

## **Update on ICMA Recommendations**

In the ICMA report, which was published a little more than a year ago, 16 major recommendations were made.

Moreover, Council may be aware that following the ICMA report, a Community Task Force was appointed by the City Manager to serve as a sounding board to provide a community perspective on the recommendations in the ICMA report. This section provides an update on each of the 16 recommendations by ICMA, and those from the Community Task Force.

### **1. Create a calls for service committee**

Currently, calls are dispatched based on the nature of the incident. The Department is building in a culture that allows for low priority calls to pend so officers can stay in their district and be proactive. This is a version of differential response.

### **2. Create a differential response for nonemergency calls**

The recommendation is to encourage the public to use an on-line report system. This will allow officers to be more proactive, and in turn, the belief is that crime would go down. Chief McElvain explained, through his training and experience, he has learned that any crime decrease will be artificial (not everyone has access to a computer; crimes are underreported in the best of circumstances, and here the public is inconvenienced further and discouraged from reporting), which means the Department will miss opportunities to develop good crime trend information, and collection of evidence, that could identify the suspect and solve a crime. An example would be searching for latent fingerprints.

There may be some opportunities to use this system, but the Department needs to explore them further.

With this said, the Vancouver Police Department is using a form of differential response by allowing lower priority calls to pend a little longer in order for officers to be responsive to crime trends in their districts.

### **3. Add officers to patrol function**

There are definite challenges the Department faces with current staffing, which will be discussed in the State of the Department. Prior to simply adding officers, the Department first needs to ensure that they have exhausted other efficiency measures such as employing the 4th watch schedule, differential response, and the VANSTAT crime control model. Moreover, there are other alternatives to consider that may be more cost effective. An example is using Police Service Technicians (PSTs) in patrol to handle lower level calls for service not requiring suspect contact.

### **4. Reorganize patrol into two precincts (one commander each)**

This was done with the reorganization of commanders.

## **5. Reinstate the rank of lieutenant**

This was done with the reorganization in May.

## **6. Abandon territorial command at the beat level**

In part, this recommendation was made because the Department divided the city into more patrol beats than the number of officers assigned to a shift. Currently, the city is divided by two precincts; the precincts are comprised of two districts each, and several beats within each district.

VPD has moved to a district level of responsibility. Officers are encouraged to maintain district integrity, leaving only for priority calls or assistance to other officers. Again, low priority calls can pend until the assigned district officer is available to handle them.

## **7. Develop case management to investigate property crimes**

VPD has not committed resources to property crimes as of yet. It is still defining priority of responsibility. More will be discussed further below.

## **8. Assign two civilians to a new Crime Scene and Evidence Unit**

This has not been evaluated.

## **9. Merge the Digital Evidence Cybercrime Unit and Children's Justice Unit**

While on the surface, this may seem like a good idea; however, there is more to consider. Perhaps, the experience and training through the Digital Evidence Cybercrime Unit (DECU) may be better served investigating fraud, identity theft, and other property crimes committed through the internet. With this said, the Department is also exploring whether a Family Justice Center makes more sense in light of our current resources than having independent units for elder justice, domestic violence and children's justice.

There may be some value in centralizing these units and developing efficiency through economy of scale. Given the number of other initiatives being managed, this is on the radar, but a lesser priority going into the next biennium.

## **10. Merge the Safe Streets Gang Task Force and Drug Task Force**

This will be taken into consideration as we move forward and examine the practicality for consolidating some of our other units.

## **11. Seek accreditation**

One of the first steps toward accreditation is to update Vancouver Police Department's policy manual. To this end, the Department has contracted with LEXIPOL, which is an updated and managed state-specific policy manual for policing. This company has been around since 2003, and used by over 1,000 departments in several states, including Washington.

## **12. Establish a system for conducting periodic inspections of all departmental units**

VPD has recently assigned a sergeant to their Audit Unit; his responsibility is to develop inspections for the Department units and manage the policy manual.

## **13. Realign the Professional Standards Unit to report to the chief of police**

This has been completed. Moreover, the Department recently had an audit conducted to review its disciplinary and Internal Affairs (IA) process. The audit developed several recommendations. The Department has initiated discussion with the Guild to explore ways to streamline and establish consistency in the investigation process, and instill trust with the office of the chief.

## **14. Consolidation of units and Police Headquarters**

In the next biennium, VPD will be conducting a space and needs assessment to not only consolidate headquarters (HQ) into one of the precincts, but to consider other areas for consolidation and whether deploying patrol from one precinct instead of two makes better operational sense.

## **15. Create a leadership team**

This was accomplished in part with the reorganization of Command Staff. While there is still room to improve upon this to incorporate more representation throughout the Department, there are a number of committees made up of various department members tasked with making recommendations to Command Staff. Some examples include the Uniform Committee, and Vehicle Evaluation Committee. VPD is continuing to seek ways to incorporate the voice of the Department.

## **16. Institute an informal Labor-Management Committee**

Monthly meetings occur with Chief McElvain and members of the Guild Board; recently the same practice was established with the Command Guild. These meetings provide informal face-to-face dialogue to address current topic and issues affecting the Department.

## **17. Complete and approval of a comprehensive SWAT Manual**

The manual was completed and accepted in October 2014.

## **18. Leadership development training**

In 2015, the Department conducted leadership training department-wide. All staff received a one-day course as a foundation into leadership; FTOs, corporals, sergeants, lieutenants, commanders and the chiefs received three-day enhanced course from the same instructor. In 2016, the Department began Blue Courage training for all staff. This is a two-day leadership development workshop designed for all staff working in a police department.

## **Community Task Force Recommendations**

This section addresses the 4 recommendations from the Community Task Force.

### **1. Addition of a fourth shift**

In congruence with the Community Task Force Recommendation, the Vancouver Police Department believes the addition of a 4th watch would enhance our patrol operation. Several internal discussions have occurred about adding the fourth watch. The Department recognizes it will provide more efficient use of its patrol officers in line with the pattern in which calls for service increase and decrease over a 24-hour period. Staff will be bidding for shifts in October and the fourth watch will begin in January.

### **2. Department reorganization with reinstatement of lieutenants**

Although previously discussed, the Community Task Force should be acknowledged for recognizing the importance of reinstating this key rank back within the Department. Again, VPD accomplished this in May, and is now ensuring each lieutenant attends the basic management training course through the Criminal Justice Training Center.

### **3. Differential police response deployment model (triage calls)**

This, too, was previously discussed. Here, what should be mentioned is when Chief McElvain met with members from the Community Task Force several months ago, they had some very good conversations around some of the hidden pitfalls if the Department were to overuse this model. The Department does, and will, continue to use differential call response in some form. Police Service Technicians handle telephone reports, and the public can make reports on line; however, the on line reporting needs to be limited. There may be some modifications that could be put in place ensuring the Department captures specific information that assist with tracking crime trends such as criminal methods of operation.

### **4. Alarm ordinance revision (enhanced verification system)**

VPD has not addressed this beyond acknowledging the recommendation. More discussion will be necessary before making any changes.