## Chapter 6
The Police: Organization, Role, and Function

### Chapter Outline
- The Police Organization
- The Police Role
- The Patrol Function
  - Evidence-Based Justice: The Police Presence and Deterrence
  - Patrol Activities
  - Improving Patrol
  - Criminal Justice and Technology: In-Car Cameras
- The Investigation Function
  - How Do Detectives Detect?
  - Sting Operations
  - Analyzing Criminal Justice Issues: Forensics Under the Microscope
  - Undercover Work
  - Evaluating Investigations
  - Improving Investigations
  - Using Technology
  - The Victim Experience: Secondary Victimization and Victim Cooperation
- Community Policing
  - Implementing Community Policing
  - The Challenges of Community Policing
  - Overcoming Obstacles
- Problem-Oriented Policing (POP)
  - Analyzing Criminal Justice Issues: The Displacement Problem
  - Criminal Acts, Criminal Places
- Intelligence-Led Policing (ILP)
  - Intelligence and the Intelligence Process
- Fusion Centers
- Police Support Functions
- Improving Police Productivity
  - Careers in Criminal Justice: Crime Analyst

### Learning Objectives
- LO1 Understand the organization of police departments.
- LO2 Distinguish between the patrol function and the investigation function.
- LO3 Discuss various efforts to improve patrol.
- LO4 Discuss key issues associated with the investigative function.
- LO5 Understand the concept of community policing.
- LO6 List several challenges associated with community policing.
- LO7 Discuss the concept of problem-oriented policing.
- LO8 Define intelligence-led policing and explain ways in which it occurs.
- LO9 Explain the various police support functions.
- LO10 Identify some of the cost-saving measures that may be employed to improve police productivity.
Cities all across the country are being forced to cope with budget cuts. Services are being curtailed, employees are being furloughed, and capital improvements are being delayed—if not canceled altogether. Throughout history, police department spending has rarely landed on the chopping block, but in light of the recession gripping America, no public agency is immune. No one likes to cut spending for crime prevention, but in some locales it has become necessary.

Police departments across the country are adopting a range of creative—and controversial—strategies to respond to mandates that they limit spending. Some of them, such as Temecula, California’s, have placed limits on overtime, putting caps on the amount of extra work officers can put in. Other cities, including Philadelphia, have left hundreds of positions unfilled. Still others are offering senior officers early retirement. In one extreme case, the city of Toledo, Ohio, made cost-saving alterations to police and fire contracts without union input. Citing falling tax revenues, officials said that economic conditions amounted to an “exigent circumstance” that gave them no choice.

A few agencies have been fortunate enough to buck the trend. Some, including the Dallas Police Department, continue to hire year in and year out. But the Dallas experience is not the norm. Spending limits and budget cuts seem to prevail more than growth and expansion. This trend raises interesting questions for public safety. Do cuts in hiring affect crime?
other restrictions limit police effectiveness? Will we see an increase in crime because of criminal justice spending cuts? Only time will tell.

Most municipal police departments in the United States are independent agencies within the executive branch of government. On occasion, police agencies in two independent jurisdictions may cooperate and participate in mutually beneficial enterprises, such as sharing information on known criminals, or they may work with joint task forces of state, county, and federal agencies to investigate ongoing criminal cases. Aside from such cooperative efforts, police departments tend to be functionally independent organizations with unique sets of rules, policies, procedures, norms, and budgets. In other words, no two are exactly alike.

### THE POLICE ORGANIZATION

Although many police agencies are today in the process of rethinking their organization and goals, the majority are still organized in a hierarchical manner, as illustrated in Figure 6.1. Within this organizational model, each element of the department normally has its own chain of command and rank system. New York City ranks include the following, from lowest to highest:

- Police officer
- Detective specialist
- Detective investigator
- Sergeant (symbol of rank: 3 chevrons)
- Lieutenant (symbol of rank: 1 gold bar)
- Captain (symbol of rank: 2 gold bars)
- Deputy inspector (symbol of rank: gold oak leaf)
- Inspector (symbol of rank: gold eagle)
- Deputy chief (symbol of rank: 1 gold star)
- Assistant chief (symbol of rank: 2 gold stars)
- Bureau chief (symbol of rank: 3 gold stars)
- Chief of department (symbol of rank: 4 gold stars)
- Deputy commissioner (symbol of rank: 3 gold stars)
- First deputy commissioner (symbol of rank: 4 gold stars)
- Police commissioner (symbol of rank: 5 gold stars)

In a large municipal department, there may be a number of independent units headed by a bureau chief who serves as the senior administrator, a captain who oversees regional or precinct units and acts as liaison with other police agencies, a lieutenant who manages daily activities, and sergeants and patrol officers who carry out fieldwork. Smaller departments may have a captain or lieutenant as a unit head. At the head of the organization is the police chief, who sets policy and has general administrative control over all the department’s various operating branches.

Problems regarding a police department’s organizational structure are not uncommon, nor are they unique to policing agencies, as anyone who has ever dealt with any governmental bureaucracy is aware. Most often they are attributable to personnel changes (due to retirements, promotions, transfers, or resignations) or
simply to a periodic internal reorganization. As a result, citizens may sometimes have difficulty determining who is responsible for a particular police function or operational policy, or two divisions may unknowingly compete with each other over jurisdiction on a particular case. The large number of operating divisions and the lack of any clear relationship among them almost guarantee that the decision-making practices of one branch will be unknown to another. These are common management problems that are not insurmountable, and they are typically resolved over time.

In promoting personnel, most departments also follow a system called the time-in-rank system. This means that before moving up the administrative ladder, an officer must spend a certain amount of time in the next lowest rank. Thus a sergeant cannot become a captain without serving an appropriate amount of time as a lieutenant. In New York City, for example, promotions from police officer to sergeant, from sergeant to lieutenant, and from lieutenant to captain all occur via a civil service formula that involves such criteria as performance on a civil service written examination, length of service, citations awarded, and optional physical fitness test (for extra points). Promotion beyond the rank of captain is discretionary. Unlike the private sector, where people can be hired away from another company and given an immediate promotion and boost in pay, the time-in-rank system prohibits departments from allowing officers to skip ranks.
and sometimes prevents them from hiring an officer from another department and awarding her a higher rank. Although this system is designed to promote fairness and stability in police agencies and to limit favoritism, it may restrict administrative flexibility.

THE POLICE ROLE

In countless books, movies, and TV shows, the public has been presented with a view of policing that romanticizes police officers as fearless crime fighters who think little of their own safety as they engage in daily shootouts with Uzi-toting drug runners, psychopathic serial killers, and organized crime hit men. Occasionally, but not often, fictional patrol officers and detectives seem aware of departmental rules, legal decisions, citizens’ groups, civil suits, or physical danger. They are rarely faced with the economic necessity of moonlighting as security guards, taking on extra details, caring about an annual pay raise, or grappling when someone less deserving gets a choice assignment for political reasons.

How close to real life is this portrayal of a selfless crime fighter? Not very, according to most research efforts. Police officers are asked to deal with hundreds of incidents each year, and crime fighting is only a small part of the daily routine. Studies of police work indicate that a significant portion of an officer’s time is spent handling minor disturbances, service calls, and administrative duties. Police work, then, involves much more than catching criminals. Figure 6.2 shows the results of a national survey of police behavior. This survey found that about 17 percent of Americans aged 16 and older (about 40 million people) have contacts with the police each year. The single largest number of these involve some form of motor vehicle or traffic-related issues. About 5 million annual contacts involve citizens asking for assistance—responding to a complaint about music being too loud during a party, warning kids not to shoot fireworks, and so on. This survey indicates that the police role is both varied and complex.

These results are not surprising when we consider the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) arrest data. Each year, about 700,000 local, county, and state police officers make about 14 million arrests, or about 20 each. Of these, about 2 million are for serious crimes (Part 1), or about 3 per officer. Given an even distribution of arrests, it is evident that the average police officer makes fewer than 2 arrests per month and fewer than 1 felony arrest every four months.

These figures should be interpreted with caution because not all police officers are engaged in activities that allow them to make arrests, such as patrol or detective work, and many work in rural and suburban departments in areas with very low crime rates. About one-third of all sworn officers in the nation’s largest police departments are in such units as communications, antiterrorism, administration, and personnel. Even if the number of arrests per officer were adjusted by one-third, it would still amount to about four serious crime arrests per officer per year, and these figures include such crimes as shoplifting and other minor larcenies. So although police handle thousands of calls each year, relatively few result in an arrest for a serious crime such as a robbery or burglary; in suburban and rural areas, years may go by before a police officer makes a felony arrest.

The role of the police involves activities ranging from emergency medical care to traffic control, but law enforcement and crime control are critical (and often misunderstood) elements of policing. Here, a bank robbery suspect is being subdued. The suspect was able to make it only across the street from the bank before being apprehended.
The evidence, then, shows that unlike TV and film portrayals, the police role involves many non-crime-related activities. Although the media depict police officers busting criminals and engaging in high-speed chases, the true police role is much more complex. Police officers function in a variety of roles, ranging from dispensers of emergency medical care to keepers of the peace on school grounds. Although officers in large urban departments may be called on to handle more felony cases than those in small towns, they too will probably find that most of their daily activities are not related to crime. What are some of the most important functions of police?

THE PATROL FUNCTION

Regardless of style of policing, uniformed patrol officers are the backbone of the police department, usually accounting for about two-thirds of a department’s personnel. Patrol officers are the most highly visible members of the entire criminal justice system. They are charged with supervising specific areas of their jurisdiction, called beats, whether in a patrol car, or by motorcycle, horse, helicopter, or boat, or even on foot in some departments. Each beat, or patrol area, is covered 24 hours a day by different shifts. The major purposes of patrol are to:

- Deter crime by maintaining a visible police presence
- Maintain public order (peacekeeping) within the patrol area
- Enable the police department to respond quickly to law violations or other emergencies
- Identify and apprehend law violators
- Aid individuals and care for those who cannot help themselves
- Facilitate the movement of traffic and people
- Create a feeling of security in the community
EVIDENCE-BASED JUSTICE

The Police Presence and Deterrence

For many years, preventive police patrol was considered one of the greatest deterrents to criminal behavior. The visible presence of patrol cars on the street and the rapid deployment of police officers to the scene of the crime were viewed as particularly effective law enforcement techniques. However, research efforts have questioned the basic assumptions of patrol. The most widely heralded attempt at measuring patrol effectiveness was undertaken during the early 1970s in Kansas City, Missouri, under sponsorship of the Police Foundation, a private institute that studies police behavior. To evaluate the effectiveness of patrol, the researchers divided 15 police districts into three groups: One group retained normal patrol, the second (proactive) set of districts were supplied with two to three times the normal amount of patrol forces, and the third (reactive) group had their preventive patrols eliminated, with police officers responding only when summoned by citizens to the scene of a particular crime. Data from the Kansas City study indicated that these variations in patrol techniques had little effect on the crime patterns in the 15 districts. The presence or absence of patrol did not seem to affect residential or business burglaries, motor vehicle thefts, larcenies involving auto accessories, robberies, vandalism, or other criminal behavior. Moreover, variations in patrol techniques appeared to have little influence on citizens' attitudes toward police, their satisfaction with police, or their fear of future criminal behavior.

The Kansas City experiment gave the impression that there is little the police can do to reduce crime, but it is important to note that there were limitations associated with the research design. For example, officers sometimes entered reactive beats in order to respond promptly to calls for service. There are several other reasons why we shouldn't put too much faith in the Kansas City experiment.

- Dozens of studies are almost evenly divided on whether patrol and crime go hand in hand. Almost as many researchers have found less crime in areas with a

Patrol officers' responsibilities are immense. They may suddenly be faced with an angry mob, an armed felon, or a suicidal teenager and be forced to make split-second decisions on what action to take. At the same time, they must be sensitive to the needs of citizens who are often of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. When police are present and visible, a sense of security is created in a neighborhood, and residents' opinions of the police improve. But does patrol deter crime? This question is explored in the Evidence-Based Justice box.

