

XV – HOMELAND SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIONS BUREAU

This chapter presents findings and recommendations relating to the Homeland Security and Investigations Bureau. After an initial background section that describes the bureau and its current operations, a discussion of improvement opportunities in the following divisions and units is presented: crimes against persons; crime scene response unit; homeland security and tactical; traffic and public integrity.

A – BACKGROUND

The Homeland Security and Investigations Bureau was created as part of a departmental reorganization in June 2003. The bureau, which is commanded by an assistant chief, is divided into six divisions and units:

- Crimes Against Persons Division
- Crime Scene Response Unit
- Homeland Security And Tactical Division
- Criminal Intelligence Unit
- Public Integrity Unit
- Traffic Division

A brief discussion of the functions and operations of each unit follows.

Crimes Against Persons

The Crimes Against Persons Division, which is led by a deputy chief, is responsible for all homicide, robbery and assault investigations conducted within the City of Dallas. The division is divided into three operational units: homicide (which includes special investigations), robbery and assault. Each of these units is supervised by a lieutenant. Additionally, the deputy chief is supported by an administrative sergeant and three office assistant employees.

- **Homicide.** The Homicide Unit is divided into four operational squads that work a 10-hour day (7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) four day a week schedule. In addition, two investigators are assigned to work the evening hours (from 2:00 p.m. to midnight) and a team of two investigators and one sergeant cover the hours of midnight to 7:00 a.m. on a “call back” basis. These investigators are available to respond immediately to any incident involving a suspected homicide, a suicide or an unexplained death. The homicide unit is staffed with a total of 28 sworn personnel: four sergeants (one for each squad) twenty four detectives (senior corporals) and one administrative assistant.
- **Special investigations.** The eight sworn personnel (seven detectives and a sergeant) assigned to the Special Investigations Squad investigate officer involved shootings (OIS), death in custody incidents, cold cases, and foreign prosecutions.

These staff also perform all criminal polygraph examinations for the department. The staff assigned to this unit work a four day a week, ten hour a day schedule (7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) with varying days off.

- **Assaults.** The Assault Unit consists of five squads each led by a sergeant. The groups are responsible for the investigation and prosecution of assault related crimes including indecent exposure, sexual assault (17 years of age and older) aggravated assault, injury to elderly or disabled, terrorist threats, sex offender registration and related incidents. Three of the squads handle the assaults and related crimes with a total of eighteen detectives, while the other two squads focus on the sexually related assaults with eight detectives and a civilian research specialist. There are three office assistants for the entire group.
- **Robbery.** The Robbery Unit is made up of three robbery squads each one managed by a sergeant. Two of the squads focus on robbery, aggravated robbery, false imprisonment, kidnapping, aggravated kidnapping and theft from person. Twenty detectives are assigned to these two squads. The other squad coordinates with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Joint Task. This squad, which consists of seven detectives and one robbery analyst, handles investigations for bank robbery, kidnapping, federal gun charges and incidents associated with the Hobbs Act.

Crime Scene Response

The Crime Scene Response Unit is responsible for collecting and processing of evidence at crime scenes and for searching for fingerprint matches using the automated fingerprint identification system (AFIS). The squad conducts crime scene searches by identifying, collecting and preserving evidence to support criminal cases and for presentation in court. The unit is authorized 36 sworn personnel (three lieutenants, six sergeants and 27 senior corporals) and 29 non-sworn personnel (one forensic video specialist, 22 crime technicians, five office assistants, and one photographic technician). Of these staff 21 sworn and 18 civilians are assigned to process crime scenes.

