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## **Police Department**

### **Overview**

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The jurisdiction of the Sunbury Police Department (SPD) encompasses the City of Sunbury, approximately 2.1 square miles, bordered on the west by the Susquehanna River and surrounded to the north, south and east by Upper Augusta Township. The population of Sunbury City is approximately 10,000, as of January 2009.

### **Governing Legislation**

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The Sunbury Police Department is governed by the various sections of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Sunbury, as well as the Third Class City Code of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In addition, numerous state and federal laws and court cases affect the operations of the department.

The SPD operates within a negotiated Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Sunbury and the City of Sunbury Police Officers, effective January 1, 2005, through December 31, 2008. The agreement covers all aspects of the officer's work, salaries, additional pay, benefits, allowances, hours, leave, training, grievances, insurance, and retirement. All the officers are members of the bargaining unit, excluding the Chief of Police.

### **Budgetary Description**

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The City funds the Police Department primarily thru the General Fund. In 2008, the unadjusted estimated cost for the department was \$1,800,602, while revenues were \$129,555. Excluded from the budgetary analysis are pension funds and budgetary items related to parking.

- Revenues: The 2008 financial report provides for direct revenues of \$129,555, split primarily between fines, wage reimbursements and various police services. This represents 0.3% of total city revenues within the General Fund.
- Expenditures: The 2008 financial report provides for direct expenditures of \$1,800,602, of which approximately \$1,691,571 is for wages, overtime, health insurance, retiree health care and other benefits. Personnel costs represent 93.9% of total department costs.

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The total Police Department budget in 2008 represented 45.4% of the total General Fund expenditures. With adjusted figures (which would include a distribution of insurance costs and other employee benefits) the Police Department is more than 50% of the City's 2008 expenditures.

## **Departmental Staffing and Supervision**

The Sunbury Police Department has eleven (11) full-time officers authorized for the department. The Collective Bargaining Agreement provides for two Sergeants and two Corporals, as well as an assigned Criminal Investigator. The department has a full complement of Sergeants and one Corporal. There are also nine part-time patrol officers. The department has a civilian Administrative Assistant, who is responsible for clerical duties and evidence management.

'Span of Control' is a phrase that refers to the number of subordinate employees or organization elements that are subject to the control of a particular individual. Stone and DeLuca, in *Police Administration* write that:

"At one time, management theorists believed that no manager should be responsible for more than six (6) subordinates or six organizational elements. Today however, the theorists suggest that the span of control is dependent upon three factors; the nature of the work, the character of the worker, and the character and personality of the manager."

Provided that the personnel are exceptionally well-qualified, and require little supervision, and the manager is unusually competent, it is believed that it is unlikely that anyone would be able to provide adequate direct supervision of more than ten (10) subordinates at the operational level and more than five (5) at the administrative level. Given the aforementioned discussion, it appears that supervisory personnel are lacking to manage the department's operational functions.

It has often been repeated that the Sunbury Police Department needs additional officers to address crime and to maintain sufficient "on the street" staffing. The 'Assignment Availability Factor' (AAF) is the calculation that determines how many officers are needed to staff one desired position when you account for time off for vacation, illness, training, etc. The average AAF for most police agencies falls somewhere between 1.75 and 1.95. If you take the four (4) full-time officers minimally required for patrol assignment at Sunbury PD for each of the four twelve-hour shifts, and multiply that times the most conservative 1.75 AAF figure, you arrive at exactly seven (7) officers to staff one person per shift. Three (3) of the seven positions are in leave status at various times and not available for duty assignment to patrol functions. This is problematic since it creates an officer safety concern for the one (1) officer assigned to patrol responsibilities.

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Minimum staffing of any shift for patrol duties should always be at least two (2) officers. It is dangerous for any one officer to respond to a burglary in progress, active fight, active domestic conflict, active disturbance, or any other type of call for service where people involved need to be either separated and/or taken into custody. It is possible to call for neighboring police department backup; however, if they also are functioning at minimum staffing then the mutual aid agency is leaving that municipality uncovered and the ripple effect begins to impact the safety of both communities. Mutual aid should be reserved for the exception and should not be the rule to create supplemental staffing in a given community.

Another solution to the staffing problem has often been the use of part-time sworn officers to substitute for full-time officers. The effectiveness and efficiency of this approach are dependent upon the quality and availability of the part-time personnel. Arrests require court time when they may also be scheduled to work at another employer, often their full-time responsibility. This does not even address their more limited understanding of the community and department policies and procedures, which then adds additional inefficiency to their functioning and increases the management oversight responsibility with added time required to supervise and train officers. It is suggested that part-time sworn officers only be employed as supplemental personnel to support regular full-time officers, not substitute for them as regularly assigned sworn personnel.

Given the previous discussion, if two (2) officers per shift are required for the four shifts, then fourteen (14) patrol officers would be required when the AAF of 1.75 is applied (8 times 1.75). This would allow for the eight (8) officers to staff the shifts at all time while six (6) officers would be in rotational statuses to compensate for the Assignment Availability Factor.

