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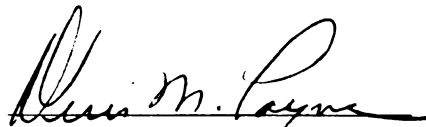
Post-Shooting Incident Policies in  
Michigan Municipal Police Agencies

presented by

Patricia E. Nowak

has been accepted towards fulfillment  
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M.S. degree in Criminal Justice



Major professor

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**POST-SHOOTING  
INCIDENT POLICIES IN MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL  
POLICE AGENCIES**

**by**

**Patricia E. Nowak**

**A THESIS**

**Submitted to  
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## **ABSTRACT**

### **POST-SHOOTING INCIDENT POLICIES IN MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL POLICE AGENCIES**

**By**

**Patricia E. Nowak**

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate how many municipal police agencies in the state of Michigan had policy regarding post-shooting incidents. A secondary purpose of this study was to identify how close those policies followed the model policy proposed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). Data collection involved a mailed survey instrument which was administered to a sample of Michigan municipal police agencies. The findings indicate that the majority of agencies do have policy regarding post-shooting incidents; however, many of those agency's policies do not follow the model policy proposed by the IACP. For instance, many existing policies are related liability issues for the agency instead of factors related to the personal welfare of the officer. The researcher also found that approximately one-quarter of the responding agencies had a police officer involved shooting within the last five years.

To  
My Parents  
Robert and Margie Wilcox  
who are my inspiration in life

"It's not the critics who counts, not the man who points out the strong man stumbled or whether the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and often comes up short again and again ... and who at worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly so that his soul shall never be with those cold and timid ones who know neither victory nor defeat"

Theodore Roosevelt  
Police Commissioner, New York, New York

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### Overview of the Research Problem

This research is undertaken to assist Michigan municipal police agencies in recognizing the importance of having effective post-shooting incident policies, and to assist those agencies by reducing stress among members or employees of those agencies.

### Primary Concerns for Research

For many years mental health professionals have recognized the emotional and psychological ramifications which can result in the aftermath of life-threatening, catastrophic events. In the past decades, this phenomenon has been sensitized to the public's attention by the significant number of Viet Nam Veterans who have suffered adverse and sometimes severe emotional reactions to their wartime experiences. In many cases, these problems surfaced years after they returned from combat (IACP, 1989).

These and other factors have increased the understanding and appreciation for the psychological and emotional effects on survivors of traumatic violence or death in a variety of contexts. In the past, little attention has been placed on policies regarding post-shooting incidents. In May 1990, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), supported by funding by the United States Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance, developed a "Model Policy for Post-Shooting Incident Procedures". The purpose of the policy was to provide guidelines which could be uniformly applied to any officer-involved shooting incident that had

resulted in death or serious bodily harm. It's purpose was to minimize the chances of involved personnel developing or suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

### Purpose of the Study

The survey research is designed to investigate police agencies in the State of Michigan in order to determine if policies regarding post-shooting stress are being used by Michigan municipal law enforcement agencies. A secondary purpose is to explore if any, or to what degree those policies by the agencies follow the IACP's Psychological Services Administrative Guidelines regarding officers involved in on-duty shooting situations.

### Ethical Concerns

There are ethical reasons to institute such policies. Some police administrators have failed to recognize the levels of stress that can occur when officers are involved in shooting incidents. Furthermore, some police administrators have inadvertently added considerable stress related to police shootings through organizational aspects which are under their direct managerial control. Management can compound the problems an officer experiences in recovering psychologically from an on-duty shooting incident because of inappropriate departmental policy or simply the lack of policy.

It is important for police administrators or managers to recognize their moral and ethical responsibilities to assure the mental well-being of the individuals under their command. The human resource is the most important resource of the police organization. It is the responsibility of management to use all organizational resources to the fullest extent possible.



### Community Concerns

A police department's ability to respond to its community's needs is dependent upon the effectiveness of the law enforcement officers since the overall well-being of the officers affects their performance of their duties. Administrators need to provide citizens with high-quality police services and protection from officers that are psychologically impaired.

### Legal Concerns

There are also legal justifications for such policy. Recent legal decisions have held police organizations responsible for employee behaviors and the psychological fitness of officers. Under the heading "negligent retention", police agencies and their supervisors can be held liable for the action of their employees if there were indications that the employee was not functioning adequately, but did not take any action to provide assistance (Stratton 1980).

Even in departments that have never faced charges of this nature, the potential for civil liability provides a strong incentive to institute programs and policies that assist employees who are experiencing stress-related difficulties.

Training in the area of stress is also important and may take on legal ramifications. Recently, the United States Supreme Court held that a city can be held civilly liable for failing to properly train its officers, if this failure demonstrates that the city was deliberately indifferent to the deprivation of an individuals constitutional rights Canton v. Harris, 109 S. Ct. 1197, (1989).

### Labor Relations Concerns

Discipline is of key interest to union officials and management. A supervisor is hard pressed to ensure proper accountability unless there is

written policy governing the actions of those employees involved in a shooting incident. Without written policy, the union would undoubtedly grieve the discipline inflicted upon the member(s) as it would be construed as ambiguous to what was required from the employees involved (Payne, 1989).

### **Basic Assumptions**

An underlying assumption of this research is that the IACP guidelines do assist in minimizing stress in shooting incidents. Paramount to the officer involved in a shooting incident is the stress that builds from "not knowing what will happen" administratively. In a time where the officer is experiencing emotional and possible physical pain, inadequate or no policy at all will only increase their symptoms of stress.

The IACP Model Policy defines the purpose of the policy (see Appendix A), the policy itself, specific definitions, procedures at the scene, post-incident procedures, as well as stress recognition. The Model Policy also contains and requires training pertaining to post-traumatic stress disorders while requiring supervisors to be responsible for making available to it's members information on counseling and mental health services (See Appendix A).

### **Primary Research Questions**

1. Is there significant differences between Michigan municipal police agencies post-shooting policies and the IACP's policy?
2. Is there a significant difference between the type and size of Michigan municipal police agency that follows the IACP Model Policy and those agencies that do not.

3. Is there a significant difference between age, length of service, and amount of education of a Michigan Police Chief regarding whether their department has a policy and/or follows a policy similar to the IACP guidelines.

### **Additional Research Questions**

In addition to the primary questions being addressed, other broad questions can be explored. The answers to these questions may have an impact on improving knowledge about post-shooting procedures by identifying additional subject matter.

1. Does the type of stress training the chief has had impact on whether the department has a written policy ?
2. Is there a written policy, and who initiated it?
3. If the department does not have a written policy, what reason do they give?
4. How many chiefs are familiar with the IACP Post-Shooting Incident Model Policy?
5. How many chiefs would consider using the Model Policy if they were aware of it?
6. How many chiefs feel that their officers need a structured support system after an officer-involved shooting?
7. What kind of structured support system is offered to the officers?
8. Is the support person responsible for fitness to return to duty evaluations?

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Definition of Stress

The pioneer of stress research, Hans Selye (1974), defined stress as the "non-specific response of the body to any demand". It is non-specific because it can be produced by almost any agent. Selye describes the defensive reaction to a stressor in terms of the "general adaptation syndrome"(GAS), which refers to a group of symptoms and signs which appear together. The three stages of this response consist of 1) the alarm reaction, wherein the body initially reacts to the first exposure to the stressor; 2) the stage of resistance, where the characteristic signs of the alarm response subside and resistance occurs if continued exposure to a stressor is compatible with adaptation; and, 3) the stage of exhaustion, where continued exposure to a stressor exhausts the energy used for adaptation, and where the signs of the alarm reaction reappear and become irreversible.

#### Managerial Concerns

The topic of stress has been studied and applied to many fields of study. Although researchers differ on the amount of stress leading to ineffectiveness, many effects of stress can be observed. Initial studies on occupational stress were spurred by a concern in the private sector that uncontrolled stress affected morale, efficiency, productivity and job turnover. One result of the observations was the development of the concept called burnout. A symptom of burnout was the turnover of public sector employees in mid-career.

In the police organization, a main concern of administrators is the potential of stress leading to dysfunctions in the organization or its members. Some stress is necessary for an individual to function normally. Stress, however, that is too intense or prolonged can have destructive physiological and psychological effects upon officers that may lead to the the inability of an individual officer to function optimally.

Important to any organization interested in increasing their effectiveness is exploring what managerial behavior will induce employees to act in a way consistent with the expectation and demands of the organization. The recurring theme is recognition on the part of management that subordinates have needs, abilities, and opinions that are crucial to the effectiveness of the organization (Kalinich, Klofas, & Stojkovic, 1987). This deals directly with the necessity of recognizing the stress of the employees and/or assisting in resolutions of it to gain maximum effectiveness of the organization. Of primary interest to a police administrator is the recognition that a police officer will determine how a policy will be implemented, not their superiors, (Lipsky 1980). Therefore a concentrated effort should be made to deal with the stress of the line officer.

Looking at the stress in the organization, one must consider multiple stressors occurring simultaneously, the duration of the stress situation, and the magnitude of the stress, in order to ease dysfunctional stress (Kalinich, 1984). Three basic reactions to stress have been defined and include, depression, anger and anxiety. All three have an impact on the personality, health, and job performance of the individual. Symptoms of stress that are directly related to the job include a high absentee rate, alcoholism, accidents, serious errors in judgement, and slow reactions (Kalinich, 1984). Relating to errors in judgement, psychological research has also suggested that under

stress conditions, the likelihood of erroneous perception increases (Brunner, 1958 & Buckhout, 1975).

What have previously been defined are symptoms of stress; however, the underlying causes of stress must also be understood. In order to address this issue, it is important to see how the individual is affected by the job and the organization. Many people would argue that one of the major stresses of police work would deal with the actual "job" police perform; however, the research in criminal justice has indicated that organizational factors have been identified as the major causes of stress and burnout.

Relating stress to job satisfaction, Albert Camus once said, when work is soulless, life stifles and dies (Kroes, 1976). It is the negative pressures and stressors of the job that lead to worker dissatisfaction. According to Kroes (1976), policing is one of the most difficult jobs in America today. He reports that workers are experiencing unbelievably high amounts of negative work pressures and job stress.

Kroes (1976), defines stress as the occupational pressure or burdens which adversely affect workers. What is troublesome, overwhelming, or uncomfortable about a job can be labeled the stressors of the job. Kroes also feels that in the police profession, job stress not only exists, but it may be the paramount problem facing policeman today. Kroes feels that the first step should be to identify the individual job stressors within an occupation and determine their potential harm to the individual worker. Some researchers feel that there is an optimum level of stress, and that too little as well as too much stress is bad. Kroes argues that to assume that job stress is essential to maintaining an optimum level of arousal is going too far, believing that there are enough stimuli in the world to keep us aroused. He believes what some call the need for "stress" to enjoy his/her job should be properly labeled

"challenge", which a more scientific researcher would feel is an intrinsic job motivator.

According to Kroes (1976) a worker who is subject to job stressors produces a strain to his/her person. In essence, the stress of the job interacts with the worker to disrupt their psychological and physiological homeostasis, resulting in a strain effect. The nature, extent and duration of the strain effects will lead to reduced efficiency at work, personality change, and medical conditions such as ulcers, heart attacks, asthma, and obesity.

### Stress Levels

Stratton (1978) explains stress at four levels. In the first level, the individual is nervous and experiences increased tension, the emotions betray the arousal of aggressive impulses; overabundance of emotionalism; worry is often accompanied by minor bodily and sexual dysfunction. If ignored, level one can deteriorate into the individual experiencing a growing discomfort, anomie, and feeling of uselessness. In this second level, guilt and fears intensify and there may be a steadily increasing inability to perform work or relate with others. This may be covered up at great costs by the individual. The individual often copes by displaying bravado and recklessness, or utilizing defense mechanisms such as blocking or fantasies. The stress agent is not attacked; rather the aggression is diverted to more socially accepted forms of activity such as gambling, reckless driving, physical violence, or becoming overly generous, friendly, or enthusiastic, but with frequent mood changes. At the third level of dysfunction, aggression is no longer inward, but is directed outwardly. There may be violent acts towards animals and the individual may have a need to destroy "evil" in whatever form it is perceived. There will also be suspiciousness, hyper-sensitivity, and

overactivity. Responses will be speeded up to much activity, talking too fast, and sleeping too little. Impaired judgement will become apparent to everyone, including the individual. In the fourth level, controls are no longer effective. This level is characterized by severe blowups and temper tantrums. No longer is any attempt made to live up to expectations. The individual may become manic, depressed, schizophrenic, or paranoid. The facade disintegrates, and suicide may be the result.

### Types of Stress

Burgin (1978) defines two types of stressors: uncontrollable and controllable. Uncontrollable stress includes withdrawal of friends and negative reactions from non-police persons in both occupational and social settings. It may include specific job situations, shift-work, court procedures and decisions, and the possibility of danger. This may lead to a condition necessitating the officer to continuously exhibit behavior beyond reproach on and off duty. These uncontrollable stressors are a fundamental part of the police occupation, according to Burgin (1978).

In discussing controllable stressors, Burgin (1978) stated that unfortunately, many police organizations have not only failed to recognize uncontrollable stressors, but they have added considerable sources of stress through aspects of the organization which are under managerial control. Some of these controllable stressors include, inappropriate personnel policies and procedures (particularly disciplinary procedures), poor supervision practices, a lack of opportunities for officers who need help, and inadequate training. Burgin (1978) also stated that the impact of stress on police officers manifests itself in physiological problems, such as heart disease, diabetes, alcoholism and other stress-related disorders.



Psychological disorders and emotional instability are also outcomes of stress, as are broken marriages, and overt verbal or physical hostility toward the public. In the extreme, suicide by the officer is possible. Burgin (1978) explains the impact of stress on the police organization as a loss of police officer efficiency, complaints from the public, lawsuits arising from police malpractice, workmen's compensation claims and disability retirements. He also includes "burned out" personnel in supervisory and management positions, who create still more stress in their subordinates, peers, and commanding officers.

Stratton (1978) stated that authors such as Kroes (1976), Eisenberg (1975), and Reiser (1976), and leading authorities such as Roberts (1975) have tried to categorize the various stressors impinging on law enforcement into 4 areas. These areas include 1) stressors external to law enforcement 2) stressors internal to the organization 3) stressors in police work itself, and, 4) stressors confronting the individual officer.