Homeland Security And Tactical

The primary purpose of the Homeland Security and Tactical Division (Tactical Division) is to respond to major incidents involving acts of terrorism, civil unrest, disaster response and recovery; to address situations involving barricaded persons and the execution of high risk warrant execution; and to perform other tactical functions (such as parade events, marathons, and related-crowd control). In addition to tactical operations, the division includes the SWAT group, mounted/explosive ordnance/canine patrol, fugitive incidents and the helicopter unit. Overall command of the tactical division is handled by a deputy chief, who is supported by an administrative sergeant and office assistant. The division is divided into a number of units, each headed by a lieutenant, including two tactical units, one tactical support group, one mounted/explosive/canine squad and one helicopter squad. Within these groups, there is a total of 117 sworn personnel: 17 sergeants, 79 senior corporals, 19 police officers, and 2 park rangers. There are 8 non-sworn positions including three office assistants, an inspector, two mechanics and two animal keepers.

- **Love Field Unit.** The Love Field Unit is responsible for providing security and uniformed presence at the City of Dallas' municipal airport (Love Field) located approximately six miles north of downtown Dallas at Mockingbird Lane and Cedar Springs Road. This group also provides coverage at Parkland Hospital by stationing a senior corporal at the facility twenty four hours a day. The unit is authorized 48 sworn personnel (one lieutenant, four sergeants, five senior corporals and 38 police officers.)

Criminal Intelligence

The primary responsibility of the Criminal Intelligence Unit, which is led by a lieutenant, is to collect, store, assess, and disseminate criminal intelligence information using established criteria that provide for the legitimate needs of law enforcement. In particular, the unit gathers intelligence for the purpose of identifying criminal patterns or trend development and identifying suspects and criminal enterprises. Background checks for City of Dallas boards and commission appointees is also performed by this unit as is dignitary protection. The unit is divided into four separate squads: terrorism/theft task force squad, dignitary protection squad and two criminal investigations squads. Each squad is managed by a sergeant. There is a total of 23 senior corporals assigned to this unit. In addition, two office assistance provide clerical support.

Public Integrity

The Public Integrity Unit, which is led by a lieutenant, directs and coordinates all criminal investigations of sworn and non-sworn City of Dallas employees. In this role the unit serves as a liaison between the District Attorney's Office, the City Auditor's Office, and the police department. The unit has authorized staffing of 15 sworn employees (one lieutenant, two sergeants, and 12 senior corporals) and one non-sworn position.

Traffic Division

The Traffic Division is managed by a lieutenant who reports to the assistant chief who commands the bureau. The division is split into four major units, accident investigations, special investigations, enforcement and special projects.

- **Accident investigations.** The accident investigations unit is divided into six squads each headed by a sergeant. There are 43 investigators and detectives (senior corporals) authorized for this unit. The units investigates vehicular accidents and vehicle related crimes.
- **Special investigations.** The special investigations unit is divided into two squads each led by a sergeant and a task force which reports directly to the lieutenant who leads the division. One of the squads is involved in enforcement of laws regarding driving while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. It is staffed with one investigator (senior corporal) and 9 police officers. The other squad performs special accident investigations and is staffed with eight accident investigators (senior corporals). The task force is involved in youth related vehicular crimes and late night crimes.

- **Enforcement.** The enforcement unit, the largest group in the division, is responsible for the enforcement of motor vehicle related laws. There are six squads in this unit each headed by a sergeant. A total of 37 motor officers (senior corporals), nine police officers staffing radar elements and one technician are assigned to these squads. The school crossing guard program is also assigned to this unit. It is staffed with a supervisor and 8 public service officers.
- **Special projects.** The final squad in the traffic division is special projects . This squad is led by a sergeant and is staffed with two senior corporals and four office assistants. This group performs records management and is responsible for the input of data for accident occurrences into the Polaris Data system.

B – CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS

This section discusses staffing needs in the Crimes Against Persons Division.

For The Most Part, Staffing Of The Crimes Against Persons Division Is Adequate

With one exception the investigative units within the Crimes Against Persons Division are adequately staffed. One unit, however, needs additional resources. The six officers assigned to the sexual assaults squad currently has an annual caseload of 173 cases per year while in other cities investigators are expected to handle significantly fewer cases (between 100 and 115 cases per year). Three additional investigator positions should be added to bring the unit's workload per officer down to a more reasonable level.

