Field Training Program and Concerns with the San Jose Model

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Abstract

The San Jose and Police Training Officer/Reno Field Training Models are the most widely utilized models in American Law Enforcement. The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing was highly critical of the San Jose Model and recommended changes be made to new training programs. Law enforcement agencies have been able to modify the San Jose and PTO/Reno Models to meet the new training challenges in the 21st century.

Introduction

The need for field training in law enforcement was recognized in the 1930s from surveys conducted by the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement's Wickersham Commission. Since then, various training models and programs have been implemented. The history of training programs has been influenced by Presidential Commissions, agency legal and liability concerns, cultural changes, advancements in education and technology, and recognition of training needs.

The San Jose Field Training Model was developed in the 1970s by the San Jose Police Department in California. The program's development was to fulfill a formalized training need for officers transitioning from police academies to answering calls for service on the streets. The San Jose Model is the most widely used model in law enforcement field training.

Community policing became a popular policing strategy in the 1990s with the establishment of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) within the United States Department of Justice. As law enforcement agencies began focusing on this strategy, some issues were reported in implementing this new strategy with the established field training programs. The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing was critical of the San Jose Model and even suggested a possible replacement model by name, The Police Training Officer Program (PTO) also known as the Reno Model.

The Police Officer Training Program is based on newer problem based learning and critical thinking. The PTO Model was field tested for the first time in 2000 and is used by over 400 law enforcement agencies nationwide (COPS, 1999). Its creators, as well as the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, believe the model is the future of law enforcement field training. This project attempts to examine the San Jose and PTO Field Training Models in reference to community policing and address

concerns identified by the President's Task Force and other stakeholders in law enforcement field training by reviewing the following:

1. What is a Field Training Program?
2. What is Community Policing?
3. The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing.
4. Is the San Jose Field Training Model still effective?
5. Is the Reno Field Training Model a better solution?

Literature Review

Background

The Wickersham Commission was the first to recognize the lack of training for new police officers in its report in 1931. Although the commission was enacted to study the issue of prohibition, it discovered through surveys sent to law enforcement agencies that 80% of agencies surveyed did not have any formalized training for new officers. Over the next few decades, training requirements and needs were left to the individual police departments. This approach created huge training inconsistencies between police departments and regions of the country. Some training programs were developed to provide some basic skills while some agencies remained slow to recognize training needs.

Amid civil rights and Vietnam War protests in the 1960s, President Lyndon B. Johnson convened the Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration. The goal of the commission was to review the entire criminal justice system and make recommendations for improvements of the management of law enforcement agencies (Katzenbach 1967). The commission recommended changes in hiring standards and the training and development of police officers. Recommendations which came from the commission were the creation of minimum training standards for police officers, education programs for new and veteran officers, and community involvement in crime prevention (Katzenbach 1967). The developing field training programs were to ensure newly hired officers received hands-on training from an experienced officer.

Another aspect law enforcement agencies began to consider was agency liability regarding training. Title 42 U.S.C. 1983 allows civil penalties to be awarded for violations of constitutional rights by government entities. In the City of Canton, Ohio vs Harris, the Supreme Court ruled that the government entity, in this case the City of Canton, Ohio, could be held liable for not providing adequate training for employees (McNamara 2001). This case established the term "deliberate indifference" referring to the rights of the individual claiming harm (McNamara 2001). With deliberate indifference, the individual must prove the agency's training program is inadequate, the inadequacy is a result of the agency's deliberate indifference, and that the inadequacy caused harm to the individual.

While most law enforcement agencies view training as a way to provide the best service to the community, some are motivated by the liability aspects holding them accountable for the lack thereof. Civil liability suits can cost a government entity and

ultimately the taxpayer, there can also be criminal charges brought against agency personnel. This does not indicate that all civil actions brought against law enforcement agencies will be successful, however, a robust training program would help reduce the need for litigation.

Community Policing

According to The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, community policing is defined as "a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime" (Delany & Elkins 2015). The definition has been applied to various law enforcement strategies that seek to address the causes of crime by developing partnerships within the community to solve problems. Sir Robert Peel, the father of modern policing, recognized in the 1800s a need for community acceptance and support of a police force to successfully deter criminal activity (Fisher-Stewart, 2007).

During the reform era of American policing, patrol officers became more distant from the communities they served. Law enforcement agencies became centralized, similar to military organizations. Introduction of the patrol car decreased response times, but the response times became a measure of success in crime control. The radio was introduced during this era and allowed information to be shared quickly and effectively. However, the radio helped centralized control of agency personnel and increased the demand for quicker response times. This concern with response times further eroded relationship building between the police and the communities served. Officers continued to respond to calls, address the situation as required and moved onto the next call as quickly as possible.