Patrol Activities

Most experts agree that the bulk of patrol effort is devoted to what has been described as order maintenance, or peacekeeping: maintaining order and civility within the officer's assigned jurisdiction. Order-maintenance policing generally targets behavior that falls somewhere between criminal and noncriminal. The patrol officer's discretion often determines whether a noisy neighborhood dispute involves the crime of disturbing the peace or whether it can be controlled with street-corner diplomacy and the combatants sent on their way. Similarly, teenagers milling around in the shopping center parking lot can be brought in and turned over to the juvenile authorities or handled in a less formal and often more efficient manner.

Police encounter many troubling incidents that need some sort of fixing. Enforcing the law might be one tool a patrol officer uses; threats, coercion, sympathy, understanding, and apathy might be others. SWAT teams often handle the most difficult situations, but most important is keeping things under control so that no complaints arise. The real police role, then, may be that of a community problem solver.

Police officers practice a policy of selective enforcement, concentrating on some crimes but handling the majority in an informal manner. A police officer is supposed to know when to take action and when not to, whom to arrest and
higher police presence as have found less crime in areas with a lower police presence.

Some studies from other countries have shown that when the police go on strike (they are usually prohibited by law from doing so in the United States), crime rates surge. This suggests that patrol certainly does something to reduce crime.

Recent federal funding for the hiring of additional police officers has been linked to significant reductions in crime rates in cities across the country.

When the Department of Homeland Security increases the terror threat alert level, more police are put on patrol. Researchers have found that these surges in the police presence have led to less crime.

Increasing the size of the local police forces may have other benefits for the overall effectiveness of the justice system. Adding police and bolstering resources can increase prosecution and conviction rates. Inadequate resources make it difficult to gather sufficient evidence to ensure a conviction, and prosecutors are likely to drop these cases. Adding police resources helps increase prosecutorial effectiveness.


whom to deal with by issuing a warning or taking some other informal action. If a mistake is made, the officer can come under fire from his peers and superiors, as well as from the general public. Consequently, the patrol officer’s job is extremely demanding and often unrewarding and unappreciated. The attitudes of police officers toward the public, not surprisingly, are sometimes characterized as being ambivalent and cynical.11

Improving Patrol

In response to the aforementioned issues, police departments have initiated a number of programs and policies to try to improve patrol effectiveness. Some have proved more effective than others. Some are also more controversial than others.

AGGRESSIVE PATROL The Kansas City study greatly influenced the way police experts viewed the effectiveness of patrol. Its lukewarm findings set the stage for community- and problem-oriented policing models, which stress social service over crime deterrence. However, it may be too soon to dismiss police patrol as a crimefighting technique. Although the mere presence of police may not be sufficient to deter crime, the manner in which they approach their task may make a difference.

Police departments that use proactive policing, or an aggressive law enforcement style, may also help reduce crime rates. Proactive policing can include increased targeting of specific offenses, more arrests or citations for specific offenses or infractions, or a combination of each. For example, jurisdictions that encourage patrol officers to stop motor vehicles to issue citations and to aggressively arrest and detain suspicious persons also experience lower crime rates than jurisdictions that do not follow such proactive policies.15 Aggressive traffic enforcement can also have the added benefit of reducing more serious crimes.13

proactive policing

An aggressive law enforcement style in which patrol officers take the initiative against crime instead of waiting for criminal acts to occur. For example, they stop motor vehicles to issue citations and aggressively arrest and detain suspicious persons.
Likewise, research has shown that a concentrated focus on drug sales can be successful, as can a focus on gun-related offenses.

**BROKEN WINDOWS POLICING** The order maintenance function has become all the more important in light of George Kelling and James Q. Wilson’s popular *broken windows model* of policing. Their highly influential article made three key points:

1. *Neighborhood disorder creates fear.* Urban areas filled with street people, youth gangs, prostitutes, and the mentally disturbed are the ones most likely to maintain a high degree of crime.

2. *Neighborhoods give out crime-promoting signals.* A neighborhood filled with deteriorated housing, unrepaired broken windows, and disorderly behavior gives out crime-promoting signals. Honest citizens live in fear in these areas, and predatory criminals are attracted to them.

3. *Police need to aggressively target low-level “quality of life” crimes.* If they are to successfully reduce fear and prevent more serious crime from coming into neighborhoods, they must first address the minor problems that invite more serious ones.

Broken windows policing is controversial because some people perceive it as harassment. Why focus on low-level petty crimes when there are more serious problems? Others feel that broken windows policing is remarkably effective. Researchers have claimed it was responsible for the drastic reductions in crime that took place in New York City during the 1990s. Other researchers have put broken windows policing to the test and found that, indeed, it can be an effective approach. The downturn in the New York City violent crime rate during the 1990s has been attributed to aggressive police work aimed at lifestyle crimes: vandalism, panhandling, and graffiti.

**RAPID RESPONSE** It is widely assumed that criminals can be caught if the police can simply get to the scene of a crime quickly. As one researcher put it, . . . the shorter the police travel time from assignment to arrival at a crime scene, the more likely it is that police can arrest offenders before they flee. This claim is then extended to rapid response producing three crime prevention effects. One is a reduction in harm from crimes interrupted in progress by police intervention. Another, more general benefit of rapid response time is a greater deterrent effect . . . The third hypothesized prevention effect comes from the incapacitation through imprisonment of offenders . . .

But does the research support this view? Does rapid response really increase the chances of police catching lawbreakers? Unfortunately, the jury is still out, but some researchers have found that a quick response can be beneficial.

**PROCEDURAL JUSTICE** Patrol can be made more effective when police pay attention to how they treat citizens. For example, researchers have found that when officers treat citizens with dignity and respect, the citizens are more likely to be satisfied with the experience, to accept police decisions, and even to participate in crime prevention programs. Research also indicates that precinct-level efforts to ensure that officers are respectful of citizens can help lower the number of complaints and improve community relations. In other words, the police must pay attention to procedural justice, a concern with making decisions that are arrived at through procedures viewed as fair. If people view procedures as unfair, they will be less likely to support police in their crime-fighting efforts.

**USE OF TECHNOLOGY** Police departments have also relied on technology to help guide patrol efforts. The best-known program, CompStat, was begun in New York City as a means of directing police efforts in a more productive fashion. William Bratton, who had been appointed New York City police chief, wanted to revitalize the department and break through its antiquated bureaucratic structures.
He installed CompStat, a computerized system that gave local precinct commanders up-to-date information about where and when crime was occurring in their jurisdictions. Part of the CompStat program, twice-weekly "crime-control strategy meetings," brought precinct commanders together with the department's top administrators, who asked them to report on crime problems in their precincts and tell what they were doing to turn things around. Those involved in the strategy sessions had both detailed data and electronic pin maps that showed how crime clustered geographically in the precinct and how patrol officers were being deployed. The CompStat program required local commanders to demonstrate their intimate knowledge of crime trends and to develop strategies to address them effectively. When the assembled police administrators presented their ideas, the local commander was required to demonstrate, in follow-up sessions, how he had incorporated the new strategies in the local patrol plan. CompStat proved extremely successful and made a major contribution to the dramatic decline in New York City's crime rate during the past decade. CompStat-like programs have since been implemented in other jurisdictions around the country. Concept Summary 6.1 summarizes efforts to improve patrol effectiveness.

Technology has found its way into every avenue of police work. In-car cameras, laptop computers, radar, laser speed guns, and a variety of other devices are commonplace in the typical police cruiser.
CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND TECHNOLOGY

In-Car Cameras

During the 1990s, lawsuits alleging racial bias in police traffic stops began to be filed. This, coupled with some questionable shootings and other police-suspect encounters, prompted many agencies to install cameras in their patrol cars. Between 2000 and 2004, the Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services in the U.S. Justice Department awarded over $20 million in grants to local police departments so they could purchase and install in-car camera systems. Before the funding program, 11 percent of state police and highway patrol vehicles were equipped with cameras. A few years later, nearly 75 percent of these agencies were able to equip their police cars with cameras.

Reasons for In-Car Cameras

In-car cameras offer several advantages. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) studied in-car camera programs in states and came up with several reasons why this technology is desirable:

- **Officer safety.** Perhaps the single most beneficial feature of an in-car camera is the positive effect it can have on officer safety. Having a recording of, say, traffic stops enables the officers to view it and critique their actions after the fact.

- **Professionalism and performance.** Officers report altering their behavior to some extent when in front of the camera. The IACP found that many officers reported performing to the best of their ability, knowing their actions were being recorded. Other officers argue that a camera’s recordings are useful for preparing courtroom testimony; there is less need to rely on memory, which bolsters an officer’s credibility when he or she is testifying.

- **Defense against complaints.** A recording of a police-citizen contact helps protect the officer and the department for which he or she works from meritless complaints or lawsuits. The IACP study revealed that roughly half of citizen complaints are withdrawn once complainants are made aware that a camera recorded the alleged incident.

- **Leadership benefits.** Police administrators regard in-car cameras as desirable because they aid in investigations of misconduct and promote accountability of officers working in the field. Years of research on public perceptions of police have revealed that professionalism and courtesy promote citizen satisfaction and support. Cameras help further this.

- **Training.** Just as individual officers may review the recordings from their in-car cameras, so can training personnel use the recordings to arm trainees with the knowledge they need and stones of “what not to do.”

Untold numbers of other technological innovations have assisted the police in their crime control and prevention efforts. Some have helped them detect and apprehend criminals more quickly. Others have been developed in response to community concerns, making departments more accessible to the communities they serve. Still others have been put in police cars to protect officers from allegations of impropriety. One such technology, the in-car camera, is featured in the accompanying Criminal Justice and Technology feature.

THE INVESTIGATION FUNCTION

Since the first independent detective bureau was established by the London Metropolitan Police in 1841, criminal investigators have been romantic figures vividly portrayed in novels, movies, and TV shows. The fictional police detective is usually depicted as a loner who is willing to break departmental rules, perhaps even violate the law, to capture the suspect. The average fictional detective views departmental policies and U.S. Supreme Court decisions as unfortunate roadblocks to police efficiency. Civil rights are either ignored or actively scorned.31

Although every police department probably has a few aggressive detectives who may take matters into their own hands at the expense of citizens’ rights, modern criminal investigators are likely to be experienced civil servants, trained in investigatory techniques, knowledgeable about legal rules of evidence and
Criticisms of In-Car Cameras

In-car cameras are not supported by all concerned. To this day, some agencies have yet to install cameras because of resistance on the part of line officers and their collective bargaining units. In Montgomery, Alabama, officials agreed to install in-car cameras in the city’s police cruisers years ago, mainly in response to one officer’s shooting of an unarmed suspect, but union officials say the cameras threaten officer privacy. Critics make these points about in-car cameras:

- Distracted from the job. If cameras encourage officers to be on their best behavior, then some of them may become more aware of the camera rather than focusing on the task at hand. A small number of officers in the IACP study reported that the cameras distracted them from violators. Sometimes the officers would even worry more about positioning the camera for optimal viewing than about guarding their own safety.

- Too much reliance on the camera. Some officers also reported relying more on recordings of their stops than on their own memory. This could be detrimental from a court testimony standpoint (see above), and some officers reported that their note-taking skills suffered as a consequence of heavy reliance on technology.

- Too much information. There is a concern that the cameras reveal too much information. Union challenges, such as those in Montgomery, Alabama, underscore the controversy associated with requiring that officers always be on their toes because a camera is recording every move. Is this desirable? Many agencies compromise by setting the cameras to turn on only when the vehicle’s flashing lights and/or siren are turned on.

- Stress and job performance. The IACP study found that some officers reported increased stress levels associated with the cameras. A small percentage reported reduced job satisfaction. Some officials even reported making fewer traffic stops because of the presence of a camera.

