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LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER LINE OF DUTY DEATHS:  
THE AFFECTS OF AGENCY SIZE ON ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

presented by

Brett Edward Banner

has been accepted towards fulfillment  
of the requirements for

MASTER OF SCIENCE degree in CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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**LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER LINE OF DUTY DEATHS:  
THE AFFECTS OF AGENCY SIZE ON ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**By**

**Brett Edward Banner**

**A THESIS**

**Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
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for the degree of**

**MASTER OF SCIENCE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER LINE OF DUTY DEATHS: THE AFFECTS OF AGENCY SIZE ON ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**By**

**Brett Edward Banner**

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between law enforcement agency size and the existence of formal death policies established for survivors of officers killed in the line of duty.

A questionnaire was administered to mid to upper-level administrative law enforcement personnel who attended a session of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy in Quantico, Virginia. The questionnaire investigated services provided by law enforcement agencies. The chi-square test was used to determine differences between certain variables.

Results indicated that large agencies are likely to:

1) have a formal death policy; 2) provide a benefits coordinator to survivors; and 3) have an officer killed in the line of duty more than small agencies. Additionally, agencies with formal policies are more likely to provide survivor services than agencies without formal policies. Finally, agencies that did not have an officer killed were less likely to have a formal policy.

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In memory of Terry J. Jablonski,  
Bay City, Michigan, Police Department.  
My friend, you will never be forgotten.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

During the decade of the 1980's more than 1,500 United States law enforcement officers were killed while completing law enforcement duties. The Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reports revealed that during this decade, 801 officers were killed feloniously while another 713 officers were killed accidentally in the line of duty (Major, 1991).

Fatalities may occur when officers respond to arrest situations, domestic disturbances, or enforce traffic laws. The number of officers feloniously killed each year during the decade of the 1980's fluctuated with the most officers (91) feloniously killed in 1981 and the fewest officers (65) feloniously killed in 1990 (Uniform Crime Reports, 1990).

In addition to felonious killings, officers also die on duty as a result of auto mishaps, negligent use of a firearm, or personal misfortunes, such as falls or drowning (Major, 1991). The number of officers who died each year accidentally during the decade of the 1980's also fluctuated with the most officers (79) accidentally killed in 1989 and the fewest officers (66) accidentally killed in 1981 (Uniform Crime Reports, 1990).

Whether an officer is killed feloniously or accidentally,

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the event is traumatic to the deceased officer's family and colleagues. The sudden death of an officer has psychological impacts on those individuals closest to the officer. For numerous law enforcement spouses, the symptoms they encounter meet the criteria for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD may include the following symptoms as defined by the American Psychiatric Association (1987, p. 250),

"Difficulty falling or staying asleep, irritability or outbursts of anger, difficulty concentrating, hypervigilance, exaggerated startle response, and physiologic reactivity upon exposure to events that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event (e.g., a woman who was raped in an elevator breaks out in a sweat when entering any elevator)."

PTSD is a psychological disorder associated with victims of rape, physical assault, natural disasters, prisoners of war, and hostages (Stillman, 1986).

In addition to the psychological effects, the sudden death of an officer has financial and practical effects on survivors and law enforcement personnel. The survivor and colleague distress level is affected by the agency's response to the officer's death (Stillman, 1986). Inappropriate responses or a lack of responses by the agency may re-aggravate the symptoms experienced by those individuals closely associated to the deceased officer (Stillman, 1986).

#### Statement of the problem

Stillman (1986) states that emotional and psychological issues surrounding deaths of officers are rarely broadly addressed by police administrators. More than likely, the

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police department will respond to an officer fatality in an action-related, task-oriented manner. Some departmental policies deal exclusively with notification procedures and funeral arrangements, yet they do not address the long-term trauma associated with the sudden and unexpected death of an officer. Some departments lack formal procedures to assist with the paperwork concerning benefits and funeral arrangements.

Additionally, certain departmental policies provide only for felonious on-duty deaths while excluding accidental deaths. Often, homicide victims' survivors receive more or preferential treatment from the agency when compared to victim survivors of accidental deaths. The dissimilar treatment adds injury to the survivors who are already traumatized (Stillman, 1986).

The death of an officer reminds sworn personnel of their own mortality. A critical incident, such as a line-of-duty death, can create high levels of stress for the law enforcement officer. If the stress is not alleviated, problems can arise that can affect the officer and the agency (Snow, 1990).

As previously mentioned, many law enforcement survivor policies rationalize an action-oriented philosophy as more important than the long-term/psychological needs of the survivors. Many departments do not consider psychological needs to be part of their responsibility (Stillman, 1986).

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### Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between law enforcement agency size and the existence of formal death policies established for the surviving family members and colleagues of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. The methodology was based on the following hypotheses.

### Hypotheses

#### 1. Null

There will be no difference in existence of line-of-duty death policies in law enforcement agencies that serve a population of 100,000 citizens or more and law enforcement agencies that serve a population less than 100,000 citizens.

#### Alternate

Significantly more law enforcement agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more will have line-of-duty death policies than law enforcement agencies serving a population less than 100,000 citizens.

#### 2. Null

Regardless of agency size, there will be no difference in whether law enforcement agencies designate a support person to assist survivors of officers killed in the line of duty.

#### Alternate

Significantly more law enforcement agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more will have individuals designated as support persons to assist survivors than law

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enforcement agencies serving a population less than 100,000 citizens.

Tangible benefits such as financial assistance and funeral arrangements will be examined in addition to intangible benefits such as emotional support and counseling. Further, the size of population the law enforcement agency serves, whether or not the agency has a formal line-of-duty death policy, and the felonious or accidental death of an officer will be examined to determine what assistance is provided to the survivors and colleagues of officers killed in the line of duty.

The law enforcement officers chosen for this research were selected from individuals who attended the 170th session of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy (FBINA) at Quantico, Virginia, from June 21 to September 4, 1992. A session is conducted four times annually for eleven weeks. Each session is attended by approximately 250 law enforcement officers who fit certain criteria (Ault, 1985).

### Definitions of terms

The terms are operationally defined for the purpose of this research as follows:

- 1) Law enforcement agency: An agency with a mission statement to protect the life, liberty, and property of its citizenry within a specific jurisdiction; and investigates violations of the law of that jurisdiction and other matters as determined by the chief law enforcement officer within that

jurisdiction (Ault, 1985).

- 2) **Law enforcement officer:** A sworn member of a law enforcement agency who is authorized by law to carry a firearm; and is currently (July, 1992) attending the FBI National Academy (Ault, 1985).
- 3) **Survivors:** Immediate family members of the deceased officer; parents, siblings, fiancée, and/or significant others (Concerns of Police Survivors, 1988).
- 4) **Beneficiary:** Recipients of specific death benefits (Concerns of Police Survivors, 1988).
- 5) **Benefits:** Financial payments made to the family to contribute to the financial stability following the loss of a loved one; including emotional or psychological assistance. Benefits are further divided as follows:
  - a. **Intangible benefit:** Emotional or psychological assistance. Assistance with death procedures, e.g., notification procedures, assistance with the media, transportation to the hospital, police-family response services, spouse support group, liaison person assigned to the family, peer counseling, instruction on stress management, assistance with benefits paperwork, referral to local counseling, assistance with will preparation, access to a staff psychologist, chaplaincy program, and continued contact with the family. A benefit of no material being.
  - b. **Tangible benefit:** Financial payments towards expenses arising from the law enforcement officer's

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death, e.g., funeral arrangements, workers compensation, departmental group life insurance, police pension, public safety officer's death benefit, social security, agency paid counseling, and continued health coverage. A benefit that can be appraised for value (Concerns of Police Survivors, 1988; Black, 1979).

- 6) Colleague: A fellow worker in the law enforcement profession; either sworn or non-sworn personnel (Concerns of Police Survivors, 1988).
- 7) Death policy: The responsibility of the law enforcement agency to provide liaison assistance to the immediate survivors of any officer who dies in the line of duty, whether feloniously or accidentally, while an active member of the department, to include the clarification and comprehensive study of survivor benefits, and to provide tangible and intangible assistance during this traumatic period of re-adjustment for the surviving family (Concerns of Police Survivors, 1988).
- 8) Line-of-duty death: Any action that claims the life of a law enforcement officer who was performing work-related functions while on or off duty. This category was broken down into:
  - a. Accidental death: The cessation of a law enforcement officer's life while acting in the line of duty; caused by unexpected or unintended means.
  - b. Felonious death: The cessation of a law enforcement



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officer's life while in the line of duty; caused by an individual's malicious intent to kill the law enforcement officer (Concerns of Police Survivors, 1988; Black, 1979).

- 9) Support person (benefits coordinator): The agency representative ordered or assuming responsibility for dispersing specific death benefits to the beneficiary (Concerns of Police Survivors, 1988).

### Summary

Each year, law enforcement officers are killed suddenly in the line of duty. The sudden and traumatic death of an officer has a financial and psychological impact on those individuals closely associated to the deceased officer. The survivor distress level is affected by the agency's response to the officer's death. Inappropriate agency responses or lack of responses may re-aggravate the symptoms experienced by both family survivors and the deceased officer's colleagues.

Agencies deal with officer deaths in a variety of ways; however, a previous study conducted by Stillman (1986) noted that police administrators rationalize action-oriented procedures as more important than the long-term psychological needs of survivors. Stillman (1986) further stated that many police departments do not consider psychological needs to be part of their responsibility. This study examines the size of population the law enforcement agency serves, the existence of a formal line-of-duty death policy within the agency, and the



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type of officer death to determine what assistance is provided to the survivors and colleagues of officers killed in the line of duty.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Introduction

To many individuals, the police are the primary source for public services in the United States. Contemporary law enforcement officers perform the duties of counselors, social workers, psychologists, negotiators, and investigators in addition to their mission of serving the public (Reese, 1986). Citizens have come to depend on police officers to resolve any problem or, at the very least, direct citizens to the agency that can properly solve their problems. Due to the high visibility of the police, many citizens expect police officers to address a variety of problems and situations (Holden, 1986). In part, the officer's availability to address diverse issues and care for the populace has led citizens to accept the police as a protectoral symbol of the community.

To many, the police officer represents the brave individual who daily encounters the worst manifestations of human behavior (Reese, 1986). The run-down and drug-infested tenements, the dark and dirty alleys, and the violent streets are the natural environment of the police officer, our guide and protector. Partly, it is the officer's ability to face the ugly side of our society that impels us, as a society, to

show our admiration and gratitude to the police officer (Uviller, 1989).

Frequently, the police represent idealistic behavior in the community and departments strive to attain or maintain good public relations with the community they serve. From this orientation the police realize that citizens are an important source of information and have legitimate concerns and suggestions. Effective police departments have recognized that it is in their own best interest to be competent, fair, honest, and responsive to the individual needs of citizens. This responsiveness can be measured by the number and attitude of citizens who willingly approach the department to make complaints, inquiries, or offer assistance to the police (U.S. Department of Justice [USDOJ], 1987).

Problem solving can often be accomplished effectively by involving both the community and police in decision-making rather than the police alone. The sharing of responsibilities allows for both police and community members to identify community problems and determine strategies to alleviate these problems (USDOJ, 1987; Wasserman & Moore, 1988).

Further, the community entrusts its values to the police. In turn, the police enter into an agreement with the community to protect societal values. Law enforcement officers should recognize the fact that as protectors of the community they must uphold a higher standard of values and ethics than the private citizen. It is this type of conduct, one that is beyond reproach, that enables the police to represent

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idealistic behavior in the community (USDOJ, 1987).

A commitment to law and order, the upholding of morals and values, and the ability to serve the community dutifully has enabled the police to become positive role models in society. As Manning (1977) states, due to their visibility and attachment to the traditional values of patriotism, honor, duty, and commitment, the police have become symbols of integrity in society. The individual who wears the police uniform is a positive symbol to most people; visible evidence that society employs dedicated individuals to protect civil order, even at the cost of their lives (Trojanowicz, 1991).

Viewed as integral protectors of the social order, the police are empowered with the authority to maintain the status quo. They serve to deter crime, and reduce the perceived fear of crime. However, no matter how much training an officer receives or caution he or she exercises, unpredictable human behavior can pose a danger to the law enforcement officer (Trojanowicz, 1991). The death of an officer by either felonious or accidental means serves to diminish the services the police provide to society (Manning, 1977).

#### The death of a police officer

The death of an officer has many implications for both society and the police culture. The loss of an officer's life can increase the perception of vulnerability in society, the lack of morality in society, or illustrate a reduced ability to deter criminal intentions. To the police, a colleague's

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death intensifies the mortality of the profession, invokes a sense of vulnerability, increases introspection among officers, and reaffirms the danger associated with defending society against criminal and immoral actions (Arenberg, 1988; Garner, 1991; Manning, 1977; Muir, 1977; Reese, 1987).

After the ambush-style shooting deaths of two Bay City, Michigan police officers, Sheriff Gerald P. VanAlst expressed the effects the tragedy would have on area law enforcement officials.

"I think they will be fully conscious of this for about six months...Then it will fade. Unfortunately, it won't last much beyond that. Some complacency will set in. I'm not knocking these men and women. It's just human nature." However, "It will be in the back of their minds for the rest of their careers...So to that extent, there will be some lasting effect of this tragedy" (Younkman, 1991, p. 1A).

Further, Bay City, Michigan Acting Police Chief Timothy Lochinski added the following thoughts of this incident.

"I think you begin to realize you are mortal...It could happen to you right here in Bay City. It's not something that happens in Detroit, or Flint or even Saginaw, now it is in Bay City. You are more conscious of what can happen" (Younkman, 1991, p. 1A).

Although the volume of police killings is less dramatic than homicides in the general public, the rate of lethal assaults against the police exceeds that rate against the general public. From 1977 to 1984, the rate of lethal assaults against the police was approximately double that of lethal assaults against the public. Police killings vary each year in both number and rate, but the rate per 100,000 is always greater than for the general public (Peterson & Bailey,



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A police funeral serves as an occasion when tributes can be made to those individuals who uphold the social order. Police officers will unite to aid one of their own to a degree unlike other professions. This response is a tribute to the bond officers have for one another; they face the realization that at any moment their time could come (Depue, 1979). The symbolism and imagery of paramilitary procedures represent the solidarity and respect the police unit has for its members. The funeral reassures officers of the rituals and ceremony they will receive should they have the misfortune to be killed while performing their occupational duty (Arenberg, 1988; Manning, 1977; McClain, Aurentz, & Ellis, 1983).

The task and action-oriented procedures implemented by the department help lessen the anguish felt by surviving family members and colleagues of the deceased officer. The department must be there to offer comfort and support. The department should also be ready to provide any assistance the family may desire, and should be prepared to offer the family information regarding federal, state and departmental death benefits (Arenberg, 1988).

Out of respect, a police department will arrange a ceremonial funeral to honor the officer and all the officer stood for. However, even a respectful tribute will not alleviate the long-term psychological trauma associated with the immediate loss of a close individual. The most important thing the department can do to comfort the family is let them

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know the department shares their loss and will do anything to ease their burden (Arenberg, 1988).

Each year, law enforcement officers are killed in the line of duty. The Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reports revealed that in 1990, 65 officers were killed feloniously while 67 officers were killed accidentally in the line of duty. An officer dies every 59 hours; the average age of the officer is 25 years (Shaw, 1991a). Moreover, over 73,000 city, county, state, and federal officers were assaulted in 1990.

#### The impact of the officer's death on survivors

Whether an officer is killed feloniously or accidentally, the event is considered traumatic to those who knew the officer. The sudden death of an officer has psychological impacts on those individuals closest to the officer. For numerous police spouses, the symptoms they encounter from the officer's death meet the criteria for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD is an unpredictable psychological anxiety disorder resulting from an exposure to a traumatic incident. The symptoms of this disorder may develop in a few days, or take years to develop. Some of the most common reactions suffered by survivors are having difficulty making decisions and concentrating, feeling alone or uncomfortable in social situations, sleeping difficulties, having flashbacks or thoughts of the traumatic experience, experiencing a diminished ability to express emotions, and feelings of

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hostility. To be classified as PTSD, these symptoms must last for at least one month, but can be lessened in emotional magnitude by the prompt counseling of the survivor(s) (Blak, 1986; Geiger, 1985; International Association of Chiefs of Police [IACP], 1990; McCafferty, Domingo, & Palahunic, 1989; Paradise, 1991; "Police Agencies," 1987; Solomon & Horn, 1986; Stillman, 1986).