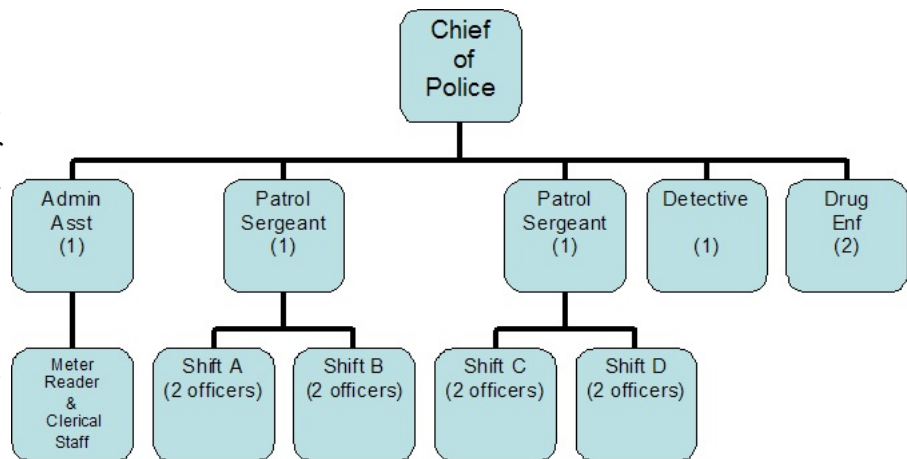
Adding six (6) additional officers to meet this staffing objective is probably not within the fiscal possibility of the department currently. Also, it would create additional issues when considering the supervisory ratio problem that was discussed as a part of this section. Three (3) additional officers however could be added to partially solve the staffing problem and the supervisory issues as well. In our observations there does not appear to be any significant responsibilities imposed upon the Sergeants and Corporals; in effect they are senior officers. This results in the Police Chief having to exercise supervision over the entire complement of officers.

Whatever the staffing complement and configuration, it is clear that supervisory personnel need to take on actual supervisory responsibilities. These positions would be patrol-supervisory in nature. Each would be responsible for one half of the patrol complement and would work swing shifts from daylight to evening to overlap depending upon the determined work load of the shifts for given days. Under the current staffing they would always serve as supplemental personnel.

These supervisors would be responsible for reporting to the Chief of Police and be accountable to for the performance of the officers assigned to their shifts. The Chief would retain supervisory

responsibility for the administrative functions and the investigative functions of the department. The administrative assistance would oversee all of the administrative functions under the Chief's direction. The organizational model under such a plan would appear similar to this:

Under this staffing arrangement the sergeants would work flex shifts to provide for a power three-officer staffing of evening nights for weekends or midday to cover meal breaks, court time, or other officer time where they were not available for calls for service. Additionally, depending upon the status of the criminal



investigative workload and the ongoing needs to develop the drug enforcement capability of the department, another sergeant position could be created to consolidate and supervise the crime activities of the department. Under the above configuration, the Chief of Police is directly responsible for five supervisors reporting to him; thereby being in conformance with span of control advisories. With the addition of another criminal sergeant, he would be responsible for four supervisors. This is considerably more efficient and effective than his current responsibility of oversight for all eleven plus members of the agency, both sworn and civilian.

One note concerning the staffing complement in the discussion above: this assessment has been based solely upon position staffing with regard to single position deployment and officer support needs. The AAF analysis is based upon average standards for other agencies and not specifically the Sunbury Police Department. The officer numbers also do not take into account call volume or determinations of specific community problems requiring special staffing. An analysis of these variables is possible and could more specifically develop accurate numbers for staffing. Such a study is outside the scope of this current report. One of the difficulties in doing such an analysis is the lack of available longitudinal data to support such a study resulting from the inadequacies of the department's current records management system.

### Recommendations:

- Staffing Increase: The City should develop a plan to add additional FTE personnel over the next several years, as city finances allow. This could be full-time officers,

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part-time officers or other arrangements. It appears that there will be funding available for additional police officers in the Economic Stimulus Package; the conditions of the grants and availability are not known at this time.

- **Contractual Changes:** The City should see to have the collective bargaining agreement altered to permit the City to determine the number and rank of supervisory personnel to ensure that the department does not become too rank heavy. In addition, the City should seek language that would improve the AAF rating. This would include less vacation, personal and sick leave time for new hires than existing officers, thus decreasing the number of officers necessary to meet daily staffing requirements.
- **Upgrade Supervisor Responsibilities:** Supervisory personnel, such as Sergeants and Corporals, must take responsibility for overseeing many day to day activities, including reviewing reports, enforcing the Standard Operating Procedures and participating in Performance Evaluations, among other things. The City must provide training to the supervisors as part of their probationary period, and should be evaluated by the Chief on a regular basis.

## **Policing Objectives**

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Over the past two decades there have been a number of operational philosophies developed to help police departments and communities address crime and related societal afflictions. Most prominent among these philosophies are Community Oriented Policing (COPS) and Problem Oriented Policing (POPS). While both differ in approaches, they are consistent in one respect - both seek to move from short-term reactive policing to long-term community and issue involvement to address criminal activity.

The Sunbury Police Department is structured as a reactive department, generally utilizing a call and response approach to criminal activities. This is a traditional model for police activities, and is reflective of prior departmental priorities and staffing levels. The department does perform undercover drug investigations, both on its own and in cooperation with state and regional enforcement agencies.

In reviewing the crime statistics and in general discussions with officers and elected officials, it is generally viewed that the City has a drug problem, affecting not only adults but also school-aged children. This situation has resulted in a deteriorating quality of life in the City, increased drug overdoses well out of proportion to the population, and declining property values. This core problem would be best solved by adopting and utilizing a Problem-Oriented Policing program, in conjunction with other City departments and outside law enforcement agencies.