C – CRIME SCENE RESPONSE

This section discusses the staffing of the Crime Scene Response Unit, discusses how these staff should be organized, and presents a recommendation for improving the linkage between crime scene response and crime solution.

STAFFING

Additional Staffing Is Needed To Promptly Collect And Process Evidence At Crime Scenes

Excluding supervisors, the department currently employs 21 sworn officers and 18 civilian crime scene technicians to process evidence at crime scene. Analysis suggests that somewhat fewer staff are allocated to this function than are needed. The following table shows the number of crime scene technicians¹ that need to be deployed on each watch to ensure the average time a call will hold before a crime scene technician is available to respond is short.²

¹ The civilianization analysis presented in Chapter X suggests that all crime scene response personnel should be civilians.

² This analysis assumes that the average time for a crime scene technician to handle a property crime scene is one hour and fifteen minutes and that 30 minutes is required to travel to each scene. The analysis also assumes that the average time required for a technician to handle a persons crimes is three hours and forty-five minutes and that 30 minutes is required to travel to

Watch	Persons Crime Per Hour(a)	Property Crime Per Hour (a)	Recommended Staffing	Average Wait Time (Minutes)
First	0.80	0.93	8	6.7
Second	0.59	2.34	9	7.1
Third	0.82	2.14	10	6.4

(a) Based on average for highest workload weeks over a four week sample.

At recommended staffing levels crime scene investigators will spend no more than two-thirds of their shift on any watch handling and traveling to calls. Consequently, they will have ample capacity to take breaks and should also have the ability to respond effectively to calls during periods of extremely high workload.

Watch	Recommended Staffing	Percent Of Shift On Calls
First	8	59.3%
Second	9	65.5%
Third	10	65.9%

To achieve recommended staffing levels while allowing for vacation, holidays and regularly scheduled days off 14, 16 and 17 staff need to be assigned to the first, second and third watches respectively.

Watch	Recommended Staffing	Relief Factor	Staffing After Relief	Staffing After Rounding(a)
First	8	1.75	14.00	14
Second	9	1.75	15.75	16
Third	10	1.75	17.50	17
Total				47

(a) Fraction staffing needs up to .66 FTEs should be provided using overtime.

In addition, two sergeants and two clerical employees should be assigned to each watch to ensure that one supervisor and one clerical employee are on duty 365 days a year.³ A lieutenant should oversee this unit.⁴ (One lieutenant is currently assigned to each watch but the number of sergeants overseen by each lieutenant is low – ranging from one on the first watch to three on the second watch. One lieutenant position should be sufficient to manage this function).

each call. It should be stressed that these estimates of the time required to process crime scenes are quite conservative and exceed the estimates of the unit manager by fifteen minutes for property crimes and by forty-five minutes for person crimes. However, given that no information was available on the actual time required to process crime scenes it was determined that being conservative in terms of these time estimates was appropriate.

³ 1.75 positions are needed on each watch to ensure one position is on duty 365 days a year after allowing for regularly scheduled days off, vacation, holidays, illness and other excused absences.

⁴ Over time, the department should consider replacing these sworn supervisors and managers with civilian employees. In the short term, however, until enough civilian employees have developed the skills and expertise needed to oversee crime scene processing activities sworn officers should continue to oversee this function.

A comparison of current and recommended staffing of personnel responsible for collecting evidence at crime scenes is presented in the following table. As this table shows seven additional positions should be assigned responsibility for collecting evidence at crime scenes.

Position	Authorized	Recommended	Increase/ (Decrease)
Lieutenant	3	1	(2)
Sergeant	6	6	--
Senior Corporal	21	--	(21)
Subtotal Sworn	30	7	(23)
Crime Technician	18	47	29
Office Assistant	5	6	1
Subtotal Civilian	23	53	30
Total	53	60	7

ORGANIZATION

Crime Scene Response Personnel Should Be Assigned On A Geographic Basis

As discussed in Chapter VII, to the extent possible centralized staff should be geographically deployed to strengthen the link between these staff and the patrol operations divisions. To this end, crime scene response personnel should be assigned on a geographic basis to work primarily in the areas served by a specific division. These allocations should be made based on the overall level of Part I crime in each of the patrol divisions.