In addition to psychological effects, the sudden death of an officer has emotional and financial effects on survivors and the police colleagues. The survivors' and colleagues' distress levels are affected by the police department's response to the officer's death. Also, the department suffers from practical effects, e.g., assigning a liaison team to the family or dealing with the media after such a critical incident (Sawyer, 1989). Furthermore, the stress a surviving spouse encounters can depend on the way the spouse was notified of the death (Pastorella, 1991a; Shaw, 1991), and the length of time married to the deceased officer ("Police Agencies," 1987 ; Stillman, 1986).

Survivors have been notified either in person or through a telephone conversation. Unfortunately, there are also individuals who learn of their spouse's death through the media. Those individuals contacted by telephone, or who have learned of the incident secondhand, have reported additional trauma of guilt and hostility from their perception that the department lacked compassion in their notification methods (Geiger, 1985; "Police Agencies," 1987; Stillman, 1986).

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Those women who were married for less than ten years displayed a more severe reaction to the loss of the spouse than those individuals married for more than ten years (Stillman, 1986).

The fewer years an officer is married, the more the spouse will report stress should the officer be killed. These spouses, who in many cases are young, report intense feelings of hostility and alienation. They report being more fearful and feel they have lost the ability to express or feel positive affect, i.e., contentment or joy. These individuals are vulnerable and fear the possibility of being taken advantage of (Pastorella, 1991a; Stillman, 1986). In reality, their vulnerability can make them susceptible to sexual seductions, or experiencing the difficulty of establishing a relationship. These individuals need the assistance of counseling and support groups (Stillman, 1986).

#### A lack of psychological services for officers and survivors

Traditionally, death has been a delicate subject to discuss in our society. Few people will discuss death, and communities offer little assistance to survivors. Our socialization has encouraged us to avoid conversations about death. Often, conversations made about death are to minimize or diminish any legitimate feelings concerning death (Hendricks, 1984).

Emotional and psychological issues are rarely addressed by police administrators. More than likely, a law enforcement department policy will respond to a fatality in a tangible



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manner, e.g., the chain of command for notification purposes or how to perform the ceremonial functions associated with the funeral. Some departmental policies deal with notification procedures, funeral arrangements, and assisting with legal and financial paperwork, yet they do not address intangible areas or the long-term trauma associated with sudden and unexpected death (Shaw, 1991; Stillman, 1986).

Law enforcement managers need to realize the importance the family places on the department just "being there" for the family (V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992). Unknowingly, some law enforcement agencies have deepened a family's grief by ignoring the family after the funeral of the officer (Arenberg, 1988; G. Kaufman, personal communication, April 16, 1992).

Police departments often avoid emotional and psychological areas, which are intangible, due to the police culture. Police agencies often wish to project an image of maintaining control and being invulnerable to the emotional or stressful effects of a traumatic incident. Further, many officers believe they are in total control of their emotions and indestructible in their actions; therefore, emotional assistance is unnecessary. This officer mind-set is a coping mechanism used to deal with the dangers and hazards of police work (Blak, 1986; Klein, 1989; Mullins, 1985; Ostrov, 1991; Pastorella, 1991; Pierson, 1989; Reese & Horn, 1990; Violanti, 1991). Moreover, to feel vulnerable makes the job more difficult, and the officers do not want their families to

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worry about their safety (Shaw, 1991a).

Some officers have been trained not to reveal their emotions; thus, they suppress or deny their emotional reactions to critical incidents (Blak, 1991; Fisher, 1986; Harris, Sprang & Komsak, 1988; Hendricks, 1984; Horn & Solomon, 1989; Lippert, 1991). This is a dangerous attitude for the officer to engage in. Denying emotions can create psychological harm at the expense of the individual (Hendricks, 1984; Lippert, 1991; Ostrov, 1991; Violanti, 1991). Even though police officers are trained to recognize and deal with a variety of traumatic events, they also can succumb to the stress associated with these events (IACP/BJA National Law Enforcement Policy Center [IACP/BJA NLEPC], 1990). Traditionally, law enforcement officers have strived to live by the myth that police officers solve other people's problems, yet do not have any problems of their own (Fisher, 1986).

The lack of available police psychological services may prevent the discovery of any hidden stress-related organizational problems (Dunne, 1991; Reese, 1987). The needs of both the colleagues and family members of the deceased officer may be considered to be in conflict with the agency's need to maintain order (Stillman, 1986).

Officers and their families may not accept psychological support because they feel only others within the police culture can truly understand their problems and be able to address the special issues and problems police families face.

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This lack of understanding combined with the cautious attitudes of those within the police culture aids in the avoidance of emotional and psychological areas (Klein, 1989; Stillman, 1986). Officers do not want to face the onus of seeking assistance from a "shrink."

Police are not expected to have the same human frailties as other members of society, which makes it more difficult for an officer to acknowledge his or her problems and seek help (Stratton, 1987). Also, the officer may be hesitant to see a counselor where the officer's "street people" seek assistance (Depue, 1979).

The duration of trauma suffered by police survivors may extend to long-term emotional distress. One reason for this phenomenon is the lack of support or intervention services provided by the community. Some individuals assume families involved in the police culture are predisposed to the possibility of death (Stillman, 1986a).

Police survivors suffer from stress because they do not seek psychological assistance. Survivors endure their pain because of the misconception that, as members of the police family they should be better prepared for tragedy. However, some survivors refuse community services due to their belief that only members of the police culture can truly understand their problems (Pastorella, 1991a; Shaw, 1991; Stillman, 1986; Stillman, 1986a).

The Concerns of Police Survivors study (Stillman, 1986) reported that the surviving family members and colleagues of

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officers killed in action are no more prepared for the loss of a police family member than are those individuals whose family member is not associated with law enforcement. Moreover, police survivors have exhibited psychological symptoms associated with PTSD for periods of two years after the incident occurred (Shaw, 1991).

### Felonious versus accidental death

Often, society regards homicidal death as more serious or traumatic than death caused by an accident. Consequently, the assumption arises that survivors of an officer killed feloniously experience more severe trauma than survivors of an officer killed accidentally. As a result, some departmental policies provide financial assistance only for felonious on-duty deaths and exclude accidental deaths. However, spouses of officers killed either feloniously or accidentally experience the same level of distress (Stillman, 1986).

An increase in distress can occur for the families of officers killed accidentally. Some police departments respond differently to those deaths resulting from homicide as opposed to a death attributed to accident, with homicides receiving more or preferential treatment from the department. This dissimilar treatment adds injury to survivors who are already traumatized (Stillman, 1986). Survivors are dismayed to witness departmental treatment that is different from the type of departmental assistance they expected.



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### Benefits and compensation

Survivors indicate problems in obtaining benefits and compensation (Geiger, 1985; Sawyer, 1989; Stillman, 1986). Some departments provide benefits, yet there are delays in processing requests. Some departments are unaware of all available benefits (Stillman, 1986). However, other agencies readily provide assistance to survivors and some of these agencies are mentioned in the following sections.

### Public safety officers' benefit act

Of the departments that provide benefits, many of these provisions are financial in nature. On September 29, 1976, President Gerald R. Ford signed the Public Safety Officers' Benefit Act (PSOB). This Act provides a \$100,000 benefit to eligible survivors of a public safety officer whose traumatic death occurred in the line of duty. This Act also provides the same benefits to a public safety officer who obtains a permanent and totally disabling injury as the result of an incident that occurred in the line of duty (O' Sullivan, 1989; Powers, 1985; U.S. Department of Justice [USDJ], 1976).

Once the U.S. Department of Justice has approved a claim for death benefits, the benefits are paid in one sum. If there is no surviving child of the deceased officer, the sum goes to the surviving spouse. If there is a surviving child or children, one-half goes to the child or children in equal shares and the other half to the surviving spouse. If there is no surviving spouse the sum goes to the child or children

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in equal share. If there is no surviving child(ren) or spouse, the sum goes to the parent or parents in equal shares. A public safety officer must be survived by a survivor as previously noted if the benefits are to be paid. Further, public safety officers cannot name their own beneficiaries under this Act (O' Sullivan, 1989; USDOJ, 1976).

There are limitations and exclusions to the Act in which no benefits will be paid. The following are reasons for benefit exclusion: If the death or permanent and total disability was the result of an officer's intentional misconduct; the officer was voluntarily intoxicated; the officer was performing duties in a grossly negligent manner; the claimant's actions were a substantial contributing factor to the death of the officer; and, to any military-related officers. Furthermore, deaths or permanent and total disabilities resulting from stress, occupational illness, or chronic, or progressive and congenital diseases are not covered by the Act unless there is a traumatic incident that occurs which is a substantial factor to death or permanent and total disability (O' Sullivan, 1989; USDOJ, 1976). However, in Michigan, an officer who suffers from an on-duty or off-duty heart attack is insured according to a state civil service ruling (D. M. Payne, personal communication, September 21, 1992).

The benefits provided by the PSOB Act should not reduce the amount of local or state benefits received by the survivor. Furthermore, the PSOB benefit is not reduced by

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benefits received at the local or state level. The PSOB Act ensures that the benefits received under this Act will not be subject to federal income or estate tax. During the first 10 years the PSOB has been enacted, more than \$106 million has been awarded to 2,134 families in hopes of alleviating the economic burden associated with the tragedy ("In 10 years," 1986). Survivors can file a claim for these benefits by contacting either the U.S. Department of Justice or by filing through the organization in which the public safety officer served. The U.S. Department of Justice will then determine whether the circumstances of the death or permanent and total disability entitle the claimant for a benefit payment (O'Sullivan, 1989; USDOJ, 1976).

#### Municipal police department benefits

Local police departments that do provide assistance to a survivor of an officer killed in the line of duty often do so in a financial manner. Examples of financial assistance are provided by the Baltimore, Maryland; Chicago, Illinois; and New York, New York police departments.

R. L. Daniel (personal communication, April 1, 1992) stated the Baltimore Police Department provides the following benefits to families of sworn members who are killed in the performance of their duties:

- A. Approximately \$100,000 from the U.S. Government.
- B. \$50,000 from the state of Maryland.
- C. \$20,000 from the city of Baltimore.

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- D. \$6,000 from the Death Relief fund.
- E. \$3,000 from the Fraternal Order of Police.
- F. Return of pension contribution (7% of salary with interest).
- G. Full pay to the spouse (until he or she remarries) or to the children until age 19 (22 if full-time students)
- H. Free college tuition (four years) to any state-run college from the Conroy Tuition Program.
- I. An additional \$1,500 per year (up to four years) for educational expenses to cover non-tuition costs (From Fallen Heroes of Baltimore, Inc.).

The Chicago Police Department also provides financial assistance to surviving family members of a police officer killed in the line of duty. The distribution of the finances, from a specific fund included in the General Finance Section of the Annual Appropriation Ordinance, follows a format similar to the distribution of funds from the PSOB Act. For one year after a police officer is killed in the line of duty, the salary of that officer shall be paid to surviving dependents in the aforementioned manner (Chicago Municipal Code Handbook, § 11-42, 1987).

Awards determined from the "Board of Trustees of the Policemen's and Firemen's Death Benefit Fund" range from a minimum of \$10,000 to be paid to a surviving spouse or single minor child to a maximum of \$25,000 for three or more



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dependents to be divided in equal parts (Chicago Municipal Code Handbook, §22-12, 1987).

The trustee bank may disburse financial amounts in the interest of the beneficiaries to provide support for educational expenses of the child(ren) or dependent minor siblings of a deceased police officer (Chicago Municipal Code Handbook, §22-7, 1987).

The New York City Police Department offers a Pension Section within their organization that counsels survivors regarding the types of monetary benefits for which they are eligible. Moreover, the pension coordinators will prepare applications for assistance from the Police Relief Fund, a line organization representing all uniformed ranks. The Fund organization provides financial assistance to personnel and their families on an as-needed basis (P. A. Gager, personal communication, April 14, 1992).

#### Private assistance-The Hundred Club

During the early 1950's, a group of individuals led by William Packer founded the Hundred Club. The origination of the club began when a Detroit patrol officer, Andreas Mellert Jr., was killed while making a seemingly routine arrest. Patrolman Mellert left behind a widow who was expecting a child within the next few weeks. Saddened by the financial distress of the widow, Mr. Packer contacted one hundred friends and associates and asked them to contribute to a fund he was raising. The purpose of the fund would be to provide

immediate financial relief for the family of an officer killed in the line of duty (Powers, 1985). Packer was able to raise \$7800.00, which was almost double the salary of a patrolman during that period. Packer also arranged a scholarship fund for Mellert's daughter who was born six weeks after he was killed. Shortly after this incident the contributors to the Mellert fund decided their efforts would continue to be needed, so in 1952 the Detroit Hundred Club came into existence (Hundred Club of Cook County, 1992; R. Webber, personal communication, March 27, 1992).

The Hundred Club has since expanded to a present 500 members and this idea has spread to other cities and organizations throughout the United States. The Hundred Club insists on maintaining a low profile, only emerging when a tragedy occurs. Their motto, "We care for those who care for us" is proven each time this organization provides financial assistance to deceased officers' spouses and scholarship funds to both the spouses and children for their continued education (R. Webber, personal communication, March 27, 1992; Powers, 1985).

An example of a Hundred Club branch organization that continues the idea of providing immediate financial assistance to families of law enforcement officers or firefighters killed in the line of duty is the Hundred Club of Cook County. Currently, this organization, which resembles the original Hundred Club, pays all existing debts the family has incurred at the time of the officer's or firefighter's death, college

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and medical expenses of the children and spouse, and up to \$30,000 to pay off the mortgage. This private, non-profit organization has the flexibility to provide assistance on a case-by-case basis and will arrange for spouses to receive legal and investment advice in addition to financial support (Hundred Club of Cook County, 1992).

When an officer is killed in the line of duty it usually takes two months before pension and other compensations begin. That is the main reason the Hundred Club members feel their immediate contribution is so important. Between 1966 and 1986 the amount of the initial check paid to families was increased from \$1,000 to \$2,500. Other contributions have also increased, primarily for mortgages, but the organization membership dues remain at \$200 a year (Hundred Club of Cook County, 1992).

Ralph G. Scheu, president of the Hundred Club of Cook County, summarizes the purpose of the club by explaining that the organization will do whatever is necessary to put the deceased officer's family finances in order. That includes paying most debts in full. The club will assist in any way provided that the need is legitimate and within the organization's current financial limitations. Eugene Tracy, chairman and CEO of People's Energy Corporation and People's Gas, Light and Coke Co. expressed the general feeling of many Cook County residents when he was quoted as saying,

"The Hundred Club requires so little of its members, and yet it does so much. It takes care of those who take care of us" (Hundred Club of Cook County, 1992, p. 10).

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### Explanation of death benefits

Stillman (1986) reports that 89 percent of the surveyed police departments explain death benefits to their employees, but the extent to which the officers understand the information is unknown. Departments indicate they supply this information in ways ranging from brief oral descriptions to giving officers a booklet to read. However, only a small number of departments fully explain the death benefits and compensation they provide to their employees. Some departments lack formal procedure to assist with financial paperwork and many lack psychological services associated with death benefits. Nevertheless, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) has prepared a survivor's handbook as a guide to death benefits.

### A survivor benefit guide

The "Death and Dying" guide prepared by the Police Employees Assistance Program (PEAP) of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department offers a variety of services associated with the death of a police officer. Some of the services offered are a guide to funeral arrangements, records of general information and the location of valuable documents, and benefits that are available at a local, state, and federal level (Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department [LVMPD], 1989; O' Sullivan, 1989; V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992).

Funeral arrangements include the choice of funeral home

in which to have the service, the type of burial proceedings, cremation (if desired), and funeral expenses. Funerals can be arranged to fit everyone's economic standards. Therefore, costs should be governed by what the survivor(s) can afford (LVMPD, 1989; O' Sullivan, 1989).