Critical Thinking

1. What do you feel is the most important reason for in-car cameras? Is it a good reason?

2. Do in-car cameras make the police more effective or less effective? Why?


Investigative services can be organized in a variety of ways. In New York City, each borough or district has its own detective division that supervises investigators assigned to neighborhood police precincts (stations). Local squad detectives work closely with patrol officers to provide an immediate investigative response to crimes and incidents. New York City also maintains specialized borough squads—homicide, robbery, and special victims—to aid local squads and help identify suspects whose crimes may have occurred in multiple locations. There are also specialty squads that help in areas such as forensic. Other departments maintain special divisions with prime responsibility for addressing specific types of crimes.

Some jurisdictions maintain vice squads, which are usually staffed by plainclothes officers or detectives specializing in victimless crimes, such as prostitution or gambling. Vice squad officers may set themselves up as customers for illicit activities to make arrests. For example, male undercover detectives may frequent public men’s rooms and make advances toward other men. Those who respond are arrested for homosexual soliciting. In other instances, female police officers may pose as prostitutes. These covert police activities have often been criticized as violating the personal rights of citizens, and their appropriateness and fairness have been questioned.
How Do Detectives Detect?

Detectives investigate the causes of crime and attempt to identify the individuals or groups responsible for committing particular offenses. They may enter a case after patrol officers have made the initial contact, such as when a patrol car interrupts a crime in progress and the offenders flee before they can be apprehended. Detectives can investigate a case entirely on their own, sometimes by following up on leads provided by informants. Sometimes detectives go undercover in order to investigate crime: a lone agent can infiltrate a criminal group or organization to gather information on future criminal activity. Undercover officers can also pose as victims to capture predatory criminals who have been conducting street robberies and muggings.33

In a study of investigation techniques, Martin Innes found that police detectives rely heavily on interviews and forensic evidence to reconstruct or manufacture a narrative of the crime, creating in a sense the "story" that sets out how, where, and why the incident took place.34 To create their story, contemporary detectives typically use a three-pronged approach:35

- **Specific focus.** Detectives interview witnesses, gather evidence, record events, and collect facts that are available at the immediate crime scene.

- **General coverage.** This process involves detectives who (a) canvass the neighborhood and make observations; (b) conduct interviews with friends, families, and associates; (c) contact coworkers or employers for information regarding victims and suspects; and (d) construct victim/suspect time lines to outline their whereabouts before the incident.

- **Informative data gathering.** Detectives use modern technology to collect records of cell phones and pagers, computer hard drives (tablets, laptops, notebooks, desktops, and servers), diaries, notes, and documents. Information includes data used by persons of interest in the investigation that tell about their lives, interactions with others, and geographical connections (see Exhibit 6.1).

Detectives may successfully identify a criminal suspect if these methods pan out. But that is only the beginning of building an airtight case. Next, the detec-
Investigative Functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Focus</th>
<th>General Coverage</th>
<th>Informative Data Gathering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific witnesses</td>
<td>Neighborhood canvass</td>
<td>Cell phone records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific evidence</td>
<td>Friends, family, and associates</td>
<td>Computer hard drives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific events</td>
<td>Coworkers</td>
<td>Other records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific facts</td>
<td>Victim/suspect time lines</td>
<td>Private papers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Detectives attempt to gain as much information as possible from their suspect, perhaps even getting him to confess.

**Sting Operations**

Another approach to detective work, commonly referred to as a sting operation, involves organized groups of detectives who deceive criminals into openly committing illegal acts or conspiring to engage in criminal activity. Numerous sting operations have been aimed at capturing various types of criminals, ranging from professional thieves to sex offenders. To catch professional thieves, undercover detectives often pose as fences, set up ongoing fencing operations, and encourage thieves interested in selling stolen merchandise. Transactions are videotaped to provide prosecutors with strong cases. A similar approach is sometimes used to catch sex offenders.

Sting operations have drawbacks. By its very nature, a sting involves deceit by police agents that often borders on entrapment. Covert police activities have been criticized as violating the personal rights of citizens while forcing officers into demeaning roles, such as having female officers act like prostitutes. (Ironically,

sting operation

Organized groups of detectives who deceive criminals into openly committing illegal acts or conspiring to engage in criminal activity.
ANALYZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE ISSUES

Forensics Under the Microscope

The Chicago Tribune’s “Forensics Under the Microscope” series suggests that all is not well in the world of forensic sciences. Such concerns were echoed in a more recent National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report entitled Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward. The authors of the report highlighted a series of problems with the forensic sciences, many of which are not well known to people on the outside—and particularly not to those who owe their knowledge of forensics and investigations to fictional television programs. Here are some of those problems.

- **Case backlog.** The NAS called attention to another report in which it was learned that federal, state, and local laboratories reported a backlog of nearly 500,000 requests for forensic analysis. This backlog has been made even more serious by requests for quick test results. Labs are having a difficult time keeping up.

- **DNA demands.** The ascendency of DNA evidence and the opportunities to use it during investigations has further burdened crime labs. And even though the NAS, along with other experts and commissions, has heralded the advent of DNA testing as valuable for criminal investigations, there is only so much it can do. According to the NAS report, “DNA evidence comprises only about 10 percent of case work and is not always relevant to a particular case. Even if DNA evidence is available, it will assist in solving a crime only if it supports an evidential hypothesis that makes guilt or innocence more likely. For example, the fact that DNA evidence of a victim’s husband is found in the house in which the couple lived and where the murder took place proves nothing. The fact that the husband’s DNA is found under the fingernails of the victim who put up a struggle may have very different significance.”

- **Questionable evidence.** Now that DNA evidence is regarded as a gold standard in criminal investigations, this has started to cast doubt on convictions secured through other, more traditional types of evidence. According to the report, “The fact is that many forensic tests—such as those used to infer the source of tool marks or bite marks—have never been exposed to stringent scientific scrutiny . . . . Even fingerprint analysis has been called into question.”

- **Errors.** The NAS also called attention to several disturbing examples of errors and fraud in the forensic sciences. In one case, a state-mandated examination of the West Virginia State Police laboratory revealed 2005 research by Mary Dodge and her associates found that rather than considering it demeaning, female officers found their sting work as make-believe prostitutes exciting and considered it a stepping-stone toward promotion.38

Sting operations may encourage criminals to commit new crimes because they have a new source for fencing stolen goods. Innocent people may have their reputations by buying merchandise from a sting operation when they had no idea that the items had been stolen. By putting the government in the fencing business, such operations blur the line between law enforcement and criminal activity.

Undercover Work

Sometimes detectives go undercover to investigate crime.30 Undercover work can take a number of forms. A lone agent can infiltrate a criminal group or organization to gather information on future criminal activity. Or a Drug Enforcement Administration agent may go undercover to gather intelligence on drug smugglers. Undercover officers can also pose as victims to capture predatory criminals who have been conducting street robberies and muggings.

Undercover work is considered a necessary element of police work, although it can prove dangerous for the agent. Police officers may be forced to engage in illegal or immoral behavior to maintain their cover. They also face significant physical danger in playing the role of a criminal and dealing with mobsters, terrorists, and drug dealers. In far too many cases, undercover officers are mistaken for real criminals and injured by other law enforcement officers or private citizens trying to stop a crime. Arrest situations involving undercover officers may
that the convictions of more than 100 people were in doubt. Another scandal involving the Houston Crime Laboratory came to light in 2003. An investigation revealed "routine failure to run essential scientific controls, failure to take adequate measures to prevent contamination of samples, failure to adequately document work performed and results obtained, and routine failure to follow correct procedures for computing statistical frequencies."

- **Incompatible fingerprint identification systems.** Law enforcement agencies around the country have developed and put in place automated fingerprint identification systems in an effort to solve crimes. The problem, according to the NAS, is that there is inadequate integration of these systems.

- **Lack of preparation for mass disasters.** According to the NAS, "Threats to food and transportation, concerns about nuclear and cyber security, and the need to develop rapid responses to chemical, nuclear, radiological, and biological threats underlie the need to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of adequately trained forensic specialists . . . [but] public crime laboratories are insufficiently prepared to handle mass disasters."

  - **The CSI effect.** The so-called "CSI effect," named for the popular television programs, is concerned with the real-world implications of Hollywood's fictional spin on the forensic sciences and criminal investigations. The NAS found that some prosecutors believe they must make their in-court presentations as visually appealing as possible in an effort to please jurors who think they understand forensic work from having watched their favorite television programs. Attempts to satisfy such unrealistic expectations may possibly compromise the pursuit of justice.

### Critical Thinking

1. To what extent has the recent attention paid to wrongful convictions fueled calls for improvement, such as those in the NAS report?

2. At the other extreme, what improvements have been made in recent years?


also provoke violence when suspects do not realize they are in the presence of police and therefore violently resist arrest.

Undercover officers may also experience psychological problems. Being away from home, keeping late hours, and always worrying that their identity will be uncovered can create enormous stress. Officers have experienced post-undercover strain, resulting in trouble at work and, in many instances, ruined marriages and botched prosecutions. Hanging around with criminals for a long time, making friends with them, and earning their trust can also have a damaging psychological impact.

### Evaluating Investigations

Serious criticism has been leveled at the nation's detective forces for getting bogged down in paperwork and being relatively inefficient in clearing cases. One famous study of 153 detective bureaus found that a great deal of a detective's time was spent in nonproductive work and that investigative expertise did little to solve cases. Half of all detectives could be replaced without negatively influencing crime clearance rates.40

Although some question remains about the effectiveness of investigations (see the Analyzing Criminal Justice Issues box), police detectives do make a valuable contribution to police work because their skilled interrogation and case-processing techniques are essential to eventual criminal conviction.41 Nonetheless, in a majority of cases that are solved, the perpetrator is identified at the scene of the crime by patrol officers. Research by the Police Executive Research
Forum shows that if a crime is reported while in progress, the police have about a 33 percent chance of making an arrest; the arrest probability declines to about 10 percent if the crime is reported 1 minute later, and to 5 percent if more than 15 minutes elapse. As the time between the crime and the arrest grows, the chances of a conviction are also reduced, probably because the ability to recover evidence is lost. To put it another way, the longer the gap between completion of the crime and the placing of the investigation into the hands of detectives, the lower the odds that the perpetrator will be identified and arrested.42

**Improving Investigations**

A number of efforts have been made to revamp and improve investigation procedures. One practice has been to give patrol officers greater responsibility for conducting preliminary investigations at the scene of the crime. In addition, specialized units, such as homicide or burglary squads, now operate over larger areas and can bring specific expertise to bear. Technological advances in DNA and fingerprint identification have also boosted investigation effectiveness. Investigations also improve with cooperative victims, as discussed in The Victim Experience box.

One reason for investigation ineffectiveness is that detectives often lack sufficient resources to carry out a lengthy ongoing probe of any but the most serious cases. Research shows the following:43

- **Unsolved cases.** Almost 50 percent of burglary cases are screened out by supervisors before assignment to a detective for a follow-up investigation. Of those assigned, 75 percent are dropped after the first day of the follow-up investigation. Although robbery cases are more likely to be assigned to detectives, 75 percent of them are also dropped after one day of investigation.

- **Length of investigation.** The vast majority of cases are investigated for no more than 4 hours stretching over 3 days. An average of 11 days elapse between the initial report of a crime and the suspension of the investigation.

- **Sources of information.** Early in an investigation, the focus is on the victim; as the investigation is pursued, emphasis shifts to the suspect. The most critical information for determining case outcome is the name and description of the suspect and related crime information. Victims are most often the source of information. Unfortunately, witnesses, informants, and members of the police department are consulted far less often. However, when these sources are tapped, they are likely to produce useful information.

- **Effectiveness.** Preliminary investigations by patrol officers are critical. In situations in which the suspect’s identity is not known immediately after the crime is committed, detectives make an arrest in less than 10 percent of all cases.

