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**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF POLICE AND FIRE  
CONSOLIDATION TO THE HOMELAND SECURITY  
MISSION**

by

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March 2010

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**THE CONTRIBUTION OF POLICE AND FIRE CONSOLIDATION TO THE  
HOMELAND SECURITY MISSION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis explores the idea of consolidating police and fire departments as a unique way to deliver public safety services to communities in an integrated fashion. It investigates how the uniqueness of this concept can fit into our plan to prevent, protect, respond, and mitigate interrelated challenges in a fully coordinated approach. The main claim of this study is that the consolidation of police and fire services enhances communication among disciplines, creates unified leadership and command, and aids in attaining a high level of comprehensive emergency response and planning—and that this improves the execution of the homeland security mission. Through a comparative case study, the research focuses on the history and organizational design of three consolidated departments; the perspective they have towards collaboration and homeland security; and the reported advantages and challenges attributed to these models. The thesis will use the homeland security mission as a backdrop in order to examine the concept of consolidation through comparative case studies. As our country continues to deal with multifaceted threats that force our disparate organizations to integrate in a unified effort; what are the contributions that the consolidation of police and fire services have on the homeland security mission?

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>DEFINING THE PROBLEM.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>THINKING DIFFERENTLY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>HOMELAND SECURITY MISSION.....</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>1. Innovation.....</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>2. All-Hazards Approach.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>12</b>
	<b>1. Genesis .....</b>	<b>12</b>
	<b>2. Historical Perspective and Viability.....</b>	<b>13</b>
	<b>3. Organizational Design .....</b>	<b>14</b>
	<b>4. Cultural Implications.....</b>	<b>15</b>
	<b>5. Effectiveness .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>19</b>
	<b>1. Research Design .....</b>	<b>20</b>
	<b>2. Characteristics of the Population .....</b>	<b>20</b>
	<b>3. Data Collection Procedures/Instrument .....</b>	<b>21</b>
	<b>4. Data Analysis.....</b>	<b>22</b>
	<b>5. Organization.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>FULL CONSOLIDATION: SUNNYVALE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>COLLABORATION PERSPECTIVE.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>E.</b>	<b>HOMELAND SECURITY PERSPECTIVE.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>F.</b>	<b>ADVANTAGES.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>G.</b>	<b>CHALLENGES.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>H.</b>	<b>SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>PARTIAL CONSOLIDATION: SAN DIEGO HARBOR POLICE DEPARTMENT .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>COLLABORATION.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>E.</b>	<b>HOMELAND SECURITY.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>F.</b>	<b>ADVANTAGES.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>G.</b>	<b>CHALLENGES.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>H.</b>	<b>SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE CONSOLIDATION: WHITE PLAINS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>43</b>

B.	HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE .....	43
C.	ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN .....	44
D.	COLLABORATION.....	47
E.	HOMELAND SECURITY.....	48
F.	ADVANTAGES.....	49
G.	CHALLENGES.....	50
H.	SUMMARY .....	51
V.	FINDINGS: INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION .....	53
A.	HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE .....	53
B.	ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN .....	54
C.	COLLABORATION.....	55
D.	HOMELAND SECURITY.....	57
E.	ADVANTAGES.....	58
F.	CHALLENGES.....	58
VI.	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	61
A.	SUMMARY .....	61
B.	CONCLUSIONS .....	62
C.	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	64
D.	FUTURE RESEARCH.....	69
	LIST OF REFERENCES .....	71
	INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST .....	75

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety organizational chart. ....	27
Figure 2.	San Diego Harbor Police organizational chart.....	35
Figure 3.	White Plains Department of Public Safety organizational chart .....	46

