

SPARKS POLICE DEPARTMENT

PERSONNEL UTILIZATION STUDY



AUGUST 2013



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Sparks retained the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) to conduct a personnel utilization study of the Sparks Police Department (SPD). Specifically, the assessment described in this report addresses the following topics: current policing environment, department wide workload, and staffing analysis and overall department organization. The intent of the assessment is to assist the City of Sparks by providing recommendations for staffing and organizational changes that will improve the operation of its police department.

The City of Sparks, located in Washoe County, Nevada bordering Reno has a population of approximately 92,000. Between 2008 and 2011 serious crime as measured through the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports has been declining. Both violent and property crime declined some 30% from 2008 to 2011.¹ As of the initiation of this study in December 2012, the department had on staff 107 sworn positions and 41 civilian employees.

Generally, the organization of the department is designed so that there are clear lines of authority and supervision. The organization is also designed so that it can carry out its core business practices in an organized fashion. SPD core business processes are typical of most police departments and include responding to citizens calls for service, conducting proactive patrol through vehicle stops and premises checks, conducting investigations of crimes reported to the police, and conducting proactive investigations.

Based on PERF's analyses of the policing environment in similar cities, knowledge of best policing practices, and measurable workload data, we find that the department is adequately staffed at an authorized sworn level of 108 sworn positions. Overall the Sparks Police Department is a very good police agency operating efficiently and effectively. **This study found that the average patrol time consumed by Calls for Service in Sparks is 34%, providing sufficient time for patrol officers to respond to calls for service, engage in proactive activity and engage the community.**

However, detailed workload analyses of the department's operations involving civilian staff found that operations within the Detective Division would be enhanced by an increased civilian authorization of two investigative aides and the Administration Division would benefit from two communications supervisor positions.

¹ 2012 UCR crime data for Sparks, Nevada was not available as of this report's release date.

PERF also offers recommendations for improving the department's effectiveness and efficiency, including changes related to its organizational structure, operations, policies, and the collection of performance indicators. Adopting these recommendations will assist the police department in monitoring its overall performance and efficiency in carrying out its core business processes going forward.

Summary of Proposed Recommendations

A summary of the report's recommendations is below. The details of the recommendations are found in the body of this report.

Recommendation 1: *The department should consider an alternative patrol schedule to the current weekday 4-10 and weekend 3-12 that would improve communications, enhance officer work experience throughout all patrol shifts, and eliminate isolation.*

Recommendation 2: *The department should encourage the preparation of reports in the field and reduce the amount of time officers spend in the station at the end of the shift.*

Recommendation 3: *The department should enhance traffic related enforcement through accident and violation analysis.*

Recommendation 4: *The department should rename the sections General Investigations Squad One and General Investigations Squad Two. Changing the names of the investigative sections within the Detective Division will end the inaccurate implication that one squad handles violent crimes and the other handles property crimes.*

Recommendation 5: *Members of the investigative units should have a single work schedule with consistent work hours.*

Recommendation 6: *The department should consider having both detective squads work a four day ten hour schedule with weekend coverage.*

Recommendation 7: *The Detective Division should develop and codify the assignment of investigations based on established criteria of solvability factors.*

Recommendation 8: *The Department should develop a written policy that outlines which follow-up investigations are handled by the Detective Division and which will be conducted by Patrol personnel.*

Recommendation 9: *The Detective Division's case management system (MCI) should be able to provide an individual report that lists the offense descriptions and number of investigations for each member of the division.*

Recommendation 10: *Detectives should not maintain open cases unnecessarily.*

Recommendation 11: *The Detective Sergeants should not be "working" supervisors handling a caseload.*

Recommendation 12: *The department would benefit from staffing the Detective Division with one civilian Police Investigative Aide in each section. These two additional personnel will help ensure that current number of detective remains adequate given the workload.*

Recommendation 13: *The Crime Suppression Unit should identify and develop meaningful indicators to measure the effectiveness of the Unit.*

Recommendation 14: *After developing measurements to evaluate the effectiveness of the CSU, the department should monitor the activity of the Unit to determine if a second team should be added.*

Recommendation 15: *The Department should provide funding to maintain the services of the Victim Advocate if state funds are depleted in 2013.*

Recommendation 16: *The department should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the Crime Analyst/Statistician position and provide a clear sense of direction.*

Recommendation 17: *Crime analysis documents and data should be housed on a department share drive.*

Recommendation 18: *The "Tactical Crime Analysis Report" should be modified to include crime mapping and known offenders.*

Recommendation 19: *The department should strive to identify and track high frequency incident locations.*

Recommendation 20: *The department should limit the cases that can be handled by Police Assistants to misdemeanor crimes where no known suspect or evidence is known to exist.*

Recommendation 21: *The department should ensure that procedures and practices are in place to ensure that officers dispatched to a scene do not refer a person at the scene to file a report to either the web-based or telephone reporting systems.*

Recommendation 22: *Policy and procedure should be modified to dispatch an officer immediately for a check on the well-being of persons who do not answer "Senior Patrol" calls.*

Recommendation 23: *The department should implement alternatives to the Dictaphone system in the report writing process.*

Recommendation 24: *The department should re-implement the use of an automated reporting system (ARS) to eliminate the redundancy of data entry.*

Recommendation 25: *The department should hire two additional communication supervisors in the next budget year to provide 24-hour coverage in the communications center.*

Recommendation 26: *The department should immediately update and distribute a Standard Operating Procedures manual to all communications center employees.*

Recommendation 27: *All matters involving internal affairs investigations should report directly to the Chief of Police.*

Recommendation 28: *The department should review its policy and procedures regarding reporting requirements for complaints from community members and should ensure the policy is clear and applied consistently throughout the department.*

Recommendation 29: *The department should be reorganized at the highest level so that the Patrol Division Commander, the Investigation Division Commander and the Administration Division Manager all report directly to the Deputy Chief*

METHODOLOGY

To carry out this project, PERF conducted interviews with city administrators, elected officials and departmental personnel, observed department operations, performed data analysis and conducted document reviews. Quantitative data was gathered from the department's computer aided dispatch system (CAD) for the purposes of analyzing patrol workload. Quantitative data was also gathered from the Managing Criminal Investigations summary to assess criminal investigation workload. Because of a 2012 transition in data collection software, the in-depth analyses conducted in this report used 2011 data. Through a review of the existing reports, the 2011 data was determined to be more representative of the actual workload of the department. A combination of qualitative and quantitative data was applied to analyze workload related to support staff functions.

The demographic data contained in this report was obtained from census documents. Crime figures were obtained from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports (UCR). Comparable staffing data was also obtained from UCR. SPD staffing and workload data was provided by the Sparks Police Department.

One portion of the study was the development of performance indicators relevant to the SPD. Indicators are presented to encourage the department and the city to consider ways to begin measuring police performance in some new ways. Performance indicators are presented in their relevant sections of the report. Overall recommendations are made based on PERF's assessment of the available information and data based on our experience in conducting these assessments in other agencies and knowledge of national best policing practices.

THE COMMUNITY

Sparks is located east of Reno in Washoe County, Nevada. Since 2000, Sparks has had a population growth of almost 40%, resulting in a 2010 population of 92,183. The unemployment rate in Sparks has been over 11%, but by May 2013 it had fallen to 9.5%, still 2% higher than the national average. The economy of the city is primarily based on the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food service industries. The retail trade is also an important component of the local economy.

City demographics are a primary factor in creating police workload. Cities with a higher density – population per square mile – and a higher percentage of multi-family residences are likely to generate more police work. High percentages of low-income housing, young people, alcohol outlets, a transitory population and poverty also tend to be associated with higher demands for police service.

The following table compares 2010 U.S. Census data from Sparks with Reno and the state as a whole.

Sparks Demographic Information, 2010 Census

Category	Sparks	Reno	Nevada
Persons under 18 years, percent, 2010	25.8%	22.8%	24.6%
Living in same house 1 year and over percent, 2007 - 2011	76.5%	73.9%	78.2%
Housing units in multi-unit structures, percent, 2007-2011	25.9%	40.0%	29.6%
Median household income 2007-2011	\$56,637	\$49,700	\$55,553
Persons below poverty level 2007-2011	12.0%	16.1%	12.9%
Persons per square mile, 2010	2,524	2,186	25

Sparks differs from Reno in that Sparks has a lower percent of its housing units in multi-unit structures, a higher median income and a smaller proportion of its population below the poverty level. Sparks is denser than Reno with more persons per square mile.

Sparks was compared to five other western cities based on size to determine whether Sparks' data is typical. The following table compares Sparks' demographic information with those of comparable cities.

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Comparable Demographic Information, 2010 Census

Category	Indio, CA	Citrus Heights, CA	Hawthorne, CA	Chico, CA	Sparks NV	Yuma, AZ	Average
Population, 2010	79,302	84,870	85,681	87,714	92,183	95,429	87,530
Persons under 18 years, percent, 2010	30.1%	23.1%	27.5%	19.5%	25.8%	28.2%	25.7%
Living in same house 1 year and over percent, 2007 -2011	78.0%	79.4%	87.1%	67.1%	76.5%	75.5%	77.3%
Housing units in multi-unit structures, percent, 2007-2011	20%	30%	66%	37%	26%	20%	33%
Median household income 2007-2011	\$52,199	\$54,575	\$45,622	\$41,632	\$56,637	\$44,113	\$49,130
Persons below poverty level 2007-2011	21%	12%	17%	22%	12%	18%	17%
Persons per square mile, 2010	2606	5855	13862	2618	2524	774	4706

Based on the table above, Sparks has an average percent of its population under 18, lower than average proportion of its housing units in multi-unit structures and has the highest median household income. It has a lower than average population density.

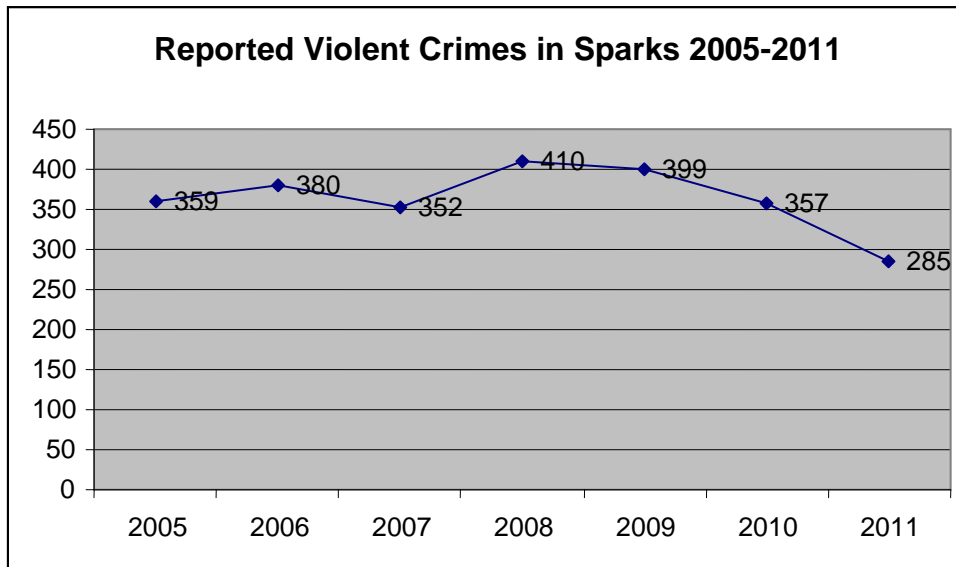
Another factor that may have an impact on police workload in Sparks is its border with Reno. Reno is larger and is a destination for gambling tourism. Successful police operations in Reno have the potential to push crime problems into Sparks. Effective communication and cooperation between the Reno and Sparks Police Departments has kept this from becoming a problem.

These circumstances are used in this assessment as background. They help to understand the context of policing in Sparks.

CRIME IN SPARKS

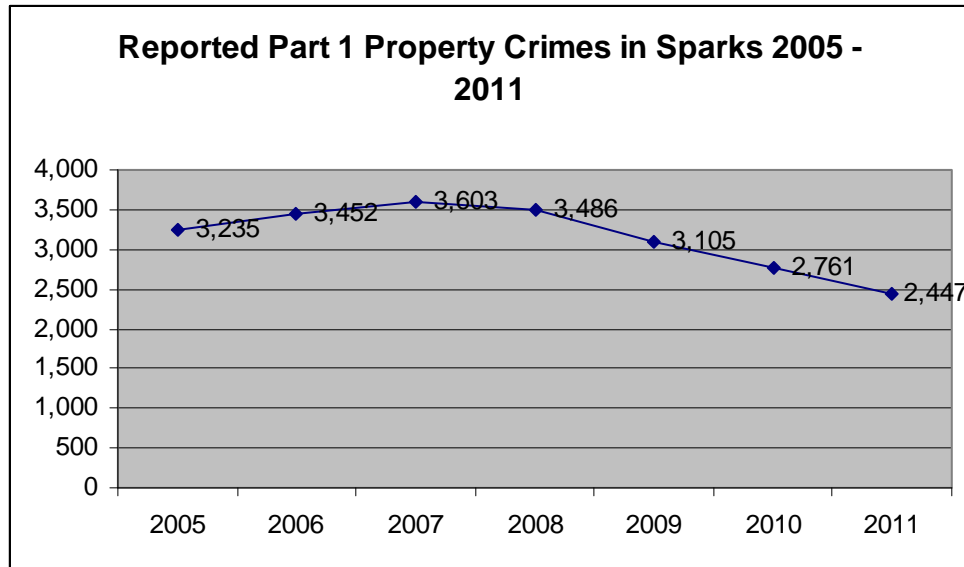
While the frequency and types of crime occurring in Sparks are not the sole factor in determining police staffing needs, they are an important factor. The amount of crime in a jurisdiction will influence the level of patrol response, the level of investigative resources needed, and the need for staff that support those directly involved in dealing with crime and disorder.

Crime in most American jurisdictions is recorded and compiled through the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system. There are eight "Part I" crimes widely reported because of their severity and frequency. They include murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft and arson. Other types of crime designated as Part II crimes are usually less serious in nature and are not recorded as systematically as are Part I crimes. Four Part I crimes are violent crimes (homicide, rape, aggravated assault and robbery). The total numbers of Part I violent crimes reported to the Sparks Police Department from 2005 through 2011 are shown in the following table.



Violent crime peaked in 2008 and has been declining ever since.

The following table shows the trend in Part I property crimes – burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft and arson – from 2005 through 2011.



The table above shows property crime in Sparks has been declining since 2007.

The following table uses data from the FBI's 2011 Uniform Crime Reports to compare crime in Sparks with comparably sized western cities.

Agency	Population 2011	Violent crime	Violent crime per 1,000	Property crime	Property crime per 1,000
Indio, CA Police Department	76,930	430	5.6	2,610	33.9
Citrus Heights, CA Police Department	84,280	334	4.0	3,333	39.6
Hawthorne, CA Police Department	85,284	623	7.3	2,124	24.9
Chico, CA Police Department	87,200	245	2.8	2,115	24.3
Sparks, NV Police Department	91,025	285	3.1	2,447	26.9
Yuma, AZ Police Department	94,381	490	5.2	3,227	34.2
Average	86,517	401	4.7	2,643	30.7

Based on UCR statistics, Sparks has the second lowest violent crime rate of the comparables, and a property crime rate that is lower than the average for the group. When compared to Reno, which has more than twice the population of Sparks, Sparks has a lower violent crime rate – 3.1 violent crimes per 1000 in Sparks and 4.9 in Reno. The property crime rate in Sparks also is lower than that of Reno, 28.8 in Reno compared to 26.9 in Sparks. Sparks generally enjoys relatively low levels of crime compared to comparably sized cities, as well as compared with the adjacent larger city of Reno.

CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

This section of the report provides an overview of the Sparks Police Department, including its high level organizational structure, staffing levels as compared to similarly sized departments, and core business processes. Individual organizational units are discussed later in this report.

