

# The Police Chief

THE PROFESSIONAL VOICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

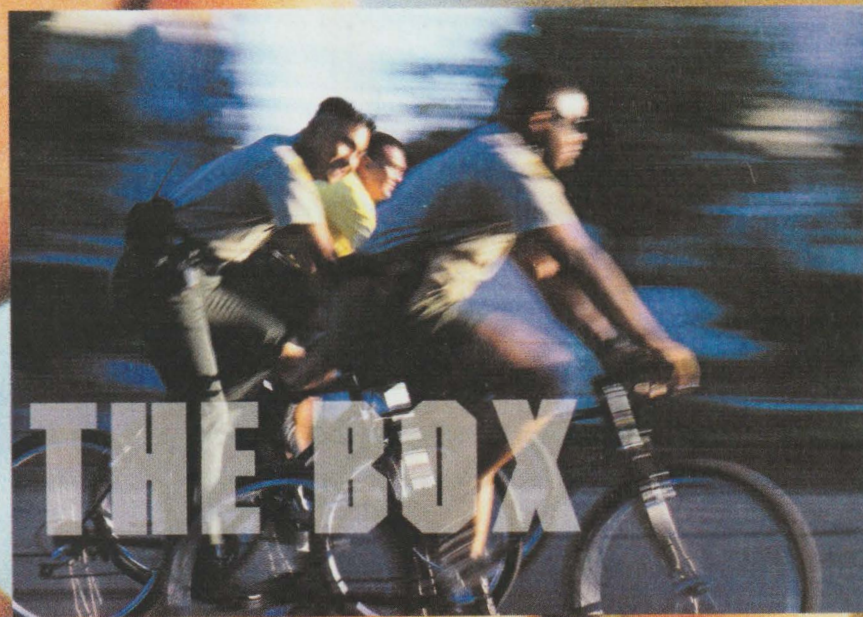
MARCH 2000

Preparing for  
Organizational  
Change

Measuring Success

Building  
Community  
Trust

THINKING  
OUTSIDE



## Also in this issue:

- ✓ Protecting the National Infrastructure
- ✓ Terrorism and the Municipal Police Department
- ✓ Developing Future Leaders



# Measuring Success

*By Commander Ross E. Swope, Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, DC*

**W**orking smarter is becoming a necessity to many police departments that are facing increasing demands without receiving additional resources to meet these demands. In the process of working smarter, many departments are using new models of policing. As they make the transition to community-oriented and problem-solving policing, they need to know what is working. Police departments can accomplish this through program evaluation to measure their success.

The following example illustrates the importance of program evaluation.

A recently promoted sergeant is assigned to a new area. He attends his first community meeting, where residents complain about an open-air drug market at a specific intersection. The residents describe individuals loitering on the corner throughout the evening, a high volume of vehicular traffic, and money and small objects being exchanged between the individuals on the corner and the people in the cars. The residents hear gunshots in the night, and report that violent crimes have increased near the corner. As a result, residents are afraid to go out at night.

The sergeant expresses concern and informs the group that he will address the problem. He leaves the meeting, visits the intersection, and discovers that the residents are correct. The corner is an open-air drug market. Later that evening, the sergeant meets with the beat officers assigned to that area. They confirm the residents' complaints and the sergeant's observations. The officers report that drug activity has always occurred at that corner, but that recently it has gotten worse. The next day the sergeant meets with officers assigned to the vice unit. The vice unit is aware of the drug sales taking place at the corner and has periodically made arrests. A check of the reported crimes near the corner reveals a recent upsurge in violent incidents. Calls for service near the corner have also increased significantly in the past three months. There is obviously a problem.

The sergeant devises a plan. He places foot patrol officers in the vicinity of the corner every day from three o'clock in the afternoon until three o'clock in the morning. After 60 days the sergeant feels confident that he has dealt effectively with the open-air drug market. He attends a community meeting and reports on the actions he has taken.

Has the sergeant been successful? If you answered yes, how do you know? Did the number of reported violent crimes decrease? Did the number of drug arrests increase or decrease? Did the amount of drugs seized increase or decrease? Did the volume of traffic decrease? Do residents still hear gunshots? Do residents notice a difference? Do residents feel safer? Did the number of calls for service decrease? Have the beat officers seen a change?

Did the sergeant conduct a visual inspection of the corner and record what he observed?

Program evaluation provides a process to find the answers to these questions. It is the process of knowing what works; it is the process of enabling the department to work smarter.

New models of policing call for decentralized organizational structures and place the brunt of the responsibility for effecting change on street-level officers. Because of this, program evaluations are critical for street-level officers—it is as important for these officers to conduct evaluations as it is for agencies to evaluate department-wide programs and initiatives.

## *Program Evaluation*

Program evaluations can provide departments with measures of success and show which plans, tactics, and initiatives should be abandoned. Resources can be more efficiently and effectively directed as a result of program evaluation. Program evaluation can help account for actions in terms of effectiveness and cost. Effectiveness is defined by results and benefits. Costs are defined by time, manpower, equipment, and even good will or satisfaction with the police. A program evaluation also can help determine how difficult a plan is to implement. Program evaluation provides feedback for implementation, and knowledge on which to base future programs and decisions.