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAR	After Action Report
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations
ATSA	Aviation Transportation Security Act
CBP	Customs & Border Patrol
CBRNE	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive
COMSTAT	Computer Statistics
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DoD	Department of Defense
DPS	Department of Public Safety
EMD	Emergency Medical Dispatch
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EMT	Emergency Medical Technicians
EMT-b	Emergency Medical Technician—Basic
EMT-I	Emergency Medical Technician—Intermediate
ESU	Emergency Services Unit
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FDNY	Fire Department New York
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials
HP	Harbor Police
IAFF	International Association of Fire Fighters
IAFC	International Association of Fire Chiefs
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
ICMA	International City Managers Association
ICP	Incident Command Post
ICS	Incident Command System
IEMS	Incident Emergency Management System
IUPA	International Union of Police Associations
JFO	Joint Field Office
JHOC	Joint Harbor Operations Center

JTTF	Joint Terrorism Task Force
MCP	Mobile Command Post
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTSA	Maritime Transportation Security Act
NYPD	New York Police Department
PSO	Public Safety Officer
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NYC	New York City
OEM	Office of Emergency Management
SDPS	Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety
SWAT	Special Weapons And Tactics
TLO	Terrorism Liaison Officer
UASI	Urban Area Security Initiative
UC	Unified Command
US	United States
USOC	Unified Special Operations Command
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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## I. DEFINING THE PROBLEM

### A. THINKING DIFFERENTLY

On December 1, 1862, in an annual message to Congress, President Abraham Lincoln wrote, “We can succeed only by concert. It is not ‘can *any* of us *imagine* better?’ but ‘can we *all* do better?’ Object whatsoever is possible, still the question recurs ‘can we do better?’ The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew. We must disenthrall our selves, and then we shall save our country” (Lincoln, 1953). In this timeless message, Lincoln identifies a few ideas that are worth including in the Homeland Security discourse.

As in 1862, the United States now can succeed in its Homeland Security effort only if we work in concert. Today, the need for working together is made most obvious in the multidisciplinary nature of Homeland Security. We can only “do better” by ridding ourselves of the institutional silos that separate organizations and disciplines. Lincoln’s use of the phrase “succeed by concert” means to succeed together, not unlike an actual musical concert. There are many different musical instruments that are included in a concert. Each instrument has a unique musician, look, and sound. Each musician has the ability to play a solo. But in the context of a concert, the director and musicians have the duty to bring everyone together to play from the same sheet of music. When they come together and complement each other, they can produce beautiful music—a concert. Historically, the disciplines that form our Homeland Security field have been playing very good music in a solo capacity. It is time that they come together in concert. In order to do that, assumptions need to change and approaches need to differ.

Jurisdictions organize their emergency services separately, but emergencies ignore jurisdictional and disciplinary boundaries. They require responders from different disciplines and often different jurisdictions, to work together to address the situation effectively. In other words, the nature of emergencies forces agencies to collaborate. The public expects a high level of coordination from the organizations that are charged with

protecting them, but the reality is that the interaction among first responders is sometimes antagonistic rather than collaborative. The relationship between fire, police, and EMS agencies varies across the country but is often strained.

The issue lies with the way we define emergencies and the way that we organize the services that deal with them. If we categorize emergencies as police problems, fire problems, or emergency medical problems, it makes sense to organize our response organizations accordingly. Because the categorization is flawed, however, it has resulted in “silos” among response agencies. “Silos” refer to the artificial separation that exists between disciplines and between agencies. Emergencies ignore artificially created boundaries. From the routine, to the seasonal, to the catastrophic, very few emergencies are only a police problem, a fire problem, or an emergency medical problem. A major vehicle accident, a shooting, an earthquake, as well as terrorist incidents, each requires a cohesive multidisciplinary approach. There is a need to define these problems differently and to approach them differently so that a collaborative environment can be created.<sup>1</sup>

Hocevar, Thomas, and Jansen (2006) discuss some of the reasons that collaboration does not occur among organizations. “Organizations fail at collaboration for many reasons; organizations have their own missions with goals and incentives that often conflict with one another; agencies often have histories of distrust that are hard to alter; leaders may not actively support collaborative efforts; and coordination systems and structures that might support collaboration are often lacking.”

