



THE CITY OF
SAN DIEGO

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OFFICE OF
JERRY SANDERS
CHIEF OF POLICE

95-70

July 17, 1995

Mr. John Lusardi
Police Executive Research Forum
1120 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 930
Washington DC, 20037

Dear John,

In 1994, several department members from the Eastern Division Area Command opened a project that addressed the problems created by a major university within that command. Essentially, San Diego State University, with an enrollment of over 30,000 students, was responsible for hundreds of calls for service including special event assistance, noise and loud party complaints as well as assorted crimes. Even though the university had its own police department, the jurisdictional boundaries were unclear and there was confusion as to which responding police agency was responsible for given calls.

Eastern Division's project team included a sergeant, three officers, a retired senior volunteer in policing and a crime analyst. Their research and analysis led to several responses that improved training, clarified jurisdictional boundaries and improved inter-departmental cooperation with the university's Department of Public Safety.

Additionally, it resulted in a reduction of calls for service for the San Diego Police Department. This was a very successful project and I am pleased to recommend them for the annual Herman Goldstein Excellence in Problem Solving Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JSL".

Jerry Sanders
Chief of Police



DIVERSITY
BRINGS US ALL TOGETHER

SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY
AND COLLEGE AREA
COMMUNITY
PROJECT

Project Leader

Nathalio M. Caplan, Sergeant
Eastern Patrol Division

Project Members

Jeffrey M. Napier, Police Officer II
Eastern Division, Neighborhood Police Team

Jack R. Didelot, Police Officer II
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Analytical Support

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SCANNING

- A Problem Solving Project dealing with the effect a large University has on the surrounding community.
- A study of the number of calls generated by University activities for the San Diego Police Department.
- A review of calls generated by University activities and the nature of the problems.
- A review of jurisdictional issues and their effect on response to community requests for police services.
- An internal review of various San Diego Police Department policies and practices and their effect on police staffing and response to requests for service in the College Area Community.
- The potential for larger problems when SDSU completes construction of a large arena project which will increase the crowd capacity of future events (scheduled for completion in about two years).

San Diego State University is an educational institution located entirely within the City of San Diego and within patrol beat 314. This is a beat located in the busiest area of the City of San Diego. A significant number of the calls are generated by university students and events. San Diego State University has its own policing agency known as the Public Safety Department. They are responsible for law enforcement duties within the university and some outlying buildings.

Because of the large volume of calls originating from university activities, the initial scanning was designed to reduce the effect the university had on the San Diego Police Department. The committee was formed by a patrol Sergeant and comprised of two patrol officers, one officer from the Neighborhood Police Team, and one community member volunteer. Assisted by the crime analysis section we determined there were more than one hundred and forty calls in ten

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months which were directly linked to university or student activities. This number represented only the calls to which the Department had responded. The actual number of requests for police service is much larger since Public Safety maintains their own statistics.

There was a wide range of complaints. Illegal parking, traffic congestion, loud music, large parties, littering, urinating and defecating in residence yards, fights, assaults, rapes, etc. All these problems affect the quality of life in the College Area Community, which has formed a council (CACC) to address some of the neighborhood concerns. They meet regularly with SDSU representatives to deal with these issues.

As a result of the scanning process, the project focus was shifted to reduce the effect of these problems on the community. This, if successful, would have the desired effect of reducing calls for service to the S.D.P.D.

The calls we identified as originating from Public Safety jurisdiction were found to be only a portion of the actual call volume. Due to formatting inconsistencies in the Computer Aided Dispatching (CAD) we determined there are other calls we were unable to capture. The most prominent example of this was a one day event at SDSU which required the deployment of thirty-five units for a total of over one hundred hours of police time. Although we knew it existed, we had difficulty locating the information because it had been assigned a location as "SDSU Concert" which is a non-geographical designation.

A review of Public Safety records dealing with response to noise calls to Interfraternity Council (IFC) member houses showed they had fifty six "verified" noise complaints in the 1994-1995 school year and forty in the 1993-1994 school year. "Verified" complaints are those in which Public Safety arrived and was able to establish the existence of a disturbance. It does not account for calls in which the noise was no longer present but still required a police response.

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In addition to the party, noise, etc. calls we determined the university hosts a number of for-profit events throughout the year. They include athletic, cultural, musical concerts, and similar activities which draw crowds in the thousands. When these events take place the problems previously described are exacerbated.

An additional problem we identified dealt with the relationship between the two Departments. Interviews with S.D.P.D. officers, and information from Public Safety officers showed there is a strained relationship at several levels. Much of this was caused by confusion over jurisdiction and responsibilities. Officers responding to calls frequently felt it was the other agency's responsibility to provide service, investigate crimes, or file reports. As a result, the feeling that work was being "dumped" from one agency to the other was present, if not prevalent.

