

Police operations



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Department Organization Paper “ What if the structure of police organizations is shaped by factors beyond easy human contrivance, such as the size and age of the force, the degree of stability in the political environment, the complexity of governmental regulation, the geographical dispersion of the population, or the nature of police work itself” (Maguire 2003)? In this paper I will describe in detail various types of police agencies at the local, state, and federal level and how each is organized, identify the principal roles and functions of police organizations and their role as it applies to the law, and also identify major organizational theories associated with policing. * There are many different types of police organizations that specifically deal with specific circumstances. On the other hand there are broad organizations that deal with a wider scope of jurisdiction and rules. I will just touch on the major organization within police work at the local, state, and federal levels. The first organization (city and county) are the first level of policing. Moreover, these agencies have municipal police, county police, and the county sheriffs.

(Wikipedia 2010) “ The Municipal police are law enforcement agencies that are under the control of local government. Their powers are delegated by legislation or directives by higher levels of government” (para. 3). They receive pay by local budgets and have fewer rights than that of state police. Municipal police are generally a part of law enforcement that acts more of a deterrent, only limited by the by the equipment that they carry. They can range from one officer agencies to our own Sacramento PD. The next police organization is state, which includes the state police and bureaus of criminal investigation.

State police are controlled by the state supreme courts and are directed by state codes of criminal procedure that define what police must do and what they may not do. “ The most important role of state governments has been to require the licensing or certification of all sworn officers” (Walker and Katz 2008, para. 02). State police have state wide authority to conduct law enforcement activities and also criminal investigations. They perform functions outside the jurisdiction of the county sheriff. Some of their duties include, but are not limited to; enforcing traffic laws on state and interstate highways, protecting the governor, provide technological and scientific support services and help to coordinate with other jurisdictions in aiding serious cases. Another service is the highway patrol that patrols the highways for any infractions concerning traffic and safety.

Other state police agencies such as the Bureaus of Investigation (State Detectives), Bureau of Narcotics (Drug Enforcement), Department of Public Safety (provide oversight and coordination over various state level police agencies), and also Marine Patrol (water police), are amongst state patrols. All these agencies have state wide jurisdiction governed by the state supreme courts rule. The last level police organization is the federal government. (Walker and Katz 2008) states, “ The role of each federal agency is specified by federal statute. In important respects, federal agencies have far less complex role than that of municipal agencies. Federal agents do not have the ambiguous and difficult order maintenance responsibilities, do not maintain 911 emergency telephone services, and are not asked to handle vague disturbance calls” (para. 61).

“ Federal Law Enforcement Officers are authorized to enforce various laws not only at the federal level, but also state, county, and local in many circumstances” (Wikipedia 2010). There are numerous federal agencies such as, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Defense, or Department of Energy to just name a few. All federal agencies are limited by the U. S. Code, but because of the USA PATRIOT Act (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001), federal power has broadened in scope. As (Grant and Terry 2008) state, “ researchers have found four main theories or explanations. The first Psychological theories, argue that core attitudes are formed before the individual enters the police force and are a function of such things as family background, social status, and prior education.

Next, Educational theories, state that core attitudes are acquired during police training and early years on the street and are passed on to recruits by older, more experienced police officers. Also, Sociological theories, state that police attitudes are shaped by the daily demands of police work and reflect the “ working culture” of policing. Lastly, Organizational theories, argues that police attitudes and values are shaped by the organizational and working culture of policing and the demands placed upon officers by their police colleagues” (p. 223). Whether officers exhibit similar personality traits and the extent to which these are caused by predisposing factors or a socialization into the police culture is the subject of many diverse explanations: psychological, educational, sociological, and organizational. ‘ The influence of historical factors on officer perceptions of suspiciousness must also be

considered in discussing the origins of police culture. Police are in many ways a reflection of the larger societal force in which they are embedded” (Grant and Terry 2008, p.

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