Funeral costs include the following:

A. The services of the Mortuary and staff that are often presented as a "package" and include:

- Preparation of the body
- Viewing and Church service
- Conducting the funeral and grave side service
- Funeral director and staff services
- Filing of necessary papers and permits

B. Choosing between caskets and urns

- Caskets--prices range from a few hundred to several thousand dollars
- Urns for cremated remains--prices range from one hundred to one thousand dollars
- Rental caskets--to be available for those who will be cremated after the funeral services

C. Property and Memorialization

- Burial or Interment space
- Preparation of Grave space
- Marker
- Vault/Liner
- Endowment care



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The best time to make these decisions is before the need arises. The shock and grief from a death can bring a sense of helplessness that can hinder wise funeral arrangement decisions. Preparing in advance can reduce funeral costs and some of the stress for the survivors. A law enforcement officer should make a list of the following instructions in the event of his or her death: choice of funeral home, religious preference, where the service should be held, wishes for a lodge service, selection of pallbearers, and a choice of cremation if desired (Arenberg, 1988; LVMPD, 1989; Shaw, 1991).

#### The funeral coordination team

Another critical area where planning is essential is the coordination of funeral services. Rather than leave the funeral to chance, it may be wise to designate a "response team" that functions as a liaison between all facets of the funeral and ensures all procedures operate in a smooth order (McClain et al., 1983).

A group of volunteers, not close coworkers of the deceased officer, should be available to assist the family and coordinate activities for the department. These activities should be in relation with the family's wishes and in no way disrupt the plans of the family. The degree of the response team's involvement is the sole prerogative of the family. In some instances the response team's role may be merely advisory (McClain et al., 1983; Shaw, 1991).

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The following are considerations stated by McClain et al. (1983) for the department to keep in mind when organizing a funeral:

- A. Mutual support: Family/Police--The relationship between the family and police should be of close interaction. It is suggested that two individuals share co-leadership roles in funeral organization. A family member will be overall in charge of funeral planning, with a police supervisor act as "second-in-command."
- B. Component activities--One officer should be in charge of each subsidiary activity. The failure to delegate an individual for each activity may result in some activity being mistakenly overlooked.
- C. Legal issues--A legal representative should be present from the onset to insure the proper release of the officer's personal belongings and to act as a "buffer" should discrepancies arise as to who has the right to make the funeral arrangements.
- D. Memorial contributions--The agency should have a policy that determines the distribution of monies to avoid indecision and inconsistencies. This policy can determine how monies will be accepted and the options available to donors.
- E. Traffic Control--Traffic control along all major routes to and from the funeral should be specifically assigned to officers.

F. Parking--Individuals should be assigned to arrange parking at the funeral and burial site.

G. Out-of-town officers--Provisions should be made for those out-of-area officers who attend the funeral. The host agency should have sufficient personnel available to greet out-of-town officers. Out-of-town officers should be informed of the schedule of ceremonies; and, if possible, they should be invited back to agency headquarters after the funeral for a meal.

Other considerations such as religious concerns, funeral home arrangements, fiscal arrangements, and an up-to-date list of the officer's records are also important facets of funeral coordination and should be planned for accordingly. However, because these considerations are mentioned in other areas of this paper, they are not elaborated on in this section of the paper.

In addition to funeral arrangements, the officer should make a life support decision in the event that after the accident the officer has no chance of recovery or to be able to return to a productive life. The officer should be asked if he or she approves of extraordinary efforts to save his or her life, or if the decision should be left to a family member. Some states recognize the validity of a "living will" if the officer's death is imminent (Arenberg, 1988).

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### Records of general information and valuable documents

Up-to-date records should be kept of each officer's personal data and location of parents and nearest living relative to make every attempt to notify personally family members of the officer's death. The records should include the spouse's employment, the children's schools, the officer's medical history, physician and dentist, hospitalization and dental insurance, church affiliation, and attorney (Geiger, 1985; Shaw, 1991). Also, the record should list who the officer would like to accompany the department representative when the death notification is made (O' Sullivan, 1989; Shaw, 1991).

A record of valuable documents and their location should include the following items: the officer's will and the names of the executor and attorney; life, accident, and automobile insurance policies, which include the insurance company, its address, and the insurance agent; bank accounts that name the bank and account number(s); safety deposit box(es), their box numbers, and the location of the keys; stocks and bonds and the brokers; real estate information, notes, and agreements; marriage license; birth certificate; past years' income tax records; cemetery deed; donor card; and, a list of real property and deeds. A law enforcement officer's preparation of a valuable documents record will help alleviate the additional grief that may be associated with trying to produce these documents (Arenberg, 1988; LVMPD, 1989; O' Sullivan, 1989).

The department should allow officers to take valuable documents forms home to discuss the information with their families. These forms should be updated yearly to make any necessary adjustments in information (Arenberg, 1988).

#### Financial death benefits

All full-time employees of the LVMPD are eligible for group benefits associated with the Las Vegas Police Protective Association, Inc. The group coverage of "non-contributory life and accidental death and dismemberment benefits" allows \$10,000 for life benefits and \$10,000 for accidental death and dismemberment benefits. Also, the spouse and each child will receive \$1,000 for dependent contributory life benefits (LVMPD, 1989).

Once a designated beneficiary is decided when an officer is killed, the LVMPD Payroll Section of the Fiscal Affairs Bureau provides a final payout of accrued salary, vacation, and bonus time. They will also help establish whether the officer had attained enough work credits to receive Social Security benefits. A lump-sum death payment of \$255 is available to the eligible survivor in addition to any monthly survivor insurance benefits (LVMPD, 1989).

When an officer is killed in the line of duty the state of Nevada provides financial assistance through the State Industrial Insurance System Coverage. This compensation, which LVMPD (1989) states is a death benefit, provides the following benefits to family survivors:



- A. Burial expenses, not to exceed \$5,000.
- B. To the spouse,  $66 \frac{2}{3}$  percent of the average monthly wage paid until the spouse's death or remarriage, with 2 years' compensation in one sum upon remarriage.
- C. In the subsequent death of the spouse, the children will equally share the compensation until the youngest reaches age 18, or the age of 22 if he or she is enrolled as a full-time student in an accredited school.
- D. Following the remarriage of the spouse, each child must be paid 15 percent of the average monthly wage, up to a maximum family benefit of  $66 \frac{2}{3}$  of the average monthly wage.
- E. If no spouse or dependent children survive, dependent parents or siblings will receive  $33 \frac{1}{3}$  percent of the average monthly wage apiece with the aggregate compensation not exceeding  $66 \frac{2}{3}$  of the average monthly wage.

If a non-federal law enforcement officer is killed in the line of duty, the U.S. Department of Labor through the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs may provide a monthly compensation to eligible survivors, provided they meet certain limited conditions. This compensation will pay the spouse 50 percent of the officer's pay at the time of death. If children are eligible for benefits, the spouse will receive 45 percent of the pay and each child is entitled to 15 percent.



If the children are the only survivors, the first child is entitled to 40 percent of the pay and the additional children receive 15 percent, shared equally. The total monthly compensation may not exceed the employee's pay or 75 percent of the monthly pay of the highest step for grade GS-15 of a U.S. government employee (LVMPD, 1989).

This compensation terminates upon the survivors' death or marriage. Upon remarriage, the deceased officer's spouse will receive a lump sum of two years' compensation. However, monthly benefits will continue if the widow or widower marries after the age of 60. Awards to children, grandchildren, or siblings terminate upon reaching 18 years of age unless the individual is a student or incapable of self-support. Burial expenses will be paid for up to \$800 for the officer killed in the line of duty (LVMPD, 1989).

#### Psychological services offered by the police department

Psychological services provided by the departments in response to the Stillman (1986) survey indicate over 50 percent of those departments have a psychological unit, yet only 30 percent of departments provide access to a staff psychologist. Relatively few departments provide peer-counseling or police-family response services; less than half make counseling referrals; and less than 20 percent offer financial assistance for outside counseling.

An exception to this problem is the New York City Police Department (NYCPD). This organization offers a Police Self

Support Group that is composed of uniformed members of all ranks who have experienced traumatic events. The NYCPD not only offers peer counseling, but their Employee Assistance Program will also make referrals for professional assistance when necessary (P. A. Gager, personal communication, April 14, 1992).

Many departments do not consider psychological or long-term needs of survivors to be part of their responsibility. Survivors indicated diminished services and contact from the police department shortly after the officer's funeral (Stillman, 1986).

Most survivors desired some type of contact, either formal or informal, to continue after the funeral. The families do not want to be forgotten or abandoned as a result of the loss of the officer; thus, the department should reassure the family that they are still considered part of the department's family (Arenberg, 1988; Sawyer, 1989; Sawyer, 1990; Snow, 1990; Stillman, 1986a; V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992).

How the department acts towards the family within the first three to six months after the officer's funeral will have a great impact on the speed and quality of the family's recovery from its grief. Within this time, officers closest to the deceased should make it a point to visit the family at least once a month. These visits need not be long; their purpose is simply to remind the family that the department has not forgotten the deceased officer and that he or she is



remembered and missed (Arenberg, 1988; V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992).

One reason for the feeling of abandonment is that the deceased officer's colleagues are experiencing the distress of losing a co-worker. This problem could be reduced if officers were prepared to handle line-of-duty death and given victimization training (Sawyer, 1990). Training and education in the area of death notification may be helpful; however, there is little training offered to most death notifiers (Hendricks, 1984).

#### The effect of a colleague's death on an officer

An officer can help him or herself by informing the surviving family of all the details surrounding the tragedy. By explaining the incident to the family the officer is encouraged to work through the grief of the loss of a colleague (Sawyer, 1990). It is also important to understand that the notifier of the tragedy may be susceptible to a variety of emotions, and the officer's death may be a traumatic event for the notifier. Neither the notifier nor the survivors are prepared for the death of an officer (Hendricks, 1984; Pastorella, 1991a).

Since notifiers can experience some of the same emotional trauma the survivors will experience, they can discuss their own thoughts and feelings about the traumatic incident with the survivors. This sharing of emotions may enable the survivors to ventilate some of their emotions and increase

their ability to begin movement through the grieving period (Hendricks, 1984).

The death of an officer reminds sworn personnel of their own mortality. A critical incident, such as a line-of-duty death, can create high levels of stress for the police officer. If the stress is not alleviated, problems can arise that will affect the officer and police department. Therefore, it would be beneficial for both the officer and the department to develop a type of psychological assistance program that maintains positive psychological health and provides a clear message that the stress the officer is feeling is legitimate; that it is all right to be human. A program that promotes early intervention after an officer's exposure to a traumatic incident may assist in eliminating some of the symptoms associated with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. It is important for law enforcement administrators to understand what PTSD is, how to recognize it and how to anticipate what may trigger it (Bergmann & Queen, 1987; Hoff, 1978; Klein, 1989; McCafferty, Domingo, & McCafferty, 1989; Paradise, 1991; Snow, 1990a; Wells, Getman, & Blau, 1988).

A critical incident is defined by Snow (1990a, p. 79), as

"Any occurrence that brings an overwhelming emotional response from the officer...And whose emotional effect goes beyond the officer's normal coping ability."

Often, the critical incident is repressed by the officer for numerous reasons and this repression leads to emotional problems. Further, this incident may result in a change of the officer's values, confidence, and ideals (Bergmann &

Queen, 1987; Wells et al., 1988).

### Critical incident stress debriefing

A critical incident stress debriefing (CISD) program can help lessen emotional problems by having the officers involved with the tragedy brought together for a debriefing session approximately 24 to 72 hours after the incident. The officers are led by a mental health professional trained in the area of emotional illness to express and share what feelings they have experienced since the critical incident in an educational process atmosphere. The result is officer acknowledgment and realization that the feelings experienced are normal for an abnormal situation and their feelings will subside given time and understanding (Blak, 1986; Blak, 1991; Bohl, 1991; G. Kaufman, personal communication, April 16, 1992; Hendricks, 1984; IACP/BJA NLEPC, 1990; Lippert, 1991; Pierson, 1989; Sawyer, 1989; Snow, 1990a; Solomon, 1990; Wagner, 1986; Wittrup, 1991).

This psychological intervention at a group level serves a dual purpose. First, CISD provides the organization with a healing process. The group debriefing makes it possible for individuals to comfort each other and share emotions without feeling unusual. Second, the participants can learn from this experience. Sharing individual perceptions about the incident allows each individual the ability to integrate the experienced trauma more easily. By comparing feelings, the individual appreciates the idea that others are also



experiencing normal feelings concerning an abnormal incident (Blak, 1986; Blak, 1991; Bohl, 1991; G. Kaufman, personal communication, April 16, 1992; Hendricks, 1984; IACP/BJA NLEPC, 1990; Pierson, 1989; Sawyer, 1989; Snow, 1990a; Solomon, 1990).

### Critical incident symptoms

A CISD program is essential to the mental health of the police officer involved in a critical incident. Officers have reported feeling an emotional numbness or sense of denial during the incident. Afterwards, they may suffer from feelings of depression for the actions they undertook at the time of the incident. A feeling of irritability, an exaggerated startle response, memory loss, exhaustion, bewilderment, apathy, cynicism, and a feeling of isolation from officers not involved in the incident are symptoms suffered by an officer as a result of his or her involvement in the critical incident. The surviving partner in the case of an officer's death may suffer from flashbacks of the event during the investigation and other actions concerning the incident (Bergmann & Queen, 1987; Boyle, 1987; Halcrow, 1987; Hendricks, 1984; McCafferty, Domingo, & Palahunic, 1989; Pierson, 1989; Snow, 1990a; Wells et al., 1988). It should be noted that bewilderment or temporary confusion, and memory losses are problems that can drastically affect the officer's ability to perform; thus, possibly placing the officer in danger (McCafferty, Domingo, & Palahunic, 1989; Pierson,

1989).

It is important to understand that individuals suffering from these symptoms will do so at varying degrees and lengths of time. Some individuals may experience these symptoms all at once, while others seem to grieve one step at a time (Harris et al., 1988). The variability of reactions to a critical incident is a characteristic inherent in the diagnosis of PTSD (Nielsen, 1991).

Several factors influence the nature and degree of reactions to traumatic incidents. These reactions include: The nature of the traumatic incident as it interplays with the officer's past experiences and psychological mind set; the coping style of the officer; prior stressful events of a similar nature that the officer managed; the degree of warning available to the officer; physical and psychological proximity to the traumatic incident; concurrent stresses in the individual's life; and the extent and nature of the victim's social support (Nielsen, 1991).

It is imperative to alleviate the problems suffered by these officers because it has been noted that officers involved in critical incidents may develop a feeling of bitterness, become introspective, and lose enthusiasm (McCafferty, Domingo, & Palahunic, 1989; Muir, 1977; Sewell, Ellison, and Hurrell, 1988). The officer may become a loner and limit contact with fellow officers. These symptoms can result in the officer calling in sick more often and eventually leading to resignation or retirement from the

department without receiving proper emotional treatment to deal with the experienced symptoms (IACP/BJA NLEPC, 1990; Muir, 1977; Pierson, 1989).

Moreover, critical incident stress can lead to health problems such as high blood pressure, headaches, intestinal problems, and muscle tension. The CISD program can reduce these problems by giving the officers emotional and mental support needed to confront the long-term effects of a critical incident. Furthermore, a CISD program gives the police administrator an effective means to manage critical incident stress. Management of PTSD can be difficult, and symptoms and treatment may last for years. However, early recognition of the problem coupled with effective follow-up sessions can facilitate effective treatment (Halcrow, 1987; McCafferty, Domingo, & Palahunic, 1989; Ostrov, 1991; Sewell et al., 1988; Snow, 1990a).

#### Critical incident management

The immediate supervisor and unit commander are in the position to give general support to officers by setting a standard and model for helpful behavior. Rather than criticizing and persecuting, the supervisor can be trained to reassure officers in appropriate situations (McMains, 1989; Solomon & Horn, 1986). The immediate supervisor can offer counseling skills and experience to the traumatized officer and alleviate some effects of the incident. The mental effects of the incident may not occur immediately, or the

officer may attempt to hide the problem. However, the supervisor should be responsible for monitoring the behavior of personnel for any symptoms of the disorder (IACP, 1990).

The supervisor can arrange all the necessary administrative details to lessen the stress on the traumatized officer. Initially, the supervisor should be dispatched to the scene of the traumatic incident and assume primary responsibility for care of the involved personnel without being unrealistic. The supervisor should refrain from using such statements as "I know everything will be fine" or "I know things will work out perfectly." Often, the afflicted officer will view these comments as superficial. The supervisor will have more effect by indicating his or her support for the officer and a willingness to do anything to help the officer (Harris et al., 1988; Hendricks, 1984; IACP, 1990; IACP/BJA NLEPC, 1990). In addition, the unit commander can ensure the immediate supervisor arranges the administrative details, while also providing supervisor support and guidance throughout all phases of the critical incident process (Wells et al., 1988).