Staffing

How police agencies are staffed is generally determined by the number of personnel needed to address reactive workload, carry out proactive tasks, and provide services that support the operation of the police department. When the project began in December 2012 the Sparks Police Department was staffed with 107 sworn officers (108 are authorized) and 41 civilian employees (43 are authorized). Six positions are funded by a grant through the federal Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).

For the purposes of comparison, the following table provides the staffing levels of similarly sized police departments.

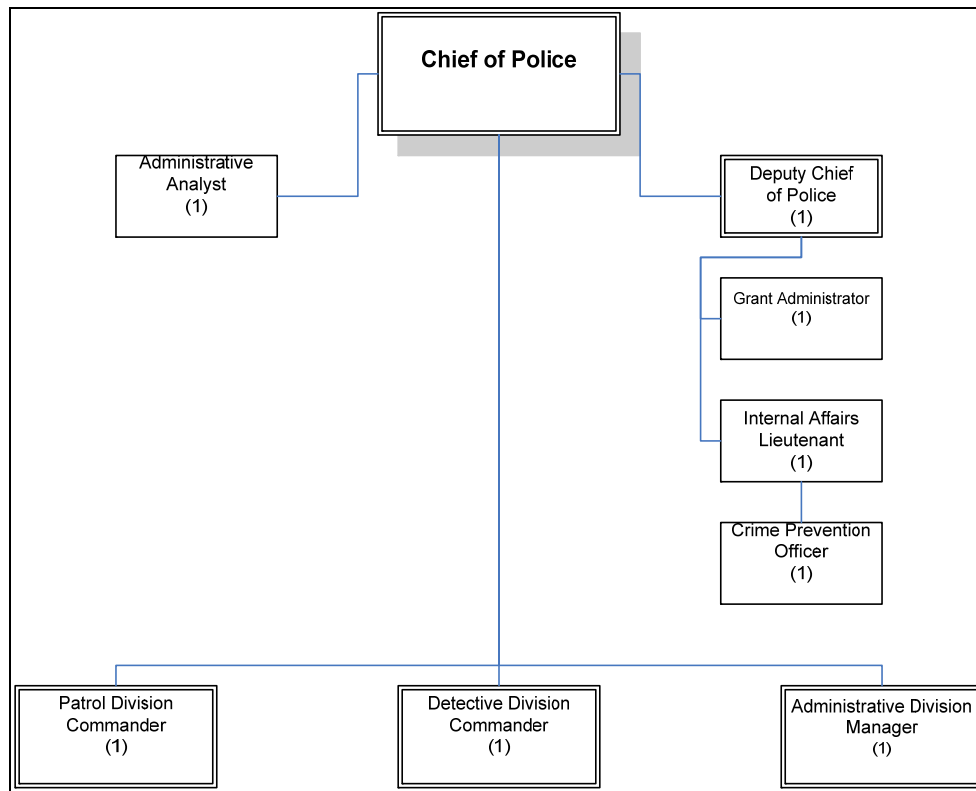
Law Enforcement Agencies	Population	Total	Sworn	Civilian
Indio, CA Police Department	76,930	103	65	38
Citrus Heights, CA Police Department	84,280	130	85	45
Hawthorne, CA Police Department	85,284	131	94	37
Chico, CA Police Department	87,200	149	95	54
Sparks, NV Police Department	91,025	151	108	43
Yuma, AZ Police Department	94,381	236	160	76
Average	86,517	150	101	49

The Sparks Police Department has a total staffing level that meets the average for the comparable police departments. It is slightly above the average in sworn personnel and slightly below the average for civilians.

Organizational Structure

The Department is organized into three divisions: Patrol, Detective, and Administration; plus a fourth component: the Office of the Deputy Chief. This structure is shown in the following diagram.

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The commander of each division oversees the functions of the division's sworn and civilian managers. The organization of the department is designed so that there are clear lines of authority and supervision. The organization is also designed so that it can carry out its core business practices in an organized fashion.

Core Business Practices and Functions

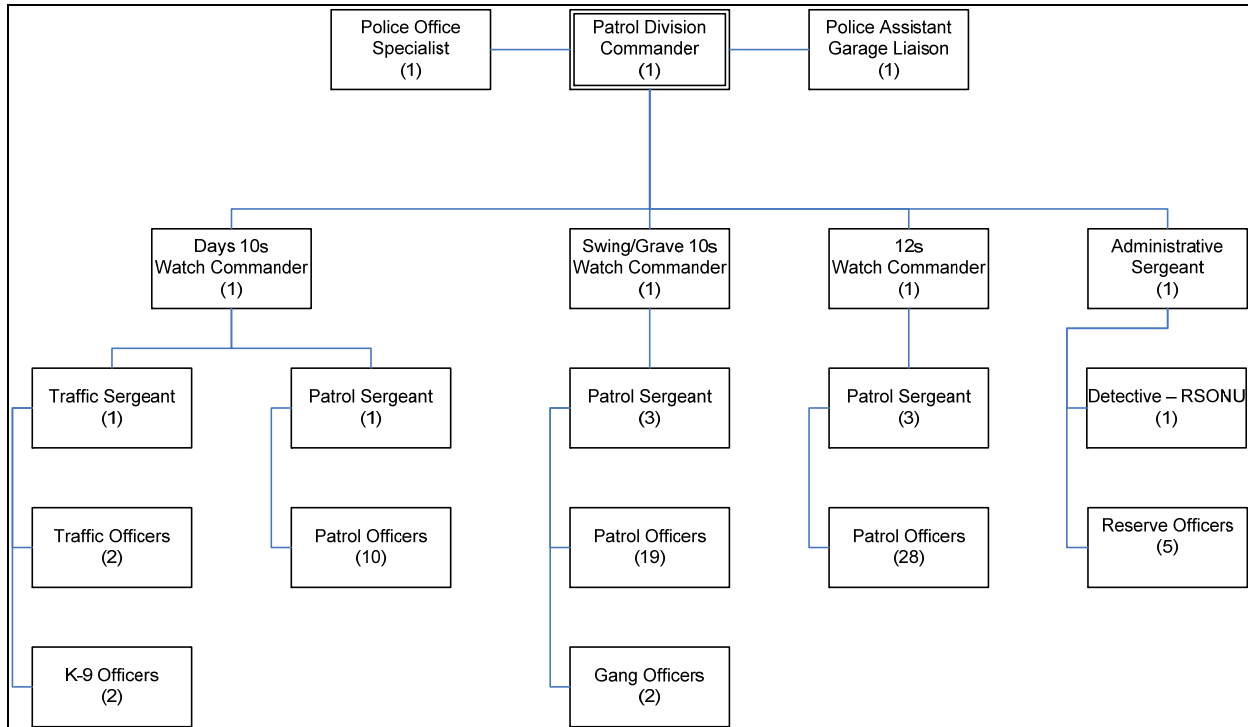
Core business processes are those activities carried out by the SPD that "touch" an external client. SPD core business processes are typical of most police departments. They include responding to residents' calls for service, conducting proactive patrol through vehicle stops and premises checks, conducting investigations of crimes reported to the police, and conducting proactive investigations in such areas as vice and narcotics.

While most U.S. police agencies the size of Sparks carry out these business processes, how they do so varies. Local policy preferences influence the number of people needed and how they are organized. For example, some departments have implemented a variety of programs to reduce the number of calls requiring an immediate response by a patrol officer. Some participate in regional task forces to respond to vice and narcotics crimes. Others may share a communications center and dispatch system with other police agencies.

Such choices influence the staffing needs of police departments. Police workload is dynamic and is defined both internally and externally. A 911 call for police service requiring a police report is an external workload demand. Processing the report and reporting crime data to the state and FBI is an internal workload demand. This report examines the Sparks Police Department in terms of how it responds to external work demands and how it is organized to address the internal work load required to meet those external demands. The following pages provide discussion of each of the major units of the Sparks Police Department.

PATROL DIVISION ORGANIZATION AND WORKLOAD

The organizational structure of the Patrol Division is shown below, along with the number of personnel assigned.



Patrol operations are centralized and operate from police headquarters. A Patrol Division Commander oversees all patrol operations and answers directly to the Chief of Police. Three lieutenants act as “watch commanders” and are in charge of a group of patrol officers working a common schedule. One of the lieutenants is also in charge of traffic and K-9 officers; a second has gang officers reporting to him.

Patrol Workload

Sparks Police Department patrol officers, as in most American law enforcement agencies, spend their time responding to calls for service from the public, engaging in self-initiated activity, conducting follow-up investigations, and performing a variety of administrative tasks. Citizens ask for police service by calling the police dispatch center (either through 911 or on a non-emergency line), in person by stopping an officer in the field, or by going to police headquarters. Officers responding to “calls for service” (CFS) may handle the incident informally, write a

report about the incident if necessary (usually when their preliminary investigation indicates that a crime has been committed), or when circumstances warrant, make an arrest.

The amount of self-initiated activity in a police department is a function of how proactive officers are and the amount of time available to the officers for such activity. Officers may initiate an action because they see suspicious behavior, observe a traffic violation, are conducting a follow-up investigation to gather more information on a previous case, or are looking for suspects with outstanding warrants. Such activities are products of an officer's discretion. The officer decides when and where to begin these encounters. The frequency of self-initiated activities that an officer performs is dependent, to some extent, on how busy the officer is with calls for service and on the availability of opportunities to take action.

Calls for service response and self-initiated work are both vital parts of patrol operations. The major difference between the two is that a police agency has little say over when calls for service are received; members of the public call the police when they need the police. They usually expect the prompt arrival of a uniformed officer. Although some departments are able to influence this workload to some extent – for example, by separating urgent calls necessitating an immediate high-priority response from non-urgent calls that may permit a delayed response – the times of day when calls originate cannot be controlled by the police.

Self-initiated work is initiated by patrol officers when they are not responding to calls. The more time that is spent responding to calls for service, the less time there will be for self-initiated work, problem solving, and community engagement activity.

Sparks Data

To examine patrol workload, PERF received a year's worth of records from the department's computer aided dispatch (CAD) system. The department suffered substantial computer system problems during 2102, so 2011 records were used. It was reported that the dispatched workload has been fairly consistent and that the 2011 data is representative of the current workload. The 2011 database contained 79,245 records². Of these, 34,224 had a source code of "On Site" indicating that they were officer self-initiated activity. The remaining 45,021 had source codes indicating that they were calls from the public requesting service from the police department.

² The number of recorded dispatch records has averaged 81,079 from 2008 through 2011. There were 86,066 recorded dispatches in 2008, 80,825 in 2009, 78,180 in 2010, and 79,245 in 2011.

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However, of the 45,021 records, 19,443 were not dispatched calls for service. For these calls, no unit was assigned and no dispatched time was recorded. Most have a very short duration when measured from time received until time cleared. It was reported to PERF that these records are primarily administrative in nature. An incident number is generated for medical calls, for calls that are handled at the front desk, for calls when someone is just seeking information, for calls coming in on non-emergency lines when the caller hangs up, and for other purposes that do not need an officer to be dispatched. Subtracting these “administrative” incidents from the total calls for service left 25,579 dispatched calls for service records.

The following descriptive relates to these 25,579 dispatched calls for service.

Calls for Service in Sparks

For Sparks in 2011, the following chart shows the ten most prevalent types of calls for police service. The “Number” column refers to the number of dispatched events.

2011 CFS Call Type	
Call Type	Number
Follow Up (See text for explanations)	1501
Welfare Check	1362
Domestic Disturbance	1171
Domestic Assault & Battery	888
Alarm Commercial Police	789
Parking Violation	772
Suspicious Person	747
Suspicious Circumstance	741
Disturbing the Peace	655
Suspicious Vehicle	643

Altogether these ten call types account for 36% of all the calls recorded in Spark. There is a wider diversity of call types in Sparks than in other jurisdictions PERF has studied. The ten most frequent call types usually account for over 50% of the total number of calls.

“Follow Ups” typically occur when citizens call to have a patrol officer conduct further investigation of a crime that was reported earlier. In many departments this call type will not be

among the most frequent because follow-up investigations are performed by investigators. But in Sparks, as is described more fully below, patrol officers are assigned case investigations.

A “Welfare Check” occurs when some calls the police and is concerned about someone else, for example an elderly neighbor who has not been seen for some time. The remaining most frequent calls are generally like those found in similar police agencies.

For policing purposes, Sparks is divided geographically into seven police beats³. Beats 1, 3, 5, 7 are located in District One, on the west side of town. In 2011, these four beats accounted for 56% of the calls for service.

- Beat 1 is mostly residential (90%) with mainly single family units, although there are several large apartment complexes with low income housing units.
- Beat 3 is the smallest beat in size but contains the city’s largest casino. It has one of the two high schools in the city and has mostly single family residences.
- Beat 5 is some 95% commercial and light industrial but with two casinos.
- Beat 7 is in the central part of the city and is the oldest area. The beat is 90% residential, mostly single family with older homes, some dating back to 1900.

The other three beats, 2, 4 and 6 – on the city’s east side – make up District Two.

- Beat 2 in the farthest north and is 60% residential, 20% commercial and 20% open space. Most residences are single family although the beat does have several large condo/apartment complexes. There is also a planned community with two championship golf courses. The commercial areas consist of large strip malls anchored by big box stores. Beat 2 residents tend to be at the higher end of the economic scale.
- Beat 4 is about 90% residential and has the other Sparks high school. Most homes are single family structures although there are several large apartment complexes.
- Beat 6 is 40% residential and 60% commercial and light industrial. Commercial property includes a casino and a large outdoor mall, next to a marina. Housing is primarily single family.

³ Beat descriptions were provided by the Sparks Police Department.

The next table shows the number of calls for service (CFS) per beat.

2011 Calls For Service per Beat		
Police Beat	Count per Beat	% of Total Calls
1	4,204	17%
2	3,220	13%
3	3,040	12%
4	3,265	13%
5	3,262	13%
6	4,666	19%
7	3,419	14%

Beat 3, the smallest beat, accounted for 3,040 calls for service (12% of the total), the fewest calls for any beat. Beat 6 had the most calls for service with 4,666 (19% of the total), more than 53% greater than the number in Beat 3. There are some differences in the nature of the calls for service between those two beats. Beat 6 had 125 calls regarding shoplifting, Beat 3 had none. This is in line with the nature of the two beats since Beat 6 has the shopping mall, and other than the casino, there is little commercial activity in Beat 3.

Beat 6 had over 10 times the number of commercial alarms as did Beat 3 (277 versus 24.) These call types are typical of the commercial enterprises concentrated in Beat 6. Beat 3, with fewer calls overall than Beat 6, had more calls about domestic disturbances (176 compared to 161), domestic assault and batteries (140 versus 109), civil protection custody (142 versus 114), and warrants (75 to 69). This calls for service pattern fits predominantly residential and the lower economic profile of Beat 3.

The next table shows how calls for service in Sparks are most frequently concluded.

CFS Disposition	
Disposition	Disposition Count
Satisfied at Scene	6,592
Report Taken	4,462
Unable to Locate	2,745
Arrested Adult	1,643
Advised & Complied	1,489
Gone on Arrival	1,487
Handled Other Jurisdiction	949
Unknown	867
Unfounded	821
No Report Taken	659

These dispositions account for 85% of all the calls for service recorded for 2011. Officers are able to handle many citizen requests for service without generating a formal report. Over one-third have dispositions like “satisfied at the scene,” “advised and complied (used when an officer provided advice to the calling party and they complied with his/her suggestion),” and “no report taken.” Conversely, 28% of the calls generate some form of report, including “report taken,” arrests of adults and juveniles, and citations.

The next table indicates the priority, or urgency, of the call and the number of calls reported in that call priority code. Priority 1 is the most urgent call for police service and traditionally involves a life-threatening situation.

CFS Priority	
Priority	Priority Count
1	4,787
2	3,523
3	8,591
4	5,069
5	3,598

Priority 1 calls make up 19% of all calls. Five call types – domestic disputes, domestic assault and batteries, affrays (fights), medical assists, and traffic accidents with injuries – account for approximately half of all Priority 1 responses.