The end of the reform era and into the 1990s saw an implementation of community policing strategies (Schmalleger & Worrall, 2010). Some law enforcement administrators began to recognize that the culture in our society had changed and current strategies in law enforcement were not working.   Studies revealed the links between crime and substance addiction, neighborhood blight, and lack of employment opportunities.   Instead of just responding to calls for service, police agencies were engaging with the communities they served to build relationships and address problems. Sub-stations were created so the community had more opportunities to speak with police face to face. With new community policing strategies, officers are more apt to remain in the same patrol area which allows the opportunity to build these needed relations with members of the neighborhood or business district. This increases the chances of mutually beneficial cooperation between the police and the citizenry. The officer becomes a part of the neighborhood and its safety becomes more of concern for the officer.

Problem solving also comes to the forefront of services provided by the police agency. Officers are training in critical thinking skills and given access to resources to address problems in the neighborhoods they serve.   Partnerships with other government agencies and non-government entities are formed with resources now becoming available to assist with neighborhood issues. For example, a higher crime

area may need additional lighting from the city to assist with crime reduction and to make the area residents feel safe. A previous response may have been to increase patrols in the area, but this would be a temporary solution. An abandoned house may need to be torn down to address drug traffic. Again, a typical response may have been to remove trespassers from the house only to see them return later. Local churches and other private organizations are included in finding solutions from after school activities to civic donations.

Every agency and community must research their own needs and solutions. What works in one area might not work in another (Fisher-Stewart, 2007). The agency seeking to employ community policing must be open to new and creative ideas and be willing to research problems. The goal of community policing is to become proactive and not reactive to criminal activity (Schmalleger & Worrall, 2010). To reach this goal the community must be involved, and the police must be engaged in problem solving. Training for these new strategies must be provided through academy, in-service and field training programs.

The President's Task Force On 21st Century Policing

The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing was convened in 2015. The task force researched issues relating to law enforcement and community relations. Its findings were published with six "pillars" or areas of concern with recommendations. Key recommendations included building relationships with the community served, enacting policies that reflect the values of the community served, proper utilization of technology to educate and engage the community, crime reduction techniques, ensuring quality education to include a review of field training programs, and reviewing shift durations. The final report was critical of the San Jose Field Training Model due to how long it has been utilized.

The report also questioned if the San Jose Model was adaptable enough to include training with new technology and community policing strategies. Adult learning methods and problem-based learning techniques were highlighted in the report. These methods and techniques were considered when developing the Reno Field Training Model and would require adaptation by agencies utilizing the San Jose Field Training Model.

San Jose Model

In 1972, San Jose Police Lieutenant Robert Allen and Dr. Michael Roberts developed and implemented the San Jose Field Training Model. The development of the training program was in response to a fatal vehicle crash involving a young San Jose police officer. The training system in place at that time was inadequate and provided little more than a two-week familiarization to the new profession. The training program did not provide any means to document deficiencies and no mechanism was in place to terminate trainees who did not possess the skill set for the position. At the time of implementation and for years to come, the San Jose Field Training Model was the most comprehensive training program available. The model has been utilized by the majority of law enforcement agencies in the United States.

The process starts with an observation period before performance evaluations begin and the program lasts 14 weeks. The San Jose Model uses four training phases and the trainee rotates between Field Training Officers (FTOs) with the final phase being completed with the original FTO. The agency uses standardized evaluation guidelines developed from job task analysis to give feedback to the trainee throughout the shift (Konrath 2015). FTOs complete a Daily Observation Report at the end of each shift and the report is reviewed with the trainee. The San Jose Model uses a seven-tiered scale to "grade" the trainee's performance. A Supervisor Weekly Report is completed by the FTO's superior and remedial training is available. A Trainee Task List is used to track required tasks that the trainee has performed. Experiential learning activities (ELA) such as scenarios and verbal questions are provided by the FTO for situations that are not experienced during normal calls for service. The trainee will rotate to different shifts and patrol areas to ensure exposure to a variety of calls, demographics, and work hours (Konrath 2015).

The San Jose model can, and has been, adapted to fit the agency's needs. Rating scales can be changed, and agencies input required tasks on the Trainee Task List. The agency also provides material for experiential learning activities. The San Jose Model has withstood legal challenges and is the training standard for CALEA accreditation. Proponents of this model like the clear daily documentation that is provided. However, critics are opposed to the daily evaluation marks and prefer the trainee to learn from a mistake without immediate penalty. Another criticism of the San Jose Model is that it was created during the reform era of American Law Enforcement (Bond 2016). Being developed during this era, as some claim, makes the model too militaristic and centralized (Walker 2005). The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing suggests that the model is outdated and is not a good fit for community policing strategies. Although, it must be noted that one of the task force participants, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, was also a developer of the PTO Field Training Model (Konrath 2015).

PTO Or Reno Model

The PTO field training model was developed in collaboration with the United States Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, Police Executive Research Forum, and the Reno (NV) Police Department. The development of this model was assisted by a grant from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Service. The model's creation was in response for the need to replace what some considered an outdated San Jose Field Training Model. The Reno (NV) Police Department was the first law enforcement agency to implement the PTO field training model and the PTO model is sometimes referred to as the Reno Model. Five other law enforcement agencies also tested the new field training model to include: Savannah (GA) Police Department, Lowell (MA) Police Department, Colorado Springs (CO) Police Department, Richmond (CA) Police Department, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC) Police Department (COPS, 1999).