Given these findings, detective work may be improved if greater emphasis is placed on collecting physical evidence at the scene of the crime, identifying witnesses, checking departmental records, and using informants. The probability of successfully settling a case is improved if patrol officers gather evidence at the scene of a crime and effectively communicate it to detectives working the case. Also recommended is the use of targeted investigations that direct attention at a few individuals, such as career criminals, who are known to have engaged in the behavior under investigation.

**Using Technology**

Police departments are now employing advanced technology in all facets of their operations, from assigning patrol routes to gathering evidence. Similarly, investigators are starting to use advanced technology to streamline and enhance the investigation process. Gathering evidence at a crime scene and linking clues to a list of suspects can be a tedious job for many investigators. Yet linkage is critical if suspects are to be quickly apprehended before they are able to leave the jurisdiction, intimidate witnesses, or cover up any clues they may have left behind.
SECONdary victimization and victim cooperation

Background
Research suggests that some crime victims are traumatized during the criminal justice process, a phenomenon dubbed secondary victimization. Rape victims in particular often relive certain aspects of the initial incident, perhaps when testifying at trial or while interacting with investigators soon after calling police. Shana Maier conducted interviews with a number of rape victim advocates, one of whom reported:

...a lot of police don't have training on sexual assault. And if you have just been raped by a man and you have a man coming in who is talking down to you in a way or making it feel like it is your fault, asking questions like, "Well, did you go with him to his room? Were you alone with him in his room?" Things like that, it tends to make you feel like it was your fault.

This is not to suggest that the police are uniformly insensitive to the plight of sexual assault victims. Much has changed in the past few decades. Much attention is now being paid to the victim experience, especially in sensitive cases involving sexual assault. Serious strides have been made in the criminal justice system and beyond to ensure victims are not forgotten, and the police are often trained in how to deal appropriately with crimes in which the secondary victimization potential looms large.

The Big Picture
Moving in to other areas of criminal activity, some domestic violence victims have reported unpleasant experiences in the investigative process. Others believe that the system did not take their case seriously enough. Additional research published by the National Institute of Justice confirms as much. Domestic violence victims who felt the police did not handle the initial incident effectively were less likely to report subsequent incidents, which of course makes it more difficult to identify and apprehend the perpetrator. This line of research thus suggests that the police need to take great care in investigating such cases, not just to make victims "feel good," but to make sure offenders are held accountable.

Homicide is a special case. Obviously the immediate victim cannot be "re-victimized," but surviving family members, other close relatives, and friends sometimes are. These "co-victims" often suffer post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms, stress, physical illness, loss of trust, intense grief, and a host of other ailments. And they, too, occasionally report unpleasant interactions with criminal justice officials. For example, a study by Paul Streitsky and his colleagues found that the vast majority of homicide co-victims were dissatisfied with their level of communication with investigators, especially in so-called "cold cases," those in which the offender has successfully eluded authorities for a long time. Co-victims reported frustration with a dwindling level of communication over time, staff turnover, and a general lack of updates concerning the status of the case. Their experiences are not particularly surprising though, investigators have a lot on their plates and it is difficult to pour slim resources into the pursuit of perpetrators who may never be found. Even so, steps should be taken to encourage victim involvement, communication, and cooperation for as long as possible during the investigative process.

Classroom Exercise
Organize the class into groups representing a variety of different victims, such as victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, human trafficking, burglary, drunk driving crashes, and homicide co-victims (the preferred number of students in each group and the size of the class will dictate the variety of offenses). Have each group come up with a bulleted list of recommendations they would give to first responders in order to facilitate positive interaction with the victims and minimize the chances of secondary victimization. A helpful starting point for gathering information is the website of the Office for Victims of Crime at www.ovc.gov.

One innovative use of technology enables investigators to compare evidence found at the crime scene with material collected from similar crimes by other police agencies. Police agencies are using a program called Coplink to help with this time-consuming task. Coplink integrates information from different jurisdictions into a single database that detectives can access when working investigations. The Coplink program allows investigators to search the entire database of past criminal records and compile a list of possible suspects even when only partial data are available, such as first or last name, partial license plate numbers, vehicle type, vehicle color, location of crime, or weapon used. The Coplink program enables police to access data from other police agencies in minutes, a process that otherwise could take days or weeks. The Coplink system allows for easy information sharing between law enforcement agencies, a task that has been problematic in the past. It is one of the new breed of computer-aided investigation techniques that are beginning to have a significant impact on capture ratios in the nation’s police departments.

COMMUNITY POLICING

For generations, police agencies have been trying to gain the cooperation and respect of the communities they serve. At first, efforts at improving the relationships between police departments and the public involved programs with the general title of police–community relations (PCR). Developed at the station house and departmental levels, these initial PCR programs were designed to make citizens more aware of police activities, alert them to methods of self-protection, and improve general attitudes toward policing.

Although PCR efforts showed a willingness of police agencies to cooperate with the public, some experts believed that law enforcement agencies needed to undergo a significant transformation to create meaningful partnerships with the public. In their view, community relations and crime control effectiveness cannot be the province of a few specialized units housed within a traditional police department. Instead, the core police role must be altered if community involvement is to be won and maintained. To accomplish this goal, police departments should return to an earlier style of policing, in which officers on the beat had intimate
contact with the people they served. Modern police departments generally rely on motorized patrol to cover wide areas, to maintain a visible police presence, and to ensure rapid response time. Although effective and economical, the patrol car removes officers from the mainstream of the community, alienating people who might otherwise be potential sources of information and help to the police.

In response to the limitations of earlier approaches to policing, community-oriented policing (COP) programs have been implemented in large cities, suburban areas, and rural communities. Also described as simply "community policing," such programs promote interaction between officers and citizens and give officers the time to meet with local residents to talk about crime in the neighborhood and to use personal initiative to solve problems. Although not all programs work (police-community newsletters and cleanup campaigns do not seem to do much good), the overall impression has been that patrol officers can reduce the level of fear in the community. Some studies have also showed that community policing programs reduce crime.

Exhibit 6.2 elaborates on the elements of community-oriented policing.

**Implementing Community Policing**

The community policing concept was originally implemented through a number of innovative demonstration projects. Among the most publicized were experiments in foot patrol, which took officers out of cars and had them walking beats in the neighborhood. Foot patrol efforts were aimed at forming a bond with community residents by acquainting them with the individual officers who patrolled their neighborhood, letting them know that police were caring and available. The first foot patrol experiments were conducted in cities in Michigan and New Jersey. An evaluation of foot patrol indicated that although it did not bring

| community-oriented policing |
| Programs designed to bring police and public closer together and create a more cooperative environment between them. |

| foot patrol |
| Police patrol that takes officers out of cars and puts them on a walking beat to strengthen ties with the community. |

---

**EXHIBIT 6.2** Three Key Components of Community-Oriented Policing

| Community Partnerships |
| Collaborative partnerships between the law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve to develop solutions to problems and increase trust in police. |

- Other government agencies
- Community members/groups
- Nonprofits/service providers
- Private businesses
- Media

| Organizational Transformation |
| The alignment of organizational management, structure, personnel, and information systems to support community partnerships and proactive problem solving. |

| Agency Management |
| Climate and culture
- Leadership |

| Labor relations
- Decision making
- Strategic planning
- Policies
- Organizational evaluations
- Transparency
- Organizational structure |

**Geographical Assignment of Officers**

- Despecialization
- Resources and finances

| Personnel |
| Recruitment, hiring, and selection
- Personnel supervision/evaluations
- Training |

| Information Systems (Technology) |
| Communication/access to data
- Quality and accuracy of data |

| Problem Solving |
| The process of engaging in the proactive and systematic examination of identified problems to develop and rigorously evaluate effective responses. |

- Scanning: Identifying and prioritizing problems
- Analysis: Researching what is known about the problem
- Response: Developing solutions to bring about lasting reductions in the number and extent of problems
- Assessment: Evaluating the success of the responses
- Using the crime triangle to focus on immediate conditions (victim/offender/location)

down the crime rate, residents in areas where foot patrol was added perceived greater safety and were less afraid of crime.\textsuperscript{49}

Since the advent of these programs, the federal government has encouraged the growth of community policing by providing millions of dollars to hire and train officers.\textsuperscript{49} The U.S. Justice Department’s Office of Community Oriented Policing Services is the go-to source for community policing funding.\textsuperscript{50} Hundreds of communities have adopted innovative forms of decentralized, neighborhood-based community policing models. Recent surveys indicate that a significant increase is evident in community policing activities in recent years and that certain core programs such as crime prevention activities have become embedded in the police role.\textsuperscript{51}

**The Challenges of Community Policing**

The core concepts of police work are changing as administrators recognize the limitations and realities of police work in modern society. If they are to be successful, community policing strategies must be able to react effectively to some significant administrative problems:

- **Defining community.** Police administrators must be able to define the concept of community as an ecological area characterized by common norms, shared values, and interpersonal bonds.\textsuperscript{52} After all, the main focus of community policing is to activate the community norms that make neighborhoods more crime resistant. If, in contrast, community policing projects cross the boundaries of many different neighborhoods, any hope of learning and accessing community norms, strengths, and standards will be lost.\textsuperscript{53}

- **Defining roles.** Police administrators must also establish the exact role of community police agents. How should they integrate their activities with those of regular patrol forces? For example, should foot patrols have primary responsibility for policing in an area, or should they coordinate their activities with officers assigned to patrol cars?\textsuperscript{54}

- **Changing supervisor attitudes.** Some supervisors are wary of community policing because it supports a decentralized command structure. This would mean fewer supervisors and, consequently, less chance for promotion and a potential loss of authority.\textsuperscript{55} Those supervisors who learn to actively embrace community policing concepts are the ones best able to encourage patrol officers to engage in self-initiated activities, including community policing and problem solving.\textsuperscript{55}

- **Reorienting police values.** Research shows that police officers who have a traditional crime control orientation are less satisfied with community policing efforts than those who are public service oriented.\textsuperscript{56} In some instances, officers holding traditional values may go as far as looking down on their own comrades assigned to community policing, who as a result feel "stigmatized" and penalized by lack of agency support.\textsuperscript{57}

- **Revising training.** Community policing requires that police departments alter their training requirements, especially during field training.\textsuperscript{58} Future officers must develop community-organizing and problem-solving skills, along with traditional police skills. Their training must prepare them to succeed less on their ability to make arrests or issue citations and more on their ability to solve problems, prevent crime effectively, and deal with neighborhood diversity and cultural values.\textsuperscript{59}

- **Reorienting recruitment.** To make community policing successful, mid-level managers who are receptive to and can implement community-change strategies must be recruited and trained.\textsuperscript{60} The selection of new recruits must be guided by a desire to find individuals with attitudes that support community policing. They must be open to the fact that community policing will help them gain knowledge of the community, give them opportunities to gain skill and experience, and help them engage in proactive problem solving.\textsuperscript{61}
Reaching out to every community. Because each neighborhood has its own particular needs, community policing must become flexible and adaptive. In neighborhoods undergoing change in racial composition, special initiatives to reduce tensions may be required. Some neighborhoods are cohesive and highly organized, and residents work together to solve problems. In other neighborhoods, it takes more work for community policing to succeed.

Overcoming Obstacles

Although there are formidable obstacles to overcome, growing evidence suggests that community- and problem-oriented policing can work and fit well with traditional forms of policing. Many police experts and administrators have embraced these concepts as revolutionary revisions of the basic police role. Community policing efforts have been credited with helping reduce crime rates in large cities such as New York and Boston. The most professional and highly motivated officers are the ones most likely to support community policing efforts.

These results are encouraging, but there is no clear-cut evidence that community policing is highly successful at reducing crime or changing the traditional values and attitudes of police officers involved in the programs. Some research does show that the arrest rate actually increases after COP programs have been implemented. However, crime rate reductions in cities that have used COP may be the result of an overall downturn in the nation’s crime rate, rather than a result of community policing efforts.