MONITORING PERFORMANCE

Clearance Rates Should Be Tracked By Crime Scene Technician

Crime scene technicians receive little consistent feedback about the extent to which the evidence they collect and process at crime scenes contributes to the arrest (and potential conviction) of criminals. To provide feedback to technicians on the results of their work and, in so doing, to provide an increased incentive for high quality crime scene processing, technicians should receive feedback on how the evidence they collect and process is used to solve crimes. In addition, the percentage of crime scenes processed by individual crime scene technicians that result in case clearances should be tracked. While this information should not be used to evaluate the performance of technicians – a range of factors in addition to the quality of evidence collected and processed influence whether a crime will be cleared – providing this information will help to reinforce to technicians the importance of their work.

D – TACTICAL

This section presents recommendations relating to SWAT, helicopters, mounted and tactical support operations.

SWAT

SWAT Officers Should Support The Patrol Operations Divisions When Their Specialized Skills And Training Are Not Needed For Specialized Assignments

The department's SWAT operation consists of 52 officers. In calendar year 2003 approximately 19 percent of the time of these officers was devoted to training and roughly a third of their time (32 percent) was spent in special assignments (e.g., saturation patrol, security threat postings, ceremonies, and dignitary protection). Incidents handled by SWAT personnel in 2003 included 30 barricaded persons, the service of 44 hazardous warrants, 180 investigative arrests and 137 city arrests for ordinance violations.

As this workload analysis indicates, the department has not done an effective job of ensuring that SWAT personnel make effective use of their time when they are not training or working on special assignments. Indeed, only slightly more than half their time is currently spent on these activities and the other half is unaccounted for. To address this issue, an expectation should be established that SWAT personnel should support patrol operations divisions when their specialized training and skills are not needed for special assignments or they are not training

To ease the administrative burden of implementing this recommendation the unit should be divided into two units of 26 officers each. The 26 officers assigned to one unit should focus primarily on supporting patrol operations division efforts to reduce crime and respond to calls-for-service. These officers should, however, remain available to support specialize SWAT assignments when they are needed. The second unit, also consisting of 26 officers should take the lead in performing the bulk of the specialized assignments currently performed by SWAT personnel. In addition, these officers should support patrol operations division staff when their workload allows them to do so.

As with the "discretionary resources" assigned to the patrol divisions that are deployed at the discretion of the division's deputy chief (discussed in Chapter XIV), SWAT officers should be assigned to the patrol operations divisions based on the number of "repressible" crimes occurring in each division. The following table summarizes the recommended allocation of these officers by division.

Division	Allocation Percentage	SWAT Staff To Be Allocated	Staff Allocated To Division
Southeast	18.2%	26	5
Southwest	19.3%	26	5
Central	13.3%	26	4
North Central	12.9%	26	3
Northwest	15.5%	26	4
Northeast	20.8%	26	5
Total	100.0%		26

The Time SWAT Personnel Devote To Training Should Be Somewhat Reduced

Effective training is essential to effective SWAT operations. However, it is not necessary for officers to spend 19 percent of their time on training (or an average of one day a week). A more reasonable level of training would be for SWAT personnel to devote approximately 10 percent of their on-duty time to training (an average of one day every two weeks).

HELICOPTERS

The Department Should Lease A New Fleet Of Helicopters

This discussion is divided into two parts. First, an assessment of the need for helicopter operations and the size of the fleet is presented. This discussion is followed by an assessment of whether the existing fleet of helicopters should be replaced.