The PTO Field Training Model uses Problem Based Learning (PBL) as the primary method of teaching (COPS 1999). PBL is not a new concept. This method of adult learning has been used in the education and medical fields for many years. PBL

challenges the student with a possible scenario that is difficult to solve. The object of the exercise is to develop the student's problem-solving skills. The exercise encourages the trainee to collaborate with the community and peers to find a solution. In law enforcement application the student or trainee would not only answer the call for service, but also consider the causation of the criminal act (COPS 1999).

The training process starts with a week-long integration phase to introduce the trainee to the program. The training program consists of 15 weeks with four phases. Trainees are rotated between Police Training Officers (PTOs) and remedial training is available with the use of Learning Activity Packages. Trainees work day shift to provide more training opportunities and problem-solving resources. A Problem Based Learning Exercise is assigned to the trainee at the beginning of each phase. The trainee must also complete a neighborhood portfolio exercise which includes identifying crimes, geographical, and cultural characteristics of the area assigned (COPS, 2005). A learning matrix is used to track what core competencies the trainee has learned. Daily journals are kept by the PTO and trainee to record calls for serve answered during the shift. These journals are for training purposes only and not for evaluation. Weekly training reports are submitted by the PTO and the trainee. A midterm evaluation period follows the first two phases and a final evaluation period follows the last two phases. (COPS, 1999).

The PTO Model can be adapted to meet any agency's needs. Items can be added to the learning matrix and Problem Based Learning Exercises are created by the agency. The model meets CALEA training standards. Proponents of the PTO Model point out that the model was designed to meet the critical thinking needs required of current community policing strategies (Walker 2005). The PTO Training Model would fulfill the recommendation of a new field training program by The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Some critics of the PTO Model have issues with the trainee's daily evaluation not being documented, a reference to the San Jose Model's Daily Observation Reports. A concern was raised regarding the lack of supporting documentation needed for termination from the program, another reference to the San Jose Model's Daily Observation Reports.

Methods

The purpose of this research project was to discover if the San Jose Field Training Model continues to meet the initial field training needs of modern law enforcement agencies. The implementation of community policing policies and the overall adaptability of the San Jose Model will be focus areas of the research.

Data was obtained through a survey which was distributed to state, county, and municipal law enforcement agencies in Florida. Survey distribution was coordinated with the Florida State Law Enforcement Chief's Association, the Florida Sherriff's Association, and the Florida Police Chiefs Association.

Survey questions were designed to determine if the San Jose Model was being utilized and if modifications were made by the law enforcement agency to meet their individual training needs. Questions also were asked referencing whether the thought of researching or implementing a different field training model had occurred within the

agency. Questions also touched on concerns raised by the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing recommending the need for a new field training model.
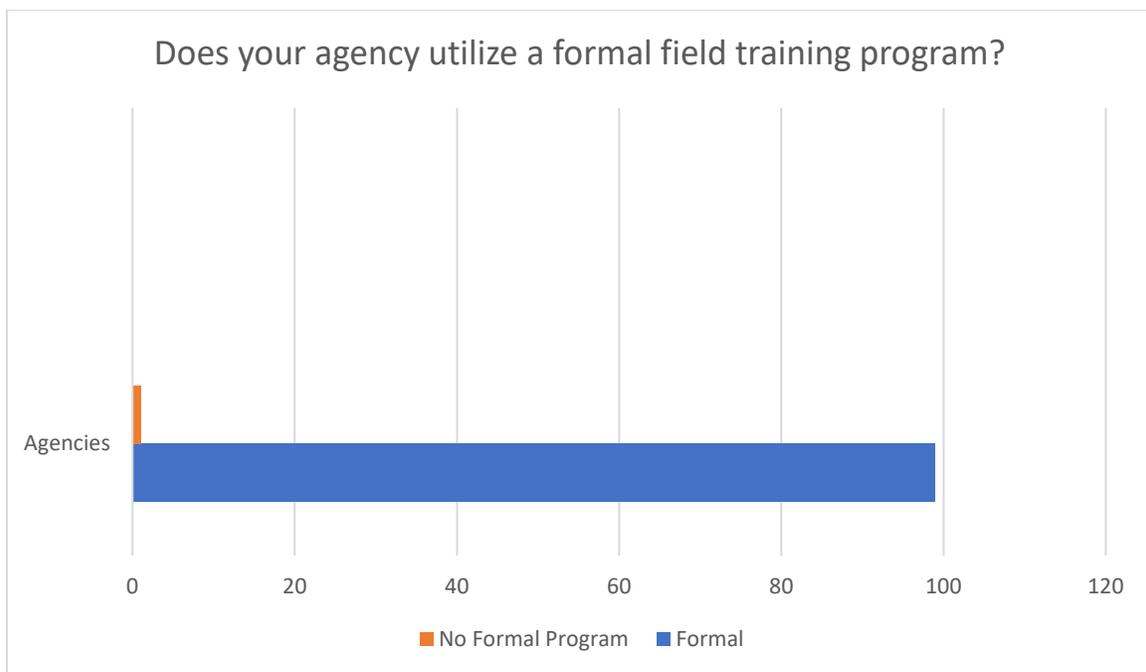
One potential weakness of the survey would be the agencies that are heavily invested in their field training program may not be willing to consider other field training programs. Another potential weakness would be agencies unwilling to be critical of their current field training program.