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## Drug Problem Review

This clearly is an area that requires more research and documentation in terms of regional initiatives and problems specific to the City of Sunbury. It is well established in the current intelligence information available through Federal, State, and Regional sources that the drug problem is proliferating within Pennsylvania, particularly in the rural areas of the northern and central regions.

Gangs from the New York area and Maryland area have continuously attempted to infiltrate these areas for the purposes of marketing and distribution. There are two essential factors in this movement. One, families attempting to flee the urban environment are moving to the cities and town along I-80 and other primary roadways and bringing the urban culture their children have become accustomed to, and two, the urban gangs themselves have established exploratory cells that seek out areas where their activities are not scrutinized the way they are currently in urban area. Specialized units and intelligence networks operating in urban areas in New York, New Jersey, and the Maryland areas do not extend to the Northern, Northeastern, and Central Pennsylvania rural areas. Initiatives such as the Route 222 corridor project leave the other exposed areas of the state without the valuable intelligence required to confront the increased movements of drug operatives.

The City of Sunbury has a clear history of drug gang initiatives. Some of these gangs may have connections to New York or other areas, and some may be 'home grown' wanna-be's; both are insidious and dangerous to the quality of life of a community.

The impact on the economic and cultural life of a community is seriously impacted as quality of life diminishes. Having active gang activity, which brings drugs and violence to the community, has spiraling negative effects. George Kelling wrote of his "Broken Windows" Theory many years ago, and has become the base fundamental thought in the design of ComStat and Problem Oriented Policing (POP) theories. POP is a philosophy that maintains the problems of quality of life and social disorder in a community need to have the priority attention of law enforcement working closely with community Code Enforcement. Seemingly simple problems such as youths congregating on street corners, graffiti, run-down properties by out-of-town non-invested landlords, and territorial gang initiatives create an adverse environment for community growth and development both economically and culturally. The more those conditions are allowed to occur, the more the problem becomes exacerbated until the downward trend becomes exponential. ComStat becomes the manner by which, statistically, the problems are identified and targeted.

It is unclear at this point how deep the drug problem is entrenched in the City of Sunbury. Even if it is mild, it must be understood that the area surrounding Sunbury could be more entrenched. The nature of the drug culture for distribution and marketing is to move to where there is least resistance. Although local initiatives are important and the pressure must remain constant, a larger intelligence network needs to be in place to serve the smaller communities through information sharing. That

process is currently deficient in Sunbury and the region. Detectives working on the drug problem currently report that meeting with the few and far between investigators dedicated to the issue are one way they share information, while a web site opened for them by the Maglocen RISS organization is the only other. The missing link is a real-time information sharing system that is available not only to the specialty drug enforcement officers, but is also available to the individual officers on the street managing these problems on a day-to-day basis. This issue will be further discussed in a subsequent section. Although absolutely necessary to dedicate specialty services to drug interdiction, the personnel assigned are operating less than efficiently by the lack of information sharing resources and a dedicated regional initiative.

### **Recommendations**

- **Review of a Formal Policing Philosophy:** We recommend that the City review the concept of Problem-Oriented Policing to determine if it is appropriate in addressing crime issues within the City.
- **Force Multipliers:** In connection with identified "problem" areas, the Department should consider how to utilize other city departments and outside resources as force multipliers to address problems. For example, instead of using just police officers in dealing with a property with regular quality of life issues, such as loitering, drug crimes, noise and the like, it can also leverage services provided by the Building and Code Enforcement Officers and Treasurer's Office to address concurrent problems, with the intention of resolving problems.

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## Police Records Management System (RMS)

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Law enforcement is information dependent. Calls for service from citizens require the documentation of the event in a police report whether they are non-criminal in nature or criminal. The activities associated with responding, investigating, resolving, prosecuting, or other actions all need a system by which to report and then later retrieve information.

The Sunbury Police Department is currently using a records management system known as "Informant." The RMS is completely an office-based system at this time. Officers take complaints via the County Radio System, respond and manage the compliant, then return to the station to complete the report associated with the compliant. This process is repeated for all calls during their shifts. Movement to and from the office for reporting is not efficient in terms of staff hours and vehicle fuel. It also keeps officers from the field and tied to the office for reporting. The optimal way for officers to complete RMS incident reports is through wireless connected reporting that integrates with the CAD system being provided through the County. This system would provide data linkages between CAD, the RMS software and field reporting. It would also allow the officers to use the services of CAD connections to the PennDOT databases and Pennsylvania's JNET gateway system to the AOPC and other services. Such a system requires a mobile interface through a wireless interface such as EVDO, 3G, or Data Radio.



This system has continued to be proven to be inefficient and problematic for the agency. The data entry process is cumbersome and retrieval is limited. Statistical reports to aid the Chief of Police in management of the agency's performance are also a major issue in that most are not functional. As an individual agency it is clear that the department needs to migrate to a completely new records management system that meets the LEITSC Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement Records Management Systems (RMS) Version II. These standards are available at [www.leitsc.org](http://www.leitsc.org). The standards of the Law Enforcement Information Technology Council (LEITSC) provide significant guidance to agencies developing a request for proposal (RFP) for purchasing or upgrading a records management system (RMS). They are designed to inform law enforcement about the basic functional requirements that all RMS systems should have in order to achieve interoperability and are the current state-of-the-art standards in the United States.

