
Municipal Management Series

Local Government Police Management

Third Edition

**Editor
William A. Geller**

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Municipal Management Series

**Local
Government
Police
Management**

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Foreword

The United States is on the threshold of a new era of policing, an era in which the police function is being repositioned to make major contributions to addressing and solving the problems of drugs, crime, and violence that affect the quality of life in communities throughout the nation.

No one can deny the breadth of these problems. Cities with increasingly scarce fiscal resources are faced with crumbling infrastructure, increasing crime, drug abuse, widespread unemployment, racial tension and racially motivated attacks, and expanding levels of senseless violence. There are no easy solutions.

Today's police leaders are uniquely positioned to become a catalyst for dealing with many of these important problems. They have a historic opportunity to move policing from a largely reactionary posture into the forefront of problem solving in the neighborhoods of our cities and towns.

Just as police leadership of the 1920s and 1930s advanced policing from within, establishing a professional commitment to integrity, education, training, and quality management, today's police leadership has the opportunity to participate in shaping a vision that will sustain policing through the next fifty years.

The riots of the 1960s caused deep soul-searching about an institution that no longer was capable of being

responsive to the demands of the day. As a result, policing was re-directed toward protecting and serving the society in its quest for a peaceful and safe existence, free from fear and with democratic values applied equally to all Americans.

Now, with U.S. cities in crisis, with the problems of violence, crime, racial polarization, disorder, and drugs tearing at the basic fabric of our communities, police and other local government leaders must go a step further in redefining the police role in the local government structure that manages fundamental public services.

The police role traditionally has been primarily enforcement, and the nation's prisons are overpopulated as a result. Police leaders are now asking themselves whether they want their legacy to be the building of more prisons and the incarceration of record numbers of citizens.

The inmates of prisons today are predominantly poor, undereducated, low- or unskilled, unemployed or unemployable. Most are minority. We arrest them in record numbers for the crimes they commit, but the problems on our streets grow worse, not better. Why is this? It is because institutions that used to constitute society's infrastructure—family, neighborhood, schools, churches, even social service providers—have lost their capacities to socialize and give meaning and value to a large, important segment of our people.

The police find themselves dealing with the failures of these other social institutions.

People without jobs—and without the prospect of jobs—cannot and do not live well. It should not surprise us that so many of them turn to drugs for a brief respite from despair. Many turn to crime to feed their habits and to ease their pain. Recognizing this does not excuse their illegal behavior, but it does challenge leaders to search for better ways in order to make a difference.

Police leaders must keep their eyes on these broad, critical issues while they develop as skilled managers of dynamic police agencies and ever-changing operational practices. This and the earlier volumes of *Local Government Police Management* have been devoted to the development of these managers. But good management alone will not prepare police executives for the challenges of the twenty-first century. Strong and clear value-oriented leadership is critical as well, and the reader will also find inspiration here for the articulation of departmental values.

The new vision of policing described in these pages draws on many of the strengths of the professional model of policing and on examples of excellence in the private sector. More significantly, it focuses attention on the relationships of the police with the residents of neighborhoods, with other units of government, with the business community, and with colleagues in their own organizations.

Great leaders have great visions. They focus on what could be rather than what has been. They look beyond the obvious and dream of the ideal. They articulate a vision for their communities and their employees with a sense of purpose

toward which they can direct their energies.

No one becomes a leader in a vacuum. Every successful leader had a mentor, an advisor, a role model. The police profession must develop a commitment to mentoring that capitalizes on the talent and expertise available in retired and current leaders and in the private sector. Mentoring becomes fruitful when it is combined with a strong vision about the future—a vision about how the individual and the organization can make a difference in the community and society at large. The next generation of police leaders will find much in this text to help them clarify their vision and develop their capacity to make a difference.

Police leaders today are increasingly equipped to rise to the challenges set for them on these pages. They are better educated and more representative of their communities than at any time in recent memory. They can draw on the emerging successes of community-focused, problem-oriented policing and carry forth that developing vision. They have the opportunity to focus on solving problems rather than merely responding to reports of incidents, and they have the benefit of an increased willingness of residents to share responsibility for community order maintenance and crime control. These efforts aim to build neighborhood capacities to directly confront many of the issues which are so important to the quality of life. Our challenge to be creative is greater than at any time in the nation's recent past. The opportunities are clear.

City managers, mayors, and local governing bodies also have a major role in reshaping American policing. First, they have a responsibility to fully understand the changing nature of the police function, so they can provide adequate support,

advice, and oversight to the efforts of police leaders in meeting these new challenges. Even the most visionary police leader will be ineffectual if the chief executive or the elected council does not fully understand the importance of the police as a vital part of the total governmental service delivery structure. The police must be viewed as a resource in meeting the important needs of residents. Elected and appointed local government leaders also have a responsibility to challenge their police executives to achieve excellence as collaborators with other local agencies and with a host of other public and private groups and organizations in the community. Finally, they have a responsibility to ensure that the young men and women in the middle ranks of police departments are provided with opportunities to develop the skills, knowledge, and vision necessary to assume future leadership positions.