Despite these professional obstacles, community policing has become a common part of municipal police departments. The concept is also being exported around the world, with varying degrees of success; some nations do not seem to have the stability necessary to support community policing. Where it is used, citizens seem to like community policing initiatives, and those who volunteer and get involved in community crime prevention programs report higher confidence in the police force and its ability to create a secure environment. They also tend to be more likely to report crime.

PROBLEM-ORIENTED POLICING (POP)

Closely associated with, yet independent from, the community policing concept are problem-oriented policing (POP) strategies. Traditional police models focus on responding to calls for help in the least possible time, dealing with the situation, and then getting on the street again as soon as possible. In contrast, the core of problem-oriented policing is a proactive orientation.

Problem-oriented policing strategies require police agencies to identify particular long-term community problems—street-level drug dealers, prostitution rings, gang hangouts—and to develop strategies to eliminate them. Like community policing, being problem solvers requires that police departments rely on local residents and private resources. This means that police managers must learn how to develop community resources, design efficient and cost-effective solutions to problems, and become advocates as well as agents of reform. A significant portion of police departments are using special units to confront specific social problems. For example, departments may employ special units devoted to youth issues ranging from child abuse to gangs.

Problem-oriented policing models are supported by the fact that a great deal of urban crime is concentrated in a few hot spots. A large number of all police calls in metropolitan areas typically radiate from a relatively few locations: bars, malls, the bus depot, hotels, and certain apartment buildings. By implication, concentrating police resources on these hot spots of crime could appreciably reduce crime.
ANALYZING CRIMINAL JUSTICE ISSUES

The Displacement Problem

One of the most common criticisms of problem-oriented policing is that it simply pushes crime into surrounding areas. In other words, the criminal element follows the path of least resistance. This can be both a blessing and curse. On the one hand, a city mayor who is responsible to those in the city he or she serves may not care if a successful intervention pushed crime into a neighboring city; the people in the neighboring city don't elect the mayor! On the other hand, when crime moves elsewhere, it doesn't go away. This means that some problem-oriented strategies help one community (or neighborhood) but hurt the next.

Unfortunately, few efforts to investigate the effectiveness of problem-oriented policing consider the issue of displacement. Few take a hard look at whether crime went up in surrounding areas—or at other aspects of displacement. Researchers have identified five types of displacement:

- **Temporal**. Offenders change the times at which they offend.
- **Spatial**. Offenders offend in different locations.
- **Target**. Offenders choose different targets.
- **Tactical**. Offenders use different methods to accomplish their objectives.
- **Offense**. Offenders switch to different crime types.

Note that four of these varieties of displacement do not require that offenders move to a different area. This complicates matters, because it means the police need to be cognizant of more than just spatial displacement. They have to look for unanticipated consequences. If, for example, a city sees a surge in car thefts from mall parking lots, the police may launch an initiative to aggressively patrol the areas to catch and deter criminals. Their work is not done, however, if they succeed. They also need to ensure that offenders didn't opt for different targets, such as residences—or cars parked in private driveways. This is difficult to do.

What factors influence whether displacement will occur? A recent study by the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing identifies three factors:

- **Offender motivation**. What drives offenders to break the law is likely to influence displacement.

Criminal Acts, Criminal Places

Problem-oriented strategies are being developed that focus on specific criminal problem areas, specific criminal acts, or both. They have proved so popular and effective that an organization has emerged whose mission is to share information between police agencies concerning best practices. The Center for Problem-Oriented Policing makes available an extensive collection of problem-specific guides that police officers around the country can access, read, and apply to situations in their respective jurisdictions. Examples of problem-solving efforts include combating auto theft and violence.

**COMBATING AUTO THEFT** Because of problem-oriented approaches (combined with advanced technology), car thieves in many jurisdictions are no longer able to steal cars with as much ease as before. To reduce the high number of car thefts occurring each year, some police departments have invested in bait cars, which are parked in high-theft areas and are equipped with technology that alerts law enforcement personnel when someone has stolen a vehicle. A signal goes off when either a door is opened or the engine starts. Then, through the use of global positioning satellite (GPS) technology, police officers can watch the movement of the car. Some cars are also equipped with microscopic videos and audio recorders, which enable officers to see and hear the suspect(s) within the car, and with remote engine and door locks, which can trap the thief inside. The technology has been used in conjunction with an advertising campaign to warn potential car thieves about the program. The system has been instituted in several cities, with impressive results. Motor vehicle theft dropped over
Drug-addicted offenders, for example, may substitute one type of theft for another in order to generate cash to sustain their habits.

- **Offender familiarity.** A large body of literature confirms that offenders, like people in general, don't like to step out of their comfort zone. More often than not, if displacement is going to occur, it will occur close to the same location and offenders will opt for familiar targets and tactics.

- **Crime opportunity.** When there are opportunities to offend, motivated offenders will do so. A community-wide initiative that puts all residents on high alert may do wonders to "harden" targets and make it difficult for offenders simply to move up the street to the next suitable target. Alternatively, if one specific location is targeted, but others are not, then those other areas may become attractive for motivated offenders.

Many problem-oriented policing initiatives do not result in displacement. In fact, some produce positive spillover effects, a phenomenon known as **diffusion.**

Diffusion involves the reduction of crime (or similar benefits) in areas other than the one initially targeted. Many studies have shown evidence of diffusion, so it is important for evaluators to be aware that there can be additional benefits associated with problem-oriented policing programs. But they can be just as difficult to detect as displacement.

**Critical Thinking**
1. Why may displacement not occur?
2. What are the ideal boundaries for detecting displacement?
3. How exactly could displacement be measured?


---

40 percent in Minneapolis over a three-year period in which bait cars were used and dropped 30 percent in Vancouver within six months of the time the program was begun. In addition to cutting down on auto theft, the system (which costs roughly $3,500 per car) tends to reduce the danger of high-speed pursuits because police officers can put obstacles on the road to stop the car.78

**REDUCING VIOLENCE** A number of efforts have been made to reduce violence by using problem-oriented community policing techniques. Perhaps the best-known program, Operation Ceasefire, was a problem-oriented policing intervention aimed at reducing youth homicide and youth firearms violence in Boston. Evaluations of the program found that Ceasefire produced significant reductions in youth homicide victimization and gun assault incidents in Boston—reductions that were not experienced in other communities in New England or elsewhere in the nation.79

The Jersey City, New Jersey, police recently applied a variety of aggressive crime-reducing techniques in some of the city's gang-ridden areas. Evaluations of the program show that crime rates were reduced when police officers used aggressive problem solving (e.g., drug enforcement) and community improvement techniques (e.g., increased lighting and cleaned vacant lots) in high-crime areas.80 Recent research on efforts to reduce gun violence suggest that a strategy of "pulling levers" can be quite effective. This approach focuses on communicating penalties to criminals and using every get-tough strategy available when laws are violated.81

Although programs such as these seem successful, the effectiveness of any street-level problem-solving efforts must be interpreted with caution.82 Criminals could merely be dispersing to other, safer areas of the city and planning to
return shortly after the program has been declared a success and the additional police forces have been pulled from the area. Nonetheless, evidence shows that simply saturating an area with police may not deter crime but that focusing efforts at a particular problem may have a crime-reducing effect.

Gauging the effectiveness of problem-oriented policing is difficult. On the one hand, it may have a deterrent effect; hot-spots policing increases the community perception that police arrest many criminals and that most violators get caught. On the other hand, there is the possibility of displacement: criminals move from an area targeted for increased police presence to another that is less well protected. When the police leave, the criminals return to business as usual. The displacement issue is discussed further in the Analyzing Criminal Justice Issues feature.

INTELLIGENCE-LED POLICING (ILP)

Since 9/11, policing has experienced a fundamental philosophical change. It has combined a homeland security focus with the many advances made in the realms of community- and problem-oriented policing. An outgrowth of this combination is intelligence-led policing (ILP): "the collection and analysis of information to produce an intelligence end product designed to inform police decision making at both the tactical and strategic levels." More simply, ILP is intended to further shift the emphasis in police work away from reactive responses and individual case investigations. It instead emphasizes information sharing, collaboration, and strategic solutions to crime problems at various levels. It relies heavily on:

- Confidential informants
- Offender interviews
- Careful analysis of crime reports and calls for service
- Suspect surveillance
- Community sources of information

The British have a long history of sophisticated intelligence gathering and analysis. All 43 British constabularies, as well as the London Metropolitan Police, have had intelligence units for some time, to deal with problems ranging from drugs to organized crime. The UK’s National Drugs Intelligence Unit, created in the 1980s, gathers intelligence to aid in the enforcement of laws against drug trafficking. In 1992, the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) was formed, mainly to deal with the problem of organized crime. One of its responsibilities is to work with the chemical industry in the UK to identify and disrupt the production of synthetic drugs.

In contrast, American law enforcement agencies have, until recently, had little intelligence-gathering capacity. If it occurred at all, intelligence gathering was mostly reserved for large police agencies. According to David Carter, one of the leading experts on ILP, "Early law enforcement initiatives typically had no analysis and essentially consisted of dossiers kept on individuals who were suspicious or were deemed to be threats of some sort, often based on intuitive, rather than empirical, threat criteria." Current ILP initiatives attempt to compensate for this shortcoming.

Intelligence-led policing bears a great deal of similarity to problem-oriented policing. The two are somewhat different, however. Problem-oriented policing puts problem identification and solution in the hands of individual street-level officers. In contrast, ILP emphasizes a top-down managerial approach by which administrators set priorities for crime prevention and enforcement and then pass these priorities down through the agency. ILP is also similar to community policing in that it relies on residents as part of the intelligence-gathering process. But it is different, too, because whereas community policing emphasizes the desires of the community, intelligence-led policing relies on problem identification through careful analysis of the criminal environment as a whole. Intelligence-led policing...
has even been likened to CompStat, which is discussed earlier in this chapter. See Table 6.1 for a summary of the differences and commonalities between CompStat and intelligence-led policing.

To gain a more concrete grasp of the concept of intelligence-led policing, consider these examples:

- A county sheriff's office identifies narcotics control as its top priority and develops strategies accordingly. The office targets known offenders and groups, shuts down open-air drug markets and crack houses, and participates in school-based drug awareness programs to help prevent drug use.
- A statewide agency identifies vehicle insurance fraud as a top area for enforcement. The agency targets those involved in staged accidents, identifies communities in which insurance fraud is prevalent, exposes ongoing fraudulent activity, and mounts a public education campaign.
- A police agency in a small city makes safe streets a priority. The agency focuses on directed enforcement in identified hot spots. It also targets career criminals whose apprehension will significantly reduce the number of crimes being committed. Preventive measures include enhanced patrols, improved street lighting, and crime watch programs.91
Intelligence and the Intelligence Process

Because intelligence-led policing emphasizes policing based on intelligence, it is only fitting that we devote more attention to the concept of intelligence. Basically, there are two types of intelligence. Tactical intelligence "includes gaining or developing information related to threats of terrorism or crime and using this information to apprehend offenders, harden targets, and use strategies that will eliminate or mitigate the threat." It consists of information that can be used immediately. An example of tactical intelligence is knowing that a wanted fugitive is at a particular location. This is information that can be used immediately for the purpose of making an arrest. Strategic intelligence provides information to decision makers about the changing nature of certain problems and threats for the purpose of "developing response strategies and reallocating resources." It is more general and is used to direct operations. An example of strategic intelligence is awareness that a particular gang traffics in a particular type of drug. With this information, pressure can be brought to bear on the gang as a whole, even though law enforcement officials may not have the tactical intelligence necessary to make an arrest.

Intelligence gathering follows a six-step process (see Figure 6.3). The first step, planning and direction, involves deciding what it is that officials want to know and what data to collect to that end. The next step, collection, consists of gathering the data that will be used for making decisions. Step three, processing and collation, involves evaluating the reliability and validity of the data collected. Officials need to sift through the data and decide what information will be useful. Fourth comes analysis. This includes crime analysis (such as detecting patterns of certain types of crimes) and investigative analysis (such as examining bank records). The fifth step, dissemination, involves getting the information to the decision makers who need it. Finally, reevaluation entails getting feedback on the products generated by the intelligence function. Note that the process is cyclical and continues indefinitely. Figure 6.3 emphasizes that intelligence is fluid and constantly subject to change.

