.

**Plan of Action.** A "plan of action" is in essence a request for an extension of time to come into compliance with a given standard. Again, the *SAM* provides details (Chapter III, Section B.3):

If an agency cannot comply with a given standard within the time period allowed for the self-assessment (ordinarily six months), one or more plans of action are filed with the Commission. The plan is recorded on the reverse side of the ISSR or on a blank sheet of paper. The plan includes: (1) the standard in question by number and short title; (2) the action necessary to achieve compliance; (3) the proofs that will verify compliance; and (4) the time necessary to achieve compliance.

The agency is then permitted up to 6 months, from the date that the self-assessment is returned to the Commission, to come into compliance. If a plan of action "fulfillment report" has not been filed within the designated period, the agency's application is suspended until the Commission is notified that the agency is satisfied that it is in compliance.

It is important to note that the Commission does not schedule the on-site assessment until all waiver requests have been disposed of and the agency indicates that all plans of action are fulfilled.

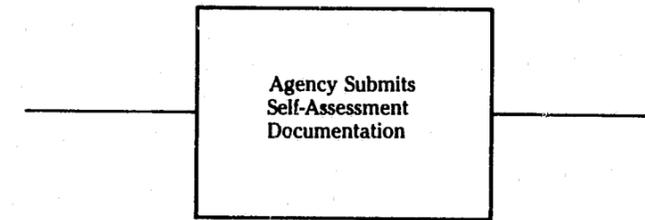


\* Agency withdrawal or deferral is a possibility at this or any step in the process.

\*\* See Chapter V, Section A.1.c.

**STEP TWELVE: COMMISSION STAFF PROCESSES WAIVER REQUESTS AND/OR REVIEWS PLANS OF ACTION; ADVISES AGENCY OF DECISIONS**

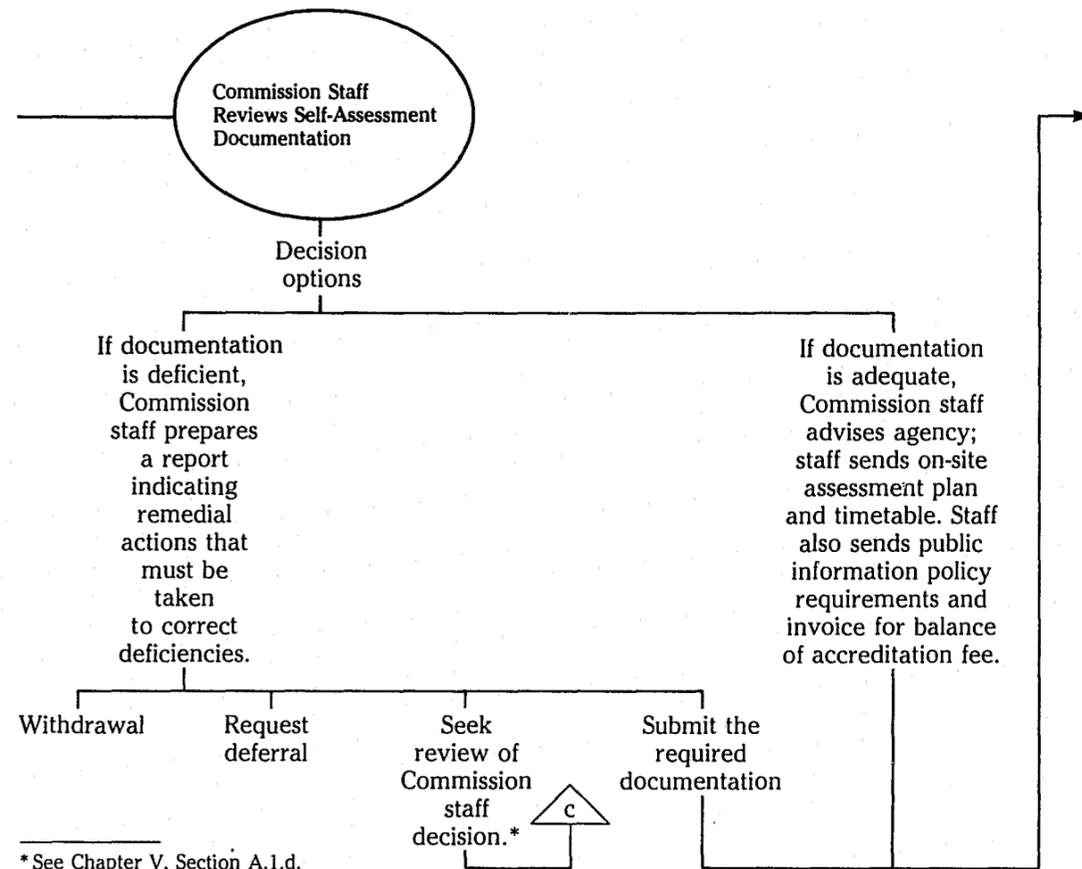
The Commission's staff processes waivers and reviews plans of action in accord with established Commission policies. Decision options are indicated in the chart above. Waivers are processed by staff in accord with established policies.



