

INTERSECTIONS:
Traffic Safety
Committee

Public Safety

**FACTORS IN LEADER
DEVELOPMENT**
Greg Veitch
Ret. Police Chief

Pillars of Leadership

GORDON GRAHAM:
Some Things
You Can Just
See Coming

COUNSEL'S CORNER:
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Tracking Performance

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THE CHIEF'S CHRONICLE

SEPTEMBER 2024

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Pictured to the right are your Vice Presidents being sworn in by Chief Michael Lefancheck. 1st VP, Paul Oliva, Mount Pleasant PD, 2nd VP, David Catholdi, Brighton PD, and 3rd VP, Steve Rotunno, Cicero PD



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Jeff Rinaldo – 50 A and Freedom of Information
Charles Tyree – NYS DCJS Intelligence led policing

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

President
Chief Shawn Heubusch



Let's Make Communities Across New York Safer

Thank you all for attending the 2024 NYSA-COP annual training conference held in historic downtown Buffalo, NY. It was a great opportunity to reconnect with old friends and make some new ones as well as get insight into the latest trends facing law enforcement today. Not only were we able to learn from one another, but we were also introduced to cutting edge technologies on display from our partners and vendors.

I hope each of you left the conference with renewed enthusiasm and a variety of ideas and strategies to take back to your organizations and towns, cities or villages that will enhance public safety in your communities.

I want to thank our dedicated staff that once again

created an amazing conference that surpassed expectations and delivered three great days of training and networking events. Also, a big thanks to our event sponsors for ensuring that our members were taken care of. The bar gets raised higher each and every year!



From the President's Desk

I look forward to leading this esteemed organization into the coming year and working alongside others to make communities across New York safer for all. There are plenty of challenges to address and we must rally as an organization to face them head on. Please reach out to your zone reps to stay on top of what is going on in NY-SACOP or to discuss challenges you may be facing in your jurisdiction that NYSACOP may be able to assist with. Be safe and be well.



Keep Your NYSACOP Profile Up-To-Date:

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chief/Ret. Patrick Phelan

Working for change at the Attorney General's Office

Since the inception of the Office of Special Investigations at the NYS Attorney General's Office, police departments in New York have been subjected to investigations by the AG into any incident involving a police encounter resulting in the death of a civilian. These investigations typically take a protracted amount of time, and the police agency executives are forced to place the officers involved on administrative duty or leave while they await the determination from the Attorney General.

In August of this year NYSACOP provided a letter to Attorney General Letitia James laying out our concerns about this process and asking for meeting to work on improvements to the process. An excerpt from the letter reads; "Our concerns lie not in the jurisdiction of the Office of the Attorney General to investigate these matters but in the length of time taken by the Office of Special Investigations to complete these investigations. Many New York agencies have experienced fatal encounters and been subjected to investigations by the Office of Special Investigations. While these agencies await the outcome of investigations, the personnel involved are placed on administrative duties and held back from the day-to-day operations of the police agency. The absence of these officers from our daily operations places a tremendous toll on our agencies." This letter was signed by all the Chiefs and Commissioners of New York's major cities, NYSACOP Leadership, and all the NYSACOP zone representatives.

I have discussed this matter with the Attorney Gen-

eral and her staff and hope to have future meetings regarding the Office of Special investigations. We will keep the membership advised of our progress.

In addition, since the establishment of the Law Enforcement Misconduct Investigation Office within the Attorney General's Office, police agencies have been subjected to investigations based of private complaints made to the LEMIO and after forwarding information to the office after an officer has received five complaints. These investigations also take prolonged periods of time and often at the conclusion the LEMIO suggests changes to policy that have already been made by updated policy or disciplinary measures such as suspension or termination that are not reasonable, practical, or even possible under law. Commis-

sioner Joseph Gramaglia of the Buffalo Police Department has pushed back on these practices and called for changes including the issuing a preliminary report for review by the agency to provide the opportunity for the agency to offer clarification and correction where necessary. The LEMIO has recently indicated that they will implement to change and begin issuing preliminary reports for agency review before the issuance of the final report. Buffalo's success shows that change is possible. Tyler Nims, Deputy Attorney General in charge of the Office of Law Enforcement Misconduct Investigation, will be speaking at the NYSACOP/NYSSA Leadership Summit in Schenectady on November 7th, 2024. Registration for the summit is available on the NYSACOP website nychiefs.org.



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The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) will bring together criminal justice professionals from across New York State and the nation, once again, for its annual Public Safety Symposium from Tuesday, Sept. 17 to Friday, Sept. 20, 2024, at the Empire State Plaza Convention Center in Albany, N.Y.

The goal of the symposium is to provide public safety and law enforcement executives, researchers, practitioners, community organizations, community supervision personnel, crime analysts and prosecutors with an opportunity to hear from criminal justice leaders and innovators and to network with each other to share successful strategies and ideas. Over the course of four days, symposium attendees will hear about innovative ideas, evidence-based violence reduction practices, changes in policing, and other contemporary criminal justice topics, with the goal of every attendee leaving with new information that can be used to strengthen their public safety efforts.

We are also pleased to announce keynote addresses by Nashville Police Lt. Mark Wynn (ret.), Kassy Alia Ray, Ph.D., Jerry Ratcliffe, Ph.D., and Mitch Javidi, Ph.D., who are all distinguished leaders in public safety. These keynote speakers bring a wealth of experience and expertise and will cover a wide range of topics, including leadership, evidence-based policing, intimate partner violence prevention, community engagement, and officer safety. Attendees will have the opportunity to gain valuable insights and learn from these compelling stories and innovative approaches that have made significant impacts in the field.

Registration information can be found on the DCJS training calendar at: www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/ops/training/calendar.htm.

If there are any questions about registration or the symposium, please email us at: publicsafetysymposium@dcjs.ny.gov.

To see our symposium trailer video, please go to this link at our DCJS YouTube page: [2024 DCJS Public Safety Symposium \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2024DCJSPublicSafetySymposium)

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CHIEF'S CORNER

Effectively Utilize Technology

By Chief Stuart K. Cameron - Old Westbury PD



It's no secret that many police departments are struggling to attract new candidates to join their ranks. Even agencies that have historically had a plethora of interested candidates looking to become members of their departments now find themselves grappling with personnel shortages and the inability to backfill for retirements. These staffing issues are quite often occurring in an environment of rising crime or, at best, with crime levels much higher than in the recent past, thereby creating a vexing dilemma for police leadership.

One method to continue to drive crime down, even with decreased staffing levels, is to effectively utilize technology. Law enforcement technology has been exploding, with a steady stream of new innovations and capabilities being added to the menu of available products on a regular basis. While many agencies have taken advantage of a variety of these new technologies, quite frequently each technology is siloed and isolated, often being dispersed among disparate commands within larger departments. Experience has demonstrated in many law enforcement agencies that combining these technologies into a single center has a synergistic effect which will in turn make the sum much greater than each individual part.

Many agencies primarily use technology solely for post event investigations, rather than maximizing its utility and continuously accessing incoming information in real-time to proactively drive down crime.

Most law enforcement agencies routinely capture a great deal of information about the domain they are responsible for, however effectively utilizing this vast storehouse of data to reduce crime has not been well executed in many agencies. On the contrary, many law enforcement agencies simply warehouse much of the data that they collect instead of using it in any meaningful manner to increase the efficiency of their mission.

Very often the data that has been collected can be a tremendous asset in identifying crime patterns, crime trends, modus operandi patterns, and suspect profiles, thereby empowering agencies to direct their resources more effectively, thus developing

more successful crime reduction strategies. Data analysis can be further enhanced when law enforcement databases are used in conjunction with open-source information.

Real Time Crime Centers or RTCCS are facilities designed to access all relevant technology that a police agency possesses, combining these inputs with



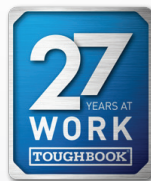
SCPD RTCC - video walls are a prominent feature in RTCCs, which can be used to coordinate the response to significant events in progress, like this simulated school attack.

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access to both internal law enforcement and external open-source databases. According to the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the overarching mission of an RTCC is “to provide a law enforcement agency with the ability to capitalize on a wide and expanding range of technologies for efficient and effective policing”.



Private cameras – RTCCs can expand their reach by accessing existing public and private cameras through camera sharing agreements.

