A CENTURY OF SERVICE -

A CENTURY OF PRIDE

INSIDE — K-9 HONORS • READER SURVEY
The Problem Oriented Policing (POP) project has created the Problem Analysis Advisory Committee (PAAC) to assist patrol officers in solving problems on their beats. The PAAC meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month from 1300-1430 at the Southeast substation, and are chaired by Captain Jerry Sanders. Anyone interested in finding non-traditional ways to solve traditional police problems is welcome to attend.

Each month a guest agency is invited to present issues of interest to patrol officers. At the January meeting, the San Diego Housing Commission sent Cathy Lexin and Kathy Farrington to discuss public housing issues. Farrington informed officers of the conditions for disqualification of Section 8 benefits (federal subsidies for privately owned housing), and said that the Housing Commission will inspect properties at anyone’s request if the tenants or landlords are suspected of violating conditions specified in the lease agreements. Lexin reported that regular communication resulting from the POP program now takes place between the Commission and the police department. This new relationship has encouraged the Commission to examine existing policies and lease agreements, and action is underway to remedy practices that allow tenants engaged in narcotic or other crime activity to continue to receive subsidies.

If officers have questions regarding Housing Commission policies, please contact Nancy McPherson, POP Coordinator, at 236-6816.

Officers also make presentations on problems they are trying to solve using a POP approach. Southeast Patrol Officers Gail Arcediano and Dave Walker reported on their success in applying POP principles to an apartment complex at 5400 Imperial. Arcediano said that prior to using POP, she and her partner conducted routine patrol and made arrests for illegal activity in the complex. Using a POP approach, they were successful in working with the management company and the resident manager to evict problem tenants and implement new security measures in the complex.

WECAN Officer Bobby Wight discussed his efforts at 2701 Imperial where a gambling room attracts narcotic activity. Wight plans to shut down activity at the gambling room and has completed extensive crime analysis reports, talked with area residents, and searched historical records for information on ownership of the property. As Wight’s case demonstrates, officers presenting POP cases to the PAAC may be at any stage in their problem solving efforts. The emphasis is on using the PAAC’s resources and expertise to work through POP problems.
C.S.O. Makes An Impact

What is it that finally provokes officers to take the initiative to solve an on-going problem? Is it the continuous radio calls? Maybe it's the never-ending reports emanating from one address. Or is it a combination of both when the officer holds little or no hope that the problem will cease on its own? For Community Service Officer Sheila Kinney, all three reasons motivated her to apply problem solving on her beat.

One of CSO Kinney's most time-consuming duties is removing abandoned vehicles from the streets in Southeast San Diego. The vehicles are usually dilapidated and attract little attention from the police administrators and analysts who must respond to more immediate public concerns. Just like police officers who frequently respond to recurring radio calls unaware that a pattern may be developing, Kinney gave little regard to the repeat calls of abandoned cars.

When Kinney heard about the abandoned car along Nogal Street, she responded to the call and noticed that several vehicles had expired registration dates, weren't being paid for, and appeared to be abandoned. Kinney began talking to the car repair shop owner about the vehicles.

Kinney's persistence and initiative paid off when the owner of the car repair shop agreed to remove the abandoned vehicles. Kinney continued to follow up with the shop owner and the city's impound service to ensure that the vehicles were removed.

As Kinney moved into the analysis stage, she realized that the car repair shop had a history of removing abandoned vehicles that operated out of the backyard. She also found out that their vehicle registration had been suspended due to several violations.

Kinney worked with the City Treasurer's office to reclaim the impounded cars and contact the registered vehicle owners. She also phoned CALTRANS to inform them of the repeat calls of abandoned cars from that area.

Finally, she placed a call to an urban enforcement officer in the city and learned that they were also recovering abandoned cars in the area. Kinney worked with the enforcement team to develop a plan to remove the remaining abandoned vehicles.

Through her efforts, the car repair shop was held responsible for the abandoned vehicles and the vehicles were removed from the street.

Kinney's experience highlights the importance of proactive problem-solving and the need for officers to think beyond the immediate response to a call. By taking the time to investigate and address the root cause of the problem, Kinney was able to address the issue of abandoned vehicles in her district.