### External Stressors

External stressors include frustration with the criminal justice system, court leniency, inconsiderate scheduling of judicial proceedings, negative or distorted media presentations, unfavorable attitudes of some minority communities, attitudes of administrative bodies who have the power to restrict law enforcement and funding. Also included are lack of community resources, and the ineffectiveness of the rehabilitation programs.

### Internal Stressors

Internal stressors are found within the agencies themselves. They may include poor training, supervision, equipment, pay, inadequate career

development opportunities and poor reward systems. Other stressors include policies which are viewed as offensive, excessive paperwork, failure of administration and the citizens to appreciate the police officer's effort and performance, and the political implications that often enter into everyday decisions.

### Stressors Within Police Work

Among the stressors within police work are shift work, court time and holdover time, role-conflict, ongoing interplay between fear and danger, the fragmented nature of the job, and the constant exposure to other human beings in distress. The job may also include boredom contrasted to peak alertness, the responsibility for other people's safety, work overloads, and the need to present the "superman" image in all situations.

### Stressors Confronting Individual Police Officers

A police officer lives and performs under more stress than any member of any other profession said Somodeville (1978). Any sign of anxiety, fear, or uncertainty becomes a highly undesirable trait for those officers who feel that they must be a "superman", or always in control. Because a police officer is expected to deal with all situations in the same methodological manner, the officer develops a "mask" that serves to maintain an image as well as defend himself/herself from the horrors to which he/she is exposed. This mask becomes so ingrained that the officers may incorporate it into their personality at work and at home. According to Somodeville (1978), a protective device becomes a liability. It can create emotional and physical problems that, in many cases, the officer in question is the last one to recognize.

Many research findings have indicated that organizational factors were the major causes of stress and burnout, Kalinich (1987). Whitehead & Lindquist (1986) argue that chronic intense stress may lead to burnout. Chronic burnout has been defined as a "syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism" by Maslach & Jackson (1981). Both stress and burnout refer to physical and psychological reactions to the work environment.

In studies of correctional officers in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Washington, Cheek and Miller (1982, 1983) found that "administrative sources" were the primary source of stress on the job. The administrative sources included such concerns as lack of communication from management, lack of clear guidelines on the job, and lax or inconsistent administrative practices. In their study of correction officer burnout, Whitehead & Lindquist (1986) concluded that administrative policies and procedures were sources of stress. This study also supports the view that managerial control efforts may conflict with officer's desire for autonomy and discretion.

Joseph Terlizzi (1978), believes that stress is a symptom characterized by maladjustment of roles, failure of organizational functions, conflict within one's reference group, and rapid social change(s). Whitehead (1985) examined stress due to the nature of the job in his study of burnout among probation and parole officers. In studying the causes, Whitehead argues that his data does not support theories that link burnout to emotionally charged contact with clients. Rather, burnout was tied to the officer's need for efficacy and a sense of providing competent service to clients. Gary Cherniss (1980) has suggested that burnout may arise from boredom, excessive job demands, job design problems such as role-conflict, and role ambiguity or lack of participation in decision making. All of the above are stresses, not from the job performed, but from the organization.

One common form of conflict is "role conflict", which occurs when the individual within an organization is not able to comprehend and/or accomplish the tasks expected of them (Kalinich, 1987). The source of this role conflict may be a communication problem between officer and supervisor or a disagreement between a subordinate and a supervisor regarding tasks. As a result, role conflict deals with inconsistent messages and pressures from superiors regarding their expectations. Role conflicts may lead to high turnover, absenteeism, and low morale (Alpert & Dunham 1988). Role conflict can also be traced to much of the stress found in organizations.

Vertical conflict also leads to stress. This conflict exists between those individuals who are in differing positions of authority within an organizational hierarchy (Kalinich, 1988). This may be perceived as stressful to the subordinate who views the supervisor as attempting to "control" their behavior. An example of this may be the officer viewing a program like "Management by Objectives" as an encroachment into his/her areas of expertise (Shanahan, 1985). They see an administrator taking the officer's discretion away or limiting it, which may give the officers the perception that the program is responsible for making them lose "control" over their job. Role and vertical conflict are also forms of intraorganizational stress.

Kalinich (1988) identifies four types of conflict in organizations. These include personal conflict, group conflict, intraorganizational conflict, and interorganizational conflict. Effective stress exists within the individual and usually involves some form of goal conflict or cognitive conflict. Typically, this form of conflict is a function of not meeting one's expectations within some type of context. Festinger (1957) refers to this as "cognitive dissonance" in that s/he cannot reconcile their personal expectations of the police role with those expectations of the police organization.

Whatever decision the officer makes on dealing with the conflict, it will have an impact on the officer's future behaviors. Group conflict occurs in organizations when individual members of a group disagree on some point of common interest. The resolution of the conflict is essential to the survival of the group and may even enhance the effectiveness of the group in the long run. Interorganizational conflict typically refers to the problems generated by the structural makeup of an organization. It is concerned with the issues of formal authority in the organization and how it is delegated. Interorganizational conflict occurs when there is a common purpose among many disparate organizational units but there is disagreement as to how that purpose will be addressed. This type of conflict arises when separate organizational units perceive their goals and objectives in conflict with each other and who operate in the same task environment.

### Physical Effects of Law Enforcement Stress

Job stress can affect a person's health, personality, and job performance. Research has identified psychological stress as an important causal agent in such health problems as coronary health disease, gastrointestinal malfunctions, dermatological problems, severe nervous conditions, neurosis, and a number of other physical and mental disorders. The presence of thirty-five physiological effects of job stressors have been shown. These include "virtually every ailment from headaches and sinus attacks to shrinking thalamus', spastic colons, and grinding teeth" (Terry, 1981).

Several studies on stress have been conducted concerning its effects on police officers. Interviews with one-hundred male Cincinnati police officers revealed that the officers believed their jobs had adversely affected their family lives. Furthermore, 32% of those officers reported digestive disorders

and 24% reported headaches. These figures compared with only 14% of the civilian population, (Kroes, Margolis, and Hurrell, 1974). A 1972 to 1974 study in Tennessee, which included police and other occupational groups, examined hospital and mental health center records. This study revealed that the police had more digestive and circulatory disorders than other occupations (Richard & Fell, 1975).

Another study of police officers found that the onset of strain occurs early in an officer's career. 15% of the officers in the study had cholesterol levels which rendered them twice as prone to coronary heart disease as persons with normal levels; 27% showed elevated triglycerides; 56% were from 6 to 20 pounds overweight, with 28% more than 21 pounds overweight. In addition, twenty-seven percent had a medium high or high risk of coronary heart disease, (Grencik & Pitchess, 1973).

### Emotional Effects of Law Enforcement Stress

The few systematic studies that attempt to relate stress and emotional problems experienced by police officers have primarily looked at rates of suicide, divorce, alcoholism, as well as the psychological distress of officers involved in shooting incidents.

### Suicide

Kroes (1976) contends that police suicides are underreported. Since the victim's colleagues are typically the first to arrive at a suicide scene, he asserts that the incident may be reported as an "accidental death" to shield the officer's family or to protect their right to insurance benefits. Nevertheless, Davidson and Veno (1978) reported that in the state of Wyoming, from 1960 to 1968, the suicide rate for police was almost twice the rate for physicians.

Some investigators argue that there is considerable discrepancy between myth and fact when considering the prevalence of police suicide (Fabriacatore & Dash, 1977). In fact, the available literature on police suicide rates does not always confirm the assertion that police are a high risk population. Dash and Reiser (1977), for example, found the suicide rate for police in Los Angeles during the period 1970 to 1976 was well below the average rate for Los Angeles County.

### Divorce

Most investigators who have examined the effects of job-related stress on the officer's home lives have reported unusually high rates of divorce. For example, Stratton (1976) stated that law enforcement marriages as a group, have one of the highest divorce rates in the country. While there is a general trend in society toward less stable marriages, law enforcement marriages have stressors inherent in them which can create specialized difficulties that do not exist in other marriages. Later, however, Stratton (1982) concluded that the incidence of divorce among police officers has been overestimated.

Kroes, Hurrell, and Margolis (1974) did find that a majority of married officers report that their work has an adverse effect on their home lives. Some of the reasons discussed included the possibility that the profession inhibits non-police friendships; it makes them less able to plan social events, and generates a negative public image for their family. In addition, officers are more likely to take job pressures home and their spouses often worry about their safety.

### Alcoholism

Hurrell and Kroes (1975) have suggested that those in policing are especially vulnerable to alcoholism. They contend that some police administrators have informally reported that as many as 25 % of the officers in their departments have alcohol abuse problems. However, systematic studies are lacking to confirm the widely held belief that police suffer unusually high rates of alcoholism. Although research has established a relationship between high job stress and excessive drinking, (Singleton & Teahan, 1978), evidence for high rates of alcoholism among police remains questionable.

### Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

In 1980, the American Psychiatric Association recognized a new syndrome called the "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder ", or P.T.S.D. (D.S.M. III, 1980). This syndrome is said to be the result of exposure to traumatizing life events leading to an extreme emotional response (Van Fleet, 1990). This disorder can occur in either an acute or chronic phase. Not all officers involved in shootings will experience P.T.S.D. Officers who learn that their unexpected and uncontrollable reactions during and after a shooting are shared by other officers are better able to accept their own feelings and thoughts.

The emotional impact of a shooting incident has been recognized as the most traumatic experience a law enforcement officer can face. In discussions of post-shooting trauma reactions, one should keep in mind that the same range of reactions is applicable to other traumatic situations. Even in the absence of physical injury, the psychological stress caused by such experiences can be profound. Goolkasian, Geddes, and Deong (1985), stated



that some of the frequently-cited reactions include guilt, anxiety, fear, nightmares, flashbacks, social withdrawal, insomnia, and impaired memory concentration. Officers involved in shooting incidents, as well as their families, supervisors, and fellow officers, are generally unprepared to cope with the traumatic aftermath of such incidents.

In a study consisting of 86 officers attending post-shooting seminars, Solomon and Morn (1986) found eighteen different reactions that expressly experienced by the officers. Those reactions included a heightened sense of danger, anger, nightmares, isolation, withdrawal, fear and anxiety about future situations, sleep difficulties, flashbacks, intruding thoughts, emotional numbing, depression, alienation, guilt, sorrow, remorse, the "Mark of Cain"(an assumption that others blame them or shame them), problems with authority figures/rules/regulations, family problems, feelings of insecurity/loss of control, sexual difficulties, alcohol/drug abuse, and suicidal thoughts. Further research from Solomon and Horn's (1986) pilot study suggest that more support will decrease post-shooting trauma, particularly in terms of alienation and problems with the system.

Although Solomon and Horn (1986) admitted that they had no actual data, their observations suggested that following procedures which are sensitive to the officer's needs could go a long way toward reducing a stressful aftermath that would too often compound the stress of the incident itself. Solomon and Horn provide the following checklist of ideas and actions which warrant consideration when shooting incidents occur:

- 1) Give compassionate response to involved officers at the scene.
- 2) Avoid judgmental remarks.
- 3) Provide physical and mental first aid.
- 4) Remove the officer from the crime scene (body).

- 5) Replace the officer's revolver.
- 6) Arrange contact with officer's family and provide support.
- 7) Provide a psychological break for the officer before a detailed interview.
- 8) Place the officer on administrative leave, not suspension.
- 9) Provide mandatory counseling within 1-2 days.
- 10) Screen incoming telephone calls to the officer.
- 11) Advise employees of the basic facts of the incident.
- 12) Screen vicarious thrill seekers.
- 13) Provide independent legal counsel for the officer.
- 14) Allow for a paced return to duty.
- 15) Consider the officer's interests in media releases.
- 16) Expedite the completion of administrative and criminal investigations and advisement of the outcomes to the officer.

### **Stress as a Responsibility of Management**

According to Sandford (1977), it is believed that organizations are structured processes which exist to help individuals satisfy their needs. As such, they are integrative, social processes. The human resource is the most important element of organizations. Management is the process by which individual and group effort are coordinated toward group goals. The responsibility of management is to use all organizational resources to the fullest extent possible. Sanford believes that human behavior is caused, rather than occurring by chance. He feels that work is the primary means by which individuals satisfy most of their needs.

Stratton (1978), discussed how law enforcement agencies have traditionally dealt with stress. Some of these traditional methods included ignoring the officer, hiding or transferring the officer, firing the officer,

allowing a disability retirement, or rehabilitating the officer. Stratton recommends rehabilitating the officer because this approach is effective and more importantly, the humanness of this approach results in increased productivity and morale.

### Programs to Prevent or Treat Stress

#### Psychological Counseling

The most common approach for dealing with police stress is to identify officers who are exhibiting signs of physical or psychological distress. Remedial actions to deal with this distress could include individual or small group counseling and other forms of psychotherapy. For instance, many of the larger police departments in the United States have established psychological service units to locate officers in distress (Jacobi, 1975; Bennette-Sandler & Ubell, 1977; and, Schilling, 1978). Such units provide counseling for the officers as well as members of their families. Additionally, these programs can be mandatory or voluntary.

According to Somodville (1978), in a profession where stress is rampant, where accurate selection and effective maintenance of personnel is a key in the perpetuating of the smooth functioning of the department, and where unpredictability is the only thing predictable, a psychologist can provide services in a multitude of areas to improve the human dimension of police work. Some of the services a psychologist can provide to a police department is that of a diagnostician. They can perform behavioral cause investigations when an officer is behaving in a way that suggests emotional problems as the source of his/her poor performance. They may also conduct psychodiagnostic evaluations on officers seeking counseling. Sandford (1977)

also states that the role of counseling is to improve performance through the solutions of problems. Some other specific functions carried out by police agencies can be illustrated by the Los Angeles Police Department. Stratton (1978), discussed how the Los Angeles Police Department, in its delivery of psychological services, provides confidential counseling, special training programs for spouses to reduce stress in law enforcement marriages, as well as special courses on stress and coping mechanisms.

### Training Methods

Training may be used as an attempt to reduce stress in organizations. Burgin (1978) states that because of the potential cost to both officers and the police organization, stress management is an important aspect of police administration. Burgin feels that stress programs should focus on: equipping officers to cope with the uncontrollable stressors, reducing controllable stressors, and providing easy access to treatment for officers with stress related problems. A well-developed stress management program should include:

- 1) Training - dealing with uncontrollable stressors associated with policing, all police personnel should receive training on stress and the management of stress on a personal basis.
- 2) Reviewing Policy and Procedures - to determine if they give use to unnecessary stress.
- 3) A Counseling and Referral Program - where counseling can be originated on both voluntary or directed basis.
- 4) Seminars for Police Spouses - which focus on stresses involved; problems in families, methods for managing stress.