Assessment of the need for helicopter operations and the size of the fleet. Before determining whether the department's aging fleet of helicopters should be replaced, an assessment must be made about whether helicopter operations should be continued. Helicopters are of considerable tactical value to police departments but are of particular value in searching for citizens or apprehending persons fleeing a crime scene. Analysis conducted by other police departments support this finding. For example, a 1998 Toronto Police Services study found that when response time is reduced from four minutes to two minutes for certain types of incidents (especially those for which a suspect is fleeing from the scene) the apprehension rate is increased by 100 percent. In addition, a 1998 Collier County (Florida) Sheriff study found that the odds of apprehension increase by 65 percent if response occurs within five minutes. Since helicopters are extremely helpful in ensuring a fast response to calls for service, continuation of helicopter operations is warranted.

In addition, a fleet of four helicopters – which allows for three helicopters to be operational while one is being maintained – is appropriate for a city the size of Dallas. San Antonio and San Diego, for example, each operate a fleet of four helicopters or .35 and .33 helicopters per million population respectively. With a fleet of four helicopters Dallas would have one helicopter for every .34 million population.

Assessment of whether the existing fleet of helicopters should be replaced. The department's helicopter fleet is relatively old and expensive to maintain. The average age of the Dallas fleet (26.72 years) is much older than the average age of the helicopter fleet of other police departments (5.88 years for Charlotte; 5.71 years for Philadelphia; 21.32 years for San Deigo and 4.66 years for San Antonio). In addition, the department's fleet has reached the point at which continued maintenance is not a cost-effective option. Indeed, the annual cost of maintaining the fleet of four helicopters - \$733,000 per year – exceeds the estimated value of the fleet (\$450,000).

The department has estimated that a ten year lease purchase program would cost \$1 million per year. These costs would be offset by the savings in maintenance associated with operating helicopters under warranty (estimated to be \$1 million over five years) and approximately \$1.3 million in current price agreements for maintenance and trade-in

that could be applied to the lease of new helicopters. In addition, these helicopters would allow four passengers to be transported (as compared to the one passenger that can be transported with the current helicopters) and a reduction in maintenance down time that would increase the overall availability of the fleet.

The Department Should Explore The Possibility Of Contracting With Other Area Police Departments To Provide Helicopter Services

While the tactical benefits of operating a helicopter unit for a city the size of Dallas makes the costs of the program worthwhile, smaller departments – that would also benefit from access to helicopters from time to time – cannot afford the high cost of acquiring, maintaining and operating a helicopter fleet. To assist these agencies while also offsetting the cost of operating the department's helicopter unit, the Dallas Police Department should explore the possibility of contracting with other area police departments to provide helicopter service. Entering into such agreements would benefit all the agencies involved.

MOUNTED

The Department Should Take Steps To Ensure The Mounted Unit Is Responsive To The Needs Of Individual Patrol Divisions

In any police department, deploying a mounted unit is a luxury not a necessity. While mounted units can play an important role in crowd control and in providing police visibility in certain situations, they are not essential to police departments achieving their missions. In a department such as the Dallas Police Department that has significant needs to address and is struggling to meet those needs in an environment of limited resources, it is incumbent on the mounted unit and its officers to make itself as valuable as possible to the various patrol divisions that would be allocated additional resources if the mounted unit did not exist.

To this end, the department should take steps to ensure the mounted unit is responsive to the needs of individual patrol divisions. In particular, mounted unit managers should prepare plans at the beginning of each month indicating the hours the mounted unit is needed to address citywide needs and the hours it is available to support patrol operations. Patrol division managers should then “bid” to use the remaining time of mounted officers to address local division needs. Procedures should be established to determine which among these “bids” represents the best use of the mounted unit's resources and unit staff should be deployed accordingly. It should be noted that the central business district, with its many entertainment centers will likely receive a disproportionate share of mounted unit support as the unique capabilities of a mounted unit are best suited to providing visibility and crowd control in these districts. However, under this deployment approach, all divisions will have access to the support of the mounted unit's resources when a strong case can be made that they need them.