Results

The survey was sent to 335 state, county, and municipal law enforcement agencies in Florida. I received 83 responses, for a 25% response rate. Four open-ended questions relied upon a previous multiple-choice question for response and may not have been answered by the survey taker.

Survey questions inquired if a formal field training program was in use, what model was the program was based on, and if agency training needs were being met. Questions regarding an agency's community policing strategies and training were also included. Open ended questions allowed for sharing of data from previous research conducted and changes made by the agency.

The first question inquired if the agency utilized a formal field training program with trained field training officers. Eighty-two (99%) agencies responded yes to having a formal field training program for new officers. One reporting agency responded no to a formal field training program. No respondent skipped this question.

Does your agency utilize a formal field training program?

(Bar chart with y-axis labeled "Agencies" and x-axis from 0 to 120. Legend: orange = No Formal Program, blue = Formal)

The second question asked approximately how many officers are trained through the agency's field training program annually. Of 83 responses, 35 (43%) agencies trained less than 10 officers, 40 (49%) agencies trained 11-50 officers, 6 (7%) agencies trained 51-90 officers, and 2 (1%) agencies trained 91 or more officers annually. No respondent skipped this question.

Officers Trained Annually

■ <10 annually   ■ 11-50 annually   ■ 51-90 anually   ■ 91> annually
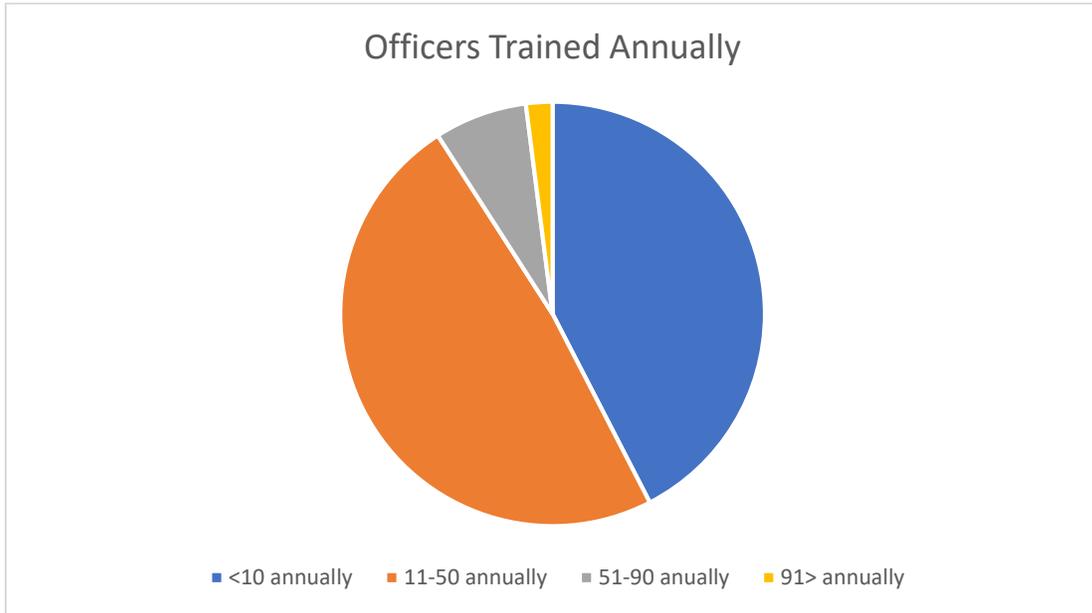
The third question asked if the agency utilized community policing strategies. Of 83 respondent agencies, 68 (82%) reported utilizing some type of community policing strategy. The respondent agencies which did not utilize a formal community policing strategy were 15 (18%). No respondent skipped this question.