Operational procedures dealing with traumatic incidents should be standardized, yet subject to the judgment of the intervener (fellow officer, peer counselor, supervisor). Wells et al., (1988) classify critical incident response procedures into departmental regulations in the following manner:

A. Activation. Traumatic incident regulations should

describe the types of events that would require a critical incident response from the department.

- B. Crisis team manager. Departmental procedures should designate the individual(s) to be contacted once a critical incident occurs.
- C. Crisis team members. Specific team members should be designated on a duty roster. The roster should incorporate officers who have experienced traumatic incidents with those individuals who would learn from the experience of working with a seasoned crisis intervener.
- D. Press liaison. The department should designate a public information officer to meet with the press.
- E. Initial assignments. Department regulations should provide specific assignment information for both the crisis manager and team members concerning the various types of critical incidents that may occur.
- F. Meetings and reports. The crisis management team should meet and report on the different types of crisis events likely to occur. Both formal and informal reports should specify the actions and results of crisis intervention with each type of incident.

#### Police employees assistance program

Another program implemented to reduce employee's stress and personal problems is the Police Employees Assistance

Program (PEAP). This program offers peer counseling and professional referral to employees and immediate family members of a law enforcement organization (Simpson, Jensen, & Owen, 1988).

The objectives of the program are identification, prevention, and treatment, when applicable, to personal and family casualties directly or indirectly attributable to job-related stress. Short-term, and confidential counseling or professional referral is voluntarily provided to those employees who seek assistance. When employee help is offered within the working atmosphere, the individual may be more willing to seek assistance before his or her problems become more severe. Simply knowing that the program exists may help the employees feel more comfortable as they face daily high-risk situations (Halcrow, 1987).

Immediate, at-work assistance can help alleviate an individual's lack of motivation to seek assistance from multiple resources, which provide the support and follow-up care that an employee may need. Officers experienced in interpersonal relations and "street experience" serve as full-time peer counselors and contact officers (Besner, 1985; Garner, 1991; IACP/BJA NLEPC, 1990; Lambuth, 1984; LVMPD policy, 1984; Nielsen, 1980; P. A. Gager, personal communication, April 14, 1992; Simpson et al., 1988; Williams & Bratton, 1990).

The role of the peer counselor does not replace the services of a professional psychologist. Rather, the peer

counselors assist employees with referrals and professional counseling services while maintaining the anonymity and confidentiality of participants. A goal of both the peer counselor and psychologist is to create a needs assessment for the employees; that is, learning what types of assistance are necessary, appropriate, and effective (Balzer & Pargament, 1987). The combination of officer and psychologist perspectives presents an inside understanding of a cop's world, and a clinical sensitivity to an individual's personal problems (Linden & Klein, 1986).

Research indicates that peer support is one of the most beneficial types of support a traumatized individual can receive. A fellow employee who "listens" and allows the officer to vent his or her feelings helps alleviate the individual's stress level. No one better understands and is empathetic to the problems of a law enforcement officer than another law enforcement officer. The officer is able to discuss openly and honestly his or her doubts and fears without feeling unusual or different from other law enforcement personnel (Balzer & Pargament, 1987; Blak, 1986; Bratz, 1986; Depue, 1979; Dunne, 1991; Harris et al., 1988; Horn & Solomon, 1989; Klein, 1989; Linden & Klein, 1986; Mireles & Soskis, 1990; Pastorella, 1991; Pierson, 1989; Solomon, 1990; Stratton, 1987; U.S. Department of Justice [USDOT], 1985). Some officers may find it difficult to talk to a psychologist and admit to a problem they are unable to handle; but those officers are often willing to discuss their

problem with a peer counselor who can resolve the problem or find further assistance for the officer (Klein, 1989).

Identifying the needs of the employee and properly referring the individual to available resources are essential duties of the peer counselor. The peer counselor knows from personal experience and training what range of emotional needs an officer may require as the result of a traumatic incident (Nielsen, 1980; Solomon & Horn, 1986; USDOJ, 1985). In addition to a peer counselor a police psychologist evaluates the participants and assists with critical incident trauma debriefings and fitness-for-duty evaluation after traumatic incidents. The combination of peer counselor and police psychologist referrals to a variety of local organizations and professionals enables the participants to use mental health care as needed, while facilitating constructive coping (Besner, 1984; Horn and Solomon, 1989; LVMPD policy, 1984; Paradise, 1991; Simpson et al., 1988; Wells et al., 1988).

According to Pastorella (1991), the function of peer counseling is a supplementary resource to psychological services that has not been used to its full potential. To acquire the full benefits of peer counseling services, the peer counselor must do more than merely lend a sympathetic ear to the officer. Training is the key to effective peer counseling. Peer counseling can become a more effective tool by instructing the peer intervener in facilitative listening, assessment techniques, and crisis intervention.

The employee assistance services are available



continuously on a voluntary basis; that is, employee participation is totally voluntary. If an employee is unable to see a counselor immediately or does not wish to discuss his or her problem in person, the New York City Police Department provides a HELPLINE number that individuals can call 24 hours daily to seek emergency psychological assistance (P. A. Gager, personal communication, April 14, 1992). Any employee situation mentioned as a result of this type of psychological service remains confidential (Depue, 1979; Garner, 1991; LVMPD policy, 1984; McMains, 1986; Simpson et al., 1988; Stratton, 1987; Wagner, 1986; Westbrook, 1984 ).

PEAP program involvement with critical incidents is nearly identical to the CISD program. One noted difference is the deployment of a PEAP counselor to the scene of a traumatic incident. In a CISD program there is a time lapse before employee assistance is provided, whereas in a PEAP program, immediate intervention is available. Immediate peer intervention at the scene of the incident can have a positive impact on the traumatized officer. Yvonne Conner, director of the Drug Enforcement Administration's Employee Assistance Program explains,

"Symbolism in this closed society means a lot. How your peers perceive you at times of stress means a great deal, so having one of your own arrive at the scene and reach out is more beneficial than several therapy sessions" (Paradise, 1991, p. 98).

In addition to peer counseling, a "companion officer" strategy may be implemented as a way to provide the traumatized officer with emotional support. The purpose of

the companion officer is to prevent the "locking in" of emotional trauma following a traumatic event. The companion officer works to diffuse the intense emotions the officer is experiencing so he or she may return to the pre-trauma level of emotion. The companion officer assists the traumatized officer by educating and remaining with the officer during the period immediately following the traumatic event. The purpose of these actions are to prepare traumatized officers for their ordeal by devising a solution for dealing with emotions they never learned to effectively resolve (Blum, 1987; IACP/BJA NLEPC, 1990).

Hoff (1978) emphasizes that law enforcement departments should devise policy that the departmental psychologist or a member of the peer support team be available to the officer immediately following the traumatic incident. The department should be active in its outreach to the officer; thus creating a clear message of concern, while reducing the impact of the trauma (Bergmann & Queen, 1987; Hoff, 1978).

The New York City Police Department's Trauma Debriefing Program provides immediate response to traumatic incidents 24 hours a day, seven days a week (P. A. Gager, personal communication, April 14, 1992; Reese & Horn, 1990). A PEAP counselor will arrange a mandatory debriefing by a police psychologist of all employees involved in a critical incident. This mandatory confidential debriefing will defuse the stigma an officer may face from seeking counseling (Bohl, 1991; Lambuth, 1984; Solomon, 1990; Stratton, 1987).

As a result of this service, the peer counselor can make recommendations concerning relief duty and follow-up counseling, if necessary (Simpson et al., 1988). All officers seeking mental health assistance should be provided with literature associated with mental health and a memorandum with the names and telephone numbers of all critical incident or peer support counselors, mental health services, and police chaplains (Reese & Horn, 1990).

Besner (1984, p. 34) states,

"Employee assistance programs promote mental health. By providing the employee with easier access to help, you reduce the time between the initial appearance of a problem and treatment. The earlier the intervention occurs, the greater the return to the department in productivity and costs saved."

An example of the success of a PEAP program can be found at the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD). Before the department's implementation of the PEAP program, the organization experienced a resignation rate of 60 percent for officers involved in a fatal shooting incident. However, during the first four years of the program's inception there were no resignations for this reason within the LVMPD. At least for the LVMPD, the program has been a success in promoting employee stability and organization savings. For example, training and equipping a LVMPD officer within the first year costs the department \$34,000 (Simpson et al., 1988). Managers are aware that if employees are lost for reasons that could be corrected, the cost in loss of experience coupled with the training of new employees will

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outweigh the cost of prevention of health programs (Stratton, 1987).

A cost-benefit analysis in this type of situation may encourage an organization to implement a PEAP program. The benefits of the program, in addition to financial savings, are that PEAP counselors are available for employee assistance at any time or place. However, problems still arise with the acceptance of the program (Simpson et al., 1988).

The major employee concern of this program is the stigmatization of the individual who wants or requires professional assistance. Some employees fear the utilization of these services may jeopardize the upward mobility of their career. The problem may be alleviated when the agency places the services outside the physical structure of the department and emphasizes the confidentiality of participant involvement. Officers from departments that have private psychological services away from headquarters do not face the onus of receiving psychological services (D. M. Payne, personal communication, September 21, 1992). Part of the effectiveness of the program is due to the confidentiality and professionalism of the services provided (Balzer & Pargament, 1987; Besner, 1984; Depue, 1979; Dunne, 1991; Pastorella, 1991; Reese & Horn, 1990; Simpson et al., 1988; Stratton, 1987; Wagner, 1986; Westbrook, 1987).

Many LVMPD employees feel the PEAP program is beneficial to their needs and departmental needs. They stress a minimal financial burden is placed upon the agency that offers this

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type of program. The majority of the expenses is the result of the counselors' salaries and office equipment. However, all on-duty traumatic incidents are debriefed at the cost of the department. Yet, it should be emphasized that any department cost is minimal if the program saves an employee's career or life (Balzer & Pargament, 1987; Lambuth, 1984; Simpson et al., 1988; Westbrook, 1987). The police administrator may recognize that employees suffering from personal problems consume more of the administrator's time than healthy, productive employees (Williams & Bratton, 1990).

The New York City Police Department's Psychological Services Unit offers a program within their Health Services Division. This psychological unit offers limited in-house counseling or referral for professional treatment. If a traumatized individual desires outside assistance, financial assistance for treatment outside the police department is available through the Police Relief Fund (P. A. Gager, personal communication, April 14, 1992).

#### Delivering police psychological services

The requirements and needs of each law enforcement agency place numerous constraints upon police administrators, which affect the types of psychological services delivered to the employees of the department. These constraints include: budgetary limitations, personnel decisions, and size of the organization in terms of personnel employed and territory served (Reese, 1987).

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The position of police psychologist differs according to the strengths and interests of the mental health professional. Due to the relatively new position of police psychologist, many mental health professionals are involved in developing their own job description once they are hired by a law enforcement agency. This development tends to focus the position in favor of the psychologist's strengths and interests (Reese, 1987).

The delivery of psychological services is dependent upon the organizational demands of the law enforcement agency. It is essential for the department to set priorities to the types of psychological services it desires before initiating the hiring process. Unfortunately, until recently there was no substantial network for mental health professionals to share ideas and learn of existing programs that provide psychological care to law enforcement agencies. There was no successful attempt to quantify the number of law enforcement agencies that provided psychological services, nor were any delivery systems explained in great detail. It seems that each police psychologist was newly developing a system, in terms of mental health delivery. For this reason, police psychological services vary in scope and magnitude (DiVasto, 1990; Reese, 1987).

#### Police department policies

Almost 70 percent of the departments Stillman (1986) surveyed reported a lack of policy concerning officer death.

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Police departments often lack formal policy because they are under the assumption that a line-of-duty death will not occur in their department. This is especially evident in small police departments. However, statistics from 1988 show that 40% of police officers killed feloniously were from cities with a population of less than 25,000. Sheriff Nick Gulling expresses the problem that occurs when a department is not prepared for a line-of-duty death,

"It was the first line-of-duty death we ever had...It caught us completely by surprise-we didn't think it would ever happen to us" (Snow, 1990, p. 34).

Unfortunately, it is this lack of planning that promotes an overwhelming effect on the department when this type of incident occurs (Snow,1990). Law enforcement officers need to realize that line-of-duty deaths are part of today's environment, and should be planned for by the department as carefully as any other critical incident situation (Arenberg,1988).

#### Death notification

Most departments with an active officer death policy mention notification procedures. Procedures vary, but most mention the need for immediate notification of the family. Family notification must occur before the media announces the tragedy, to eliminate the shock and anger the individual experiences from receiving secondhand news. Few departments specified which officer would notify the survivors (Geiger, 1985; Sawyer, 1990; Shaw, 1991; Snow, 1990b; Stillman, 1986;

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Wentink, 1991).

Often, any available officer was asked to notify the family. Sometimes, the deceased officer's partner was expected to notify the family. This problem could be eliminated by having officers designate an individual they want to notify their family in the event of a personal tragedy (Snow, 1990). Thus, a death notification delivered by a friend of the deceased will offer a level of compassion the survivor may desire (Shaw, 1991).

If the chief cannot assist in the notification of the family, an effort should be made by the chief to visit the family shortly after notification to convey the department's sympathy and support. This act shows the family and fellow officers that the department is concerned with the welfare of its employees (Shaw, 1991; Snow, 1990).

Arguably, the best way to notify a family of the loss of a loved one is by sending a notification team to the family residence. This team would consist of an individual the family had designated to notify them of such an incident, a high ranking official, the police chaplain, and possibly the police psychologist. Initially the team can effectively communicate the death of the officer and the events surrounding the incident; then, it can provide support for the family. Adequate information, delivered appropriately and in a timely manner can reduce some anxiety suffered by the survivors. This is important because it eliminates the stress caused by curiosity and unanswered questions (Hendricks, 1984;

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Shaw, 1991; Wentink, 1991).

#### Death notification guidelines

Survivors should be notified within their home of the officer's death. The death of an individual is a personal matter and should be discussed in an area of privacy (Hendricks, 1984; Wentink, 1991). It is extremely important to notify the entire family at once of the incident. Telling a family member of the incident at a later time will give that individual a feeling of separation from the family or a feeling of unimportance (Wentink, 1991).

The notification of an individual's death should follow certain guidelines. The first step is to notify the survivors in a straightforward manner. The second step is to deliver the notice in stages so the survivor can adjust his or her defenses to the news of the death. Simply notifying the survivor of the officer's death without any preparatory consideration is not considered professional and may lead to additional survivor trauma (Hendricks, 1984).

The third step is assessment of the survivor's behavior. The notification team should be alert to the verbal and nonverbal cues the survivor emits. These cues will indicate when the survivor is ready to continue with the notification process. A focus on these cues will indicate if the survivor seems to be suffering from additional stressors. The team can assess these stressors and determine if the survivor can remain in control. If not, the team should remain with the

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individual until a stable family member or professional intervener arrives (Hendricks, 1984; Wentink, 1991).

Finally, the team will need to answer any questions the survivor may have concerning funeral arrangements, how to view and secure the body, police and coroner procedures, and court processes. The team can provide this information in written form along with their names and phone numbers. This information is beneficial in the event the survivor will need to contact the notification team in the future (Hendricks, 1984).

A priority of the team after notification is to let the family know the department is there for them and will do whatever it can in its power to provide the family with a support system. The notification team should try to understand the reactions of the survivors so they can adjust their approach to the survivors thus benefiting the notification team and the survivors (Hendricks, 1984). This team can provide immediate assistance to the family so the mental healing process can begin (G. Kaufman, personal communication, April 16, 1992; Hendricks, 1984; J. Horn, personal communication, June 30, 1992; V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992).

The manner in which police administrators treat survivors has an impact on the morale of fellow officers. Officers perceive departmental treatment of survivors as a direct relationship to the department's concern and compassion for all officers (Hendricks, 1984).

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### Liaison team assignments

An effective department will plan for line-of-duty deaths by assigning personnel specific duties so conflicts of responsibility do not occur and everyone knows their job (Snow, 1990). Effective departments may assign an officer liaison team as communicators between the family and the department (Arenberg, 1988). A team of a male and female officer is sent to the family to alleviate distraught emotions since the emotional level of family members is high. A team of male and female officers helps prevent responses and officer actions from being misinterpreted by the family (Pastorella, 1991a; Shaw, 1991; Snow, 1990). A third member of the liaison team may include a mental health professional trained in the area of death notification (Geiger, 1985).