RTCCs often monitor computer aided dispatch systems and radio broadcasts in real time, seeking to immediately assist patrol officers as they respond to events in progress. They offer an effective solution to the successful coordination of various technologies, combined with an efficacious

utilization of information to both solve prior crimes and to prospectively prevent future crimes from occurring. Real Time Crime Centers can be a hub for state-of-the-art technologies, such as gun shot detection systems, close circuit camera feeds, and license plate readers. These real-time data feeds can be combined with query access to public and private databases utilizing advanced analytics and data visualization tools.

Many RTCCs feature prominent video walls where information, such as camera feeds or LPR data, can be presented in an effective and organized manner. The staff within the RTCC can select what is displayed on the video wall depend-

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ing upon a current strategic objective or based upon an incipient event. Many agencies will map the location of the technology that they have access to, thereby creating the ability to generate extremely useful graphics to highlight what technology is available to them for a given situation. These maps can then in turn be displayed on the video wall. For example, an agency that has officers responding to a robbery call can place the map depicting the immediate area where the robbery occurred on the video wall detailing potential escape routes and then toggle on map layers showing the location of CCTV cameras, fixed and mobile LRP, the real-time location of responding patrol cars and even a helicopter downlink video feed, if available. This type of display can provide a big picture view and help to facilitate the capture of a suspect fleeing from the scene of a crime by coordinating the response in the most effective manner given the resources available. As RTCC staff members search CCTV and LPR feeds for vehicles that fit the description of the suspect vehicle, this information can be shared with patrol units in the immediate area. With enough camera feeds and

LPRs available, it is possible to track a fleeing suspect in real-time or even predict an expected course of flight.

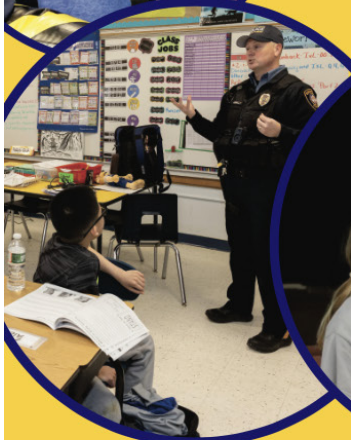
Many Real Time Crime Centers have achieved great success by accessing technology owned by other municipalities or even private entities, such as CCTV camera feeds, through joint access agreements. Quite often an RTCC will be established at a county or regional level. Agreements can be promulgated to bring in existing city, town or village camera feeds, for example, thereby leveraging the investment in these cameras to broaden and enhance their overall effectiveness. Permission to access privately owned camera networks can also be achieved as most cameras are now IP based, which can facilitate access via the internet. Cameras of sufficient resolution, whether they be law enforcement owned or owned by another municipality or private entity, can also often be utilized as a license plate reader with suitable software or firmware configurations.

Some departments have begun to establish drone as a first responder (DFR) programs with proper authorization from the Federal Aviation Administration.

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These programs allow drones to be situated in strategic locations throughout a jurisdiction ever ready to be launched to respond to calls for service or the activation of gunshot detection systems. Once airborne the video generated by a drone's onboard camera systems can be sent back to the RTCC. In many cases it is also possible to stream video back to an RTCC from in-car video systems or even body worn cameras.

At least one gunshot detection system



Fixed LPR / Fixed LPR2 / Mobile LPR - License plate readers, whether fixed or mobile, can be a cornerstone technology in RTCCs, constantly monitoring for wanted and stolen vehicles.

manufacturer has leveraged the audio capability of their gunshot detection sensors to detect illegal street shows, where groups gather to illegally race cars, burn-rubber, or drift cars, thereby often shutting down sections of public roadways in the process. Recently some police officers have come under attack as they try to shut down these types of events. The prompt notification that an event of this nature may be occurring can allow RTCC staff members to confirm that the activity is in fact occurring via CCTV feeds in the area or even via drone video, if that capability is supported, before any calls from the public are received. Sending officers to the scene shortly after these gatherings have begun can assist officers in safely dispersing the attendees in a

more effective manner before things get out of control and lawless group dynamics take over.

As information streams into the RTCC analysts can immediately begin work utilizing various tools to research and attempt to determine who may have committed an offense in question and where they may be going. Analysts can utilize tools such as facial recognition, social media searches, departmental and open-source databases to further leverage data that has been captured by sensors out in the field.

Many smaller departments do not have the resources to stand up their own RTCCs, but that doesn't mean that they can't benefit from this concept. Smaller agencies can opt to participate in regional RTCCs, even if they can only supply personnel on a part-time basis. Another solution that is starting to emerge for smaller departments will be the use of artificial intelligence powered automated

RTCCs. Technology is being designed that can monitor computer aided dispatch systems to identify calls involving crimes in progress. These systems can then autonomously access any technology that the department may possess to search for viable leads based upon witness reporting.

For example, a call involving a robbery wherein the suspect fled from the scene while operating a red SUV, can prompt the AI powered system to automatically access CCTV cameras and license plate readers in the immediate area of the crime scene looking for any red SUVs that match the description. Since AI is very powerful, precise witness descriptions detailing the suspect vehicle can increase the fidelity of the results, such as partial license plate numbers, bumper stickers, body damage or luggage racks on the vehicle. As the AI powered system finds potentially relevant information it can be brought to the attention of dispatchers or responding officers to coordinate a more efficient response or search for the suspect.

Even larger regional RTCCs will benefit from the expanded use of AI. Many of these facilities are victims of their own success, having access to copious amounts of technology, which can make it difficult to rapidly determine what is relevant in each situation. Much like the expression drinking from a fire hose,

this information overload can at times make it difficult for staff members to efficiently search through everything in an expeditious manner in the immediate aftermath of an event. AI can assist in speeding up the process of determining what technology is relevant in each situation by searching across multiple platforms for whatever an RTCC analyst is seeking or what is pulled out of a CAD program, flagging patterns, anomalies, similarities, and trends. The effectiveness of an RTCC is not only measured in the accuracy of the products that they produce, but also in the speed with which the information is made available.

For RTCCs that do not operate twenty-four hours per day, operations can be switched over to AI after hours to maintain some capability when the facility has traditionally been closed. AI relies upon machine learning (ML), to continuously improve itself in each environment, so as the system is utilized in the real-world it should continue to become better at what it does. Much like AI, the human staff members assigned to the RTCC should continually strive to improve their capability by attending relevant training and staying informed about new technology. Much akin to any other special assignment within a law enforcement agency, proper training is imperative to hone the skills of the staff members assigned to the RTCC.

RTCCs can not only make participating agencies more effective in solving crimes, but they can also generally assist in solving crimes faster and with a greater laser focus on specific offenders, thereby causing less collateral involvement of innocent residents in the process. RTCCs and the technology that they have access to are a true force multiplier for agencies allowing them to be more effective even with reduced staffing levels. As artificial intelligence and machine learning begin to be applied to create virtual RTCCs this capability will be within the reach for all law enforcement agencies, despite their overall size and ability to allocate staffing to create a dedicated crime center. Policing will always be a personnel

intensive endeavor, however with addition of effective technology, police personnel can become much more efficient at what they do, thereby continuing to reduce crime even with reduced staffing levels.



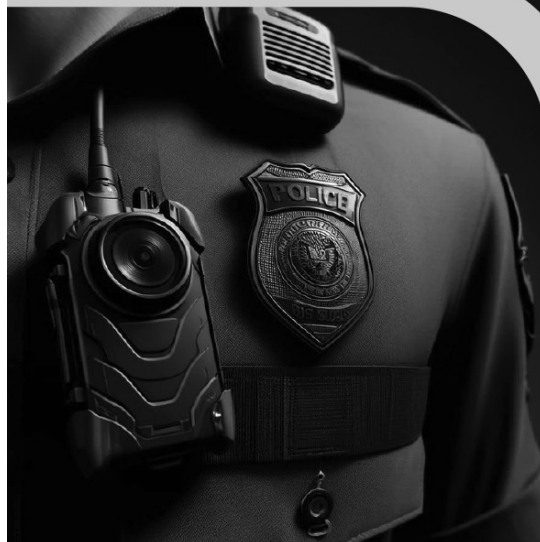
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Tracking Performance, from Hiring Through Employment

Two recent incidents from Oklahoma and Illinois will help to set the tone for this article. One has a tragic outcome; the other does not. But the underlying issues are the same and frame this question: Should those officers have been there in the first place?

Oklahoma: An Illegal Detention

In Oklahoma, officers encounter a man walking on a public street with his 6-year-old son just before 6:00 am. The primary officer approaches him and asks what he is doing. The man explains he is out for a walk with his son who is autistic. The officer says it's suspicious of them to be walking around at this hour and the man replies, "We do that." The officer says, "No, you don't. Give me your ID."