Community Policing Strategies Utilized
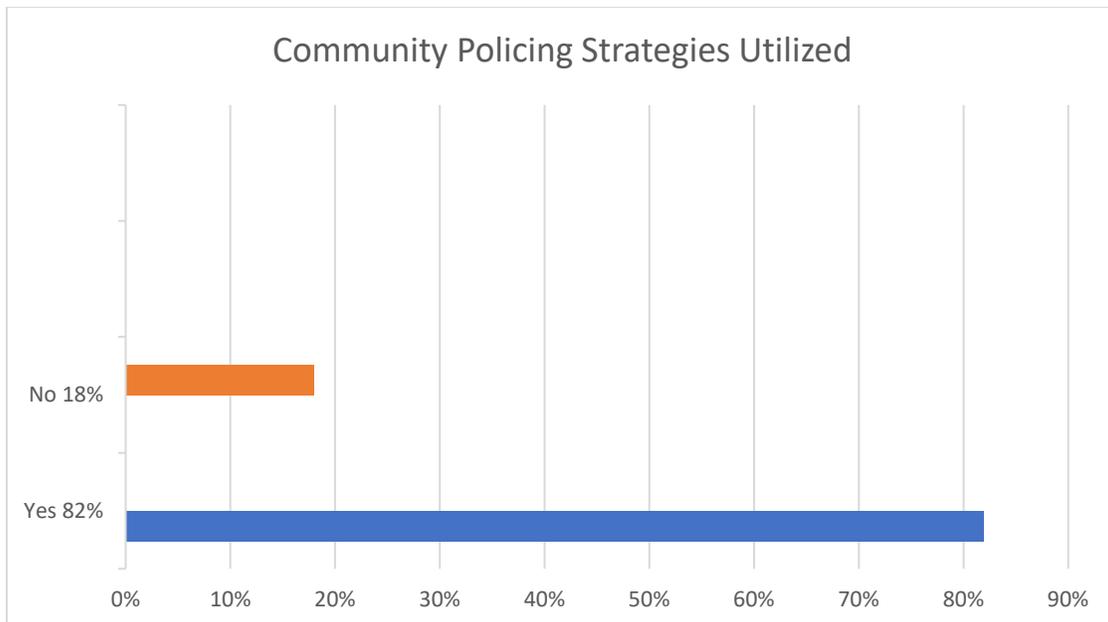
Question 4 asked if Community Policing was included in the field training curriculum. Of the 83 respondent agencies, 56 (67%) agencies responded yes, they include Community Policing training in their field training program, and 27 (33%) did not include Community Policing. No respondent skipped this question.
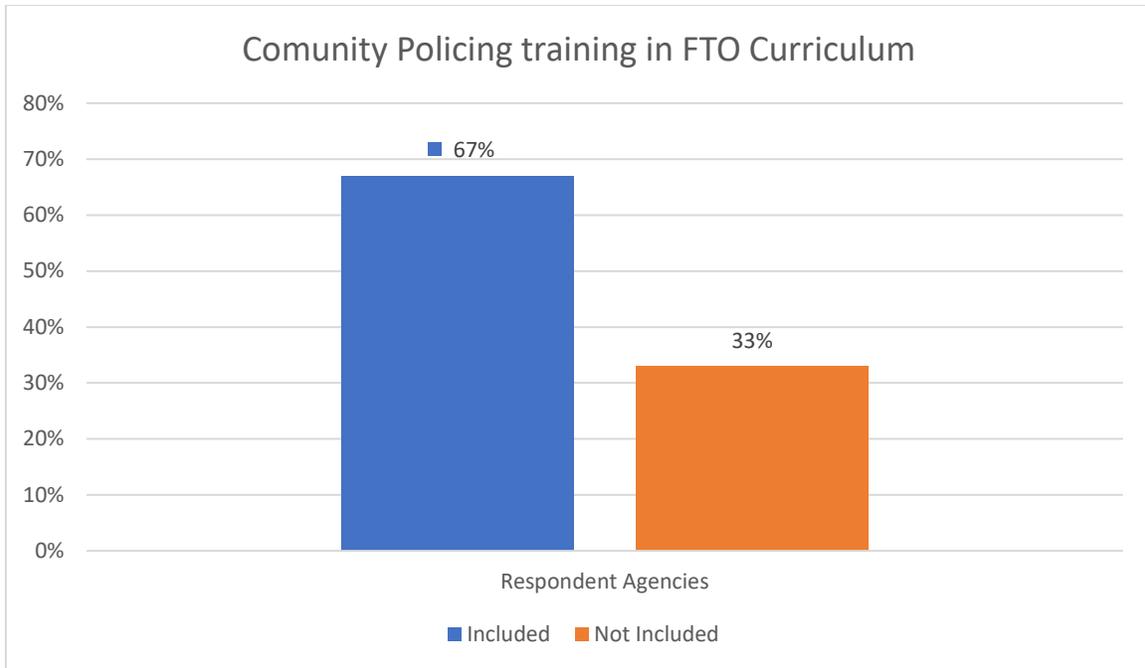

Question 5 asked is Community Policing Training provided outside of the field training program. Of the 83 respondent agencies, 51 (61%) agencies reported yes, Community Policing Training is provided, and 32 (39%) agencies reported no training is provided outside of the field training program. No respondent skipped this question.

Question 6 asked if new officers' critical thinking skills were evaluated throughout the field training program. Of the 83 respondent agencies, all 83 (100%) reported that critical thinking skills were evaluated throughout the field training program. No respondent skipped this question.

Question 7 asked participants what field training model their agency utilizes. Of the 83 respondent agencies, 63 (76%) agencies use a variant of the San Jose Field Training Model, 6 (7%) agencies use the PTO/Reno Field Training Model, and 14 (17%) agencies indicated other for their choice of field training models. No respondent skipped this question.

