

# **Dewey Beach Police Department**

## **Organizational Analysis**

### ***A Study of Departmental Operations, Administration and Support Services***

**June 30, 2019**



AMERICAN LAW ENFORCEMENT  
TRAINING AND CONSULTING, LLC

Completed and presented by

Captain Gregory A. Warren, Ed.D. (Delaware State Police - retired)

Managing Member, American Law Enforcement Training and Consulting, LLC

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*"Solutions for 21st Century Security, Public Safety and Law Enforcement"*


P.O. Box 4384

Wilmington, DE 19807-4384

(302) 270-7043

[g1.warren@comcast.net](mailto:g1.warren@comcast.net)

[www.americanletc.com](http://www.americanletc.com)

Please feel free to direct any questions or correspondence regarding this project to  
Dr. Gregory A. Warren. 

The conclusions and recommendations presented in this report are based upon the data presented by the Town of Dewey Beach, its employees, Town residents, business owners, visitors, and multiple law enforcement professionals in Delaware, regarding the various administrative, operational and support services activities of the Dewey Beach Police Department. The conclusions, opinions and recommendations presented by the author of this report are based upon current best practices in the field of law enforcement in the United States today and are only presented in an effort to assist the Dewey Beach Police Department in becoming the very best law enforcement agency possible.

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## Executive Summary

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The Dewey Beach Police Department is responsible for providing full-service policing to a population of approx. 350 year-round residents/citizens, primarily during the winter months or "off season". However, this number swells into the thousands during the peak summer months, with an extremely large number of summer residents, guests, visitors and tourists visiting the Town during the summer months and or during special events. In order to effectively meet the law enforcement needs of the Town, the police department must provide 24 hr. a day police services. This need is currently being met by too few full-time, Dewey Beach police officers during the summer months. Currently the Town's only method of fulfilling the policing needs of the community during this peak period is to rely on both part-time and seasonal police officers certified in the State of Delaware. Even these additional resources must be supplemented by various outside police agencies such as the Delaware State Police, the Delaware Alcohol Tobacco Enforcement Agency and several other area municipal police agencies when requested. This policing model at best presents challenges in and of itself. At its worst, it leaves the Town insufficiently protected and many of its own police officers overwhelmed at times. At its best it provides the minimum level of police services possible while incurring the least level of cost to the Town. There are other police jurisdictions in the United States today who suffer from the same type of high demand for police services during specific times of the year and or during specific events. Part-time, reserve and seasonal police officers play an integral role in the operations, administration and support services of many of America's law enforcement agencies today. However, their numbers typically make up a small percentage of the total number of police officers on duty at any one time. In a policing environment such as Dewey Beach, these additional resources must be relied on heavily in order to accomplish even the most basic mission of the Police Department, particularly in the summer. This, coupled with several other concerns ranging from a poorly designed and inadequate police facility, low morale within the department, an exploding Town population in the summer, including an inordinate number of public nuisance and disorderly type calls for service and criminal incidents in the summer, requires the immediate attention of the Town, if it intends on ensuring the Police Department can continue to provide the Town and its visitors with the police services it both expects and deserves. In short, the Police Department is currently understaffed, should revisit its own table of organization, shift scheduling system, and job responsibilities of each and every person serving within the Department. The Department's station is in dire need of replacement and possesses so many concerns and issues I don't believe they could be adequately addressed within the current footprint or structure they reside in today. These concerns are exacerbated by a low starting salary, and limited chances for promotion internally. To complicate this matter worse there is the lack of a formal pay matrix, career development program, and staffing shortages, all enhanced by a lack of training by everyone's account. Finally, to further deepen the concerns and issues of the Police Department, there appears to

exist a deep divide or bifurcation that specific personality conflicts and perceived political interference have caused within the Town of Dewey Beach both in the past and even today. This has resulted in a deep lack of trust on what appears to be almost everyone interviewed for this study.

With all of these factors and variables in mind this study will present a number of observations, findings and conclusions and even generalities, which will hopefully provide both the Town and Police Department leadership with the information required to start some very serious dialogue about the current, and more importantly future status and ability of the Town's Police Department to meet its mission successfully. The last critical portion of this report will be the presentation of possible recommendations for alleviating and or minimizing the negative affect or impact of as many of the items identified as possible, with the resources available and environment prevailing at this time. This report concludes with suggesting that the Town of Dewey Beach and its Police Department should identify a blue-ribbon panel to better study and identify which of the items uncovered during this study and included in this report, can in fact be addressed with the current resources available. In short, this report should not be the end of the analysis/study of the Police Department, but should in fact be the beginning of real, positive change for the entire Police Department, which will ultimately result in a safer, more positive experience for everyone, including the police officers working for the Town of Dewey Beach and most importantly the citizens and visitors they serve.

## **Quick Reference Guide of major findings:**

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### **Prioritized list of major findings**

**Department needs both a strategic plan and an updated and supporting Policy Manual**

**Lack of trust exist between Police Department and certain Town officials and Town employees**

**Department is at times understaffed**

**Police station's physical facility condition is unacceptable**

**Officers desire additional training and responsibilities**

**Officers have limited promotional and career development opportunities**

**Both starting officer and veteran officer salaries are low (both full-time and part-time)**

**Police officer Annual Performance Appraisal needs to be updated**

## **Scope of Work:**

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Review the current table of organization, chain of command, span of control and corresponding rank structure.

