

# **Oakland Crime Reduction Project**

## **Bratton Group Findings and Recommendations**

**May 8, 2013**

The Bratton Group, LCC, in conjunction with the Strategic Policy Partnership, has been working with the Oakland Police Department (OPD) on improving its Compstat crime management and command accountability system and on reorganizing its investigative functions to respond more effectively to homicides, shootings, robberies, and burglaries. These reforms are an important component in the larger effort to move the OPD to a Neighborhood Policing Plan, with the city divided into five districts, each commanded by a captain. The key to this new district-based structure is geographic accountability for each captain – and for their subordinate lieutenants, sergeants, and officers – for a specific area of the city with its specific crime and disorder problems, its familiar community members, and, to a significant degree, its specific cast of criminal characters. Under the Neighborhood Policing Plan, the district captains will be the principal crime fighters in the Department, each taking responsibility for crime in their respective districts and each held accountable for designing and directing responses and strategies to counter crime conditions. So far the OPD has established two districts in East Oakland with three more planned for the western part of the city.

The Neighborhood Policing Plan is a long-term effort to rebuild the service delivery and crime-fighting capabilities of the OPD after years of attrition that have reduced OPD headcount by about 25 percent. The OPD is working to add police officers, but the current staffing shortfalls make it all the more important that the Department deploys and manages its resources effectively now. The management and structural reforms recommended here are part of a blueprint for focusing the OPD's crime fighting efforts at the local or district level. The Compstat crime management system is being revamped into a more effective accountability tool, providing a relentless focus on responding to and resolving local crime and police service problems. In a key structural reform, the recommended establishment of decentralized District Investigation Units (DIUs), will give the district captains an investigative resource to help them in their efforts to counter and control local crime.

### **The Compstat Process**

*The Compstat Process is a paradigm-shifting approach to police management. It is an accountability tool, a training tool, a motivational tool, and a crime analysis tool. Its fundamental purpose is to keep key police managers – including chiefs, district captains, investigative supervisors, and special unit commanders – sharply focused on the central police responsibilities of responding to and controlling crime. The heart of the process is a series of regularly scheduled crime strategy meetings where a police department's top management and its field managers engage in tough, probing sessions about current crimes and the plans and tactics to counter them. The*

*recommedations listed below are intended to strengthen OPD's existing Compstat process and have been implemented in the past two months.*

### Findings

- The Compstat Process as previously practiced in Oakland was more of a report or a presentation by a captain than the system of vigorous strategic oversight. Compstat should be an intensive and probing dialogue between the department's top commanders and its field managers, including patrol, investigations and special unit commanders.
- The former Compstat presentations were too general and did not deal with crime specifics. The exchanges at Compstat should be focused on the specifics of crime patterns and individual crimes and the measures being taken to counter them.
- As formerly practiced, Oakland's Compstat did not have a true primary questioner pressing for answers to the critical questions about specific crime problems. The department's primary questioner should study, and be conversant with, the current crime picture and should be ready to ask a series of follow-up questions to ensure that every reasonable effort is being made, that every solid lead is being followed, and that the Department's various components are responding swiftly to emerging crime patterns and problems.
- The captains and other field managers at Compstat were not being held accountable for knowledge of crime in a designated district. Captains, investigative commanders and special unit commanders should all be expected to come to the meeting with a thorough familiarity with the crime patterns and crime conditions in their areas of responsibility, which is achieved by reading the incident reports about individual crimes.
- Under the existing process there was no sense of coordination, information sharing or support from the centralized Criminal Invesigation Division (CID).

### Recommendations

- Compstat meetings should be firmly under the control of the primary questioner who drives the process forward and keeps it focused on the specific crime problems and the plans to counter these problems.
- The primary questioner, not the reporting captain, should control and direct the electronic maps and screens.
- Captains will be expected to be fully conversant with their crime problems, having accurate, timely information by reading and understanding all Part I crime reports.
- Expanded participation and input will be expected from investigative supervisors at every level in the Department, who should be prepared to describe in detail the response of their investigative units to current crime incidents and patterns, to report on the status of all but the most sensitive active investigations, and to share information about successful strategies.
- The Compstat Report should be a succinct summary of crime and enforcement activity, showing trends in the previous two- and four-week periods, as well as

year-to-date comparisons, that can be used as a departure point for Compstat discussions.

- Working from the Compstat Report, the primary questioner should engage the district captain and other relevant supervisors concerning any spikes or trends in the crime numbers, paying particular attention to spikes in killings and shootings, and questioning them on their plans to deal with these issues, i.e., the development of effective tactics.
- All Department chiefs and captains should be present at all Compstat meetings, except in cases when other important business calls them away. Compstat should be seen as one most important regular activities taking place in the Department.
- In addition to general questioning about current crime trends, the primary questioner should pursue a series of regular lines of questioning at the Compstat sessions:
  - Hot Spots – What is being done to correct conditions at various hot-spot locations?
  - Calls for Service – Are calls for service up or down, and if up, why are they spiking? Consider highlighting the top five locations for repeat calls in each district. Why are police continually called there? What is the underlying problem? Are we wasting valuable resources?
  - Enforcement – What is happening with arrests and other enforcement activity? Why are some officers in a given district very productive while others are not? Are we making arrests in the right places and for the right reasons? Are officers being properly directed by their supervisors towards areas where crime is spiking?
  - Warrants – What is the progress on executing Ramey warrants and other warrants such as bail jumping, failure to appear, and parole warrants? The number of Ramey warrants should be broken down by district, and this information provided to each district captain and to the CID captain. The district captains should be questioned about what is being done to capture these suspects.
  - Measures of Evidence Gathering and Processing – When Bratton Group recommendations concerning the tracking of crime scene work are implemented, Compstat should include a recap of crime scene runs and lab submissions from supervisors assigned to these functions. This would cover the number of runs responded to, the number of locations fingerprinted, the number of ballistics and DNA submissions, etc.
  - Ceasefire – How many Ceasefire individuals called to a call-in reside in a district? How many accepted service? How many in/out of jail? How many have been injured? How many have been victims of crime themselves? How many are wanted for a crime?
  - Persistent Quality-of-Life issues – What are the quality-of-life issues that are most problematic for the community? What are we doing about them?