Two primary issues that should be considered in the evolution to any new RMS should be the ability to share information regionally. Given the close proximity of Sunbury to other Counties, regional information sharing would require a multi-County approach. The problem becomes one of legacy

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data systems being integrated into new vender products. Another issue then becomes the information technology infrastructure for the sharing architecture and the security of these sharing pathways so they are compliant with the Information Technology Management Reform Act (Public Law 104-106). Under this law, the U.S. Secretary of Commerce approves standards and guidelines that are developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) for Federal computer systems. Any state or local computer system that accesses national databases must comply with these Federal requirements. These standards and guidelines are issued by NIST as Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) for use government-wide. NIST develops FIPS when there are compelling Federal government requirements such as for security and interoperability and there are no acceptable industry standards or solutions.

Although the department has an existing RMS, it is so dysfunctional that they must largely begin as though they do not have such a system. Consideration should not be given therefore to how a new system should integrate into their existing system. Rather, they should look to find the best system that is compliant with the LEITSC, the NIST FIPS 180-3 standards, and the Pennsylvania Criminal History Records Act (CHRIA) requirements. The department should also look for Pennsylvania based vendors that provide for functions specific to Pennsylvania such as PennDot Crash Report system interfaces for auto upland, Uniformed Crime Report automatic electronic reporting, interfaces to CPIN and LiveScan booking devices, creating the PA criminal complaint form, juvenile allegation reports, search warrants, and multi-jurisdictional pointer system interfaces.

The benefit to the agency is that there are a number of other Pennsylvania Counties that have seen this as an essential need as well. Many RMS vendors have been tried and tested in the records production environment and many have failed. All vendors have their limitations and many in some ways do not meet the federal or state requirements completely. There is no need for the department to reinvent the wheel since many counties who have involved themselves in this RMS search process are more than willing to share their results with other organizations following in their footsteps.

Although the purpose of this summary is to merely discuss the current limitations with the department's 'Informant' RMS product, it is not to recommend any other particular vender. A search by other Pennsylvania Counties involved in the process has realistically arrived at only three current vendors that meet the Pennsylvania Specific requirement. Those vendors include the PA Chief's of Police sponsored "C-Net", the Cody Systems software product, and the Mobile Sync software product by In-Synch. Cody and In-Synch remain relatively competitive in terms of functionality while C-Net has experienced some difficulties remaining competitive given some of its architectural design limitations.

The first goal of the department in seeking a new RMS should be to look at what other department's in the area are currently using and see if there is any common product that would make the interoperability of records systems an easier objective to accomplish. If such a commonality does

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not exist, then the department should seek to engage other area Chief's to develop a regional RMS search working group to develop a model for a records management system that would provide for a common platform to share information among the agencies. If the regional concept is not well received, then a County project team should be assembled with the support of the District Attorney's Office to accomplish the same objective at least among the County municipal police departments. Crime does not stop at municipal boundaries, and the sharing of information is essential for police departments to control criminal activity.

If the department does not have the time or technical ability to do such a search for an RMS product, then a consultant should be contracted to accomplish this need. Records management is a cortically essential component to the effectiveness and the efficiency of a police department. Quality records systems can often provide for existing personnel becoming more proficient and therefore reducing the number of personnel required to accomplish the same tasks. As we all know, adding technology is far more cost-effective than adding personnel.

The new wave of law enforcement is "Intelligence Led Policing". This initiative is tongue-and-groove to the data-driven processes of ComStat and Problem Oriented Policing. Although it can be done on the micro-scale of a single agency, it is most cost effective and efficient when done collectively through combining of regional assets in terms of both staffing pools and funding initiatives. This allows the agency to function with lean staff resources while functioning smarter using the data available for problem directed effects. The days of random patrol should be over in police departments. ILP and POP are the new objectives that have proven to save both time and money for agencies.

The department spends \$2,349 annually for maintenance for Informant. It is unknown what the cost of other, more data intensive products, would be. The movement toward a regional data and mobile data environment seems as it is an essential objective for the agency to research and attempt collaboration with other agencies.

### **Mobile Reporting Capabilities**

Crime is not sedentary; it moves and moves rapidly in this contemporary society. Just as radios thwarted the success of mobile criminal activity when they were introduced many years ago, today, mobile data is the best edge against the mobility of today's criminal element. Putting data at the fingertips of police officers in the field through laptops and/or handheld devices is an essential ingredient to optimal and cost-effective policing. Police officers and agencies must work smarter.

Any records management system project should also consider the ability of mobile units to interface with the host system. This can be accomplished in a number of ways technically. As a basic requirement officers should be able to do reports in the mobile environment and should be able to

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synchronize those reports to the host system intermittently. Somewhat more advanced, is the ability to maintain a complete virtual connection at all times from within the home jurisdiction. Each is dependant upon the vender's software capabilities and the agency's ability to either fund or supply the technical infrastructure to the functionality. The advanced methodology is certainly preferred because of the real-time access to the department's databases as well as to whatever regional sharing of information that is available.

In this day and age no police patrol officer should be without the ability to enter reports and query databases from the vehicle. The patrol unit should be a mobile office where the officer is released from the need to return to the office building each time they must complete a report or search a database. Mobile real-time computing is fundamental to efficient and effective policing without any doubt.

### **Graphical Information System**

A component of a records management system should be the GIS system. This data base mapping should provide graphical user interface to view crime data and identify trends visually, particularly among multiple jurisdictions.

Such a regional GIS system could also be supplemented by a community GIS system that would allow police access to such data files as the tax parcels, zoning areas, fire data, code enforcement data, street locations, parks, recreation areas, churches, schools, and any other information that can be graphically displayed. Embedded within these locations can be links to floor plans, hazardous materials, safety alerts, etc. Again, all this information should be available at the fingertips of patrol officers from a mobile computing platform.