Some of these issues surfaced during the terrorist attacks in New York City and at the Pentagon. Numerous agencies representing different jurisdictions and disciplines had to work together in order to handle both events. There was a difference between the response at the Pentagon and the response in New York City, however, as is illustrated by the following excerpt from the 9/11 Commission Report. “While no emergency response is flawless, the response to the 9/11 terrorist attack on the Pentagon was mainly a success for three reasons: first, the strong professional relationships, and trust established among

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<sup>1</sup> In this context, “collaboration” is used to refer to the ability that organizations have for working together towards a common goal. “Coordination” is used to refer to the ability that organizations have to make the plans needed to achieve that goal. “Collaboration” and “cooperation” are used interchangeably.

emergency responders; second, the adoption of the Incident Command System; and third, the pursuit of a regional approach to response. Many fire and police agencies that responded had extensive prior experience working together on regional events and training exercises.” (9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission of Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, 2004, p. 314).

In an article published in *Homeland Security Affairs* titled “Lessons We Don’t Learn,” the authors gathered a group of incident commanders with vast experience handling major disasters and asked them, “What accounts for a failure to collaborate?” The experts cited three main reasons. “First, they said, agencies lack the commitment to coordinate with each other. At best, they are unaware of what other agencies are doing and do not try to find out. At worst, they are unwilling to cooperate. This stems from a lack of trust between agencies and a lack of understanding across disciplines. Moreover, agencies often find themselves in competition. Day-to-day they fight with each other for scarce budget resources. This battle worsens during a major disaster when resources become even scarcer” (Donahue & Tuohy, 2006).

Many major events like Hurricane Andrew, Hurricane Katrina, the Oklahoma bombing, and the attacks of September 11 have underscored the fact that first responders cannot handle the complexity of a sizable terrorist attack or a major natural catastrophe on American soil without a collaborative effort that transcends jurisdictions and disciplines. Homeland Security professionals have studied the responses and handling of these events. After Action Reports (AARs) have been compiled and disseminated. The same lessons have been drawn out time and time again. Consider the following excerpts from AARs discussed in “Lessons We Don’t Learn” (Donahue & Tuohy, 2006, pp. 1–2):

### **Hurricane Katrina, 2005**

In terms of the management of the Federal response, our architecture of command and control mechanisms as well as our existing structure of plans did not serve us well. Command centers in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and elsewhere in the Federal government had unclear, and often overlapping, roles and responsibilities that were exposed as flawed during this disaster.... This lack of coordination at the Federal headquarters-level reflected confusing organizational structures in

the field.... Furthermore, the JFO [Joint Field Office] staff and other deployed Federal personnel often lacked a working knowledge of NIMS [the National Incident Management System] or even a basic understanding of ICS [Incident Command System] principles (*The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina Lessons Learned*, 2006, p. 52).

### **Attack on September 11, 2001**

It is a fair inference, given the differing situations in New York City and Northern Virginia, that the problems in command, control, and communications that occurred at both sites will likely recur in any emergency of similar scale. The task looking forward is to enable first responders to respond in a coordinated manner with the greatest possible awareness of the situation.... Emergency response agencies nationwide should adopt the Incident Command System (ICS). When multiple agencies or multiple jurisdictions are involved, they should adopt a unified command. Both are proven frameworks for emergency response (*The 9/11 Commission Report*, 2004, pp. 315, 397).

### **Oklahoma City bombing, 1995**

The Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS) and Incident Command System (ICS) were weakened early in the event due to the immediate response of numerous local, state and federal agencies, three separate locations of the Incident Command Post (ICP), within the first few hours, and the deployment of many Mobile Command Posts (MCPs), representing support agencies (*After Action Report: Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building Bombing*, 2003, p. 3).

### **Hurricane Andrew, 1992**

The Committee heard substantial testimony that the post-disaster response and recovery to Hurricane Andrew suffered from several problems, including: inadequate communication between levels of government concerning specific needs; lack of full awareness of supply inventories and agency capabilities; failure to have a single person in charge with a clear chain of command; and inability to cut through bureaucratic red tape (*Governor's Disaster Planning and Response Review Committee Final Report*, 1993, p. 60).