**STEP THIRTEEN: THE AGENCY SUBMITS ITS SELF-ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION TO THE COMMISSION**

The agency submits its self-assessment documentation when: (1) all waiver requests are either resolved or filed, pending a decision by the Commission; (2) when all plans of action are fulfilled or are within one month of completion; and (3) when compliance with all other applicable standards are documented.

Copies of all Commission-supplied self-assessment forms are submitted to the Commission for its review.



\* See Chapter V, Section A.1.d.

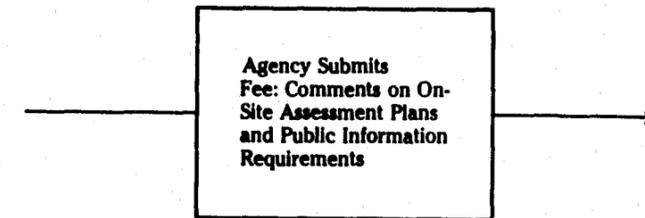
**STEP FOURTEEN: COMMISSION STAFF REVIEWS THE AGENCY'S SELF-ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION**

The Commission's staff reviews all self-assessment forms, which include a list of items that document compliance. If deficiencies are found, staff prepares a report indicating remedial actions that must be taken to correct the deficiencies. (Agency options are noted on the chart above.)

When documentation is complete and considered adequate, the Commission's staff advises the agency.

Staff sends an on-site assessment plan together with suggested dates and a timetable of events. In addition, staff explains public information requirements as contained in the Commission's public information policy.

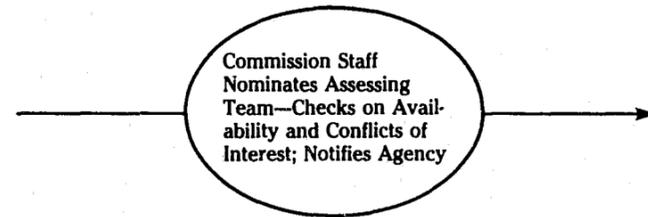
An invoice for the balance of the accreditation fee is sent.



**STEP FIFTEEN: THE AGENCY SUBMITS THE BALANCE OF THE ACCREDITATION FEE AND COMMENTS ON THE ON-SITE ASSESSMENT PLANS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS**

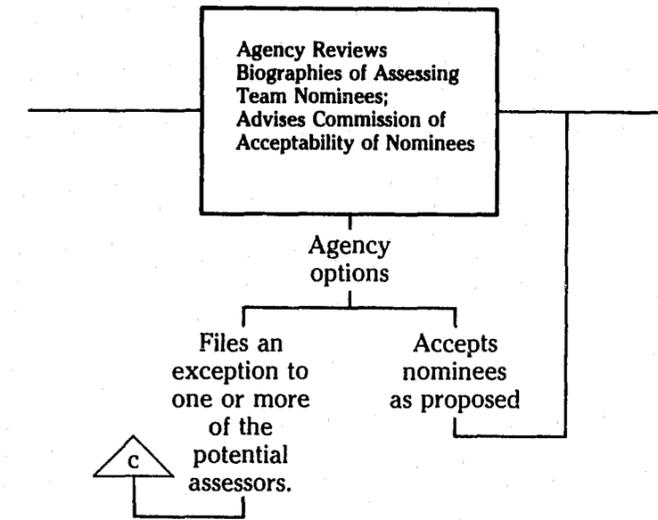
Details of the on-site assessment (excepting the identity of assessors—addressed in Step 17) is worked out with the candidate agency in the weeks following approval of its self-assessment documentation.