Review past and current pending litigation.

Review risk exposure to the Police Department and hence to the Town of Dewey Beach.

Review specific critical departmental policies and standard operating procedures.

Review departmental hiring, career development, training and promotional practices and processes.

Review policing methodologies and law enforcement best practices.

Review crime reduction and traffic enforcement techniques.

Review citizen and constituent relations.

Review the prevailing leadership philosophy and standard supervisory management practices.

Review leadership and supervisory management preparation and training.

Review inter-agency relationships, interoperability and cooperation with other LE agencies.

Review police officer work performance standards for all Department personnel.

Review budget development and usage, including effectiveness vs. efficiency and various cost benefit analysis of major programs or projects.

Review discipline usage within the agency.

Review the Department's compensation/salary/ benefits package as it relates to affecting other areas of this study i.e. employee morale.

Review current strategic plan, including Departmental goals and objectives and the corresponding operational tactics, administrative functions and support services utilized to achieve same.

Review performance management practices and the Department's annual performance appraisal instrument.

Review the Police Department's equipment and physical facilities.

Review the Police Department's technology.

**Review the Department's use of the Federal LESO program.**

**Review the Department's usage of part-time and seasonal police officers.**

**Review the Department's readiness to initiate the Delaware Police Chief's Council's Police Department Accreditation program.**



## **Methodologies Utilized During the Study**

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Conceptualize, operationalize and implement the plan for completing the work included in the scope of this organizational analysis (see above for further regarding the scope of the work and deliverables for this project)

Conducting the required research for the study, including:

- 1) Onsite visitations to the police department's physical facility
- 2) Onsite visitations to the Town to conduct PD interviews and observe police operations
- 3) In-person interviews of residents, business owners and other police professionals
- 4) Written survey usage
- 5) Report reviews
- 6) Data analysis and statistical comparisons i.e. Criminal and Traffic arrests data
- 7) Policy Manual review
- 8) Annual Performance Appraisal review
- 9) Additional data base searches – demographics of the Town and area, major employers, tax base, crime trends of the area etc.
- 10) News media searches
- 11) Pending litigation analysis

Analyze the data collected above for specific behaviors, patterns, trends, generalities and anomalies. Based upon the observations, findings and conclusions drawn from the study and taking into consideration the known limitations prevailing within the Town of Dewey Beach and the Police Department itself, compile a comprehensive list of observations, findings and conclusions, and develop a commensurate list/menu of recommendations designed to address as many of the problems, issues and/or concerns as possible.

## Observations, Findings, Conclusions and Generalities

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- 1) It appears to be enough funding available for the Town of Dewey Beach to operate and sustain a full-time police department. It does appear a large amount of the funding available may in fact be generated by the Police Department itself through their various enforcement actions, particularly during the summer months which result in fines of various levels being levied via a violation of a Town ordinance and adjudicated through the local Alderman's Court. For example, in one recent year 2014, there were over 1640 criminal arrest or traffic citations issued by the Police Department, many of which were adjudicated locally through the Dewey Beach Alderman's Court. A small percentage of those charges were transferred to the Sussex County Court of Common Pleas. I am unable to distinguish how many of, or which of those charges were issued/completed by Dewey Beach's full-time officers versus their part-time and seasonal police officers.
- 2) It appears the general public and other constituents within the community i.e. businesses, residents, visitors etc. appear to be satisfied with the level of police services they are provided by the Dewey Beach Police Department. For example, one resident expressed her deep gratitude to the Police Department for helping her and her adult daughter resolve a personal safety issue they had confronted last year.
- 3) It appears that the "car-per man" program currently in use is one of only a few benefits the Dewey Beach Police Department possesses for enhancing the motivation of their current police officers and or attracting new ones. Even this benefit however, only offers Dewey Beach's police officers an approximate \$ 3,000.00 per year financial benefit. This figure can vary, depending upon the COLA for that area and the type of vehicle it is and also how much personal use of the vehicle is allowed. Is the vehicle just for commuting or is to take the place of a personally owned vehicle etc. In short, multiple variables affect the computation for this dollar amount, but this figure is widely used throughout the United States for police vehicles used for commuting to and from work as Dewey Beach allows.
- 4) It appears the Police Department's training budget is inadequate for both the size and needs of the Department. This would be considered a critical area of concern as training corresponds to many other facets of a career field where such as policing, where risk management at every level is paramount. Training not only provides a new or at least enhanced skill set, but also simultaneously helps protect the Town from, litigation via mitigating risk and working in and showing a "good faith" environment of

police professionalism. Lastly, training is always considered a great motivator for many personnel and is regarded as an opportunity to enhance one's chances for promotion or possibly even being cross-trained in another area of policing within the Department. The need for more and better training was mentioned in almost every survey and in every interview completed or conducted during this study.