These statements reveal that we constantly face issues related to command and control, coordination, and communication at these large events. It is evident that our

nation will continue to face large events, whether man-made or natural. It is also evident that those events cross jurisdictional as well as disciplinary boundaries. The National Planning Scenarios also highlight this fact. Either by virtue of the number of projected victims, the nature of the threats, or the identification of common goals, the scenarios provide a way to anticipate the need to work in a collaborative manner. Homeland Security practitioners are charged with finding ways to protect our nation in the most efficient way possible. If we are going to do this, we cannot afford to continue to attempt to fix the same problems with solutions that have not worked in the past—it is time to act anew, it is time to do better.

Eugene Bardach suggests in “A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis” (p. 1) that instead of trying to look for best practices, jurisdictions should look for smart practices. Bardach comments that people will rarely have any confidence that a practice is actually the “best.” He says, “An ‘interesting idea’ embedded in some practice is what I would term a ‘smart practice.’ I prefer the term ‘smart practice’ to ‘best practice’ or even ‘good practice’ because it underlines the fact that any practice worth such special attention ought usually to have something clever about it. It is this ‘something clever’ that the researcher must analyze, characterize in words, and appraise as to its applicability to the local situation.” Bardach’s ideas can be useful as we explore concepts that could help us address our collaboration needs. Bardach argues that smart practices are clever ideas that have multiple functions, deliver public value<sup>2</sup>, and challenge assumptions. He arrives there by interpreting and characterizing the elements of the practice, exposing its generic vulnerabilities, and asking the question, Will it work here?

If the collaboration deficit cannot be overcome through knowledge, awareness of failures, and incentives to improve, perhaps the problem is not a cognitive one but rather one of structure. The issue of structure has been identified as one that needs to be addressed when handling a major event. The Incident Command System (ICS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS) use the concept of Unified Command in

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<sup>2</sup> The idea of public value is discussed by Bryson (2004, 8): “Creating public value means producing enterprises, policies, programs, projects, services, or infrastructures (physical, technological, social, etc.) that advance the public interest and the common good at a reasonable cost.”

order to organize the leadership of differing organizations and encourage them to work together under a single command structure. “UC [Unified Command] is an important element in multi-jurisdictional or multi-agency domestic incident management. It provides guidelines to enable agencies with different legal, geographic and functional responsibilities to coordinate, plan and interact effectively. As the team, UC overcomes much of the inefficiency and duplication of effort that can occur when agencies from different functional and geographic jurisdictions, or agencies at different levels of government, operate without a common system or organizational framework” (Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA], 2005, p. 6).

Unified Command as a concept is designed to temporarily address collaboration issues through the structuring of response organizations while handling major events. As shown earlier through the different AARs, even this application seems to fall short regularly. It seems that the same barriers that prevent organizations from collaborating fully on a day-to-day basis are also responsible for preventing the benefits of Unified Command from being realized. ICS and NIMS have acknowledged that the answer to collaboration issues among different organizations lies within the structure of the organizations—specifically the leadership structure. First responder agencies have been organized according to disciplines that address only a portion of a major event or an emergency scene. There are models that address this structural problem by reorganizing first responder organizations and consolidating their efforts.

The consolidation of first responder assets is not a new idea. It has been practiced across the country in different ways since the early 1900s. In essence, the consolidation of police and fire services means that instead of having completely separate organizations that specialize solely in police or fire services, these consolidated departments (often called public safety departments) have been integrated to varying degrees, creating a single organization responsible for responding to multiple types of emergencies. Although there are different models that reflect the various degrees of integration, the commonality is that there is one organization encompassing different disciplines under a single command. Generally speaking, there are three different degrees of integration

within public safety departments that are represented in three models. Those models are full consolidation, partial consolidation, and administrative consolidation.

This reorganization of first responder agencies into consolidated services can be considered a smart practice. It is a concept, as Bardach explains, that is a clever idea that has multiple functions, delivers public value, and challenges assumptions. It is a clever idea because it offers an integrated solution to an array of increasingly complex emergencies. It creates an organization that delivers multiple functions through a single command structure. It delivers public value because it uses public assets in an efficient way. And it absolutely challenges assumptions. It is worth a closer inspection and consideration by cities all across the country.