In the meantime, the Commission's staff moves ahead to Step 16.



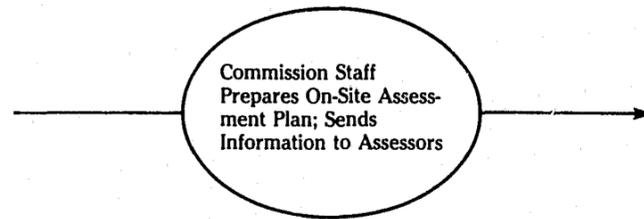
**STEP SIXTEEN: COMMISSION STAFF NOMINATES AN ASSESSING TEAM AND ALTERNATES AND CHECKS ON THEIR AVAILABILITY AND POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST; THE AGENCY IS NOTIFIED**

The Commission's staff nominates assessors and possible alternates and advises them of the place and date of the proposed on-site assessment. When availability is confirmed and possible conflicts of interest are resolved, names and biographies of the potential nominees are sent to the agency.



**STEP SEVENTEEN: THE AGENCY REVIEWS BIOGRAPHIES OF ASSESSING TEAM NOMINEES AND ADVISES THE COMMISSION REGARDING ACCEPTABILITY OF NOMINEES**

Agencies have an opportunity to review the names and backgrounds of persons proposed as potential assessors from which the actual assessing team is selected. As indicated above, agencies have an opportunity to object to any nominee for cause. Details are worked out by agency personnel and the Commission's staff.



**STEP EIGHTEEN: COMMISSION STAFF PREPARES THE ON-SITE ASSESSMENT PLAN AND SENDS THE ON-SITE ASSESSMENT PACKAGE TO THE TEAM LEADER AND GENERAL INFORMATION TO THE ASSESSORS**

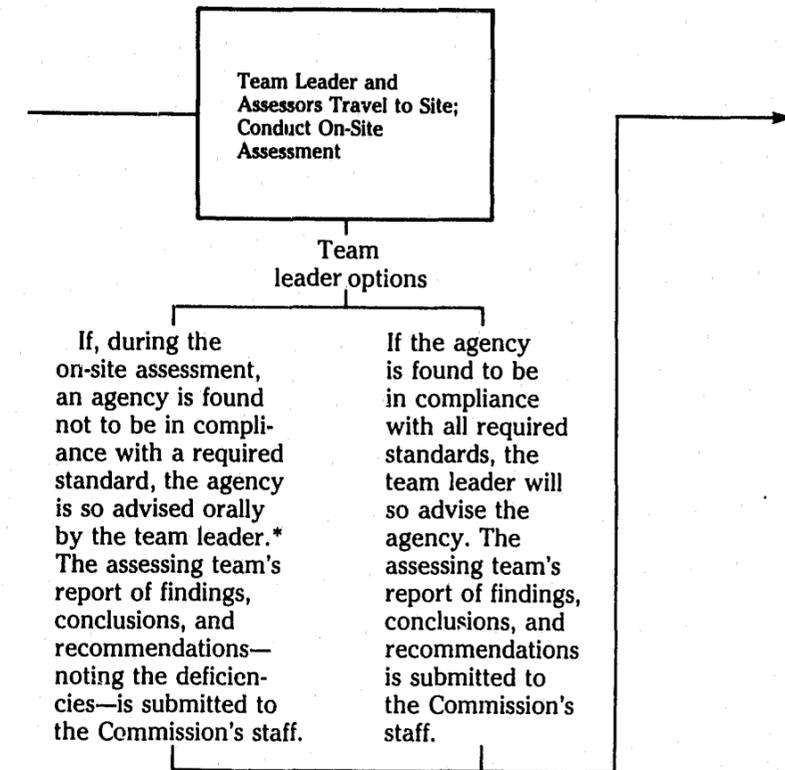
The Commission's staff prepares an On-site Assessment Plan for each on-site assessment. The plan addresses the usual "who, what, when, where, and how" questions:

