



REPORT TO COUNCIL

City of Sacramento

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STAFF
January 24, 2006

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Subject: Informational Report: Presence of Police Officers in Neighborhoods

Location/Council District: Citywide

Recommendation:

This is an informational report regarding methods the Police Department is employing to increase the participation of police officers in problem solving in City neighborhoods.

Contact: Albert Nájera, Chief of Police, 433-0800
Scott LaCosse, Captain, 808-2290

Presenters: Scott LaCosse, Captain

Department: Police

Division: Operations - Administration

Organization No: 2121

Summary:

The Police Department is utilizing an increased emphasis on Problem Oriented Policing with a focus on neighborhood problems as a means of engaging officers more directly in neighborhoods.

Committee/Commission Action: None.

Background Information:

The Police Department has increased its emphasis and training in Problem Oriented Policing (POP), with a focus on solving neighborhood problems, as a means of having officers become increasingly engaged in neighborhood issues. An increase in patrol staffing, accomplished through the addition of officers previously approved by Council, is expected to further enhance the Department's ability to engage officers in resolving neighborhood problems.

At the end of field training, the Police Department assigns all new officers to one of the POP teams for 1 month. These officers are typically assigned to POP officers who work the beats where the officers will be assigned. This provides new officers the opportunity to become familiar with current issues in the neighborhoods they will patrol, to meet some of the neighborhood groups and leaders in the area, and to develop a rapport with

the POP officers and an understanding of POP tactics. The Department believes it is beneficial to expose officers to these methods and to engage them in neighborhood issues during their initial training.

To augment the training given to new officers, the Department will be conducting refresher training in POP for all patrol supervisors during the coming year. While supervisory officers have already had training and experience in the resolution of neighborhood problems through the POP model of policing, this training will re-emphasize the Department's focus on neighborhoods and accountability for field supervisors.

On a weekly basis, patrol watch commanders participate in an information sharing process called InfoCom. During this meeting each week, watch commanders identify locations of repeat calls for service and other neighborhood problems. They also then identify what staffing resources and problem resolution strategies they are utilizing to address the issues. This process supports rapid identification and response to troublesome neighborhood problems.

The Department is also in the process of migrating records on neighborhood problems that are the subject of POP tactics to its new Records Management System (RMS). This will allow immediate access to these records by officers in the field, and to allow for notification of units responding to calls that there is an active POP project at those locations. Responding officers will have the information available that they need to become directly involved in resolving these problems in neighborhoods, rather than merely handling the immediate issue that was the subject of the call.

The Department has also fielded a neighborhood traffic enforcement team as a means of increasing police presence in neighborhoods. This team, consisting of 7 officers and 1 sergeant, focuses on specific neighborhood traffic problems and has been operating for 11 weeks. The team has written over 4,000 citations and responded to over 130 neighborhood traffic complaints to date.

The Mayor and City Council also requested information regarding the Department's prior practice of operating service centers in City neighborhoods. The Department has found from past experience that in order to meet the expectations of the public that responds to these centers that it is necessary to have a Department employee on-site. The Department makes significant use of volunteers, but the number and types of issues that the public has brought to service centers in the past has exceeded the knowledge base of volunteers. The Department has also found that the limited hours that the previous centers were staffed created frustration for members of the public who responded to these facilities with the expectation of being able to conduct all manner of police related business. The Department has expanded its hours of operations at existing police facilities using Records Division staff as a means of increasing public access to Police services on a walk-in basis.

Financial Considerations: Not applicable.

Environmental Considerations: Not applicable.

Policy Considerations:

This report meets one of the objectives identified by the Mayor and City Council in their strategic plan.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): Not applicable.

Respectfully Submitted by: Scott LaCrosse
Scott LaCrosse
Captain

Approved by: Albert Nájera
Albert Nájera
Chief of Police

Recommendation Approved:

Ray Kerridge
RAY KERRIDGE
Interim City Manager

Ref: COP 1-12

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