The fire and police services have long and respected traditions of service to the public in this country. The consolidation of police and fire services is a deviation from those traditions. A public safety department, by definition, must operate differently from a traditional police or fire department. The concept has been embraced by some, and it has not been accepted by others. The professional fire service organizations have had an official position against this approach for many years. A recent document published by the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) and the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), titled “Police and Fire Consolidation: An Ineffective Use of Resources,” begins by stating, “Combining roles of fire fighters and police officers is a concept that challenges and undermines the career fire fighter’s role as a guardian of public safety” (IAFF/IACF, 2009, p. 3).<sup>3</sup>

The idea of consolidating police and fire services is not one that can be taken lightly. It is not a quick fix to a city budget. There is a minefield littered with organizational issues, cultural barriers, and implementation challenges that make this a very difficult choice. Nevertheless, some jurisdictions appear to have implemented the concept successfully. Lt. David Frazer of the Rohnert Park Department of Public Safety<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This comment specifically refers to fully consolidated public safety departments since those are the ones that combine the roles of fire fighter and police officer. This concept will be discussed later.

<sup>4</sup> The Rohnert Park Department of Public Safety is considered to be a fully consolidated department.

(2007, p. 17) writes, “Combining these two professions and the accompanying resources, forces a public safety agency to work synergistically while offering highly trained and versatile first response officers.”

The 9/11 Commission Report (2003, p. 396) cited teamwork, collaboration, and cooperation at an incident site as critical to a successful response. The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, proved that a large enough attack can overwhelm even the largest first-responder agency. The Homeland Security establishment cannot lose opportunities to increase teamwork and collaboration based on mere opinions, and the idea of consolidating police and fire services cannot be dismissed simply because it challenges the status quo. This topic needs a serious and rigorous academic view so that the potential value of this concept can be taken advantage of. It could be used as a vehicle to accomplish collaboration and coordination; reach common goals; establish trust and strong professional relationships; and deal with scarce budget resources. But it will require us to think differently.

Our country today is experiencing challenges that are unique and complex. There is a need for integrated solutions to the multifaceted challenges our country faces today. The emphasis on collaboration is good and is needed. But, as Homeland Security practitioners, we are charged with finding ways to protect our nation in the most efficient way possible. We need to go beyond just working together—we need to integrate our efforts and rid ourselves of the barriers that prevent collaboration from happening. We can begin to accomplish this by encouraging the development of strong professional relations and by establishing trust among emergency responders. The public safety concept is an interesting idea that is clever. It provides a synergistic approach to public safety services and utilizes unity of command. It is a system of multiple functions that delivers contributions. The question remains, Can the controversial practice of consolidating police and fire departments be considered as a valuable option?

## **B. HOMELAND SECURITY MISSION**

The claim of this thesis is that understanding and investigating the consolidation of police and fire services is helpful to the homeland security dialogue. The homeland

security construct is inherently multidisciplinary. At the core of the efforts to secure the homeland lie concepts like collaboration, interoperability, and unity of command. Yet, even as they acknowledge the need for these approaches to a complex problem, many resist any discussion related to consolidated police and fire services. However, examining this issue will allow the first responder to use lessons extracted from this model to improve services to the homeland. First responder agencies do not lack an awareness and understanding of our collaboration shortcomings. The problem is that repeated calls to collaborate, share, and communicate are not enough. We need to think differently. We need to come to the realization that our problem is not lack of knowledge or lack of understanding; it is a structural problem.

## **1. Innovation**

As the discipline of homeland security matures, the professionals shaping it must be creative as they look for solutions. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2008–2013 (2008, p. 3) lists innovation as one of the core values. “We will identify and explore uncharted opportunities to enhance homeland security. We will encourage and recognize our employees’ original thoughts and initiatives and will foster a creative environment in which they can grow, develop, and progress.” Bellavita, in a document titled “What is Preventing Homeland Security,” writes, “Three fears hamper efforts to reconfigure that system [prevention]: the fear of new behaviors; the fear of imagination; and the fear of emergence” (2005, p. 1). These two statements stand at odds: one highlights the desire to generate original thoughts and initiatives in a creative environment, while the other is a reminder of the fear of change and imagination.