Mounted unit managers will need to be flexible in scheduling training to accommodate the needs of the patrol divisions. Unit managers, however, should be made to clearly understand that their primary role is to be of service to the operations divisions and that this role requires flexibility. Staff assigned to the unit should clearly understand and accept the need for flexibility in scheduling and deployment before accepting the assignment.

TACTICAL SUPPORT

The Department Should Discontinue Staffing A Stand Alone Fugitive Squad

A Fugitive Squad – which reports in the Tactical Support Unit – is currently responsible for apprehending fugitives. A specialized stand alone unit is not needed to perform these functions as the Tactical Services Section has enough capacity to assume these responsibilities. The two officers currently assigned to the Fugitive Squad should therefore be either discontinued or redeployed.

E – TRAFFIC

This section discusses the deployment of traffic staff, the need to strengthen relationships with the City's traffic engineering department, and the benefits of making use of automated traffic enforcement technologies.

The Preponderance Of Traffic Division Should Be Assigned To Patrol Divisions

As discussed in Chapter VII, most of the functions currently performed by the Traffic Division should be assigned to patrol operations divisions. Indeed, the only staff that need to be centralized are the investigators who investigate vehicular crimes (who will be assigned to the proposed centralized investigations unit), the unit responsible for overseeing school crossing guards, the special projects units and the special investigations unit. In addition, this group should, coordinate the deployment of motorcycle officers – drawn from staff assigned to patrol divisions – when such officers are needed to support specialized activities such as providing dignitary escorts that require the deployment of officers on motorcycles. The remaining traffic enforcement officers and accident investigators currently assigned to the traffic division should be assigned to the six patrol divisions. (Chapter XIV presents the recommended allocation of these officers based on the number of injury accidents occurring in each patrol division.) How these officers are allocated among area lieutenants in each patrol operations division should be determined by the division's deputy chief based on an assessment of traffic enforcement needs in the various geographic areas for which lieutenants are responsible.

One lieutenant should be sufficient to oversee the reduced traffic division. Two lieutenant positions can be discontinued or redeployed.

Temporary Staff Should Be Employed To Eliminate The Backlog Of Accidents That Have Not Been Entered Into The POLARIS System

At present, there is a backlog of an estimated 17,000 accidents that have not been entered into the POLARIS system the department uses to analyze traffic accidents. Without timely and accurate information about traffic problems that can be used to identify high risk locations, determining how best to deploy officers to conduct selective traffic enforcement activities designed to reduce the risk of accidents is not possible.

To address this problem the department should, in the short term, engage temporary contract staff to eliminate the backlog of accidents that have not been entered into the POLARIS system. An additional clerical person should also be assigned to the centralized traffic section to prevent this problem from recurring.

The Department Should Work Closely With Traffic Engineering And Other City Departments To Reduce The Risk Of Traffic Accidents

Reducing the risk of accidents at high risk intersections requires a collaborative effort on the part of the police department's traffic enforcement personnel, the city's traffic engineering department and other city departments (for example, departments responsible for trimming trees that may obstruct visibility at some intersections). Despite the importance of these collaborative efforts, little coordination among the departments currently exists.

To address this problem the lieutenant who oversees the centralized traffic section should seek to establish regularly scheduled meetings with representatives of the traffic engineering department and other appropriate city officials to review information on traffic accidents, identify high risk intersections and develop common strategies to address them. These meetings should focus on traffic problems in each patrol division on a rotating basis, and managers from each division should attend these meetings when traffic issues in their divisions are discussed. Including patrol operations division managers in these meetings is important because these managers will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the police department's responsibilities in implementing agreed upon accident reduction strategies.