When the man says his ID is at his house, the situation escalates. The officer grabs him and takes him to the ground, then handcuffs him. In several points in the video the officer has a difficult time explaining why the man's behavior was so suspicious and would lead to an arrest for failing to identify himself. While this is happening, the child is screaming and crying.

Eventually the man is released without a formal arrest. The bodycam video goes viral in the community. According to news reports, once the video is released,

other people contact the media to report they had previous encounters with the same officer who they felt was disrespectful to them.

Illinois: Unnecessary Escalation

In a more prominent incident, Illinois deputies responded to Sonya Massey's home in response to her 911 call for a possible intruder outside her home. Deputies quickly determine Sonya may be a person with mental illness and interview her within her home. The situation quickly escalates when deputies ask her to shut off the stove burner heating up a pot of water. Sonya picks up the pot and states to the primary deputy, "I rebuke you in the name of Jesus," which the deputy perceives as a threat. He yells for her to drop the pot, stating, "I am going to shoot you in your f***'ing face," then he does, killing her.

The deputy did not activate his body camera until immediately after the shooting, which was captured in the video buffer. This incident drew national media attention.

So what caused these poor outcomes? In the Oklahoma incident, the officer did not understand his legal limitations and let his anger control his decision mak-





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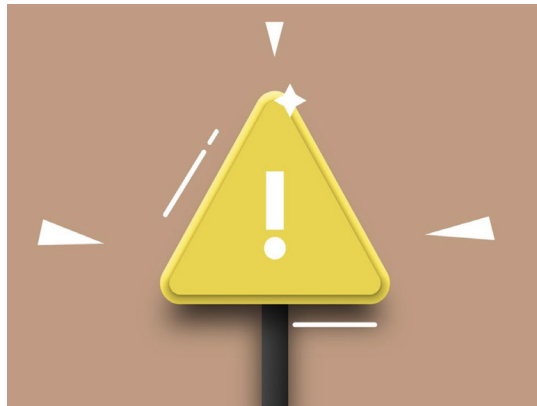
ing, leading to what I believe was an illegal detention. In Illinois, the deputy unnecessarily escalated the incident with the decisions he made. But the common theme in both incidents is that the officers had been previously employed at other law enforcement agencies and both received questionable performance reviews from their prior employers. The warning signs were there, but no one acted on them.

Willful Blindness?

The Oklahoma officer had previously worked for a sheriff's department and, per the sheriff, had been demoted and placed in a non-public facing position due to complaints from both fellow employees and citizens. He was later hired by a local city department.

As for the deputy involved in the shooting of Sonya

Massey, much more information is available due to the tragic outcome. The deputy's entire personnel record was released to the public on the sheriff's department website, including the results of his background investigation. The investigation included conversations with three of his prior police agencies. All three indicated the deputy needed more training, and one indicated he had poor officer safety skills.



Since the shooting, information obtained by media outlets from at least one of those agencies revealed there was much more to the story. The deputy

had apparently attempted an inappropriate vehicle stop, which led to a high-speed pursuit and an accident. More importantly, the investigating member of that agency concluded the deputy lied about the incident. This was



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not fully documented. The deputy had also been discharged from the Army for “misconduct (serious offense)” according to the discharge document in the file, yet there is no indication of any inquiry to the Army.

Certainly, the former agency should have been forthcoming with all their information. But the responsibility falls on the hiring agency to review all available information firsthand and follow up as necessary with interviews. It has been my experience this happens less often than it should. A brief phone call with one person at a prior agency is often the extent of the inquiry.

As a chief, I had several occasions to initiate disciplinary actions that led to the resignation of officers. On at least three occasions I spoke with the heads of other agencies looking to hire these former officers. I told all

three the same thing – bring a signed release and I will tell you everything I have. One did and did not hire the person. The other two hired the former officers regardless of my warning.



I acknowledge that law enforcement is in a recruiting and retention crisis, which has been exacerbated over the past few years. The desire to fill open positions can be overwhelming and, without careful balance, can be fraught with risk. Background investigations need to follow a rigid and detailed process that

should be the same for all candidates, whether new officers or lateral transfers. Administrators may think they are helping their current members by getting them relief with the addition of personnel, and those existing members may welcome the help. But when one officer backs up another during an ongoing call, the backup officer

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must be able to trust that the first officer is doing the right thing.

The goal of all law enforcement leaders should be to make their agency a better place for the members who deserve to be there and do what they must do to get rid of the ones who do not. Not all people are suitable to be officers or deputies. And as the sheriff in the Massey incident noted, good cops do not want bad cops.

Changing the Paradigm

Does this mean you can never hire someone who has a poor review from a prior agency or employer? No, that is not my point. Policing is not easy. Officers commonly have different strengths and weaknesses. Young officers will also progress at different rates. Every case is potentially different and must be weighed on its own merits after all efforts to obtain information about the candidate have been exhausted. This allows for an educated decision as to whether the positives outweigh the negatives and whether the agency has the talent and resources to develop a tailored performance improvement plan for that officer or deputy. Equally important, we need to have a system in place for rigorous, ongoing, multi-point review of officer performance.

It comes to this: We need to change the paradigm about how we monitor, track and evaluate officer behavior. This means collecting extensive and consistent data on what our officers are doing.

“Wait, what? You mean you want to spy on us and use the data to discipline us? You don’t trust us and you are catering to all the police critics!”

Nope, that is not what I am saying – and here lies the paradigm shift. We need to move from this attitude into one more accepting of reality, which is that policing is complicated and difficult. We need to use every tool available to us to strive for continuous improvement on both an individual officer and agency level.

Leaders also need to realize that while blaming individual officers is easy, accepting that an organization has contributed to a bad result is typically resisted.

Mining the Data

The use of data should not be considered only as a means of disciplining or micromanaging an officer. Instead, we need to take a far more expansive approach and look at the data to determine if there is a need to improve the entire agency. I will use two examples from my first agency. As many agencies were then (and many still are) our record-keeping, such as use of force reports, was paper-based. Minor disciplinary records were kept by supervisors of each individual shift or division. There was no sharing of complaints unless it rose to the level of an internal affairs investigation. With that background, let’s look at the examples.

The first example involved a personnel complaint arising from a traffic stop that quickly escalated and led to the temporary handcuffing of a motorist. I was in internal affairs and as we investigated the incident, we concluded the source of the conflict was that the officer refused to tell the driver why he had been stopped until the driver provided his paperwork. We could have just recommended some level of discipline for the officer, but then we thought, did we create this through our training? That led to a search through each shift and division’s individual disciplinary records. The answer to us was a resounding yes, and we had to fix it at the organizational level. We fundamentally changed how we trained officers to communicate with a stopped driver. Our personnel complaints plummeted.

The second example involved the deployment of TASER devices department wide. I oversaw the training unit at the time. We were early adopters of the devices in our area, and we closely followed the recommendations for initial training. We put everyone through the training and that was that. After a period of months, we had an incident where an officer used a



TASER device on an elderly woman with questionable justification.

Again, the easy out would have been to blame the officer, discipline him to some degree and move on. At the time our use of force reports were submitted with incident reports and/or arrest folders and filed away. Once they were reviewed by a supervisor, they were generally not looked at again. We decided to pull every incident where a TASER device had been deployed and look at the circumstances. Once we had all that data available to us it became clear that officers in some cases were improperly deploying them. We evaluated the initial training and quickly concluded that we did not properly prepare the officers for the interplay and overlap of TASER device use with traditional defensive tactics methods. We retrained the entire department, and the problem was effectively eliminated.

These are two examples of how data can benefit officers and help them improve while also improving the department. Yes, there are also times when discipline will result. But what we are trying to do is create an at-

mosphere of continuous improvement that will benefit both the community and the members of the agency.

Years ago, I was asked by the union of another agency to informally review some video of an incident and give an opinion about the actions of the officers. It involved an officer illegally arresting an intoxicated person out of anger. When the person began resisting and kicking while handcuffed, the officer called for help. Backup officers arrived and jumped in to assist, as any officer would do under those circumstances. There is more to the story that I will not get into, but this led to a massive investigation, involvement of an outside agency, and a termination and other disciplinary actions. But here is the most important part – when I watched that video, I saw an officer who had no ability to effectively communicate with the person. Instead, he escalated the incident.

Upon my inquiries, I discovered his shortcomings were well known among fellow officers. What if the agency had central access to overlapping data points that may have raised a flag about this officer? Result-

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ing audits of in-car or body camera video could have quickly revealed an obvious problem. The first step then would be to ask whether the officer could be re-trained to effectively remain calm and de-escalate situations. If not, separation may be necessary. The point is, however, that such a system would ultimately be to the benefit of all the officers by highlighting a vulnerability and correcting it.