As individuals with a vested interest in the future of our communities, the readers of this golden anniversary edition of *Local Government Police Management* will be charged with a mission in the coming years. We will be called upon to develop

new ways to deliver police services equitably, effectively, and within the context of democratic values in an environment of increasingly scarce fiscal resources. As we move ahead, our skills and creativity will surely be tested. But if we build on our proud past and develop a meaningful vision for the future, if we develop leaders who are creative, sensitive, and thoughtful, we will play an integral part in restoring to our country the values, principles, and quality of life that made it great. That includes safer streets and safer communities. That includes the basic freedoms of any democracy, especially the freedom from fear.

The challenge of today's leaders is not to leave policing in America in the same condition we inherited it, but to improve it by exercising leadership that makes a difference.

Lee P. Brown
Commissioner
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Police Department

President
International
Association of
Chiefs of Police

Foreword

The importance of police management to the quality of life in a community cannot be overemphasized. The police have substantial power to intervene in residents' daily activities. They are the visible representatives of government in many sensitive and emotional situations. And they have the authority to use deadly force if need be. For these reasons, the police department is continually scrutinized by the local governing body, citizens, and the press; and police performance remains high on the agenda of city and county managers and other chief administrators.

At a time of fiscal constraints on local government, fundamental questions about policing take on new urgency. What should the police be doing? How well are they performing? And how do we know?

Because policing is so central a service of local government, ICMA has long been committed to helping police chiefs and local administrators work together to answer those questions and strengthen police management at the local level. Over the last fifty years, ICMA has published, in ten editions and under the direction of seven editors, a substantial book on local government police management.

This golden anniversary edition of *Local Government Police Management* reflects significant changes in the environment of policing over the past decade—a virtual epidemic of drug-related crime; a growing body of research that challenges our

assumptions about the effectiveness of traditional police practices; mind-boggling technological advances in information systems and forensics; and the blossoming demographic diversity of the population and the work force.

At the same time, the book reflects significant changes in the philosophy and practice of policing—a shift in orientation away from incident-driven reaction and response toward prevention and problem solving; a new interest in setting and using standards of performance and professionalism in police work; and, significantly, a growing realization that effective policing requires a new partnership between police and the communities they serve. Among the names for this partnership are community-oriented, community-based, and problem-oriented policing.

Finally, this book reflects an emphasis on “values-driven” management that is finding a voice in police theory and practice in the 1990s. The book concludes with a reflective piece that is a departure from tradition for ICMA’s “Green Book” series but should strike a responsive chord with its readership. In the final chapter, a scholar and a chief encourage their police colleagues to recognize and heed time-honored values and be explicit about incorporating them into departmental policies and practices.

To create this book, ICMA turned to experts in policing—those who have pondered and studied the sig-

nificant questions confronting departments today and who have managed those departments in changing times. The editor, Bill Geller, assembled a roster of advisors and participants who are broadly representative of the field today. We extend special thanks to Bill for his prodigious efforts and to the members of the editorial advisory committee whose names appear opposite the title page of this book:

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A number of ICMA staff members and other individuals also contrib-

uted to this project: Barbara H. Moore, Director of Publications, who oversaw the project; Jane E. Lewin, who copyedited the manuscript; Verity Weston-Truby and Christina A. Davis, who undertook a variety of editorial responsibilities; Dawn M. Leland, who managed production; and Mary W.

Blair and Tonya L. Horsley, who provided administrative assistance.

William H. Hansell, Jr.
Executive Director

International City
Management Association
Washington, D.C.

Preface

Much about police technology, technique, and targets has changed in the 162 years since Sir Robert Peel's "Bobbies" began to provide a prototype for what would become the American local police department—a publicly financed, publicly accountable, paramilitary, bureaucratic, twenty-four-hour, primarily uniformed force. Consider, for example, the relative ease and accuracy of information sharing then and now. News of Peel's organizational invention in 1829 at best could reach American shores in three weeks by steamship; today, police who cannot even pronounce one another's names participate in live international teleconferences on how to forge partnerships for public safety with the community, and they electronically exchange and analyze fingerprint records, DNA data, and other information in seconds. Until the advent of a workable fountain pen in 1884, police who questioned criminal suspects recorded any incriminating statements longhand using a quill; today, roughly a third of all American police agencies use videotape to document the manner and content of stationhouse confessions by serious felony suspects. (And, in an ironic symmetry, citizens sometimes use videotape to document police-civilian encounters on the streets.)