One program used by Somodevilla (1978), in training supervisors exposes them to some of the many signs of stress-related problems which may be exhibited by their subordinates. In this program, supervisors are taught how to deal with the individual, while relating to them in a meaningful, helpful, and supportive manner. Supervisors are also taught to refer individuals for counseling, if the problem requires the involvement of a professional therapist.

Sensitivity training may also be a means of giving group members an insight into their own behavior and how this affects group efforts (Terlizzise, 1978). This approach involves human relations indoctrination. Besides sensitivity training, other training methods for stress reduction include the use of physical exercise, proper diet and self-awareness or relaxation techniques. Biofeedback, transcendental meditation and self-hypnosis allows officers to become more related, get a feeling of what is happening to their body, and through this awareness, understand themselves more fully, Stratton (1978).

Bartollas, Miller & Wice (1983), also stated that stress management has become an important issue because of the serious problems it poses to police officers. Some of the techniques reviewed by the authors included the development of technical skills that will support the police officer in critical incident situations. Included in their discussion was human relations training programs and experiments with encounter and sensitivity training. Police identity workshops utilizing role-playing techniques, cognitive inputs, simulation of critical incidents, and personality measurement feedback were also examined. The team-building format that trains a unit of police officers to counter the tension and stresses and to provide group support is important. Crisis intervention training, and interpersonal conflict

management training, participative management the team policing model and biofeedback techniques are all emphasized in the stress management training, Reiser (1975).

### Policy and its Implications

Policy is defined as the principles and values which guide the performance of a departmental activity (Carter & Barker, 1991). A policy is not a statement of what must be done in a particular situation. Rather, it is a statement of guiding principles that should be followed in activities which are directed toward the attainment of departmental objectives. Policy is formulated by analyzing objectives and is based upon police ethics and experience, desires of the community, and mandates of the law. Policy is articulated to inform the public and department employees of the principles which will be adhered to in the performance of the law enforcement function, Los Angeles Police Department (1982).

According to Wells, Getman, and Blau (1988), each law enforcement department must develop its own standardized procedures for responding to traumatic events. Stratton (1978) stated that stress arises not only from the very nature of police work and the individual personal problems of an officer, but also from frustration in dealing externally with other agencies and institutions and in coping with policies and practices in the department.

Having a policy demonstrates to the employee that the agency understands the importance of recognizing their needs in a shooting incident. Captain Tom Pierson, Department of Police, Borough of Fort Lee, New Jersey (1989) states that agencies that develop procedures to assist officers after fatal shootings acknowledge that post-shooting trauma occurs and that involved officers must be assisted. Dr. Fred Van Fleet (1991) also stated that in spite of

the snowpiling evidence of the realities of post-traumatic stress and the enormous benefits of debriefings, he was amazed at how few organizations are prepared to deal with the aftermath of many of the tragedies which occur, almost daily, in the prison environments. Few departments have guidelines for dealing with such events, let alone policies. According to Van Fleet, only a handful of today's major police departments have post-shooting policies. He states that it would be well advised for all departments involved with the Criminal Justice System to initiate working guidelines, so when a tragedy does strike within their organization, their members are prepared for it.

Carter and Barker (1991) feel that a formal directive system in both verbal and written media is essential for the administrative control and guidance of police officer behavior. Also, Barker and Wells (1982), in a survey of police agencies found that 24% had no written rules and regulations covering 16 patterns of police deviance. Even those agencies with written policies, procedures, rules, and regulations may not have had a properly formulated system which was communicated to, and understood by the members of the department.

The IACP in 1975 found several deficiencies in many departments with a written directive system. Many departments' written directives were not current, and most had never been updated since originally issued. Many were not usable, and did not accurately reflect the current position of the chief administrator. The IACP also found that the directives were not clearly written, and in many instances, they were in conflict with other existing policies, procedures, rules and regulations, resulting in and creating confusion at upper and lower levels. It was also found that the written directives were not distributed to operations-level personnel and in many cases, not even to supervisory or management personnel. Other findings

included that only one copy was in existence, the directives many times were not compiled or enforced, and sometimes the directives attempted to include too much, while policies, procedures, rules and regulations were grouped together under one general heading, IACP (1975).

### Conclusion

The review of the literature indicates the obvious impact stress has on the individual and the organization. When a shooting occurs, not only will the officer have to deal with the "uncontrollable stressor", but also with the "controllable" stressor, which may include lack of policy or inappropriate policy dealing with post traumatic shooting situations.

The stress of the officer is also the responsibility of management. Many of the programs designed to prevent or treat stress are person-centered and do not take into account any of the organizational problems that may induce stress. Officers involved in shooting incidents would be pleased and comforted if they knew they were valued by the organization. Ayres (1990) states that supervisors who give the impression that they don't care about their people can substantially contribute to employees psychological stress. Ellison and Genz (1983), also suggest that good supervision itself is the best stress management tool. Good supervisory techniques not only increase efficiency, but they also help officers withstand outside pressures. In contrast, inappropriate supervision can be one of the worst sources of pressure.

Effective supervision encompasses the formulation of policies to guide and direct employee behavior, while at the same time showing the employee the police position on this major issue. By developing appropriate policy for post-shooting incidents, the employee can look at the policy elements which may reflect concern for the employees and their needs. For the employee



who is involved in a shooting incident, familiarity with the department policy will allow the employee to know the chain of events that will occur. They will feel that no matter who is involved, if the policy in place is followed, they will be treated equitably. They will know what is expected of them as well as knowing what to expect from their supervisors and administrators.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### Research Questions

The research questions of this thesis examined the policies used by Michigan municipal law enforcement agencies for dealing with post-shooting stress.

This thesis will examine how the type of stress training the chief has had will impact on whether the department has a written policy or follows the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) model policy regarding post shooting stress. Subtopics will determine if a policy exists, and if one does, the conditions under which it was initiated will be examined. In regard to agencies that do not have a written policy for post-shooting stress, this thesis will examine the department's reasons or justifications for the lack of policies related to this area.

Familiarization of chiefs to the IACP Post-Shooting Incident Model Policy will also be explored. Questions will also be asked to determine a chief's willingness to consider adoption of such a model.

Other relevant findings related to police officer involved shootings and stress will also be presented for the reader. It is anticipated that this additional information will provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues related to police officer involved shootings and the subsequent degrees of stress involved.

#### Instrumentation

The survey design in this study is cross-sectional, as it was administered at one time without any pre-test or post-test alternatives. The

survey design is intended to produce a list of relevant factors that will have practical applications in the field of law enforcement. Specifically, it will examine issues involving police stress related to on-duty shooting incidents.

### Population

The population in this study consisted of all law enforcement chiefs of municipal police agencies in the State of Michigan. Police municipality is defined as any city, town, township, village or university. County Sheriff's Departments were not included in the sample population.

### Sampling Design

Simple random sampling was implemented for the selection of the sample. A complete list of all municipal police departments was constructed from a list provided from the Michigan Police Chiefs and a computerized data base. Each department was then numerically listed and from that list departments were selected from a computerized list of random numbers. Each police agency had an equal and independent chance of being selected from the population for the sample without bias from the researcher, while reflecting the variations that exist in the population of municipal police agencies.

### Sampling Frame

The sampling frame was obtained from the July/August 1990 publication of the Michigan Police Chiefs, which was the most current listing of all police agencies in the State of Michigan at the initiation of the research. This publication listed 470 agencies by type of agency, current chief, current address and telephone number. In order to assure that all police agencies

were included or represented in the list, the list from the Michigan Police Chiefs was compared to the existing data base of police agencies held by Michigan State University, School of Criminal Justice.

### Rationale for Sampling

The implementation of simple random sampling was the most appropriate method for this thesis. According to Babbie (1986), random sampling assists in cancelling out biases while providing a statistical means for estimating sampling errors. In order to enhance the timeliness of the study and to keep research costs controllable, it was to the best interest of the researcher to maintain a sample which would produce valid and reliable findings without undue time and cost constraints.

### Sampling Error

This survey was primarily confined to the subject of the existence of policies and the variability among existing policies related to officer-involved shootings. To avoid sampling errors, the following procedures were adopted.

The survey instrument was pre-tested. Departments selected in the pre-test were from a convenience sample and were not included in the actual sample. Suggestions and comments on the survey were received and considered. After revisions, the final draft of the questionnaire was developed and transmittal letters and letters of explanation were prepared for dissemination with the questionnaires (see Appendix B). Final approval for the study by the Michigan State University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects on June 16, 1992 (see Appendix C)

A prepared letter of introduction explaining the purpose and instructions for completion was also included. In order to improve the

response rate, reminders were placed in the monthly publication of the Michigan Police Chiefs Newsletter, an official publication of the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police (See Appendix D). It was determined that this would be the most beneficial means of re-notification, as all police agencies receive this newsletter. The Executive Director of the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police provided his full cooperation and support of this venture. Follow-up letters were also sent to those agencies that failed to return their questionnaire in a timely manner to again increase or maximize the response rate (see Appendix E).

### Sample Size

Assuming that the proportion  $p$  would be .05, the following formula was used to estimate the sample size

$$n = \frac{N}{(N-1) B+1} = \frac{470}{(469) .0025 + 1} = 216$$

Where  $N$  is the total population,  $n$  is the sample size, and  $B$  is the bound of error estimated. An assumption was made that there would be a normal distribution, and the bound of error was estimated to be .05. Proportion is the primary population parameter of interest.

### Distribution of Survey Instrument

Questionnaires were mailed to 216 Michigan municipal police agencies on July 31, 1992. Included with the questionnaires were letters of introduction explaining the study, instructions for completion, and a self-addressed stamped envelope. A stamped post card was also included, which

was to be mailed back separately from the questionnaire. The purpose of the post card was to identify those that had responded to the questionnaire and to identify non-respondent's, so a follow up or reminder letter could be sent to those agencies. The initial dissemination resulted in the collection of 101 complete and useable questionnaires, comprising a 46.7% response rate.

A follow-up mailing of the questionnaire was conducted in September 1992. Again, letters of explanation, instructions for completion, and a self-addressed stamped envelopes were sent to the remaining 115 agencies that failed to respond in the first series of mailings. Follow-up mailings and reminders resulted in the collection of an additional 44 complete and useable questionnaires.

The two series of mailings resulted in the collection of 145 completed and useable questionnaires. The final response rate for this research was 67.1%.

### Data Analysis

Items 1-54 in the questionnaire consist of nominal level data. By scaling the data at the nominal level, all categories were homogeneous while also being mutually exclusive and exhaustive. All items were edge coded to simplify the data entry stage of the research. Thus, codesheets were not necessary. A codebook was constructed to provide for the location of variables, code assignments and for later interpretation during data analysis.

Data was examined with univariate analysis techniques to obtain descriptive statistics or summaries of the variables. Also included in the univariate analysis were frequency distributions as well as relationships between the variables. Measures of central tendency were also used on some

of the variables to establish summary statistics. Crosstabulations of key or interesting variables was also conducted on relevant data.

Additionally, this thesis will determine how many agencies and those chiefs of the agencies are familiar with the IACP Post-Shooting Incident Model Policy, and how many chiefs, if made aware of the policy, would actually consider the adoption of the policy.

This thesis will also examine the need for support mechanisms, such as emotional and psychological services for the officers involved in a shooting incident. Also examined is whether the agency-designated support person is responsible for fitness to duty evaluations of officers involved in shootings.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### Demographic Findings

Demographic characteristics were analyzed to determine the significance of these characteristics on policy related to officer-involved shootings. This category of variables was constructed of personal and organizational characteristics of the responding agencies. Variables analyzed in this category consisted of the respondent's gender, age, race, years in law enforcement, years as Chief, education of Chief and the type of department. These variables were organized in categorical fashion to obtain more meaningful findings. Descriptive statistics such as the mean, median and mode were not applied to the variables. Many meaningful findings regarding police officer involved shootings and stress have been discovered.

**Table 1**  
**Chief's Total Years in Law Enforcement**

Number of Years in Law Enforcement		N	%
1.	1-5	0	0
2.	6-10	4	2.8
3.	11-15	17	11.7
4.	16-20	26	17.9
5.	21-25	36	24.8
6.	26 +	62	42.8
Total		145	100%



As indicated by Table 1, the majority of respondent's have had a number of years in law enforcement. Data was collapsed into ordinal level or categorical data to better determine the amount of years in law enforcement the respondents had. The data indicates a skew to the categories 21 - 25 and 26 + years of service, with the the majority of chief's having had 26 or more years of experience in law enforcement. This however, is not a significant finding. Generally, chiefs of police have begun their law enforcement career in an entry level position and advanced through the ranks. It may also indicate that chiefs of police should be cognizant of the needs and concerns of the street level officers, since they once also held that position.

**Table 2**  
**Years As Chief**

Years as Chief		N	%
1.	1-5	66	45.5
2.	6-10	35	24.1
3.	11-15	26	17.9
4.	16-20	11	7.6
5.	21-25	4	2.8
6.	26 +	2	1.4
	Missing	1	-
Total		145	100%

The results from Table 2, Years as Chief, indicate that the majority of the respondent's have worked in the capacity for chief for a period between one and ten years. This suggests that the majority of respondent's are rather new to the the position of chief. This, however, may not be a significant

finding. Many of the chief's may have worked their way up through the ranks, and as a result, have not spent a great majority of their career as chiefs.

**Table 3**  
**Education of Chief**

Education		N	%
1.	High School	12	8.3
2.	Some College	53	36.6
3.	Associate Degree	20	13.8
4.	Bachelor Degree	39	26.9
5.	Master's Degree	17	11.7
6.	Doctorate	3	2.1
	Missing	1	0.7
Total		145	100%

The results presented in Table 3 indicate that the majority of responding chief's do not have associate or bachelor degrees, but simply indicated that they have taken some college courses. The data also indicated that 26.9% had a bachelor's degree. Advanced degrees, however, are minimal among the responding chiefs.