The assignment of a liaison team is a critical task, and the assigned officers should not be so close to the family that their emotional involvement detracts from their effectiveness to help the family. However, an officer close to the family can help the family in the mental healing process by sharing the grief of the deceased officer with the family (J. Horn, personal communication, June 30, 1992). The officers' duties are to assist the family in any manner possible, insure that all family needs are met, and keep the family notified of all departmental proceedings concerning the officer's death (Harris et al., 1988; Mireles & Soskis, 1990; Sawyer, 1990; Snow, 1990).

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### Incident information

From the survivor's view, a lack of shared information between the department and the surviving family is probably the worst action the department can perform. Although the department may want to shelter the survivors from the gruesome details and facts surrounding the incident, the survivors need to know that the officer didn't suffer. The survivor will spend many moments contemplating and visualizing how the spouse died. If the spouse has nothing more to base these moments on than the media reports, it is likely that he or she will visualize the scenario in much worse terms than what actually happened (V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992; Wentink, 1991).

The spouse can become extremely frustrated when he or she has questions and the department refuses to answer any of them. Answers such as "There's nothing you can do to bring him back," or "Let us do our jobs and don't you worry" do nothing to alleviate the problems or questions the spouse is facing. The spouse not only has a need to know what happened to the loved one, he or she has a right to know. It is important for the surviving spouse to be informed of the entire incident so he or she can vent feelings. If the notifying officer(s) work to establish a relationship with the surviving spouse then the spouse will benefit from the support while having time to develop a sense of autonomy (Pastorella, 1991a; V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992).

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**Immediate support**

Immediate support may be provided by the department by assigning an officer or officers to serve the needs of the family that will arise from the time of the notification until the funeral process is complete. Arenberg (1988) compiled a concise list of the more common family needs:

- A. Transportation needs (especially to the hospital after notification of the tragedy). An agency may want to designate a car and driver to the family.
- B. Child-care needs. An employee may be assigned child-care duties until volunteer or paid help is attained.
- C. Preparation of meals. Allowing others to bring prepared meals to the home will eliminate the time consumed for this task.
- D. Media liaison needs. Explained in some detail following this list.
- E. Protection. An officer should be assigned to watch the house while the family is away; some burglars will take advantage of the bereaved family by burglarizing the home while the family is attending the funeral.
- F. Monitoring phone calls and answering questions for friends and family.
- G. Funeral arrangements. Explained prior to this listing.
- H. A need for information. Explained prior to this listing.

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- I. Reassuring the surviving spouse that the officer is there for him or her.

#### Handling the media-The public information officer

The department should assign an officer the role of public information officer (PIO) to notify the media of an officer's death. This officer's duty is to distribute an initial news release and then interact with the media on a regular basis. As a courtesy to the family, all news releases should be distributed to them in addition to the media (Arenberg, 1988; IACP/BJA NLEPC, 1990; Snow, 1990; Wells et al., 1988).

The worst thing a department can do is tell the media they have "no comment" concerning the officer's death. This reaction forces the media to secure information from any available source and this information is often incorrect and distorted. The interests of the media often conflict with the interests of the family, and distorted information for the sake of a story can provide emotional distress for family members (Harris et al., 1988; IACP/BJA NLEPC, 1990; Snow, 1990).

The PIO may establish a press area close to, but not interfering with, the scene of the tragedy. This provision allows the press to get the information it needs to relay a story to the public without disrupting the area where the incident occurred. During this time, the PIO should schedule media interviews with the police chief, coroner, or

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investigating officer. This tactic prevents the media from obtaining information in any way possible (Snow, 1990). By informing the media of the events surrounding the incident, the media can play an important role in accelerating the judicial process and educating the public by placing the incident in high-profile publicity (Harris et al., 1988).

The PIO will also inform the media of the guidelines they must follow during the funeral, e.g., where equipment can be set up and filming done. These agreed-upon guidelines between media and department will help prevent disruptions during the funeral ceremony (Snow, 1990).

#### Parental consideration

The parents of the deceased officer will be affected by the individual's death. Often, following the death of the officer, there is friction between the parents and spouse of the officer. Open hostility and competition may be present when the agency presents the officer's badge and/or memorial plaque. To alleviate problems and feelings of neglect, Shaw (1991) suggests the agency make a joint presentation to both the surviving spouse and parents of the deceased officer. This action is inexpensive, shows the agency's appreciation for the life of the deceased officer, and may aid in reducing any anger that may be directed towards the agency.

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### Trial assistance

If a trial follows the line-of-duty death of a police officer, the department may assume this time for the family is just as emotional as the death of the officer. During this time the family is forced to relive its loss, often without the protection of the support system that was provided following the notification of the officer's death (Arenberg, 1988).

The department representative's presence serves as a reminder that the department remembers the slain officer and is interested in the disposition of the case against the accused. This representative could inform the family and counsel them about what may occur at the trial. The family should be warned that details of the death will be retold and the defense attorney will try to establish the innocence of his or her client by using a variety of methods that may be disagreeable to the family of the slain officer. The family should be forewarned that the chance may arise that the defendant will be acquitted, and they must be prepared for that possibility (Arenberg, 1988; Shaw, 1991; Shaw, 1991a).

Once the family is forewarned, they will be better prepared to hear a verdict or sentence that is not to their approval. They may not agree with the outcome of the trial, but at least they will not be shocked by the decision (Arenberg, 1988).

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Continued assistance

After the trial is complete the department should still remain involved with the family. Continued support, in various ways, should still be provided to the family. The family has been forced to lose a loved one, but it should not also be forced to lose the support of the department. The department can continue to provide support merely by inviting the family to functions they would normally have been invited to had the officer not been killed (Arenberg, 1988; V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992).

Many times the family will decline the invitation to attend these functions, but the important point to remember is that the department made an offer because of friendship or remembrance. Departmental managers need to keep one idea in mind when providing assistance to the family: be there. Be there for the family because the officer no longer can be (Arenberg, 1988; V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992). The department can offer its assistance to the family by sending cards to the family 30 and 60 days after the officer's death. These special cards let the family know that the department is still thinking of the family and will offer its assistance when the family is prepared to ask for assistance (G. Kaufman, personal communication, April 6, 1992; V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992).

The department should make note of the following occasions where the family will experience the same intensity of grief as when the officer was first killed. The occasions

to be aware of are:

- A. The officer's birthday. The department should arrange to visit the officer's home or grave site (Arenberg, 1988; V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992).
- B. The anniversary of the officer's death. The department should arrange to visit the officer's grave site or home to show that the department has not forgotten one of its own. Also, a floral bouquet should be placed at the officer's grave site on the anniversary of his or her death. Additionally, a "thinking of you" card from the department can be mailed to the family at this time (Arenberg, 1988; V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992).
- C. The holidays. Holidays can be painful remembrances of the loss of a loved one. The department could invite the family to any get-togethers it may sponsor. This is especially appropriate if small children are involved (Arenberg, 1988; V. J., personal communication, May 5, 1992).

These steps can be effectively carried out by the department with little time or financial involvement. Arenberg (1988) suggests the implementation of these ideas ranges from time spent of ten minutes per week for the first three to six months following the officer's death, to approximately an hour per year from then on. The financial cost of implementing these ideas amounts to less than \$40 per



year. From a cost-benefit perspective, these actions are a small price to pay to offer comfort to a family whose loved one gave his or her life while being an officer.

#### Departmental degrees of assistance

Information and emotional services police departments provide vary in amount and procedure. Of those departments Stillman (1986) surveyed, over 95 percent provided assistance with benefits, over 90 percent provided assistance with the media and transportation to the hospital, over 40 percent assisted with instruction on stress management, over 30 percent provided financial counseling, and just over five percent provided assistance with will preparation.

#### Summary

It is beneficial for departments to establish a formal, standardized death policy for police personnel. Effective procedures allow for prompt, organized, and sensitive responses to the human emotions police administrators will confront. The provision of departmental assistance by police staff improves both officers' and survivors' perceptions that the police really do "take care of their own." However, a lack of planned procedures will result in negative effects on the family and the department. One of the detrimental effects a line of duty death can have on a police department is the lowering of officers' morale when they witness the poor treatment or lack of treatment surviving families receive

(Snow, 1990b).

If care and respect are taken in the treatment of those involved with the deceased officer, stronger and more cohesive bonding between family and department will occur. The immediate and continued response from the police department can have a beneficial impact on the well-being of the survivor and the fellow officers of a colleague killed in the line of duty (Snow, 1990; Stillman, 1986).

In conclusion, although line-of-duty deaths are infrequent, their unexpected impact on a law enforcement agency can leave department administrators unprepared for needs that accompany such a tragedy. These needs can include providing emotional support to the surviving family, alleviating the trauma the departmental officers are encountering, identifying and applying for the various types of assistance available to surviving families, and dealing with the media when this incident occurs (Snow, 1990).

This review has outlined the growing need for the formulation of law enforcement policy concerning line-of-duty death, while presenting some procedures that may be implemented into policy. The remainder of this study will examine the affect law enforcement agency size has on the types of assistance provided to the colleagues and surviving families of officers killed in the line of duty.

The problematic and far-reaching effects a sudden and unexpected officer death can have on the department and surviving family members are too overwhelming to address on a

trial-and-error basis. A department can ill afford to learn of procedures needed for line-of-duty death after the fact. Action taken in this manner is not often in the best interest of the survivors or fellow officers. The financial and emotional impact that a sudden and unexpected officer death has on both the department and surviving family can only be properly addressed by the thorough and considerate preparation of policy by law enforcement administrators before the need for such a policy arises. It is only fitting that the final tribute made to an officer should be accomplished in a well-organized manner (McClain et al., 1983). If a death policy is implemented and used properly, it can aid in the healing process of the survivors while possible being the greatest support to an individual during the most devastating period in the individual's life (Wentink, 1991).

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between law enforcement agency size and the existence of formal death policies established for the survivors and colleagues of officers killed on active duty. This chapter will describe the research design, subjects, procedures, confidentiality and ethical concerns, and limitations of the research.

#### Design

To test the hypotheses, a questionnaire consisting of seven subsets of questions was designed by the researcher (see Appendix A). The subsets were designed to elicit insights into law enforcement agencies policy or procedure concerning officer death in the line of duty. Forty-seven questions were divided into the following subsets: 1) "general" section; 2) agency policy or procedure concerning officer line-of-duty death section; 3) assistance services provided to family survivors section; 4) assistance provided to the deceased officer's colleagues section; 5) types of assistance provided to surviving relatives section; 6) assistance provided to a non-fatally injured officer section; and 7) individual officer

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demographics section.

The data collection instrument generally contained close-ended questions where a respondent was asked to select an answer from among a list provided by the researcher, was exploratory, and was designed to assess the nature of assistance provided to survivors. Revisions of the survey were made twice by the process of content review to eliminate scoring discrepancies, determine the appropriateness of content, and make the survey more amenable to law enforcement officer participation.

The survey questions pertained to the hypotheses generated by the researcher. Additionally, some open-ended questions were designed in which the respondents were asked to provide their own answers to the questions. These questions aided in determining the different types of services or assistance the agency provided to survivors and the results are presented in the discussion section.

The survey measured a single sample group. Although the administration of the questionnaire occurred over nine class periods and a three week time frame, it was treated as one time frame as opposed to a planned time sequence design.

The questionnaire was chosen as a means to attempt to generalize results from this study on the basis of limited information (Blalock, 1979). Further, it is an appropriate format for making descriptive studies of populations.

This format was necessary due to the limited time allotment for data collection. Self-administered

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questionnaires are cheaper and quicker than an alternate format such as an interview survey.

The self-administered survey format was chosen as an appropriate means for dealing with sensitive issues (Babbie, 1989). Some respondents were reluctant to admit their agency lacked formal death policies or procedures. The survey format and aggregate collection of data may have increased participants' response level to questions. Closed-ended questions were chosen because they can be easily processed and provide more uniform responses than open-ended questions (Babbie, 1989; Blalock, 1979).

#### A purposive sample

The subjects in this research were law enforcement personnel who attended the 170th session of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy (FBINA) at Quantico, Virginia, from June 21 to September 4, 1992. Each session of the FBINA consists of an eleven week course of instruction for approximately 250 law enforcement officers. There are four sessions annually (P. Disharoon, personal communication, June 25, 1992).

These subjects were mid to upper-level administrative officers chosen to attend the FBI National Academy by FBI field agency personnel. Mid to upper-level officers were chosen due to their influence in the creation and amendment of policy. These men and women are prepared to meet the challenges of the future; and, they help set the standard for



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integrity, competence, dedication, and professionalism among law enforcement officers (United States Department of Justice, 1990).

One out of eight of these officers attending the FBINA classes will eventually become the CEO of a law enforcement agency. These officers should be cognizant of the types of policies and procedures that their department provides for the assistance of the survivors of officers killed in the line of duty (J. Campbell, personal communication, April 16, 1992).

The subjects were participants in a non-probability sample design. Babbie (1989) states this type of sampling method is a purposive or judgmental sample, which is a...

"Sampling method in which the researcher uses his or her own judgment in the selection of sample members" (p. 207).

This sample type was selected because the researcher felt the subjects would yield the most comprehensive answers concerning line-of-duty death policies among law enforcement agencies and for the reasons previously stated.

The subjects represented federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies from throughout the United States and nineteen foreign countries. Additionally, these subjects were representatives from a range of agency sizes and regions throughout the country (Ault, 1985; J. Campbell, personal communication, April 16, 1992; P. Disharoon, personal communication, June 25, 1992; R. Trojanowicz, personal communication, April 16, 1992).

Ault (1985, p. 38) states,

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"The students who attend the National Academy come from a variety of law enforcement backgrounds that differ in department size, community size, law enforcement experience (although each attendee must have over five years experience as a law enforcement officer), and location. They further represent a broad spectrum of age, race, educational and personal experience; however, the mean age, education, and years in law enforcement have not varied much since 1975, when background records were first kept" (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1-Mean Age, Education Level and Years in Law Enforcement for Law Enforcement Officers Attending Selected National Academy Sessions From 1975 to 1992

Session	(Year)	Age	Education	Years
100TH	(1975)	38.6	13.9	14.2
102ND	(1975)	38.2	13.9	14.2
104TH	(1976)	38.5	14.0	14.4
105TH	(1976)	38.6	13.9	14.4
108TH	(1977)	39.0	14.0	14.6
110TH	(1977)	37.7	14.2	14.1
112TH	(1978)	37.8	14.3	13.9
117TH	(1979)	38.0	14.5	14.0
121ST	(1980)	37.1	14.6	13.6
125TH	(1981)	37.3	14.7	13.9
130TH	(1982)	37.6	15.0	13.8
134TH	(1983)	38.1	14.9	14.7
136TH	(1984)	38.2	14.8	14.6
138TH	(1984)	38.2	14.7	14.6
143RD	(1985)	38.6	14.7	15.4
145TH	(1986)	38.6	15.1	15.4
150TH	(1987)	39.3	15.3	15.4
154TH	(1988)	38.6	15.5	15.3
159TH	(1989)	39.8	15.6	16.6
163RD	(1990)	40.1	15.4	17.1
167TH	(1991)	39.9	15.4	17.1
170TH	(1992)	39.8	15.8	16.4

Note. From records of the FBI National Academy (1992), Quantico, Virginia.

The subjects from the 170th session of the FBINA were asked to participate in a study that dealt with departmental line-of-duty death policy. Each subject was informed of this study

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upon his or her arrival at the FBI National Academy by a letter informing the individual of the proposed research project and desired participation in the study (see Appendix C).

#### Questionnaire administration

The questionnaire was administered during Behavioral Science Services Unit (BSSU) classroom periods and distributed to those law enforcement officials who were in class and voluntarily participated in the survey. The participants were asked by the researcher to complete the survey individually, not to compare answers, and return the questionnaire when completed so the regular instructor could continue with class.

The subjects returned the questionnaire to the researcher by either handing the form to him personally or placing it, not concealed, in an area designated by the researcher and instructor at the front of the classroom. No one was allowed to review another individual's questionnaire and all surveys were secured by the researcher in a locked cabinet. These control procedures were used to alleviate the possible contamination of survey responses.