In essence, the scanning process identified a problem of enormous proportions, one which significantly affected the College Area Community and was a sizeable depletion of Department resources.

ANALYSIS

Our analysis identified the main areas where problems exist:

- Confusion and conflict about jurisdictional responsibilities between the two agencies.
- Noise, parties, litter, etc. from IFC activities in the College Area Community.
- Noise, traffic congestion, parking problems, disturbances, etc. caused by large university events.

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Because many of the problems originate in another jurisdiction, we limited our analysis to identifying solutions which we could implement within our jurisdiction. At significant stages of the project information was forwarded to Public Safety for their review and to allow them the flexibility of devising solutions within their own jurisdiction. Other areas of research were geared toward empowering the CACC to devise solutions and obtain cooperation from the university.

We were able to locate an Administrative Agreement signed by the Chief of San Diego Police Department and the Chief of the Public Safety Department. This agreement had been in existence for several years and clearly spelled out each agencies responsibilities, however, its existence was not well known. By the terms of the agreement Public Safety is responsible for response to calls, investigation of crimes, and all policing duties to all grounds of the university proper. In addition, all IFC member houses are within their jurisdiction, as are a number of other outlying buildings and facilities. A total of forty locations were identified as falling within this jurisdictional agreement.

Feedback from CACC showed that community members often preferred Public Safety to respond because they have better response times than the Department. In essence, calls of loud noise or parties are given a lower priority by S.D.P.D. and added to a sometimes significant (40+) stack of calls waiting for response. Public Safety, having a smaller jurisdictional responsibility, has a better response time, and can impose additional sanctions to university students and IFC houses.

We found that partially due to CAD formatting and partially due to long standing practice the Department Communications section would routinely send Department units to locations which were the responsibility of Public Safety. Sometimes this was done "as a courtesy" and sometimes under an erroneous belief that some type of civil liability existed if no Department resources were sent.

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When reviewing the noise, disturbance, etc. problems, we found that in some instances these were facilitated by the City of San Diego issuing noise variance permits to the IFC which allowed them to violate noise ordinances. The permits were issued under an agreement between the IFC and the CACC and were routinely approved without a significant review process.

Large university-sponsored events were another problem. The university hosts concerts, athletic events, cultural events, and other activities. Some of these draw crowds nearing ten thousand people. These events are usually within the university grounds and as such cause only noise problems during the actual event. Outside the university the problems occur at the beginning and end of the events and are related to traffic congestion and parking violations. Although Public Safety may staff adequately for the actual event, the negative effect on the community is not well controlled. The worst example was the event mentioned earlier which caused traffic congestion as far as three miles away.

The Department's Special Events Unit takes no part in planning for these incidents. They are the unit which is charged with staffing pre-planned events. Frequently this is done by charging the event promoter for any police services. Because the university is the host, the Special Events Unit has no jurisdiction within the grounds of the university. As a result, any traffic problems have to be handled by the normal complement of patrol units. This causes an enormous drain on the already limited patrol resources. With the completion of a new event arena, the problems caused by events of this nature are sure to be more significant.

RESPONSE

The committee made a number of recommendations and then assisted in their implementation.

- Training of Department patrol personnel to clarify jurisdictional issues.

- Computerized identification of significant addresses affected by the project.
- Training of Communications personnel to clarify jurisdictional issues.
- Use of Retired volunteers to disseminate information to affected community members.
- Official notification to affected police agencies and University entities.
- Involvement of various City, County, State agencies in the problem solving effort.
- Assistance in meetings between community members and University representatives.
- Financial recovery of costs incurred by the San Diego Police Department for policing areas within jurisdiction of the University.

Jurisdictional Problems:

Eastern Division supervisors were made aware of the Administrative Agreement and its provisions. Training was conducted at supervisor's meetings. The first portion of the training was to make the supervisors aware of the nature of the problem. The second training session was to delineate the jurisdictional responsibilities of both agencies. This was done by writing a memorandum quoting relevant portions of the agreement and distributing it to Division personnel. Finally, the same memorandum was read at patrol briefing sessions to make the field personnel aware of the jurisdictional issues.

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A list of the addresses within Public Safety's jurisdiction was sent to Communications Division. A request was made to have all addresses entered into the CAD Prior Activity Code (PAC) file which warns telephone operators of significant factors at specific locations. These entries were made to notify the caller that they must call Public Safety for service to the appropriate locations.

Communications Division Lead Dispatchers were given training outlining the nature of the problem and the jurisdictional issues. This was done to assist them in dealing with questions from the public about police response to the affected locations.

A request was made to communications Division to stop the practice of sending units to the affected locations. This was instituted on all calls except emergency calls. These were handled by initiating a response and then notifying Public Safety so they could assume reporting and investigating responsibilities.