- Identification of team members and key agency personnel (names, addresses, telephone numbers);
- Description of the scope of the assessment—functions to be checked, standards to be assessed, number of outlying facilities to be examined, if applicable;
- Dates of the assessment—date and time of the Public Information Session, including the names of persons scheduled to appear and offer testimony;
- Place of assembly and place of the first meeting with the agency's chief executive officer; and
- Other details.

All members of the team are supplied with as much information about the agency as possible including copies of the APQ, annual reports (if available), copies of pertinent correspondence including correspondence in connection with the public information session.

In addition to the preceding information, the On-site Assessment Package is sent to the team leader. This package consists of:

- Copies of the agency's self-assessment documents.
- A listing of standards that the assessors must assess. This computer-produced list includes three types of standards: (1) mandatory standards with which all law enforcement agencies *must* comply; (2) a listing of other mandatory standards; and (3) a listing of nonmandatory standards. The list represents a minimum assessment; assessors are free to go beyond this minimum as they wish, or as circumstances on site, warrant or dictate.



\* A team leader may suggest that the agency offer additional, but pre-existing, proofs of compliance, or request a waiver, or prepare a plan of action; an effort will be made to resolve all such matters before leaving the agency.

**STEP NINETEEN: THE ON-SITE ASSESSMENT IS CONDUCTED AND A REPORT IS PREPARED FOR THE COMMISSION**

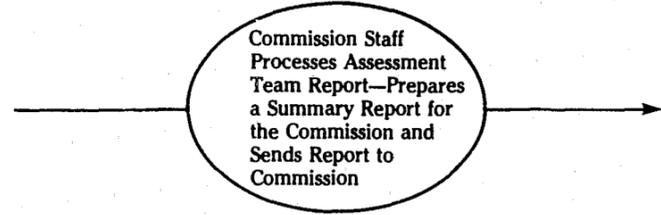
The team leader and assessors travel to the site and conduct the assessment in accord with Commission-approved policies and procedures as outlined in the *Assessor's Manual*.

The final step in the on-site process is the conduct of a Summation Conference with the agency's chief executive officer. As indicated above, if deficiencies are found, the team leader advises the agency at that time. If waiver requests or plans of action are needed, they may be provided to the team leader for inclusion in his or her final report. If there are no major deficiencies, the agency is so advised; in this regard, the agency is cautioned that this is a preliminary assessment that cannot be completed until all documentation is assembled, reviewed, and analyzed. (Information regarding the Assessing Team report is covered in Step 20.)

[A note about "evaluation reports." Although the depiction does not indicate that evaluation reports are prepared or submitted, each on-site assessment generates three kinds of evaluation reports.\*

- The agency is asked to critique the accreditation program generally, as well as the self-assessment process, the on-site process, and the team leader and the assessors.
- Each assessor is asked to critique specific parts of the accreditation program.
- Team leaders are required to evaluate the performance of all assessors.]

\* Sample evaluation reports are included in the *Assessor's Manual*—Appendices B, C, and D.