The surveys were distributed to the subjects within the first three weeks of classroom instruction. The researcher was instructed by BSSU instructors to survey the subjects during the first half of the 170th session to insure a high response rate by participants. The researcher was informed that after approximately five to six weeks of instruction,

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subjects' willingness to participate in any BSSU survey study would decrease.

Participants were assured through a cover letter (see Appendix B) and by the researcher that their responses would remain confidential. The responses were gathered as a collection of aggregate, unidentifiable set of responses; thus, providing anonymity to the participants' responses.

The information on the survey reflected public policy, which is subject to public scrutiny. The survey did not intend to gather information about peer opinions. Rather, the intention of the survey was to identify if, and what types of line-of-duty death procedures an agency provided to survivors and colleagues of an officer killed in the line of duty and the duration of these services or assistance.

From these responses the researcher shared information with those officers of the FBINA 170th session whose agencies were interested in creating or amending death policy. The high number of responders and their responses provided a basis for investigating the types of services law enforcement agencies provided to the surviving family and colleagues of an officer killed in the line-of-duty.

The researcher provided the participants with his telephone number in the event they had questions or concerns regarding the study. Further, the researcher provided participants with the option of giving their consent to allow the researcher to contact the officer's respective agency in the event further policy information would be requested.



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Subjects granted their consent to participate in the study by returning a completed questionnaire to the researcher during a surveyed BSSU class.

The researcher was granted permission by the BSSU chief, John H. Campbell, to administer the survey instrument to the 170th session of the FBINA.

### Confidentiality and ethical considerations

The subjects were asked to identify their agency name and location. This was done in the event the researcher would need to contact the agency for further policy information. However, the subjects were not asked to put their name on the questionnaire; therefore, the researcher would not mention a subject's participation in the study if he contacted the agency. An agency would only be contacted if the explicit consent of the subject was given.

To further insure confidentiality of subjects' answers, each questionnaire was assigned a three-digit code and referred to by that code number. The "agency name" and "agency location" questions were referred to by the assigned code number. These questions were detached from the remainder of the questionnaire to insure the subject could not be identified with the data. These procedures followed the guidelines set by the committee for reviewing projects involving human subjects (UCRIHS) and the protection of their rights at Michigan State University.

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### Response rate

The survey was distributed to nine different BSSU classes to insure the participation of all willing subjects. In addition, a cover letter (see Appendix B) was presented to each individual and provided an explanation of the rationale for this research project and asked for each individual's participation.

Of the 249 possible responders, 244 completed and returned the questionnaire for a return rate of 97.99 percent. However, 11 surveys from agencies having two or more respondents were eliminated. Only one survey from each of these agencies was retained and within that subset of surveys from the same agency there was a high rate of agreement. Responses from the same agency were in agreement at a rate of 82.97 percent and assured the reliability of the responses. The total valid cases examined was 233 cases for a response rate of 93.57 percent. This rate is above the 70 percent return rate for mailed surveys that Babbie (1989) has expressed as a very good return rate for a study. No follow-up survey was necessary because of the exceptional response rate. However, the data included missing responses due to either the officers' lack of knowledge about their agency's policies or procedures concerning officer death in the line of duty or the agency lacked written policies or procedures in this area and the officer could not complete the questionnaire because no formal agency standards had been created.

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to upper-level administrative positions would have knowledge of the types of policies or procedures their agency would engage in as related to officers killed in the line-of-duty. Unfortunately, this assumption could not be supported as many officers answered questions with "don't know", "not applicable" responses, or failed to answer the question entirely.

The researcher also made the assumption that if an agency did not have a formalized policy related to line-of-duty death provisions, the agency would at a minimum provide certain procedures to follow in the event an officer was killed in the line of duty. On the contrary, during the classroom periods that the questionnaire was distributed, the researcher was verbally informed by some subjects that their agency lacked written policies or procedures; thus, the respondent could not complete the questionnaire.

### Analysis of data

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The data processing, including entry and analysis, was initiated at the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia.

The data were analyzed in relation to the two hypotheses presented in the introduction section. The responses and data were displayed in a frequency format. The open-ended questions were reviewed in anticipation of specifically describing the types of services provided to survivors and

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colleagues of officers killed in the line-of-duty.

Quantitative analysis using a chi-square one sample test was performed to determine statistical significance where appropriate data assumptions could be established. Chi-square is based on the assumption that no relationship or differences exist between two variables in the total population (Babbie, 1989). In addition, Blalock (1979, p. 279) states,

"The chi-square is a very general test that can be used whenever we wish to evaluate whether or not frequencies which have been empirically obtained differ significantly from those which would be expected under a certain set of theoretical assumptions...The chi-square test...enables us to interrelate nominal scales with any number of categories."

This test was performed because the data were nominal. The data results were obtained by cross-classifying two nominal-scale variables, in which the chi-square test is most commonly applied (Blalock, 1979). Probability was set at the .05 level of significance, because the consequences of a Type I error (rejecting a true hypothesis) in this research were not serious enough to engage in a more stringent level of significance (Babbie, 1989).

The surveys of officers serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more were analyzed to determine the degree to which these responses were elicited. It was determined upon further examination that respondents of agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more answered questions with "don't know" responses or failed to answer the question entirely at a rate of over four to one when compared to "not applicable" responses.



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This result may be attributed to agency size and the scope and magnitude of policies associated with large agencies. Officers from large law enforcement agencies may not completely understand the details of all policies and procedures their agency has implemented. The task of understanding all policies may be difficult for some individuals; therefore, a higher rate of "don't know" responses may be expected. However, a supervisor should strive to understand all agency policies.

#### Limitations of the study

The requirement that the FBI National Academy attendees participate in self reporting curtailed the ability to generalize survey results to a larger population. The respondents' lack of knowledge concerning line-of-duty death policy and inability to answer questions will not make it allowable to generalize to all agencies.

The interpretation of the results of this study requires some consideration of the limitations of the methodology. The threat to external validity was examined. Since the purpose of this research was to determine the relationship between law enforcement agencies and formal death policies or procedures established for the surviving family members and colleagues of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty, the use of the 170th session of the FBINA as a sample influences the extent to which the results can be generalized.

The assumption that these study results apply to all law

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enforcement agencies may not be warranted. The participants of this study were not randomly selected from law enforcement officers throughout the nation; rather, the subjects were a group of FBI National Academy students chosen from law enforcement agencies that represent every state, agency size, and region throughout the nation to constitute a purposive sample. In addition, because this study was exploratory in nature, the subjects were not truly representative of all law enforcement agencies. Therefore, the study may not completely answer all research questions but merely point the way toward an answer (Babbie, 1989).

The mean group scores of the subjects in the 170th session were calculated. The means of the subjects' age, education, and years served in law enforcement were compared to the mean scores of the same variables from other FBINA sessions.

A comparison of mean values showed the value to remain nearly the same from one session to the next (see Table 3.1). From this knowledge it was concluded that the officers from the 170th session were very similar to officers from preceding FBINA classes (see Table 3.2). Thus, the answers given by the officers from the 170th session should be similar to answers that would be given by officers from other FBINA sessions and representative of law enforcement agencies from throughout the nation since these aggregate characteristics of the sample are nearly the same as those same aggregate characteristics in the population. However, caution should be exercised when

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generalizing from the data.

Table 3.2-A Comparison of Mean Ages, Years of Education, and Years in Law Enforcement For Selected Sessions of the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy From 1975 to 1991, With Mean Ages, Years of Education, and Years in Law Enforcement of Subjects of this Study

	Age	Education	Experience
Selected Session	38.5	14.7	14.8
Current Subjects	39.8	15.8	16.4

An explanation for slightly higher scores in all three categories may be that as the field of law enforcement strives to become more professional law enforcement officers will attain a higher degree of education and retain their agency positions longer. Although the subjects were mid to upper-level administrative officers, these subjects were once line officers and their answers are representative of sworn law enforcement personnel.

### Summary

A questionnaire generally containing close-ended questions was distributed to 249 law enforcement officers who attended a session of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy (FBINA). The questionnaire measured a single sample group and was chosen as an appropriate format for making a descriptive study of a population within a limited time frame.

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The survey participants were mid to upper-level administrative officers who represented federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies from throughout the United States and nineteen foreign countries. Each participant was asked to identify the types of line-of-duty death procedures his or her agency provided to the survivors and colleagues of an officer killed in the line of duty. The responses were gathered as an aggregate, unidentifiable set of responses to provide anonymity to the participants' responses.

Of the 249 possible responders, 233 valid cases were examined so no follow-up survey was initiated. Quantitative analysis using a chi-square one sample test and t-test were performed to determine statistical significance where appropriate data assumptions could be established. The respondents' lack of knowledge concerning line-of-duty death policy and the lack of a random selection of participants may warrant applying the study results to all law enforcement agencies. However, the mean respondent group scores of certain officer characteristics were compared to the same mean scores of other FBINA classes and showed the values to be nearly the same; thus, showing the respondents to be very similar to officers from preceding FBINA classes.



## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study are presented in terms of comparisons by chi-square analysis, t-tests, and percentile ranking. This chapter restates the hypotheses, presents data used in hypotheses testing and from additional findings, discusses the results, and compares the data to a previous study. A majority of the discussion focuses on additional findings, but all the tested significant findings from the research are mentioned.

#### Results

##### Hypothesis one:

H<sub>1</sub> Significantly more law enforcement agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more will have line-of-duty death policies than law enforcement agencies serving a population less than 100,000 citizens.

##### Hypothesis two:

H<sub>2</sub> Significantly more law enforcement agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more will have individuals designated as benefits coordinators to assist survivors than law enforcement agencies serving a population less than 100,000 citizens.

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The research hypotheses were supported at the .05 level demonstrating that there is a significant relationship between agency size and a formal line-of-duty death policy or the designation of a benefits coordinator (see Table 4.1). These results seem to suggest that agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more tend to have a line-of-duty death policy or benefits coordinator more than agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens.

Table 4.1-Agency Services-Independent Variable=Agency Size

Dependent Variables	$\chi^2$	N	df	sig
Formal Death Policy	19.13	226	1	.000
Benefits Coordinator	23.35	227	1	.000
Liaison Officer	16.39	211	1	.000

\*Note: Please see section on intervening variables.

Additional analysis of these variables was conducted for further results. Nearly two-thirds (66.1 percent) of agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more had a formal death policy while only 36.1 percent of agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens had a formal death policy.

Overall, 51.8 percent of the respondents' agencies had a formal line-of-duty death policy or procedure. Of that 51.8 percent, 18.5 percent of respondents expressed their policy differentiated between felonious and accidental officer

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deaths. However, only 11.6 percent of all respondents indicated that they had noticed differences in departmental treatment of survivors of officers killed feloniously as compared to officers who die accidentally, but they do not know if this different treatment is formal policy.

Sixty percent of agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more had a benefits coordinator while only 28 percent of agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens had a benefits coordinator. Further, 45.4 percent of all the respondents' agencies had a benefits coordinator.

#### Additional analysis

An important concern of this study was to demonstrate that agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more were more likely to provide benefits to the survivors and colleagues of the deceased officer than agencies serving a population less than 100,000 citizens. The researcher hypothesized informally that agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more would provide officer death associated services because these agencies serve a large population and the chance an officer may be killed in the line of duty is greater due to increased interaction with more citizens.

Survey respondents indicated officers were feloniously killed in the line of duty in 42.6 percent of agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more. Conversely,

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only 18.8 percent of agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens had officers feloniously killed in the line of duty.

In addition to felonious deaths, officers also accidentally die in the line of duty. According to respondents, officers died accidentally in 43.9 percent of agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more. However, only 10.1 percent of agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens had officers die accidentally in the line of duty.

These differences indicated a significant relationship between agency size and the felonious or accidental death of an officer (see Table 4.2). The data were supported at the .05 level and tend to suggest agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more were more likely to have officers feloniously or accidentally killed in the line of duty than agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens.

**Table 4.2-Officers Killed-Independent Variable=Agency Size**

Dependent Variables	$\chi^2$	N	df	sig
Feloniously Killed	12.69	209	1	.000
Accidentally Killed	27.73	206	1	.000

**\*Note:** Please see section on intervening variables.

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size and officers getting killed in the line of duty, data were analyzed to examine the types of death benefits agencies offered to survivors and colleagues of a deceased officer. Frequencies were run to compare agency size to the following variables: duration of assistance provided to survivors, the assignment of a liaison officer to the surviving family, the periodic review of beneficiary papers, the explanation of death benefits to employees, the maintenance of current records of addresses and phone numbers of employees and their nearest relative, sworn personnel participation in critical incident stress debriefing, and the application of benefits that are provided to both officers non-fatally injured and those officers killed in the line of duty.

Stillman (1986) indicated that many police agencies do not provide psychological assistance to survivors beyond the time of the funeral service. However, survey respondents indicated 49.1 percent of their agencies provided some type of psychological assistance beyond the time of the funeral service. In addition, the results of the duration of any type of agency assistance to survivors is presented in Table 4.3.

According to respondents, almost one-half of the law enforcement agencies provide assistance to survivors up to a period of six months. This increased duration of assistance may indicate that agencies have improved their services to survivors since the Stillman (1986) study. Further, 72.2 percent of the respondents indicated their agencies would continue to invite surviving families to agency activities.

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**Table 4.3-A comparison of law enforcement agency size to the duration of assistance provided to survivors**

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**Agencies serving a population less than 100,000 citizens.**

<u>Duration</u>	<u>Percent Reporting</u>
less than 1 month	40.7%
1 to six months	25.4%
7 months to 1 year	10.2%
over 1 year	23.7%

**Agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more.**

<u>Duration</u>	<u>Percent Reporting</u>
less than 1 month	24.7%
1 to six months	24.7%
7 months to 1 year	8.6%
over 1 year	42.0%

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Nevertheless, the problem arises that over 40 percent of the psychological assistance provided by law enforcement agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens occurred during the first month after the officer died. The inherent problem with this is that survivors cannot be diagnosed as suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder until after the symptoms have persisted for one month.

Therefore, it is necessary for all law enforcement agencies to increase the duration of their psychological assistance to periods well beyond the time frame of one month. In this respect, mental health professionals can make a more accurate diagnosis and properly refer the patient to the necessary mental health services.

According to the respondents, 78.1 percent of agencies

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that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more provided a liaison officer to the family for assistance purposes. However, just 50.5 percent of agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens provided a liaison officer to the family. Overall, respondents indicated 65.7 percent of their agencies provided a liaison officer to the family.

This difference indicated a significant relationship between agency size and the provision of an agency liaison officer (see Table 4.1). The data were supported at the .05 level and tend to suggest agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more were more likely to assign a liaison officer to surviving families than agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens.

The periodic review of beneficiary papers furnished to an officer was completed by only 36.6 percent of respondents' agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more. In addition, 35.3 percent of agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens reviewed beneficiary papers. Overall, only 36 percent of the respondents indicated their agencies reviewed beneficiary papers.

The explanation of death benefits to employees was done in 84.7 percent of respondents' agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more. Seventy-eight percent of agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens explained death benefits to employees. Overall, 81.8 percent of the respondents stated their agencies explained

death benefits to employees.

Current records of addresses and phone numbers of employees and their nearest relative were maintained by 86.8 percent of respondents' agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more. Further, 87.2 percent of agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens maintained current employee records. Overall, 87.1 percent of the respondents stated their agencies maintained current employee records.

Respondents indicated sworn personnel were allowed to participate in critical incident stress debriefing (CISD) programs at 62.3 percent of agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more. Just 53.9 percent of agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens allowed sworn personnel to participate in CISD programs. Overall, 58.3 percent of the respondents' agencies allowed sworn personnel to participate in CISD programs.

Benefits that apply to both officers non-fatally injured or killed in the line of duty were offered by 87.1 percent of respondents' agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more. Similarly, 83.3 percent of agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens offered the same benefits to both groups. Overall, 85.4 percent of the respondents indicated their agencies provided benefits to both groups.

Examination of these results indicated agencies that served a population of 100,000 citizens or more offered

services to survivors and colleagues of officers killed in the line of duty more often than agencies that served a population less than 100,000 citizens, except for the maintenance of current employee records. However, the degree of difference between agency size and these variables was not great. There was no significant difference in the relationship between agency size and certain services offered by law enforcement agencies, except for the designation of a liaison officer to offer assistance to surviving family members.

