

Creating Cultures of Integrity in Law Enforcement

National Community Policing Conference
July 27, 2006

Institute on Race and Justice
Northeastern University

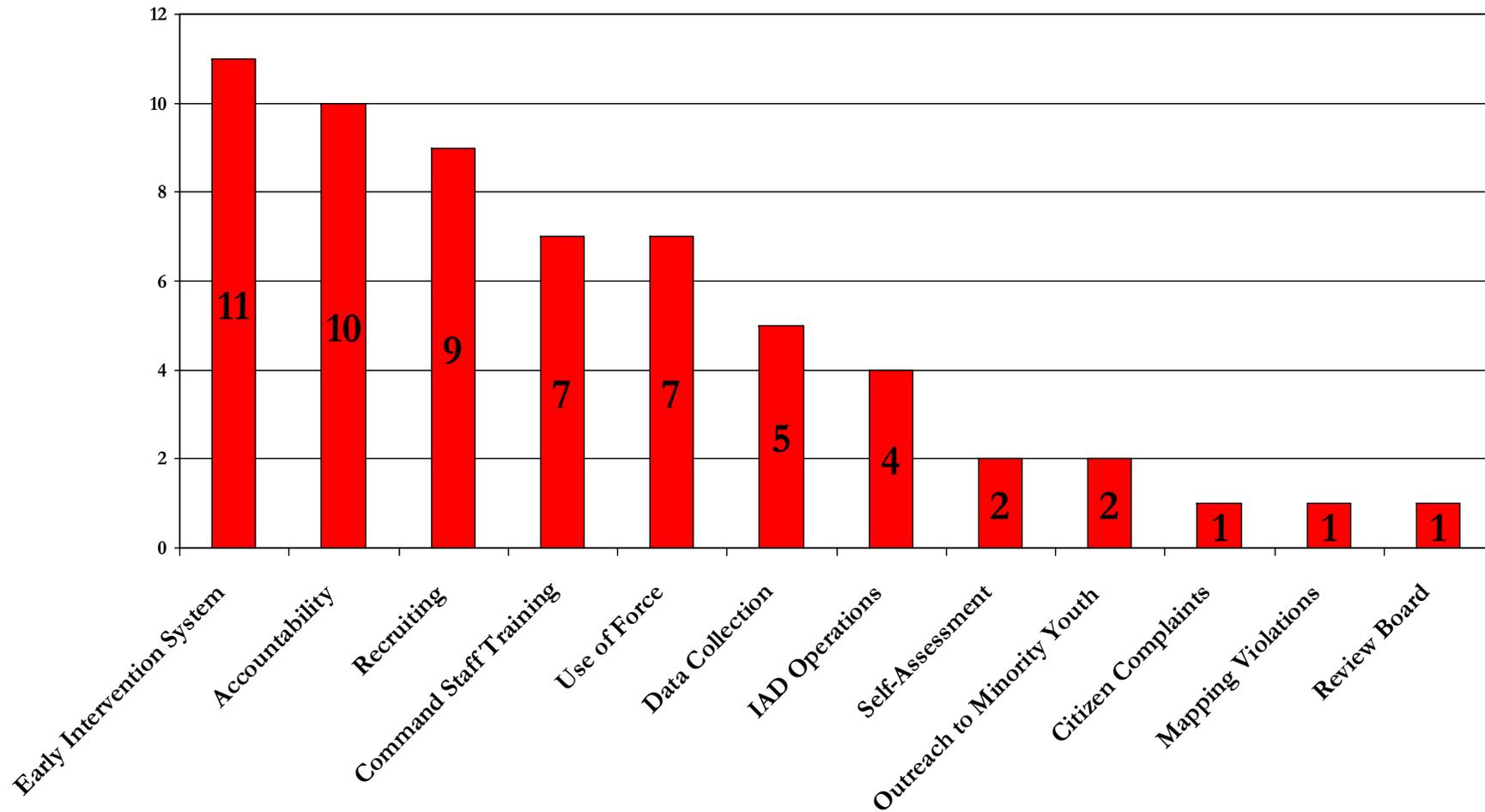
Goals of COPS Integrity Initiative

- Build on and strengthen the integrity initiatives developed by COPS for purposes of community policing
- Foster trust and mutual respect between police and citizens
- Focus on organizational or institutional cultural changes – more than preventing officer misconduct

Components of Police Integrity Initiatives

- Series of initiatives to meet emerging and changing law enforcement needs by creating or strengthening local programs that build trust between the police and communities:
 - Promoting Cooperative Strategies to Reduce Racial Profiling
 - Creating Cultures of Integrity
 - Enhancing Cultures of Integrity
 - Collaborative Leadership Project
 - Police Integrity National Training Initiative