Members of the Bratton Group team worked intensively with Assistant Chief Eric Bershears to help prepare him for his role as the primary Compstat

questioner and participated in the Compstat meetings conducted on the new model. They also assisted in revising the Compstat Report.

### **District Investigation Units (DIUs)**

*The recommended establishment of District Investigation Units will decentralize the investigation of most robberies, burglaries, and shootings. The DIUs will report to the district captains, giving the captains an investigative resource that can respond swiftly to crime victims and crime scenes and pursue investigations through to arrest.*

### Findings

- Centralized investigations conducted by the Criminal Investigation Division (CID) have not been successful in countering the growing robbery and burglary problems in Oakland.
- Major Crimes Section 1 of CID, which investigates homicides, gun assaults, suspicious deaths, and officer-involved shootings, has too large of a workload to effectively investigate shootings, many of which are closed without further investigation because of uncooperative victims.
- For a number of reasons, centralized robbery investigators working for Major Crimes Section 2, are slow to respond to robberies and interview victims, losing momentum on the investigation of pattern robberies.
- Effectively, burglaries are not investigated in the City of Oakland with only one part-time investigator assigned to more than 10,000 burglaries last year.
- Increased camera monitoring of commercial areas throughout the city would provide significantly more leads in robberies and burglaries and in some shooting cases.

### Recommendations

- Reduce the workload of Major Crimes Section 1 to homicides and grievous assaults from which the victim is likely to die by assigning gun assaults for investigation at the district level.
- Assign most robberies and non-gun assaults for investigation at the district level.
- Assign burglaries for investigation at the district level.
- Establish District Investigation Units (DIUs) in each of the five districts to investigate robberies, burglaries, and assaults/shootings.
- Assign experienced investigative sergeants to manage the DIUs. These sergeants would be responsible for all investigative activity in the districts and would represent district investigations at Compstat.
- Assign three experienced investigators and three to four police officers to each DIU, pairing experienced investigators with officers with less experience.
- Assign each investigator/police officer team to one of three specialties: robbery, burglary, or assaults/shootings.
- Establish staggered schedules for DIU to ensure a working presence by investigators in the afternoon and evening hours seven days a week.

- Have DIU investigators respond to crime scenes, interview victims, canvass for witnesses, gather evidence and identify crime patterns, modus operandi, and repeat criminals active in the district.
- As the DIU system is established, use the DIUs as an investigator training ground and career path, with officers moving in progression from police officer assigned to a DIU, to a DIU lead investigator, to centralized CID and homicide investigations.
- Establish strictly observed case management protocols to provide guidelines for DIU investigations, including updated Investigative Action Reports (IARs) at five days, 15 days, and 28 days for each active case. The Bratton Group team has prepared a sample case management system for adaption for use in Oakland.
- Significantly increase the camera monitoring capabilities of the OPD in commercial areas throughout the city to provide identifications and evidence in robbery, burglary and some shooting cases. Cameras would be monitored and recorded at the Domain Awareness Center that is currently under construction.

### **Evidence Management**

*For the DIUs to be optimally effective, OPD should implement reforms in the management of evidence, changing some of the priorities and systems by which evidence is gathered and analyzed.*

### Findings

- Crime scene technicians in Oakland work without direct supervision and therefore with little systematic organization.
- The OPD's digital photo file access, which could be a key tool in identifying robbery suspects, is extremely slow and is rarely used in current robbery investigations.
- Fingerprint evidence gathered at burglary scenes is not generally used in burglary investigations or submitted for comparisons by the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS).
- More extensive and timely analysis of shell casings found at the scenes of shootings and other crimes could provide stronger evidence in assault cases, connecting guns to both specific crimes and specific gangs.

### Recommendations

- Assign a supervisor, preferably a sergeant, to manage crime scene technicians and establish a systematic dispatch protocol that both prioritizes and tracks all crime scene runs.
- Acquire a faster running digital photo system to access Alameda County's Consolidated Arrest Report System (CARs) so that photo arrays can be shown expeditiously to robbery victims.
- Establish a new protocol for the processing of fingerprints from burglary scenes so that prints in cases with other leads and/or in cases that have been linked a pattern of burglaries can be submitted for expeditious AFIS comparisons. Hire additional fingerprint analysts as needed to provide this service.

- Increase the analysis of shell casings found at shooting scenes to link specific weapons to specific crimes across geographical areas and periods of time. Hire additional ballistic analysts as necessary to provide this service.