A Continual Process

Still leery of collecting data on officer performance? Many years ago, when license plate readers (LPRs) started rolling out, civil rights groups were concerned about the abuse that could come with all that data available to the police. What was the typical law enforcement response? *You have nothing to worry about if you did nothing wrong.* Today, LPR data is now a vital component of countless criminal investigations.

The same argument can be made about officer performance data – you only have to worry if you are doing something wrong. Leaders must shoulder the responsibility to use available data responsibly, with the willingness to accept organizational shortcomings.

For agencies that are still heavily paper-based, the process I am describing is possible but admittedly time-consuming and burdensome. But the potential long-term rewards are not only worth it; they are essential in any contemporary law enforcement agency. Rigid and thorough background investigation guidelines are immediately attainable and had they been followed in the incidents discussed in this article, may have prevented a man from being illegally detained and a woman with mental illness from being shot and killed. The question at the conclusion of the investigation should not be, “Is there something that disqualifies the candidate under state law?” Instead, the question should be, “Do we want this person in our agency?”

We must also stop thinking about such evaluations as a one-time occurrence. Rather, all law enforcement leaders should be asking themselves, “Do we have the proper tools and systems in place to monitor all our officers, identify risks and training needs, and enhance performance on an individual and agency level?”

If the answer is no, well then, in the words of Lexipol co-founder Gordon Graham, you have a “problem lying in wait.”

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Breaking down Communication Barriers: A New Method of Addressing Organized Crime in New York State

By Lawrence Eggert, Director of the Niagara County Crime Analysis Center,
Retired Chief Lockport NY

A well-dressed man approaches a bank teller and asks to withdraw a few thousand dollars from his account. He produces a U.S. passport and a credit card in the name of the account holder, but the teller senses something is off. The teller asks the customer to wait while she speaks with a manager. When the teller returns, the male is gone. The bank's manager reports the incident to the police department. An officer responds but there is no financial loss, no copy of the passport or credit card to determine if it was fraudulent, and police are unable to contact the customer. The officer takes a report for a suspicious occurrence. With no crime committed, the report is forwarded to detectives but is never assigned for investigation. What the agency doesn't know, however, is that in the past two days, this male was in six other financial institutions in separate jurisdictions. His scheme worked four times, allowing him to withdraw more than \$20,000 from four different victims' accounts. As a "one off" criminal case, these investigations often become inactive due to the lack of actionable information. Each agency only has awareness of its own incident and doesn't realize that the case is part of a larger criminal enterprise.

This type of criminal activity occurs every day in New York State and unfortunately is increasing in frequency. Transient suspects and conspirators, in many cases as part of organized criminal groups, travel across the state committing low risk, high reward crimes targeting institutions and vulnerable populations. When investigated in isolation, the crime that fall through the cracks of law enforcement.

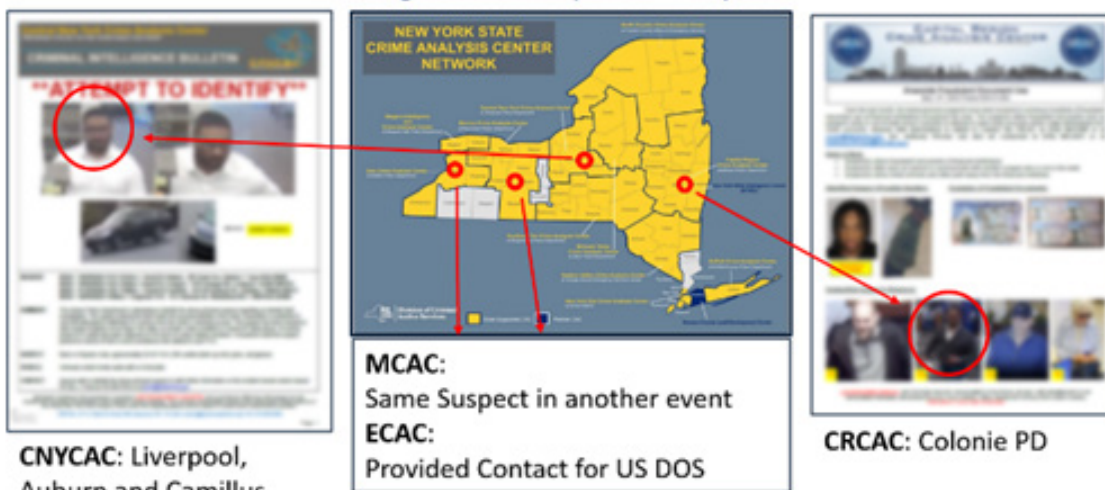
New York State's Crime Analysis Center Network has recognized these cross-

jurisdictional information and intelligence gaps and is working in partnership with local law enforcement agencies to address them.

For more than a decade, the state Division of Criminal Justice Services has funded Crime Analysis Centers (CAC) to support local, state and federal crime-fighting efforts by

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Largescale Identity theft - Passports



Suspect MO and surveillance images are the key to unlocking cross-jurisdictional criminal activity

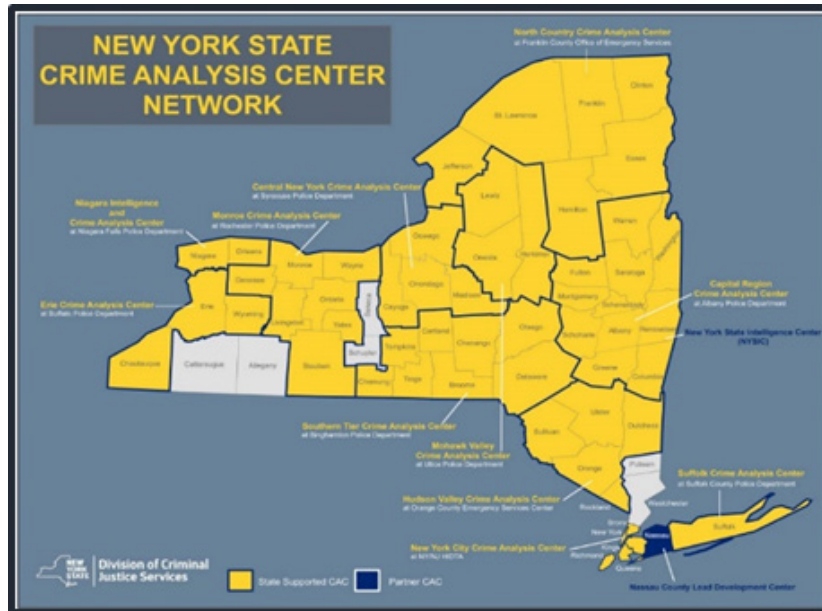
leveraging technology to analyze and compile available information, intelligence and data across jurisdictions. The [network currently has 11 Centers strategically located from Niagara Falls to Suffolk County](#) that have agreements with agencies in 55 of the state's 62 counties. These agreements allow the centers to access Record Management Systems (RMS) data from law enforcement agencies that report more than 75 percent of Part One crime outside of New York City.

Centers utilize data connections across their geographic areas of responsibility to support partner agencies' investigations, which gives staff a comprehensive awareness of criminal activity occurring in their region. This unique access to data, combined with investigative support of local cases allows Center Network staff to develop a greater awareness of cross-jurisdictional criminal activity than ever before. Centers consistently identify transient groups and common actors oper-

ating across the state.

To improve our collective efforts in combatting this cross-jurisdictional activity, the CAC Network established a bi-weekly, virtual CAC Network Intelligence Sharing Meeting for the first time in May 2024.

Held bi-weekly, these meetings include representatives from each of the 11 Centers, and staff from the New York State Intelligence Center (NYSIC). During meetings, staff review ongoing criminal activity within each Center's area of responsibility with a focus on incidents that have a strong likelihood of cross-jurisdictional relevance, discuss emerging trends of criminal activity observed within their area of responsibility or surrounding areas, and develop best practices for supporting ongoing cases with participating personnel.



These meetings have produced results from the outset. Following the inaugural meeting, a large-scale identity theft pattern that started in the Capital Region was recognized in Central and Western New York. The combined effort of CACs led to a suspect's identification, and all related investigative reports and products were then compiled and provided to both the involved police agencies and all relevant federal agencies.