FUSION CENTERS

In the spring of 2002, law enforcement executives from around the country met at a Criminal Intelligence Sharing Summit. Summit participants called for the development of a national intelligence plan, one that could be used to prevent future terrorist attacks like the ones that occurred on 9/11. After this meeting, the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative and the Intelligence Working Group were formed. These groups eventually developed the National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan (NCISP). The report outlined a number of "action steps" that could be taken to improve intelligence gathering and sharing among law enforcement agencies across the country. The NCISP sought to communicate:

- A model intelligence-sharing plan
- A mechanism to promote intelligence-led policing
- A blueprint for law enforcement administrators to follow when enhancing or building an intelligence system
- A model for intelligence process principles and policies
A plan that respects and protects individuals’ privacy and civil rights
A technology architecture to provide secure, seamless sharing of information among systems
A national model for intelligence training
An outreach plan to promote timely and credible intelligence sharing
A plan that leverages existing systems and networks, yet allows flexibility for technology and process enhancements

As part of this process, many states and large cities have formed fusion centers. According to the National Fusion Center Guidelines, a fusion center is an effective and efficient mechanism to exchange information and intelligence, maximize resources, streamline operations, and improve the ability to fight crime and terrorism by analyzing data from a variety of sources. Often located in police departments, these centers are set up for the purpose of sharing information and intelligence within specific jurisdictions and across levels of government. Fusion centers often emphasize terrorism prevention and crime fighting with extensive use of technology. They frequently resemble a department’s technological “nerve center” and are usually housed in a central location where information is collected and then shared with decision makers. There are four main goals for fusion centers:

- Provide support for a range of law enforcement activities, including anti-crime operations and terrorism prevention
- Provide help for major incident operations and support for units charged with interdiction and criminal investigations
- Provide the means for community input, often through tip lines
- Provide assistance to law enforcement executives so they can make informed decisions about departmental priorities

Fusion centers are intended to provide a mechanism through which government agencies, law enforcement, and the private sector can work together for the common purpose of protecting the homeland and preserving public safety. They are based on a model of collaboration. Collaboration between agencies and across levels of government has been lacking throughout history, but the events of 9/11 affirmed a need for change. The concept of fusion centers will continue to catch on, and more will probably be developed as law enforcement becomes increasingly aware of the benefits they can yield.

III POLICE SUPPORT FUNCTIONS

As the model of a typical police department indicates (see Figure 6.1 near the beginning of the chapter), not all members of a department engage in what the general public regards as real police work—patrol, detection, and traffic control. Even in departments that are embracing community- and problem-oriented policing, a great deal of police resources are devoted to support and administrative functions.

Many police departments maintain their own personnel service, which carries out such functions as recruiting new police officers, creating exams to determine the most qualified applicants, and handling promotions and transfers. Innovative selection techniques are constantly being developed and tested. For example, the Behavioral-Personnel Assessment Device (B-PAD) requires police applicants to view videotaped scenarios and respond as though they were officers handling the situation. Reviews indicate that this procedure may be a reliable and unbiased method of choosing new recruits.

Larger police departments often maintain an internal affairs branch, which is charged with policing the police. The internal affairs division processes citizen complaints of police corruption, investigates allegations of unnecessary
CAREERS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Crime Analyst

Duties and Characteristics of the Job

Crime analysts engage in a number of important law enforcement support functions. Foremost, they study patterns of criminal activity and profile suspects. They analyze crime data (calls for service, arrests made, etc.) and often use that information to forecast the days, times, and places those crimes are most likely to occur. They are called upon to provide information on demand, analyze long-term programs, and develop intelligence.

Crime analysts, sometimes called intelligence analysts, use three primary types of crime analysis. Tactical crime analysis is used to identify immediate crime threats, determine patterns (e.g., location, suspect descriptive), and disseminate that information to patrol officers and detectives. Strategic crime analysis involves gathering and interpreting crime data, then making recommendations as to where police resources are best concentrated. Finally, administrative crime analysis involves reporting to the chief, city council members, and other officials as required, making recommendations, sharing information with superiors and other stakeholders, and seeking additional resources, among other duties. A good crime analyst makes a police department look “good” to the public and local government officials.

Job Outlook

The job outlook for crime analysts is quite favorable. According to the International Association of Crime Analysts (IACA), the demand for qualified crime analysts has increased more than tenfold in the past 15 years. Law enforcement is always a top priority for local governments, so funding for crime analysts is not likely to wane. That said, their positions, like those of other government employees, hinge on funding. Also, some crime analysts are involved in grant writing and may earn part of their wages from “soft money,” which can make the situation unpredictable for some of them. In general, though, crime analysts usually enjoy stable government jobs with good benefits.

use of force by police officers, and even probes allegations of police participation in criminal activity, such as burglaries or narcotics violations. In addition, the internal affairs division may assist police managers when disciplinary action is brought against individual officers. Internal affairs is a controversial function because investigators are feared and distrusted by fellow police officers. Nonetheless, rigorous self-scrutiny is the only way that police departments can earn citizens’ respect. Some type of citizen oversight of police practices and civilian review boards with the power to listen to complaints and conduct investigations have become commonplace in police departments.

Most police departments are responsible for the administration and control of their own budgets. This task includes administering payroll, purchasing equipment and services, planning budgets for future expenditures, and auditing departmental financial records.

Police departments maintain separate units charged with recording and disseminating information on wanted offenders, stolen merchandise, traffic violators, and so on. Modern data-management systems enable police to use their records in a highly sophisticated way. For example, officers in a patrol car who spot a suspicious-looking vehicle can instantly receive a computerized rundown on whether it has been stolen. And when property is recovered during an arrest, police using this sort of system can determine who reported the loss of the merchandise and arrange for its return.

Another important function of police communication is the effective and efficient dispatching of patrol cars. Again, modern computer technologies have been used to make the most of available resources.

In many departments, training is continuous throughout an officer’s career. Training usually begins at a police academy, which may be run exclusively for
Salary
Specialized knowledge is required and, as such, crime analysts tend to do fairly well. An entry-level crime analyst can make as much as $60,000 per year. Experienced and well-qualified crime analysts can make $80,000 per year or more. A supervising crime analyst in a large city like Los Angeles can make close to $100,000 per year, if not more.

Opportunities
Most opportunities for crime analysts reside in large police departments. Less populous cities with few police officers generally do not require dedicated or full-time crime analysts. Opportunities also exist in certain task force offices. For example, federal High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) offices, which are regional and often combine several states, employ crime intelligence analysts.

Qualifications
Crime analysts are often civilian employees, which may prove desirable for those who do not want to become sworn peace officers. Crime analysts require knowledge of techniques and methods used in data collection, statistical analysis, report preparation, and research. Knowledge of numerous computer applications is also required, as is a full command of the English language for report writing and communications, familiarity with law enforcement operations, and the like.

Education and Training
Many positions require a four-year degree, often with a concentration in criminal justice, criminology, and/or policing. Some permit a combination of work experience and education short of a four-year degree. Positions may or may not require any particular licensing or certification, but either can make an applicant more competitive. For example, the International Association of Crime Analysts offers a certification program. According to IACA, graduates may be more marketable and/or earn more from their employing agencies as a result of the certification.


larger departments or be part of a regional training center that services smaller and varied governmental units. More than 90 percent of all police departments require preservice training, including nearly all departments in larger cities (population over 100,000). The average officer receives more than 600 hours of preservice training, including 400 hours in the classroom and the rest in field training. Police in large cities receive more than 1,000 hours of instruction divided almost evenly between classroom and field instruction. Among the topics usually covered are law and civil rights, firearms handling, emergency medical care, and restraint techniques.

After assuming their police duties, new recruits are assigned to field-training officers who "break them in" on the job. However, training does not stop here. On-the-job training is a continuous process in the modern police department and covers such areas as weapons skills, first aid, crowd control, and community relations. Some departments use roll-call training, in which superior officers or outside experts address police officers at the beginning of the workday. Other departments allow police officers time off to attend annual training sessions to sharpen their skills and learn new policing techniques.

Police departments provide emergency aid to the ill, counsel youngsters, speak to school and community agencies on safety and drug abuse, and provide countless other services designed to improve citizen-police interactions.

Larger police departments maintain specialized units that help citizens protect themselves from criminal activity. For example, they advise citizens on effective home security techniques or conduct Project ID campaigns—engraving valuables with an identifying number so they can be returned if recovered after a burglary. Police also work in schools, some by patrolling them and others by teaching youths how to avoid drug use.
Police agencies maintain (or have access to) forensic laboratories that enable them to identify substances to be used as evidence and to classify fingerprints.

Planning and research functions include designing programs to increase police efficiency and strategies to test program effectiveness. Dedicated crime analysts often assist in this regard. Career options for crime analysts are explored in the Careers in Criminal Justice box. Police planners monitor recent technological developments and institute programs to adapt them to police services. Many small agencies do not have the luxury of extensive support divisions. The larger the agency, the more likely there will be several distinct support divisions and functions.

### IMPROVING POLICE PRODUCTIVITY

Police administrators have sought to increase the productivity of their line, support, and administrative staff. As used today, the term police productivity refers to the amount of order, maintenance, crime control, and other law enforcement activities provided by individual police officers and concomitantly by police departments as a whole. By improving police productivity, a department can keep the peace, deter crime, apprehend criminals, and provide useful public services without necessarily increasing its costs. This goal is accomplished by having each police officer operate with greater efficiency, thus using fewer resources to achieve greater effectiveness. Cost-saving productivity measures include, but are not limited to, consolidation, informal arrangements, sharing, pooling, contracting, service districts, civilian employees, multiple tasking, special assignment programs, and differential police responses.102

- **Consolidation.** One way to increase police efficiency is to consolidate police services.103 This means combining small departments (usually with fewer than 10 employees) in adjoining areas into a superagency that serves the previously fragmented jurisdictions. Consolidation has the benefit of creating departments large enough to use expanded services (such as crime labs, training centers, communications centers, and emergency units) that are not cost-effective in smaller departments.

- **Informal arrangements.** Unwritten cooperative agreements may be made between localities to perform collectively a task that would be mutually beneficial (such as monitoring neighboring radio frequencies so that needed backup can be provided).

- **Sharing.** Services that aid in the execution of a law enforcement function can be shared (such as the sharing of a communications system by several local agencies). Some agencies form mutual-aid pacts so that they can share infrequently used services, such as emergency response teams.104 Some states have gone as far as setting up centralized data services that connect most local police agencies into a statewide information net.105 Information sharing is becoming increasingly popular.

- **Pooling.** Some police agencies combine the resources of two or more agencies to perform a specified function under a predetermined, often formalized arrangement with direct involvement by all parties. One example is the use of a city-county law enforcement building or training academy; another is the establishment of a crime task force.

- **Contracting.** Another productivity measure is a limited and voluntary approach in which one government enters into a formal binding agreement to provide all or certain specified law enforcement services (such as communications or patrol service) to another government for an established fee. This often occurs in small cities located within a county that has a large established law enforcement agency. It is often cost-prohibitive for a small city to have its own full-service police agency, so contracting with a sheriff’s department, for example, can be helpful.106
LO1 Understand the organization of police departments.
- Today’s police departments operate in a military-like fashion.
- Policy generally emanates from the top of the hierarchy.
- The time-in-rank system requires that before moving up the administrative ladder, an officer must spend a certain amount of time in the next lowest rank.

LO2 Distinguish between the patrol function and the investigation function.
- The bulk of the patrol effort is devoted to order maintenance and peacekeeping. Patrol serves a deterrent function and is intended to promote a sense of security in the community.
- Investigative work is less visible than patrol and is necessary when it is not certain who the offender is and/or when the offender eludes police.