Since 2001, public safety professionals have been engaged in the process of understanding the multidisciplinary approach to homeland security. As this new approach develops, there have been many efforts aimed at enhancing the way that agencies work together. A group of mid- to high-level homeland security professionals from local, state, and federal agencies participating in a master’s degree program at the Center for Homeland Defense and Security operating out of the Naval Postgraduate School in

Monterey, California, were asked to come up with ideas to enhance the multidisciplinary aspect of homeland security. The first three ideas listed were: the need to institutionalize collaboration among homeland security disciplines starting in basic training; the necessity of providing joint duty opportunities; and the need for more cross-functional teams. Collaboration among government agencies has been identified by Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 as one of the objectives of the U.S. government: “to ensure that all levels of government across the Nation have the capability to work efficiently and effectively together, using a national approach to domestic incident management” (Office of the Press Secretary, 2003).

Historically, the driving force behind the idea of consolidating police and fire services has been tied to the opportunity to save money. The premise is that in the consolidation process efficiency is created. That premise has been hotly debated through the years. This research does not attempt to settle the question of the efficiency or alleged savings of consolidation models. Instead, it attempts to use the homeland security framework to examine the effectiveness of different consolidation models in the quest for new “smart practices” in this arena. The multidisciplinary approach to training a professional in police and fire services within a fully consolidated model is the ultimate institutionalization of collaboration among disciplines. Partial consolidation models can leverage their ability to perform multiple functions. Administrative consolidation models may capitalize on their organizational structure in order to provide a more coordinated service to the community.

## **2. All-Hazards Approach**

The Department of Homeland Security has turned to an all-hazards approach in order to mitigate emergencies. “Our Nation faces threats from both natural and man-made sources. We will take an all-hazards approach to emergency management that allows us to respond effectively to all emergencies, whether caused by acts of nature or by our enemies....Through education and outreach, we will foster homeland security expertise across multiple disciplines to serve as an indispensable resource for the Nation” (United States Department of Homeland Security, 2008, p. 4). The idea of an all-hazards

approach fits well within the hypothesis that even though jurisdictions organize their emergency services separately, emergencies ignore jurisdictional and disciplinary boundaries. In addition to looking at the all-hazards approach as an attempt to deal with the multidisciplinary aspect of homeland security, it is also helpful to explore the military idea of joint duty assignments.

The importance of joint duty assignments in the military was underscored by the Goldwater-Nichols defense reforms of 1986. These reforms are often credited for changing the military's historic parochialism to an emphasis on jointedness, enhancing their ability to coordinate and integrate across services. In an attempt to use these reforms as a model to foster interagency cooperation in the city of New York, McGeary (2007, p. v) writes, "This thesis recommends that NYC adapt several provisions of the Goldwater-Nichols Act to change the underlying attitudes and cultures of its first responder agencies. By encouraging its personnel to focus their planning, training, and operational activities on what benefits the City as a whole, as opposed to the individual agency to which they belong, the City will profit from the improved coordination, communication, and cooperation necessary to effectively prepare for and respond to emergencies of any magnitude."

Some of the recommendations listed by McGeary include centralizing the coordination of efforts in the Office of Emergency Management (OEM); model promotion policies to the Goldwater-Nichols Act reforms; and a professional education program emphasizing joint doctrine (McGeary, 2007). These ideas come out of the necessity to institutionalize the understanding that each of these disciplines relies on the other to operate and deliver services effectively to the citizens.

The creativity involved in the consolidation of police and fire services is well within the mission of DHS to develop new ways to prevent, prepare, respond, and mitigate all kinds of disasters. Fear of change and lack of imagination block the desire to look at these models, but the need to work together in a more collaborative way, while taking advantage of trust and established relations, makes it a powerful alternative to investigate. Some homeland security professionals have attempted to look for ways to institutionalize collaboration as they seek new strategies to approach the complicated

problems that exist in homeland security. The concept of consolidating police and fire services is the ultimate institutionalization of collaboration among disciplines.