Patrol Staffing and Workload

Assessment of the fit between patrol officer staffing and patrol workload requires three primary steps: determining the amount of work that needs to be performed in terms of the time consumed, determining the level of current staffing resources committed to patrol, and assessing the match between workload and patrol.

Time Consumed: The year's worth of dispatch data from the department's information system PERF received was "cleaned" to remove incomplete records or those with excessively long time from "time received" to "time cleared." Such records indicate that the officer never provided a cleared time to a dispatcher or that some other processing error occurred. The initial set of tables below is composed of the average calls-for-service time consumed per week in hours, by hour of the day and day of the week. The time spent by each patrol officer on each call is the time from when the officer was dispatched until the officer indicated to the dispatcher that he/she completed the call, or "cleared." The time consumed includes calculations of the amount of time spent on the call by both the primary officer and any back-up officers. Most calls require at least one additional officer for officer safety.

The time spent on each call was added into the hour block in which it occurred. For example, if the officer was dispatched at 1045 hours and cleared the call 35 minutes later at 1120 hours, 15 minutes were allocated to the 1000 – 1059 time block and 20 minutes were allocated to the 1100 to 1159 time block. The total amount of time was averaged by week and by day and hour. This data is shown in the next table.

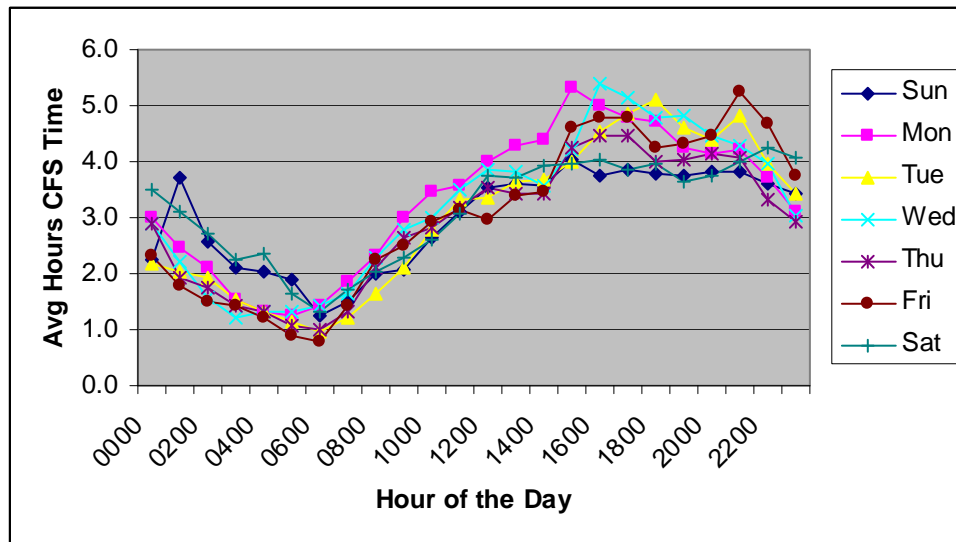
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Average Time Consumed By Calls For Service Weekly							
Hour	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
0000	2.2	3.0	2.2	2.9	2.9	2.3	3.5
0100	3.7	2.5	2.1	2.2	1.9	1.8	3.1
0200	2.6	2.1	1.9	1.6	1.7	1.5	2.7
0300	2.1	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.4	1.4	2.2
0400	2.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	2.3
0500	1.9	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.1	0.9	1.6
0600	1.3	1.4	1.0	1.4	1.0	0.8	1.3
0700	1.5	1.9	1.2	1.7	1.3	1.4	1.7
0800	2.0	2.3	1.6	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.1
0900	2.1	3.0	2.1	2.8	2.6	2.5	2.3
1000	2.6	3.5	2.8	3.0	2.8	2.9	2.6
1100	3.1	3.6	3.3	3.5	3.2	3.1	3.1
1200	3.5	4.0	3.4	3.8	3.5	3.0	3.7
1300	3.6	4.3	3.7	3.8	3.4	3.4	3.7
1400	3.6	4.4	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.9
1500	4.1	5.3	4.0	4.2	4.2	4.6	3.9
1600	3.7	5.0	4.5	5.4	4.5	4.8	4.0
1700	3.9	4.8	4.9	5.1	4.5	4.8	3.9
1800	3.8	4.7	5.1	4.8	4.0	4.2	4.0
1900	3.8	4.2	4.6	4.8	4.1	4.3	3.6
2000	3.8	4.1	4.4	4.5	4.1	4.5	3.8
2100	3.8	4.2	4.8	4.3	4.1	5.3	4.0
2200	3.6	3.7	4.0	3.9	3.3	4.7	4.3
2300	3.4	3.1	3.4	3.0	2.9	3.8	4.1

Shaded time blocks represent peak work periods. The calls for service workload in Sparks is generally highest on Monday through Wednesday afternoon from 1500 hours up to 1900 hours. In a predominately residential community as Sparks, this is not unusual since it reflects youth activity as school lets out and when people return home toward the end of the workday to discover they have been victimized through a larceny or burglary.

The next chart shows the calls-for-service workload by day of the week.

Average CFS Time By Day of the Week



In general the rise and fall of the call for service workload is similar for each day of the week. The level is lowest from about 0500 through 0700, increases throughout the day peaking in the early afternoon hours, and then starts a decline about 2200 hours. This pattern is typical for suburban cities like Sparks, where schools let out, afternoon rush hour traffic occurs, and residents return home to discover criminal activity such as vandalism, larceny and burglary after being away for most of the day.

Patrol Schedule

Patrol staffing is divided into two clear and distinct schedule options, each with three separate shifts. The current shift schedule was put in place to bolster staffing levels on Friday and Saturday evening. Each shift has eight to eleven officers assigned. The first schedule option, a four-day, ten-hour work week, is assigned Tuesday through Friday with a graveyard shift (Team A -- 2200 through 0800 hours), day shift (Team B -- 0600 through 1600 hours) and swing shift (Team C -- 1400 through 2400).

The second schedule option, a three-day, twelve-hour work week, is assigned Saturday through Monday with a similar graveyard shift (Team D -- 2000 through 0800 hours), day shift (Team E -- 0600 through 1800 hours) and swing shift (Team F -- 1400 through 0200 hours). Officers assigned to this 12-hour shift option must work an additional eight-hour tour during the two-week pay period. Current contract regulations require this additional tour to be assigned the day preceding or the day following the officer's three-day tour. Effective utilization of this

additional tour has posed challenges to supervisory personnel. This eight-hour tour is often used by the officers as compensatory leave or training.

One lieutenant watch commander manages the Tuesday through Friday day shift, usually working from 0600 through 1600 hours. The second lieutenant watch commander manages the weekday ten-hour swing and graveyard shifts and is usually on duty from 1400 to 2400 hours. The third lieutenant watch commander is in charge of all of the weekend officers working the 12-hour shifts with varying weekend hours. Interviews and observations indicate that watch commanders are frequently assigned duties and tasks that take them away from direct patrol oversight.

Interviews and observations indicate that the current work schedule creates a lack of interaction and cooperation between the weekday and weekend shifts. Additionally, since officers select their assignment based on seniority, veteran officers and sergeants are normally working during the week, with the less experienced officers assigned to weekends. Concerns were expressed that the weekend shift appears isolated from the remainder of the department. Communication between the weekday and weekend shifts appears limited.

Selection of patrol shift schedules is done in six month intervals based on seniority. Sergeants assigned to the Patrol Division are assigned to one of the six shifts described above. Most shifts have only one sergeant assigned. Sergeants make arrangements between themselves and the watch commander to cover any supervisory vacancy due to planned or unexpected leave.

The city is divided into seven beats with a goal of assigning a minimum of one officer to each beat. Additional officers provide coverage when available, during weekends, and overlap periods. Officers report for daily roll call to receive their assignments. Roll call lasts between 30 and 45 minutes, with officers reporting to their assigned beat within the first hour. Officers have traditionally been provided one to two hours at the end of their tour for report writing. Reports are hand written or computer-generated and are reviewed by a police sergeant. Officers have the ability and frequently use a dictation device to record the narrative portion of their report. The Records Section then transcribes the recording for final report submission. Officers do not utilize their mobile data terminals to prepare reports in the field.

The current schedule allocates patrol officers to weekdays (working four 10-hour shifts Tuesday through Friday) or to weekends (working three 12-hour shifts Saturday through Monday). At the time of the PERF site visits, officers were assigned as follows:

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Team A (9 officers) Tuesday through Friday midnight shift 2200 through 0800 hours;
 Team B (10 officers) Tuesday through Friday day shift 0600 through 1600 hours;
 Team C (11 officers) Tuesday through Friday swing shift 1400 through 2400 hours;
 Team D (8 officers) Saturday through Monday midnight shift 2000 through 0800 hours;
 Team E (10 officers) Saturday through Monday day shift 0600 through 1800 hours;
 Team F (11 officers) Saturday through Monday swing shift 1400 through 0200 hours.

The next table shows the number of officers scheduled at a 75% “show up” rate. Officers do not “show up” on every day they are scheduled to work. Absences may be due to vacation, illness, training, court appearances, or other leave time. Prior PERF calculations indicate that patrol officers show up typically 75% of the time they are scheduled and that this is a common show up rate among police departments. The following table shows the average patrol officer time using the current schedule and the 75% show-up rate.

Patrol Officer Resources in Hours at 75% Show-Up							
Hour	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
0000	14.3	14.3	15.0	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.0
0100	14.3	14.3	15.0	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.0
0200	6.0	6.0	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.0
0300	6.0	6.0	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.0
0400	6.0	6.0	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.0
0500	6.0	6.0	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.0
0600	13.5	13.5	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	13.5
0700	13.5	13.5	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	13.5
0800	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
0900	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
1000	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
1100	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
1200	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
1300	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
1400	15.8	15.8	15.8	15.8	15.8	15.8	15.8
1500	15.8	15.8	15.8	15.8	15.8	15.8	15.8
1600	15.8	15.8	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	15.8
1700	15.8	15.8	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	15.8
1800	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3
1900	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3
2000	14.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	14.3	14.3
2100	14.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	14.3	14.3
2200	14.3	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	14.3	14.3
2300	14.3	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	14.3	14.3

The next table shows the result of applying the 75% show-up rate and overlaying the officer data with the average time consumed by calls for service. The resulting table depicts the average amount of officer time consumed by calls for service by hour of the day and day of the week.

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Officer Time Consumed By Calls for Service By Hour of the Day and Day of the Week							
Hour	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
0000	15.7%	21.0%	14.6%	42.7%	42.7%	34.4%	58.2%
0100	26.0%	17.4%	13.7%	32.8%	28.4%	26.5%	51.6%
0200	42.7%	35.1%	28.4%	23.3%	25.7%	22.1%	45.3%
0300	35.1%	25.3%	22.5%	18.2%	20.9%	21.3%	37.3%
0400	34.2%	22.2%	19.8%	19.8%	19.4%	18.2%	39.1%
0500	31.6%	20.9%	17.0%	19.4%	15.8%	13.4%	27.1%
0600	9.3%	10.5%	6.7%	9.9%	6.9%	5.4%	9.9%
0700	11.1%	13.8%	8.6%	11.6%	9.2%	10.1%	12.6%
0800	26.7%	30.9%	21.7%	30.6%	28.1%	29.9%	27.4%
0900	27.7%	39.8%	28.1%	37.3%	35.2%	33.4%	30.6%
1000	35.2%	46.2%	37.3%	39.8%	37.7%	39.1%	34.8%
1100	41.6%	47.6%	44.4%	46.6%	42.3%	42.0%	40.9%
1200	47.3%	53.3%	44.8%	51.2%	47.3%	39.5%	49.8%
1300	48.0%	57.2%	48.7%	50.8%	45.9%	45.2%	49.4%
1400	22.7%	27.9%	23.4%	22.7%	21.7%	22.0%	24.9%
1500	25.7%	33.7%	25.4%	26.8%	26.9%	29.3%	25.1%
1600	23.7%	31.7%	54.9%	65.3%	54.3%	57.9%	25.6%
1700	24.6%	30.5%	58.8%	62.4%	54.0%	57.9%	24.6%
1800	45.9%	57.2%	61.7%	57.9%	48.5%	51.4%	48.2%
1900	45.6%	51.4%	55.9%	58.5%	49.1%	52.4%	44.0%
2000	26.8%	50.1%	53.3%	54.0%	50.1%	31.3%	26.4%
2100	26.8%	51.1%	58.5%	52.0%	49.5%	36.9%	28.1%
2200	25.3%	24.7%	26.5%	26.3%	22.0%	32.7%	29.9%
2300	24.0%	20.6%	22.8%	20.3%	19.6%	26.4%	28.6%

Sparks patrol officers spend an overall average of about 34% of their time in the field on calls for service response. The shaded time blocks represent those period when the amount of patrol officer time consumed averages over 50% of that available. The busiest periods are on weekdays from 1600 through 2100 hours. A two-hour period just after midnight on Saturday is also busy.

There are no universally accepted standards for how much patrol time should be consumed by calls for service. One department may set an informal target at 30% to 40%. Another department may determine that patrol officer calls for service time should not exceed an average of 60%. One traditional rule of thumb, recognized before community policing became prevalent, was that one-third of an officer's time should be spent on calls for service, one-third on self-initiated activity, and one-third on uncommitted patrol time. A desire for some of an officer's time to be devoted to community policing activities altered that old rule and led to many variations dependent on local considerations.

In some cities, how patrol officers spend their time is not closely tracked or subjected to a formal target. PERF's work in other cities has shown variation in targets for patrol time use. A large Midwest department had a standard of 35% of an officer's time being used to respond to calls for service. A large Phoenix suburb set a standard of 40%. In a northern California agency, the time to be consumed by CFS varied in each of the city's 10 police districts, from a low of 30% to a high of just over 50%. A Florida agency with an actual figure of 67% set a target to reduce call-for-service time to 50%. Another agency in Florida set a target at 45%. A large southern department has an average of 42% of patrol officer time consumed by calls for service. With an average time consumed figure of 57.2%, a department in Texas had a comparatively high average calls for service time consumed figure.

The Sparks average calls for service time at 34% provides sufficient time for patrol officers to respond to calls for service, engage in proactive activity and engage the community. There are 29 one hour time blocks over the week when the average time consumed is higher than 50%, three of them show an average call time consumption of over 60%.

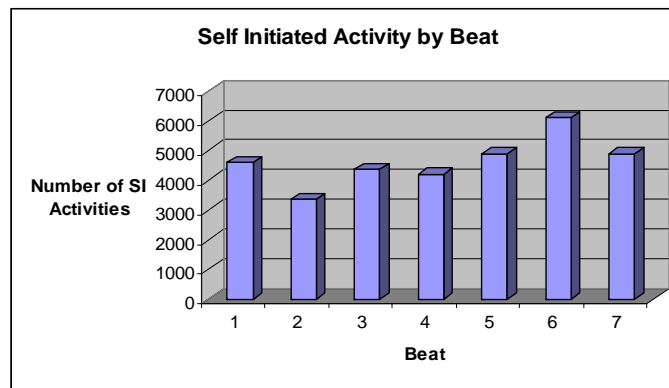
Self-Initiated Activity

Patrol officers not only respond to calls for service but also engage members of the public at the officer's initiative. These activities represent "proactive" police work when officers do things like making traffic stops, attempting to serve warrants, assisting persons in trouble, and checking on suspicious vehicles and persons. The 2011 data included 34,224 records where officers engaged in such self-initiated work. The table below reflects the 10 most frequent types of self-initiated (SI) activity in 2011.

Self Initiated Activity Type	
Call Type	Call Type Count
Traffic Stop	11,696
Premises Check	8,853
Follow Up	2,860
Warrant	1,826
Parking Violation	1,673
Suspicious Person	1,548
Suspicious Vehicle	1,192
Motorist Assist	466
Citizen Assist	457
Outside Assist	396

The two most frequent activities were traffic stops and premises checks. Traffic stops accounted for 34% of all self-initiated activities. Traffic stops were highest on Saturday and lowest on Sunday. The peak time for traffic stops was between 2300 and midnight, and the fewest were recorded between 0500 and 0600.