Field Training Model Utilized
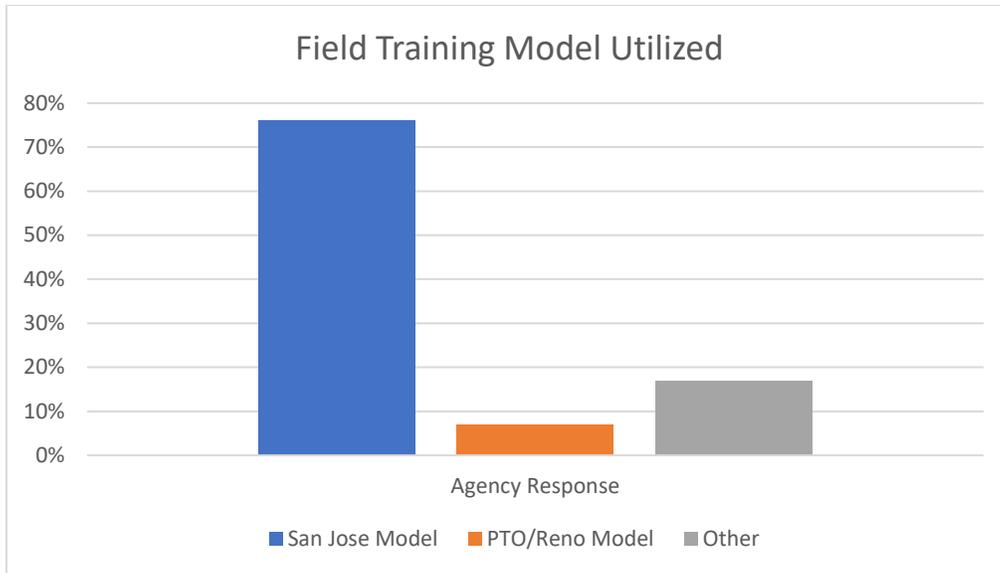
Question 8 asked if their current field training model was developed in house. Of the 83 respondent agencies, 55 (66%) agencies stated yes, their current model was developed in house, and 28 (34%) agencies did not develop their own field training model.

Developed Model In House
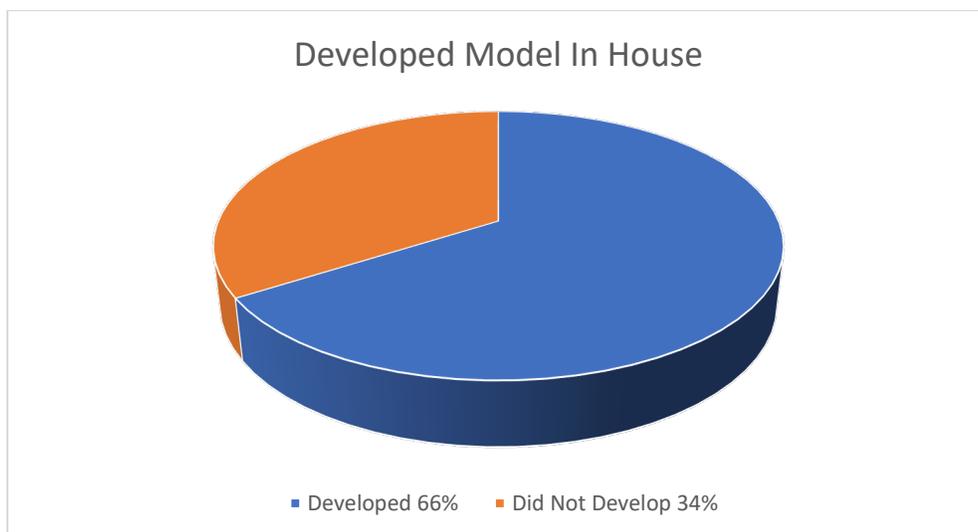
Question 9 asked if their agency's current field training model was adaptable enough to meet the agency's training needs. Of the 83 respondent agencies, 82 (99% reported yes, they thought the current model was adaptable enough to meet training needs, and 1 (1%) agency reported the current model was not adaptable enough. No respondent skipped this question.

Question 10 was an open-ended question to allow the respondent to list any significant changes that have been made to their agency's current model to meet a change in training needs. The comments left by respondents included changes made to the current model to address new technology, accelerated programs, extending program length, community policing, and new safety concerns. Of the 83 respondent agencies, 16 agencies skipped this question.