**Table 4**  
**Department Size**

Department Size		N	%
1.	Less than 10	61	42.1
2.	11-35	50	34.5
3.	36-60	14	9.7
4.	61-85	7	4.8
5.	86-110	4	2.8
6.	111-135	0	0.0
7.	136-160	4	2.8
8.	161-185	5	3.4
9.	186-210	0	0
10.	211 or more	0	0
Total		145	100%

Table 4 addresses the size of the department, including civilians. The majority of the responding agencies are small, consisting of ten or less employees. Almost three-quarters of the sample (76.6%) have less than 36 employees, while few large departments responded. This can be attributed to the fact that the majority of police agencies in the State of Michigan do not serve a large metropolitan city; rather, they are encompassed in the smaller towns, villages and cities.

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**Table 5**  
**Type of Agency**

<b>Agency Type</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
1.	City	87	60.0
2.	Township	20	13.8
3.	Village	28	19.3
4.	University	3	2.1
5.	Combined Police & Fire	2	1.4
6.	Other	5	3.4
	Total	145	100%

Table 5 addresses the type of department that responded to the questionnaire. The majority of respondent's come from city police departments, followed closely by villages and then townships.

**Table 6**  
**Training in Occupational Stress**

<b>Training</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>
1.	Yes	105	72.4
2.	No	38	26.2
Missing		2	1.4
Total		145	100%

Another point of interest was if the chiefs have had any training regarding police stress related to officer-involved shootings. The results

presented in Table 6 indicate that the majority of the responding chiefs have had training which addressed occupational stress.

**Table 7**  
**Type of Training**

Training		N	%
1.	Formal Training Programs & Seminars	85	58.6
2.	In-Service	6	4.1
3.	College/University Courses	5	3.4
4.	Speeches/ Presentations	21	14.5
5.	Reading Articles & Books	18	16.9
	Total	145	100.0

The data presented in Table 7 indicates that the majority of the respondent's obtained their knowledge of occupational stress at Formal Training Programs and Seminars. Of interest in this table is the fact that very few police chiefs have recieved training in stress at the university or college level.

**Table 8**  
**Established Written Policies**

Written Policies		N	%
1.	Yes	85	58.6
2.	No	60	41.4
	Total	145	100%

It is of interest to determine how many agencies in the State of Michigan have written policies and procedures to deal with police officer involved shootings. As indicated by Table 8, 58.6% of the responding agencies had some type of written policy regarding officer shootings. Although the majority of the department's do have some type of policy, it is also important to note that approximately 40% of the responding agencies do not have policies or procedures regarding officer shootings.

**Table 9**  
**Source of Policy**

Source		N	%
1.	Gov't Administration	2	1.4
2.	Police Administration	83	57.2
3.	Police Officers	2	1.4
4.	Labor Union	1	.7
	Missing	57	39.3
	Total	145	100

Pursuant to Table 9, when policies do exist, the majority of those initiated are by the actual agency rather than by an external organization. This may indicate that those department's have recognized the need for such policies and procedures on their own initiative, rather than by an external change agent. There appears to be a lack of input by the actual individuals (the police officers) that the policy impacts as well as the fact that labor unions have failed to pursue issues regarding officer-involved shootings.

**Table 10**  
**Reasons for No Policy**

Source			
1.	Too Expensive	1	1.6
2.	Not Enough Time to Prepare	19	31.6
3.	Do Not Feel it's Necessary Due to Lack of Incidents	16	26.6
4.	Officers Capable of Handling Stress	0	0
5.	Unaware of Need	17	28.3
6.	Stress is not an Issue	0	0
7.	Do Not Believe in Written Policies	0	0
8.	Missing	7	11.6
	Total	60	100

Table 10 investigates why those agencies do not have written policies regarding officer involved shootings. Three variables are of importance. One of the primary reasons for failing to have established policies is simply because the chief feels that they do not have adequate time to prepare suitable policies regarding officer involved shootings. Secondly, the agencies admitted that they were unaware that a need existed for the establishment of policies related to officer involved shootings. Another fundamental reason why policies were not established was the fact that such policies were not needed because of a lack of officer involved shootings in their particular agencies.

**Table 11**  
**Familiarity and Consideration of IACP Policy**

<b>ITEM1</b>			
<b>Familiarity</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
1.	Yes	50	34.5
2.	No	95	65.5
	Total	145	100%
<b>ITEM 2</b>			
<b>Consideration of IACP Policy</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
1.	Yes	112	77.2
2.	No	10	6.9
	Missing	23	15.9
	Total	145	100%

Table 11 examines if the respondent's are familiar with the International Association of Chief's of Police (IACP) Post Shooting Incident Model Policy (Item 1), and if they were made aware of the IACP Model policy would they consider adopting it (Item 2). According to the data, the majority of the respondent's were not familiar with the IACP Policy and the majority of respondent's would consider adopting the policy if they were made aware of it.

The majority of respondents indicated that they are not familiar with the Model Policies created by the IACP regarding officer involved shootings. However, when asked if the agencies would consider the adoption of the IACP guidelines, the majority (77.2%) indicated that they would consider adoption of the policies.



**Table 12**  
**Structured Support System**

Support Systems		N	%
1.	Yes	122	84.1
2.	No	2	1.4
3.	Depends on Circumstances	18	12.4
4.	Don't Know	3	2.1
	Total	145	100

Table 12 examines if the respondent's feel that officers need a structured support system after an officer involved shooting incident. The majority of respondents felt that a structured support system is necessary. However, it is also of interest that some of the respondent's indicated some skepticism toward a structured support system, via their indication that a support system would be contingent upon the actual circumstances of the incident.

**Table 13**  
**Types of Structured Support Systems**

<b>Item 1</b>					
<b>Support Systems</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
1.	In-House Psychologist /Counselor	10	6.9	135	93.1
2.	Contracted Psychologist /Counselor	89	61.4	56	38.6
3.	Chaplain	46	31.7	99	68.3
4.	In House Support Group	21	14.5	124	85.5
5.	Contracted/ Voluntary Support	23	15.9	122	84.1
6.	Mental Health Professional	38	26.2	107	73.8
7.	None	29	20.0	116	80.0
* Agencies could have indicated multiple forms of structured support offered					

<b>Item 2</b>			
<b>Return to Duty Evaluation</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
1.	Yes	65	44.8
2.	No	42	29
3.	Don't Have Support System	36	24.8
4.	Missing	2	1.4
	Total	145	100

Table 13, Item 1 examines the types of structured support mechanisms offered at the responding agencies.\* Meanwhile, Item 2 is subcomponent of the existing support system; for there could be a support system without a return to duty evaluation in the agency .

As illustrated by Item 1, the most frequent structured support system was a contracted psychologist/counselor. This may be on account of the fact that few police agencies could afford a full-time in-house counselor. The next widely used structured support system is the use of a chaplain or religious figure. This usage could be based on many reasons. These could include financial reasons, as well as the support system figure being known to the officer and family involved. Furthermore, the geographical proximity to the police department would make the chaplain easily accessible, while the chaplains presence would be less stigmatizing on the officer and others involved than the use of more formal structures.

Item 2 is associated with the use of structural support. Although 36 agencies indicated that they do not have a support system, it is of interest to note that 44.8% of the agencies support systems were responsible for the return to duty evaluation.

**Table 14**  
**Total Officer Involved Shootings**

Shootings		N	%
1.	None	110	75.9
2.	1	18	12.4
3.	2	7	4.8
4.	3	1	0.7
5.	4	2	1.4
6.	5-7	4	2.8
7.	8-10	1	0.7
8.	11 or more	2	1.4
	Total	145	100%

Table 14 examines how many officer involved shootings the agency had experienced in the last five years. The results presented in Table 14 indicate that the majority of respondent's have not had any officer involved shootings in the last five years. It is of significance to note, however, that 35 or 24.1% of the responding agencies did have officer-involved shootings in the last five years, indicating a need for policies regarding officer-involved shootings.

Table 15 is a direct comparison of the IACP Guidelines on officer involved shootings to those policies that currently exist in the sampled municipal police agencies in the State of Michigan. This Table will compare the IACP policy to those agencies which have policies related to officer involved shootings in order to determine the extent to which existing departmental policies adhere to the established IACP guidelines. Three categories were artificially constructed. These categories consisted of low (less

than 50%), moderate adoption of IACP guidelines (50.5 to 74.5), and high adoption of the ICAP guidelines (more than 75%).

**Table 15**  
**Comparison to IACP Guidelines**

<b>ITEM 1</b>			
<b>High Adoption</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
1.	Supervisor Required to be at Scene	71	94.7
2.	Supervisor to make medical arrangements for the Officer	57	76.0
3.	Removing Officer from the Body and/or distance from Scene ASAP	56	75.7
4.	Officer allowed recovery time prior to interview	66	90.4
5.	Supervisor to meet with involved officer(s) when possible	65	86.7
6.	Are Officers advised of upcoming detailed debriefing	65	87.8
7.	Officers advised not to discuss incident	62	83.8
8.	Officers weapon taken as evidence	72	97.3
9.	Policy considers the return or replacement of weapon	61	85.9
10.	Notification of family/transportation when officer is injured	72	97.3
11.	Removal of involved personnel from line duties pending investigation	57	78.1
12.	Investigate the shooting as soon as possible	74	100
13.	Consider officers personal interest in media releases	56	76.7

Item 1 analyzes those items contained in the IACP Policy which police agencies have highly adopted (more than 75% of the responding agencies) into their own policies and procedures. All responding agencies that have a policy also indicated that that policy contains a specification that an immediate investigation of the shooting should take place as soon as possible.

ITEM 2			
Moderate Adoption		N	%
1.	After preliminary investigation, policy provides for friend, relative, peer support	48	64.9
2.	Are questions by the supervisor limited to preliminary facts of incident	53	70.7
3.	Policy specifies upcoming admin. procedures	47	64.4
4.	Inform supervisor to recognize stress involved	49	66.2
5.	Involve support personnel/encourage to contact specialists	50	67.6
6.	Make family counseling available	43	58.1
7.	Provide briefing to reduce rumors	41	55.4
8.	Policy recommends agency members to show concern for involved officer(s)	39	53.4
9.	Supervisors to monitor officer(s) behavior for P.T.S.D.	44	59.5
10.	Allow supervisor to order officer(s) to seek mental health assistance	48	64.9
11.	Provide information to employees regarding mental health services	43	58.1
12.	Recommendation for limited or light duty	37	53.6
13.	Recommendation for continued course of counseling	40	57.1
14.	Recommendation for relief and return of duty weapon	35	50.7



Item 2 contains moderate adoption (50.5 to 74.5) of the recommended IACP guidelines, by those agencies that reported having post-shooting policies. This category contained both issues concerning the officers well being and their significant others, as well as the department's specific issues regarding liability.

<b>ITEM 3</b>
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Low Adoption		N	%
1.	Drug administration limited to medical personnel	9	13.0
2.	Policy advises officer to consider retention of attorney	35	47.3
3.	Policy provides for immediate contact of family if officer is not injured	26	35.1
4.	Policy provides protection of officer(s) from crank calls	24	32.4
5.	Officer(s) involved required to requalify with weapon	22	30.1
6.	Department provide training P.T.S.D.	29	39.2
7.	Time specification for limited or light duty	12	17.4

Item 3 contains low adoption (less than 50%) of the recommended IACP guidelines, by those agencies that reported having post-shooting policies.

It is of particular interest in this constructed category that there appears to be a pattern involved in the adoption of policies by departments. Specifically, it appears that if the department itself is affected, there is a liability concern, and the department has a policy related to it.

However, when the issue involves the actual officer's well-being or their significant others, fewer agencies have policies related to this.

Thus, it appears that policy exists when the department is in jeopardy. However, the personal needs of the officer are not a high priority. Rather, the needs of the actual officer are a low or moderate priority for police administrators.

**Table 16**  
**Years As Chief**  
**& Existence of Policy**

Years		Yes	%	No	%
1.	1-5	40	47.6	26	.43
2.	6 - 10	18	21.4	17	.28
3.	11-15	16	19.0	10	.17
4.	16-20	5	.06	6	.10
5.	21-25	3	.04	1	.06
6.	26 +	2	.02	0	.00
	Missing				
Total		84	100%	60	100%

The majority of responding agencies indicated that their chiefs have less than 6 years of experience. Of interest, however, is the fact that many of the new chiefs have established policies. At the same time however, 26 agencies also reported that they do not have policies related to officer involved shootings.

**Table 17**  
**Education of Chief**  
**Related to Policy**

Education		Y	%	N	%
1.	High School	6	.07	6	10.2
2.	Some College	31	36.5	22	37.3
3.	Associate Degree	9	10.6	11	18.7
4.	Bachelor Degree	25	29.4	14	23.7
5.	Master's Degree	12	14.1	5	.08
6.	Doctorate	2	.02	1	1.7
	Missing	(1)			
	Total	85	100	59	100

Table 17 examines the relationship of the education of the chief compared to the existence of policy regarding officer-involved shootings. It can be assumed that the higher the educational level of the chief, the more probable it would be that they recognize a need for policies regarding officer-involved shootings. However, 36.47% or 31 of the respondents who have policy only have received some college education. This is followed by those chiefs that have a bachelor's degree (29.4%). As a result, it can be inferred that education of the chief, may have little bearing on the existence of policy.

**Table 18**  
**Agency Size**  
**Related to Policy Implementation**

Agency Size		N	%
1.	Less than 10	27	.45
2.	11-35	26	.43
3.	36-60	4	.06
4.	61-85	0	.00
5.	86-110	2	.03
6.	111-135	1	.02
7.	136-160	0	.00
8.	161-185	0	.00
9.	186-210	0	.00
10.	211 or more	0	.00
Total		60	100%

It is also of interest to determine the size of the police agency in relation to the existence of policies for officer-involved shootings. Table 18 reports that 88% of the departments with less than 35 employees did not have policies for officer-involved shootings.

**Table 19**  
**Relationship of Training to**  
**Existence of Written Policy**

	Written Policy	Training	No Training
1.	Yes	72	13
2.	No	33	25
<b>Total</b>		105	38

Table 19 examines if the chiefs have had occupational training and if they have a written policy regarding officer-involved shootings. The table indicates that the ratio of trained to non-trained police chiefs who do not have policy is quite low. Meanwhile, the table also indicates that for those chiefs that have had training, there is a five fold difference that they will have policy if they have had training. This suggests that training in occupational stress may make police chiefs more cognizant of the need for such policy in their agency.