The purpose of program evaluation, also known as evaluation research, is to evaluate the impact of intervention, responses, treatments, tactics and actions. Program evaluation is the process of determining whether actions taken produced the intended result. Program evaluation has two components: process evaluation and impact assessment (Maxfield and Babbie, 1995).

Process evaluation enables the researcher to determine if the intervention, response, treatment, tactic or action was implemented as planned. This information is captured through process measures. Impact assessment enables the researcher to determine if the intervention, tactic or action achieved the intended goal of the action (i.e., if the goal of a program was met). This information is captured through outcome measures.

Program evaluation thus seeks to link the intended action and goals of a plan to empirical evidence that the plan was implemented, and that it is having the desired effect. Program evaluation helps determine which successes and failures can be attributed to a program and which to chance or extraneous causes. To obtain useful results from a program evaluation, it is necessary to conduct both a process evaluation and an impact assessment. This means gathering data that measures processes and outcomes (impacts).



# Chief of Police

Salt Lake City is seeking a Chief of Police to command a dynamic police force of 420 sworn officers and 200 support personnel.

Salt Lake City is situated between two beautiful mountain ranges. The world's largest inland sea, "The Great Salt Lake," borders the city on the northwest. The downtown skyline continues to change as Utah's economy experiences strong growth. Ranked one of the best environments for business, the Salt Lake area has among the highest concentrations of biomedical, high technology, and software firms. Salt Lake is a city of vitality. It is a montage of modern high-rise commercial centers, historic sites and classic buildings with first-class accommodations and fine dining establishments. Numerous outdoor recreational opportunities surround the city. It is the 2002 Olympic Host City.

We are seeking a Police Chief with the following criteria:

- Graduation from an accredited college or university, with a Bachelor degree in Police Science, Law Enforcement or related field, AND, ten (10) years progressively responsible experience in law enforcement (experience and education may substitute for each other). Must have three (3) years in responsible command position in a law enforcement agency.
- Demonstrated leadership and a proven track record in cultivating and maintaining effective working relationships with elected officials, department heads, employees and employee associations in an urban environment.
- Sensitivity to the diverse population (173,000) of Salt Lake, including cultural diversity, and a variety of ethnic/racial issues, religious, social and other interests.
- Knowledge of organizational structure, laws, ordinances, policies and procedures of police administration, and management.
- Demonstrated interest in public safety administration through association with professional societies, post graduate education, specialized retraining programs or seminars, and ability to plan public safety activities for five to seven years in the future.
- Demonstrated commitment to community oriented policing.

Salary negotiable, depending on qualifications. Range: \$73,464 - \$104,940.

Applicants are encouraged to apply by April 5, 2000. Submit resumes to Salt Lake City Human Resources, 451 South State, Suite 115, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111. Fax 801-535-6614. Salt Lake City is committed to equal opportunity employment

To develop a plan to address a specific problem, clear goals must be established. Traditional goals include reducing reported crime rates, increasing arrests, increasing closure rates and decreasing response time. In community policing or problem-oriented policing agencies, program goals include reducing the level of fear in the community, improving community satisfaction with police, improving the quality of life for residents, doing justice, increasing community participation in police activities, reducing social and physical disorder, building trust and respect, reducing complaints filed against officers, identifying and recruiting outside public and private agencies to work with the police and community, promoting noncriminal options and restoring crime victims.

Plans often have multiple goals. In the case of the open-air drug market, goals may include reduction of the reported crime rate, increased drug arrests, reduction in the level of fear in the neighborhood, and reduction in the disorder created by heavy traffic and by loiterers. A plan may also have just one goal. In a case of thefts from parked vehicles, the goal might be just to reduce thefts from automobiles.

What activities, events, incidents, and steps occurred as part of a plan in the furtherance of the goal? Process measures are empirical indicators of whether the plan was put into practice as envisioned. If a plan has multiple steps, multiple process measures will be needed.

If a police intervention, action, tactic, or plan is intended to accomplish something, officers must be able to measure that "something." Outcome measures are empirical indicators of whether desired goals are achieved. In cases of multiple goals, multiple outcome measures will be needed.

## Data—Empirical Indicators

Process-measure empirical indicators and outcome-measure empirical indicators are derived from data. In program evaluation, data are pieces of information describing events, people, and other subjects (Eck, 1984). It is important to collect the best data possible with a minimum expenditure of resources.

Data are available from a variety of sources. Official reports provide data on the type, location, time and date of reported crime, as well as victim and suspect information. Radio-run logs and traffic tickets are sources of data. Official records from other agencies may be available—statistics from the census bureau, information from civil inspections and citations, and actions taken by the Department of Public Works.