Consideration should be given to developing a community GIS system, but in the interim the department should seek an RMS with GIS as a component part for the crime analysis element that is essential in determining problem areas or location to be addressed through Community Oriented Policing and/or Problem Oriented Policing strategies.

### **Commonwealth Law Enforcement Assistance Network (CLEAN)**

The department currently has a CLEAN terminal in operation. This is necessary for the returns for the CPIN/LiveScan automated fingerprint system. It is also essential for RMS access depending upon the department's future development of a Pennsylvania based RMS system for County or regional deployment. Although this system is currently costing the agency for lines to access the database, it should be retained and built upon in future deployments of information technology. Mobile technology can also interface with this product and provide PennDOT as well as warrants and wanted persons information to the officer in the field immediately without returning to the office or going through an already busy County dispatch facility.

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## Recommendations

- New RMS System: As heavily emphasized above, the current system is completely inadequate for current needs, and is extremely inefficient to use. The City should begin the process of developing interest in a regional approach to records management, in order to better serve the department and other regional entities, reduce the procurement costs and in order to qualify for grants.

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## Standard Operating Procedures

A major issue of the department is the predominately antiquated policy portfolio that exists. Chief Mazzeo inherited a limited collection of policies that were largely present but also largely unenforced, and in all probability not widely followed. Since his arrival at the agency he has written a number of policies in an attempt to fill the void, particularly with those that required immediate clarification for operations. A complete review and overhaul of the entire manual is necessary.

Current and valid policy and procedure manuals are essential for the operational and administrative proficiency and professional performance of all law enforcement agencies. As Bennett and Hess write in *Management and Supervision in Law Enforcement*, "An agency's policy and procedure manual is the foundation on which most discipline is based". They are the heart and soul of an effective system of discipline and high morale within a department. They promote clear and consistent guidance for the daily as well as the critical operational matters that present themselves to the department's personnel.

Updated and constantly current policies and procedures should be based upon federal, state, and local statutory laws as well as case law that affect the law enforcement organization. The fact that the Sunbury Police Department does not have such a document, or series of documents codified as a manual, suggests a serious deficiency in their potential operations. Formalized policy is an absolute essential ingredient for the organization and without it decentralized decision-making and free-lancing runs rampant.

One of the key issues with creating such a departmental policy manual however involves the time it takes to research and then write the manual. In addition, all of the policies of the manual should be in compliance with the law enforcement standards of at least the Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission (PLEAC). That program currently has 131 standards in its standards manual that address the Organization and Management Role, Law Enforcement Functions, Staff Support Responsibilities, and the Pennsylvania Legal Mandates. These should be the minimum mandatory area that any Pennsylvania police department's policy manual addresses and the agency continues to be in compliance with by practice. Additionally, the national accreditation program, the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies(CALEA) program has 460

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standards that agencies participating must maintain compliance. Depending upon the agency size, the total number of standards in the CALEA program that apply may become less than the maximum. Both program support best practices in law enforcement agencies through their standards.

It is important to understand that regardless of whether or not an agency voluntarily participates in the accreditation process, their activities will be legally judged based upon the standards requirements. The agency cannot escape the accreditation standards by simply choosing to not enroll and then claiming, when they are sued, that the standards do not apply to them since they do not participate. The mere fact that such standards now exist through endorsement of professional organizations such as the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police or CALEA, in and of itself, attaches a higher level of legitimacy to the expectation that all agencies should be in compliance. Courts judge agency's practices based upon the standard models. That being the case, every agency should comply with the policy requirements identified by the standard even if they choose not to become officially accredited.

Therefore, the Sunbury Police Department should develop a strategic plan to bring their policy manual in line with the Pennsylvania standards at a minimum. The problematic nature of assigning personnel to accomplish this feat can be a major consideration for a small agency however. Many agencies who have undertaken this goal of creating a manual have worked two to three years on the process, having had to work on it between other community and department issues, concerns, and demands that have a way of finding themselves into everyday needs.

The Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association has recognized this need and is developing a model policy manual that would be made available at no cost to small agencies. That manual will have policies that meet the standards and if adopted by the agency without revision could be used in the PA Accreditation process as proof of policy compliance. It is anticipated that the model policy manual will be available in late summer 2009.

In the interim, the Chief should continue to write Special Orders that will assist in the orderly delivered of law enforcement services and develop discipline for the members of the department with regard to internal administrative matters and external operations in the delivery of police services.

**Recommendations:**

- Utilization of Model Policies and Procedures: The City should use model policies and procedures by the PA Chiefs of Police Association, rather than develop a new set of procedures which will have to be reviewed by legal counsel. These procedures, which have been extensively vetted by legal counsel, insurance and risk management firms, and police officers, are easily accessible and can be quickly modified for local use.

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- **Training:** All officers must be trained on these key policies, and must demonstrate a firm understanding of the requirements of these procedures. There should be a process for retraining for all officers on a regular basis to ensure that key policies are fully understood and complied with. All officers should be required to have in their possession a current copy of the manual for immediate reference while in the field.
  - **Enforcement of Policies:** The City must ensure that officers act in ways consistent with the approved policies, and that disciplinary actions be taken towards officers that repeatedly fail to understand and implement the policies.