Question 11 asked if their agency has researched the PTO/Reno Field Training Model. Of the 83 respondent agencies, 59 (72%) agencies report that no research has been done regarding the PTO/Reno Field Training Model and 23 (28%) agencies had conducted research. One respondent skipped this question.
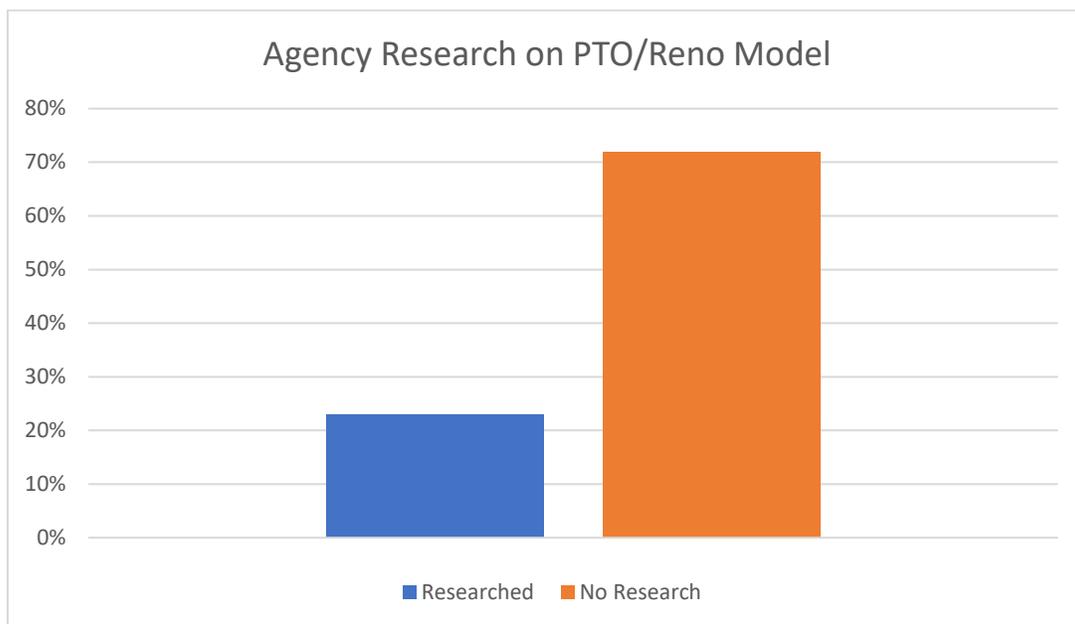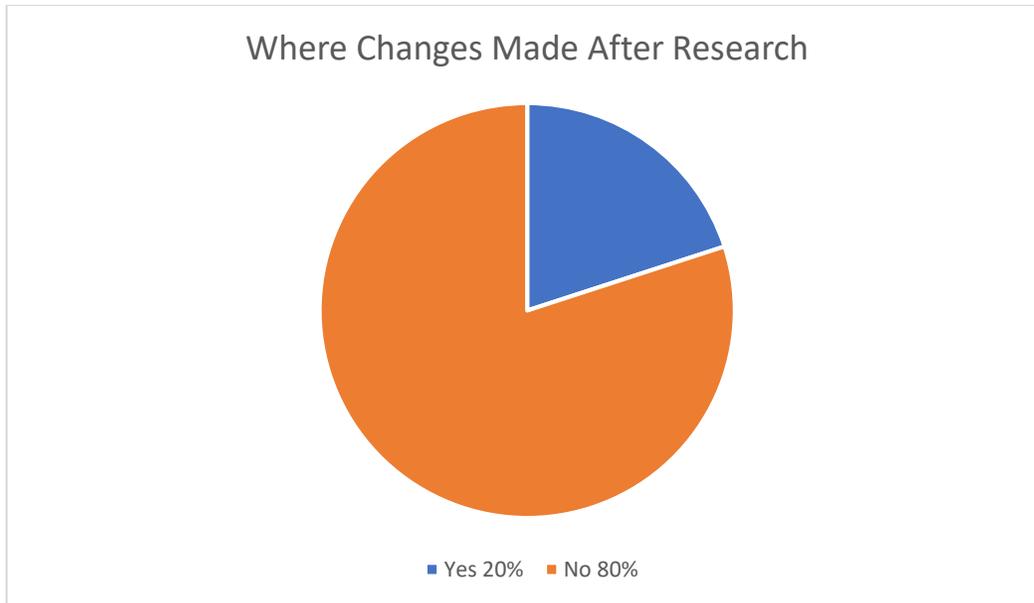

Question 12 was also an open-ended question and asked if research was completed on the PTO/Reno Model, what were the results. Comments from the respondent's agencies included difficulties in transitioning, not being conducive to agency needs, lack of structure, and apprehension to change. Of the 83 respondent agencies, 24 skipped this question.

Question 13 asked if their agency conducted research on any other field training models. Of the 83 respondent agencies, 64 (79%) agencies have not conducted any further field training research and 17 (21%) agencies have conducted research on other field training programs. Two respondents skipped this question.

Question 14 was another open-ended question and asked what the result of any research that was conducted on other field training models. Comments left by respondents included references to field training programs of Kent State University

Police and the University of Central Florida Police. Documentation changes, scenario-based training, and training rotation was also mentioned in the responses. Twenty-four respondents skipped this question.

Question 15 asked if there were any changes made to their agency's field training program based on the results of researching other field training programs. Of the 83 respondent agencies, 63 (80%) agencies reported that no changes were implemented due to the research of other field training programs and 16 (20%) reported changes had been implemented due to information found through the research. Four respondents skipped this question.

Where Changes Made After Research

■ Yes 20%　■ No 80%

Question 16 was an open-ended question that asked what changes were made to the agency's field training program because of researching other training models. Respondent comments included extending the training program, development of interpersonal skills, field training program for field training officers, and additional classroom training to include scenario training. Twenty-six respondents skipped this question.