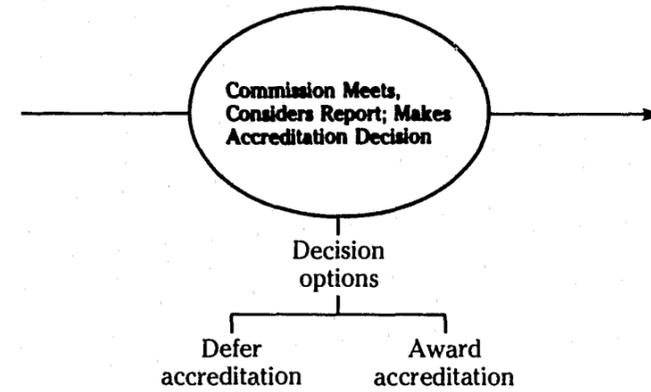


**STEP TWENTY:** COMMISSION STAFF CONDUCTS A FULL REVIEW OF THE ASSESSING TEAM'S REPORT AND PREPARES AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR THE COMMISSION AND SENDS THE REPORT TO THE COMMISSION

The assessing team's report includes:

- A notation of compliance or noncompliance on the reverse side of the agency's self-assessment form (the Individual Standard Status Report)—for each standard assigned for assessment by the Commission's staff. Each form is signed and dated by one of the assessors.
- A report of findings prepared by the team leader—either written or dictated.

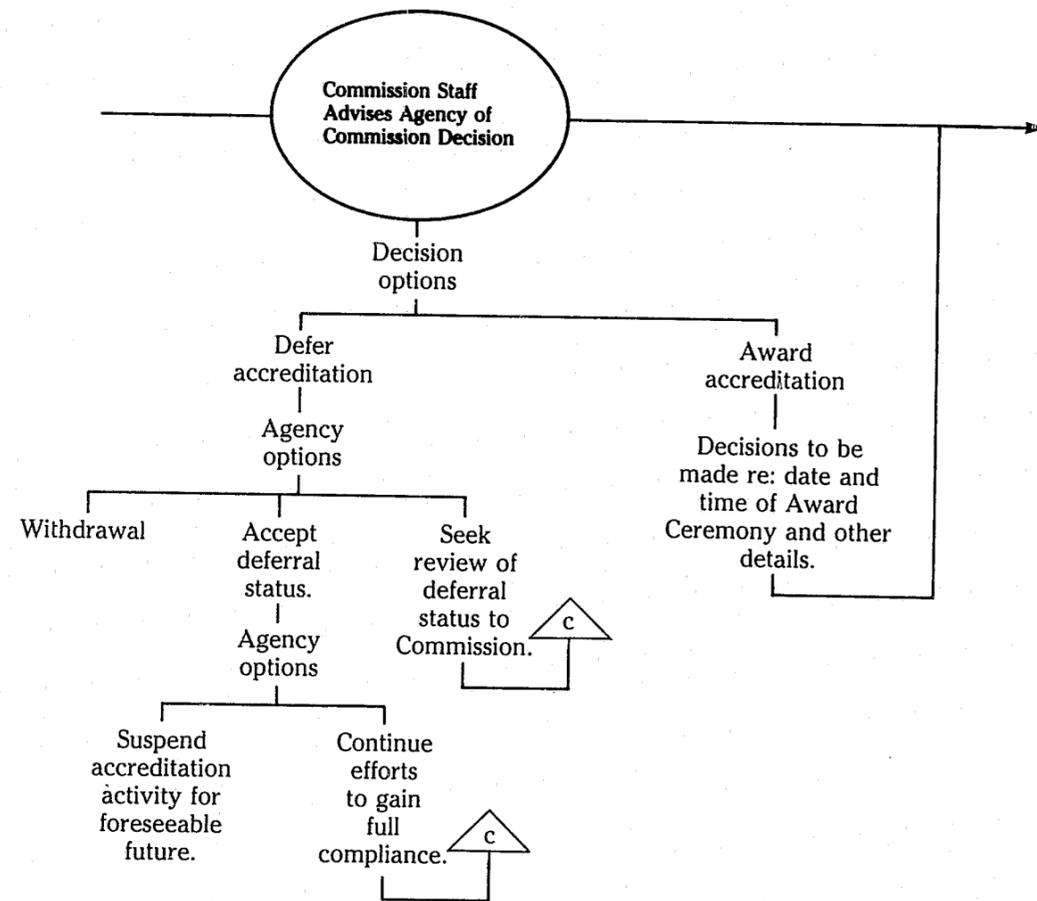
The Commission's staff prepares an Executive Summary of the report so as to facilitate the Commission's deliberations; the report is forwarded to the Commission in time for its review before the next meeting.