Yet, despite the technological developments, discovering the *strategic* innovations that will help police protect a free society—so that the police work in a way that promotes freedom—remains one of the most difficult challenges of local

governance. As work on this golden anniversary edition began—fifty years after ICMA's publication in 1938 of the book under its previous title, *Municipal Police Administration*—our nation's police confronted a number of crises. But these are crises as understood by the ancient Orientals, whose written symbol for "crisis" is made up of the characters for "danger" and "opportunity."

The dangers are apparent. Murder rates at the beginning of this decade set new records in many American jurisdictions, frustrating and frightening neighborhoods everywhere. Drug abuse and related disorder problems continued to press into every nook and cranny of the country. As Lee Brown has observed elsewhere, "Communities too small to have double parking problems contend with crack dealers." And a generation of youth is in jeopardy. Speaking to the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, Reverend Joseph Lowery commented: "Our youth have despair for breakfast, futility for lunch, hopelessness for dinner and sleep on a pillow of desperation."

Yet, there *are* opportunities to make a difference, and steps are being taken to seize these opportunities. Our nation's communities are coming to understand that the health of a democracy depends on citizens doing their part to work with government. Whereas the police radio call "officer needs assistance" traditionally has meant "come quickly, bring guns," in-

creasingly the police are calling for and receiving assistance on a much more diverse range of challenges and from a much wider array of public and private sources. In these unconventional alliances many see great promise for reclaiming even our most devastated and violence-torn neighborhoods.

Moreover, there is even some cause for optimism about the level of crime in America. Our legitimate outrage over the devastation of some urban neighborhoods and over rising national murder rates should not confuse us into thinking that the nation *overall* has been suffering a surge in other types of violent crime. The federal government has conducted victimization surveys that tally *all* crimes (other than homicide) committed against Americans and not just the fraction of crime that the public reports to police, the police report to the FBI, and the FBI reports to the media. These victimization surveys reveal that the number of *violent* crimes per 1,000 population in the United States was lower in 1990 than in any of the previous seventeen years, except for 1986. Furthermore, the number of police feloniously slain in America each year has been steadily declining since the mid-1970s. Half as many officers were killed in the line of duty in 1990 as in 1974; and based on the number of violent crime arrests made in the two periods, police were 300 percent *less* likely to be killed by offenders as the decade of the 1990s began than they were in the mid-1970s.

There is reason for hope at the global level as well. In our generation, emerging democracies dot the world's landscape. As American police and other local government officials watch their international colleagues struggle with the fundamental issues that confront those policing a newly emancipated society, the conclusion seems incapable that *every* democracy, our own included, is perpetually and

necessarily an *emerging* democracy. That is, with change as the only constant, if a democracy stops emerging it starts eroding. Thus, this is a book about policing in a way that nurtures democratic processes and recommits the police and all other citizens to the principles that define a democracy, even under pressure.

Most of the fundamental issues confronting America's emerging police leadership will differ little from those confronted by Peel, his mentors, and our contemporary colleagues around the globe: To whom are the police accountable in a democratic state and through what mechanisms? What role should the public have in self-policing, in collaborative efforts, and in picking the priorities and tactics of the professional police? In seeking to achieve an ordered liberty, how can the police foster order without squelching liberty? In fulfilling their "order maintenance" or peacekeeping responsibilities, how should the police distinguish between dangerous disorder and desirable diversity (especially in a multi-cultural community)? In our pluralistic society, how can the police safeguard the cultural "mosaic"—an invigorating coexistence of proud cultures, races, ethnicities, religions, and political and other preferences? In our increasingly pluralistic police organizations, what can be done to create models of interracial and intercultural cooperation and respect among officers that will set a tone for improvements in the broader community? How can the police be motivated to be physically courageous and imaginative in protecting the innocent, yet compassionate and just in handling criminal suspects and others whom the police see as adversaries? How can police leaders and managers better integrate systems and operations inside the police organization so that it has the capacity to solve the *internal* problems that could inhibit successfully addressing the *community's* difficult

problems? How can police and local government managers establish a police work environment in which officials are willing to consider whether defective work—ineptness, brutality, corruption, laziness, misguided zealotry, or some other deficiency—is the product of systemic problems or of policy, supervisory, or training failures rather than solely the individual responsibility of the workers? How can we fashion a work environment that encourages police officers to be creative and gives them permission, within reason, to make mistakes in pursuit of departmental missions? Without supervisors—and the community—granting police officers appropriate “permission to fail,” asking police to take risks in devising better methods sends troubling mixed messages and becomes a cruel joke. Most of these challenges and the advice about addressing them contained in this volume apply regardless of location or agency size. The problems are as great and the prescriptions as pertinent for the 79 percent of America’s local police departments that employ fewer than 25 sworn officers as they are for the biggest police bureaucracies in the land.