The following chart shows self-initiated activity per beat.



The amount of officer generated activity in Beat 6 (the busiest beat with the mall and marina) is 82% more than the least active, Beat 2 (which is characterized by more expensive residences and open space). Of all its self initiated activities, Beat 1 (90% residential including large apartment complexes including low income housing) recorded 44% as traffic stops. This compares to only 28% traffic stops in Beat 3 (the smallest beat) and Beat 7 (the oldest residential part of the city).

One purpose of self-initiated activity is to search for illegal behavior. Sparks officers are successful in this regard in about 20% of their proactive encounters. The officer issued a citation in 16% of self-initiated activities and made an arrest in 4% of the time. More typically the officer initiated activities are handled at the scene with no further action. Approximately 65% were disposed of through “Satisfied at Scene” (40.2%) or “Advised and Complied” (24.7%).

PERF Simulation of an Alternative Patrol Schedule – Four 10-hour days all week

Because concern was expressed that the current schedule results in a lack of interaction and cooperation between the weekday and weekend shifts, PERF simulated the impact of a schedule that had all of patrol on a four-day on, three-day off 10-hour schedule. This simulation sought to create a schedule that would reduce the perceived isolation of the weekend shift and improve communication.

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Under this model the four-ten schedule would be applied over the entire week, thus eliminating the three-12-hour weekend schedule. Six squads would be created, two assigned to each shift with a common overlap day that varies by the time of day to increase the number of officers on the street to meet peak demand on the busiest days. The overlap day might also be used for training and compensatory time. The total number of officers would still be 59, and the shifts would be as follows:

Midnight A Squad (8 officers, Wednesday through Saturday, 2200 to 0800);

Midnight B Squad (8 officers, Saturday through Tuesday, 2200 to 0800);

Day C Squad (9 officers, Monday through Thursday, 0700 to 1700);

Day D Squad (9 officers, Friday through Monday, 0700 to 1700);

Swing E Squad (13 officers, Tuesday through Friday, 1400 to 2400);

Swing F Squad (12 officers, Friday through Monday, 1400 to 2400).

The following table shows how the 59 officers would be scheduled over the course of the week.

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**Proposed “4-10” Schedule, Number of Officers Scheduled per Hour
59 Officers Total**

Sparks - 59 officers with 4-10 Schedule							
Hour	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
0000	8	8	8	8	8	8	16
0100	8	8	8	8	8	8	16
0200	8	8	8	8	8	8	16
0300	8	8	8	8	8	8	16
0400	8	8	8	8	8	8	16
0500	8	8	8	8	8	8	16
0600	8	8	8	8	8	8	16
0700	17	26	17	17	17	17	25
0800	9	18	9	9	9	9	9
0900	9	18	9	9	9	9	9
1000	9	18	9	9	9	9	9
1100	9	18	9	9	9	9	9
1200	9	18	9	9	9	9	9
1300	9	18	9	9	9	9	9
1400	21	30	22	22	22	34	21
1500	21	30	22	22	22	34	21
1600	21	30	22	22	22	34	21
1700	12	12	13	13	13	25	12
1800	12	12	13	13	13	25	12
1900	12	12	13	13	13	25	12
2000	12	12	13	13	13	25	12
2100	12	12	13	13	13	25	12
2200	20	20	21	21	21	41	20
2300	20	20	21	21	21	41	20

The following table takes into account the show-up rates and overlays the number of officers showing up, on the average, with the hours consumed by calls for service for the four-ten schedule.

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**Percentage of Officer Time Consumed by Calls for Service
Proposed 4-10 schedule**

Hour	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
0000	37.3%	49.8%	36.4%	48.0%	48.0%	38.7%	36.4%
0100	61.8%	41.3%	34.2%	36.9%	32.0%	29.8%	32.2%
0200	42.7%	35.1%	32.0%	26.2%	28.9%	24.9%	28.3%
0300	35.1%	25.3%	25.3%	20.4%	23.6%	24.0%	23.3%
0400	34.2%	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%	21.8%	20.4%	24.4%
0500	31.6%	20.9%	19.1%	21.8%	17.8%	15.1%	16.9%
0600	20.9%	23.6%	16.0%	23.6%	16.4%	12.9%	13.9%
0700	11.7%	12.0%	9.6%	13.0%	10.2%	11.3%	11.4%
0800	29.6%	21.5%	24.1%	34.0%	31.2%	33.2%	30.4%
0900	30.8%	27.7%	31.2%	41.5%	39.1%	37.1%	34.0%
1000	39.1%	32.1%	41.5%	44.2%	41.9%	43.5%	38.7%
1100	46.2%	33.1%	49.4%	51.8%	47.0%	46.6%	45.4%
1200	52.5%	37.0%	49.8%	56.9%	52.5%	43.9%	55.3%
1300	53.3%	39.8%	54.1%	56.5%	51.0%	50.2%	54.9%
1400	22.7%	24.4%	22.3%	21.7%	20.7%	17.0%	24.9%
1500	25.7%	29.5%	24.2%	25.5%	25.7%	22.6%	25.1%
1600	23.7%	27.7%	27.5%	32.6%	27.2%	23.4%	25.6%
1700	43.0%	53.3%	49.8%	52.8%	45.7%	31.8%	43.0%
1800	42.1%	52.4%	52.2%	49.0%	41.0%	28.3%	44.1%
1900	41.8%	47.1%	47.3%	49.5%	41.6%	28.8%	40.3%
2000	42.4%	45.9%	45.1%	45.7%	42.4%	29.7%	41.8%
2100	42.4%	46.8%	49.5%	44.0%	41.8%	35.0%	44.4%
2200	24.0%	24.7%	25.2%	25.1%	21.0%	19.0%	28.4%
2300	22.8%	20.6%	21.7%	19.3%	18.6%	15.3%	27.2%

This four-ten schedule with 59 officers would result in an average of 33% of patrol officers' field time being consumed by calls for service which is approximately the same as the current schedule.

However, the four-ten schedule is a better match of personnel to the workload because it reduces the number of time blocks over 50% time consumed to 16, with just one being over 60%. Under the current schedule, of the 168 one-hour time blocks in the week (seven days times 24 hours), 29 time blocks averaged over 50% of the available officer time consumed by calls for service, with three of those averaging over 60%.

By having everyone working the 4-10 schedule and varying the overlap days by shift, the separation between the weekday shift personnel and the weekend shift personnel would end. In addition, of the six squads, only two would not have at least one weekend (Friday, Saturday, Sunday) day off.

Another possible variant of the 4-10 schedule would have all squads work with a single common day off – Wednesday. One set of squads would work Sunday through Wednesday, the other Wednesday through Saturday. This would allow for training for special units that have officers on each of the three shifts. The impact would be to have 23 time blocks over 50% and two over 60% time consumed. The overall average time consume would remain at 33%. Every officer would have one weekend day off.

This simulated 4-10 schedules provide more than adequate coverage for calls for service response. However, with the 75% show-up rate, at times there will be six officers on-duty. Therefore, if the department were to go to this schedule, it would have to assign, at times, one officer to cover two beats. For this purpose, Beats 3 and 5 could be combined since Beat 3 is the smallest and Beat 5 has a very limited residential population. Back-up, when needed could be provided from Beat 1, Beat 7 and Beat 6.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: *The department should consider an alternative patrol schedule to the current weekday 4-10 and weekend 3-12 that would improve communications, enhance officer work experience throughout all patrol shifts, and eliminate isolation.* The 4-10 schedule for all shifts presented here is one example. This simulated schedule provides good coverage for calls for service, provides opportunities for much better communications between shifts and squads and reduces the number of the busiest time blocks. It could also improve the mix of experience in the patrol shifts so that not most all of the least experienced officers are clustered on the least desirable long week-end shift as is the current case.

Recommendation 2: *The department should encourage the preparation of reports in the field and reduce the amount of time officers spend in the station at the end of the shift.* Current practice indicates officers return to the station one to two hours before the end of the shift to initiate the report writing process rather than completing reports on their in-car computers. Visibility is one of the key components of any crime prevention effort. Writing reports in a marked patrol vehicle in a high traffic / high call for service area, when possible, will serve as a crime deterrent and keep the officer more readily available should they receive a high priority call for service.

Patrol Performance Indicators

Patrol should be designed to promote community engagement. Officers should be assigned to the same geographic area of the city and should be expected to be familiar with the ongoing crime and disorder problems faced by those who live, work or otherwise frequent their assigned area. There should be time available for officers to interact with community members and not

just respond to calls for service. To support these efforts Sparks should consider tracking the following performance indicators related to patrol. They should be used by top command to assess the caliber of patrol service..

- Length of time officers have been assigned to beats, based on yearly increments.
- Quantity and scope of community engagement by patrol officers.
- Based on resource allocation data, the percentage of time officers have available for proactive policing.
- “Beat” officers can base daily patrol action plans based on information provided through crime analysis. .

Traffic Section

The Traffic Section has an authorized strength of two motor officers and a traffic accident investigator, under the direction of a traffic sergeant. At the time of PERF’s site visit, actual strength of the Traffic Section was two motor officers and one traffic sergeant, with no one filling the investigator position.

The motor officers conduct proactive traffic enforcement efforts and respond to traffic complaint areas. When the traffic section is at authorized strength, the traffic accident investigator and motor officers also investigate a majority of the traffic accidents. The Traffic Section Sergeant coordinates the Major Accident Investigation Team (MAIT). The team investigates collisions involving significant injury or death. At the request of the Highway Patrol, the Sparks Police has assumed traffic responsibility for two highways that would normally be under the jurisdiction of the Highway Patrol.

The traffic Sergeant works Monday through Thursday from 0600 to 1600 hours. The motor officers work either a 0530 to 1530 hours or a 0900 to 1900 hours shift on a day off schedule designed to cover all weekdays. In 2011 the Traffic Section made 1510 traffic stops, issued 934 citations, and investigated 300 accidents. Traffic officers normally work only on major thoroughfares and in school zones. Traffic Section officers will back up patrol on non-traffic related calls when necessary.

The department receives many traffic related complaints from community members. The normal response to the complaints is for the Sergeant to evaluate the situation and assign resources where necessary. The reserve officer program provides assistance to the Traffic Section and is comprised of trained volunteer personnel who work alongside sworn personnel.

Interviews and observations indicate that traffic related violations and accidents are a source of many citizen complaints and concerns. Additionally, a more proactive traffic enforcement effort is considered a top priority by city leaders.

Recommendations

Recommendation 3: *The department should enhance traffic related enforcement through accident and violation analysis.* The SPD is very effective at monitoring crime and traffic related concerns. The SPD should utilize Crime Analysis personnel to monitor traffic related patterns and trends and disseminate this information to patrol supervisors. Patrol supervisors could then more effectively assign patrol personnel, in collaboration with the Traffic Section, to address these issues with directed patrol and enforcement.

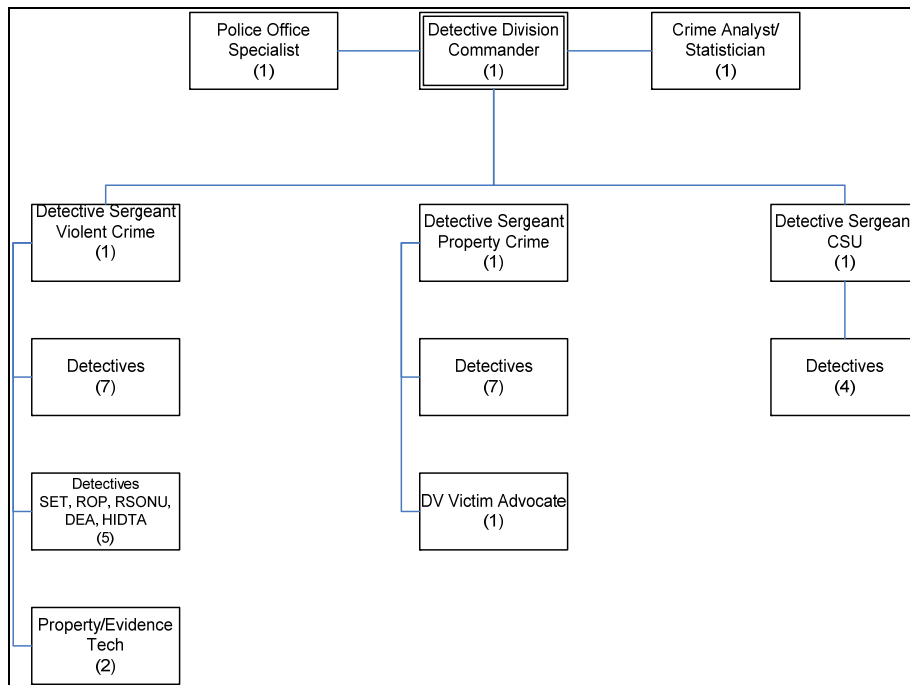
DETECTIVE DIVISION ORGANIZATION AND WORKLOAD

The objective of the Sparks Police Department's Detective Division is to conduct "detailed and thorough investigations that exceed prosecutorial standards." The division's operational philosophy is to develop a cross-functional team of detectives utilizing a generalist approach to assigning and conducting criminal investigations. In addition to their regular supervisory duties, sergeants within the Detective Division are expected to serve as mentors and educators for those under their command. Detectives are expected to not only maintain their personal caseload but to assist others in the division outside the scope of their primary assignment when necessary.

Detective Division Organizational Structure

The Detective Division is managed by a Police Commander who reports directly to the Chief of Police. The position of "Commander" is a lieutenant assigned by the Chief. Commanders receive compensation that is 15% above lieutenant's pay. The Division is organized into three investigative teams, each supervised by a Sergeant: the Violent Crimes Section, the Property Crimes Section, and the Crime Suppression Unit. The Detective Commander also has two civilian personnel reporting to him: a Police Office Specialist who provides clerical needs for the Division, and the department's Crime Analyst and Statistician position that provides analytical services for the entire agency. Members of the Division receive an additional 10% assignment pay and are provided a take-home vehicle. The division's organizational structure is shown below.

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Violent Crime and Property Crimes Sections

The Violent Crimes and Property Crimes Sections conduct follow-up investigations of gross misdemeanors (offenses handled by the District Courts and punishable by six to twelve months in jail and/or a fine of \$2,000) and felonies. Each section consists of seven detectives under the supervision of a sergeant. Cases come to the investigative units based on patrol lieutenants' review and approval of reports completed by patrol officers.

The lieutenants determine if the follow-up investigation will be conducted by patrol or investigative personnel. Although there are certainly a number of exceptions, generally, detectives are responsible for investigating felonies as well as gross misdemeanors. Patrol officers are responsible for the full investigation of all other offenses.

Assignment of the cases that come to the Violent and Property Crimes Sections are made by detective sergeants based on their knowledge of the experience and expertise of division personnel. The sergeants review cases forwarded to investigations daily on week days. They determine if a follow-up investigation is warranted based upon the offense and solvability factors. The cases requiring further action are assigned to a detective in either the Violent or Property Crimes Section.

The sergeants assign cases based on their knowledge of the specialized experience and expertise of their personnel – taking into account the number and complexity of the open cases of each detective. When specialized detectives are unable to effectively investigate additional incidents, the case is assigned to anyone in the section.

It should be noted that there is an odd anomaly in the nomenclature of the Detective Division. The detectives with expertise and experience investigating violent crimes, including homicide, robbery, and felonious assault, are all assigned to the *Property Crimes* section. Other cases assigned to the Property Crimes section, which are more commonplace, include auto theft and burglary. The sergeant personally investigates deaths and runaways. One detective is principally responsible for robbery and gang related offenses, one handles auto thefts and the others are assigned the remaining offenses. One of the Property Crimes detectives is also assigned to a U.S. Marshals Task Force but can be called upon to handle cases as necessary. The U.S. Marshals Task Force assists the department in locating and apprehending wanted suspects.

