



Indiana Law Enforcement Summit

“A Way Forward in the 21st Century”

Contributing entities include the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Indiana Association of Chiefs of Police Foundation (IACPF), the Indiana Sheriff's Association (ISA) and the Indiana State Police (ISP).

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Introduction

As 2014 came to a close, law enforcement and police service in the United States was experiencing intense scrutiny and a seeming loss of trust. Individual actions in a variety of U.S. cities, captured by citizen video, called into question police tactics. In at least one city, the U.S. Department of Justice engaged in a swift review of an officer's actions in a deadly force encounter and they ultimately began a review of police and criminal justice system practices in that same city. As these actions were playing out in the central part of our nation, a group of police executives and association executive directors in Indiana began a dialogue that imagined a method for their respective organizations to come together to chart a course to enable Indiana law enforcement to move progressively into the 21st century. Their goal was and continues to be improving policing and law enforcement practices in their state. The method used, as described below, culminated in two-day conference in Indianapolis, Indiana on April 26th and 27th where these professionals finalized the strategic goals and objectives that serve as a guide for Indiana law enforcement for the next five years. This strategic plan was designed as a guide that law enforcement executives and their fiscal bodies can readily reference to maximize the delivery of police resources to best serve the many communities of Indiana. The hope and desire of these executives is that this plan will aid all of the law enforcement organizations in Indiana at the city, county and state levels of government.

As a prelude to this plan it should be noted that several distinct issues emerged from the perspective of the assembled police executives. During Summit discussions, these law enforcement leaders clearly acknowledged that the erosion of the public's trust was a major concern. Several goals and objectives found here are expressive of this concern. These commanders recognize the importance of police legitimacy as the overarching theme that allows citizens to have great confidence in their law enforcement agencies. A second issue of concern involved budgetary concerns. Slightly more than 58 percent of those responding to an initial survey that preceded the Summit noted budgetary concerns as threat to securing sufficient resources with which to maintain and improve law enforcement in their respective communities. These leaders also recognized that part of the answer to the budget concerns involve educating the public and our fiscal bodies concerning the work of law enforcement and the resources needed to efficiently and effectively deliver those services. As a final major theme, the Summit revealed an emerging concern with the recruiting, selection, training and retention of the next generation of police officers. The assembled executives acknowledged the growing diversity of our state and the need to have law enforcement agencies reflective of that diversity. Goals and objectives that should positively impact those areas of concern are found here as well.

Methodology

In late 2014, representatives of the Indiana Association of Chiefs of Police, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources – Law Enforcement Division, the Indiana Sheriff’s Association and the Indiana State Police assembled in person and telephonically to create a mission statement and value statement that would guide this effort. Once these two statements were agreed upon, this coalition developed a strength, weakness, opportunity and threat (SWOT) survey that was provided to Indiana law enforcement agencies to ascertain internal and external issues that were collectively facing all city, county and state agencies. The questions in this survey requested the respondents to respond from the perspective of their individual agency and then, the profession as a whole. All respondents were asked to identify the top three items (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) facing their respective agency and then law enforcement as a whole in the state of Indiana. These responses were then tallied to identify the top three issues in every category facing law enforcement in Indiana, thus providing a natural priority from which to identify the strategic goals for the group. The assembled group gathered over a two-day period (April 26th and 27th 2015) to confirm, debate and develop the strategic goals and objectives that would finalize this strategic plan. A draft copy of this document was forwarded for all to review and offer final editing comments. This document is now in final form and, according to commentary from the participants at the Summit, may be subjected to annual review.

In March 2017, these same criminal justice professionals gathered again to review the actions of Indiana stakeholders and the on-going validity of their Best Practices recommendations. Minor adjustments and some format changes followed as a result of this second meeting. All of the participants agreed to meet on an annual basis to review the state of policing in Indiana. Their hope is to ensure that their respective agencies and those they represent will continually serve the citizens of our state adhering to a core set of values and best practices.