**STEP TWENTY-ONE:** THE COMMISSION MAKES AN ACCREDITATION DECISION

Based on the information provided it by its assessment team and staff, the Commission decides that the accreditation decision will be:

- *Award Accreditation.* It directs the staff to notify the agency—and to begin planning for an Awards Ceremony.
- *Defer Accreditation.* The staff is directed to advise the agency of the Commission's decision and the reason or reasons for its decision to defer accreditation. The staff is directed to make every effort to assist the agency with efforts to gain compliance with applicable standards—short of providing technical assistance.

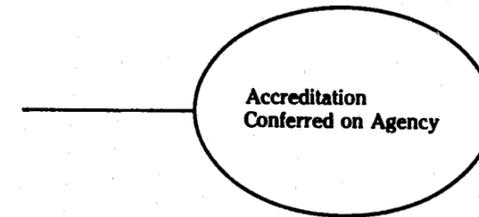


**STEP TWENTY-TWO: COMMISSION STAFF ADVISES THE AGENCY OF THE COMMISSION'S DECISION**

The Commission's staff advises the agency regarding the Commission's decision. If the decision is favorable—i.e., award of accreditation, staff proceeds with plans for the Awards Ceremony and other details involved in gaining accreditation status. Details would include such items as preparation of a certificate, transmittal of a suggested media announcement package, and, in general, assistance with planning of the Awards Ceremony.

If the decision is to defer accreditation, the agency is provided with detailed information regarding the procedures for appeal, as well as, an outline of steps to gain full compliance with the standards.

Agency options are listed above; they include withdrawal, acceptance of the deferral status (raising options as noted above), and seeking a review of the deferral status.



**STEP TWENTY-THREE: ACCREDITATION IS CONFERRED ON THE AGENCY AT AN AWARDS CEREMONY**

The Commission intends to award accreditation at a ceremony to be held in the locality—at headquarters or another site chosen by the agency. One or more Commissioners will be in attendance to represent the Commission.

*An afterword:* Accreditation is not the final stage of the accreditation program. Rather, it is a milestone in a continuing relationship between the Commission and the agency. The Commission is committed to providing the agency with reports of exemplary policies, procedures, and programs from other agencies and from published and unpublished research. The Commission also develops new standards—in an orderly process—in conjunction with accredited agencies and in conjunction with the four law enforcement membership associations. With regard to what is expected of accredited agencies, the Commission has stated two policies:

- Simply stated, accredited agencies will be expected to maintain their compliance with those standards under which they were accredited.
- Accredited agencies will be expected to file an annual report that testifies to continuing compliance; every five years, accredited agencies will be reaccredited—which includes an on-site assessment by Commission assessors.

## APPENDIX B

### THE BENEFITS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION

It is difficult to project benefits for a program that is not operational as yet. But, in this regard, Commission staff has undertaken two tasks. First, a listing of potential benefits and beneficiaries has been developed; it is reported on in Section 1, below, and in Exhibit B.1. Second, a benefits questionnaire was developed\* to test how practitioners (law enforcement agency personnel) rate a listing of benefits. The questionnaire was administered to approximately 65 persons who participated in Law Enforcement Accreditation Workshops in Florida, Missouri, and California. The same questionnaire was administered to persons on the Commission's Newsletter mailing list. Both groups ranked potential benefits in similar ways. Results of these surveys are reported in Section 2.

#### 1. Potential Benefits for Law Enforcement Accreditation.

It would *not* be possible to prepare a definitive list of benefits and then reduce them to potential dollar savings or to another measure of their worth. But, it *is* possible to identify potential beneficiaries and to list areas of benefits for each one. Five potential beneficiaries are identified:

- The agency's chief executive officer and the agency's command staff;
- All other members of the agency including sworn and civilian personnel;
- Neighboring law enforcement and criminal justice agencies;
- State, county, and local governments and their elected leaders, and appointed managers and administrators; and
- Citizens in the agency's service area.