And on the other hand, the detectives who investigate the property crimes of forgery, fraud and embezzlement all work in the *Violent Crimes* Section. The Violent Crimes section is also responsible for Sex Crimes (both adult and child), Child Abuse and Neglect, Felony Domestic Abuse, and Elder Exploitation. Four detectives within the Violent Crimes section have the primary responsibility for sex, exploitation and child abuse cases while the remaining three are responsible for forgery and fraud types of investigations.

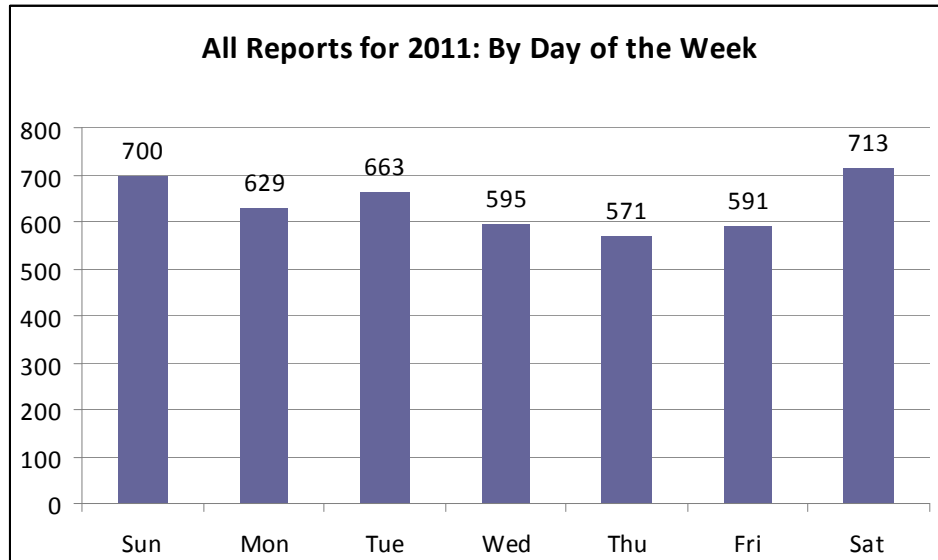
In essence, the names of the investigative sections do not always match the work performed by the unit members. Both sections function as general assignment units.

When an investigation is completed, the detective's report is forwarded to his/her sergeant for review and approval. Cases are closed in compliance with the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting Program case clearance criteria.

The division accommodates the needs of Violent and Property Crimes detectives in determining work schedules. Most detectives work a 4/10 schedule with either Friday/Saturday/Sunday or Saturday/Sunday/Monday as normal days off. A few members of the division work a 5/8 schedule with Saturday/Sunday as normal days off. Work hours of detectives also vary, either 0600 to 1600 hours; 0700 to 1700 hours or 0800 to 1800 hours. No detectives are scheduled to work weekends or evenings.

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The following chart shows the distribution by day of the week for all 2011 calls for service for which reports were written. Usually a report results when the responding officer determines that a crime may have been committed and that further investigation may be warranted.



This chart shows the distribution for all reports. Not all will result in an investigation because further review may indicate no crime was committed. The data represent all report calls, both those that might be conducted by patrol and by investigations. The busiest days are Sunday and Saturday, when no investigators are scheduled to work.

Several factors may result in substantial delays before a serious crime is reported until a detective begins an investigation. Crimes reported on Friday, Saturday and Sunday will not be reviewed or assigned by the sergeants until Monday morning since detectives do not work weekends. Detectives with Monday off because of the 4-10 schedule will not receive new cases until they return to work on Tuesday morning. Under these circumstances, a crime that was reported on Friday will be four days cold before a detective will begin the investigation. In addition, interviewees indicated that occasionally report distribution is delayed due to a back up in the Records Section's transcription process.

The 4-10 schedule also interferes with the continuity of investigations since detectives stop working on their cases during their three days off. Cases are not usually handed off.

Some of this lag time for serious cases is countered by the Detective Division's call out procedure. The call out policy is stated in a memorandum from the Detective Commander to Patrol Supervisors dated December 14, 2011. At the request of a field supervisor, the on-call

detective sergeant is to be contacted. The detective sergeant determines whether an on-scene detective response is needed. Typically detectives are called out for incidents involving a death; an injury sustained that is likely to lead to the victim's death; an in-custody arrest; or a potentially high profile or sensitive case. Detectives may also be called out when officers encounter a suspect the detective has flagged. Multiple detectives may respond if needed. On-call schedules for both detective supervisors and detectives are posted every six months. Supervisors are on-call approximately every fourth week, detectives once every six or seven weeks.

Data furnished by the department indicate that in 2011 the Detective Division was assigned 1,165 of 1,876 cases (62%) for follow-up investigation. Patrol officers were assigned the remaining 711 cases (38%). The Day Shift Patrol Lieutenant is responsible for assigning and managing all investigations assigned to patrol personnel using the same Managing Criminal Investigations (MCI) case management system in use by detectives.

Staffing the Detective Division

The number of personnel assigned to the Sparks Police Department's Detective Division is dependent upon a number of variables, including: the desired level of investigations completed by detectives as established by the department; the types and complexity of cases followed up on by detectives; and the availability of time to investigate cases.

The actual availability of employees' time to address casework is quite different from the hours they are assigned to work. Detectives have an estimated 2,080 hours available to work per year (based on an average of 80 hours per fourteen-day work cycle). However, not all these hours will be available to apply to an investigative workload. Holidays, various categories of leave (annual, military, family, in-service, etc.), training time, court time, time spent getting warrants, and time assisting outside agencies reduce the amount of time available to investigate cases. Based on interviews with members of the division, PERF's work with similar agencies, and the seniority of SPD detectives (they accrue more leave time than junior employees), an availability time of 70% was established. Therefore, of the 2,080 annual work hours, each detective can be expected to have an average of 1,456 hours to spend actively investigating cases.

PERF was provided 2011 data from the department's MCI Case Activity Summary to calculate the number of cases investigated. Data was used from 2011 rather than 2012 because of a change in systems in 2012. Full year data from 2011 was determined to be more representative of the workload of the agency.

This information was sorted by offense classification and employee (both detectives and patrol officers). The data included the number of investigations carried over from 2010, the number of cases assigned in 2011, number of cases closed in 2011, and number of cases carried over into 2012. In some instances, individuals closed more cases in 2011 than were assigned during the year because they closed a high number of investigations carried over from 2010.

With the assistance of the Records Manager, personnel data was used to identify those investigations conducted by any member of the department assigned to the Detective Division in 2011. Detectives in the Crime Suppression Unit were excluded because they are not assigned follow-up investigations and do not carry an investigative caseload. The following table identifies each detective's workload.

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2011 Individual Detective Workload

Detective	Cases Carried Over from 2010	Assigned in 2011	Total Case Worked, 2011	Cases Closed in 2011	Cases Carried Over to 2012
Det-1 *	34	48	82	50	32
Det-2 *	18	35	53	31	22
Det-3 *	23	55	78	53	25
Det-4 *	17	90	107	89	18
Det-5 *	11	55	66	47	19
Det-6 *	11	49	60	37	23
Det-7 *	18	83	101	75	26
Det-8 **	37	79	116	92	24
Det-9 **	27	85	112	79	33
Det-10 **	35	29	64	51	13
Det-11 **	18	49	67	48	19
Det-12 **	5	12	17	9	8
Det-13 **	3	53	56	23	33
Det-14 **	25	84	109	83	26
Det-15 ***	17	113	130	98	32
Det-16 ***	14	5	19	3	16
Det-17 ***	22	13	35	2	33
Det-18 ***	15	130	145	116	29
Det-19 ***	5	3	8	4	4
Totals	355	1070	1425	990	435
Average	19	56	75	52	23

Individual detectives are not named, but are given a number.

* Currently Assigned to the Violent Crimes Unit.

** Currently Assigned to the Property Crimes Unit.

*** Assigned to the Detective Division during part of 2011.

The 19 detectives assigned to the Violent Crimes and Property Crimes Sections during all or part of 2011 were responsible for 1,425 cases, 25 percent of which were investigations carried over from the previous year. The Detectives worked a total of 1,425 cases in 2011, 70% of which were closed in 2011. “Closed” is defined as cases that were “cleared” (or solved) according to the FBI’s UCR standards and cases for which active investigation ceased because all leads were exhausted. In 2011 the average case load per detective was 75, or just over six per month.

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The MCI Case Activity Summary Report by Offenses Description was used to determine the type of cases detectives may be expected to handle. This offense report revealed 1,528 potential investigations assigned to the Detective Division in 2011.

2011 All Offenses

Crime Type	Carry-Over from 2010	Assigned In 2011	Total Cases Worked 2011	Closed in 2011	Carry-Over to 2012
Forgery/Fraud	218	396	614	494	120
Theft	115	175	290	175	115
Death/Attempt Suicide	53	128	181	108	73
Simple Assault	212	124	336	83	253
GTA	41	98	139	93	46
Burglary	121	96	217	119	98
Sexual Offenses Against Child	26	67	93	56	37
Vandalism	73	58	131	55	76
Aggravated Assault	77	57	134	56	78
Rape/Sexual Offense	19	56	75	42	33
Child Abuse/Neglect	27	47	74	48	26
Robbery	44	42	86	42	44
Harassing/Stalking	54	36	90	30	60
Vehicle Burglary	33	32	65	26	39
Missing Persons	11	32	43	27	16
Utterance/Entering	23	25	48	38	10
Threats/Bomb Threat	30	25	55	24	31
Miscellaneous Felonies	15	22	37	22	15
Murder/Homicide	4	8	12	10	2
Weapons Offenses	8	2	10	4	6
Arson	3	1	4	1	3
Kidnapping	3	1	4	2	2
Total	1,210	1,528	2,738	1,555	1,183

From this information, estimates were made of the number and type of offenses the Detective Division investigated in 2011. As stated earlier, many cases are assigned to patrol officers for investigation; some are closed due to the lack of any leads. Using the information from the 2011 Detective Workload Table, the offenses that made up the 1,070 cases assigned to the Division in 2011 were allocated.

Estimated Detective Investigations for 2011 by Crime Type

Crime Type	Assigned
Forgery/Fraud	243
Theft	50
Death/Attempt Suicide	128
Simple Assault	40
GTA	98
Burglary	100
Sexual Offenses Against Child	67
Vandalism	20
Aggravated Assault	40
Rape/Sexual Offense	56
Child Abuse/Neglect	47
Robbery	40
Harassing/Stalking	30
Vehicle Burglary	32
Missing Persons	32
Utterance/Entering	12
Threats/Bomb Threat	15
Miscellaneous Felonies	11
Murder/Homicide	2
Weapons Offenses	1
Arson	1
Kidnapping	1
Total	1,070

The number of cases in each offense description was based upon several factors including: the Sparks Police Department's commitment to the Big-5 crime types⁴ those types of offenses that can be expected to be forwarded to an investigative unit (and not assigned as patrol investigations) and PERF's experience in working with detective divisions throughout the country. As an example, all homicides, death reports, sexual assaults, and child neglect cases remained in the workload of detectives for 2011.

The majority of the crimes against persons were included in the workload figures, while a lower percentage of property crimes remained, because many property crimes are misdemeanors and, in Sparks, are patrol investigations. This information was used to consolidate and sort the

⁴ The department emphasizes the control and reduction for 5 crime types prevalent in Sparks. These are: robbery, grand theft auto, residential burglary, commercial burglary and vehicle burglary.

offense types to fit the current organization and distribution of workload within the Sparks Police Department's Detective Division. \

Solvability Factors

Next, the estimated time needed to complete investigations was calculated. No matter how much investigative effort is put forth by either the initial responding officer or an assigned detective, some crimes are going to be much more difficult and time consuming to solve than others. Police departments in the United States, such as including the Sparks Police Department, find the best use of limited investigative resources is to assign cases based upon the seriousness of the incident and the potential to solve the case.

“Solvability factors” are the leads, clues and pieces of information – evidence – associated with a crime which may to be useful in “solving” the case. The success of a follow-up investigation depends heavily on the evidence procured during the preliminary investigation by the patrol officer and through any subsequent follow-up investigation.

Based on the presence of solvability factors (such as suspect name, evidence, etc.), criminal investigations can be separated into four distinct solvability categories:

- “Contact Only” Cases (those that result in no follow-up or in simply re-contacting the victim);
- “Less-Complicated” Cases (substantial solvability factors are present that require relatively little further investigation to close the case);
- “Typical” Cases (those most typical with a moderate level of solvability factors); and
- “More Complex” Cases (limited solvability factors present that require substantial effort and are difficult to close).

In Sparks, the investigative time consumed and percentage of cases in each solvability category were based upon input from the detective sergeants, two groups of detectives, and PERF's work with other departments' investigative units throughout the country.

The average time it takes to investigate a crime in each solvability category was calculated. This time is an average time for all cases; some individual investigations will take longer, and others will take less. The following tables represent the percentage of cases and estimated time required to complete an investigation in each of the division's two investigative units.

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Violent Crimes Section	Contact Only		Less-Complicated		Typical		More Complex	
	Time Required	% of Cases	Time Required	% of Cases	Time Required	% of Cases	Time Required	% of Cases
Forgery/Fraud	1	25%	8	40%	20	25%	80	10%
Sexual Offenses	0.5	10%	20	40%	40	40%	80	10%
Other Offenses	0.5	25%	4	40%	8	30%	20	5%

The “Other Offenses” in Violent Crimes include stalking and threat offenses.

Property Crimes Section	Contact Only		Less-Complicated		Typical		More Complex	
	Time Required	% of Cases	Time Required	% of Cases	Time Required	% of Cases	Time Required	% of Cases
Grand Theft Auto	0.5	40%	10	25%	20	30%	80	5%
Robbery/Kidnapping/ Aggravated Assault	1	20%	20	35%	40	30%	120	15%
Death Rpt/Runaways	1	25%	5	40%	10	30%	40	5%
Homicide	0	0	80	40%	160	45%	240	15%
Property Crimes	1	30%	5	30%	20	30%	40	10%
Other Offenses	0.5	25%	5	30%	10	35%	40	10%

The Property Crimes Section includes such offenses as burglary, thefts, simple assaults, counterfeiting and vehicle burglary. The “Other Offenses” includes offenses such as vandalism, miscellaneous felonies and arson.

In looking at these tables, the “typical” sexual offense cases investigated by detectives assigned to the Violent Crimes Section represent 40 percent of all the sexual offense investigations and can be expected to consume an average of 40 hours of detective time. No homicide investigations require a “contact only” response; and “more complex” robberies can be expected to consume 120 investigative hours on average and to represent 15 percent of those investigations.

Based on the 2011 caseload, the following tables provide the number of cases and hours required for each investigative category within the two investigative sections of the Detective Division.

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Projected Time Required for Investigations – 1

Violent Crimes Section	Contact Only		Less-Complicated		Typical		More Complex	
	# of Cases	Est Hours	# of Cases	Est Hours	# of Cases	Est Hours	# of Cases	Est Hours
Forgery/Fraud	60.8	60.8	97.2	486.0	60.8	1215.0	24.3	1944.0
Sexual Offenses	17.0	8.5	68.0	1360.0	68.0	2720.0	17.0	1360.0
Other Offenses	16.8	8.4	26.8	107.2	20.1	160.8	3.4	67.0

Based on the solvability factors and numbers of crimes reported in 2011, a total of 9,789 hours would be required for investigating the cases assigned to Investigations Squad 1. When that figure is by the 1,456 work hours available from each detective per year (reflecting the 70% available time ratio), 6.7 detective full time equivalencies are required. Currently seven detectives are assigned to Squad 1. Thus, the number of detectives assigned is appropriate for the workload.