- 5) It appears the Police facilities are inadequate, both in square footage and more importantly in their design. The station is so woefully inadequate, I will list here the concerns observed during my tour and visitations to the station and or revealed during my interviews of police personnel during this study. See below for further information regarding the station itself. (See below #6 - # 12) and (Confidential Appendices A and B for further)
- 6) There is apparently a known air quality issue within the Town Hall and adjacent police station, to the extent that there are in fact mold issues within the station that need to be addressed. On close examination, what appeared to be mold could actually be seen in the first floor holding room area of the police station.
- 7) The dispatch area of the Department is woefully inadequate in almost every facet available to inspect or rate.
- 8) There is such limited space within the station that on the second floor a suspect in custody being held on the current detention bench there, would be able to see the information or material displayed on several of the sworn officer's computer screens and or hear anything that is being said or transmitted within the room.
- 9) The **long-term evidence locker** is full, and does not appear to have enough space to adequately discern or delineate what is stored in different areas. The evidence locker also does not contain any type of climate control system which allows for large swings in both temperature and humidity, dropping dramatically in the winter and increasing exponentially in the summer. It can only be assumed that the humidity levels are also uncontrollable at this time and rise and fall according to the weather present.
- 10) There does not appear to be enough large item storage capacity for larger pieces of evidence or for "other property recovered" items such as yard equipment, bicycles etc.
- 11) The processing area does not appear to offer adequate assurance that female and male prisoners and or juvenile vs. adult prisoners, can be adequately and legally separated from each other.

- 12) There does not appear to be a shower available for police personnel usage (should they need decontamination of some type) and there also does not appear to be an eye-washing station available for prisoners who have been pepper-sprayed.
- 13) It appears there are instances where the full-time police officer on duty is the senior officer available and therefor is in charge of multiple seasonal police officers and the police dispatcher, yet it appears they have had absolutely no law enforcement leadership or supervisory management training.
- 14) It appears that the police dispatchers even though a critical facet of police operations and are quite literally the true "lifeline" of all of police personnel on patrol, receive only OJT (on the job training). Apparently, no type of formal or nationally certified training by APCO, the Association of Police Communications Officers is provided.
- 15) Until recently when the second sergeant retired from the Police Department, literally half of the full-time police officers employed by Dewey Beach PD were formal supervisors by rank and pay.
- 16) The staffing shortage already present has now been exasperated by the loss of another experienced, full-time officer, who is leaving as several other officers have for work at another police department.
- 17) Even though there may be some disagreements on the operations and administration of the Department, it appears that everyone works together as a team when required for the good of the Department, and the citizens they serve.
- 18) It appears that everyone agrees to some extent that the personality conflicts and political issues that have arisen in recent years in the Town and between the Town and the Police Department, or at least certain elected officials and the Police Department, have been a huge distraction to everyone and that trust levels at this time are stretched almost beyond description. This has subsequently caused morale to worsen even more so.
- 19) There appears to be no formal or accepted pay scale or pay matrix for each rank and or time in grade for the sworn police officers, regardless of rank or seniority.
- 20) The Department's Annual Performance Appraisal requires a revisiting and has multiple specific items that need to be addressed.

**SPECIAL NOTE: IN THIS SECTION I HAVE CO-MINGLED THE RECOMMENDATIONS WITH THE OBSERVATION, FOR EASE OF UNDERTANDING, DUE TO THE LENGTH AND COMPLEXITY OF MANY OF THE ITEMS COVERED IN THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL INSTRUMENT. (SEE BELOW a. THROUGH k.)**

- a) **Formatting throughout the document is inappropriate**
- b) **The term "procedure" is used extensively, but should be replaced with the term "policy". Policies are established first and then procedures are developed to implement or enforce the policy.**
- c) **#2 d. "Takes care of personally issued equipment" is grammatically wrong and in fact changes the meaning of the statement. Is the equipment issued to just that person or is it personal equipment, owned by the officer themselves?**
- d) **#3 "Maintains an awareness of assigned beat. What is a "beat" and what is the definition of awareness? The term "beat" is typically for television and is not sued typically used in Delaware police departments.**
- e) **#3e. "Checks on businesses for robberies". A robbery is typically a part 1, in progress, felony type of crime and would be coming in via a 911 call, not by completing property checks or business checks. The writer of this statement may have meant "burglaries".**
- f) **#4 "Written information" is poor word choice.**
- g) **#4 Quality of work, should possibly be under #8 completing thorough or comprehensive criminal investigations.**
- h) **#5c. Not sure what this statement means, but it needs to be removed immediately "Does not shy away from physical confrontation". During litigation, this could particularly in today's environment be misconstrued as the Police Department condoning "never backing down" or the always "winning at any cost" mentality that many citizens believe the police possess today. It will be very hard for the Town's City Solicitor or attorney representing the Town to defend and or even properly define what this statement means.**
- i) **#6d. "Takes reasonable risk in performing job" what is a reasonable risks and what training have they received to help the police officers determine what risk is acceptable? Police work is already a risk laden career field, Departments need to be very careful in this area.**