These meetings have continued to identify regional criminal activity and resulted in coordinated law enforcement investigations into crimes including bank fraud, gold bullion scams, skimming devices, schemes to defraud, organized retail theft groups and regional package theft activity. Incidents once thought to be isolated events have been identified as patterns, and this statewide collaboration has

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multiplied solvability factors. The result? Improved chances for suspect identification and a better understanding of the totality of the criminal activity, which means not only state, but the likelihood of federal prosecution.

Center staff use their extensive experience and breadth of information available to identify crime patterns that are likely to have cross-jurisdictional ties. When staff at one Center identifies a specific series of events, other Centers



Todd H. Weis, Director, Capital Regional Crime Analysis Center

often discover previously unrecognized patterns of criminal behavior in their own geographic area of responsibility. In one such case, a pattern initially identified by the Suffolk County Crime Analysis Center had stretched from that jurisdiction into Western New York.

In addition to identifying emerging trends and cross-jurisdictional patterns, these meetings

have allowed analysts to gain valuable resources on different listservs, security groups and coalition groups. They have fostered better communication among the 11 Centers, improved the capabilities of the network and products it

provides to partner agencies, and developed best practices for supporting multi-jurisdictional collaboration efforts.

Information, Intelligence and Partnership are the foundational pillars upon which the state's Crime Analysis Center Network was originally built. Supporting local law enforcement at the granular level gives the network a unique perspective of the challenges faced by law enforcement and provides those agencies access to vital tools and shared resources to address them. Staff across the network are committed to expanding collaboration, increasing its support to law enforcement partners, and identifying new opportunities as it continues to grow. **Said simply: Together, we are better!**



Samantha Monge, Crime Analysis Coordinator, Office of Crime Analysis and Strategic Partnerships

Resources:

- Fraudulent IDs can/are being purchased at [FakeYourDrank](#). These identifications are scannable in TRACS.
- [Crime Analysis Center Contact Information](#)

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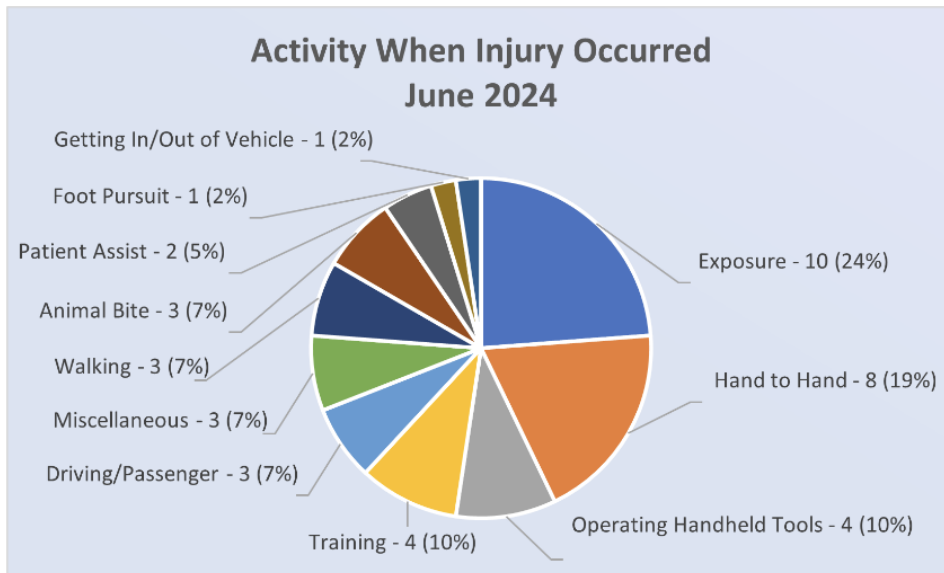
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June 2024



Activities Breakdown of the 42 Submitted Claims

- Exposure - 10** (methamphetamine, smoke, saliva, blood)
- Hand to Hand - 8** (punched, tackled, kicked, lifting, fell down stairs, combative)
- Operating Handheld Tools - 4** (accidental sidearm discharge, scissors, hammer, drug test kit glass)
- Training - 4** (DT-knee, ankle, teeth / Firearms-knee)
- Driving/Passenger - 3** (vehicle struck during traffic control, making u-turn, motorcycle struck)
- Miscellaneous - 3** (dehydration, cardiac issue, slipped on obstacle during K9 handler tryout)
- Walking - 3** (rolled ankle, pothole, tripped over keyboard cord)
- Animal Bite - 3** (cat, dog)
- Patient Assist - 2** (strained back lifting, kicked)
- Foot Pursuit - 1** (injured wrist when fell)
- Getting In/Out of Vehicle - 1** (closed door on hand)

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INTERSECTIONS

Traffic Safety Committee

Bill Georges, A/Chief (ret.) Albany PD

Chair, NYSACOP Traffic Safety Committee

NYSACOP Traffic Safety Outreach Liaison

Traffic Safety is Public Safety

As fall is upon us, I hope that everyone had a safe and enjoyable summer! The NYSACOP Traffic Safety Team continues to serve our members and promote traffic safety engagement throughout the State. The team, working in concert with the NYSACOP Traffic Safety Committee (TSC), the Governors Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) and other traffic safety organizations, works to provide information, resources and assistance to all our members, their agencies and allied organizations. If you would like assistance/information re: your agency's traffic safety matters, please don't hesitate to contact NYSACOP Traffic Safety Services Coordinator Dan Denz at ddenz@nychiefs.org.

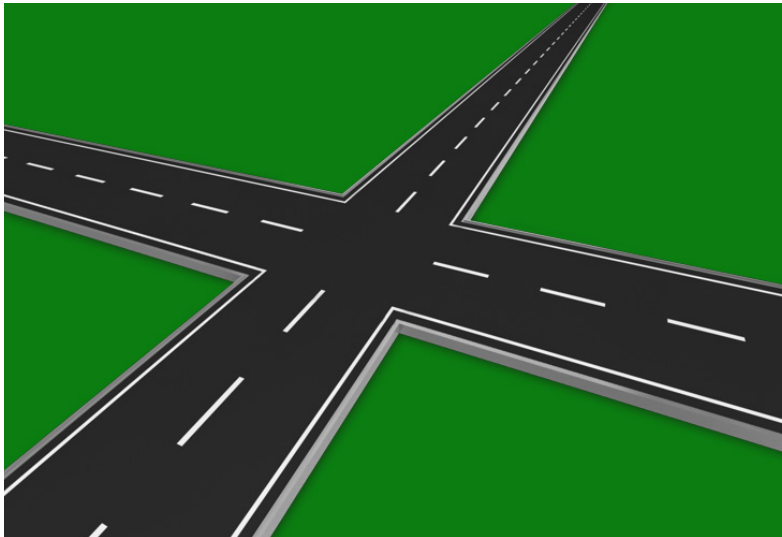
The team is continuously involved in training efforts. Our Traffic Safety Executive Leadership seminars are ongoing and we are currently in the planning phase re: scheduling future seminars. If your region/agency is interested in this training, please contact us. We also continue to work with both GTSC and DCJS to provide ongoing training in traffic safety related areas including, but not limited to, impaired driving, crash investigation, commercial vehicle enforcement, motorcycle safety and enforcement initiatives. Training courses are routinely announced in NYSACOP bulletins, to our Traffic Safety Points of Contact and also on

the website so please be on the lookout for them. Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) training is being offered continuously as impaired driving, especially drug impaired driving, is on the rise and thus more DREs are needed. One important point regarding DRE training is that proficiency in Standardized Field Sobriety Test-

ing (SFST) is mandatory so both ARIDE and SFST training are important. FYI, several ARIDE training courses are currently being conducted. We also sponsor Below 100 training courses so please contact us if you're interested in hosting one.

In addition to training, we constantly monitor traffic safety issues and are currently working on several issues including the issue of roadside oral fluids testing. If your agency is currently using this technology, or has in the past, please let us know as we are interested in your experiences. Additionally this year we worked with our partners to urge the Legislature to pass the Deadly Driving Bill (S.3135/A.174) however unfortunately this important and necessary legislation died in this legislative session. We will continue our efforts in the next legislative session to hopefully get the bill passed.

We also monitor crash data and wanted to highlight that there is an uptick in both motorcycle (including limited use/moped) crashes and also "wrong way"



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crashes. If your jurisdiction is experiencing these types of crashes, or an uptick in other crash categories, we would appreciate it if you would let us know.

The NYSACOP Annual Conference was held on July 14-17 at the Buffalo Hyatt Regency Hotel and was a great success! If you were able to attend, I hope you enjoyed the conference. Nick Bruel, Senior Program Manager, National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF), gave an informative presentation on officer-involved traffic related deaths and injuries resulting from crashes and/or incidents. Information from Nick's presentation can be found at <https://nleomf.org/officer-safety-and-wellness/vehicle-roadside-safety/>.