**Table 20**  
**Officer-Involved Shootings**  
**Compared to Agencies that Have No Policy**

Shootings		N	%
1.	None	53	88.3
2.	1	5	8.3
3.	2	2	3.3
<b>Total</b>		60	99.9%

As indicated in Table 20, the majority of agencies that do not have policies related to officer-involved shootings, have not had any such incidents in the last five years. However, 11.6% of the responding agencies that do not have policies indicated that they have had one or more officer-involved shootings.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to look at the municipal agencies in the State of Michigan to examine the extent to which policies exist in police officer post-shooting incidents.

#### General Findings

It was of primary interest to determine summary characteristics of the respondent which in this case was directed to the chief. According to the findings, the majority of police chiefs have had more than 21 years of law enforcement experience. However, their tenure as chief was generally less than 5 years. It also appears that the educational level of the chiefs includes those who have had some college education, with few having advanced degrees.

Demographic features for the agency indicated that most of the responding agencies have less than 36 employees. Although the survey covered all municipal agencies the majority of those agencies that responded were city police agencies.

Most of the respondent's did have training in occupational stress. Most of this training or knowledge in occupational stress was obtained at formal training programs and seminars, followed by speeches and presentations. It does not appear that the type of stress training has impacted whether the department had a written policy; however, those chiefs that did have some training were more more likely to have policy.

Most of the police agencies that responded have some type of written policy regarding officer involved shootings. However, a large percentage of department's do not have policies for officer-involved shootings.

The origin of policy for those agencies that do have them came mainly from the police administration. Few of those departments had officer-initiated policy or that they weren't allowed to formulate policy. This finding may indicate that few officers recognize the need for such policies. Likewise, very few agencies had their policy come from governmental administrative units outside of the police agency. This could be attributed to the fact that outside agencies or organizations may not have a full understanding of the needs and concerns of a police department. Furthermore, it could also suggest that many police agencies could be resistant to policy recommendations from outside the organization or external change agent.

In examining why agencies do not have written policies regarding officer involved shootings, the most prevalent reason given was that the chief indicated that the department did not have adequate time to prepare suitable policies. Given the IACP Model on officer involved shootings, this may enable agencies to establish policy without taking the time to prepare their own. Secondly, many agencies indicated that they were unaware that a need existed for the establishment of policies related to officer-involved shootings.

Policies may not have been established due to lack of officer-involved shootings. Unfortunately, police departments are historically reactive in nature. That is, they would rather wait for particular incidents to occur, and then formulate a solution. By not looking at the officer's individual and personal needs, the department's own liability and stress brought on by a lack



of or inadequate policy should certainly alert those agencies of the importance of policy whether they have had police officer involved shootings or not.

Most of the respondent's also indicated that they were not familiar with the IACP Post-Shooting Incident Model Policy. However, they indicated that if they were made aware of such a policy, they would consider adopting it. This may indicate that police agencies are eager to examine existing policies in order to expedite the creation of policy because of the ease of the adoption of a policy already determined by experts in the field.

Structural support systems were another topic of interest. The majority of the respondent's felt that a structured support system was necessary. It also appeared that some of the respondents were looking at the need for support as a ranking system of severity when 12.4% of the sample indicated that it "depends on the circumstances", or whether a structured support system was necessary.

The research data also examined the types of structured support mechanisms offered at the responding agencies. The most frequent structured support system was a contracted psychologist. This would appear to be the most beneficial mechanism for the agency. The agency would have rapid access to a professional while keeping costs down. The second most widely used was the chaplain. This again does not seem surprising as a chaplain is free of charge, easily accessible, possibly known to department members and carries little stigma to the officers as opposed to seeing a psychologist. The data also reflected that the support person was responsible for fitness to return to duty.

Most of the respondents agencies have not had any officer-involved shootings in the last five years. Of interest, however, is that over one-quarter of the respondents have experienced one or more officer-involved shootings

in the last five years. One would think that if you weren't going to waste your time and energy into developing a policy because of the lack of officer involved shootings that you are running a one in four risk.

Of particular importance was comparing the IACP policy to those agencies which have policies related to officer involved shootings in order to determine the extent to which existing departmental policies adhere to the established IACP guidelines. There appeared to be a pattern involved in the adoption of policies for departments. If the department itself had the potential of being affected by a officer-involved shooting, it had a policy related to it. Obviously, the reason for this was the fact that the department could be held liable. However, when the issue involved the actual officer's well-being as well as significant others, fewer agencies had policies related to this. It would appear that the personal needs of the officer are not considered a high priority by these police agencies. Rather, the needs of the actual officer are a low or moderate priority for police administrators. The data reflects that there is a significant difference between Michigan municipal police agencies post-shooting policies and the IACP's policy.

When examining the relationship between years as Chief and the existence of policy, the majority of responding agencies indicated that their chiefs have had less than six years of experience and that many of the new chiefs have established policies. However, in the manner the question was asked it is difficult to determine if the new chiefs had developed the policies or whether the policy is an artifact of prior administrations.

Examining the educational level and age of the chief related to the existence of policy, it appears that the amount of education and the age of the chief had little to do with whether the responding department had a policy or



not. Again, in the manner the question was constructed, it cannot be determined if the policy pre-existed the chief.

The research data also examined how the responding agencies type and size related to policy implementation. Those agencies that were least likely to have policies were city police departments. Those agencies that had less than 36 employees were also least likely to have policies regarding post-shooting incidents. It was not surprising that smaller agencies would least likely have policy as they would have fewer shootings than larger police departments and may be less likely to need policy based on this information.

One interesting finding was the relationship between training and written policy. The majority of the police chiefs that indicated that they had policy also indicated that they have had training in occupational stress. This conclusion appears plausible as the police chiefs are made aware of occupational stress, the more likely they may be in formulating policy to assist the officer in reducing stress caused by no policy or inappropriate policy.

Most of the responding agencies in this survey that did not have policies related to officer-involved shootings have not had any shootings in the last five years. Again, those agencies may not be as likely to perceive the need for policy since they have not had any recent shooting incidents. However, to have a officer-involved shooting incident is catastrophic and is certainly not the time to start formulating a policy. The data also demonstrated that 11.6% of the responding agencies that didn't have a policy indicated that they have had one or more officer-involved shootings.

### Overall Findings

Research concerning policy formulation on post-incident shootings is limited in its scope and nature. As a result, the purpose of this research was

to look at the municipal police agencies in the State of Michigan to examine the extent to which policies exist in post-shooting incidents.

This study was important for many reasons. In order to determine whether an existing policy can compound the problems an officer experiences in recovering psychologically from an on-duty shooting incident, one needs to examine if there is a policy as well as the policy's contents.

This study provided many interesting findings. As with all research, these findings should be interpreted with caution for several reasons. One must take into account that the questionnaire method was to be directed to the office of the chief and to be completed by the chief or his/her designee. Depending on who actually completed the questionnaire may have affected the quality and accuracy of responses.

Additionally, one must consider the issue of social desirability. The respondent may have wanted their agency to appear in a more positive light and subsequently tailored their responses in that manner. Hence, the respondent may have made socially desirable responses to impress the public and other law enforcement organizations.

### Directions for the Future

While there are practical implications regarding this research which is valuable to law enforcement agencies, there are also some future research implications for individuals desiring to investigate post-shooting stress and policy related to it.

Although this study has provided meaningful data, it was restricted to municipal police agencies. A recommendation would be to include Sheriff Departments as well. This may produce further insight into the findings generated in this research. Here, similar surveys could be replicated to



validate the findings in this study. It is anticipated that findings regarding the variables studied would yield comparable findings.

Other topics for further research to consider would be to focus the study on officers who have been involved in shooting incidents and to examine the policy the officers were subjected to and the effects by this policy on the officer. This may reveal a higher understanding on how inappropriate or lack of policy may actually be a contributing factor to the officer stress level. This researcher requested policies from all departments surveyed. However, a minimal number was returned with the completed questionnaires. For future research, it would be beneficial to conduct a content analysis of those existing policies from Michigan municipal police agencies.

As previously indicated, management can compound the problems an officer experiences in recovering psychologically from an on-duty shooting incident because of inappropriate or lack of policy.

In aggregate, the examination of post-shooting incident policies in Michigan municipal police agencies resulted in useful findings for social science researchers as well as individuals in the field of law enforcement. As a result of the study, some of the responding agencies from the sample requested and received the IACP Model Policy on Post-Shootings incidents that will hopefully benefit members of the department. However, these findings have also opened up new avenues of inquiry that must be examined fully to understand police stress and its relationship to policies on post-shooting incidents.

## APPENDICES



## APPENDIX A

### IACP Policy

**POST-SHOOTING  
INCIDENT PROCEDURES**

# Model Policy

<i>Effective Date</i> May 1, 1990		<i>Number</i>
<i>Subject</i> Post-Shooting Incident Procedures		
<i>Reference</i>		<i>Special Instructions</i>
<i>Distribution</i>	<i>Reevaluation Date</i> April 30, 1991	<i>No. Pages</i> 2

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines that shall be uniformly applied following any officer-involved shooting incident that has resulted in death or serious bodily injury, in order to minimize the chances that involved personnel will develop or suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

## II. POLICY

Law enforcement duties can often expose officers and support personnel to mentally painful and highly stressful situations that cannot be resolved through normal stress coping mechanisms. Unless adequately treated, these situations can cause disabling emotional and physical problems. It has been found that officer-involved shootings resulting in death or serious bodily injury to a citizen or a fellow officer may precipitate such stress disorders. It is the responsibility of this law enforcement agency to provide personnel with information on stress disorders and to guide and assist in their deterrence. Therefore, it shall be the policy of this agency to take immediate action after such incidents to safeguard the continued good mental health of all involved personnel.

## III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: An anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to short-term severe stress, or the long-term buildup of repetitive and prolonged milder stress.
- B. Officer-Involved Shooting Incident: A line-of-duty incident where shooting causes death or serious bodily injury to an officer or other person.

## IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Handling of Officers at Scene of Shooting Incident
  1. A supervisor shall be dispatched to the scene of the incident, and shall assume primary responsibility in caring for involved personnel.
  2. The supervisor shall make appropriate arrangements for all necessary medical treatment.
  3. During any period where the involved officer is required to remain on the scene, but has no immediate duties to fulfill, the officer should be taken to a quiet area away from

the scene of the incident. A peer counselor or other supportive friend or officer should remain with the officers, but should be advised not to discuss details of the incident.

4. The supervisor should arrange for the officers directly involved in the incident to leave the scene as soon as possible, and be taken to a quiet, secure setting.
5. Where possible, the supervisor shall briefly meet with the involved officers.
  - a. No caffeine or other stimulants or depressants should be given to the officers unless administered by medical personnel.
  - b. Only minimal, preliminary questions should be asked about the incident. The officers should be advised that a more detailed debriefing will be conducted at a later time.
  - c. Any standard investigations that will occur concerning the incident should be discussed with the officers.
  - d. The officers should be advised that they may seek legal counsel.
  - e. The officers should be advised not to discuss the incident with anyone except a personal or agency attorney, union representative, or departmental investigator, until the conclusion of the preliminary investigation.
6. The supervisor shall determine whether the circumstances of the incident require that the officer's duty weapon be taken for laboratory analysis. Where the duty weapon is taken, the supervisor shall:
  - a. Take custody of the officer's weapon in a discrete manner; and
  - b. Replace it with another weapon, or advise the officer that it will be returned or replaced at a later time, as appropriate.
7. Involved officers should notify their families about the incident as soon as possible. Where an officer is unable to do so, an agency official shall personally notify his family, and arrange for their transportation to the hospital.
8. At all times, when at the scene of the incident, the supervisor should handle the officer and all involved personnel in a manner that

acknowledges the stress caused by the incident.

**B. Post-Incident Procedures**

1. Involved personnel shall be removed from line duties pending evaluation but shall remain available for any necessary administrative investigations.
2. All officers directly involved in the shooting incident shall be required to contact an agency designated specialist for counseling and evaluation as soon as practical after the incident. Involved support personnel should also be encouraged to contact such specialists after a shooting incident. After the counseling sessions, the specialist shall advise the agency:
  - a. Whether it would be in the officers' best interest to be placed on administrative leave or light duty, and for how long;
  - b. Where the officers were relieved of their duty weapons after an incident, at what point they should be returned;
  - c. What will be the best continued course of counseling.
3. The agency strongly encourages the families of the involved officers to take advantage of available counseling services.
4. Any agency investigation of the incident shall be conducted as soon and as quickly as practical.
5. The agency should brief other agency members concerning the incident so that rumors are kept to a minimum. Agency members are encouraged to show the involved officers their concern.
6. All personnel involved in a shooting incident should be advised that they are not permitted to speak with the media about the incident. Officers shall refer inquiries from the media to a designated agency spokesperson, unless

otherwise authorized to release a statement pertaining to the incident.

7. In order to protect against crank or abusive calls, officers should be advised to have phone calls answered by another person for several days if their names are released to the public.
8. Officers directly involved in the shooting incident shall be required to requalify as soon as practical.

**C. Daily Stress Recognition**

1. As post-traumatic stress disorders may not arise immediately, or the officers may attempt to hide the problem, each supervisor is responsible for monitoring the behavior of unit members for symptoms of the disorder.
2. A supervisor may order an officer to seek assistance or counseling from a mental health specialist upon a reasonable belief that stress may be disrupting the officer's job performance.

**D. Training**

1. The agency shall provide employees with training pertaining to post-traumatic stress disorders and the uniform procedures contained in this policy on a regular basis.
2. Supervisors are responsible for making available to their unit members information about the agency's peer counseling group and mental health services.

BY ORDER OF

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CHIEF OF POLICE

*The IACP Model Policy on Post-Shooting Incident Procedures was developed under the auspices of the Advisory Board to the IACP/BJA National Law Enforcement Policy Center. It is intended to serve as a guide for the law enforcement executive who is interested in formulating a written procedure to prevent and resolve potential problems that may result from post-shooting incidents. The law enforcement executive is advised to refer to all federal, state and municipal statutes, ordinances, regulations, and judicial and administrative decisions to ensure that the policy he seeks to implement meets the unique needs of the jurisdiction.*

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## IACP National Law Enforcement Policy Center

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# Post-Shooting Incident Procedures

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Concepts and Issues Paper

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March 1, 1991

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### A. Purpose of the Document

This paper is designed to accompany the Model Policy on Post-Shooting Incident Procedures developed by the IACP/BJA National Law Enforcement Policy Center. This paper provides essential background material and supporting documentation to provide greater understanding of the developmental philosophy and implementation requirements for the model policy. This material will be of value to law enforcement executives in their efforts to tailor the model to the requirements and circumstances of their community and their law enforcement agency.