Discussion

The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing reviewed the San Jose Field Training Model. The review was highly critical of The San Jose Model and recommended replacement of the field training model. It was thought that the San Jose Model had been around too long and was outdated for use in today's law enforcement environment. Claims were made the model was too rigid and was not adaptable enough to incorporate new ideas and technology. Some suggested that including community policing strategies would also be problematic for the San Jose Model and a new platform would be needed. A question was raised if the model adequately evaluates an

officer's critical thinking skills and relies too much on checklists to provide training benchmarks.

I found through the responses received, that agencies using the San Jose Model have made adaptations and modifications to meet the training needs of their agency. Additions to the training curriculum incorporate new technology, new officer safety concerns, and community policing strategies. Agencies extended the training program's length and added phases to address agency needs. The clear majority of respondent agencies utilized the San Jose Model, and many had researched other models, including the PTO/Reno Model. Their research resolved most to not transition to another model but to adapt processes and ideas from other models to the San Jose Model.

Respondent agencies which utilized the San Jose Model made training curriculum modifications to address specific issues relating to their agency. Modifications were made to include scenario-based training and updates in documentation. Some agencies retrained their field training officers to incorporate new changes to their program. One area of training changes which was mentioned in the responses was interpersonal and communications skills. Several agencies focused on evaluating and mentoring young officers on interpersonal and communication skills, an issue most agencies agreed needed to be addressed. The incorporation of new technology in the training programs was also mentioned in the responses.

The PTO/Reno Model and other models had a small representation in the survey, 20% of agencies surveyed. Although a very small group in this survey, the agencies utilizing the PTO/Reno Model thought the scenario training and individual learning were invaluable to their training needs. A number of agencies researched several field training models, including the PTO/Reno and San Jose Models, and found various processes that would work for their training programs. Hybrid or "Frankenstein" field training models were created with processes and parts taken from several different field training programs.

Recommendations

The survey results indicated the majority (82%) of agencies surveyed thought their current field training model was adaptable enough to meet the training needs of the agency. Numerous training model modifications were shared through the survey. The concerns of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing referencing the shortfalls of the San Jose Model seem to be unfounded. All field training models reported in use by Florida agencies seem to be adaptable enough to incorporate new processes and programs. Agencies reported changing training timeframes and adding phases when necessary. A wide variety of training topics have been added to training programs to allow focus on individual agency needs.

The Task Force's concerns regarding community policing and critical thinking skills were addressed in the survey responses. I found no field training program in use by the survey respondents lacking in critiquing a new officer's critical thinking skills. Whether using a Learning Activity Package or Daily Observation Report, the new

officer's critical thinking skills were observed and evaluated during the field training program.

Community policing strategies were another concern of the Task Force. Some respondent agencies incorporated a training block in the field training program and others held a separate community policing training class outside of the field training program. I found that a community policing focus was related to the agency's policy and not just the field training program. If an agency makes community policing a priority, then it will ensure the necessary training is provided to new recruits.

I found the survey questions I provided were lacking in some specifics in regarding the type of modifications made to agency programs. I would have liked to have had more information on the modifications and the type of issues being addressed by the modifications. The type of model being utilized did not seem to matter as much as the focus of the agency on training, including resource allocation to the field training program. Field training officers with numerous responsibilities that conflict with the training of new recruits relay the message that training is not the top priority.

Lieutenant Billy Thompson began his law enforcement career as a patrol officer with the Baldwin Police Department in 1992 and transitioned to the Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement in 2000. He served as an officer and K-9 handler until his promotion to sergeant in 2012. In 2016, he was promoted to his current position as Lieutenant. Billy is currently the Region Three Supervisor of the Bureau of Uniform Services in Nassau County and a Petty Officer First Class in the United States Navy Reserve. Billy earned his Associates Degree from Florida State College.

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Appendix A

Survey

The purpose of this survey is to identify the types of training models in use and if training needs are being met. Your participation is appreciated. The survey is anonymous and confidential. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact:

Lieutenant Billy Thompson
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement
William.thompson@freshfromflorida.com

1. Does your agency utilize a formal field training program with trained designated field training officers?
   Yes/No

2. Approximately how many officers are trained through your agency's program annually?
   <10
   11-50
   51-90
   90>

3. Does your agency utilize community policing strategies?
   Yes/No

4. Is community policing included in the field training curriculum?
   Yes/No

5. Is community policing training provided outside of the field training program?
   Yes/No

6. Are new officers' critical thinking skills evaluated throughout the field training program?
   Yes/No

7. What field training model does your agency utilize?
   San José Model
   PTO/Reno Model
   Other

8. Was your current model developed in house?
   Yes/No

9. Do you find your agency's current field training model adaptable enough to meet raining needs?
    Yes/No

10. List any significant changes which have been made to your agency's current model within the last five years to meet a change in training needs.

11. Has your agency researched the PTO/Reno Field Training Model?
    Yes/No

12. If research was completed, what were the results?

13. Has your agency conducted any research on any other field training models?
    Yes/No

14. What was the result of this research?

15. Were changes made to your agency's field training program based on researching other field training models?
    Yes/No

16. What changes were made to your agency's field training program because of this research?