Next, comparisons were made to examine the relationship between the establishment of a formal death policy and whether the agency had an officer killed either feloniously or accidentally in the line of duty. Respondents stated in 60.2 percent of their agencies where a formal death policy was established there were no officers feloniously killed; thus, it may be proposed that these agencies were proactive in their efforts to alleviate the trauma survivors and colleagues encounter when an officer is killed in the line of duty.

Unfortunately, respondents also stated 80.4 percent of their agencies that did not have an officer feloniously killed did not have a formal death policy established. When participants were queried as to why their agency lacked a formal death policy it was stated that since no officer had been killed there was no reason to establish such a policy.

In addition to the felonious deaths of officers, officers accidentally died in the line of duty. Respondents stated in 66 percent of their agencies that had a formal death policy

established there were no officers accidentally killed in the line of duty.

Respondents stated in 80.2 percent of their agencies that had not suffered an accidental officer death there was no formal death policy established. It is fortunate that many agencies that did not have a formal death policy had not experienced the death of an officer by either felonious or accidental means. Moreover, it is interesting to note that over 60 percent of agencies that had not encountered the death of an officer by either means had established a formal death policy.

These differences indicated a significant relationship between the establishment of a formal death policy and the lack of felonious or accidental officer deaths encountered by the agency (see Table 4.4).

**Table 4.4-No Officers Killed-Indep. Variable=Formal Policy**

Dependent Variables	$\chi^2$	N	df	sig
No Felonious Deaths	8.97	205	1	.003
No Accidental Deaths	4.42	202	1	.035

**\*Note:** Please see section on intervening variables.

The data were supported at the .05 level and tend to suggest that agencies that have not encountered the felonious or accidental death of an officer are less likely to have established a formal death policy than agencies that have



established such policy.

Comparisons were made to examine the relationship of an agency having a formal policy to the following variables: the provision of psychological assistance to survivors, the provision of a support person to the family awaiting trial of the suspect in the officer's death, the periodic review of beneficiary papers furnished to an officer, the maintenance of current records of an officer and his or her nearest relative's address and phone number, the provision of a liaison officer to the family for assistance purposes, the provision of a benefits coordinator to gather all benefits information available to the officer and family, sworn personnel participation in a critical incident stress debriefing program, the agency's provision of an employee assistance program, the possibility of differential department treatment of survivors of officers killed feloniously or accidentally, and benefits that were provided to an officer non-fatally injured in the line of duty that were also offered to officers killed in the line of duty (see Table 4.5).

Examination of the relationships between variables provided the following results as indicated by survey respondents. Psychological assistance to survivors was provided by 66.1 percent of their agencies with a formal death policy; whereas only 28.9 percent of their agencies without a formal death policy provided psychological assistance to survivors. Overall, 49.1 percent of the respondents stated their agencies provided psychological assistance to survivors.

**Table 4.5-Agency Services-Independent Variable=Formal Policy**

Dependent Variables	$\chi^2$	N	df	sig
Psychological Assistance	27.70	212	1	.000
Trial Support Person	10.46	172	1	.001
Review Benefic. Papers	12.35	217	1	.000
Maintain Current Recrds.	6.85	227	1	.009
Liaison Officer	9.39	209	1	.002
Benefits Coordinator	12.49	224	1	.000
CISD Program	6.48	214	1	.011
EAP Program	18.94	214	1	.000

**\*Note:** Please see section on intervening variables.

Respondents indicated the provision of a support person to the family awaiting trial of the suspect in the officer's death was accounted for by 61.2 percent of their agencies that had a formal death policy. On the contrary, 35.1 percent of their agencies without a formal policy provided a support person for trial assistance to the family. Overall, only 36.9 percent of respondents' agencies provided a trial support person to survivors. However, 26.2 percent of the respondents did not answer this question.

If the agency did not assign a contact person to the family, survivors learned of the trial proceedings either on their own or from a friend. Over fifteen percent (15.7) of the respondents' indicated their agencies reported this was the method in which survivors were kept abreast of the trial.

The media was reported as informing the surviving family of the trial in 10.8 percent of all cases, while public safety and community support groups notified survivors in less than one percent of all cases, respectively.

Respondents stated the periodic review of beneficiary papers furnished to officers occurred in 48.2 percent of their agencies with a formal death policy. Only 24.3 percent of their agencies without a formal death policy periodically reviewed beneficiary papers.

Current records of an officer's and nearest relative's address and phone number were maintained by 93.2 percent of respondents' agencies with a formal death policy. Just 80.7 percent of respondents' agencies without a formal death policy maintained current records on the officer and his or her nearest relatives.

Respondents indicated a liaison officer was provided by seventy-five percent of their agencies with a formal death policy. Conversely, only 53.8 percent of their agencies without a formal death policy provided a liaison officer to the surviving family for assistance purposes.

Respondents indicated a benefits coordinator was provided for surviving families by only 58.1 percent of their agencies with a formal death policy. However, just 33.6 percent of their agencies without a formal death policy employed a benefits coordinator.

Respondents indicated the allowance of sworn personnel to participate in a critical incident stress debriefing (CISD)

program occurred in 66.7 percent of their agencies with a formal death policy. Nearly one-half (48.5 percent) of their agencies without a formal death policy allowed sworn personnel to participate in a CISD program.

An employee assistance program (EAP) was provided by 85.8 percent of respondents' agencies with a formal death policy. Only 58.4 percent of their agencies without a formal death policy provided an EAP to law enforcement personnel. Overall, 73.5 percent of the respondents stated their agencies provided EAP to personnel.

These differences indicated a significant relationship between a formal death policy and the dependent variables listed in Table 4.5. The data were supported at the .05 level and tend to suggest that agencies with a formal death policy were more likely to provide the services listed in Table 4.5 than agencies without a formal death policy.

Respondents indicated that differential treatment of survivors of officers killed feloniously as compared to officers who died accidentally were noticed by officers in 20.4 percent of their agencies that had a formal death policy. Interestingly, only 11.9 percent of their agencies without a formal death policy were perceived by their sworn personnel as providing differential treatment to survivors. Agencies with a formal death policy were perceived as treating survivors differently at almost twice the rate as respondents' agencies without a formal policy.

Eighty-six percent of respondents indicated their

agencies that had a formal death policy provided the same benefits to officers non-fatally injured in the line of duty and to the survivors of officers killed in the line of duty. Similarly, 85.1 percent of respondents' agencies with no formal policy provided the same benefits to both groups. Overall, 85.4 percent of the respondents indicated their agencies provided benefits to both groups.

Further data analysis showed 33.3 percent of the respondents indicated their agency provided line-of-duty death or victimization training to sworn personnel. An additional 1.3 percent indicated their agencies provided some other type of related training; however, the respondents failed to mention the type of training provided to sworn personnel.

The duration of departmental assistance provided to the deceased officer's colleagues through either CISD programs, EAPs, or a related type of line-of-duty death training varied. The results indicated 19.3 percent of the respondents' agencies provided assistance to sworn personnel for less than one month, 14.6 percent provided assistance from one to six months, 2.1 percent provided assistance from seven months to one year, and 22.3 percent provided assistance for more than one year. Over 40 percent (41.6) of the respondents' agencies did not provide an answer to the question.

Stillman (1986) stated many police agencies with a formal policy or procedure concerning the death of a law enforcement officer were oriented towards death notification procedures. Data were gathered to determine what individual(s) would

notify the family of the officer's death. Respondents indicated that more than one individual may notify the family or be on a notification team. The deceased officer's partner was designated to notify the family by 3.9 percent of their agencies, 6.0 percent designated the first available officer to notify the family, 22.3 percent designated the agency chaplain, 66.5 percent responded that the chief or other supervisor would notify the family, and 9.9 percent designated a team or individual previously appointed by the deceased officer to notify the family.

The family was eventually informed of the details and the surrounding factors leading to the officer's death by 99.5 percent of the respondents' agencies. The remaining agencies that did not completely disclose information stated this happened in cases where the officer was working on a case that the agency considered confidential.

It may be possible to state that agencies with a formal death policy had established it to ease the trauma of those individuals closest to the deceased officer. Therefore, the policy was written to include various services associated with the death of an officer. The total percentages of respondents' agencies that provided certain types of services are presented in Table 4.6.

An examination of Table 4.6 shows that tangible assistance seemed to be provided by a greater percentage of respondents' agencies than intangible assistance. Based on statements from the Stillman (1986) study the researcher

informally hypothesized that law enforcement agencies would provide more tangible than intangible benefits to those closest to the deceased officer. T-test analysis revealed this hypothesis to be false at the .05 level. The mean scores of tangible and intangible benefits were compared and the results showed that intangible benefits were offered significantly more than tangible benefits ( $t = -5.04$ ,  $df = 232$ ,  $p < .001$ , Tangible  $\bar{x} = 4.39$ , Intangible  $\bar{x} = 5.40$ ,  $s.d. = 3.07$ ).

**Table 4.6-The Percentage of Law Enforcement Agencies That Provide Tangible and Intangible Assistance to Survivors**

Tangible Assistance		Intangible Assistance	
pension	83.3%	transpor. to hospital	70.0%
dept. life ins.	76.8%	notification procedure	66.5%
workers' comp.	67.0%	liaison assgn. to family	65.7%
PSOB death benefit	63.1%	asst. with the media	59.7%
funeral arrngmnts	52.4%	asst. w/benefit pprwrk	51.1%
social security	38.6%	cont. contact w/family	45.9%
cont. health cov.	33.9%	chaplaincy program	36.8%
pay for counsling	24.0%	refer. to local counsel.	32.2%
		access to staff psychol.	28.8%
		peer counseling	28.8%
		spouse support group	23.2%
		instrct. on stress mgmt.	19.7%
		police-family resp.serv.	16.3%
		asst w/will preparation	13.3%

This result indicated that agencies provided approximately one-half of the tangible services and only one-third of the intangible services listed in Table 4.6, thus showing that agencies were more willing to provide tangible rather than intangible services to survivors. However, this result did not show that law enforcement agencies actually

provided more tangible than intangible benefits to survivors or the deceased officer's colleagues.

The officer's spouse and children were usually the recipients of assistance. Nearly 90 percent (87.6) of the respondents' agencies provided assistance to the spouse while the children were provided for by 67.8 percent of their agencies. There was a dramatic decrease in services provided for other individuals. Parents received assistance from 18 percent of the respondents' agencies, siblings received 7.3 percent, roommates received 2.6 percent, significant others received 6.9 percent, and colleagues received 8.2 percent. However, the assistance provided to parents was increased if the deceased officer had no dependents. Surviving parents were provided the same assistance as spouses by 73.7 percent of the respondents' agencies when the officer did not allocate benefits to dependents.

Usually before either financial or emotional services are rendered, it is beneficial for the survivor to determine who will finance the bills for these services. Presented in Table 4.7 are the percentages of organizations that provided services to officers injured in the line of duty or to the survivors of officers killed in the line of duty. More than one organization may contribute financially to the services offered to an officer either injured or killed in the line of duty.



**Table 4.7-The Percentage of Groups That Finance Medical Bills or Funeral Service Arrangements of Sworn Law Enforcement Personnel**

Group Type	Medical Bills	Accidental Death	Felonious Death
The Agency	63.9	29.6	37.8
The Family	8.2	48.9	38.2
Pub. Safety Org.	3.0	3.4	3.0
Comm Supprt Grp.	5.2	7.3	8.2
Other*	26.2	18.5	17.6

\* Private insurance carried by the officer is used to pay for the medical bills. Either private insurance will cover the felonious death of the officer or in 6 cases a private funeral home pays for the funeral expenses. The Peace Officers Association, the FOP, and the 100 Club were noted as being the most likely to provide additional assistance to the surviving family.

In addition to organizational support, respondents indicated further assistance may be provided to survivors by the jurisdiction in which the law enforcement officer served. For each case of officer death or injury, more than one jurisdiction may have provided assistance. City employee assistance was provided by 24.5 percent of respondents' agencies; 13.7 percent was provided by county employee assistance; 30.0 percent was provided by state employee assistance; 18.9 percent was provided by federal employee assistance; and 45.9 percent of assistance was provided by the officer's group or private insurance.

### Intervening variables

Agency size and the establishment of a formal death policy were examined by the researcher as possibly having causal relationships to the creation of survivor assistance programs. However, due to time and financial limitations combined with the structure of the survey instrument, the possibility of other intervening variables was not examined. A non-inclusive list of variables such as the organizational style of the law enforcement agency, leadership dynamics, agency value statements, and agency accreditation may be related to the test variables in a manner that would facilitate the creation of survivor assistance programs. Although there is an empirical relationship between the independent and dependent test variables, there may be no causal link between them. These possibilities were not examined in this research but are suggested as directions of research for further study.

### Discussion

The results of this study were compared to findings presented by Stillman (1986) concerning police department services provided to survivors of police officers killed in the line of duty. Of the police departments surveyed, 89 percent reported they provided explanations of death benefits to their employees.

Thirty-one percent of the police departments surveyed in the Stillman (1986) study offered access to a staff

psychologist. Only 5.4 percent of the departments offered peer counseling or police-family response services; 43 percent made counseling referrals; and 19 percent paid for outside counseling. Survivors also reported agency contact with them ended soon after the deceased officer's funeral.

The death of a law enforcement officer is a tremendous shock for the officer's family and members of the agency. The officer's death may cause a significant disruption for the agency while also reminding fellow officers of their own vulnerability. Yet 67 percent of police agencies in the Stillman (1986) study lacked formal death policies.

Often, no one was designated to assist the family with financial paperwork, plan for the funeral, request benefits, or prepare the survivors emotionally for the trauma that may accompany the officer's death. In addition, if policy was established most were task-oriented and did not take into consideration the psychological needs of the survivors (Stillman, 1986).

Stillman (1986) indicated notification procedures varied among the surveyed police departments. Fifty percent of responding departments' policy dealt with notification. However, most of these departments did not have an officer or notification team designated to notify survivors. It was stated that often any officer was asked to notify survivors.

The maintenance of current officer records was essential to notifying survivors of the officer's death. Nearly 80 percent of the police agencies maintained current records of

the officer's spouse. Yet only 40 percent updated these records periodically and 27 percent never reviewed the officer's records (Stillman, 1986).

Compensation to the family varied greatly among police departments. Of the departments surveyed, 67 percent had the family pay for funeral expenses. Further, only 5.3 percent provided information on will preparation; 44 percent offered stress management instruction; 92 percent offered media assistance; and 97 percent offered benefits assistance (Stillman, 1986).

In this research, 81.8 percent of respondents' agencies explained death benefits to employees. Moreover, 34 percent gave a brief oral description of death benefits to employees; 47.1 percent stated written policy exists on the subject; and 18.8 percent fully explained to the officer his or her options concerning death benefits. The percentage of law enforcement agencies that provide services similar to those offered by police departments in the Stillman (1986) study may be reviewed in Table 4.6.

Almost one-half (45.9 percent) of the respondents' agencies maintained continued contact with the surviving family after the officer's funeral. The duration of agency assistance to survivors was provided in the following periods: 18.9 percent of the respondents' agencies provided assistance for less than one month; 15 percent for one to six months; 5.6 percent for seven months to one year; and 21 percent offered assistance for more than one year. However, 39.5 percent of

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the respondents did not answer the question.

Although notification procedures may have varied among agencies, 66.5 percent of respondents' agencies indicated they had notification practices. Many of these agencies designated one or more individuals to notify the family of the officer's death.

The compensation to surviving families varied among law enforcement agencies. Organizational support is one manner of compensation to the family and is explained in Table 4.7.

Since the Stillman (1986) study, law enforcement agency assistance associated with line-of-duty deaths have shown some positive gains. Stillman stated that only 33 percent of police departments had a formal policy associated with line-of-duty deaths. This research indicated that 51.8 percent of respondents' law enforcement agencies had a formal death policy.

This study showed improvements in the area of death notification, the provision of some psychological services, agency financial assistance with funeral payments, peer counseling, assistance with will preparation, compensation to the family, and continued agency contact with the family after the officer's death. However, less agencies reported offering counseling referrals, instruction on stress management, and media or benefits assistance than Stillman (1986) reported.