## **Benchmarking**

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A critical step in determining the effectiveness of the department, individual programs and officers is to provide a method of benchmarking of various statistics, that is, merging current information with both historical data and statistics from outside sources. This data set is essential in exercising effective command and control of the department, and should be included as part of the budget and the department's annual report.

The department does not regularly review crime rates by location, day of the week and time of day. Collecting these types of data provides a basis for analysis of patrol routes, and the number of officers and patrol elements on duty at any given time or day. Such a reevaluation might result in changes in the patrol profile and cost savings for the City.

There are numerous resources available that can help the department and City prepare and utilize benchmarking as a method of improving services and informing the public. We recommend utilizing the following sources:

- **Internal Data Sources:** The department produces statistical information for internal use, as well as for distribution to City leaders. The City should utilize this readily available information to determine historical trends, the performance of individual officers and units, cost of service for each activity, and resource distribution. For example, the department could compare annual statistics on the effectiveness of traffic enforcement programs, including parking violations, speeding and other traffic citations, residential traffic complaints, motor vehicle accidents, and add an annual cost component to see what the results are for the programs.
- **External Data Sources:** Both state and federal law enforcement agencies provide publicly-available data sets that can be used to compare crime rates for specific types of incidents, such as Part 1 crimes, crimes per thousand residents and clearance rates.

In addition, law enforcement organizations provide documentation on specific management statistics that can be incorporated into a benchmarking program. The City should also enter into a relationship with similar communities to share annual statistics, to benchmark the department against other municipal police departments.

It is important to note that the FBI puts a disclaimer on its annual *Crime in the United States* report. It notes that “These rankings, however, are merely a quick choice made by the data user; they provide no insight into the many variables that mold the crime in a particular town, city, county, state, region, or other jurisdiction.”

Year	City	Population	Offenses	Rate per 100,000	Solved	Percent Solved	Percent of County
2007	Berwick	10,246	766	7,476.1	140	18.30%	23.80%
2007	Danville	4,530	506	11,170.0	143	28.30%	58.40%
2007	Lewisburg	5,572	304	5,455.9	172	56.60%	25.50%
2007	Nanticoke	10,261	1,059	10,320.6	374	35.30%	5.60%
2007	Pittston	7,600	328	4,315.8	40	12.20%	1.70%
2007	Pottsville	14,523	1,132	7,794.5	880	77.70%	18.20%
2007	Selinsgrove	5,339	617	11,556.5	320	51.90%	33.00%
2007	Shamokin	7,396	255	3,447.8	179	70.20%	6.60%
2007	Sunbury	9,855	734	7,448.0	352	48.00%	19.10%

Year	City	Population	Offenses	Rate per 100,000	Solved	Percent Solved	Percent of County
2008	Berwick	10,246	814	7,944.6	74	9.10%	26.20%
2008	Danville	4,530	330	7,284.8	102	30.90%	51.60%
2008	Lewisburg	5,572	261	4,684.1	154	59.00%	22.20%
2008	Nanticoke	10,261	1,008	9,823.6	389	38.60%	5.80%
2008	Pittston	7,600	327	4,302.6	94	28.70%	1.90%
2008	Pottsville	14,523	960	6,610.2	728	75.80%	14.90%
2008	Selinsgrove	5,339	682	12,773.9	327	47.90%	36.50%
2008	Shamokin	7,396	132	1,784.7	1	0.80%	3.60%
2008	Sunbury	9,855	715	7,255.2	263	36.80%	19.30%

**Recommendations:**

- Reporting: The Department should include the reported UCR figures on a monthly basis to the Mayor and City Council, along with a comparison with other municipalities to provide additional context. In addition, annual figures should be

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included as part of a budgetary submission on an annual basis, along with an analysis of the figures and any recommendations.

- Website: The Department should also place this information, whenever possible, on the City's website, to improve communications with residents and the business community.

## **Training**

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One of the critical elements in any law enforcement organization is training. This should begin as a best practice at the entry stage for every employee and continue through their tenure with the department. In-service training and promotional training should complement the basic training of every department employee. We do not live in a static environment in law enforcement; therefore we need to continuously implement dynamic programs and processes to stay even with and/or ahead of the constantly changing environment in which law enforcement responds and needs to thrive.

### **Entry Level Training**

A sound probationary program must be in place for both sworn officers and civilian personnel. Field Training Programs (FTO) for sworn officers' should be developed based upon accepted national standard training models and FTOs should be certified in these programs before they train probationary officers. Competent and standardized documentation of the training process and evaluation of the trainees should also be required. The FTO program should be in written form either as an FTO Manual or as a departmental policy document.

### **In-Service Training**

Training for in-service skills should be based upon the task requirements of the given position and role to which the employee is assigned. In small organizations, the cost of time lost to training must be balanced against the benefit that the training will provide to the employee assigned to attend the training. An analysis of the employee's roles should be done annually at the end of each year with a training and development plan drafted for the following year. This can best be done as a part of an employee's annual evaluation with goal reviews from the past year in conjunction with goal setting in the pending year. This assists in performance monitoring and overall department effectiveness.

In-service training for sworn officers must involve the Municipal Police Education and Training Commission (MPOETC) twelve (12) hours of mandatory training. It should also involve role based

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training such as "Street Crimes", interviewing techniques, safe traffic stops, Verbal Judo Tactical Communication, and others directed at developing patrol officers knowledge and skills.

