

## POLICE WORKLOAD ANALYSIS

### I. Overview

Police Workload Analysis is a process for measuring staffing needs based on demand for police service from the community. The recommended level of patrol staffing is typically developed through a series of evaluations based on the goals of the police service, its Commission and the communities it serves (e.g. its approach to community oriented policing).

Patrol staffing levels establish the footprint for a police service. The number of managers, supervisors, investigators, and support staff are all determined in comparison with the work done by patrol officers. Patrol makes up the bulk of the police budget because it represents the largest category of staff employed.

### II. Measuring Patrol Staffing Needs

The primary measure of patrol workload is the amount of staff time needed to respond to calls for service from the public. Policies and practices can influence how much time officers need for administrative duties like attending meetings, taking meal breaks, going to court, transporting prisoners, and other tasks that are a natural outgrowth of answering calls for service.

Management practices, organizational goals and available staff time have an impact on officer initiated activity. That activity is generally short term, reactive work that includes traffic enforcement, citizen contacts, and other work officers generate based on their own initiative.

Some amount of time needs to be available for proactive work in the community. Proactive work is planned well before a shift begins and is designed to help a police service reach its organizational goals in serving the community.

### Areas Analyzed

- A. Patrol Staffing and Problem Oriented Policing
- B. Number of Calls for Service
- C. Types of Calls Answered and Units Dispatched
- D. Officer Initiated Activity

### III. Staffing Analysis

Another step in the staffing analysis process determines the impact of leave used and leave policies on the availability of officers for duty. The patrol work schedule used by

a police service as well as policies governing leave have a major influence on the cost that leave has in the calculation of staffing needs.

After officer availability has been analyzed, a spreadsheet model for defining staffing needs is typically used to determine the number of budgeted positions needed by the police service. The model used is based on policy decisions about the amount of proactive time a community wants to fund for patrol services and the percentage of officers' time to be spent on handling calls for service.

A complete scope of work for a workload analysis includes the examination of staffing needed by day of week and hour of day.

### **Areas Analyzed**

A. Staff Availability Factor (SAF)

Because policing is a 24 hour per day, 7 day per week service, enough police officer positions are needed to account for scheduled days off and the various types of leave officers are entitled to take. A Staff Availability Factor (SAF) is a multiplier used to determine the number of positions that need to be funded to ensure that a certain number of patrol units are on the street.

B. Assessment of 12 hour shift scheduling versus standard work week of a 5 day on 2 day off schedule

C. Calculating Positions Needed

Analysis leads to the determination of the number of patrol officers and budgeted positions needed to reach goals, and can be adjusted to determine the number of personnel needed if the goal for proactive time needs to be adjusted. A spreadsheet model is used to test different scenarios for the allocation of patrol time. The model divides the day into time blocks for potential start and stop times (needed for overlapping shifts). The analysis steps contained in these spreadsheets includes:

- Units dispatched – the number of units logged into primary and backup units to determine the number of patrol units needed to respond to citizen generated calls for service
- Units needed to answer calls – For this, the number of units dispatched is multiplied by average time per unit dispatched. These calculations take into account time needed for backup units as well as primary units. This time includes both travel time and time at the scene of calls.
- Staffing policy factors – After identifying the number of patrol units needed to answer calls, these factors are used for administrative time and proactive time

- Staff Availability Factor (SAF) – Once the number of patrol personnel needed in the field has been determined, based on the policy factors, the number of units needed in the field per day is multiplied by the SAF to account for leave and vacancies

#### IV. Example Conclusions

1. Problem Oriented Policing (POP) – Experience from other police services work load analysis has shown that POP can be a bridge to problem solving and building community partnerships.
2. Current allocation of time –use of tools and capabilities to more accurately measure how patrol officers spend their time by hour of day and day of week, measuring the percentage of time that is spent by units assigned to routine patrol duty at different times of the day on major categories of tasks, such as:
  - Calls for service from the public dispatched to patrol units
  - Reactive police officer initiated activity like traffic stops and field interviews
  - Administrative time like meals, breaks, court time, and training
  - Uncommitted time that could be used for proactive work
3. Staffing levels – Once the current allocation of time for patrol officers is determined, it is much easier to set goals for how patrol time should be spent in the future, with staff levels including positions allocated to problem oriented policing.
  - Patrol work schedule. - patrol work schedule should be tailored to assure that patrol officers are scheduled for duty in proportion to call for service workload, based on by hour of day and day of week, creating overlapping shifts when necessary
  - Revise the SAF if the number of scheduled days off changes based on the schedule picked to determine if officer availability for duty changes because of the new or revised schedule
4. Data Quality – To make the most of a police service’s investment in a CAD system, they must continually work to improve the quality of data being collected.
  - Develop rules for defining calls for service, officer initiated activity, administrative time and time spent on proactive work.
  - Ensure call priorities are coded into basic categories, with each type of call having guidelines on the numbers of units dispatched.
  - Implement a quality control process that captures exception criteria
5. Management Reports – Programming support to generate useful management reports.