- j) #5e. "With less and less than lethal" I believe this is either a typo or grammatically incorrect.
  - k) #7d. What is "Problems in personal relationships with other personnel". I'm not sure what this means and could be interpreted to mean multiple items, none of which is clearly outlined or explained. The same problem resides with this statement as with the statement described in above section h. dealing with confrontations.
  - l) #8a.b. & c. are redundant. This area should also directly mention "Constitutional Rights" and "Civil Rights' etc.
  - m) The directions for the ratings used in this document are at the end of the document, not at the beginning. Why would the directions be available to the rater after they have completed the document? The signatures required at the end of the document are different. They should all match and be in alignment with one another. Also, the term "Statistics" should be changed to another term, possibly "Productivity". Also, a stats per capita (hours worked and in what areas of responsibility) should be added. The aggregate or gross numbers generated by any officer are not informative enough to rate the officer fairly, but also are misleading, depending upon how many hours that officer worked and how many calls they were sent on and thus the amount of time they had left available to engage in some type of the more self-initiated activities listed in the document. For example, hours on duty, hours on patrol, hours assigned to a special activity, sick hours expended, vacation used during this rating period, which shift were they assigned etc.
- 21) The practice of police officers using their overhead emergency lights to get through intersections and then disengaging their emergency lights immediately and preceding onto their destination should be discontinued. This practice is a liability for the Department and Town, due to if the officer should cause an accident due to utilizing this procedure it will undoubtedly be questioned. The second reason for discontinuing this activity is it appears to the general public and motoring public that you are abusing your power and were simply tired of waiting for the traffic to clear. (The writer of this report actually watched this occur during one of his visitations to the Town.
- 22) There also appears to be some concern regarding unsafe driving, pedestrian traffic flow and the number of pedicyclist within the Town limits. There appears to be a divide in regards to this topic: Many of the individuals interviewed for this study regarded traffic flow and the dangers of the roadways within Dewey Beach as a definite problem. However, most police officers revealed during both the written

survey sent out and again in many of the interviews, that traffic issues were not really considered a major problem within the Town. They may feel this way, because of the high number of misdemeanor type criminal nuisance incidents within the Town, which may possibly cause traffic enforcement to take a "back seat" to other more pressing issues, particularly when you work continually understaffed during the summer months and traffic may be light in the winter months.

- 23) Several individual's suggested that Del DOT be contacted about synchronizing the traffic lights in Town, similar to those in Ocean City. It is believed this could in fact move traffic in a more efficient manner and increase the safety levels for both pedestrians and pedicyclist.
- 24) The current shift scheduling system and model followed could be modified in an effort to provide better police coverage and simultaneously increase morale within the department. The police officers themselves appreciate being able to select their own shift, however, the usage of and more complete integration of the command staff into the actual shift rotations, would not only provide better police coverage, but would also assist operations in other ways such as increasing morale and provide for more thorough supervision and training of the police officers on patrol.
- 25) It appears that there is both a desire and a need for a larger command staff presence during non-daylight hours. Even-though policing has become more complicated and requires a greater amount of time be spent on administrative and support functions, there is certainly room for the ranking members of the Department to spend a greater percentage of their time in the field supervising and training the full-time, part-time and seasonal patrol officers. This is a growing trend nationally, that police supervisors and command staff etc. get out with the troops and work with them as much as possible.
- 26) There appears to be some degree of concern about the current effectiveness of the chief of police and the overall effectiveness of the leadership and supervisory management practices within the police department at this time.
- 27) It appears that historically the number of seasonal police officers hired for any given summer season has been decreasing dramatically. The study revealed there may have been as many as 40 seasonal officers hired per year in the past. This year, 2019, it appears the Town will be hiring and fielding 15 seasonal officers.
- 28) It would appear that the promotional process for the police officers with the Department should be revisited. It was mentioned more than once that a career development program of some type should be implemented.

- 29) There appears to be some concern and dissension over the topic of hiring a ninth full-time police officer for the Town. It has been mentioned more than once that the idea of limiting the number of seasonal police officers hired would result in the hiring of a ninth full-time officer, but that has in fact not happened as of yet. This issue has resulted in some increased levels of distrust within the ranks of the Police Department.
- 30) It appears that there are times when untrained seasonal police officers who have not been through the Council on Police Training's EVOC course (Emergency Vehicle Operations Course) are allowed to drive marked police vehicles. Again, from a risk management perspective this is unacceptable for several reasons.
- A. The police officers are in a marked vehicle, but are unarmed (no firearm or firearms training) yet they can now become a target in a marked police vehicle.
- B. A citizen or visitor in distress could approach them needing immediate protection or an intervention of some type and the police officer is inadequately prepared to assist the citizen.
- C. Lastly, if someone should be injured in the police vehicle or outside the vehicle such as another motorist or pedestrian, the Town's liability could undoubtedly be extraordinary.
- 31) The Town's major crime reduction efforts appear to be adequate as the Town's serious crime rate would be considered low for the size population that exist within the Town, particularly during the summer. The tremendous increase in the summer population and number of visitor's present skews the crime rate for obvious reasons.
- 32) It appears there was in fact a police bicycle patrol at one time which has been disbanded. Interest was observed in bringing that program back, if only for the seasonal police officers.
- 33) It appears internal communications is lacking and also external communications within some facets of Town government. For instance, it has been stated that the Chief of Police is not always invited to Town Council meetings. Within the Department, many employees stated the Department did not have a mission statement, but it in fact does, it is in the policy manual, which reveals the Department's personnel don't know necessarily know what is in the policy manual and or what is in the manual is not being effectively communicated. There appears to be a need for better communication between the Chief of Police and his police officers and all employees within the Department.