What follows is the “Best Practices Plan” for Indiana law enforcement organizations. It is offered to serve as an identified “Way Forward in the 21st Century.”

Mission Statement

The mission of Law Enforcement in the state of Indiana is to create an environment in their departments which reflects best practices, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of their communities. This will be accomplished by adhering to the ideals of the Constitution of the United States as well as the Constitution of the State of Indiana. We are committed to the concept of professional service to our communities that will provide protection to the lives, property and personal liberties of the citizens of Indiana, while recognizing the diversity of culture and language. We will strive for the practice of fair and impartial enforcement of the law for the benefit of Indiana's populous. We will work to develop a partnership within our communities that is responsive to their needs.

Confirmed March 2017

Vision Statement

Indiana Law Enforcement will provide, through mutual trust, safety and protection to the populous of Indiana.

Confirmed March 2017

Best Practices Recommendations

1.0 Improve recruitment, selection, hiring, diversity and retention practices to meet agency needs.

- 1.1 Indiana law enforcement agencies will collect demographic data on their respective service populations and continue to do so on an annual basis.
- 1.2 Indiana law enforcement agencies noting deficiencies greater than ten percent of agency population and service population will develop recruitment plans to target needed population groups for law enforcement service. Among the efforts to be considered should be such activities as: recruiting at historically African-American universities; recruiting at women's events; recruiting at universities where particular foreign languages are taught; recruiting through "faith-based" groups; and, recruiting at LGBTQ venues.
- 1.3 Indiana law enforcement agencies should consider reaching out to the high school population age demographic to acquaint students with the profession of policing. Agencies should consider discussions to establish Jailer School at the vocational high school level. Indiana law enforcement leaders are encouraged to create their own outreach program at high school level as a conduit for continual recruiting of potential officers. The establishment of youth leadership academies similar to the program by Lieutenant Don Bender in Gettysburg, Maryland should be considered. Other potential strategies include recruiting officers from "cradle to grave," the use of career tech center and career academies.
- 1.4 Indiana law enforcement agencies should continue to promote law enforcement exploring.
- 1.5 Indiana law enforcement membership groups, the Indiana State Police and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division shall reach out to the Indiana Department of Education for development of a police/law enforcement career curriculum for delivery at the high school age level. This curriculum should include a focus on values and personal accountability.
- 1.6 Indiana law enforcement membership groups will work to assist law enforcement agencies in using social media for recruiting.
- 1.7 Law enforcement Summit participants encourage Indiana Law Enforcement to conduct "Post Hire interviews" to determine why and how young men and women came to seek employment as police professionals. The aggregate data from such interviews should be analyzed and disseminated to all Indiana law enforcement.
- 1.8 Indiana law enforcement agencies are to make the application process user friendly to include electronic application processes.

2.0 Secure sufficient funding to meet agency staffing, training, wellness and equipment needs.

- 2.1 Indiana law enforcement agencies will continually use education at the "grass roots" level regarding the work and focus of Indiana law enforcement. This "understanding enforcement through education" will become a routine part of Indiana law enforcement activity, recognizing that the better our citizens understand our work, the likelihood of their on-going support improves.

- 2.2 Indiana law enforcement membership organizations will create personal relationships to better educate state and local lawmakers regarding the work of Indiana law enforcement agencies.
- 2.3 Law enforcement membership organizations will engage in an annual joint legislative lobbying meeting to take place in the Fall (September/October) of the year and before and after Indiana's legislative summer committee session review.