LO3 Discuss various efforts to improve patrol.
- Police departments have taken several steps to improve patrol, including aggressive patrol, proactive policing, adopting a broken windows policing strategy, responding to 911 calls quickly, paying attention to procedural justice, and using technology.
- Some efforts to improve patrol have proved more effective than others. For example, it may be more effective to target specific types of crimes than to be concerned solely with rapid response.

LO4 Discuss key issues associated with the investigative function.
- Contemporary detectives typically use a three-pronged approach. This consists of specific, general, and informative (data collection) elements.
- Sting operations occur when organized groups of detectives deceive criminals into openly committing illegal acts or conspiring to engage in criminal activity.
- Detectives frequently work undercover. Undercover work is considered a necessary element of police work, although it can be dangerous for the agent.

LO5 Understand the concept of community policing.
- Community policing consists of a return to an earlier style of policing, in which officers on the beat had intimate contact with the people they served.
- Community policing gives officers the time to meet with local residents to talk about crime in the neighborhood and to use personal initiative to solve problems.

LO6 List several challenges associated with community policing.
- Implementing community policing can be challenging because of difficulties in defining community, choosing appropriate roles for officers, changing supervisor attitudes, reorienting police values, revising training, and recruiting different types of officers.
- One of the most significant obstacles associated with community policing is reaching out to citizens.

LO7 Discuss the concept of problem-oriented policing.
- Problem-oriented policing strategies require police agencies to identify particular long-term community problems and to develop strategies to eliminate them.
- Concentrating police resources on so-called hot spots of crime could appreciably reduce crime.

LO8 Define intelligence-led policing and explain ways in which it occurs.
- ILP consists of the collection and analysis of information to produce an “intelligence and product” designed to inform police decision making at both the tactical and strategic levels.
- ILP emphasizes problem solving, but from the top down. It relies on community input, but priorities are set at the department level, not identified by residents.

LO9 Explain the various police support functions.
- Other organizations or divisions that support patrol, investigations, and traffic include personnel, internal affairs, administration, records, dispatch, training, planning, and research.
- The larger the police department, the more extensive its support divisions.

LO10 Identify some of the cost-saving measures that may be employed to improve police productivity.
- Police departments have sought to improve their productivity by consolidating, adopting informal arrangements, sharing, pooling, contracting, assigning service districts, hiring civilians, multiple tasking, using special assignments, and trying differential response.
KEY TERMS
- time-in-rank system, 197
- beats, 199
- order maintenance (peacekeeping), 200
- proactive policing, 201
- broken windows model, 202
- procedural justice, 202
- vice squads, 205
- sting operation, 207
- community-oriented policing (COP), 213
- foot patrol, 213
- problem-oriented policing (POP), 215
- hot spots of crime, 215
- displacement, 218
- intelligence-led policing (ILP), 218
- tactical intelligence, 220
- strategic intelligence, 220
- National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan (NCISP), 220
- fusion center, 221
- internal affairs, 221
- police productivity, 224

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS
1. Should the primary police role be law enforcement or community service? Explain.
2. Should a police chief be permitted to supervise an officer with special skills to a supervisory position, or should all officers be forced to spend time in rank? Why or why not?
3. Do the advantages of proactive policing outweigh the disadvantages? Explain.
5. What are the relationships among community policing, problem-oriented policing, and intelligence-led policing? Are they similar or fundamentally different?

NOTES
17. Ibid
Critical Thinking

1. What, if anything, can be done to reduce racial bias on the part of police? Would adding minority officers help? Would it be a form of racism to assign minority officers to minority neighborhoods?

2. Would research showing that police are more likely to make arrests in interracial incidents than in intraracial incidents constitute evidence of racism?

3. Police spot three men of Middle Eastern descent carrying a large, heavy box into a crowded building. Should they stop and question them and demand to look into the carton? Is this racial profiling?


PROBLEMS OF POLICING

Law enforcement is not an easy job. The role ambiguity, social isolation, and threat of danger present in working the streets are the police officer’s constant companions. What effects do these strains have on police? The most significant problems are job stress, fatigue, violence and brutality, and corruption.

Job Stress

The complexity of their role, the need to exercise prudent discretion, the threat of using violence and having violence used against them, and isolation from the rest of society all take a toll on law enforcement officers. Police officer stress leads to negative attitudes, burnout, loss of enthusiasm and commitment.
CAUSES OF STRESS A number of factors have been associated with job stress. Some are related to the difficulties that police officers have in maintaining social and family relationships, considering their schedule and workload. Police suffer stress in their personal lives when they bring the job home or when their work hours are shifted, causing family disruptions. Those who perceive themselves as alienated from family and friends at home are more likely to feel stress on the job.

Some stressors are job related. The pressure of being on duty 24 hours per day leads to stress and emotional detachment from both work and public needs. Policing is a dangerous profession, and officers are at risk of many forms of job-related injury. Every year, several officers are killed. On the other hand, law enforcement officers contemplating retirement also report high stress levels. Although the job may be dangerous, many officers are reluctant to leave it.

Stress has been related to internal conflict with administrative policies that deny officers support and a meaningful role in decision making. Stress may result when officers are forced to adapt to a department’s new methods of policing, such as community-oriented policing, and they are skeptical about the change in policy. Other stressors include poor training, substandard equipment, inadequate pay, lack of opportunity, job dissatisfaction, role conflict, exposure to brutality, and fears about competence, success, and safety. Some officers may feel stress because they believe that the court system favors the rights of the criminal and handcuffs the police; others might be sensitive to a perceived lack of support from governmental officials and the general public. Still others believe that their superiors care little about their welfare. And stress levels are far from constant. Researchers who have monitored officers’ heart rates during the course of their shifts have found that, indeed, stress level fluctuate depending on the situations an officer encounters.

Police psychologists have divided these stressors into four distinct categories:

- External stressors, such as verbal abuse from the public, justice system inefficiency, and liberal court decisions that favor the criminal. What are perceived to be antipolice judicial decisions may alienate police and reduce their perceptions of their own competence.
- Organizational stressors, such as low pay, excessive paperwork, arbitrary rules, and limited opportunity for advancement.
- Duty stressors, such as rotating shifts, work overload, boredom, fear, and danger.
- Individual stressors, such as discrimination, marital difficulties, and personality problems.

The effects of stress can be shocking. Police work has been related to both physical and psychological ailments. Police have a significantly high rate of premature death caused by such conditions as heart disease and diabetes. They also experience a disproportionate number of divorces and other marital problems. Research indicates that police officers in some departments, but not all, have higher suicide rates than the general public. (Recent research shows that New York City police have suicide rates equal to or lower than the general public, and some researchers have found a lower than average police suicide rate in other areas of the country.) Alcohol and drug abuse have been linked to stress, as well. Police who feel stress may not be open to adopting new ideas and programs such as community policing.
COMBATING STRESS The more support police officers get in the workplace, the lower their feelings of stress and anxiety. Consequently, departments have attempted to fight job-related stress by training officers to cope with its effects. Today, stress training includes diet information, biofeedback, relaxation and meditation, and exercise. Many departments include stress management as part of an overall wellness program that is also designed to promote physical and mental health, fitness, and good nutrition. Some programs have included family members: they may be better able to help the officer cope if they have more knowledge about the difficulties of police work. Research also shows that because police perceive many benefits from their job and enjoy the quality of life it provides, stress-reduction programs might help officers focus on the positive aspects of police work.

Stress is a critically important aspect of police work. Further research is needed to create valid methods of identifying police officers who are under considerable stress and to devise effective stress-reduction programs.

Fatigue

Nearly everyone has been tired at work from time to time. While on-the-job sleepiness is inconsequential for many workers, it can lead to disaster for others. No one wants airline pilots to fall asleep, and the prospect of a truck driver sleeping behind the wheel is equally disturbing. What about a police officer? A police officer who is overly tired may be at higher risk of acting inappropriately or being injured on the job.

The problem of “tired cops” has largely been overlooked, but it should not be. Police officers often work lengthy shifts with unpredictable hours. The Boston Globe investigated one agency and found that 16 officers worked more than 80 hours in a week. One even worked 130 hours! While it is difficult to fault anyone for seeking overtime pay, too much work can lead to disaster. Here are some examples:

- A Michigan police officer working nearly 24 hours straight crashes his cruiser while chasing a fleeing motorist. He is critically injured.
- In California, a sheriff’s deputy working alone drifts off a deserted highway and is killed instantly when his patrol car crashes into a tree.
- An officer in Florida, who has had trouble staying awake, runs a red light in her patrol car and crashes into a van driven by a deputy sheriff, injuring him severely.
- A police officer driving home from working in Ohio nods off at the wheel, begins swerving in and out of traffic, and runs off the road, striking and killing a man jogging down the sidewalk.

CONTROLLING POLICE FATIGUE What can be done to control police fatigue? One option is for administrators to pay special attention to scheduling so that officers do not work too much overtime. Another is for administrators to adopt policies that place limitations on second jobs. Many officers moonlight as security guards, which may affect their on-the-job performance. A recent government report offered several other recommendations for limiting fatigue. Administrators should:

- Review the policies, procedures, and practices that affect shift scheduling and rotation, overtime, moonlighting, the number of consecutive hours allowed, and the way in which the department deals with overly tired employees.
- Assess how much of a voice officers are given in work-hour and shift-scheduling decisions. The number of hours that officers work and the time of day they are assigned to work affect their personal, social, family, and professional lives. Excluding officers from decisions affecting this arena increases
stress, which in turn reduces their ability to deal with fatigue and tends to diminish their job performance and ability to deal with stress.

- Assess the level of fatigue that officers experience, the quality of their sleep, and how tired they are while on the job, as well as their attitudes toward fatigue and work-hour issues.
- Review recruit and in-service training programs to determine whether officers are receiving adequate information about the importance of good sleep habits, the hazards associated with fatigue and shift work, and strategies for managing them. Are officers taught to view fatigue as a safety issue? Are they trained to recognize drowsiness as a factor in vehicle crashes?

Violence and Brutality

Police officers are empowered to use force and violence in pursuit of their daily tasks. Some scholars argue that the use of violent measures is the core of the police role. Even so, since their creation, U.S. police departments have wrestled with the charge that they are brutal, physically violent organizations. Early police officers resorted to violence and intimidation to gain the respect that was not freely given by citizens. In the 1920s, the Wickersham Commission detailed numerous instances of police brutality, including the use of the “third degree” to extract confessions.

Today, police brutality continues to be a concern, especially when police use excessive violence against members of the minority community. The nation looked on in disgust when a videotape was aired on network newscasts showing members of the Los Angeles Police Department beating, kicking, and using electric stun guns on Rodney King. Other incidents reported in both national and local media over the years also illustrate the persistent problems that police departments have in regulating violent contacts with citizens.

Who Are the Problem Cops? Evidence shows that only a small proportion of officers are continually involved in problem behavior. What kind of police officer gets involved in problem behavior? Aggressive cops may be ones who overreact to the stress of police work while at the same time feeling socially isolated. They believe that the true sources of their frustration—such as corrupt politicians or liberal judges—are shielded from their anger, so they take their frustrations out on readily available targets: vulnerable people in their immediate environment.

Police Brutality

Actions such as using abusive language, making threats, using force or coercion unnecessarily, prodding with nightsticks, and stopping and searching people to harass them.

Activists react on May 16, 2012, after former Houston police officer Andrew Blomberg was found not guilty of official oppression in the videotaped beating of a 15-year-old burglary suspect. Blomberg, 29, was the first of four fired police officers to stand trial for their roles in the alleged daylight beating of Chad Holley in March 2010. The daylight arrest prompted fierce public criticism of the police department by community activists who labeled it another example of police brutality against minorities.
Some officers are chronic offenders. Research conducted in a southeastern city by Kim Michelle Lersch and Tom Mieczkowski found that a few officers (7 percent) were chronic offenders who accounted for a significant portion of citizen complaints (33 percent). Those officers receiving the bulk of the complaints tended to be younger and less experienced, and they had been accused of harassment or violence after a proactive encounter that they had initiated. Although repeat offenders were more likely to be accused of misconduct by minority citizens, there was little evidence that attacks were racially motivated.