- 34) It appears the Department could certainly use an enhancement or upgrade to some of its technology. The use of body cameras, seasonal police officer's radios are in disrepair and there are even LIDAR unit calibration issues. There are multiple items and capabilities which could be upgraded or acquired in the realm of technology by the Department, however, many of these types of both hardware and software purchases require initial funding, and also maintenance and training packages to accompany them for long term sustainability.
- 35) It appears that parking enforcement was in fact a responsibility of the Police Department at one time, but that duty has been moved to another section of Town government.
- 36) There appears to be a desire on the part of many of the sworn police officers to complete enhanced firearms training. Many have stated that there have been issues in the past with just acquiring enough ammunition to engage in this activity. The use of deadly force is obviously a low frequency/ high risk activity and therefore lends itself well to being an area of concern for both officer's safety and ensuring the safety of the public.
- 37) It does not appear there is a formal on-call schedule for ranking police administrators. This is needed to ensure junior police officers working can speak to a ranking member of the department quickly, it also ensures that should there be a major event, there is a ranking member of the Department ready to respond to the scene immediately.
- 38) It appears there is a desire to not engage in stricter discipline or corrective action within the Department. This can become a concern for obvious reasons because, circumventing the policies and or procedures in place may become the norm and part of the corporate culture of the organization if left unchecked.
- 39) It appears the LESO program is slowly being cleaned up and purged throughout the Department.
- 40) The Department's Policy Manual should be painstakingly reviewed and all identified or required changes made. It appears that the contract the Department has with Lexipol is going to address much of this. However, there should still be a final read and review as part of the checks and balance system required for such an important document. It does not appear the Lieutenant in charge of this task has adequate time to complete this very time consuming and tedious task. A light review during this study revealed the following items just as a few examples of some of the kinds of items that need to be addressed in the manual as it stands now:

**SPECIAL NOTE: IN THIS SECTION I HAVE CO-MINGLED THE RECOMMENDATIONS WITH THE OBSERVATIONS FOR EASE OF UNDERSTANDING, DUE TO THE LENGTH AND COMPLEXITY OF MANY OF THE ITEMS COVERED IN THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL INSTRUMENT. (SEE BELOW a. THROUGH q.)**

- a. Pg. 6 "electric "version should be "electronic "version"
- b. Mission statement – multiple grammatical errors, also should state "citizens, residents, business owners', visitors and tourist"
- c. Pg. 9 "his" should be "this"
- d. Pg. 9 under Seasonal Police Officer Training Requirements - one area states in bold "seasonal police officers do not carry a deadly force weapon and no weapons are issued to seasonals. However, in the last sentence of this same area it states "seasonal who carry firearms should be trained ..... etc."
- e. Pg. 15 states under Chief of Police "must have graduated or be able to certify with a Delaware Police Academy". This should state "be able to obtain basic police officer certification with the Delaware Council on Police Training"
- f. Pg. 398 Electronic eavesdropping and many, many other sections throughout the manual have not be updated or reviewed since 2007 or 2008.
- g. Pg. 397 Multiple typos
- h. Pg. Applicant background packet should be reviewed in its entirety
- i. Pg.393 section b. Under the Travel section it states "all travel must be authorized by the investigator, however, the investigator is the one who needs to request the travel, so they are then authorizing their own travel. I believe they mean must be authorized by the Chief of Police.
- j. Pg. 383 typos such as "extremal" should be replaced with "external"
- k. Might want to revisit whether the LT. and Chief have to wear body armor. If they should respond to a call or even stop a vehicle or provide backup while commuting to and from work, particularly since they are in a police vehicle, if they were to be injured without their body armor on and the Town knew of this, then the Town will

probably be held responsible for their injuries due to not requiring them to wear their standard issued equipment.

- l. Pg. 353 the Word Wrap Around function did not work properly, should be reformatted.
- m. Pg. 405 Explains the procedure for police K-9 bites, however Dewey Beach PD does not have a police K-9 and has not for some time.
- n. Pg. 412 It does not appear B and C are for Dewey Beach PD, but are designated for the Delaware Department of Justice and for Capitol PD.
- o. Pg. 423 Explains Dewey Beach PDs use of an incinerator, yet then states Dewey Beach PD does not have access to an incinerator.
- p. Pg. 437 states "any unauthorized physical, logical and electronic access" not sure what the word logical is ding within the sentence"?
- q. Pg. 438 Part of the last sentence states Dewey Beach Police, Chief of Police, but then above it states (Agency Name)?

In short, the Department's Policy Manual is in desperate need of a complete overhaul. There are many, many typos and grammatical errors, some of which can actually affect the meaning of the policy. The number of fonts and variances in formatting reveal to any reader, the manual has been pieced together over time. It also appears a tremendous number of the policies contained within the manual have an effective date of or were last updated in 2008, which would reveal to any outside reader that most of the manual has not be revisited or kept up to date in over 10 years. There are also instances where the terms or vocabulary used best describes another agency such as the term "Shift Commander", which is used heavily in portions of the manual, would reveal that this was taken from the Delaware State Police. The term "shift commander" is a term heavily utilized in the State Police and throughout their thousands of pages of policy, both in their Divisional Manual and Administrative Manual. The items just described above by themselves individually may not appear to be critical in and of themselves, but when looked at in total, would certainly assist any plaintiff's attorney in helping to impeach any representative of the Dewey Beach Police Department testifying on behalf of the Town, or in the very least not show a "good faith" effort by the Department to ensure that the 4 P's of organizational management and risk mitigation are being utilized. The 4 P's are Policy, Procedures, Processes and Practices. The manual should reveal upon anyone's review that the Dewey Beach Police Department is identifying and writing effective policy, then

developing the Standard Operating Procedures required to implement the policy and then identifying the required Processes to ensure the Procedures can in fact be put into place, and lastly putting into Practice the first three P's described above. The Department should ensure that all personnel in fact follow the Policy, Procedures and Processes on a regular basis, which would allow the Department to emphatically state in "good faith" that they follow "Best Practices" in their operations.

