

Our study of the Los Angeles Police Department training system revealed many areas in need of improvement before the LAPD can consider its officers proficient in use of force, search and seizure, arrest procedures, community policing, and diversity awareness. These findings and accompanying recommendations appear throughout the preceding pages. The recommendations are provided separately in Appendix M.

Yet there is much to be optimistic about for the leaders of the LAPD, in general, and those responsible for training, in particular. Needed improvements are rarely a function of *what* needs to be covered by the Department's curricula. Rather, the issue is one of *how* the requisite material should receive coverage. Curricula content, guided by previous studies, POST specifications, state regulation, and other guidelines, is more likely to suffer from an overabundance of guidance than insufficient direction when it comes to the five areas of interest. What is lacking is synchronization in training that brings instruction in use of force, search and seizure, arrest procedures, community policing, and diversity awareness together in ways that replicate field conditions. We found few problems with the content of recruit and continuing education courses, but the artificial manner of presenting the material actively works against understanding how the five topic areas are interrelated in day-to-day operations. The appropriate measure of success should be not the number of hours taught, but rather the effectiveness of Department officers in the field in applying the skills of concern. LAPD training has thus far failed to achieve the synchronization necessary to promote that ef-

fectiveness. What is needed is recognition that such synchronization and a means to achieve it are necessary.

There is ample evidence that the recognition is there. The consistent interaction between us and the LAPD leadership responsible for Department training has provided many opportunities to discuss the challenges and requirements confronting that leadership. All evidence points to a sincere commitment to improvement. What remains is a call for identifying a means to accomplish needed improvements. The modern concept of professionalism alone provides the synchronizing mechanism and the unifying concept needed to guide instruction in the five areas of concern and its application in the field. The overarching recommendation that the Department adopt professionalism as its guiding concept in turn spurs five primary recommendations that will facilitate this end.

OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATION

The Los Angeles Police Department should adopt a concept of police professionalism that incorporates the tenets of corporateness, responsibility, and expertise as the mechanism for guiding the development and execution of its training, to include training in the areas of use of force, search and seizure, arrest procedures, community policing, and diversity awareness.

PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish an LAPD lessons-learned program.
- Introduce and maintain consistently high quality throughout every aspect of LAPD training.
- Restructure the LAPD Training Group to allow the centralization of planning; instructor qualification, evaluation, and retention; and more efficient use of resources.
- Integrate elements of community-oriented policing and diversity awareness training models throughout LAPD training.
- Develop training on use of force, search and seizure, and arrest procedures that meets current standards of excellence.

Professionalism and its tenets of corporateness, responsibility, and expertise are the foundation on which effective training can be built. The five primary recommendations provide cornerstones for that construction. Further recommendations offered herein help to shape instruction in the five areas of concern and provide direction regarding needed changes.

Mayor Hahn and Police Commission President Rick Caruso both made it clear that recommended training changes should have the least possible effects on police operations—they should take officers out of the field as little as possible.¹ We concur with this sentiment and have purposely avoided mandates of a certain number of hours of training (though primarily for other purposes) and prescriptions regarding training frequency or timing. Such recommendations are philosophically at odds with reform efforts of the LAPD, and they provide false comfort. Recommending that two hours of community policing be provided four times a year provides a convenient box for an auditor to check. It does nothing to ensure quality or retention of training covering the vital topics of concern in this study. Further, local knowledge is often the best knowledge, especially with regard to operational issues. There are training experts within LAPD who will understand this study's recommendations and can implement them in the manner that makes the most sense from the perspectives of both efficiency and effectiveness. The guidance provided in the preceding pages is explicit regarding how to enhance Department officer expertise in use of force, search and seizure, arrest procedures, community policing, and diversity awareness. Properly applied, all five areas will receive more coverage during officer instruction than is currently the case. That instruction will be more effective in teaching needed skills. Retention of the material taught will improve.