In this area is also the mandatory annual firearms qualifications and other weapons qualifications required by the MPOETC and the certifications required or suggested by manufacturers of the other weapons being carried. First Aid and CPR are also considered in this area since they have either an annual or bi-annual requirement

All departmental personnel should also be required to take a departmentally developed and implemented 'Ethics' presentation at least every two years. With law enforcement being under the spot light of the community and the media it is continuously imperative to keep ethical behavior in the forefront of the thought processes of police officers and department employees.

#### Promotional Training

Supervisors who are initially promoted should attend training programs such as Penn State's POSIT and POLEX and the PA Chief's of Police Associations 'Command Institute'. In addition, they should attend first line supervision courses developed by any number of providers. All of these training opportunities are often few and far between unfortunately, but the travel is well worth the investment. Supervisors should also continue to take other programs that may present themselves helping them to better understand their role as being separate for that of the patrol officer. Taking the leap from patrol officer to supervisor of patrol officers, and becoming middle management, is often the most difficult hurdle to overcome psychologically. Any training opportunity that assists supervisor in understanding their role in maintaining officer accountability to themselves and the organization is essential in the training assignments and process.

#### Special Problems Training

One of the key training requirements of the department should be in the areas of responding to critical incidents. These may include 'Active Shooter', 'Incendiary Device' response and management, hazmat responses, Incident Command Systems, or any other variety of All Hazard problems required under the National Incident Management System. Training in these areas needs to be done both through table-top exercises within the agency through scenario discussions in "what if" this happened, how would you respond and what tactics would you utilize exercises, and actual proficiency training by inserting personnel into simulated real-life situations that they must manage. These can best be accomplished through partnerships with other agencies who would also be responding to these scenarios so that each has the value-added understanding of how they would respond and deploy before they are catapulted into an actual event.

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We no longer live in the day and age where training is a luxury. We live in a time when it is an absolute necessity for the safety and security of our communities as well as the proficiency and professional development of our employees.

**Recommendations:**

- **Increase Training Activities:** We recommend that a comprehensive training program be developed for all personnel, and should be projected and funded as a line item in the annual budget. This program should include mandatory MPOETC training, standardized additional training for new hires and refresher training for existing officers, additional skills training in conjunction with projected losses of such skills through attrition, and police management training to prepare selected officers for future supervisory roles, in line with succession planning.
- **Orientation of Training to Policing Objectives:** Training programs should be oriented, or take into account, the objectives of the City whenever applicable. With internal training, course outlines must provide reinforcement of this objective as much as possible.
- **Supervisory Training:** All department supervisors should be required to take appropriate supervisory training within 90 days of promotion. This training will lead to better operations, fewer employee complaints and grievances, and help to limit City liability. Supervisory training should be an ongoing activity, and should be, in part, a requirement for maintaining the rank.
- **Leadership Development Training:** The Police Department should begin developing a succession plan for the leadership of the department, and provide for effective technical, supervisory and management training for those officers with both the aptitude and willingness to run the department in the future. Senior leadership training should be provided by outside resources, allowing future leaders to interact with their peers and bringing in new ideas into the department. It has been many years since such training was offered, and the department is in desperate need of such long-term leadership development.

A simple reading of the accreditation standards may not suffice to solve this problem. Someone who is intimately familiar with the standards and has a working knowledge of the functionality they require in facilities as well as police department operations is essential and highly recommended.

## **Other Equipment Needs**

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In our review of the Police Department, we observed the need for the following:

- **Mobile Data Terminals:** At present, patrol officers must use the radio to query vehicle and criminal records, and hand write reports that are retyped for entry into the department's computer system. This current practice is inefficient and inadequate in meeting the current information needs and expectations of officers. The City should purchase mobile data terminals to allow quicker access to criminal records and reduce the amount of down time involved with writing/rewriting reports.
- **Computers:** Most of the computers in the department are functionally obsolete, and are increasingly subject to failure. It is recommended that an information technology line item be added to the budget to update computer equipment, starting with the file server. In addition, a program should be developed to upgrade such technology incrementally over the next several years. We also recommend that the computer system backup tapes be stored off-site.
- **Vehicle Cameras:** Many departments have vehicle-mounted video cameras in all patrol cars. The video cameras provide evidence during vehicle stops, especially for DUI, and add a level of protection for officers falsely accused of misconduct. The growing popularity of video cameras attests to their usefulness for departments and officers. Funding should be thru the Capital Budget or from grants.

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## **Accountability and Logbooks**

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Officers on patrol do not maintain daily logs to track their time and activities. Normally, these logs are useful for many reasons. For example, logbooks serve to account for officer whereabouts and activities during any given patrol tour. This data can be useful protect the officer and the municipality from false accusations, or can be used as supporting evidence in disciplinary proceedings, when necessary. From a statistical standpoint, the information can be useful in compiling crime statistics by the time of occurrence of calls.

At present, there appears to be a serious lack of written documentation attesting to officer activities during a shift. Written documentation is essential in improving accountability of officers and supervisors and determining service needs and workflow.

We recommend the following:

- Logbooks: We strongly recommend that the Police Department require all officers to maintain a daily log. The officers would be required to maintain this log and account for all their time for that particular work day, including breaks and down time. The log would also require the officer to inventory his/her assigned vehicle as well as noting any damage so that inventory assigned can be restocked and damage accounted for. At the end of each work day, the officer signs his/her log and turns it into his/her supervisor for end-of-shift review. The supervisor in turn reviews the log accuracy and signs it. This would allow the supervisors to review the daily workload and make recommendations as to where and when department resources should be allocated as well as assisting supervisors with their performance evaluations on individual officers. An example of a log is attached.