## Recommendations

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- 1) The Town should hire additional full-time, part-time and seasonal sworn personnel. It appears with the geographical location, demographics of the area and the special circumstances such as having a jurisdiction which invites an overly large number of visitors during the summer months, and generates an inordinately large volume of calls for service for the Dewey Beach Police Department, that the hiring of additional full-time police officers would allow for at least two regular patrol units to be on patrol for the evening shift, one of which would be guaranteed to be a full-time officer and possibly even of a supervisory capacity. The part-time officers should be selected by skill set and what they offer the Town as a self-starting police officer, with a commensurate and exemplary past record of service and accomplishment. (This will of course require a major increase in their starting hourly rate). This increase in officers available would allow for better police coverage, which also many times equates to a more effective police omnipresence, faster response times for calls and higher quality investigations, due to the officers on duty having more time to be thorough and try to develop leads, suspects and in general solve crimes or even address such items as traffic accidents more effectively when they occur. In short, an additional full-time officer, several part-time officers and more seasonal officers during the summer months, could be used to provide additional capacity and service to the Town via the Police Department. The above modifications to the current staffing levels and table of organization would actually allow for a more efficient and effective chain of command, span of control and internal communications, not to mention increased officer commitment and morale in the Police Department. The Town would also experience better police coverage and the addition of extra police services currently not offered. In smaller agencies it is many times hard to and sometimes almost impossible to permanently staff or field special units such as a traffic enforcement unit or K-9 unit with a full-time police officer. In these instances, it would be appropriate to utilize O.T. and or part-time officers who have a special aptitude or desire to work just these types of duty, or allow the part-time officer to cover the regular calls for service, while the full-time officer receives advanced training or hones their various skill sets. The same type of recommendation can be utilized for working with the community, conducting criminal investigations or working on special projects with other law enforcement agencies. Utilizing O.T. and providing the officers with additional training is an excellent method of increasing productivity, both the quality and level of service to the community, not to mention the positive by-products such as increased levels of job satisfaction and increased morale on the part of the Town's police personnel. This change would also allow the Town to better reflect the number of police officers per the number of citizens serviced, which is the national

standard utilized to determine the appropriate number of officers required to provide adequate police services based upon the geographical region and location of that department and the population which it serves. (The current standard does not apply very well to Dewey Beach PD and other jurisdictions where the population served can swell enormously based upon seasons or special events etc.)

- 2) Current police methodologies appear to be working and provide the Town with the type of patrols and police service/coverage that is required. However, with the above changes to the Police Department's table of organization and manpower deployment model, the Town could enact several optional, but well-suited services for the citizens and visitors of the Town, such as a bicycle unit, motorcycle unit, part-time Criminal Investigations Unit, Citizens Police Academy initiation, etc.
- 3) The Chief of Police should develop additional training opportunities for the Town's police officers. From leadership training to obtaining various required certifications, training opportunities are paramount to safe and effective police operations and are a strong career development practice and skill set enhancement activity.
- 4) An internal survey should be distributed to all police personnel, including the part-time officers and civilians, in an effort to collect data on their career goals and aspirations, operational concerns, training requests and any concerns they may have regarding their current position as an employee of the Police Department. This information could then be utilized to enhance the thoroughness and usefulness of their respective annual performance appraisal.
- 5) Using the past three years timecards and enforcement data, as an average, develop performance standards for all full-time sworn personnel, which should be agreed upon and published with a briefing given to each and every officer as an assurance that they understand and agree to each of the performance standards. Work Performance Standards also need to be set for ranking members of the Department.
- 6) Upon completion of identifying the above performance standards, the Town should modify the police officer annual performance appraisal for all personnel, sworn and non-sworn alike to ensure accountability and high performance. (See the earlier Observation section on the Annual Performance Appraisal)
- 7) Continue the Lexipol police policy/standard operating procedure development and assurance program. The Lexipol program is a national program that has been accepted by many agencies nationally to ensure their policies are in fact in alignment with national standards. However, as can be seen in the observations and short perusal of the Department's current policy manual, I believe the Town should invest in an outside

third party to review and rewrite the Police Department's current policies to be in alignment with the Delaware Police Chief's Accreditation program guidelines. Also, policy is only the start of this process. As mentioned earlier the procedures, processes and practices which are indigenous to the Department in question must still be developed before a Policy Manual is of any real use. Many commercial programs are of a great assistance with the "big picture" but do not have the customization or knowledge base to assist smaller police departments with just getting to "first base" first and or addressing items specific to a certain type of Department or State for instance. Some nationally accepted policies state nothing more than you have to have a policy, but really don't direct an agency as to what that policy should be.