Improving training will require new resources, although perhaps less than might be thought given the considerable gains to be had through changes in approach and organizational restructuring. We understand the concerns regarding manpower and funding. To provide the LAPD with a series of recommendations that require extraordinary increases in the size of the force or exceptional funding

¹Interviews with Estela Lopez.

outlays would do little other than serve as a basis for frustration. We understand that resources are limited and have therefore attempted to avoid unnecessary recommendations that require anything other than truly fundamental requirements. However, there are areas in which the LAPD will need additional sources of funding to implement recommendations and to evaluate their success. Efficient training is impossible when the training group lacks an effective automated means of managing instruction for the Department's thousands of officers. Resource management and officer time will be misused barring the introduction of an automated means of managing faculty and physical resources, schedules, officer training status, course materials, and other facets of training management. An automated learning management system will also enhance the ability of the Department to collect data that further improves training. Funds are needed for the determination of which system should be purchased, for the actual purchase of the system, and for its maintenance. The Department will also need personnel to operate such systems. The ultimate fiscal and manpower effects will depend on the systems selected and the related ability to transition positions currently focused on manual training-program management to those supporting automated management.

It is important to note that the mode of instruction that we are advocating within this book is challenging for instructors and for curriculum developers. It necessitates a considerably more intensive instructor development course, requires more up-front planning during course creation, and differs from the model that LAPD trainers have generally followed in the past. As a corollary, the process will be found to be more rewarding to many instructors. It will undoubtedly be more valuable in serving the needs of the organization if properly implemented. A professional police force requires instructors who are professionals. Those teaching must stand as examples of what the LAPD wants those learning to emulate. Currently, policies that leave instructors in teaching positions indefinitely may well be found to be counterproductive in this regard. Rotating the best officers from field duty through instructor positions brings fresh ideas into the classroom, provides the Department an opportunity to further enhance the communications and teaching skills of their best personnel via completion of an improved instructor preparation course, and gives LAPD leaders a chance to observe its rising stars as

they interact with others from throughout the organization. There is a solid argument to support the conclusion that an instructor tour ought to be a reward for outstanding field performance and a prerequisite for advancement in the Department.

Our recommendations will require judgment and discretion in their application. The organization should adapt them as necessary because of the ever-changing challenges of modern law enforcement. More important than our specific individual recommendations is the need for a deliberate, general, and thoughtful shift in the philosophy of training and its purposes. Our analysis leads us to conclude that this can be done within the current constraints that influence training content.

For example, LAPD recruit training standards easily outnumber the POST minimum hours; LAPD offers nearly 200 more hours of training than POST requires.² None of the recommendations herein challenges the substance of external guidance. They may well question the means recommended in addressing that substance (e.g., in the case of supervision requiring a set number of hours for instruction on given topics rather than accepting that integration of such topics with other subject matter is far more effective). Points of such disagreement should be resolved with the appropriate outside agency. History reflects that most such instances are resolved in the best interests of police effectiveness and public service. In cases where external agencies fail to understand the exceptional requirements of LAPD as a department, other members of city government ought to step forward in support of their brethren. The ultimate objective is achieving what best serves the interests of the people of Los Angeles.

The first step for the Department leadership must be to adopt professionalism as fundamental to all Los Angeles Police Department activities before it can become the basis for its training. Basing instruction on the revised concept of professionalism without this commitment is pointless. Proper police performance with regard to use of force, search and seizure, arrest procedures, community policing, and diversity awareness is a function of leadership, the

²The LAPD Training Group reports this tally.

dedication of individual officers to serving society, and a training system that educates and supports those officers so that they can best perform that service. A professional force requires professional training, but no training can overcome a lack of leader support. Our interviews with Department leadership reveal a commitment to providing that support. Further, those leaders and those they lead require adequate resources from and the endorsement of other members of the city government if they are to succeed in their quest. It is only when all in their government work as a team to bring them the best in police practices that the people of Los Angeles are properly served.