**Summary**

The results from this study supported the research hypothesis that significantly more law enforcement agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more will have line-of-duty death policies than law enforcement agencies serving a population less than 100,000 citizens. The study also supported the research hypothesis that significantly more law enforcement agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more will have individuals designated as benefits coordinators to assist survivors than law enforcement agencies serving a population less than 100,000 citizens. These results seem to suggest that agencies that serve populations of 100,000 citizens or more tend to have more line-of-duty death policies and benefits coordinators than agencies serving a population less than 100,000 citizens.

Additional data analysis yielded the following results:

- 1) Although agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more were more likely to have a formal death policy, agency size did not make a significant difference in the dispersal of officer death services provided to survivors;
- 2) Significantly more agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more were more likely to have an officer killed feloniously or accidentally than agencies serving a population less than 100,000 citizens;
- 3) Agencies with a formal death policy were significantly more likely to provide services to survivors than agencies without a formal death policy; and
- 4) Agencies that did not have an officer killed either feloniously or





accidentally were significantly less likely to have a formal death policy than to establish a formal death policy.

The possibility that other intervening variables may have a causal relationship with the test variables was also mentioned.

CHAPTER V  
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study consisted of the administration of a survey instrument to mid to upper-level administrative law enforcement officers who attended a session of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy. These officers represented federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies from throughout the United States and nineteen foreign countries.

The analysis of the data was used to determine whether, as hypothesized, law enforcement agency size affected the existence of formal death policies or procedures established for the surviving family members and colleagues of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. Additional data analysis was used to determine the different types of services or assistance the agency provided to survivors.

The results of this study were compared to findings presented by Stillman (1986) concerning police department services provided to the survivors of an officer killed in the line of duty. Overall, since the Stillman (1986) study, law enforcement agency assistance to survivors associated with an officer line-of-duty death has shown positive gains among a

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variety of services.

### Conclusions

The results of the data refuted the literature review that law enforcement agencies mainly provide tangible benefits to survivors rather than intangible benefits. According to this research, data analysis by t-test showed that agencies actually provide more intangible than tangible benefits to survivors. A greater percentage of law enforcement agencies seem to provide tangible assistance; however, these same agencies also provide more intangible services to survivors overall.

This research also refuted the statement that the duration of law enforcement assistance to survivors only lasts for a short time after the officer's funeral. Overall, according to respondents, almost one-half of their law enforcement agencies provide psychological assistance to survivors for a period up to six months. Further, over one-half of their agencies serving a population of 100,000 citizens or more provide psychological assistance to survivors for a period of seven months and beyond.

This research supports the view that programs associated with officer death are being established among law enforcement agencies with a formal death policy. Further, the duration of assistance to survivors among all agencies has shown an increase since the Stillman study published in 1986.

### Recommendations

Based on the literature and this research analysis, general recommendations can be made in this area of law enforcement and specific recommendations concerning this study. Although programs associated with officer deaths are becoming more utilized in agencies with a formal death policy, many agencies need to become informed of the benefits associated with pre-planning for an officer death.

As stated previously in this chapter, there is a need for death policy and preparation even if no officer death has occurred in the agency. A theme that emerged each time the researcher spoke with the subjects in this study was the lack of death policy among their agencies. One subject stated on his questionnaire, "No deaths, No policy!" The problems associated with the lack of an established death policy have been mentioned throughout this paper. Further, even with policies that have been established, program revisions may need to be initiated to offer a greater variety and better services to survivors or colleagues.

Moreover, once upper level administrators have decided to establish a death policy for the agency, it would be beneficial to inform all administrators of this decision. In this research, 22.32 percent of the respondents answered some survey questions with a "don't know" response. This is an expected response from large agencies where individuals may not learn all the procedures of every topic concerning their agency.

Some specific recommendations for this study would be to operationalize survey questions better and add certain categories to each question. It is the researcher's feeling that some questions within the survey were not clear to all participants. Clearer definitions within questions, e.g., defining a trial support person may have reduced the number of missing responses within the data set. Clear survey questions and definitions in this research are necessary since line of duty death policy is still a new concept in law enforcement.

The addition of "not applicable" and "don't know" categories to each question would strengthen the survey and make data analysis more efficient. These categories would clarify respondents' answers and better determine a law enforcement agency's position concerning line-of-duty death policy. The researcher could draw certain conclusions based on responses within these categories, e.g., respondents that answer "don't know" may be employed within a large agency and do not know all agency procedures across all units. The survey design in this research did not make it possible for the researcher to differentiate between the above mentioned responses and blank responses.

In the future, the researcher suggests mailing the questionnaire to law enforcement agency departments that handle the dispersal of officer benefits. This method would be desired to measure and enhance the accuracy of the response rate to all questions and assure knowledgeable responses. It is likely a "benefits coordinator" or individual in a similar

position would be in a more advantageous position to complete the questionnaire. However, a problem that may arise with this method of surveying is the decreased response rate of returning a mailed questionnaire to the researcher. Follow-up mailings can be administered to effectively increase return rates in mail surveys, but the process can be time consuming and costly (Babbie, 1989).

Future studies could examine the relationship of formal policy to variables other than size. Suggestions would be to measure the establishment of a death policy to agency affiliation, budgetary constraints, the Chief Executive Officer's viewpoint on line-of-duty death policy, accreditation of the agency, organizational and leadership style, and the agency's relationship with the community, i.e., is the agency considered to be progressive.

Further, this study did not examine the agency assistance practices that are provided to survivors in an informal manner. Although an agency may not have a formally established death policy, it is likely that the agency engages in informal survivor assistance practices similar to the programs mentioned in this study. It is suggested that future research use personal interviews as a study instrument. Personal interviews could qualitatively measure agency assistance by presenting the views of survivors, friends, and long-term associates of an officer killed in the line of duty. These qualitative studies could provide additional insight to the types of agency assistance provided to survivors.

The data for this research did not lend itself to measuring those affects on the establishment of a death policy.



## APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A**  
**The Instrument**

## LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER DEATH POLICY STUDY

Please note that the confidentiality of this survey will be maintained. You are being asked to list your agency name only in the event the researcher needs to contact the agency for further information. You will not be identified.

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**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:** Beside each of the following statements, please indicate (check) your response. If a statement requires an "other" response, please write that response on the line and in the space directly beneath the options for that statement.

---

1. Agency affiliation:

- ☐ 1. State
- ☐ 2. Sheriff
- ☐ 3. Township
- ☐ 4. City
- ☐ 5. Village
- ☐ 6. University
- ☐ 7. Federal
- ☐ 8. Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. Number of sworn personnel in agency:

- ☐ 1. 1-10
- ☐ 2. 11-30
- ☐ 3. 31-60
- ☐ 4. 61-100
- ☐ 5. 101 or more

3. Size of community served:

- ☐ 1. under 10,000
- ☐ 2. 10,000-24,999
- ☐ 3. 25,000-49,999
- ☐ 4. 50,000-99,999
- ☐ 5. 100,000-249,999
- ☐ 6. 250,000 or more

4. Number of sworn personnel killed in the line of duty, or off duty in official capacity during the past 5 years:

- ☐ 1. 0
- ☐ 2. 1-2
- ☐ 3. 3-5
- ☐ 4. 6-10
- ☐ 5. over 10

5. Number of officers killed feloniously:  
( place number on blank)

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Number of officers killed accidentally:  
( place number on blank)

\_\_\_\_\_

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AGENCY POLICY OR PROCEDURE CONCERNING OFFICER DEATH IN THE  
LINE OF DUTY

---

7. Does your agency have a formal policy or procedure concerning officer death?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

7a. If yes, does agency policy differentiate between felonious and accidental death?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

8. Have you noticed any differences in departmental treatment of survivors of officers killed feloniously as compared to accidentally ?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

9. Are death benefits explained to employees ?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

10. Describe death benefit explanation:

- ☐ 1. brief oral description  
☐ 2. written policy  
☐ 3. detailed explanation

11. Does your department periodically review the beneficiary papers afforded an officer?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

12. Does your agency maintain up-to-date records of addresses and phone numbers of spouses and/ or nearest relative?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

13. Does your agency provide for the position of "benefits coordinator" or similar role, an employee who gathers all information on benefits or funeral payments available to the officer or family?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

Next page please

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### ASSISTANCE SERVICES PROVIDED TO FAMILY SURVIVORS

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Please answer the following statements in regards to policy or procedure concerning an active officer death, or how your agency would respond if an officer was killed in the line of duty. For some questions more than one answer may apply to your agency. **Please check all answers that apply to your agency.**

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For question #14 please check all persons who are provided assistance or benefits related to the deceased officer.

14. Does your agency provide assistance or benefit programs to the deceased officer's:

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. spouse   | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. roommate(s)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. children | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. significant other(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. parents  | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. colleagues           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. siblings |  |

15. Is this assistance mandatory?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

16. Please check the source(s) of any additional survivor assistance:

- ☐ 1. city employee assistance  
☐ 2. county employee assistance  
☐ 3. state employee assistance  
☐ 4. federal employee assistance  
☐ 5. other assistance, such as civic groups or the Fraternal Order of Police

17. Please list the group(s) that offer assistance to the survivors of the deceased officer:

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18. Does your agency provide psychological or emotional assistance to the survivors beyond the time of the wake and funeral?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

19. Please check the duration of departmental assistance to the survivors:

- ☐ 1. less than 1 month  
☐ 2. 1 month to 6 months  
☐ 3. 7 months and 1 year  
☐ 4. more than 1 year

Next page please

20. Who notifies the family of an officer death?

- ☐ 1. officer's partner
- ☐ 2. first available officer(s)
- ☐ 3. agency chaplain
- ☐ 4. chief or other administrator
- ☐ 5. other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

22. Reasons for not sharing incident information with the family:

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21. Is the family eventually informed of the details and the surrounding factors leading to the officers death?

- ☐ 1. yes
- ☐ 2. no

23. Who pays for the medical bills related to the services rendered to the deceased officer?

- ☐ 1. the agency
- ☐ 2. the family
- ☐ 3. public safety organization
- ☐ 4. community support group (100 Club, etc.)
- ☐ 5. other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

24. Who pays for the deceased (accidental) officer's funeral arrangements?

- ☐ 1. the agency
- ☐ 2. the family
- ☐ 3. public safety organization
- ☐ 4. community support group (100 Club, etc.)
- ☐ 5. other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

25. Who pays for the deceased (felonious) officer's funeral arrangements?

- ☐ 1. the agency
- ☐ 2. the family
- ☐ 3. public safety organization
- ☐ 4. community support group (100 Club, etc.)
- ☐ 5. other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

26. Does your agency provide a liaison officer to the family for assistance purposes?

- ☐ 1. yes
- ☐ 2. no

27. Does your agency invite surviving families to agency activities?

- ☐ 1. yes
- ☐ 2. no

Next page please

28. Does your agency provide for a "support person" to the surviving family awaiting trial of the suspect in the killing?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

29. How is the surviving family informed of the legal proceedings concerning the trial of the suspect in the killing?

- ☐ 1. departmental contact person  
☐ 2. public safety support group  
☐ 3. community support group  
☐ 4. media  
☐ 5. other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

30. If there are no dependents, are the surviving parents afforded the same services from the department?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

31. Please list the group(s) that offer assistance to the colleagues of the deceased officer:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

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ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO THE DECEASED OFFICER'S  
COLLEAGUES

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32. Are your agency's sworn personnel participants in a critical incident stress debriefing program?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

33. Does your agency provide for line of duty death, victimization training, or a related type of training?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no  
☐ 3. other, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

34. Please check the duration of departmental assistance to the deceased officer's colleagues:

- ☐ 1. less than 1 month  
☐ 2. 1 month to 6 months  
☐ 3. 7 months to 1 year  
☐ 4. more than 1 year

35. Does your agency provide an employee assistance program to sworn personnel?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

Next page please

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**TYPES OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED FOR SURVIVING RELATIVES**

Please answer this section by placing a check next to the types of assistance your agency provides for the relatives of an officer killed in the line of duty.

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- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (A) funeral arrangements ____          | (B) notification procedures ____               |
| (C) assistance with media ____         | (D) transportation to hospital ____            |
| (E) worker' compensation ____          | (F) departmental group life insurance ____     |
| (G) police pension ____                | (H) public safety officers' death benefit ____ |
| (I) social security ____               | (J) police-family response services ____       |
| (K) spouse support group ____          | (L) liaison person assigned to family ____     |
| (M) peer counseling ____               | (N) instruction on stress management ____      |
| (O) pay for counseling ____            | (P) assistance with benefit paperwork ____     |
| (Q) referral for local counseling ____ | (R) assistance with will preparation ____      |
| (S) access to staff psychologist ____  | (T) chaplaincy program ____                    |
| (U) continued contact with family ____ | (V) continued health coverage ____             |
| (W) other _____                        |  |

Next page please



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 ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO NON-FATALLY INJURED OFFICERS
 

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36. Are the benefit or assistance programs you marked in earlier questions also applied to officers non-fatally injured in the line of duty?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

37. If the assistance or benefit programs differ, please specify on the lines below and continue on the back of this page if necessary.

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38. Are the benefit or assistance programs you marked in earlier questions also applied to officers non-fatally injured while off duty and outside the scope of employment?

- ☐ 1. yes  
☐ 2. no

39. If this assistance differs, please specify on the lines below and continue on the back of this page if necessary.

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 GENERAL INFORMATION
 

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40. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ (Years)

41. Gender:

- ☐ 1. male  
☐ 2. female

42. Race:

- ☐ 1. Caucasian  
☐ 2. African-American  
☐ 3. Asian  
☐ 4. Native American  
☐ 5. Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

43. Education:

- ☐ 1. No college education  
☐ 2. Have taken college courses, no degree completed: \_\_\_\_\_ credits  
☐ 3. Associates (A.A.)  
☐ 4. Bachelors (B.A., B.S.)  
☐ 5. Masters (M.A., M.S.)  
☐ 6. above Masters: specify degree and subject \_\_\_\_\_

Next page please

44. How long have you been a law  
enforcement officer?  
\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_ Months

45. How long have you been with this  
department?  
\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_ Months

46. Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_

47. Agency location (city , state, zip code) \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any additional comments you may have concerning the survey, or law  
enforcement officer death policies and procedures, on the following lines:

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE!



**APPENDIX B**  
**Cover Letter**

1

The purpose of this questionnaire is to examine the types of assistance law enforcement agencies provide to the survivors and colleagues of officers killed in the line of duty.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this questionnaire. All your answers remain confidential. You are asked to provide your agency name only for the purpose of further contact by the researcher.

The researcher may contact your department in the event further policy information would be requested, however, your identity or affiliation with this project will not be given. Please indicate at the end of this consent form by checking either "yes" or "no" if the researcher may contact your agency.

You may contact Brett Banner, an intern for the Behavioral Science Services Unit, at extension #3887 if you have questions or concerns regarding this study.

☐ yes, you may contact my agency if you need further policy description

☐ no, please do not contact my agency

**APPENDIX C**

**FBI National Academy Request Letter**

# Memorandum



To : FBI National Academy Attendees                      Date

From : John H. Campbell  
Unit Chief  
Behavioral Science Services Unit

Subject : Law Enforcement Officer Death Policy Study

During this session of the National Academy, the Behavioral Science Services Unit (BSSU) will be conducting a study examining the types of assistance law enforcement agencies provide to the survivors and colleagues of officers killed in the line of duty. The focus of the study is an analysis of the differing types of policy provided to the survivors, and an attempt by the researcher to formulate a policy beneficial to the current needs of police administrators and surviving family members.

You are being asked to participate in this study. Your participation is voluntary. Your answers are important since they reflect the types of assistance programs there are available to family members and colleagues of officers killed in the line of duty.

Supervisory Special Agent James Horn will be supervising this project. The study is being conducted by Brett Banner, a Masters candidate from the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. Mr. Banner is serving as an intern with the BSSU.

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire that will require approximately 5 minutes of your time. At the end of the questionnaire you will be asked to provide the name of the agency you are affiliated with and its location. This is being done in the event that a follow-up contact with your agency for further policy information becomes necessary. Your identity and affiliation with this project will not be revealed.

The survey answers will remain confidential. The data will be collected in the aggregate form and reported anonymously.

Your participation will be greatly appreciated.



**APPENDIX D**

**National Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial Rubbing**



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigation

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Office of the Director

Washington D.C. 20535

TERRY J. JABLONSKI

PATROLMAN-BAY CITY, MICHIGAN POLICE DEPARTMENT 4/26/1991

NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' MEMORIAL:  
ROLL CALL OF FALLEN OFFICERS (WASHINGTON, D.C.)

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