Strategies Supported Under Creating Culture of Integrity Initiative



NU/Lowell Police Department Evaluation of Integrity Initiatives

- Established a unique partnership between police agency and researchers
- Provided technical assistance
- Monitored progress of grantees
- Identified grantees across strategy areas for site visits
- Will provide information back to the field about common challenges and areas of success

Challenges of Implementing Integrity Initiatives

- **Buy-in from line personnel**
 - EIS systems perceived as a tool to punish officers - “big brother” was always watching
 - Obstruction from unions can be a challenge when integrity initiative results in different conditions
 - “Working conditions” sometimes used to prevent ideological changes union members may fundamentally disagree with
 - In one agency, an early alert that resulted in a commendation rather than a sanction helped bring the line more on board
- **Technology**
 - Some programs (EIS and data collection) require vendors, and integrating multiples types of data, some of which was never automated
 - Contracting and RFP issues delay implementation
 - Control of network or operating systems may require agency to bring in municipal or county technology staff – having the right team in place at outset reduced delays

Challenges of Implementing Integrity Initiatives

- **Support from top ranks**
 - Integrity efforts can be undermined by staff and/or executive administration turnover
 - Messages of support have to be given throughout the project, not just at the beginning
 - Positive messages about the integrity initiatives and those responsible for their implementation must show up in many different types of forums
- **Limited of external participation**
 - Low response or participation rates from community partners
 - Particularly difficult in programs like community engagement and recruiting
 - Other issues within agency or community may undermine willingness of external groups to participate

Measuring the Impact of Integrity Initiatives

- Easier to measure if program is implemented successfully – only process evaluation
- Measuring impact of programs like CCI requires common understanding about what integrity is and how we know if it exists and/or is strengthened
- Challenge to measure longer term impact of funding for specific programs on culture of agencies

Definition of Culture of Integrity

- Integrity
 - Shift from individual behavior and internal investigations of corruption to a broader set of factors including:
 - leadership
 - command behavior
 - supervision
 - organizational structure
 - selection, hiring
 - training
 - the disciplinary system
 - the police subculture
 - community values, and
 - political and economic conditions.

Definition of Culture of Integrity (continued)

- Changing Culture
 - Broader than changing single policies or adopting a solitary program
 - Means changing shared understandings and values throughout the organization
 - Interconnection of ideals
 - Not just high-sounding ideals that organizations should strive to achieve
 - The task is to establish tangible and achievable requirements in terms of an organization's integrity
 - Potentially achievements we can measure

Understanding Indicators of Integrity

- Internal
 - Creating change within the organization
 - Effect of change broader and longer lasting than the specific program
- External
 - Community
 - Enhanced transparency
 - Perceptions change, community-police relations improved
 - Profession
 - Changes in culture of profession
 - Cross site learning = bests practices become routine practices
 - Best practices shared and enhanced through modeling by other agencies

Examples of Internal Cultural Change

St. Paul (PCSRRP—Recruiting)

- With the input of the community, the department identified 14 characteristics that a good “best candidate” for police officer should embody for recruiting new officers
- The department is now in the process of using this model to modify other procedures and practices such as internal affairs

Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office (Recruiting)

- Recruiting campaign involved a purposeful shift in tone about how officers perceive their role
- Shift in tone for advertising started to change the way officers felt about their role in the agency and responsibilities to the community
- More than just branding, started change in internal culture

Indianapolis Police Department (Use of Force)

- Initiative included multiple integrity
- Tried to tie each new type of program into overall mission of the department to respect community and enhance integrity
- Heard common themes about integrity from individuals in very different roles

Examples of External Cultural Change

Changing Community-Police Culture

- Project fosters new relationships
 - Nashville Police Department (Recruiting) campaign to increase minority representation on department brought group together to design ad campaign. Group found common ground to work on other community safety issues beyond recruiting after project
- Discussion of project in community changes perceptions, increases willingness of community to partner and engage with law enforcement

External Changes profession

- Sharing Knowledge with Peers
 - Phoenix Police Department (EIS) holds regular information session on EIS system, has become model EIS template. Other agencies have hired personnel from Phoenix for programming or have used existing program template.
- Changing Professional Standards
 - Success in one agency prompts others in state or regional to adopt similar effort. May overcome resistance in agencies that changes is not possible.

Conclusion

- Lessons learned from integrity initiative will assist other agencies as they begin or continue processes of cultural change
- Challenging endeavor
 - Hard to make change
 - Takes more than one program or project
 - Hard to monitor and evaluate change
- Continued attention to issues of cultural integrity critical as law enforcement faces new challenges