Efforts to deal with these problem cops are now being undertaken in police departments around the nation. A number of departments have instituted early warning systems to change the behavior of individual officers who have been identified as having performance problems. The basic intervention strategy involves a combination of deterrence and education. According to the deterrence strategy, officers who are subject to intervention will presumably change their behavior in response to a perceived threat of punishment. Early-warning systems operate on the assumption that training, as part of the intervention, can help officers improve their performance. Evaluations show that early-warning systems appear to have a dramatic effect on reducing citizen complaints and other indicators of problematic police performance among those officers subject to intervention.

DEALING WITH PROBLEM COPS Detailed rules of engagement that limit the use of force are common in major cities. However, the creation of departmental rules limiting behavior is often haphazard and is usually a reaction to a crisis situation (for example, a citizen is seriously injured) instead of part of a systematic effort to improve police–citizen interactions. Some departments have developed administrative policies that stress limiting the use of force and containing armed offenders until specially trained backup teams are sent to take charge of the situation. Administrative policies have been found to be an effective control on deadly force, and their influence can be enhanced if the chief of police gives them the proper support.

The most significant factors in controlling police brutality may be the threat of civil judgments against individual officers who use excessive force, police chiefs who ignore or condone violent behavior, and the cities and towns in which they are employed. Civilians routinely file civil actions against police departments when they believe that officers have violated their civil rights. Police may be sued when a victim believes that excessive force was used during his or her arrest or custody. Civilians may collect damages if they can show that the force used was unreasonable, considering all the circumstances known to the officer at the time he or she acted. Excessive-force suits commonly occur when police use a weapon, such as a gun or baton, to subdue an unarmed person who is protesting his or her treatment. The U.S. Supreme Court in 1978 (Monell v. Department of Social Services) ruled that local agencies could be held liable under the federal Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C. 1983) for actions of their employees if such actions were part of an official custom or practice.

The few “bad apples” who ruin it for the rest of the police force can have harmful effects on a department’s public image. In response, many urban police departments have implemented neighborhood and community policing models to improve relations with the public. Improved trust in police may lead to a perception that brutality is not a problem.

Corruption

Police departments have almost always wrestled with the problem of controlling illegal and unprofessional behavior by their officers. Corruption pervaded the U.S. police when the early departments were first formed. In the nineteenth century, police officers systematically ignored violations of laws related to drinking, gambling, and prostitution in return for regular payoffs. Some entered into relationships with professional criminals, especially pickpockets. Illegal behavior
was tolerated in return for goods or information. Police officers helped politicians gain office by allowing electoral fraud to flourish. Some senior officers sold promotions to higher ranks within the police department. 148

Since the early nineteenth century, scandals involving police abuse of power have occurred in many urban cities, and elaborate methods have been devised to control or eliminate the problem. Although most police officers are not corrupt, the few who are dishonest bring discredit to the entire profession. And corruption is often hard to combat because the police code of silence demands that officers never turn in their peers, even if they engage in corrupt or illegal practices. 149 Fortunately, however, recent studies reveal that corruption is quite rare and that career-ending misconduct is the exception. 150

**VARIETIES OF CORRUPTION** Police corruption can include a number of activities. In a general sense, it involves misuse of authority by police officers in a manner designed to produce personal gain for themselves or others. 151 However, debate continues over whether a desire for personal gain is an essential part of corruption. Some experts argue that the unnecessary use of force, unreasonable searches, and an immoral personal life also constitute police misconduct and should be considered as serious as corruption devoted to economic gain.

Scholars have attempted to create typologies categorizing the forms that the abuse of police powers can take. For example, the Knapp Commission, a public body set up to investigate the New York City police in the 1970s, classified abusers into two groups: meat eaters and grass eaters. 152 Meat eaters aggressively misuse police power for personal gain by demanding bribes, threatening legal action, or cooperating with criminals. Across the country, police officers have been accused, indicted, and convicted of shaking down club owners and other businessmen. 153 In contrast, grass eaters accept payoffs when their everyday duties place them in a position to be solicited by the public. For example, police officers have been investigated for taking bribes to look the other way while neighborhood bookmakers ply their trade. 154 The Knapp Commission concluded that the vast majority of police officers on the take are grass eaters, although the few meat eaters who are caught capture all the headlines. In 1993, another police scandal prompted the formation of the Mollen Commission, which found that some New York cops were actively involved in violence and drug dealing.

Other police experts have attempted to create models to better understand police corruption. Several types of corruption have been identified. 155

- **Internal corruption.** This corruption takes place among police officers themselves, involving both the bending of departmental rules and the outright performance of illegal acts. For example, Chicago police officers conspired to sell relatively new police cars to other officers at cut-rate prices, forcing the department to purchase new cars unnecessarily. A major scandal hit the Boston Police Department when a captain was indicted in an exam-tampering-and-selling scheme. Numerous officers bought promotion exams from the captain, and others had him lower the scores of rivals who were competing for the same job. 156

- **Selective enforcement or nonenforcement.** This form occurs when police officers abuse or exploit their discretion. If an officer frees a drug dealer in return for valuable information, that is considered a legitimate use of discretion; if the officer does so for money, that is an abuse of police power.

- **Active criminality.** This is participation by police in serious criminal behavior. Police may use their positions of trust and power to commit the very crimes they are entrusted with controlling. The case of New York police detectives Louis Eppolito and Stephen Caracappa is perhaps the most shocking example of police criminality in recent history. Eppolito and Caracappa sold police files on key witnesses to the mob and were convicted on charges linking them to 11 mob hits. 157

---

**Knapp Commission**

A public body that conducted an investigation into police corruption in New York City in the early 1970s and uncovered a widespread network of payoffs and bribes.

**meat eater**

A term used to describe a police officer who actively solicits bribes and vigorously engages in corrupt practices.

**grass eater**

A term used to describe a police officer who accepts payoffs when everyday duties place him or her in a position to be solicited by the public.

**Mollen Commission**

An investigative unit set up to inquire into police corruption in New York City in the 1990s.
**Bribery and extortion.** This includes practices in which law enforcement roles are exploited specifically to raise money. Bribery is initiated by the citizen; extortion is initiated by the officer. Bribery or extortion can be a one-shot transaction, as when a traffic violator offers a police officer $500 to forget about issuing a summons. Or the relationship can be an ongoing one, in which the officer solicits (or is offered) regular payoffs to ignore criminal activities, such as gambling or narcotics dealing. This is known as “being on the pad.” Sometimes police officers accept routine bribes and engage in petty extortion without considering themselves corrupt. They consider these payments as unofficial fringe benefits of police work. For example, mooching involves receiving free gifts of coffee, cigarettes, meals, and so on in exchange for possible future acts of favoritism. Chiseling occurs when officers demand admission to entertainment events or price discounts. And shopping involves taking small items, such as cigarettes, from a store whose door was accidentally left unlocked after business hours.18

**THE CAUSES OF CORRUPTION** No single explanation satisfactorily accounts for the various forms that the abuse of power takes:

- **Police personality.** One view puts the blame on the type of person who becomes a police officer. This position holds that policing tends to attract lower-class individuals who do not have the financial means to maintain a coveted middle-class lifestyle. As they develop the cynical, authoritarian police personality, accepting graft seems an all-too-easy method of achieving financial security.

- **Institutions and practices.** A second view is that the wide discretion that police enjoy, coupled with the low visibility they maintain with the public and their own supervisors, makes them likely candidates for corruption. In addition, the code of secrecy maintained by the police subculture helps insulate corrupt officers from the law. Similarly, police managers, most of whom have risen through the ranks, are reluctant to investigate corruption or punish wrongdoers. Thus, corruption may also be viewed as a function of police institutions and practices.190

- **Moral ambivalence.** A third position holds that corruption is a function of society’s ambivalence toward many forms of vice-related criminal behavior that police officers are sworn to control. Unenforceable laws governing moral standards promote corruption because they create large groups with an interest in undermining law enforcement. These include consumers—people who gamble, wish to drink after the legal closing hour, or patronize a prostitute—who do not want to be deprived of their chosen form of recreation. Even though the consumers may not actively corrupt police officers, their existence creates a climate that tolerates active corruption by others.160 Because vice cannot be controlled and the public apparently wants it to continue, the officer may have little resistance to inducements for monetary gain offered by law violators.

- **Environmental conditions.** A fourth position is that corruption may be linked to specific environmental and social conditions that enhance the likelihood that police officers may become involved in misconduct. For example, in some areas a rapid increase in the minority residential population may be viewed as a threat to dominant group interests. Police in these areas may become overly aggressive and routinely use coercive strategies. The conflict produced by these outcomes may lead to antagonism between the police and the minority public, and to eventual police misconduct of all types. One recent study, in which social/ecological conditions in New York City police precincts and divisions were associated with patterns of police misconduct
from 1975 to 1996, found that misconduct cases involving bribery, extortion, excessive force, and other abuses of police authority were linked to trends in neighborhood structural disadvantage, increasing population mobility, and increases in the Latino population.161

Corrupt departments. It has also been suggested that police corruption is generated at the departmental level and that conditions within the department produce and nurture deviance.162 In some departments, corrupt officers band together and form what is called a “rotten pocket.”163 Rotten pockets help institutionalize corruption because their members expect newcomers to conform to their illegal practices and to a code of secrecy.

Officer characteristics. A study of police misconduct in the New York City Police Department revealed that factors such as officer race, prior criminal history, and problems in prior jobs were associated with on-the-job misconduct. The authors argued that “[b]y screening out those with prior arrests and prior employment problems, departments can significantly reduce the likelihood of hiring future ‘bad cops.’”164

CONTROLLING CORRUPTION How can police misconduct be controlled? One approach is to strengthen the internal administrative review process within police departments. A strong and well-supported internal affairs division has been linked to lowered corruption rates.165 However, asking police to police themselves is not a simple task. Officers are often reluctant to discipline their peers. One review of disciplinary files of New York City police officers found that many miscreants escaped punishment when their cases were summarily dismissed by the police department without anyone ever interviewing victims or witnesses or making any other efforts to examine the evidence.166 One reason may be the blue curtain mentality that inhibits police from taking action against their fellow officers. Surveys indicate that police officers are more reluctant than ordinary citizens to report unethical behavior on the part of their colleagues.167 Engaging in illegal brutality or bending the rules of procedure falls under the code of silence.168

Another approach, instituted by then-New York Commissioner Patrick Murphy in the wake of the Knapp Commission, is the accountability system. This holds that supervisors at each level are directly accountable for the illegal behaviors of the officers under them. Consequently, a commander can be demoted or forced to resign if one of her command officers is found guilty of corruption.169 However, close scrutiny by a department can lower officer morale and create the suspicion that the officers’ own supervisors distrust them.

Police departments have also organized outside review boards or special prosecutors to investigate reported incidents of corruption. However, outside investigators and special prosecutors are often limited by their lack of intimate knowledge of day-to-day operations. As a result, they depend on the testimony of a few officers who are willing to cooperate, either to save themselves from prosecution or because they have a compelling moral commitment. Outside evaluators also face the problem of the blue curtain, which is quickly closed when police officers feel that their department is under scrutiny.

A more realistic solution to corruption, albeit a difficult one, might be to change the social context of policing. Police operations must be made more visible, and the public must be given freer access to police operations. All too often, the public finds out about police problems only when a scandal hits the newspaper. Another option is that some of the vice-related crimes the police now deal with might be decriminalized or referred to other agencies. Although decriminalization of vice cannot in itself end the problem, it could lower the pressure placed on individual police officers and help eliminate their moral dilemmas.