3.0 Improve intra-agency and interagency communication.

- 3.1 Indiana law enforcement agencies are to use formal and informal communication mechanism to promote better communication flow within agencies. These methods may include: monthly/weekly face-to-face briefings between command staff and all agency personnel; the publication of internal e-newsletters or correspondence; publication of briefing reports; web-based pronouncement of policies, procedures or regulations
- 3.2 Indiana law enforcement agencies are to develop ongoing, formal and informal, interagency dialogue between all criminal justice executives within their respective county-wide or region-wide jurisdiction. These meetings should include prosecutors, sheriff's office representatives, municipal police agency representatives, ISP and DNR – Law Enforcement Division representatives.
- 3.3 Representatives of the Indiana Association of Chiefs of Police, Indiana Sheriff's Association, Indiana State Police and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources – Law Enforcement Division will attend an annual law enforcement summit to promote on-going attention to the profession of policing in Indiana. At future meetings, a representative of the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy will be invited and other people deemed necessary to assist the attendees in the exploration of contemporary issues critical to police issues in Indiana.
- 3.4 Indiana law enforcement agencies shall extend invitations to all law enforcement colleagues in their respective regions to participate in Traffic Safety Partnerships.

4.0 Increase and communicate intra-agency and interagency training and wellness opportunities for agency personnel (to remain consistent with recommendations of The President's Task Force Report on 21st Century Policing).

- 4.1 Indiana law enforcement agencies are to assess programs and resources available to their respective officers to appropriately handle mental health and emotional issues their officers may be experiencing. Some programmatic elements that should be considered include such things as: annual psychological examinations, employee assistance plans (EAP), contracted psychological services, in-house psychological services, early warning systems, critical incident stress debriefing teams, police chaplaincy programs, and suicide prevention programs. All agencies should strongly consider implementation of one or more of the above-mentioned programs to address mental health and emotional health wellness for all police employees.
- 4.2 Indiana law enforcement membership organizations should establish a focus group of police practitioners dedicated to exploring wellness opportunities for law enforcement/public safety personnel. Examples of potential resources to help examine wellness topics include: IACPF Lunch and Learn, Fire Agencies, IMPD, the Cooper Center for Fitness and ILEA.
- 4.3 Indiana law enforcement agencies to adopt all elements of the "Below 100" initiative.

5.0 Implement opportunities to maximize interagency and community cooperation and public partnerships.

- 5.1 Indiana's law enforcement membership organizations are encouraged to develop a model social media plan/template that can be replicated by all participants to the Indiana Law Enforcement Summit. A portion of this plan shall address education initiatives that aid our public in understanding policing and will engage the public.
- 5.2 Indiana law enforcement agencies should identify and attend community events as a routine method of re-engaging the public we serve. Elements of the community policing model should be reinstated in jurisdictions throughout Indiana. Examples of potential activities that can assist with reconnecting with our communities are such things as: National Night Out, Coffee with a Cop, routine police-neighborhood meetings, routine interaction with faith –based organizations, the routine use of SRO's and other school-based activities, attendance at business group meetings and other civic groups.

6.0 Pursue federal and state grants and community foundations to enhance budget funding.

- 6.1 Law enforcement agencies are recommended to consider using the services of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute to plan and provide grant workshops regionally.

7.0 Explore methods to improve law enforcement accountability throughout the state of Indiana.

- 7.1 Law enforcement agencies are to create individual and organizational performance evaluations consistent with national best practices.
- 7.2 Indiana law enforcement agencies are to achieve accredited status through either the state accreditation process or through Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA).
- 7.3 Citizens served by Indiana law enforcement agencies should be able to view agency public records by electronic means. Items such as Merit Board proceedings, citizen advisory board meetings and citizen satisfaction surveys will be conducted and reported through easily accessible electronic media. Social media will also be used to solicit public input on police issues. The goal is that Indiana law enforcement agencies become patently transparent in policing activities.
- 7.4 Indiana law enforcement agencies will become more cognizant of and more willing to promote professional development and training at all levels. Schools, seminars and training that promote leadership and ethics will also be emphasized using such groups as FBI National Academy, Indiana's Police Executive Leadership Academy, the Southern Police Institute, the Institute for Law Enforcement Administration and the Center for Public Safety.