#### B. Background

For many years mental health professionals have recognized the emotional and psychological impact that can result in the aftermath of life-threatening, catastrophic events. Over the last several decades, however, this phenomenon has been brought to wider public attention in large measure by the significant number of Vietnam War veterans who have suffered adverse and sometimes severe emotional reactions to their wartime experiences—in many cases, years after they have returned from combat.

These and other factors have increased our understanding and appreciation for the psychological and emotional effects on survivors of traumatic violence in a variety of contexts. The psychological effects sometimes suffered by victims of kidnap, rape, or assault, as well as victims of airline hijacking and crashes, to name just a few examples, are generally referred to as critical incident trauma or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Even though police officers are trained to recognize and deal with a variety of traumatic and violent circumstances, they also can fall victim to such stress disorders. Officers involved in shooting incidents—wherein an officer shoots someone else and/or is shot, or witnesses the shooting or killing of another officer or individual—form the classic scenario for the development of traumatic stress reactions. Not all

officers involved in a shooting incident or other similar deadly force confrontation experience an overwhelming reaction. However, some of those who suffer from the more serious reactions, and particularly those who do not receive proper assistance for their problem, leave law enforcement in the aftermath, and many suffer from long-term consequences.

This concept paper addresses the steps that law enforcement agencies should take to minimize the potential traumatic and sometimes debilitating effects of an officer-involved shooting incident. It should be reemphasized, however, that post-traumatic stress reactions can develop as a result of other types of critical incidents. Airplane disasters, serious motor vehicle accidents, the line-of-duty death of a close colleague, the brutal murder of a child, or a variety of other serious incidents may have particular emotional impact on an officer. In addition, others not directly involved at the scene of a serious incident may also be affected to some degree. Dispatchers, investigators, or other officers involved in a tragic event, for example, may suffer many of the same reactions as those directly involved. This latter category of individuals has been referred to as the "forgotten victims" of such traumatic incidents.

It is clear, therefore, that the individual impact of specific circumstances on law enforcement officers cannot be reduced to a simple formula and should not be overly simplified. The potential traumatizing effects of specific circumstances depends greatly upon the dynamics of the situation and the experiences and mindset of the officers involved. Most of what is known about PTSD among law enforcement officers comes from mental health professionals who have worked with officers in post-shooting situations. But those findings and the therapeutic recommendations that have followed generally hold true for others who suffer the same reactions inflicted under other traumatic circumstances. This concepts and issues paper, while dealing with the specific procedures following shooting incidents, should have broader application for those law enforcement executives who wish to address the issue from a more generic perspective within their agencies.

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## II. PHASES OF THE EMOTIONAL AFTERMATH

Each officer experiences the emotional aftermath of a shooting in a personal manner that depends on many factors. These include the officer's perceived vulnerability during the incident; the amount of control he had over the situation and his ability to react effectively; his expectations concerning shooting situations and how closely those expectations correlated with what happened during the incident; how close or far away physically the officer was from the suspect; how bloody the shooting was; the reputation of the suspect, for example, whether he was a murderer or a scared teenager; the perceived "fairness" of the situation, for example, shooting a person who used the officer to commit suicide is perceived as unfair and may produce anger or other reactions in the officer; legal and administrative consequences of the officer's actions; the amount of stress in the officer's life and his level of emotional adjustment; personal coping skills; and the amount of peer and family support.

The following description of the emotional aftermath of the use of deadly force is a general model that applies not only to post-shooting trauma, but to the aftermath of any critical incident, that is, any situation where one feels overwhelmed by his sense of vulnerability or lack of control over the situation. Not all officers exhibit the reactions described here and those that do may not experience them in the order in which they are presented. This model is meant to provide a general understanding of the range of PTSD reactions and their interrelationships. Recognition of these emotional reactions will better equip the police administrator to interpret officer responses and reactions during investigative proceedings and in later work situations and provide a basis for understanding model policy recommendations.

### A. Shock Disruption

The traumatic experience starts when a situation puts the life of an officer or another person in danger, and the officer makes the decision to use deadly force. Many physical, psychological, and emotional phenomena may occur during the brief moments of peak stress, many of which may be confusing to the officer.

**1. Sensory Reactions.** It is quite common to experience perceptual distortions of various types. Some may experience time distortion in which events appear to occur in slow motion. Under such conditions, a few seconds may seem like a minute. For other officers, time accelerates.

Auditory distortions are common among officers involved in a shooting. For most, sound diminishes and gunshots, shouts, or other sounds may be muffled or unheard. An officer may, for example, not hear all the rounds being fired and may not be able to relate this information at a later date. Other officers experience intensified sound—gunshots sound like canons.

Visual distortions occur in about half of shooting instances. In these cases, officers may experience "tunnel vision," a condition where the officer's visual attention is so focused as to exclude all or most peripheral objects that would normally appear in the field of vision. Tunnel vision is generally accompanied by a heightened sense of detail about a narrow range of subjects, typically the

source of danger, to include the assailant and the weapon involved.

It is important that supervisors at the scene and investigators assigned to the shooting know these sensory distortions are normal and common. If an officer inaccurately reports the number of shots fired, for example, it is reasonable to believe he did not hear all the rounds fired. If he cannot give a good description of the suspect's clothing because of tunnel vision focused on the weapon, or if he says it took five minutes for the shoot-out to conclude when other evidence indicates it only took 45 seconds, it does not necessarily mean the officer is lying or trying to conceal information. He could have been experiencing the normal, perceptual distortions that commonly occur during moments of peak stress.

**2. Physical and Emotional Reactions.** The shock disruption phase starts when the shooting ends. An officer may experience a few minutes of shock symptoms such as tremors, shaking, crying, nausea, or hyperventilation among others. These are symptoms of the de-escalation of stress that sometimes occurs when a high-impact situation is over, and are not signs of weakness.

Initially, an officer may be dazed, inattentive, and upset. There may be a feeling of disbelief or difficulty comprehending the reality or significance of what happened. It may be difficult for the officer to concentrate and to remember details. From a few hours to a few days following the incident, the officer may be on an "adrenaline high" and overstimulated, causing him to be tense, anxious, agitated, or irritable. This adrenaline high may make it difficult to sleep during this period.

It is important to remember that the officer may be very sensitive to others' reactions, particularly in regard to whether the department will stand behind him. Critical comments such as "What did you do?" can magnify the trauma, whereas a supportive response such as "Are you okay?" goes a long way toward calming the officer.

Commonly, during the shock reaction period one's emotions concerning the incident, and awareness of these emotions, becomes blunted. An officer may generally feel emotionally detached and numb, but also experience occasional anxiety attacks during the same period. There is a tendency to feel as if one is running on "automatic pilot"—just going through the motions. Indeed, an individual does not experience the full emotional impact of a critical incident immediately after the event. Psychological defenses, such as denial, automatically intervene to temporarily shield the officer from what may otherwise be overwhelming emotions.

The shock disruption period may last anywhere from a few minutes to a week or longer depending upon the individual, but usually it lasts two to three days. For this reason it is important to require that an officer take administrative leave immediately following a shooting and not be allowed to return directly to his normal duty assignment even if he indicates he feels fit for duty. He may be experiencing a "denial" of emotion. For obvious reasons, an officer should not be on active duty, particularly in a street enforcement capacity, when the emotional impact takes effect.

Recognizing the possible impact of a shooting on an officer and his potential reactions to the event, the model

policy makes several recommendations for dealing with the officer at the scene.

**3. Emotional First Aid.** First, a supervisory officer should be immediately assigned to any officer-involved shooting and assume control of the situation. The first order of response in such situations is to identify any injured persons and to ensure that medical attention is secured.

When order has been established and the involved officer is no longer required at the scene, he should be taken to a quiet and secure location away from the sights and sounds of the event area. In many cases, spectators as well as friends and relatives of suspects or victims may congregate at the scene, many of whom may focus attention on the officer involved. For these and related reasons it is best that the officer be given some physical space as soon as practicable so he may regain some composure and attempt to relax.

Immediately following an officer-involved shooting one can anticipate a substantial amount of media attention. Media personnel can be expected to attempt to make contact with involved officers. In no case should these officers make comments to the press concerning the incident. All information concerning the incident should flow from the supervisory officer, the law enforcement agency's public information officer, another assigned spokesperson, or the agency's chief executive. At this stage, basic information concerning the incident should be provided to the press as soon as possible if it will not inhibit or undermine the department's investigative process. Timely release of such information will serve to discourage the press from speculation or uninformed or misdirected commentary that could be harmful to the officers and the department.

Officers involved in the incident who have been removed from the immediate scene may be accompanied by a peer counselor or personal friend based on a supervisor's appraisal of his needs. Many jurisdictions, either individually or in combination with neighboring law enforcement agencies, train law enforcement officers to serve as peer counselors to assist in these and similar situations. Such individuals are often officers who have personal experience with the impact of PTSD and an interest in helping fellow officers who may experience similar problems. If a trained peer counselor or professional assistance is not readily available, a fellow officer may serve in this supportive role. The officer should show concern and compassion whether or not the involved officer chooses to talk or remain quiet. The mere fact of having a companion close at hand can serve a strong emotional support function.

Most officers also have a desire to contact their families at such times. This is an important courtesy that is sometimes overlooked and one that can be facilitated by the supportive officer. If the officer is not injured, he should contact his family by telephone to let them know what happened before they hear rumors, news reports, or get the news from some other source. If the officer is injured, a member of the law enforcement agency who knows the family should contact them and take them to the hospital. In these instances, it is also important to ensure that the family members have someone else with them for support, such as close friends or relatives.

The supervisory officer, as well as all other officers who have contact with the involved officer, whether at the scene or at a later point, should attempt to be reassuring and supportive without being unrealistic. At all times they should act in a manner that reflects an understanding of the potential stress the officer may be experiencing. One should guard against using such phrases as "I know that everything will be fine" or "I know things will work out perfectly." Most individuals can see through such glib comments and may interpret them as casual, thoughtless remarks. It is better to indicate one's support for the officer and a willingness to help in whatever way possible.

The model policy recommends several additional steps be taken during this early phase of the post-shooting period. For example, involved officers should refrain from consuming any stimulants or depressants such as caffeine or alcohol during these periods. Either or both may serve to exacerbate the emotional side effects of the incident.

Even at this early stage, the officer's fears of the short- or long-term consequences of his actions—such as potential civil or even criminal charges or a protracted internal investigation—may fuel his fears and anxieties. Investigations of police-involved shootings can be one of the most stress-provoking activities following such an incident. Officers may be suspended from duty and their firearm taken from them. They may also be isolated from fellow officers and family for a lengthy period during interrogation and may be informed of their "rights" much like those whom they arrest. Investigation of police shootings is essential. However, officers involved in these situations are acutely aware of how they are perceived, and the manner in which such investigations are conducted can heighten or diminish feelings of alienation and isolation. Complete and professional investigations of police-involved shootings can be conducted while also showing consideration for the officers' emotional well-being.

With this in mind, the model policy provides several recommendations. For example, only minimal, preliminary questions should be asked about the incident in the period just following the shooting. The officer should be informed that a more detailed debriefing will be conducted at a later time. The process the standard investigation will follow should be discussed with the officer at this time so that he will not feel later that he is being singled out for scrutiny. At the same time, he should be made aware this is standard procedure and does not necessarily mean he is, or will be, charged with a crime or an infraction of departmental regulations. The officer should be cautioned at this juncture that he should not discuss the incident with anyone but a personal or agency attorney until the preliminary investigation is concluded.

If the officer's firearm must be taken for evidentiary purposes, it should be replaced with another, or the officer should be advised when he can expect it to be returned or replaced. Unless the officer is being relieved of duty on charges, there is little justification for confiscation of the officer's duty weapon without replacing it. If in uniform without a handgun, the officer can feel branded or come to think the department does not "trust" him with a handgun.

### B. Impact

At some point in the process, the emotional impact of the situation is experienced. The adrenaline "high" wears off, and the officer typically experiences an emotional and physical letdown. This impact phase usually occurs within three days of the incident although some officers experience a delayed reaction ranging from six months to a year or more after the incident. During this phase, the officer confronts feelings of vulnerability and mortality. Generally, the more vulnerable the officer felt during the incident, the greater the emotional impact of the situation. Feelings of vulnerability often stem from a perceived lack of control over the incident. For example, the officer may have felt forced to use his weapon when the suspect would not comply with his verbal commands. He may, as a result, feel angry that he was put in a position where there was no other choice but to use deadly force.

Officers may experience many kinds of reactions during this phase that, although normal, make some feel they are losing emotional control. Some of the more common reactions an officer may experience are:

- Heightened sense of danger/vulnerability
- Fear and anxiety about future encounters
- Anger/rage
- Nightmares
- Flashbacks/intrusive thoughts of the incident
- Sleep difficulties
- Depression
- Guilt
- Emotional numbing
- Isolation and emotional withdrawal from others
- Sexual difficulties
- Stress reactions (e.g., headaches, indigestion, muscle aches, insomnia, diarrhea/constipation)
- Anxiety reactions (e.g., difficulty concentrating, excessive worry, irritability, nervousness)
- Family problems

It is important for officers to realize these are normal reactions to an abnormal situation, not signs of mental illness.

### C. Acceptance Resolution

The next phase, which in most cases starts soon after the emotional impact hits, is the acceptance or coping phase. At this stage an officer starts understanding, working through, and coming to grips with the emotional impact of the situation. The emotional intensity tends to wax and wane over time, often peaking after about two weeks, and then starts to decrease. There is often much introspection during this time and the officer generally mentally recreates the incident, repeatedly wondering if he made the correct decision, took the correct action, or if there was anything else that could have been done. If the officer allows himself to work through the emotional impact, and does not try to suppress or deny it, he will normally come to accept the incident without inordinate guilt or anguish.

The acceptance resolution phase is usually achieved within two to ten weeks, but may take longer depending on the incident, the legal/administrative aftermath, the amount of peer and family support, and the officer's coping skills. Once achieved, the officer understands and accepts what happened and what had to be done.

There may still be occasional nightmares, flashbacks, and anxiety, particularly those triggered by situational reminders while on the job. However, the officer who is returning to a healthy and balanced emotional state comes to understand these and other underlying emotions and is capable of dealing constructively with them. With proper support and coping skills, the officer may even become stronger.