The residents in the area of 4700 Nogal Street started regularly calling in complaints of abandoned vehicles on the street and also of a car repair shop on that street. As CSO Kinney responded to the majority of the calls, she observed that several vehicles had expired registrations, some of the abandoned cars were reported stolen, and that people were often repairing the vehicles when they drove by in their van.

She also noticed that the radio calls were escalating, along with the reports she took, and realized that the situation was quickly getting worse.

Kinney saw that traditional policing was not working on this problem, so she began to think of alternative approaches to dealing with those irritating radio calls. She began to identify and concentrate on the group of related incidents as one whole problem, instead of focusing on reacting to single calls. Problem Oriented Policing (POP) was in motion.

After completing an initial scanning of the problem, Kinney applied immediate enforcement. She issued parking citations, impounded cars with expired registration dates, and marked vehicles for possible violation of the 12-hour parking law, and verbally warned the owner of the car repair shop to keep the cars off the street.

As Kinney moved into the analysis stage, she learned that the car repair shop was a towing service that operated out of the backyard. She also found out that as the owner spotted possible abandoned vehicles on city streets and freeways, he moved them to his residence, without any knowledge or consent of the registered owner. The shop owner would repair the vehicles, contact the registered owner and attempt to bill them for repair services or else he put a lien on the car.

Kinney spoke with patrol officers and learned that they were also recovering stolen vehicles from that address. One owner reported that his car had broken down on the freeway. When he returned a few hours later, his car was missing. The other owner had his vehicle stolen from in front of his house.

Armed with the information she had collected, Kinney moved into a response stage. She spoke with the overburdened auto theft detail who could offer little assistance. She also phoned CALTRANS, who could offer little assistance. The regional director of the car repair shop offered Kinney an arrangement where the shop owner would remove the vehicles and in return, he would receive a portion of the registration fees.

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PROBLEM ORIENTED POLICING

- YOU CAN DO IT

F. Y. I.

(Excerpts from Law Enf. News.)

- Patchwork Enforcement: The U.S. Customs Service under Commissioner William von Raab, has been cultivating a reputation for tough, no-nonsense enforcement of anti-smuggling laws. That type of enforcement took a bizarre twist last fall when Customs agents at the Buffalo, N.Y., port of entry seized a shipment of 5,000 commemorative uniform patches designed in honor of the agency's 1989 bicentennial. The patches, ordered earlier in the year by von Raab, were impounded when it was discovered that they did not bear tags indicating their country of origin — in this case, Canada. The 13,000 Customs employees who belong to the National Treasury Employees Union were incensed that the patches were made in Canada despite a contract provision directing that such items be American Made. Their feathers were ruffled further when they learned that the patches cost 59 cents each. Employees had been told that they would have to pay $2.50 apiece for them. The top brass at the Customs Service doesn't play the whole incident, calling it "a funny little story. " but Robert Tobias, president of the NTEU — and no great fan of von Raab — begged to differ. He called the affair "perhaps the most unpractical and stupid blunder (von Raab) has made in his bumber-ridden tenure as head of the agency."

- "I Told You To Go Before We Left the Office" Last spring, police officers in Gainesville, Fla., patiently watched a stolen motorcycle around the clock for 17 days in hopes of catching a burglar linked to nearly 200 break-ins. Then one officer took a two-minute break to go to the bathroom and while he was gone, the bike disappeared. Two Alachua County sheriff's investigators were placed on six months' disciplinary probation.

- Many Are Cold, But Few Are Frozen: A Westminster, Calif., man was fined $58 after failing to convince a judge that four frozen corpses in his van entitled him to use a car pool lane on the freeway. Robert Hanshew, who transports bodies for a mortuary transportation service, was stopped March 21 on a freeway entrance ramp. He told the officer that he believed the bodies in his van qualified as passengers, but that reasoning failed to win over Municipal Judge Richard Stanford Jr., who ruled that passengers must be alive to qualify for the two-or-more-passenger car pool lanes.