8.0 Establish core values for Indiana agencies.

- 8.1 Indiana law enforcement agencies are strongly recommended to identify, posit and train in the core values that can be used as a covenant between law enforcement and the public. Indiana's police officers, sheriff's deputies and state police officers are held to a higher standard of personal and professional conduct as is appropriate for the law enforcement profession. Their Sworn Oath to serve the public is the perfect promise that signifies mutual trust, integrity/honesty, ethics, courage, empathy and servant leadership at all levels. The starting point for all professional behaviors, are the core values that guide all agency

personnel. All agencies are encouraged to have officer recite the Code of honor or the Oath of Ethics at public events.

9.0 Create public and agency outreach efforts to improve public confidence and trust.

9.1 Indiana law enforcement agencies are to increase the number of programs that improve interaction with our individual communities. Examples of such programming include such efforts as: School Resource Officers, D.A.R.E., Citizens Police Academy, Youth Police Academy, Law Enforcement Exploring and other initiatives that offer greater opportunities for the police to engage the public we serve.

9.2 Indiana law enforcement agencies will begin efforts to create relationships with various demographic population groups within their respective communities at all levels. To develop a true sense of police legitimacy, Indiana’s law enforcement agencies recognize that it is the connection to the community that best improves the quality of life. Also, as Indiana becomes more diverse, young officers from various ethnicities and backgrounds must be effectively recruited and trained to serve our communities. Understanding the growing nature of a diverse Indiana, helps our law enforcement agencies better serve our public.

10.0 Actively seek budgetary support to maximize staffing needs, personnel development, wellness and public outreach.

10.1 Indiana law enforcement agencies, through their chief executives, will begin actively educating all police personnel in their respective agencies to help them understand the entire budget process.

10.2 Indiana law enforcement agencies will use relevant data that justifies budgetary needs.

10.3 Law enforcement executives will foster a continuous positive working relationship with their respective fiscal body representatives.

10.4 Law enforcement executives are to start the process of establishing a partnership with health insurance carriers to implement free wellness screenings for law enforcement officers.

10.5 Law enforcement executives to promote the use of the “Class A” uniform as the customary uniform for police service. This is a public outreach tool to help create a professional law enforcement image. Where the BDU uniform is utilized, agencies are strongly encouraged to explain to their public why the BDU is necessary apparel for their officers.

11.0 Actively increase recruiting, hiring and selection practices to improve the quantity, quality and diversity of new applicants.

11.1 Indiana law enforcement agencies are to develop a recruiting process promoting the assistance of high school administrators to create a “guardian” mindset with potential law enforcement applicants.

11.2 Law enforcement agencies are to develop a policy stating that every officer is a recruiter for his/her agency. Law enforcement and policing talent is needed for our profession. Every officer must realize that they have an obligation to recruit high quality candidates for police service. Every potential candidate must be approached and recruited. Officers should be given items such as “recruiting business cards” to help them in that process.

Conclusions

The law enforcement professionals of Indiana, like many of our counterparts throughout the nation, recognize law enforcement has arrived at a crossroad. A crossroad that each agency, from city, county to state and federal, must successfully navigate in pursuit of improved service and accountability to the public.

Rightfully so, citizens expect law enforcement organizations to operate with a high level of integrity. In hand with integrity comes the understanding there are appropriate levels of discretion in the law enforcement profession. While the safety of the public and the law enforcement professional are of paramount concern, enforcement actions should be executed with a caring and compassionate attitude as circumstances dictate such traits. In this same vein law enforcement professionals should, as much as possible, offer citizens a voice in the officer-citizen contact, with the expectation to be treated with respect while engaging in actions worthy of the public trust.

This “Best Practices Plan” will serve as a guide for those seeking a progressive way forward in this new century. It is a living, breathing document that represents the thoughts and concerns of many leaders in Indiana’s law enforcement community. It represents a way forward in the 21st century.