Patrol Divisions Should Make Only Limited Use Of Motorcycles To Support Traffic Enforcement Efforts

The bulk of traffic enforcement activity in the department is currently performed by officers deployed on motorcycles. However, deploying traffic enforcement officers on motorcycles tends not to be completely effective because motorcycles are limited from an operational perspective. In particular, motorcycles are less visible than patrol elements and therefore are less effective in deterring speeding and other traffic offenses. In addition, they lack the equipment needed to respond to a broad array of incidents. Deploying officers on motorcycles is also much more dangerous than deploying them in patrol elements. The combination of these factors strongly supports the deployment of traffic enforcement officers in patrol elements. Each patrol division should, however, retain a small number of officers who are trained to ride motorcycles. These officers can be deployed on motorcycles when needed to support central and division activities that require motorcycles.

Implementing this recommendation will also provide patrol lieutenants with a great deal of flexibility in how they deploy traffic enforcement officers. For example, they will be able to assign them responsibility for responding to calls and for supporting other crime reduction strategies when they are not needed for selective enforcement activities.⁵

⁵ The morning and evening rush hours are the times during which the need for traffic enforcement officers is greatest. Between the rush hours, however, departments that assign traffic enforcement officers to specialized units often have difficulty making productive use of these officers.

The Department Should Explore Implementing “Red Light” Cameras And Other Automated Traffic Enforcement Technologies

Police departments throughout the nation have found that the use of automated traffic enforcement technologies to be beneficial in increasing compliance with traffic laws and reducing the risk of accidents at high risk intersections. The City of Garland, for example, turned their cameras on September 16, 2003 and by May 14, 2004 had sent out 30,287 notices of violation. A 13 percent reduction in the running of red lights was experienced during this period. Moreover, since Washington, D.C. began operating its photo enforcement program in 1999, red light running violations at camera intersections has dropped as much as 66 percent. Fatalities involving red light running have decreased by half or more. Wilmington, Delaware also reports the number of citations issued at the city’s ten red light camera intersections has dropped an average of 62 percent. Other jurisdictions that have experienced success in reducing traffic violations by using red light cameras include Fairfax, Virginia; Oxnard, California; and New York City. In addition to installing cameras at fixed locations, the department should also explore acquiring cameras that can be deployed at various locations depending on need.

Aside from the obvious benefits associated with reducing accidents, installing such cameras create a number of ancillary benefits. In particular, the use of such cameras frees officers to focus on other activities. In addition, some jurisdictions have found the cameras to be useful in addressing illegal activity at gang and narcotics hotspots.

The department should seek grant funding to offset the initial cost of these cameras. The increased revenue from traffic citations that typically results from installing such cameras can be used to support the acquisition and installation of additional cameras over time.

Please note that there are some legal issues that must be addressed before automated traffic enforcement cameras can be implemented. In particular, a civil penalty must be established for traffic violations as has been done in the City of Garland.

Responsibility For Collecting Physical Evidence At Vehicle Crime Scenes Should Be Assigned To The Crime Scene Response Unit

At present, the detectives who investigate vehicular crimes are also charged with collecting evidence at these crime scenes. Training the technicians assigned to the Crime Scene Response Unit to collect this evidence would free these detectives to focus on investigating crime. In particular, the two detectives who are currently assigned to the overnight shift primarily to gather evidence at vehicle crime scenes could be redeployed to conduct investigations.⁶

⁶ The additional investigative capacity that will result from implementing these recommendations is needed. The unit’s workload increased from 10,000 cases in 1995 to 14,000 cases in 2003 while unit staffing did not change.

The City Should Explore The Possibility Of Tapping Tax Revenues That Are Available To Support School Crossing Guards

Cities in Texas are authorized to impose a tax to support the cost of providing school crossing guards. The City of Dallas, however, does not currently take advantage of this source of revenue. Using these revenues to offset the cost of a service the police department is required to provide but that does not support its core mission seems worthwhile.

F – PUBLIC INTEGRITY

Staffing Of The Public Integrity Function Should Be Reduced To Better Reflect Unit Workload

The 12 investigators assigned to the public integrity function investigated 181 cases in 2003 or average of 15 cases per investigator (about one every three weeks). A caseload of 24 cases a year would be more reasonable. Based on this average, eight investigators are needed which is four fewer than the number currently employed.