Other upcoming conferences include the DCJS Public Safety Symposium held at the Empire State Plaza in Albany on September 17-20, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Annual Conference in Boston on October 19-22 and the New York Highway Safety Symposium on October 21-24 in Lake

Placid, N.Y.

As always, we welcome your comments, suggestions and involvement and also would very much like to hear about what your agency is doing to promote traffic safety so please let us know so we can showcase your traffic safety initiatives. For further information, or if you would like our assistance, please contact NYSACOP Traffic Safety Services Coordinator Dan Denz at ddenz@nychiefs.org.

Thank you for all you do to make traffic safety a priority. We all know that important components of traffic safety are enforcement and education so please keep up the good work to ensure our roadways are safe. Stay safe and remember traffic safety is public safety!

Bill Georges, A/Chief (ret.) Albany PD

Chair, NYSACOP Traffic Safety Committee

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Some Things You Can Just See Coming

By Gordon Graham



Gordon Graham here and hello again! Thanks for the emails. I am so glad you are enjoying my “ramblings.” And you are right! I *am* a broken record (younger readers will have to look that term up) and I spend a lot of time thinking, reading, writing and talking about this topic. Don’t ask me about sports or the stock market or “crypto currency” – on these topics I am truly an idiot – but if you want to catch my attention, talk about managing risk.

For my first 20 years on the job, I worked in the California Highway Patrol Central Los Angeles Area (one of 105 CHP offices in the state). I worked very closely with the Los Angeles Police Department, particularly the cops in their Central Traffic Division. I have some lifelong friends from those days, including Dick Studdard (the father of the Drug Recognition Expert program), Tom Paige (another DRE guru), Mike Hagen (perhaps the most knowledgeable person in the world on all things related to exotic cars) and of course motor officer Ken Osmond (Eddie Haskell in the TV show *Leave It To Beaver* from decades past).

All of us worked around LAPD Officer Bill Leasure, a rather lazy cop who avoided making physical arrests or writing citations or even driving a patrol car. He was “just there” and rather unremarkable. So we were all surprised when he was arrested for boat theft, which led to another investigation of him being a hit man in the mid-80s. Like everything else over the next 40 years, my memories of him faded – only to be reignited with [an article](#) earlier this year in the *LA Times*, “L.A.’s dirtiest cop: A mild-mannered traffic officer

who moonlighted as a hit man.”

Never in a million years would I have suspected Bill Leasure was guilty of anything other than being lazy – and in the text messages between all of us “old guys” following the publication of the article, it’s clear I wasn’t alone. We did not see that one coming!

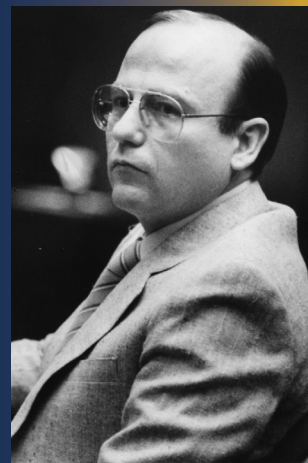
But then there are those people who clearly broadcast trouble. The same week the *LA Times* published the account of Bill Leasure, [media captured](#) “daredevil” YouTuber Ben Schneider illegally walking across a slackline rigged between two Los Angeles skyscrapers. Now, I don’t have to have a lot of foresight to guess that the “accidental” death of Ben Schneider will end up in the news someday. While I don’t know exactly how he will die, it will no doubt involve his embarking on some unacceptable level of risk.

Those of you who know me know I am not being lazy, pulling articles from newspapers to help fill my quota of words. Most of the time I am in trouble with Madame Editor for being too long-winded! There is a point to my use of the above two articles.

I don’t think anyone saw the arrest of Leasure coming, but my guess is there are a lot of people who know that Schneider will die before his due date. Some things you can just see coming – and that is exactly what I want to cover in this writing.

As we move into the fall, the holidays are not far off. Many of you will likely be traveling, taking advantage of school winter breaks to visit relatives or maybe

L.A.’s dirtiest cop: A mild-mannered traffic officer who moonlighted as a hit man. William Leasure, an ex-LAPD officer accused of setting up contract murders, sits in court during his trial April 15, 1991. The city’s dirtiest cop was also the most colorless, with a forgettable face and a personality as vague as fog.



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to escape to somewhere warm for a bit. You will be doing something exciting, and you will want to create memories. My goal here is to make these memories fun to remember in the future – not “I had a terrible time on that trip” because of an injury (or death) of someone close to you.

Let’s start with where you are going. The U.S. State Department has an up-to-date listing of places where there is great danger to American citizens – so that should be something you look at. I don’t get one nickel for telling you this, but when I travel I make sure I have [Global Rescue](#) on my side (take a look at their services; they have quite a menu). My family has had their coverage since forever, including when our son was studying in South Africa and in the extremely impoverished areas near Manila.

Our daughter did her graduate work in Scotland – and while that appeared to be much safer – I still wanted her to be protected.

Driving? A significant portion of the world drives on the other side of the road – and you can watch all the YouTube videos you want in preparation for this high-risk, low-frequency activity. You have not lived until you navigate a roundabout in light traffic.

Mrs. G and I honeymooned on Maui many decades ago. She absolutely wanted to see the sunrise from Mount Haleakala (whoa – nailed that without the help of spell check!) Some trivia for you: Mount Haleakala is the only national park that is “time sensitive” – huge numbers of people show up to watch the sun rise and then the park is essentially empty for the remainder of the day. As we were driving up to the top of this mountain, I noted scores of vans loaded with people

and bikes on the roof. As we waited for the sun to rise, I watched the aforementioned vans offloading bicycles and people. And – how can I put this gently – when I looked at many of these people it was apparent they had not been on a bike since childhood. While Spandex is a miracle fabric, it can only disguise so much.

Hmmm ... older, out of shape people, steep grade, wet highway surface with low coefficient of friction (Cf), crowned roadway, sharp curves, dawn lighting,

tight packing of bikes, high speeds – have I made my point yet? Talking with Maui EMS personnel over the years, I learned they respond regularly to severe injuries involving these bikers – injuries that ruin vacations and lives. Again, the high-risk, low-frequency analysis would have been beneficial.



Benjamin Schneider, who refers to himself as Reckless Ben on social media, recently walked a slackline strung between two skyscraper towers 40 stories above Figueroa Street in downtown L.A. (OnScene/KTLA; Irfan Khan / Los Angeles Times)

Mrs. G and I recently went to a party at a bowling alley, and I was surprised to learn that the Cf of the wood floor near the alley is significantly higher than the Cf on the wood on the alley, which has a Cf of “STS” – aka slicker than snot.

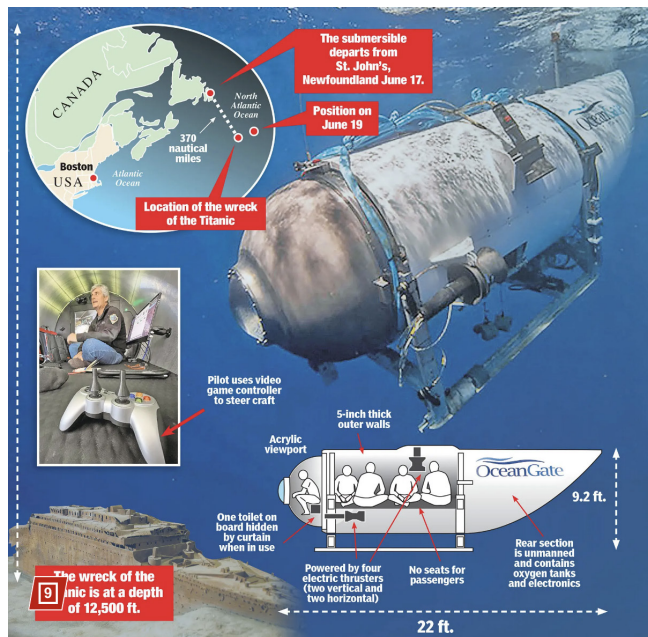
As I drive my boat up and down the west coast, I see more and more people parasailing. I am often troubled when I see a single crew member on the towing boat, multi-tasking between driving the boat, putting people up in the air, navigating the boat in traffic and paying attention to multiple high-risk activities simultaneously. But my guess is all the participants signed a waiver of liability.