As police search for the path to help define the responsibilities and secure the rights of citizenship in our “emerging democracy,” they encounter new problems, new enemies, new allies, new visions of a better tomorrow. The book that follows offers as guideposts along this stimulating and precarious path modern principles, standards, and techniques that can facilitate the work of police leaders and managers and the efforts of appointed and elected government officials to stimulate excellence in policing. These guideposts will also help the police and other government officials provide guidance to others about how to behave in a democracy.

It is no accident that this text’s practical advice for managing the

full range of functions required of any modern police agency begins and ends with chapters which explore the lessons that history may hold for those readers who will lead American policing into the next century. Over the past five decades, this ICMA book has endeavored both to honor the accomplishments of the past (including painfully learned lessons) and to explore the often dimly perceptible outlines of the future. So, too, this edition—the product of writing and advice by more than two hundred of the most insightful practitioners and most “street-wise” scholars in the field—seeks to present an amalgam of the old and the new. It seeks to present a vision of ever more valuable, efficient, and equitable police work built on the solid foundation prepared by previous generations of police. It seeks to keep the best of policing’s *process*-orientation (for example, methods that foster integrity and the use of legitimate, nonpartisan police tactics) and to introduce a heightened focus on obtaining *results* that benefit the service population. It seeks results obtained by harnessing satisfactory external and internal working relationships.

The “remodeling” of police organizations and police work that is being done and will need to be done in years ahead on the foundation provided by our predecessors follows the architects’ maxim that “form follows function.” If the focus of the police is to shift to crime prevention, fear reduction, order maintenance, and the empowerment of communities to restore informal social control systems, then the mission and culture of the police organization must be adapted. If the work of police is to include creative “problem solving,” then some aspects of traditional organizational constraints will need to be altered and new support and quality control systems created. Asking some or all of a police department’s officers to engage in

creative community problem solving within the paramilitary, bureaucratic, risk-averse work environment that has come to characterize much of policing over the past several decades is like asking someone to tap dance in snow shoes. It looks funny and isn't very effective. At the same time, when officers need to implement tactical maneuvers requiring great discipline, coordination, and timing (such as execution of search warrants, the rescue of hostages, and certain aspects of controlling hostile or even friendly crowds), any attempt to exalt the officers' individualism could prove disastrous. Again, form must follow function.

If the forms that police organizations take and the approaches that their employees adopt in the continual process of remodeling are to be as sound as possible, the perspectives of people within and outside of police organizations must be considered. When an architect designs a structure without adequately identifying the insights and needs of those who must use it, the result is unlikely to be a happy one. Since police of all ranks and responsibilities and citizens of all walks of life are the legitimate "users" of the police structure in a democratic society, all belong in the circle of public safety "change agents" and collaborators. To be sure, the idea of police-public collaboration will produce tension for all parties at times. Some of the sources of this tension can be reduced—especially misunderstandings and disrespect between the police and the public concerning each others' responsibilities, values, and styles. What cannot be changed, however, is the duty of the police on occasion to give members of the public orders—orders enforceable, if necessary and proper, with physical coercion. An imbalance of real or perceived power—whether between friends, spouses, co-workers, or other collaborators—almost always makes

for uneasy partnerships. As Woody Allen has observed, "The lion and the lamb shall lie down together, but the lamb won't get much sleep." Nevertheless, by emphasizing the positives—the strengths, intelligence, and experience that each partner brings to the collaboration and their common interest in leaving the world better than they found it—powerful coalitions can be forged.

This preface is full of lofty talk about the capacity of the police to protect the public while "enforcing freedom," as Police Chief Neil Behan likes to put it. Such talk may seem applicable to only a small segment of modern police work. If so, I commend to the reader the discussion in the concluding chapter of this volume. It examines the Preamble of the United States Constitution and derives from that analysis practical guidance for the exercise of police discretion on such seemingly prosaic matters as the issuance of parking tickets. With this examination, the book concludes on the same note on which it begins. The experiment in ordered liberty—a "morality play" in which the police are very prominent actors—is a play whose first draft was penned by some mighty respectable writers, including the drafters of the U.S. Constitution. But this play calls upon the actors to do a substantial amount of improvisation. To be sure, the playwrights have expressed clear preferences about the ultimate shape of the play and its central themes. Just as certainly, the actors have the power to alter it for better or worse. It is to those at all levels of police organizations and their bosses and collaborators outside those organizations who must fulfill these difficult improvisational responsibilities, day to day and decade to decade, that this book is directed and dedicated.

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