However, some officers do not progress normally along this path to emotional stability and get "stuck" going through the trauma process. Some of the signs of this inability to deal effectively with the incident are:

- Continuation and intensification of post-incident (impact phase) symptoms
- Excessive stress and anxiety reactions
- Being continually obsessed with the incident
- Increased absenteeism, burnout/drop in productivity
- Increase in anger and irritability
- Overreaction or being overaggressive
- Underreaction
- Risk taking
- Increase in family problems
- Alcohol/drug abuse

If an officer who has been in a shooting develops a pattern of work problems, such as repetitive excessive use of force that he did not exhibit before the incident, it may be a sign of trauma. It is important to be able to recognize these problems and be prepared to refer the officer to an appropriate source for assistance rather than merely administer discipline.

It is important to reiterate that not all officers experience a serious or even moderate traumatic reaction after a shooting. This does not suggest they are insensitive or uncaring individuals. There are typically several reasons why these officers are relatively unaffected or have strong emotional control. First, these officers are typically mentally prepared for the potentiality of a critical incident. They have anticipated what can happen, thought it through, and accepted the reality of what they might have to face and the actions they may be required to perform. Second, some officers are also better able to maintain an objective, detached point of view and accept the reality of police work and the police role. Third, as a result of coming to grips and working through feelings of vulnerability resulting from previous involvement in critical incidents, an officer may experience little emotional reaction after a shooting. After successfully working through one critical incident, it is often easier to go through another. On the other hand, if emotional reactions from a previous critical incident have been suppressed rather than resolved, a subsequent critical incident becomes more difficult to deal with. Officers who have a traumatic reaction and suppress their emotions may develop long-term emotional problems, such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

## III. STRESS AND THE INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

The investigation of any police use of deadly force is essential. Difficult questions must be asked and answers found. However, the stress of the administrative, investigative, and legal processes following the

incident can unnecessarily compound the stress of a shooting. It is not unusual for the officer to perceive that he is being treated like a suspect and is being abandoned by the department. As noted earlier, his handgun may be confiscated, giving the message that he did something wrong or is now untrustworthy to carry a firearm. He may be read his rights and isolated from other officers until he can be interviewed or interrogated. Suddenly, he may perceive himself to be the prime suspect in a homicide investigation. Most ranking administrators avoid contacting the officer for fear of giving him the impression the department supports his actions, leaving the officer with the impression that the people for whom he works do not care about him and have abandoned him. To add to the stress and finalize the officer's impression that he is alone, he is suspended, with or without pay, pending completion of the investigation. The term suspension implies to other officers and the public that the officer was wrong or at least under serious suspicion of wrongdoing. If the officer has not experienced emotional trauma as a result of the incident itself, it is possible it will be precipitated by such actions of the department. Another consequence of such treatment is it results in alienation from and distrust of the department, often long after the incident has been resolved in favor of the officer.

Although the process described may be appropriate and necessary under certain circumstances, it is not necessary to subject an officer to insensitive, non-supportive, or impersonal treatment. There are many constructive actions that can be taken and procedures that should be followed to avert or minimize an officer's stress that will not interfere with or compromise the investigative process. The model policy recommends departments take the following actions in this regard during the days and weeks following the incident.

#### **A. Post-Incident Procedures**

Law enforcement agencies, recognizing the impact the investigative process can have on involved officers, should make every effort to complete the investigation at the earliest possible time. This is not to suggest the department should rush to judgment, but it should do all that is possible to expeditiously yet professionally gather the necessary information to decide whether any improprieties were involved in the shooting incident. As soon as available, that decision should be made known to the officer and the public.

**1. Removal from Duty.** As part of the internal investigation, the involved officer should be placed on administrative leave pending evaluation and counseling by an agency designated specialist. For the officers directly involved in the shooting, this mental health debriefing should be a mandatory requirement to be completed within 72 hours of the incident. The mandated requirement for this debriefing will remove much of the stigma normally encountered with mental health counseling and much of the typical speculation from those who may question the officers emotional well-being.

The specialist should advise the agency in a confidential report as to if and when the officer should be returned to duty. Normally, only the largest of law enforcement agencies maintain full-time professional

counseling services. However, such services should be provided through contracts with community mental health facilities or private practitioners. Involved support personnel should also be permitted to make contact with the designated specialist following a shooting incident, if they so desire.

In addition to the one day of required administrative leave, provision for additional leave should be made if deemed necessary by the counseling specialist. Unless there is compelling reason to the contrary, the affected officer should be returned to his regular assignment after administrative leave. However, if circumstances of the incident dictate, it may be best to keep the officer off the street until the shooting has been resolved, that is, until after the investigation has been concluded or findings of a grand jury, coroner, or district attorney have been made public.

Depending on the officer and the circumstances involved, it may also be preferable to gradually return the officer to his normal duty assignment. In this as in other aspects of post-shooting procedures, there is need for some flexibility. Not all officers react in the same fashion to similar circumstances and departmental administrators need to be able to work with individual officers in shaping appropriate responses to best meet their mutual needs and responsibilities.

**2. Family Counseling.** The model policy also recommends law enforcement agencies provide the family of the involved officer with advice and guidance. The officer's family plays a significant role as an emotional anchor during crises and can be instrumental for emotional readjustment. Agencies can help the officer's family to understand and appreciate the significance and potential impact of the officer's experience. These services can also make family members aware of the symptoms of PTSD and the family's role in providing support to the officer during the period of emotional accommodation and adjustment. It is also necessary to help family members deal with their own stress created by the incident. Many family members simply do not know what to expect and why specific departmental procedures are necessary. Therefore, the law enforcement agency should ensure family members are kept informed and provided the opportunity to clarify any of their questions or resolve misgivings.

**3. Managing Information.** The law enforcement agency should be sensitive to the need to manage information concerning the incident to the greatest degree possible. News releases and statements to the press should take the interests of the officers into consideration. They should provide as much information about the incident as possible without being prematurely judgmental or compromising the legal and personal considerations of the officer. As is generally the case, it is best if the police agency provides the media with all information that can be released. In this manner there is greater likelihood that news stories will match the facts as they are known, rather than being based on unofficial speculation or secondhand information that may act as a disservice to all concerned and potentially complicate swift and fair completion of the investigation.

If the officer's name is released to the media, he should be advised the press may attempt to contact him for a statement. As noted, such statements from any



involved officer should be prohibited unless authorized by the agency and inquiries should be referred to the designated agency spokesperson. The officer should also be advised to have telephone calls at home answered by others. The department may also assist by providing the officer temporarily with an answering machine in order to protect against the possibility of crank or abusive calls.

In order to reduce rumors and speculation from within the law enforcement agency as well, all officers should be provided with factual information surrounding the incident as soon as possible. This will also serve to reduce the incidence of individual officers making often well-intentioned but potentially annoying repetitive inquiries of the officer.

**4. Administrative Support.** Often during post-shooting situations, particularly during the investigative process, supervisors and administrators avoid making any supportive comments to involved officers for fear their comments may be construed as official endorsements of the officers' actions. While this is often understandable, a failure to interact with the officer and to discuss the incident often gives him the impression he is being labelled as a pariah. It is important involved officers receive some indication of concern from the agency administration. It is possible to show compassion and concern for the officer's situation and feelings without commenting officially or unofficially on the propriety of his actions in the incident in question. The important point here is that the officer not be allowed to feel he has been abandoned by his department in a time of need. Such an impression can greatly enhance feelings of guilt, isolation, and apprehension and, as previously indicated, form long-lasting negative impressions about the agency's administration and its concern for staff.

**5. Firearm Requalification.** Finally, as part of the law enforcement agency's assessment of the officer's fitness for duty, the individual should be required to requalify with his service handgun as soon as practical. In some instances, one's ability to effectively use the service firearm may be impeded because of the trauma of the shooting incident. Requalification will provide reassurance to the officer as well as documentation for the agency that the officer maintains an acceptable degree of firearms proficiency.

#### **B. Stress Recognition and Training**

The model policy points out that supervisory personnel have the primary responsibility for identifying officers under their supervision who may be suffering from some form of post-traumatic stress disorder. As noted, traumatic stress disorders may develop in relationship to a wide variety of incidents, some of which may not become apparent to the law enforcement agency in any official capacity. For example, investigation of a fatal traffic accident that may appear to be a routine police procedure may trigger a stress

reaction that most fellow officers or supervisors would not expect to take place. Moreover, law enforcement officers may attempt to hide such symptoms from fellow officers and supervisors for fear that it will be perceived as a personal weakness, adversely affect their performance review, or result in an unwanted fitness-for-duty appraisal.

Supervisory personnel, therefore, must be aware of the potential for such traumatic reactions in a variety of contexts and be in a position to order the officer involved to seek assistance or counseling if it is believed that his job performance is being affected. On a broader scale, all police personnel must also be aware of the potential for traumatic reactions and be prepared to seek assistance for themselves or recommend aid for a fellow officer who they believe is affected in this manner. In order for officers to be capable of making such judgments, their law enforcement agency and immediate supervisor should provide the training necessary to make them knowledgeable about PTSD and the department's policy and procedures for prevention and treatment.

#### **C. Employee Screening**

It is important to be able to respond effectively to those who may suffer from PTSD symptoms and to take all measures possible to avoid the incidence of this problem among agency personnel. However, a large share of preventive efforts must also be directed at the selection process for police personnel. Police work is obviously not suited for all individuals. The use of psychological screening tests for the selection of recruit candidates can help to identify those persons who are more likely to be vulnerable to these types of disorders.

#### **Acknowledgement**

This paper was prepared from information contained in Training Key #385, *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder*, published by the International Association of Chiefs of Police and prepared with the technical assistance of Wayne R. Hill, Ph.D., President, Management and Behavior Consultants, P.C., Traverse City, Michigan, and Roger M. Solomon, Ph.D., Washington State Patrol. Additional materials were provided from IACP training materials prepared by Dr. Solomon which have undergone extensive field testing in law enforcement agencies.

This project was supported by Grant No. 87-SN-CX-K077 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, coordinates the activities of the following program offices and bureaus: the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office of Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not represent the official position or policies of the United States Department of Justice.

Every effort has been made by the IACP National Law Enforcement Policy Center staff and advisory board to ensure that this model policy incorporates the most current information and contemporary professional judgment on this issue. However, law enforcement administrators should be cautioned that no "model" policy can meet all the needs of any given law enforcement agency. Each law enforcement agency operates in a unique environment of federal court rulings, state laws, local ordinances, regulations, judicial and administrative decisions and collective bargaining agreements that must be considered. In addition, the formulation of specific agency policies must take into account local political and community perspectives and customs, prerogatives and demands; often divergent law enforcement strategies and philosophies, and the impact of varied agency resource capabilities among other factors.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Questionnaire**

**TO:** Chiefs of Municipal Police Agencies  
**FROM:** Patricia E. Nowak, School of Criminal Justice - M.S.U.  
**DATE:** June 24, 1992  
**SUBJECT:** Michigan Police Stress Study

This researcher, along with the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University, is in the process of conducting a study of the policies being used in Michigan Municipal Law Enforcement Agencies to minimize police stress. Secondly, I wish to determine what degree those policies follow the International Association of Chiefs of Police (I.A.C.P.) Psychological Services administrative guidelines. This researcher will be conducting surveys in order to gather relevant data for the study.

I am currently a patrol officer from the East Lansing Police Department and completing work on my Master's Degree from Michigan State University's School of Criminal Justice.

This study and its results are important to law enforcement and your cooperation in this study is appreciated. A sample of Municipal Police Agencies in Michigan will receive a survey to be completed by the Chief of Police or his/her designee. The survey will be confidential and the agencies will be asked to mail the response directly to the researcher. Involvement in this study is voluntary, I encourage all Police Chiefs to participate; the study depends on the forthright answers of the respondents.

Upon completion of the study, an executive summary of the results will be made available to respondents and to other interested parties.

Instructions for completion of the survey instrument are enclosed. Your cooperation in this study will be appreciated.

**MICHIGAN POLICE STRESS STUDY**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUCTIONS**

This research is undertaken to assist police agencies in their development of policies to reduce or minimize police officer stress in officers involved in shooting situations.

We ask that you complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed stamped envelope to Mrs. Patricia E. Nowak, 5914 Green Road, Haslett, Michigan 48840, no later than July 9, 1992. She may be reached at (517)339-3456.

Please do not put your name or agency designator on the questionnaire. Your answers are completely anonymous and cannot be linked to your name or department in any way. We also ask that you mail the enclosed post card separately after you have completed the questionnaire so that the researcher will know you have completed it. Keep in mind that the researcher will not know which questionnaire you have completed, only that you have completed one.

The answers you provide will be completely anonymous. You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning the questionnaire.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING SURVEY**

WHEN YOU MARK YOUR ANSWERS, PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING:

- \* Circle the number directly on the questionnaire indicating your choice.
- \* Circle only one number for each statement or question.
- \* Feel free to use a pen, marker, or pencil to mark your responses.

## MICHIGAN POLICE STRESS STUDY

**Definition of Officer Involved Shooting Incident:** A line of duty incident where a shooting *by an officer* caused the death or injury to another person or by *another person* that caused the death or injury to an officer.

## PART 1: GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The Chief of Police or chief's designee is requested to complete the survey by circling the number under the most appropriate answer for the particular category. Please circle only one number.

## 1. Gender of Chief

- 1 Male
- 2 Female

## 2. Age of Chief

- 1 21-25
- 2 26-30
- 3 31-35
- 4 36-40
- 5 41-45
- 6 46-50
- 7 51-55
- 8 56-60
- 9 61 or older

## 3. Race of Chief

- 1 White
- 2 Black
- 3 Hispanic
- 4 Asian
- 5 Native American

## 4. Years in Law Enforcement

- 1 1-5
- 2 6-10
- 3 11-15
- 4 16-20
- 5 21-25
- 6 25 or more

## 5. Years as Chief

- 1 1-5
- 2 6-10
- 3 11-15
- 4 16-20
- 5 21-25
- 6 25 or more

## 6. Education of Chief

- 1 High School
- 2 Some College
- 4 Associate Degree
- 5 Bachelor's Degree
- 6 Masters Degree
- 7 Doctorate

## 7. Size of Department(include civilians)

- 1 Less than 10
- 2 11- 35
- 3 36-60
- 4 61-85
- 5 86-110
- 6 111-135
- 7 136-160
- 6 161-185
- 7 186-210
- 8 211 or more

## 8. Type of Department

- 1 City
- 2 Township
- 3 Village
- 4 University
- 5 Combined: Police & Fire
- 6 Other

Next Page Please

9. Circle General Location by State Police District

- 1 First
- 2 Second
- 3 Third
- 4 Fourth
- 5 Fifth
- 6 Sixth
- 7 Seventh
- 8 Eighth

10. As Chief have you had training which addressed occupational stress of police officers?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

11. If you have knowledge of police stress circumstances please indicate the answer that best describes the method used to obtain such knowledge.