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## **Human Resource Issues**

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The majority of the department's budget is invested in personnel, necessitating a strong focus on personnel management. Written performance standards and measurements are a valuable tool to protect the officer where liability issues arise, to protect the municipality in similar circumstances, and in applying disciplinary measures against an officer, if appropriate. It is as important for the municipality and community in general to have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of its policemen, as it is for the officers and police department management. This is because of the complexity and sensitivity of police work and the potential for misunderstanding at all levels.

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## **Recommendations**

- **Job Descriptions:** The department should develop written job descriptions for each supervisory and non-supervisory police and civilian position. These should contain not only the duties of the position, but performance standards for those duties, realistic measurements for successful performance, and a clear chain of supervision. Additionally, such job descriptions, performance, and supervisory expectations should be discussed with each employee by their immediate supervisors at least annually.
- **Performance Evaluations:** All employees should be subject to both formal and informal performance evaluations on a regular basis. The evaluation should be used for employee performance reviews and career development, as well as the basis for promotions, demotions and disciplinary actions. The City would need to provide training for all supervisors performing performance evaluations, and the program should be adjusted as necessary to meet the needs of the department and the officers. This would be in addition to other performance management programs discussed above.
- **Light Duty Program:** At present, the City does not have a formalized light duty program for employees who are either injured while on duty or have suffered off-duty injuries or illnesses. Research has shown that individuals brought back to work on a part or full-time light duty basis recover faster than those that stay at home. A light duty program must be enacted consistent with the medical capabilities of the injured employee, and should allow the city to utilize the injured employee in any duty or location consistent with the medical restrictions. In addition to reducing recovery time, the City also benefits by reducing Heart and Lung Act or Workers Compensation payments (and future rate increases) and directly or indirectly allows the City to perform work that it would not be able to if not for a light duty employee.
- **Hepatitis Exposure Pre-screening:** State law creates the presumption that Police Officers diagnosed with hepatitis were exposed while on duty, except when it can be demonstrated that exposure occurred in another manner. To ensure that the City establishes a health baseline for Police Officers, it should be a requirement to have all new hires tested for hepatitis as a condition of employment. Because the new hire is not an employee, there is no requirement to bargain over this action. While the City cannot discriminate against a new hire that tests positive for hepatitis and is medically capable of completing the work, it does provide a defense for future workers compensation claims.

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In addition, the City should offer or require immunizations to protect against hepatitis, TB and tetanus for both new hires and current officers. This will reduce the possibility of a workers compensation claim should an officer be exposed to carriers.

- **Second Languages:** Over the past 10 years, a significant and growing segment of the region's population speaks Spanish as a primary or sole language. However, the Police Department does not have people that have the ability to communicate with Spanish-speaking individuals. This "failure to communicate" can have a negative impact on the ability to solve or prevent crimes, deter positive interaction with the community, and defuse situations. We would recommend that the department encourage its officers to learn elementary Spanish, or to make arrangements with instructors to provide translation services on an as-needed basis.

The department should also evaluate its written materials to see which should be provided in multiple languages.

- **Driver's License Review:** Each year, the City should check the driver's licenses of each employee that drives a city owned or leased vehicle, or who receives mileage reimbursements. The review would be to ensure that the employee has a valid drivers license, if there is a pattern of vehicle accidents or traffic violations that could have an impact on the lawful and safe operation of vehicles. This process is usually required by an insurer providing vehicle insurance for the City.
- **Labor Law Training:** The Police Chief should attend annual labor law conferences to ensure that actions taken are in conformance to state and federal laws, as well as current case law.
- **Labor Negotiations:** We have provided the Administration with a confidential review of the existing collective bargaining agreement along with negotiation strategies.

## **Financial Initiatives**

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Because the department is dependent upon general taxes, user fees and state grants to fund its operations, it is subject to potentially significant changes in its budget. In order to minimize this impact, and to advance the goals of the City, we would recommend the following:

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- **Use of Cooperative Purchasing:** The Police Department has limited use of cooperative purchasing opportunities. The City can purchase tires through the Pennsylvania Department of General Services – COSTAR program, as well as computers, uniforms and the like. The City should regularly review available cooperative purchasing agreements to determine what services and equipment can be purchased thru the various programs, nearly always at a significant cost savings versus stand-alone purchases.
  - **Pursue Grants and Non-Traditional Funding:** The new Economic Stimulus Package provides for funding for law enforcement equipment and personnel for municipalities. We would strongly suggest that the City monitor the availability of these funds, and work in coordination with its' U.S. Representative and Senators to obtain funding as necessary.

## **Conclusion**

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This review has attempted to further examine key issues of the Sunbury Police Department with regard to Organization, Operations, Facilities, and Staffing. The primary understanding that has emerged in the review of the Sunbury Police Department is that it is an organization in need of fundamental development in key liability laden areas of the agency. It has an absolutely essential need to relocate to an improved facility that supports its mission and is built upon current accreditation standards. It has a critical need to develop policy and procedures based upon the same standards of best practices, and it needs to develop a training program that initially provides the strong foundation for employees to perform the best practices established by the department.

Finally, it needs to seek a records management system that processes information efficiently and places that information at the fingertips of officers both in-house and in the mobile field environment. These are all no small tasks, but never-the-less must be achieved. The community deserves such a police department to respond to its needs and maintain its peace and dignity for the quality of life and economic prosperity to thrive.