Projected Time Required for Investigations – 2

Property Crimes Section	Contact Only		Less-Complicated		Typical		More Complex	
	# of Cases	Est Hours	# of Cases	Est Hours	# of Cases	Est Hours	# of Cases	Est Hours
Grand Theft Auto	39.2	19.6	24.5	245.0	29.4	588.0	4.9	392.0
Robbery/Kidnapping/ Aggravated Assault	16.6	16.6	29.1	581.0	24.9	1176.0	12.5	1494.0
Death Rpt/Runaways	40.0	40.0	64.0	320.0	48.0	480.0	8.0	320.0
Homicide	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	160.0	1.0	240.0
Property Crimes	70.2	70.2	70.2	351.0	70.2	1404.0	23.4	936.0
Other Offenses	8.3	4.1	9.9	49.5	11.6	115.5	3.3	132.0

Similarly, based on the solvability and caseload data, a total of 9,134 hours would be required to investigate the cases assigned to the Property Crimes Section. When that figure is divided by the 1,456 work hours available from each detective per year (reflecting the 70% available time ratio), 6.3 detective full time equivalencies are required. Currently seven detectives are assigned to Squad 2. The number of detectives assigned is appropriate for the workload.

Recommendations for the Investigation Squads

- **Recommendation 4:** *The department should rename the sections General Investigations Squad One and General Investigations Squad Two.* Changing the names of the

investigative sections within the Detective Division will end the inaccurate implication that one squad handles violent crimes and the other handles property crimes. This will end any confusion among members of the public who need to contact a member of the division. The recommended names will allow the flexibility required in the future if the supervisory staff changes or the distribution of detectives' responsibilities changes.

- **Recommendation 5: Members of the investigative units should have a single work schedule with consistent work hours.** Currently there are two work schedules and three beginning-of-watch times in the investigative sections. While providing flexibility in work schedules may provide personal benefits to employees, it can needlessly hamper the supervision and functionality of operations.
- **Recommendation 6: The department should consider having both detective squads work a four day ten hour schedule with weekend coverage.** One schedule should have detectives working Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The other schedule should have detectives working Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. On Wednesday, when all detectives are working, some time should be devoted for discussion of cases to determine if detectives are working different cases that may have the same suspects. Under this schedule, detective sergeants would review and assign cases every day and investigators will more consistently get cases with fresh leads.
- **Recommendation 7: The Detective Division should develop and codify the assignment of investigations based on established criteria of solvability factors.** Criminal investigations should be assigned to detectives based upon a thoughtful review of the initial report and the presence or absence of solvability factors. A methodical policy should be developed by the Detective Division clearly indicating the factors that must be present to assign a case to a detective for follow-up investigation. Cases with few solvability factors should normally⁵ not receive the same attention as those with a higher number of such leads.
- **Recommendation 8: The Department should develop a written policy that outlines which follow-up investigations are handled by the Detective Division and which will be conducted by Patrol personnel.** Although it was stated that all gross misdemeanors and felonies are referred to the Detective Division, there is a lack of clarity concerning operationalizing this separation. A policy should be drafted with input from both divisions articulating such a policy.
- **Recommendation 9: The Detective Division's case management system (MCI) should be able to provide an individual report that lists the offense descriptions and number of investigations for each member of the division.** Such a report is currently not available and hampers the department's ability to monitor, compare and supervise detectives' caseloads.

⁵ Sexual assault cases may be an exception. Research across the country is demonstrating the need for follow-up for all sexual assault cases.

- **Recommendation 10: Detectives should not maintain open cases unnecessarily.** A review of data reveals that many detectives have a high number of open cases. This is very apparent when comparing the number of cases open at the beginning and end of each calendar year. Supervisors should meet with detectives on a regular basis, at least monthly, to review all open cases. If a case remains open, the assigned detective should have a clear plan of what investigative action will be taken with an associated timeline. Appropriately closing investigations will allow detectives' time to be better spent on cases with higher solvability factors. To deal with "cold" cases, the department may want to consider creating a cold case squad, using retired detectives to search for new leads.
- **Recommendation 11: The Detective Sergeants should not be "working" supervisors handling a caseload.** Investigative supervisors play an integral role within a police department. The primary responsibilities of sergeants assigned to the Detective Division include reviewing reports and assigning cases, monitoring investigations of detectives, assisting detectives with investigations as necessary, maintaining the discipline of the section, and evaluating the performance of detectives. Tasking these supervisors with a caseload unnecessarily takes away from those vital duties. Based upon this analysis of detectives' caseloads, there is sufficient staffing available to handle the workload so that supervisors are not needed to personally handle investigations. They should perform supervisory duties.
- **Recommendation 12: The department would benefit from staffing the Detective Division with one civilian Police Investigative Aide in each section.** These additional personnel will help ensure that current number of detective remains adequate given the workload. A police department's Detective Division should be staffed with sufficient support personnel in order for detectives to maximize their efficiency and productivity. Support personnel are civilian members of the department who perform duties not requiring the training, expertise, or weapons skill of a sworn member of the department. In some cases, support personnel perform duties specialized to their position. Traditional duties within an investigative environment include answering telephones, receptionist activities, providing information to the public, transcribing investigators' reports and victim/witness statements and filing duties

When staffed correctly within an investigative environment, these employees provide detectives with the time they need to conduct interviews, follow up on leads, arrest suspects, and prepare cases for the successful prosecution of defendants. In some progressive departments, civilian investigative aides or civilian investigators assist

investigators with case follow-up⁶, including computer and telephone research, contacting complainants and witnesses, and any other “office-based” duties not requiring sworn status. Strategically integrated into the workforce, such positions may also present the opportunity to decrease the number of sworn personnel necessary to perform the same level of work, and to increase the percentage of cases that are successfully closed.

Tasks performed by Civilian Investigative Aides may include:

- Obtaining copies of all original and supplemental reports for follow-up investigation.
- Preparing case files.
- Running data inquiries, including driver’s license/identity cards, arrest and criminal history records, probation/parole information, etc.
- Conducting phone interviews.
- Scheduling interviews for detectives.
- Coordinating crime lab requests and results.
- Researching offenses and criminal codes.
- Completing supplemental reports as necessary.
- Preparing photo line-ups.
- Coordinating with the crime analyst.
- Maintaining accurate clearance files.

Detective Performance Indicators

A well-run detective division conducts thorough, complete, and accurate investigations that emphasize sound investigatory practices regarding case management, case screening, case prosecution, court testimony, and the management of evidence and property.

In Sparks, the department has sought to improve the overall investigative function by allowing patrol officers to perform some follow-up criminal investigations. It is well established that the likelihood of a successful case closure depends in large measure on the quality of the initial (or preliminary) investigation of the crime by patrol officers. Where patrol officers are able to identify witnesses or suspects or locate physical evidence, detectives’ chances of apprehending and charging a suspect are increased. Where patrol officers are unable to do so, detectives may be limited in the extent to which they can solve or make a prosecutable case.

⁶The Santa Ana California Police Department, for example, has long successfully used investigative aides.

Patrol officers must be expected to reach closure on assigned cases in the same manner as detectives. This means that patrol supervisors must be trained to some degree in case management. They must have access to case management files that allow them to track and monitor their officers' caseloads and progress. Where the appropriate balance between patrol and detective follow-up is achieved and managed, patrol follow-up investigations can improve the department's overall investigations function.

The department should consider tracking the following indicators to improve the monitoring and management of investigations.

- Number of unassigned cases
- Number of cases assigned to Patrol
- Number of investigated cases cleared by Patrol
- Number of cases assigned to Investigation
- Number of investigated cases cleared by Investigations
- Number of victims receiving follow-up attention
- Number of suspects contacted
- Quantity and value of property recovered by the police
- Solution times for like cases when investigators respond directly to crime scenes and when response is delayed
- Number of cases solved based on information supplied by patrol officers
- Number of cases accepted for prosecution
- Number of cases successfully prosecuted
- Number of cases declined for prosecution and reason
- Number of cases returned to originating officers for clarification or further details
- Prosecutors' satisfaction with investigators' work quality.

Crime Suppression Unit

The Crime Suppression Unit (CSU) is made up of four detectives supervised by one investigative sergeant. The unit works in close partnership with the Crime Analyst to identify crime trends, primarily those identified by the department as the Big-5: robbery, grand theft auto, residential burglary, commercial burglary and vehicle burglary. The CSU sergeant is responsible for prioritizing investigations based upon current trends, availability of leads, and the impact on the community. Once a trend has been identified, a proactive strategy is developed to address such offenses. The CSU is assigned to a 4/10 schedule, 2:00 PM to midnight, with assigned days off of Saturday/Sunday/Monday, however their work schedule and hours frequently change based upon the nature of the crime problems they are addressing.

The CSU supervisor completes a daily log which outlines the activity of the team on that shift. The log is disseminated to patrol via e-mail to keep officers abreast of the actions of the Unit. Input is solicited from officers on persons and locations of interest. Feedback is provided on such information received from members of the Patrol Division. Members of the CSU work closely with the Crime Analyst and participate in weekly CompStat meetings.

The CSU trains regularly as a team on building entry and search techniques and tactics and on the safe apprehension of suspects. CSU members have the necessary equipment to conduct these high-risk operations safely. The CSU's equipment and ongoing training are hallmarks of best practices for such tactical units.

The operations of the CSU represent the department's primary proactive policing strategy designed to have an impact on crime and disorder in Sparks. When first initiated, the Crime Suppression Unit maintained extensive statistics on all field activity performed by all members of the team. Currently, no statistics are maintained on the productivity of the Unit. The effectiveness of the Unit is measured by the levels of Big-5 crimes monitored by the department. The Unit is credited with suppressing crime in an effective and timely manner and enjoys support from both the department and the community.

Given the on-going decreases in crime CSU staffing would appear to be sufficient however additional resources could support additional suppression efforts.

Recommendations for the Crime Suppression Unit

- ***Recommendation 13:*** The Crime Suppression Unit should identify and develop meaningful indicators to measure the effectiveness of the Unit. By all accounts, the CSU is quite effective in curtailing crime in Sparks. However, most of the evidence is anecdotal. There is no statistical data that demonstrates the value of the Unit. Without performance indicators, the success of the unit cannot be objectively measured. The potential impact of changing the size of the unit cannot be determined.
- ***Recommendation 14:*** After developing measurements to evaluate the effectiveness of the CSU, the department may monitor the activity of the Unit to determine if a second team should be added. The Crime Suppression Unit is limited by its current staffing level of a single four-person team supervised by a sergeant. Should an analysis of the Unit demonstrate its value in addressing crime, the department should consider adding a second team to the Unit including a sergeant. Such staffing would extend coverage beyond ten hours per day and potentially allow coverage seven days per week.

Performance Indicators for Anti-Crime Operations

The best practices in this area involve systems for identifying crime problems, communicating the nature of the crime problems within the department and to the community, and responding to them in a timely fashion. Information managers and crime analysts routinely produce useful data that is accessible to operational commanders, supervisors, and officers about emerging patterns in crime and calls for service. These patterns are then discussed at various operational levels of the department, so that more detailed and qualitative knowledge about these problems can be included in the decision-making about which problems require tactical and strategic planning.

To enhance its anti-crime operations, the Sparks Police Department should consider formally adopting the following performance indicators.

Performance Indicators

- Frequency of crime data relayed to the Crime Suppression Unit (CSU), watch commanders, sergeants and beat officers
- Number of annual anti-crime plans implemented
- Number and regularity of department wide anti-crime strategy meetings to determine city-wide crime problems and the strategic deployment of resources in anti-crime planning and operations
- Frequency of reports outlining results of anti-crime programs, in quantitative and qualitative terms
- Dissemination of reports to all levels within the department and to the communities where anti-crime activities took place
- Frequent and ongoing comparison of project areas, and areas that make up the perimeter of test sites to determine impact of “crime spillover.”
- Partnership with a local university with the expertise to assist with operational planning, statistics and evaluation methodologies to determine accurate results of efforts undertaken

Outside Agency Task Forces

Members of the Detective Division represent the Sparks Police Department in four Multi-Agency Task Forces. Such practice provides expanded experience for members of the department, as well as access to training and equipment; and it serves as a force multiplier for the department. Supervision of these detectives is provided by the Crime Suppression Unit sergeant.

The task forces are:

- Regional Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force – One detective is assigned to the DEA Task Force which focuses on the identification, apprehension and prosecution of major narcotics traffickers in Sparks, Reno and Washoe County.
- Regional SET-Street Enforcement Team - One detective is assigned to the Regional SET Team which is responsible for the identification and enforcement of street level narcotics sales, prostitution and any other crimes affecting Reno and Sparks.
- Regional Repeat Offender Program (ROP) – One detective is assigned to the Regional ROP program, whose members identify individuals who have multiple convictions for felony crimes and work to ensure that offenders are held accountable for their crimes.
- Regional Sex Offender Notification Unit - One detective is assigned to this Unit, which is responsible for identifying and tracking registered sex offenders in Sparks, Reno and Washoe County.

Victim Advocate

The Sparks Police Department's Victim Advocate program is currently funded by the City of Sparks and grant funding from the State of Nevada Attorney General's Violence Against Women grant. The Victim Advocate assists victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Services include assisting victims with: safety planning; personal advocacy; finding a shelter; referral to community resources; providing status updates on criminal cases; filing for Victims of Crime and other victim compensation programs; registering for victim notification (VINE); filing Temporary Protective Orders and Stalking Orders; referrals to appropriate agencies for counseling, support and resources; and informing victims of their rights.

In the six month period of January through June 2012, the Victim Advocate assisted 15 primary victims of sexual assault; 95 primary victims of domestic violence; and 16 primary victims of stalking. The Advocate also provided assistance to 91 secondary victims during this six-month time period. And 111 phone calls were initiated with victims who either declined service or did not respond to the attempted contact.

The Victim Advocacy program within the Sparks Police Department addresses critical needs of victims and family members of sexual assault, domestic violence and stalking. The program improves the relationship of trust between the police and community, and is an effective strategy in positively impacting the cycle of violence in the community.

Recommendations

- **Recommendation 15:** *The Department should provide funding to maintain the services of the Victim Advocate if state funds are depleted in 2013.* Grant funds are expected to be depleted in 2013. If the state does not provide additional funding, the department should provide funding to maintain the program. This may include funding by the City or alternative public, private or non-profit funding sources.

Crime Analyst / Statistician

The Crime Analysis /Statistician position is assigned to the Detective Division Commander. The analyst is responsible for assisting both the detective and patrol units in the identification of crime trends, handling external data requests, and conducting checks to determine whether pawned property has been reported stolen. Analysis products use both the department's computer aided dispatch system and the crime mapping via the geographic information system (GIS). The information generated by the analyst is available to all members of the department as well as neighboring agencies and the Reno Fusion Center.

The Crime Analyst attends and assists in the weekly CompStat meeting. Efforts are concentrated on the Big-5 crimes; robberies, commercial / residential / vehicle burglaries, and grand theft auto. The analyst then creates and distributes a "Tactical Crime Analysis Report" regarding crime trends and patterns.

Within the Sparks Police Department, the main user of the analyses and data is the Crime Suppression Unit. The CSU depends on the expertise and services of the analyst to identify crime trends and repeat offenders and to assist in the investigation of cases. Locations and offenders are researched by the analyst to assist the Unit in identifying potential targets and prioritizing actions. When a major incident occurs in the city such as a homicide, the analyst provides a support function for the Detective Division by researching data, individuals and locations through the various systems available to the department. The analyst's participation in professional organizations and contact with outside agencies widens the range of information available to the department.

Recommendations

- **Recommendation 16:** *The department should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the Crime Analyst/Statistician position and provide a clear sense of direction.* Interviews and observations indicate that this position could be better utilized with a focused sense of direction within the agency. Requests and work direction appear to

come from a variety of components. Work direction should come from a single supervisor to assist in the prioritization of work and ensure it is necessary and not a duplication of effort. Position responsibilities should be defined and shared with end users.