- 8) To help ensure that victims of criminal incidents within the limits of the town Dewey of Beach are well informed, kept abreast of their cases status and in an effort to solidify confidence in the Police Department, victims should each receive at least two follow-up telephone calls or in-person contacts regarding the status of their case. One soon after their case is reported and again another contact subsequent to that informing them of any and all changes to the status of their case and providing them with the opportunity to provide additional information or ask questions of the investigating officer.
- 9) The idea of redesigning the pedestrian traffic flow within the Town limits would possibly allow pedestrian traffic flow to more resemble what Ocean City, MD has enacted, where pedestrian traffic is channeled more towards more controlled areas of the roadway and center median in an effort to help eliminate or at least decrease pedestrian injuries and expedite traffic flow, while simultaneously providing a more controlled traffic environment throughout the length of the highway running through the middle of Town.
- 10) It appears the Department is having a challenging time at recruiting both new part-time and seasonal police officers. This same issue is being felt not only in Dewey, but also throughout Delaware and even the Country right now. However, Dewey Beach PD's challenge is exasperated by the low morale currently in place at the Department. This becomes even further complicated by the fact that Delaware does not have an "Alternative Recruit Training" program available as other states such as New Jersey have or even an "Act 120" program like Pennsylvania law enforcement have. These types of programs allow citizens who are qualified (per state Council on Police Training standards) to complete their basic law enforcement training on their own time and at their own expense and thus provide for a constant pool of available, fully certified police officers available for Chiefs to tap into when openings become available. These programs cut the cost, time and risk for any police department wishing to use a candidate from them. This is due to the fact that the candidate incurs all of the cost for training at whichever facility of community college etc. they attend, while the police

department who may eventually hire them does not have to pay their salary and benefits for the several months, they are in the police academy for their basic training. This type of program has been very successful in both New Jersey and Pennsylvania for years. This type of program was introduced to the Delaware Council on Police Training in the mid 1990's by the author of this report, and was tailored after New Jersey's program at the time, but failed to garner enough support at that time for adoption or implementation in Delaware due to there was a glut of police officer candidates at that time.

- 11) The chief should develop and utilize a monthly roll call training program and place these monthly short training programs via an e-mail blast out to all sworn and non-sworn personnel with an attached sign off sheet. The monthly training topic should correlate to the most important or critical issue facing the agency and its personnel at that time. This training could also be completed and reinforced during a monthly Departmental wide staff meeting.
- 12) The Police Department should develop a strategic plan which reflects the Town's overall goals and objectives as a whole. With this in mind, an agreed upon "Vision" should be set for the department, so that all future efforts and initiatives of the department can be directed towards the department's Mission and Vision, via its established Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Work/Action plans. Each individual member of the police department should have the Town's and Department's goals and objectives embedded into the goals and objectives section of their individual annual performance appraisal.
- 13) The Chief of Police should initiate hosting community meetings, round table discussions or focus groups both internally and externally, in an effort to develop a more transparent relationship with both the community and those who serve within the Police Department itself.
- 14) The Police Department's budget must be delineated correctly and appropriately so that the chief can identify, manage and control cost associated with the Police Department's operations. The most critical area of this budget will be the various human resources costs. In most police departments 89-94 % of all cost are associated with the expenses involving the hiring, training and placement of all personnel including their salary and fringe benefits package. This budget should be line item in nature and should mimic the Town's budget, with a complete listing of running expenditures so that the chief can track the department's expenses and fiscal performance. The end result should be a real-time, line-item budget with a running/monthly breakdown of expenditures and a percentage of what is left in each category by the month (year to date expense reconciliation) so the Chief can adequately control and manage his expenses within the Department during each fiscal year as needed. For instance, O.T. should be a running



expenditure so the Chief can control this cost as the fiscal year proceeds. In a perfect world, I would suggest implementing a “zero-based” budgeting process for the Police Department, but it can be very time consuming and with Dewey Beach PD’s small size a simple, but well-defined line item budget may work fine.

- 15) The evidence collection, preservation and chain of custody system for evidence needs to be revisited with strict controls in place to control all evidence processes internally.
- 16) The compensation packages for the sworn personnel should be adjusted to make the compensation for all officers competitive with other surrounding Town’s departments. It will be hard to attract, retain and motivate sworn police personnel who feel unappreciated or unfairly compensated for the work they complete. This is a critical area of concern as this topic was brought up in almost every survey and in every interview conducted for this study. Even with several outside professional law enforcement agencies I interviewed, they too brought up almost immediately that the low salary package that Dewey Beach PD offers would make it hard to both recruit new officers and retain them once you have trained them. Retention and controlling attrition are just as critical functions for the health of a police department as the recruiting and training of new police officers is.
- 17) The Department should expand its community policing and community outreach activities in an effort to form a closer and more trusting relationship with all populations living, working or visiting within the Town’s corporate limits. (See below for further)
- 18) The Department should attempt to initiate a police volunteers program. These programs are sponsored and supported by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Volunteers in Policing (VIPS) program. There are many great examples of smaller police agencies from throughout the country who have effectively utilized volunteers within the agency to save money, offer additional police services and finally to better connect with and garner more support from the community.
- 19) The Department should enact a cadet program or at least support a local police explorers’ group. This could possibly be done in cooperation with other police agencies in the area, particularly in the winter when there is time for such positive police community relations activities. This may also assist with future recruiting efforts for both seasonal police officers and eventually even with full and part-time police officers.
- 20) It appears the starting salary for full-time sworn police officers is very low comparatively speaking with other agencies. With this in mind the salary package for part-time police officers is abysmal. This is a concern because the Department desperately needs additional police officers, but only for the summer season, which would denote that

they would be part-time in nature. I am breaking this out again due to the criticality of Dewey Beach PD needing both part-time and seasonal police officers so desperately to be able to function during the summer season successfully.