Benefits have been drafted for each potential beneficiary; they are listed in Exhibit B.1. Despite their scope and number, the listed benefits barely touch the surface. For example, the recruitment and selection standards have potential benefits for members of the minority community including blacks, hispanics, and women among others. The promotion and career development standards assure all employees that their long-term career interests are being attended to in a fair and equitable manner. Current employees can derive benefits from the disciplinary and grievance procedures standards and from the collective bargaining standards, if an agreement is in force. Benefits listed on the following pages are preliminary in scope; as the program matures the listing will be expanded and refined.

#### 2. Results of Two Surveys of Benefits.

a. **Workshop Participants.** The 65 workshop participants, who returned questionnaires, had the following characteristics:

- 66 percent of the respondents were senior law enforcement officials from agencies of different sizes;
- municipal law enforcement agencies composed the majority of respondents (71 percent);
- attendees represented four states: Florida, Illinois, Missouri, and California.

Participants were asked to rate 18 listed benefits as a "strong incentive," "not an incentive," or "don't know" on a 3, 2, 1, or 0 scale.

The results were as follows:

\*The questionnaire was originally developed by the staff of the Police Executive Research Forum: Susan W. McCampbell and Gerard R. Murphy.

- The strongest incentives for seeking accreditation rated by the participants are: (1) provides guidelines for correcting deficiencies in agency operations; (2) provides means of independent evaluation of agency operations; (3) provides guidelines for upgrading services; (4) provides accountability for agency operations; and (5) commits agency policies and procedures to writing.
- The moderate incentives rated by participants are (1) provides norms for an agency to judge its own performance; (2) promotes community understanding; (3) enhances relationships with local criminal justice system representatives; (4) provides independent guidelines for justifying and allocating resources; (5) provides independent guidelines for justifying budget requests; and (6) promotes understanding of the jurisdiction's legislative body.
- While no items were rated strongly as not being an incentives, the following items demonstrated a tendency in that direction: increases probability of better qualified applicants, and effects on lowered insurance rates.

b. **Newsletter Survey Respondents.** A survey instrument very similar to the PERF (McC Campbell/Murphy) Questionnaire was sent to 3,093 persons on the Commission's Newsletter mailing list. As of April 22, a 10 percent return had been received—or 297, of the 3,093: 91 percent had more than 10 years law enforcement experience; 53 percent held a rank of chief of police or sheriff, and another 13 percent were either captains or lieutenants; and 74 percent were from municipal police departments. The profile was similar to the workshop profile in most respects.

Results of the benefits ratings are reported below in two columns. The left-hand column reports the ranking taking into account those who viewed the benefit as a "strong incentive." The right hand column reports the ranking of "strong" and "moderate" rating combined. The number of ratings and percentages are reported for the top six entries in each grouping.

<b>Strong Incentive to Seek Accreditation</b>	<b>Strong and Moderate Incentive to Seek Accreditation</b>
Tie 1. Provides guidelines for correcting deficiencies in agency operations (176/59%)	1. Provides norm for agency to judge its own performance (269/91%)
Tie 1. Provides means of independent evaluation of agency operations (176/59%)	2. Provides guidelines for correcting deficiencies in agency operations (268/90%)
3. Commits agency policies and procedures to writing (167/56%)	(Tie) 3. Provides guidelines for upgrading services (263/89%)
4. Increases agency efficiency and effectiveness (166/56%)	(Tie) 3. Provides means of independent evaluation of agency operations (263/89%)
5. Provides norm for an agency to judge its own performance (164/55%)	5. Internal agency means of monitoring performance (261/88%)
6. Reduces likelihood of vicarious liability suits (154/52%)	6. Increases in agency efficiency and effectiveness (260/88%)

By means of comparison, the top five "strongest incentives" from the workshops are compared with the top six from both newsletter survey results as follows:

<b>Workshop Strongest Incentives</b>	<b>Newsletter Rankings</b>	
	<b>Strong Only</b>	<b>Strong/Moderate Combined</b>
1. Provides guidelines for correcting deficiencies in agency operations	First (Tie)	Second

2. Provides means of independent evaluation of agency's operations	Second	Third (Tie)
3. Provides guidelines for upgrading services	Seventh	Third (Tie)
4. Provides accountability for agency operations	Eighth	Seventh
5. Commits agency policies and procedures to writing	Third	Tenth (Tie)

On the basis of this research, the two most important benefits, from a police practitioner perspective are that the accreditation standards and the process will provide:

- guidelines for correcting deficiencies in agency operations, and
- a means of independently evaluating the agency's operations.