- ***Recommendation 17: Crime analysis documents and data should be housed on a department share drive.*** Currently all reports and data are being maintained on the crime analyst's department desktop computer. This information needs to be placed on the agency's share drive for both redundancy and information accessibility.
- ***Recommendation 18: The "Tactical Crime Analysis Report" should be modified to include crime mapping and known offenders.*** The Crime Analyst does a very good job of monitoring crime trends and providing the data to appropriate personnel. Additionally, the analyst concentrates efforts on the five crimes identified as most significant to the community. The weekly CompStat Report should include crime maps along with the locations of residences of potential suspects in close proximity to crime concentrations.
- ***Recommendation 19: The department should strive to identify and track high frequency incident locations.*** As part of the CompStat process, the Crime Analyst should identify locations within the city that generate repeated calls for police service over a defined time span (bi-weekly / monthly). Once these addresses are identified, department leaders can determine thresholds that would generate follow-up action by patrol or the Crime Suppression Unit. Identifying and problem solving at these locations that frequently require police attention will assist in reducing calls for service and preventing more serious incidents in the future.

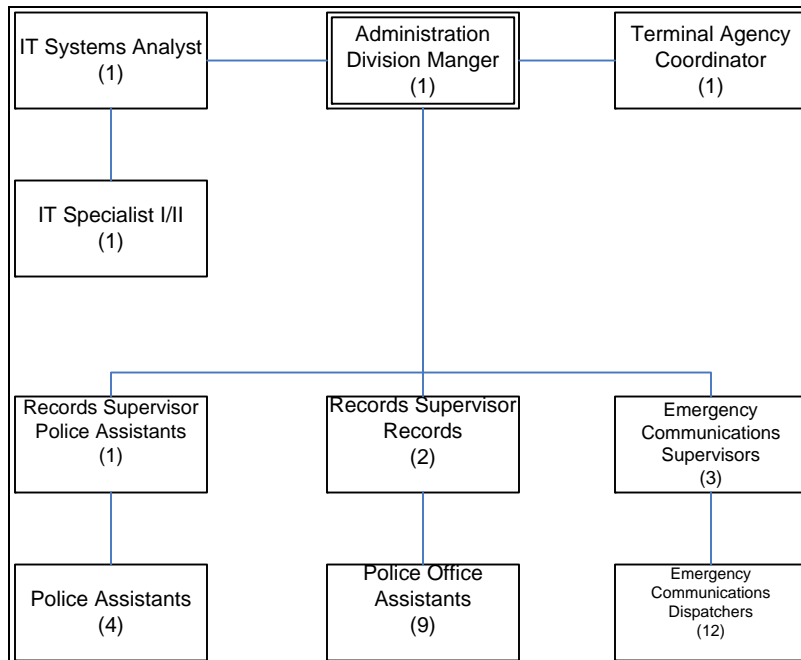
ADMINISTRATION DIVISION ORGANIZATION AND WORKLOAD

Administrative and support functions in the SPD are primarily carried out within the department's Administration Division. This component is one of three divisions within the agency. A civilian manager oversees all division operations and reports directly to the Chief of Police. The division contains five organizational components which answer directly to the Administration Division Manager. These components are Information Technology, Terminal Agency Coordination, Police Assistants, Records, and Emergency Communications Dispatchers.

This section of the report focuses on the workflow and staffing needs of the Administration Division.

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of the Administration Division is traditional and hierarchical. Supervision is provided by civilian personnel. A complete description of staffing for each component is provided in this section. The division's organizational chart including personnel assigned is below.



To assess the administrative staffing needs in the SPD, the nature, quantity, and duration of tasks carried out in the functional units must be considered. A primary consideration in assessing workload is to first consider the factors that create workload.

The first category of work in the Administration Division is primarily related to external demands for police services. Responding to calls for service and investigating crimes requires personnel to receive calls, dispatch officers, and manage records. The workload in these units increases as citizen requests for services and reports of crime increase.

The second category of work is related to internal demands and includes functions and tasks that support department operations. The workload generated in these areas is generally proportionate to the size of the SPD, but is also influenced by external factors.

The third category of work involves functions that are necessary to support the core business processes in a department the size of the SPD. While these functions are necessary, the levels of effort and personnel are discretionary.

The three categories of work described above are not unique and isolated. External demand and internal needs to support the organization are factors in all of the categories. However, the methods differ for determining staffing needs in each of these functional areas.

Determining staffing needs for administrative functions is difficult. Workload in some units is more readily quantified than others. Two approaches are generally applied to determining staffing needs. They are listed below.

- **Supervisor Observation and Evaluation:** This approach involves a competent supervisor or manager understanding the work that needs to be done, the process used to carry out the work, and whether the work is being done well and in a timely manner with the desired level of quality. This approach is most often applied in administrative areas where the workload demand is not self-generated, but created by external or internal drivers. For instance, communications center workload is generated primarily by external sources.
- **Time Study:** Another approach to determining staffing needs can be used when workload is easily quantified. In this approach, the number of required tasks combined with the time necessary to complete each task can be used as the basis for determining how many personnel are required to carry out that task. For example, if a clerk were required to conduct data entry of a particular form, and each form took 15 minutes to enter, and

20,000 forms were processed in an a year, 5,000 hours would be required annually. Considering how many hours an individual employee is available for work each year, the number of employees required to carry out this task can be determined.

This approach has its shortcomings. First, employees likely perform other tasks. Second, it does not account for any value-added or quality issues. Third, the analysis can be difficult and time consuming to carry out. This approach should not stand alone in assessing personnel needs.

SPD Administration Staffing Assessment

The PERF team has concluded that the SPD primarily determines staffing needs through supervisor observation/evaluation. This approach is common in police departments. Few departments have the resources or capabilities to conduct time studies or outcome evaluations.

Personnel cutbacks in law enforcement agencies are common throughout the country. In some departments, clerical personnel are cut so that sworn personnel can be maintained. Decisions to add administrative/clerical personnel are generally made only when the business process they carry out becomes dysfunctional. When civilian staff is eliminated, in many cases, more expensive sworn personnel must perform these tasks, taking away from their previous duties.

Administration Division Functional Descriptions

A description of each functional unit in the Administration Division is found below. All staff members are civilian personnel.

IT Systems

The IT Systems component is responsible for maintaining the agency's records management system, computer aided dispatch system, network infrastructure, and all mobile data terminals. Additionally they provide "help desk" services.

All departmental information technology support is provided by two positions within the division. The first position, an IT Specialist, primarily provides help desk support. The second position, an IT Systems Analyst with supervisory authority, was added in the fall of 2012. This individual reports directly to the Administration Division Manager. Geographical Information System (GIS) support is provided by a city GIS expert who supports city-wide GIS needs.

Terminal Agency Coordinator

The Terminal Agency Coordinator is tasked with data entry and updates into such systems as NCIC. This person also is responsible for oversight of agency access to all local, state and federal law enforcement databases. The Terminal Agency Coordinator reports directly to the Administration Division Manager. This position additionally serves as a back-up for the Identification Unit, described below

Records Supervisor and Police Assistants

These personnel are uniformed civilian employees assigned to the front desk of police headquarters. There are currently four Police Assistants supervised by one Records Supervisor. Personnel assigned to the unit prepare police reports, provide general department information, conduct code enforcement, answer department phones, provide fingerprinting services, and manage a “Senior Patrol,” an automated message that checks on the welfare of senior citizens. In prior years, two Police Assistants were assigned to patrol related functions and assisted with in-field report writing, parking enforcement and other self-initiated activities. Budget reductions eliminated all but the four current positions.

The unit handles a variety of reports that range from misdemeanor to felony crimes where an immediate police response appears unnecessary. Reports are taken at headquarters, via the telephone, as well as from the department’s web-based reporting system. The front desk is staffed Monday through Friday from 0800 to 1800 hours and Saturday from 0800 until 1600 hours. Three of the four staff members work Monday through Friday while the fourth works Tuesday through Saturday. Fluctuating start times provide the 10 hours of coverage during the week.

Staff reductions over the last several years have eliminated at least two police assistant positions. Due to this staff reduction, they are no longer able to provide on the road patrol assistance, parking enforcement or other self initiated activity. Police assistants routinely conduct follow-up investigative functions, including computer driven case research and telephone calls. Staff members on occasion handle sensitive investigations, including sexual assaults when victims present themselves at the front desk of police headquarters. Police assistants write the report, enter data in the department’s record management system, conduct follow-up investigations, and forward all case work to a detective sergeant for review.⁷

⁷ From PERF’s understanding of the process, it is not in line with best police practices for responding to victims of sexual assault. A recommendation for modifying this practice is provided in the recommendations section.

Interviews and observations indicate that officers on occasion may refer complainants to the web-based or telephone based reporting systems, both handled by police assistants. Staff members have the ability to suspend police investigations of cases, including serious crimes where no evidence is known to exist. These cases are later reviewed by investigative personnel.

Police assistants manage a department program called “Senior Patrol.” This program provides an automated call each morning to check on the welfare of seniors who have registered for the service. When a senior fails to respond to the automated call, the police assistant must go through a five-step process, which includes contacting area hospitals, before sending an officer by the location to check the person’s well-being. Police assistants handle between five and ten “Senior Patrol” follow-ups per week.

Recommendations

- ***Recommendation 20:*** The department should limit the cases that can be handled by Police Assistants to misdemeanor crimes where no known suspect or evidence is known to exist. The handling of serious felony crimes, including sensitive cases such as sexual assaults, should always be handled by experienced, trained investigators with appropriate follow-up investigations. A policy statement in line with national best practices should be developed to provide guidance for Police Assistants on how to respond when they are presented with victims of serious felony crimes, and *especially sexual assaults*.
- ***Recommendation 21:*** The department should ensure that procedures and practices are in place to ensure that officers dispatched to a scene do not refer a person at the scene to file a report to either the web-based or telephone reporting systems. This practice, even if happening only on rare occasions, will place an additional burden on an already victimized citizen and damage public perceptions about the police.
- ***Recommendation 22:*** Policy and procedure should be modified to dispatch an officer immediately for a check on the well-being of persons who do not answer “Senior Patrol” calls. Police assistants should continue to make follow-up calls at the same time an officer is dispatched to the residence. This would ensure that all efforts are made to provide immediate assistance if needed, with little burden on police resources.

Records Supervisors and Records

The Records unit consists of two supervisors who oversee eight Police Assistants and one individual assigned to perform Identification duties. Both Records supervisors report directly to the Administration Division Manager. The Records Unit is open twenty four hours a day and relies heavily on volunteer support.

The section is responsible for compiling, maintaining and disseminating information from department records regarding incident reports and motor vehicle accidents. The section is also responsible for the compiling of the SPD's Uniform Crime Report. Staff assigned to this unit scan police reports, enter data into the record management system, and type police reports that have been recorded by officers through the report dictation system.

The Identification Unit falls under the direction of the Records Section and is comprised of one civilian staff member. This unit prepares all citizen requests for reports, handles all civilian fingerprint requests, and processes all registered sex offenders as well as criminal history requests.

The Records unit relies heavily on volunteers to fulfill its mission. Volunteer staff provides almost all imaging of police reports for long term storage. With continued volunteer support the number of positions assigned to the Records unit is adequate.

Recommendations

- ***Recommendation 23: The department should implement alternatives to the Dictaphone system in the report writing process.*** The use of a dictation machine to complete the narrative section of the police report is common within the agency. The report is then transcribed by Records unit staff. Investigative personnel have made previous unsuccessful attempts to use speech-to-text technology. The department should reconsider the use of speech-to-text technology or require the officer to complete the narrative portion of the report. This technological advance may have an impact on the number of records positions needed.
- ***Recommendation 24: Optimally the department should re-implement the use of an automated reporting system (ARS) to eliminate the redundancy of data entry.*** Although the department previously implemented an unsuccessful ARS tool, the agency does have the technical support to examine other proven ARS products. Officers have access to both mobile data terminals and squad room workstations to assist them in this process. Use of an ARS tool would enhance productivity of the Records Unit staff and likely eliminate the reliance on volunteer staff that must manually scan each police report for long term storage. This change would enable Records unit staff to provide enhanced quality control support for the report writing process.

Emergency Communications

The Emergency Communications unit serves as the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for the City of Sparks. The unit further serves as a back-up for both the City of Reno and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. The unit dispatches both police and fire personnel. All Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls are directed to a private ambulance service. Staffing

for the center consists of three supervisors and twelve dispatchers. Supervisors assigned to the unit report directly to the Administration Division Manager.

Communication staff is assigned to one of three shifts. The day shift works 0800 to 1600 hours. Minimum staffing for the shift is three with one supervisor and four dispatchers assigned. The swing shift works 1600 to 0000 hours. Minimum staffing for the shift is three with one supervisor and five dispatchers assigned. The midnight shift works 0000 to 0800 hours. Minimum staffing for the midnight shift is two with one supervisor and three dispatchers assigned.

All personnel work five straight days. Supervisors and dispatchers have consistent but different days off. **Communication supervisors serve in both a supervisor and working dispatcher role.** With only three available supervisors, one per shift, supervision of the center is handled by a patrol sergeant when the communication supervisor is on leave. In this situation, supervision is provided from the field, not within the communication center. Overtime is frequently used to meet minimum staffing levels and to handle special events or circumstances. Dispatchers rotate during the course of their shift between answering incoming emergency and non-emergency calls and monitoring the multiple police and fire working channels.

PERF reviewed four years' worth of department supplied data regarding 911 and non-911 calls received in the communications center. The data was captured by fiscal year, July through the following June. The chart below identifies the communication center's call volume.

Fiscal Year	911 Calls	Non-911 Calls
2011-2012	36,054	67,665
2010-2011	27,515	90,329
2009-2010	26,439	105,315
2008-2009	14,409	129,210
Average	22,502	98,130

The average number of 911 calls received in the communications center is 2.6 calls per hour. The average number of non-911 calls is 11.2 calls per hour. As is common in 911 call centers, the day and swing shifts have a greater call volume than the midnight shift. Based on the current incoming call volume and required one to two radio channel coverage, the current unit minimum staffing requirement provides acceptable communication center coverage.

PERF has utilized a staffing formula that identifies the minimum number of positions necessary to fill the communication center's fixed number of minimum staffing positions. The formula involves the number of positions that must be filled, multiplied by the number of shifts in a 24-hour period, multiplied by the communication center's "relief factor." Relief factor refers to the number of positions necessary to consistently fill one position eight-hours per day, seven days per week.

In the case of the Emergency Communications Unit, the relief factor was calculated using the average hours a dispatcher is available. Through previous study experience, PERF has determined non-sworn dispatch personnel are available on average 80% of their assigned work hours. This equates to 1,664 work hours available per year based on a 2,080 hour work year. The relief factor is then calculated by dividing the total number of hours required to fill one eight hour shift 365 days per year ($8 \times 365 = 2,920$ hours) by the number of hours a dispatcher is available to work. In the case of the Sparks Police Department's communication center, 2,920 hours divided by 1,664 hours equates to a relief factor of 1.75.

Utilizing an average of 2.66 dispatchers (3 day, 3 swing and 2 midnight equals 2.66 average) each eight hour shift, a minimum number of dispatchers can be calculated using the formula below.

$2.66 \text{ (positions)} \times 3 \text{ (shifts)} \times 1.75 \text{ (relief factor)} = 13.9 \text{ minimum positions required}$
--

Current staffing allows for a supervisor to be working as a dispatcher as part of minimum staffing requirements. Including supervisory personnel, the communication center has 15 available positions. Due to annual leave, training and other unexpected leave, the supervisor spends the majority of his or her work time in a non-supervisory role. Effective supervision is essential to the daily operations and success of this function. Telecommunication supervisors are called upon daily to monitor employee actions, provide guidance and direction, monitor customer service and manage daily operations. In order to provide on-site supervision in the communication center at all times, a minimum of 5 supervisors would be required. The formula to calculate this staffing requirement is described below.

$1 \text{ (position)} \times 3 \text{ (shifts)} \times 1.75 \text{ (relief factor)} = 5.3 \text{ supervisor positions required}$
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Interviews conducted by PERF revealed that extensive use of overtime was required in the communication center to meet minimum staffing guidelines. As an example, a review of the

December 2012 communication center staff work schedule for the swing shift alone indicated approximately 1/3 of the month where minimum staffing requirements could not be met.