The Department's Retired Senior Volunteer in Policing (RSVP) unit was used to distribute a letter to the residents surrounding the affected addresses. They were notified of the jurisdiction and policing responsibilities. The residents were provided with relevant telephone numbers to pursue more information.

The IFC was provided with a similar letter notifying them of policing responsibilities for the affected addresses.

Copies of all relevant documents were sent to the Chief of Police, Public Safety and to the lieutenant in charge of field operations-for Public Safety.

Noise, **litter, etc. problems from IFC member houses:**

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The noise abatement unit of the City of San Diego was contacted. A request was made to assist the Department by providing decision making input into the noise variance permit issuance.

When IFC-CACC meetings were scheduled to negotiate the agreement, Department personnel attended and informed the IFC that we were recommending that no more noise permits be issued. Citizens were informed of the meeting and several were in attendance. Their input in this process was invaluable as it pointed out a significant number of problems which the IFC, and to a large extent Public Safety were unaware still existed.

Initially, the IFC was very resistant to any changes and completely opposed to the idea of permit reduction. Once they realized the loss of permits was a significant possibility they met with CACC and agreed to take significant steps to reduce the impact their activities have on the community. These changes include a significant reduction in allowed attendance to parties, a request to the university administration to allow more activities to take place within the university grounds instead of the outlying IFC houses, and addition of security personnel to IFC sponsored activities.

In addition to the changes instituted, information was forwarded to the San Diego Fire Department and the State Fire Marshall for review of the practices of the IFC members. These two agencies are currently reviewing the occupancy limits, exit availability, electrical system conditions, and other significant factors affecting the ability of IFC members to host activities with large numbers of people in attendance.

The memorandum of understanding covering the issuance of noise variance permits was revised by mutual agreement between IFC and CACC to include a review of the effect the activities have on the community and to reduce the level of permitted noise.

A mutual agreement between the two entities was started by which they pledged to work toward significant reductions in the negative effects on the community.

Traffic and parking problems from large events:

A recommendation was made to have the Department explore the possibility of billing the university or the event promoters for the costs incurred in resolving problems directly related to special events at the university. This would be done through a program similar to the current Cost Recovery program.

A recommendation was made to involve the Special Events unit in planning for large events at the university and to coordinate the Department's response by staffing these events on an overtime basis similar to the staffing for events at San Diego Jack Murphy Stadium. With the future completion of the university arena, this coordination will be crucial to deal with the significant increase in traffic and parking problems in the College Area Community.

ASSESSMENT

To date a partial assessment of the effect of this project has shown that the Department goal of reducing calls for service to the affected locations has been significant. The project was almost fully instituted at the end of April 1995. Between April 1, 1995, and May 31, 1995, there were only four (4) calls which were handled by the San Diego Police Department and which were the responsibility of Public Safety.

The CACC member of the project staff informs us that there is now the possibility that real changes will take place as a result of our efforts. This should result in a significant improvement in the problem situations previously described.

Party calls, noise calls, disturbance calls, etc. have been almost completely eliminated, however, because of the long term nature of the initial problem and the scope of the statistical research, assessment will be complete at the end of the 1995-1996 school year. This will involve a complete review of radio calls, reports, investigations, traffic and parking complaints, and other relevant factors.

Once the jurisdictional issues were settled, there now seems to be almost no argument between the field forces of the two Departments. Each is aware of their responsibilities and are now more cooperative due to the knowledge that each officer is carrying their share of the work-load.

Representatives from the Public Safety Department have met with Eastern Division personnel and a discussion has started on coordinating the efforts of the two agencies. Some of the issues discussed are attendance to student seminars to assist in the education of the students with regard to Department policies regarding disturbances, parties, noise, etc.

The recommendations for cost recovery and special events coordination have been forwarded to the Chief of Police for review and assignment to the appropriate units. These recommendations are currently under study and it is safe to state that they will be instituted in some form close to the one recommended.

CONCLUSION

This was a very successful project which required a varied approach to solve. The project members made use of a variety of Department resources, community resources, statistical information, City Departments and other available resources. These resources included but were not limited to:

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The Office of the Chief of Police, Crime Analysis, Communications Personnel, Computer Aided Dispatching system, Fiscal Management personnel, Field Operations Management personnel, Fire Department Personnel, State Fire Marshal personnel, Patrol Division personnel, Retired Senior Volunteers in Policing, Community Relations Office personnel, College Area Community Council members, San Diego State University Housing and Residential Life office personnel, Chico State University Department of Public Safety, University of California at San Diego police personnel, etc.

The value of the project for the Department has been very important. Closer ties to the community were developed, significant, long standing problems were resolved, and the quality of life around the College Area Community should show a significant improvement on a long term basis as a result of the project.

This project was started in late November, 1994, and was near completion in late April of 1995. The remaining tasks will be closely followed to insure completion as the appropriate duties are delegated and assigned.



N. M. Caplan, Sergeant

Eastern Division