The next most important benefits of the accreditation program are that the standards and the process:

- provide guidelines for upgrading services; and
- commit policies and procedures to writing.

### EXHIBIT B.1

#### BENEFITS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION

- *Accreditation Benefits for the Agency's Chief Executive Officer and the Agency's Command Staff*
  1. Accreditation requires an in-depth review of every aspect of the agency's organization, management, operations, and administration—including:
    - establishment of agency goals and objectives, with provision for periodic updating;
    - reevaluation of how agency resources are being utilized—in accord with agency goals, objectives, and mission assignments;
    - reevaluation of agency policies and procedures—especially as documented in the agency's written directive system; and
    - allowing the agency an opportunity to correct deficiencies before they become public problems.
  2. The accreditation standards provide neutral guidelines for developing strong budget justifications—especially for personnel and their allocation across functions and activities.
  3. The accreditation standards provide norms against which agency performance can be measured and monitored over time.
  4. Accreditation provides the agency with a continuing flow of information about exemplary policies, procedures, and projects as distributed by the Commission.
  5. Accreditation provides the agency an opportunity to participate in the development of new or revised standards.
  6. Accreditation provides recognition that the agency's managerial and operational policies and procedures are in accord with a body of nationwide standards—and that the agency has made a concerted effort to attain professional status.

**EXHIBIT B.1**

**BENEFITS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION (CONT.)**

- *Accreditation Benefits for All Other Members of the Agency Including Sworn and Civilian Employees.*
  1. Accreditation assures that agency policies and procedures are in written form—available to all agency personnel.
  2. Accreditation assures agency personnel that every aspect of its personnel system is in accord with nationwide standards and that it is both fair and equitable.
  3. Accreditation enhances the morale of agency personnel—building the confidence of employees in the effectiveness and efficiency of their own agency.
- *Accreditation Benefits for Neighboring Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Agencies*
  1. Accreditation promotes relationships with other neighboring law enforcement agencies, as well as prosecutors, courts, correctional agencies, and state and local governmental officials.
  2. Accreditation requires the establishment of mutual aid, i.e., agreements between law enforcement agencies; such agreements are in writing and well understood by all parties.
  3. Accreditation promotes standardization of operational policies —thereby increasing efficiency in handling calls for assistance, referrals, and joint investigations.
  4. Accreditation requires participation in statewide radio, fingerprint, crime information, and crime reporting systems.
- *Accreditation Benefits for State, County, and Local Governments and Their Elected Leaders and Appointed Managers and Administrators.*
  1. Accreditation provides assurance that the governmental unit's law enforcement agency is delivering a high level of service to citizens of the agency's service area.
  2. Accreditation provides objective measures to justify decisions related to budget requests and personnel policies.
  3. Accreditation reduces the likelihood of vicarious liability suits against the agency.
  4. Accreditation reduces the cost of liability insurance for the agency.
- *Accreditation Benefits for Citizens in the Agency's Service Area.*
  1. Accreditation demonstrates the commitment of the agency to professionalism—in terms of adherence to a body of national standards.
  2. Accreditation assures the community that its law enforcement agency is committed to the provision of services of the highest quality and that its policies and procedures are effective and responsive on the one hand, and fair and equitable on the other.
  3. Accreditation enhances community understanding of the law enforcement agency's role—as well as its goals and objectives.
  4. Accreditation commits the agency to a broad range of programs of direct benefit to the public (e.g., community crime prevention) as well as to programs to cope with man-made or natural disasters.
  5. In summation, accreditation promotes community cooperation and understanding.

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