Waivers of liability are a warning sign. When you are presented with a waiver of liability, your brain should be shouting, “DANGER WILL ROBINSON! DANGER!” (Again, the younger crowd will have to Google that.) PLEASE read the waiver – really READ it!

Last year, we all watched as the OceanGate Titan submersible lost communication with its mother ship and failed to resurface. The [four-page waiver of liability](#) the passengers all signed is quite telling. The waiver had the word “death” mentioned four times. And this part should have been a large hint:

This operation will be conducted inside an experimental submersible vessel that has not been approved or certified by any regulatory body and may be constructed of materials that have not been widely used in human-occupied submersibles.

Well, I am way past my word allotment (over 1,000 not including the attachments). I could ramble on for days on “vacation risks.” I won’t – but please do a risk assessment before you do something you will later re-



Credit: New York Post

gret. Tons of information is available online, and talking to others who have “been there, done that” might be of great value. You and your family do not have to get hurt during your next vacation – certainly not for something you could have easily seen coming.

Gordon Graham is a 33-year veteran of law enforcement and is the co-founder of [Lexipol](#), where he serves on the current board of directors. A practicing attorney, Graham

focuses on managing risk in public safety operations and has presented a commonsense approach to risk management to hundreds of thousands of public safety professionals around the world. He holds a master’s degree in Safety and Systems Management from University of Southern California and a Juris Doctorate from Western State University.



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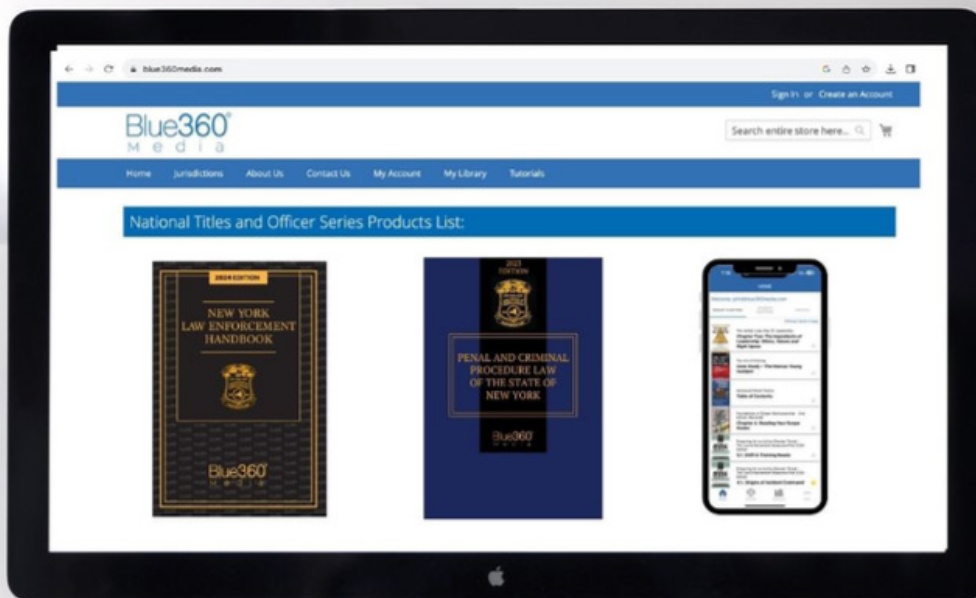
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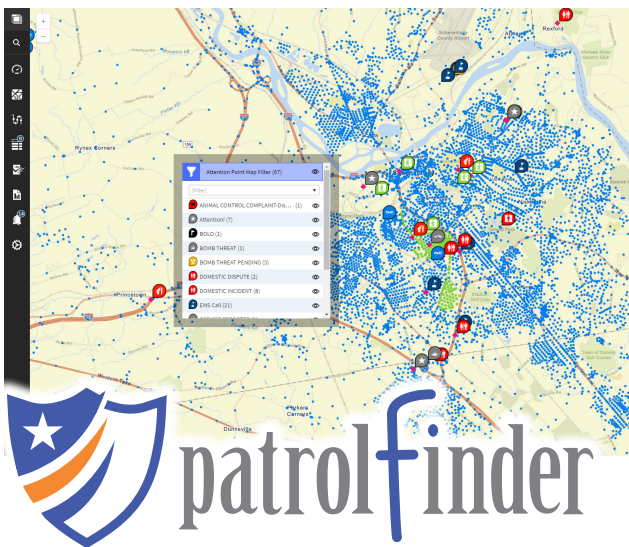







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RETIREMENT NEWS

Chief Swick, Middleport Police Department

Police Chief John Swick retired from the Middleport Police Department On June 28th, 2024 after 46 years of service with that department. Chief Swick served as Chief in Middleport for 37 years and is believed to be the longest serving Chief in the State of New York. The streets of Middleport were lined with fellow law enforcement officers and citizens alike for Chief Swick's walk-out. Included in the crown was Chief Swick's son, Lt. Jeffrey Swick



of the North Town and a Police Department. Following Chief Swick's walkout there was a gathering in the Middleport Fire Department where many gifts and kind words were bestowed on him. We wish John all the best in his retirement.



Chief Swick's and his son, Lt. Jeffrey Swick

Chief Baker, Middleport Police Department

On July 27th, 2024 Chief Edward Baker was honored at a retirement ceremony at West Seneca Town Hall for his 32 years of dedicated service. Chief Baker began his career as a Patrol Officer in 1992 and worked his way through the ranks as Patrol Lieutenant, Patrol Captain, Training Captain, head of the Accident Investigation Unit, Assistant Chief, and finally, Chief of Police. He is one of Western New York's top educators in the field of accident reconstruction and graduated from the FBI National Academy in 2016.

Chief Baker was a great officer and is an even better person. He is an active supporter and organizer of several local charity events and a longtime volunteer at our local food pantry. He has been a major advocate for the Special Olympics and has grown the West Seneca leg of the Torch Run over the last decade into the largest in WNY. Congratulations to Chief Baker and best wishes.



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RETIREMENT NEWS

Chief Sandy, Cortland Police Department

Police Chief Paul Sandy retired from the Cortland Police Department on July 31st, 2024 closing out a four-decade career of distinguished service. He has worked in many capacities within the City of Cortland Police Department beginning as a patrol officer in 1985 and culminating in appointment as Police Chief in 2021.

“We are grateful for Chief Sandy’s dedicated service to the city and its police department,” said Mayor Scott Steve “Chief Sandy has had a profound impact on the community. He is the first to offer help wherever he is needed and his reliable presence will be missed.”

Reflecting on his decision to retire, Chief Sandy expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve the city and thanked the men and women of the police department for their hard work and dedication. He also extended his appreciation to city officials, community leaders, and residents for their support throughout his career. “I loved my job and did my very best to protect the citizens of this community and Cortland County, as well as my fellow officers,” Chief Sandy said. “Looking back on my career it has been an amazing adventure and I met truly spectacular officers over the years, who it has been an honor to work alongside. The citizens of Cortland have truly wonderful officers working for them, who are dedicated to the profession. While I will always be available to assist the future command, it’s time to step back and spend more quality time with my family.”

Chief Sandy noted with pride that serving the community in law enforcement runs in the family. His son, Sgt. Kyle Sandy is a Cornell University Police Officer, his son Sgt. Cody Sandy is a Police Officer in the Cortland County Sheriff’s Office, and his daughter-in-law Neena Testa is a Sheriff’s Office K9 Officer.

His tenure as Chief, which began March 20, 2021,

has been marked by numerous initiatives that will have a lasting impact. Under his leadership, the department launched several community outreach programs aimed at fostering stronger ties between law enforcement and residents. He also spearheaded efforts to modernize departmental technology and improve officer training, ensuring that the Police Department remains at the forefront of law enforcement practices.



Chief Sandy’s career began in 1985 as a Uniform Patrol Officer. He served as a Uniform Sergeant from 1993 to 1995, then as a Detective Sergeant until 2003. His leadership skills and expertise in investigations led to his promotion to Detective Lieutenant, a position he held until 2009 when he became the Deputy Chief. In 2021, he was appointed Chief of Police, a role

in which he has served with distinction until his retirement. Chief Sandy has been an integral part of the Cortland County Drug Task Force since 1995 and played a key role in the Tactical Response Unit from 1988 to 1996, including serving as its commander. His strategic vision and operational acumen have been instrumental in addressing critical issues and enhancing public safety.

Chief Sandy has received numerous accolades for his outstanding service, including the Edward F. Moore Leadership Award from the FBINAA in 2016, the NYS Special Olympics Award in 2002, and the Lawman of the Year award from the Cortland Elks Club in 2001. His exceptional service has also been recognized through letters of commendation from various distinguished officials and organizations.