- 1 Formal Training and Training Seminars
- 2 In-service at department
- 3 College or University Courses
- 4 Speeches and presentations at meetings
- 4 Reading articles or books

12. Regarding Officer Involved Shooting Incidents - does department have written policy?

- 1 Yes- written policy
- 2 No - written policy

13. If you have a written policy please indicate the primary source of its initiation.

- 1 Government Administration
- 2 Police Administration
- 3 Police Officers
- 4 Labor Union

14. If you stated "No" to question # 12 please indicate the most appropriate reason.

- 1 Too expensive
- 2 Not enough time to prepare
- 3 Do not feel its necessary due to lack of incidents
- 4 Officers are capable of handling stress
- 5 Unaware of what is needed
- 6 Do not believe stress is an issue
- 7 Do not believe in written policies

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15. Are you familiar with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Post Shooting Incident Model Policy?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

16. If you were made aware of the IACP Model policy would you consider adopting it?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

17. Do you feel that officers need a structured support system after an officer involved shooting incident?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Depending on Circumstances
- 4 Don't know

18. What kind of structured support is offered at your department?  
( circle as many answers as apply to this question )

- 1 In-house psychologist/ counselor
- 2 Contracted psychologist/counselor
- 3 Chaplain
- 4 In-house support group (peer counselors, etc.)
- 5 Contracted or voluntary support group
- 6 Mental health professional
- 7 None

19. In response to question # 18, is the support system person responsible for the fitness to return to duty evaluation?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Do not have support system

20. Circle the closest number of officer involved shootings your department has had in the last 5 years.

- 1 None
- 2 1
- 3 2
- 4 3
- 5 4
- 6 5-7
- 7 8-10
- 8 11 or more

## Next Page Please

**PART II: POLICY QUESTIONS**

The following questions are directly related to post shooting incident policy. If you do not have a written policy on this subject matter please do not answer any more questions.

---

21. Does your policy require a supervisor to be sent to scene to assume primary responsibility in caring for involved personnel?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No.

22. Does your policy require a supervisor to make arrangements for medical treatment?

- 1 Yes
- 2. No

23. After obtaining necessary on-scene information, does your department policy specify getting the officer away from the body and/or some distance from the scene as soon as possible?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

24. Is the officer allowed recovery time in a secure setting prior to detailed interview?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

25. After the preliminary investigation does the policy provide for the involvement of a friend, relative or peer for officer's support?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

26. Does your policy require a supervisor to meet with involved officers when possible?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

27. Does your policy limit administration of caffeine, stimulants and depressants to medical personnel?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No



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28. When supervisors meet with involved officers are questions limited to preliminary facts regarding the incident?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No.

29. Are officers advised that a more detailed debriefing will be conducted later?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

30. After a shooting, does your policy specify what administrative procedures must take place during the next few hours?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

31. Does your policy have provisions to advise involved officer to consider retaining attorney to safeguard personal interests?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

32. Are the officers advised not to discuss the incident with anyone except a personal or agency attorney, union representative or departmental investigator until the conclusion of preliminary investigation?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

33. Is the police officer's weapon taken as evidence in a police officer involved shooting?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

34. Does your policy consider return of the weapon or a replacement of weapon?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

35. Does the policy provide for immediate contact of family by department if officer is not injured?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

36. If officer is injured, does department notify family and arrange transportation to hospital?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

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37. Does your policy inform the supervisor to recognize the stress of such incidents when dealing with all personnel?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

38. Does your policy require involved personnel to be removed from line duties pending evaluation?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

39. Are involved support personnel encouraged to contact specialists after a shooting incident?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

40. Does your policy make family counseling available?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

41. Does your policy require investigations of shooting incidents to be conducted as soon as possible?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

42. Does your policy require briefing of other members in order to reduce rumors?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

43. Does your policy recommend other agency members to show concern for involved officers?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

44. Does your policy consider the officer's personal interests in preparing media releases?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

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45. Does your policy provide protection for involved officer from crank calls?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

46. Are officers involved in shooting incidents required to re-qualify shortly after a return to full duty?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

47. Does your policy require supervisors to monitor an officer's behavior for post traumatic stress disorder?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

48. Does your policy allow a supervisor to order officer to seek mental health assistance when there is evidence of effects on job performance?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

49. Does your policy require your department provide training for post traumatic stress disorder for employees?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

50. Are supervisors required to provide information to employees regarding the agency's counseling and mental health services?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

QUESTIONS 51-54 REFER TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TO THE AGENCY HEAD. PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS REGARDING SUCH RECOMMENDATIONS. IF THESE PROVISIONS ARE INCLUDED IN YOUR POLICY PLEASE ANSWER YES. IF THERE ARE NO SUCH PROVISIONS PLEASE ANSWER NO.

51. A recommendation for limited or light duty.

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

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52. A length of time specified for light/limited duty?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

53. A recommendation for relief and return of duty weapon.

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

54. A continued course of counseling.

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

POLICY REQUEST

A voluntary submission of a copy of your departmental policy on police officer involved shootings is requested. If you choose to submit the policy for review, you may feel free to block out or remove all departmental identifiers before submission.

Please mail completed survey to

Patricia E. Nowak  
5914 Green Road  
Haslett, MI 48840

If you have any questions regarding this questionnaire  
please feel free to contact

Patricia E. Nowak at (517) 339 - 3456

## APPENDIX C

### Human Subjects Approval Letter

## MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH  
AND DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1046

June 16, 1992

Dennis Payne, Ph.D.  
Department of Criminal Justice

RE: MICHIGAN POLICE STRESS STUDY, IRB #92-276

Dear Dr. Payne:

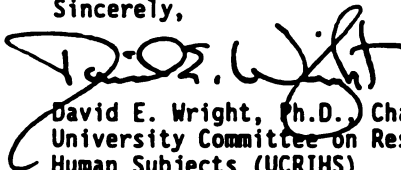
The above project is exempt from full UCRIHS review. The proposed research protocol has been reviewed by a member of the UCRIHS committee. The rights and welfare of human subjects appear to be protected and you have approval to conduct the research.

You are reminded that UCRIHS approval is valid for one calendar year. If you plan to continue this project beyond one year, please make provisions for obtaining appropriate UCRIHS approval one month prior to June 11, 1993.

Any changes in procedures involving human subjects must be reviewed by UCRIHS prior to initiation of the change. UCRIHS must also be notified promptly of any problems (unexpected side effects, complaints, etc.) involving human subjects during the course of the work.

Thank you for bringing this project to my attention. If I can be of any future help, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,



David E. Wright, Ph.D., Chair  
University Committee on Research Involving  
Human Subjects (UCRIHS)

DEW/pjm

## APPENDIX D

Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police Newsletter

# Newsbriefs



# Newsbriefs



**THANKS MACP FOR LIFE MEMBERSHIP.**  
Thomas A. Hendrickson, Exec. Director  
Mich. Association of Chiefs of Police  
2133 University Park Dr., Suite 200  
Okemos, Michigan 48864-3975

Dear Tom:

I have received your letter advising me that I have been accepted as a Life Member of the MACP, along with Messrs. Nelson, Ford, Asman, Bibb, Veldheer, and Behrendt, all who are long time friends.

Tom, it made my day to be able to become part of this distinguished group. Thank you for honoring my request of last year.

Please express my thanks to the members of the Past Presidents' Committee and the Board of Directors for their consideration.

Sincerely,  
Patrick A. Lyons  
111 W. Matisse Circle  
Nokomis, FL 34275



**THUMBS UP TO ERVIN J. MOURITSEN, MENOMINEE'S RETIRED POLICE CHIEF, WHO WAS RECENTLY RECOGNIZED BY OFFICIALS OF THE UPPER PENINSULA STATE POLICE CRIME LAB AT NEGAUNEE.** Mouritsen was a leader during his years as police chief to convince state government that a crime lab was crucial to police work in the U.P. Until the U.P. got its own lab, law enforcement units in the 15-county peninsula had to travel to Lansing to have evidence processed. This took extra personnel so that the evidence had the proper chain-of-command. It also was very time consuming. When Gov. John Engler announced the crime lab would be scrapped during state budget cuts, a load roar of protest erupted in the U.P. Mouritsen might be retired, but his support for a crime lab hasn't vanished. He rallied the support of citizens and different organizations to protest the governor's move. Engler saved the crime lab from the budget cuts in an 11th-hour decision. Lt. David Larsen, director of the U.P. lab, came to Menominee to present Mouritsen with a plaque in appreciation for his unselfish efforts. The recognition was well-deserved.



**CHEVROLET NOT DROPPING POLICE PACKAGE.**

I would like to take this opportunity to assure the MACP membership that Chevrolet has no plans to drop the Caprice or the "Police Package" from its lineup. The rumors that have been making the rounds have no basis in fact. No one from G.M. has ever indicated that G.M. has made plans to drop this car.

Shaheen Chevrolet appreciates the support we have received from the law enforcement community in the State of

Michigan, and we hope to serve this organization and its membership well into the future.

Thanks,  
John Fuller  
Fleet Manager  
Shaheen Chevrolet  
Lansing, Michigan



**TO: CHIEFS OF MUNICIPAL POLICE AGENCIES**

From: Patricia E. Nowak  
Date: September 3, 1992  
Subject: Follow up Request - Michigan Police Stress Study

This follow up notice is being sent as a reminder and a request for completion of the survey. Your response is of importance to the completion of this survey.

The focus of the study, as explained in the original cover letter, is on exploring what types of policies are being used in Michigan law enforcement agencies to minimize post shooting stress. Secondly, to what degree those policies follow the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Psychological Services administrative guidelines with officers involved in on duty shooting situations. Such a study can be a real benefit to police officers in particular, and the department as a whole.

Your information is important. Unless a sufficient number of police chiefs decide to participate, very little else can be accomplished in this regard. Though voluntary on your part, I again urge each of you who have not done so, to complete the forms and submit them as indicated in the original instructions.

If you need further guidance or help, please contact Mrs. Patricia E. Nowak at 5914 Green Rd., Haslett, MI 48840; (517) 339-3456. The responses thus far have provided rich information. You are free not to respond, but this project cannot move forward without your assistance and cooperation.



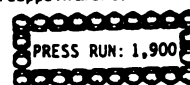
**GOVERNOR, LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS URGE HOUSE TO ACT ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE ISSUES.**

Governor John Engler, together with Sen. Majority Leader Dick Posthumus and House Minority Leader Paul Hillegonds, and a host of Michigan law enforcement officials on Sept. 23 urged the House to act on the Governor's Criminal Justice Package. "The criminal justice issues these bills address are vital to getting tough on criminals and making our neighborhoods safer," said Engler. "The Senate has already or will have passed by the week's end every bill in the crime package. I urge the House to do their duty and give our law enforcement professionals the tools they need to better protect our

citizens by following the Senate's leadership and passing these bills. The time for action is now." Among the key criminal justice issues awaiting House action are: 0 "No Knock" legislation which would enable Law Enforcement Officers, in possession of a search warrant to enter a premise without knocking; 0 The Drug Dealers Liability, a nationally acclaimed proposal which would allow those damaged by drugs to bring civil action against the dealer who supplied the drugs; 0 And, a bill which would impose the same sentence on those who attempt to buy or sell drugs as those who actually complete the transaction. "The Governor's crime package provides the needed assistance to Michigan's law enforcement community to further the fight against crime. These bills would strengthen the ability of Michigan's criminal justice community to better provide a safe and healthy state in which to live," said Col. Mike Robinson, Director of the Michigan State Police. "When police officers are forced to announce their presence they lose the element of surprise," said Lansing Police Chief Jerome Boles. "The 'No Knock' bill helps protect our officers making raids. This legislation will also help us provide better protection to the innocent neighbors of those being raided." Over thirty Michigan law enforcement personnel including uniformed officers, police chiefs, sheriffs, and prosecutors joined the Governor, Rep. Paul Hillegonds and Senator Dick Posthumus at the news conference. Immediately following the conference the attendees went to the House gallery to observe the 10:00 a.m. legislative session. Among the organizations that have endorsed this package are the bi-partisan Michigan Sheriff's Association, Prosecuting Attorney's Association of Michigan, the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police and the Alliance for a Safer Greater Detroit. The Police Officers Association of Michigan has also expressed support for this effort.



**RECHLIN AND NYOVICH APPOINTED TO MACP POSITIONS ON THE LEIN POLICY COUNCIL.** At the June 20, 1992 meeting of the MACP Board of Directors Ms. Jacqueline Nyovich, Project Leader of CLEMIS in Oakland County, was appointed to a three-year term on the LEIN Policy Council. She replaces Mr. Robert Snell who has retired. At the September 10, 1992 meeting of the MACP Board of Directors the expired three-year term of Director William Rechlin of Berkley was filled with his reappointment.





## APPENDIX E

### Follow-Up Letter

TO: Chiefs of Municipal Police Agenices  
 FROM: Patricia E. Nowak  
 SUBJECT: Follow-up request - Michigan Police Stress Study  
 DATE:

This follow-up letter, with attached survey is being sent to you as a reminder and a request for completion of the survey. Your response is of importance to the completion of this survey.

The focus of the study, as explained in the original cover letter, is on exploring what types of policies are being used in Michigan law enforcement agencies to minimize post shooting stress. Secondly, to what degree, those policies follow the International Association of Chiefs of Police (I.A.C.P.) Psychological Services administrative guidelines with officers involved in on-duty shooting situations. Such a study can be a real benefit to police officers in particular, and the department as a whole.

Your information is important. Unless a sufficient number of police Chiefs decide to participate, very little else can be accomplished in this regard. Though voluntary on your part, I again urge each of you who have not done so to complete the forms and submit them as indicated in the original instuctions.

If you need further guidance or help, please contact Mrs. Patricia E. Nowak at (517) 339-3456. The responses, thus far have provided rich information. You are free not to respond, but this project cannot move forward without your assistance and cooperation.

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