- 21) The Department should initiate a comprehensive crime, traffic and calls for service data collection program in an effort to make this data readily available to residents, police personnel and the Town leadership. An example of this would be the program utilized by the State of Delaware. The program is supported by many Delaware police agencies and the reported incidents and crimes are published weekly by geographical location in the daily and weekly newspapers. More can be found on this program at [delawareonline.com/crime](http://delawareonline.com/crime).
- 22) The Police Department's home page should be updated and redesigned to provide a more comprehensive set of services and to explain a great deal more about their operations to the public.
- 23) Due to the geographical location of the Dewey Beach Police Department and the size of both it and the surrounding communities, and the nature of the calls for police services experienced, it would behoove the Town to revisit its current police department's Memorandum of Understandings and/or Mutual Aid Agreements with other affected law enforcement agencies.
- 24) The command staff should make every effort to spend more time in the field with their personnel, particularly during non-daylight hours when the calls for service and the seriousness of those calls typically increases. Weekends and during special events would be obvious places to start with this process.
- 25) All non-sworn police personnel who the public has access to, for example police dispatch personnel, manning the station itself should be wearing uniforms. This is an acceptable expectation the public has of para-military personnel working in para-military type organizations. Uniforms serve multiple purposes for organizations such as police departments. They signify a government based, orderly organization with some degree of official authority. They also allow everyone to readily identify who a person works for and their rank and to some degree their level of responsibility. Internally, uniforms, particularly if issued and worn correctly help build esprits de corps and camaraderie and ensure everyone's role is important. (The current police dispatchers assigned to the police department are placed in such a location as to answer or greet visitors and citizens to the police department. This position should be required to wear a uniform similar to non-sworn police personnel or police dispatch personnel in other police agencies). Wearing "street clothes" provides visitors with a sense of a lack of professionalism and efficiency and fails to provide confidence in the police department.

First impressions are lasting and once engrained cannot easily be undone. Visitors to the police station should also not have to "figure out" who they are talking to, sworn police officer, civilian employee of the Department or a Town employee from another area or even a guest, intern, volunteer etc. The use of uniforms corrects this situation. A proper example of non-sworn dispatch personnel wearing a uniform would be the Rehoboth Beach Police Department dispatch personnel, all not only wear uniforms, but the uniform is color coordinated with the sworn police officers within the Department.

- 26) It appears that additional seasonal police officers should be hired for upcoming summer seasons and that providing some of them with training in police bicycle usage may be beneficial. The Milford police have in fact provided this training for several downstate police agencies in the past, such as Bethany Beach Police Department's seasonal police officers.
- 27) Continue all efforts to purge and clean up the remnants of the LESO program that has caused so much controversy for both the Town and the Police Department.
- 28) The Police Department leadership should conduct a monthly staff meeting with all members of the Department. The end of this meeting should include a monthly training topic briefly covered and reviewed as mentioned above. (see earlier mention of this)
- 29) The Chief of Police should immediately request the initiation of a new police station feasibility study. The current station does not only not meet any national or state accreditation standards, but has too many issues to almost address. In fact, it does not appear the current footprint of the joint Town Hall/ Police Station provides enough space for even a remodel of any real significance. (Please refer to the Observations Section where this topic is addressed in detail, pgs. 11-12 of this report and in the Confidential Appendices Section)
- 30) In the interim, an emergency appropriation for the solicitation of bids for addressing some of the most basic security issues at the station should be undertaken.
- 31) The Police Department should compile a comprehensive annual report which encapsulates all of the most pressing issues, accomplishments and concerns of the Police Department during the last year and providing a quick preview of what will be considered priorities for the upcoming year. This annual report would be a critical part of the annual strategic planning process for the Department.
- 32) It would behoove the Department to provide all of their police officers with (de-escalation training), since that is a critical responsibility of all police officers, but even more so in a venue like Dewey Beach in the summer.

- 33) Someone in a major formal or informal leadership position should be tasked with redeveloping both the short term and long-term relationship between the Police Department and the Town government itself. It will be very hard to continue to operate effectively with the current personality conflicts, political climate and general levels of distrust prevailing throughout the Department and Town at this time.
- 34) The Town of Dewey Beach in cooperation with the Police Department should immediately start to develop a strategic plan for the entire Police Department addressing the most critical and high priority issues facing the Department today, including but not limited to Police Department salary and compensation packages, replacing the current obsolete Police Station and how to best identify, develop and package the Department's Policies and Directives into a not only updated, but user friendly document.
- 35) It would behoove the Town of Dewey Beach to form a blue-ribbon panel of active duty police officers, retired police officers, concerned citizens, representative of the Delaware Attorney's General Office etc. to further study which actual modifications or recommendations made in this report or other recommendations made by others regarding the operations of the Police Department, should be or could be realistically initiated in an effort to redefine the Dewey Beach Police Department, both for today and into the foreseeable future.

## **References**

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**International Association of Chiefs of Police – model policies**

**Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies – accreditation standards**

**Consulted with several additional law enforcement experts**

**Delaware Police Chief’s Council Accreditation Program**

**Delaware Council on Police Training**

**National Criminal Justice Reference Service**

**Numerous organizational management, policing and law enforcement administration textbooks**

**U.S. Department of Justice, “Blue Courage” program materials**

**Numerous policing and law enforcement administration articles from the following periodicals (FBI Bulletin, Police Chief, Law & Order) etc.**

**Various local news media outlets**

**Pending litigation complaints filed**

**Any questions or comments presented in this report can be directed to Dr. Gregory A. Warren at ALETC, American Law Enforcement Training and Consulting, LLC.**