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Factors in Leader Development: *Leadership Traits*

By Greg Veitch, Retired Chief of Police from Saratoga Springs, NY



The Four Pillars of Leadership

Leadership involves an incredibly complex set of human and environmental factors. Factors within the leader, him or herself. Factors involving the situation that may or may not be within the leader's control. Factors involving the capabilities and preferences of followers. Task completion concerns and the quality of interpersonal relationships all play a role in the effectiveness of organizational leadership. Whole books have been written and entire graduate level college courses have been developed to examine any one of the many aspects of organizational leadership.

While we certainly could spend considerable time discussing the ethical implications of different leadership styles or considering whether or not high levels of emotional intelligence are beneficial to a leader in crisis situations, it is sometimes helpful to think of organizational leadership more broadly. Good leaders are often able to recognize how the component parts of leadership each play a role in how effective they are as leaders as well as how each component part of leadership affects the organization.

In a general sense, it may be beneficial to think of leadership as consisting of four main pillars that serve to hold up and support the effective operation of the organization. Much like the four legs of a table, the four pillars of organizational leadership in any organization are: Leaders, Followers, Culture and Mission.

Leaders, both individual leaders and the leadership

group as a whole, are critical to the effectiveness of an organization.

A leader who is self-centered, excessively autocratic, inconsistent, or absent, will inevitably have followers who are not motivated to perform at high levels.

A leadership team that is untrained, unsupported by upper management, consumed with competition, and unsure of what is expected of them will inevitably spend most of their time dealing with problems and conflicts that will certainly arise within the organization itself. When the leadership group is not on the same page, the organization and the individuals within it both suffer.

On the other hand, when leaders perform at their best, it is reflected in the performance of the organization. When leaders lead by example and set high standards. High standards are achieved. When leaders are held accountable it is often true that followers will hold themselves accountable, following the example set by those in leadership positions.

Leaders that take a balanced approach between task completion and relationship building see better results. Leaders who know themselves and maximize their strengths while working on their weaknesses perform better than leaders who remain blissfully unaware of their shortcomings and are unwilling to do any of the self-reflection that is a hallmark of a good leader. Peter



Senge, in his book *The Fifth Discipline*, identifies this as “personal mastery” and acknowledges the importance of good leaders to the benefit of the organization.

As the first pillar of leadership, leaders are the key to a successful organization, division or unit.

The second pillar of leadership is followers. It should come as no surprise that leaders who have well-trained, self-motivated, honorable followers, have fewer problems. Hiring the right people saves a lot of aggravation in the long term. Having high standards for hiring and promoting people will always be beneficial to the organization.

The importance of having the right followers is seen in Jim Collins’ exceptional leadership book, *Good to Great*, in which Collins dedicates an entire chapter to the concept of, “First Who...Then What.” He makes the case that winning companies start by recognizing that who is “on the bus” is more important than where the bus is going. Followers matter. Hiring standards must be adhered to. Time and again, in the aftermath of a policing scandal, blue ribbon panels often find hiring practices were, at the very least, part of the problem.

Of course, it must be recognized that most police chiefs and most leaders in police organizations do not get to pick the people who are “on the bus.” Whether a police chief is hired from outside the department or is promoted through the ranks, he or she likely did not make the hiring decisions for all of the people they are responsible for. Sergeants almost never have any say in the people they supervise. Therefore, just as it is critical to hire the right employees, it is equally important to pay attention to and develop followers throughout their careers, after they are “on the bus”.

Coaching and mentoring should be part of organization life. Training and other developmental opportunities will help to strengthen the performance and potential of followers. Policies, procedures and discipline each must take into account that every employee is an individual and should be treated as such. Balance is

needed. Employees who feel like they are treated as just a number to fill a staffing slot will soon start acting like just a warm body to fill a staffing spot.

As the second pillar of leadership, followers, definitely play a role in organizational effectiveness. The quality of performance is related to who is allowed “on the bus” and how those on the bus are trained, treated and supported.

Returning to our analogy of organizational leadership as a table, leaders and followers taken together can form two strong legs for our table. But no table has only two legs so the final two legs to consider are culture and mission.



Culture, as a force within organizations, is undeniable. Not only does organizational culture affect how leaders and followers act, but leaders and followers influence the culture.

Does your department or shift have an entitlement culture? Where the primary concern of most employees is what is in it for them. Where employees are more concerned with what their rights are, more so than what their responsibilities are.

Does your department or shift have a culture of mediocrity? Good enough, after all, is good enough. Or a culture of chaos? What about a culture of fear, marked by no one being willing to make a decision without checking with the higher ups?

When most officers adhere to policies and procedures, even the ones that are burdensome or unpopular, we might consider that department to have a culture of discipline. A department that, on the whole, always does the right things, at the right times, for the right reasons could be considered as having a culture of professionalism. An agency that treats people with dignity and respect both internally and externally, probably has a healthy culture.

Leaders, especially the leader at the top of the organizational chart, influence culture by what they support and celebrate and conversely by what behaviors they will not tolerate. While that is a simple concept, it is not

always easy. Culture can be a stubborn thing. It may take years for a leader to change a culture. So, if culture is a weak pillar in your organization currently, it is best to start working on strengthening that pillar today.

The fourth pillar of organizational leadership is: mission. Why are we here? What are we trying to accomplish? In policing, it is often taken for granted that we have a mission and what that mission is: to protect and serve.

Many police departments have mission statements at the front of their policy manual or prominently displayed on their websites. These are often very detailed and lengthy statements about the primary purposes of the organization, often including a list of values that are of importance to the agency. However, is that what the officer on the beat is thinking about when they start their shift? Is that what leaders and followers really believe? Does the culture of an agency reflect the lofty wording of the mission statement? Has anyone actually read the mission statement, that in many cases was written years before any current employee was even hired by the department?

The mission of the department needs to be clearly communicated to all members of the department and more importantly understood and lived up to by the

members of the organization. The mission should be reinforced verbally on occasion during roll call. It can be mentioned in written communications, including emails from the chief, in each policy where appropriate, in personnel memos, annual performance appraisals and disciplinary actions.

Mission creep and mission confusion should be avoided. After the mission statement is written and posted, it is up to the leaders of the agency to model it, live it, and hold officers and supervisors alike to it.

To protect and serve is a noble goal. Leaders should constantly reinforce the mission of the department wherever and whenever they can to ensure that the mission pillar of organizational leadership remains strong.

Leadership encompasses a lot. From leadership style to emotional intelligence. Ethical decision making to crisis leadership. Policy making to relationship building. For the leader responsible for the whole organization, it is helpful to sometimes take a broader view of leadership and identify key components that need to be areas of daily focus. One method of doing so is by keeping in mind the four pillars of leadership: Leaders, Followers, Culture and Mission.



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SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Building a Leadership Culture: What is the leadership culture like in your organization? Are your leaders all on the same page, do they have a consistency of purpose? Do the leaders on your team share the same goals, values, and practices? How are the leaders in your department *DOING* leadership? This session will address how to assess the leadership culture in any organization and examine some practical steps you can use to influence and build a strong and lasting culture of leadership.

Leadership and Liability: Risk Management and Liability are two words that are sometimes difficult for police officers to embrace. For the officer and supervisor on the street it can often feel like administrative oversight and policy requirements get in the way of simply, “getting the job done.” Many police leaders find it difficult to get past the frustration of all the legalese and court decisions that are often a part of liability training. Yet managing risk is a skill that all good leaders should possess, and this session will look at risk management not as a liability or “CYA” issue, but as a valuable tool in the leader’s toolbox.

Improving Police Performance Appraisals: It is coming to the end of the year, and it is time for annual performance appraisals! Are your annual appraisals an excellent source of valid data and information, or is your entire appraisal process a gigantic waste of time? This session will examine the best practices in performance evaluation by looking at some common errors made by supervisors, the purpose and process of performance evaluation, and some practical steps on how to conduct better performance appraisals this year and beyond.

Instructor: Greg Veitch is a 25-year veteran of law enforcement and published author with experience at all levels of leadership, retiring as Chief of Police with the Saratoga Springs, NY Police Department. Greg holds a master’s degree in leadership, is a graduate of the FBI

National Academy, and is an adjunct faculty member of the Criminal Justice Department at SUNY Adirondack. He has taught leadership and risk management principles to thousands of police leaders of all supervisory ranks.

To register for the Noble Cause Leadership Booster Shots Series contact:

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