Police organizations collect extraordinary quantities of data. Data on criminal events include type, frequency, location and time of crime, losses or injuries incurred, weapons used, and victim and suspect information. Data on police actions include date, time, location, duration of and observations on a surveillance, number of field interrogations at a location, and number of hours of high-visibility patrol at a targeted site. Data on residents in a community include levels of fear, satisfaction with the police, trust and respect for the police, involvement with the police in identifying and solving problems and victimization rates, ages, incomes, races and occupations. Data on offenders include number of prior arrests, substance abuse, ages, races, employment status, and location of residences. Data on a subject, such as a neighborhood, can include the numbers of vacant properties, abandoned vehicles and residents, types of housing, number of broken street lights, traffic patterns, amount of trash in public space, pedestrian use, presence of children playing outdoors, number of businesses selling alcoholic beverages, and recreational facilities available.

Official record keeping is usually mandatory and routine; therefore, official records possess attributes that other sources of data ordinarily do not:



- Records usually are maintained over long periods of time, providing a record of changes that can be traced.

- In well-managed organizations, there is usually some degree of quality control and standardization in the creation of reports.

- Often the completion of official reports is mandatory for certain incidents. This provides complete documentation of these incidents.

- Collection of data from official records can be relatively inexpensive, in terms of both time and human resource expenditures.

The primary disadvantage of official records is that they are collected for organizational purposes, not for the purpose of program evaluation (Eck, 1984).

### *Thefts from Parked Automobiles*

A lieutenant has identified a six-block area that is plagued by thefts from parked automobiles. He develops a plan to address this problem. Flyers are to be placed on cars to warn citizens of the problem and give them tips on prevention. Covert surveillance is to be carried out during peak theft times and bicycle patrols at other times. After 60 days, the lieutenant observes a 33 percent reduction in thefts from automobiles in the targeted location. Was the lieutenant's plan effective?

If you answer yes, consider this. The lieutenant discovers that only 16 flyers actually were placed on vehicles in the targeted area during the 60-day period. Only 45 minutes of covert surveillance was conducted in the past 60 days. On the day the lieutenant's plan was to go into effect, a cruiser transporting the police bicycles to the station was rear-ended by a truck and the bikes were destroyed; in fact, no bicycle patrol had taken place in the area during the 60-day period. Although thefts from vehicles in the targeted area declined by 33 percent, how confident would you feel reporting that the decline was a result of the lieutenant's plan?

A captain in another precinct heard about the lieutenant's plan and the reduction in theft from vehicles. The captain had a similar problem and decided to adopt the plan. The captain had officers conduct 120 hours of covert surveillance over 45 days, resulting in 11 arrests. But only 22 flyers were distributed, and the bike patrol was not conducted. After 60 days, the area showed a 27 percent decrease in theft from automobiles. Was every element of the plan effective?

The 27-percent reduction in thefts from automobiles was probably due, in whole or in part, to the captain's plan. We know which elements of the plan were implemented and which were not. We have discovered that increasing covert surveillance is probably an effective tactic in reducing thefts from autos in this area.

What about distributing flyers and patrolling on bicycle? Does the fact that thefts declined although these tactics were not used prove that the tactics are ineffective? No. If the tactics were not employed, it cannot be shown that they are effective or ineffective.

In reviewing the example of the lieutenant dealing with a theft-from-automobile problem, if a program evaluation had been carried out, data would have been collected to conduct a process evaluation. It would have been obvious that the intervention was not implemented as planned. Therefore, the 33 percent reduction in reported thefts from vehicles was not a result of the planned intervention because the intervention was not implemented.

The utility of program evaluation is not limited to crime problems. It can be used for any initiative.



**American  
Red Cross**

**StayWell**

*From the foremost educators in emergency response  
and a trusted name in health promotion:  
The American Red Cross and StayWell*

## **FIRST-CLASS TRAINING**

**For First Responders**

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE**



Emergency Response



**Meets and exceeds 1995 DOT guidelines!**

**Emergency Response** is a 44-1/2-53 hour advanced first aid course designed for training traditional and non-traditional first responders. This training package contains materials that comply with the 1995 US Department of Transportation First Responder: National Standard Curriculum.

This easy-to-implement program features a wide array of quality instructor support tools, including transparency masters, a computerized test bank, slides and videos.

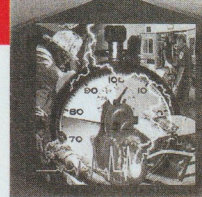
### **KEY CONTENT AREAS:**

- Preventing disease transmission
- Breathing devices including bag-valve mask and oxygen administration
- Critical incident stress debriefing
- Special populations
- Automated external defibrillation (AED)
- Healthy lifestyles awareness
- Enrichment content with in-depth information and additional skills
- Professional level CPR for adults, infants and children

**NEW!**



**CPR FOR THE  
PROFESSIONAL RESCUER**



## **CPR for the Professional Rescuer**

This stand-alone 9-hour course is intended for individuals who will have a duty to respond to an emergency as part of their job when they graduate.

**For more information or to order,  
contact your local American Red  
Cross or call 1-800-667-2968.**

LMA298

Circle no. 2 on Reader Response Card