Based on the analysis above, the communication center has the minimum number of positions necessary to meet required dispatcher staffing needs but lacks consistent supervisory coverage. Consistent on-site supervision is critical in a communication center serving as a PSAP and back-up communication center for the City of Reno and Washoe County Sheriff's Office.

Further, the section's standard operating procedures manual is outdated.

Recommendations

- ***Recommendation 25:*** *The department should hire two additional communication supervisors in the next budget year to provide 24-hour coverage in the communications center.* Effective supervision is essential to the daily operations and success of the communication center function. Telecommunication supervisors are called upon daily to monitor employee actions, provide guidance and direction, monitor customer service and manage daily operations. In order to provide supervisory coverage using an eight hour shift schedule, a minimum of five Emergency Communication Supervisors are necessary to provide 24 hour coverage.

These two additional supervisors should be in addition to the three supervisors and 12 dispatchers currently authorized, providing a total of 17 Emergency Communications unit members. The additional two supervisor positions will reduce forced overtime by providing a modest buffer to the minimum dispatchers required, provide consistent communication center supervisory coverage, and allow additional time for supervisors to perform non-dispatch related supervisory duties.

- ***Recommendation 26:*** *The department should immediately update and distribute a Standard Operating Procedures manual to all communications center employees.* The department has identified the need to update and complete the section's Standard Operating Procedures in its FY 2013 goals and performance measures. This manual is a necessary component of a successful communications center. It provides assistance in the training process, uniformity and consistency in response, employee direction and quality control.

OFFICE OF DEPUTY CHIEF ORGANIZATION

The Office of Deputy Chief of Police is comprised of one deputy chief of police, one grant administrator, one internal affairs lieutenant, and one crime prevention officer.

Internal Affairs

The internal affairs unit of the SPD is staffed by one Lieutenant. In addition to responsibility for internal investigations, the Lieutenant has the additional responsibilities of risk management, emergency operations planning, and conducting internal investigations for the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. The Lieutenant has supervisory responsibilities over the crime prevention officer.

The SPD categorizes complaints in two ways. First is a formal complaint, which is usually related to allegations involving use of force, false arrest, and neglect of duty. These investigations are conducted by the Internal Affairs Section. The second category is what is called an "inquiry." Inquiries are generally conducted at the division level. The commander of the division may decide to escalate an inquiry to formal complaint status.

In 2011, 14 formal internal affairs investigations were conducted. Twelve "inquiry" investigations were documented in the internal affairs case management system. Up to December 1, 2012, 11 formal investigations and 15 inquiries were recorded. Since not all supervisors report community members complaints on a consistent basis, the actual number of complaints is likely higher.

There are statutory requirements that affect how the SPD staffs the internal affairs function. The State of Nevada has promulgated rules regarding the length of time it takes to conduct investigations, and regulations about providing notice to officers and witnesses. Department rules require that internal investigations be completed within 45 days.

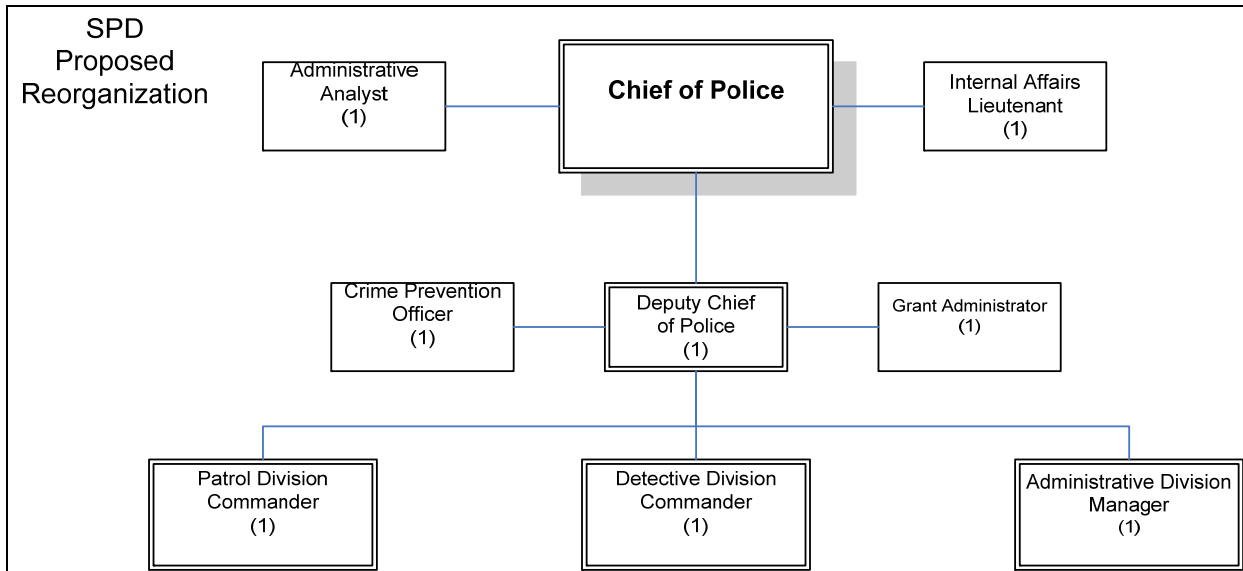
Given the relatively low number of internal investigations, this function is adequately staffed, as evidenced by the other duties the Lieutenant is responsible for.

Recommendations

- ***Recommendation 27: All matters involving internal affairs investigations should report directly to the Chief of Police.*** Internal investigations require the utmost in confidentiality and no outside political pressures. The role of Internal Affairs is critical

to the integrity of the agency and the trust of the public. Although no issue or concern has been identified in the current reporting process, policing best practice recommends direct access and reporting to the agency's chief of police.

- **Recommendation 28:** *The department should review its policy and procedures regarding reporting requirements for citizen complaints and should ensure the policy is clear and applied consistently throughout the department.* Interviews indicated that not all supervisors report complaints in a consistent way. Policy should clearly define the circumstances under which a complaint should be recorded rather than an inquiry.
- **Recommendation 29:** *The department should be reorganized at the highest level according to the following chart.*



The Deputy Chief position in the Sparks Police Department should be restructured to play a more direct role in the administration and management of the department in support of the Chief. A chief in a city the size of Sparks has two distinct roles to play – an external one and an internal one. Externally the chief needs to continually develop and maintain good relationships with the community, with city leaders, with the business community, with neighborhood associations, with non-profits and social service agencies that interact with the police, and with other agencies that make up the criminal justice system. Internally, the chief needs to manage and lead the department in many ways, including ensuring that the department runs smoothly, that crime control initiatives are well designed and implemented, that officers routinely have positive interactions with the community, that employees have opportunities to advance and become the

next generation of leaders, and that the agency is free from corruption, unnecessary use of force and discriminatory practices.

It is difficult for a single person to effectively perform all of these roles simultaneously. Consequently, the deputy chief's position is important in assisting the chief to make certain that the department is well run and that it maintains community support. There will be times when the deputy chief helps to manage the department so the chief can spend time carrying the department's safety and security message to the community. Having direct authority over the three divisions will facilitate the ability of the deputy chief to manage the agency when necessary.

CONCLUSION

The Sparks Police Department is a high quality law enforcement agency that seeks continued improvement. The department is well led and managed with a committed and experienced workforce. Overall, the department's three divisions carry out their mission well, applying contemporary techniques and tactics.

Patrol Division

This study found that the average patrol time consumed by Calls for Service in Sparks is 34%, sufficient time for patrol officers to respond to calls for service, engage in proactive activity and engage the community. There are no universally accepted standards for how much patrol time should be consumed by calls for service. One department may set an informal target at 30% to 40%. Another department may determine that patrol officer calls for service commitment time should not exceed an average of 60%.

Interviews and observations indicate that the current patrol work schedule creates a lack of interaction and cooperation between the permanently assigned weekday and weekend shifts. Patrol staffing is divided into two clear and distinct schedule options, each with three separate shifts. The three patrol lieutenants, watch commanders, each manage one of the three shifts. Each patrol lieutenant has additional assigned duties and tasks that take them away from direct patrol oversight.

Additionally, since officers select their assignment based on seniority, veteran officers and sergeants are normally working during the week, with the less experienced officers assigned to weekends. Concerns were expressed that the weekend shift appears isolated from the remainder of the department. Communication between the weekday and weekend shifts appears limited. An alternative 4-10 work schedule has been provided in the report for the department's review.

Current practice indicates officers return to the station one to two hours before the end of the shift to initiate the report writing process rather than completing reports on their in-car computers. Visibility is one of the key components of any crime prevention effort. Writing reports in a marked patrol vehicle in a high traffic / high call for service area, when safe and possible to do so, will serve as a crime deterrent and keep the officer more readily available should there be a high priority call for service.

Traffic enforcement was identified as very important to both city and department leadership. Although the SPD is effective at identifying traffic related problems, it should enhance those efforts by utilizing Crime Analysis personnel to monitor traffic related patterns and trends. Patrol supervisors could then more affectively assign patrol personnel, in collaboration with the Traffic Section, to address these issues with directed patrol and enforcement.

Detective Division

The objective of the Sparks Police Department's Detective Division is to conduct "detailed and thorough investigations that exceed prosecutorial standards." The division's operational philosophy is to develop a cross-functional team of detectives utilizing a generalist approach to assigning and conducting criminal investigations. The Division is organized into three investigative teams, each supervised by a Sergeant: the Violent Crimes Section, the Property Crimes Section, and the Crime Suppression Unit. Cases come to the investigative units based on patrol lieutenants' review and approval of reports completed by patrol officers.

There is a strange anomaly in the SPD nomenclature regarding the Detective Division. Detectives with special expertise are not necessarily deployed to the section that would logically fit their investigative specialty. The detectives with homicide expertise, robbery investigation expertise and felonious assault investigation experience are all assigned to the Property Crimes section. Other cases usually assigned to the Property Crimes section include auto theft and burglary. The detectives that investigate forgery, fraud and embezzlement cases all work in the Violent Crimes Section. The Violent Crimes section is also responsible for Sex Crimes (both adult and child), Child Abuse and Neglect, Felony Domestic Abuse, and Elder Exploitation.

In essence, the names of the investigative sections do not match the work performed by the unit members. Both sections function as general assignment units. A recommendation to change these names appears in this report. Currently seven detectives are assigned to each squad. Based on analysis, the number of detectives assigned to each squad is appropriate for the workload.

Several factors may result in substantial delays before a serious crime is reported until a detective begins an investigation. Crimes reported on Friday, Saturday and Sunday will not be reviewed or assigned by the sergeants until Monday morning since detectives do not work weekends. Currently there are two work schedules and three beginning-of-watch times in the investigative sections. Members of the investigative units should have a single work schedule with consistent work hours. While providing flexibility in work schedules may provide personal

benefits to employees, it can needlessly hamper the supervision and functionality of operations. A recommendation regarding an investigative staff schedule is discussed in the report.

Although all gross misdemeanors and felonies are referred to the Detective Division, there is a lack of clear policy regarding how cases are assigned and tracked when they are returned to the Patrol Division. A policy should be drafted with input from both divisions articulating such a policy.

A police department's detective division should be staffed with sufficient support personnel in order for detectives to maximize their efficiency and productivity. Support personnel are civilian members of the department who perform duties not requiring the training, expertise, or weapon skills of a sworn member of the department. When staffed correctly within an investigative environment, support personnel provide detectives with the time they need to conduct interviews, follow up on leads, arrest suspects, and prepare cases for the successful prosecution of defendants. This report recommends that two investigative aid positions be added to investigations.

The Crime Suppression Unit (CSU) works in close partnership with the Crime Analyst to identify crime trends, primarily those identified by the department as the "Big- 5" crimes of greatest concern to the community: robbery, grand theft auto, residential burglary, commercial burglary and vehicle burglary. By all accounts, the CSU is quite effective in curtailing crime in Sparks. However, most of the evidence is anecdotal. Without performance indicators, the success of the unit cannot be objectively measured, and t. The potential impact of changing the size of the unit cannot be determined.

The Sparks Police Department's Victim Advocate program assists victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The program has proven itself to be an effective strategy to deal with violence and victimization in the City of Sparks. Grant funds are due to be expended in 2013. If the state does not provide additional funding, the department should provide funding to maintain the program.

The Crime Analysis Unit does a very good job of monitoring crime trends and providing the data to appropriate personnel. Additionally, the unit concentrates efforts on the five crimes identified as most significant to the community. The weekly CompStat Report should include crime maps along with the locations of residences and photos of potential suspects in close proximity to crime concentrations.

As part of the CompStat process, the Crime Analysis Unit should identify locations within the city that generate repeated calls for police service over a defined time span (bi-weekly / monthly). Identifying and solving problems at these locations that frequently require police attention will assist in reducing calls for service and eliminating preventing a potentially more serious incidents in the future.

Administration Division

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Concerns were identified that patrol officers on occasion referred a complainant back to either a web-based reporting option or a Police Assistant staffed telephone reporting system. The department should ensure that procedures and practices are in place so this does not occur. This practice, even if happening only on rare occasions, will damage public relations and place an additional burden on an already victimized citizen.

The Records Section is responsible for compiling, maintaining and disseminating information from department records regarding incident reports and motor vehicle accidents. Staff assigned to this unit scan police reports, enter data into the record management system, and type police reports that have been recorded by officers through the report dictation system. The use of a dictation machine to complete the narrative section of the police report is common within the agency. The report must then be typed by Records Section staff. The department should reconsider the use of speech to text technology or require the officer to complete the narrative portion of the report. Eliminating this task from the Records Section will allow additional staff

time for quality control and review. The Records Section relies heavily on volunteers to fulfill its mission. Volunteer staff provides almost all imaging of police reports for long term storage.

Although the department previously attempted implementation of an unsuccessful Automated Reporting System (ARS) tool, the agency does have the technical support to examine other proven ARS products. Officers have access to both mobile data terminals and squad room workstations to assist them in this process. Use of an ARS tool would enhance production of the Records Section staff and likely eliminate the reliance on volunteer staff that must manually scan each police report for long term storage.

The Emergency Communications unit serves as the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for the City of Sparks. The unit further serves as a back-up for both the City of Reno and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. The unit dispatches both police and fire personnel with Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls directed to a private ambulance service. Staffing for the center consists of three supervisors and twelve dispatchers. **Communication supervisors serve in both a supervisor and working dispatcher role.** With only three available supervisors, one per shift, supervision of the center is often handled by a patrol sergeant when the communication supervisor is on leave. Overtime is frequently used to meet minimum staffing levels and to handle special events or circumstances. The department should initiate efforts to provide supervisory staffing in the 911 center at all times requiring two additional communication supervisors.

The Office of Deputy Chief of Police is comprised of one deputy chief of police, one grant administrator, one internal affairs lieutenant, and one crime prevention officer. Currently all matters involving internal affairs investigations report directly to the deputy chief of police. The role of Internal Affairs is critical to the integrity of the agency and the trust of the public. Although no issue or concern has been identified in the current reporting process, policing best practice recommends direct access and reporting to the agency's chief of police. The Deputy Chief position in the Sparks Police Department should be restructured to play a more direct role in the administration and management of the department in direct support of the Chief.

Performance Indicators

Finally, the Police Executive Research Forum has conducted studies in over 250 police agencies and provided research and conferences on a wide array of police topics. This has resulted in the development of a broad range of best practices, benchmarks and performance indicators for policing. PERF has provided a variety of performance indicators designed to assist the Sparks

Police Department as it strives for continued success. Of special relevance to the Sparks Police Department are performance indicators that pertain to the Patrol Division, the Detective Division and the department's proactive approaches to crime, violence and disorder.

It is important to recognize that some indicators, when measured for the first time, act as a baseline. The initial calculation is not meaningful until subsequent observations are taken. This allows the department's progress to be measured over time, much like examining reported crimes over the years. As part of the Patrol and Detective Division report sections, PERF has provided a variety of performance indicators designed to assist the Sparks Police Department as it strives for continued success.