## **C. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Even though the concept of consolidating police and fire services into one department has been around for almost 100 years, the literature in this area is limited. Perhaps this is the reason it remains a poorly understood idea. The literature can roughly be divided into several categories: case studies of departments that have experimented with this idea; studies covering economic implications, organizational considerations, and attempts at forecast viability; articles in journals discussing cultural issues and historical perspectives; and opinion-based articles. Some of the questions that have been addressed by the literature include but are not limited to the genesis of the concept, historical perspectives, organizational designs, cultural implications, and effectiveness within the public safety realm.

### **1. Genesis**

The following quote is drawn from an article written in 1956, but it highlights an issue that cities still face today—their dwindling purchasing power. The ability to provide public safety services and the increasing challenge to pay for those services seems to have been the genesis of the idea of consolidating police and fire services. “An interesting experiment is being carried out in several of our smaller cities. At the present time there is no indication that it will be adopted by the larger cities, but it is being watched closely by those small cities who are finding it more and more difficult to provide the increasing services demanded of them with their dwindling purchasing power of city funds. (Ayres, 1956).

Matarese et al., (2007) states that the driving force toward consolidation is often the opportunity to save money. David Frazer, a lieutenant with the Rohnert Park Department of Public Safety in California, cites saving money by cross-training police officers as firefighters as the initial motivation for consolidating fire and police services (2007). The model in Rohnert Park (one of the only two fully consolidated departments

in the state of California according to Frazer) has gone through many challenges over the years in the way of in-depth studies ordered by the Rohnert Park City Council, but according to Frazer, it has withstood those challenges. “To date, the city still saves an average of about \$1 million dollars [sic] a year in personnel costs versus traditional police-fire models” (Frazer, 2007).

Aside from alleged financial savings there are other reasons cited in the literature for consolidating fire and police services. By creating a department where members understand and perform duties related to the police and fire professions in an integrated manner, there is an organizational interdependence that is needed to address “hometown security” in a post-9/11 environment (Matarese et al., 2007). Additionally, the idea of unity of command lies at the center of the consolidation concept. “The public safety concept also offers a continuity of command that traditional police and fire agencies lack. Whatever the emergency, the chain of command ultimately leads to one individual responsible for the entire event. In such a system, the various players, regardless of their specialties, are part of the same team, operating under the same leadership, and, most important, within the same communications system” (Matarese et al., 2007).

## **2. Historical Perspective and Viability**

The first public safety department in the United States operating under the concept of consolidating police and fire services was established in 1911 in the Village of Grosse Pointe Shores, Michigan (Village of Grosse Pointe Shores). Initially, the idea of consolidating fire and police services began in small towns while they attempted to figure out how to provide public safety services as they grew. “By the 1960s, more than 73 cities—44 in the United States and some 29 in Canada—were operating under a police-fire consolidation system of one form or another. The largest city with a fully integrated police-fire system was Dearborn, Michigan, with a population of 112,007. One half of all cities were under 14,332 in population. The average size was 24,168 in the United States and 18,100 in Canada” (Dane, 1989). Through the years, many cities have come to the conclusion that the concept does not work for them, and they have gone back to separated services. During the 1960s, there were approximately 129 consolidated departments in

the country, but by 1970 approximately 16 of them had abandoned the concept (More, 1970). Many others, however, have remained as consolidated departments.

In a paper titled “Police and Fire Consolidation: What is Concept Viability in Urban California by 1999?” Nolan Dane, Jr., discusses the question of whether or not the concept of fire and police consolidation has a future in California’s urban environment; he provides a glimpse as to why some cities may have abandoned the concept. The study looks forward for a period of 10 years, from 1989 to 1999, and attempts to decide whether the concept could be implemented in the city of Torrance, California. The study was also hoping to generate discussion related to the topic among law enforcement leadership (Dane, 1989). The study concludes that the concept has had limited success and acceptance in California and that “successful implementation” of the concept in California in the ensuing 10 years would be “unlikely.” (Dane, 1989). Dane argued that the influences of tradition and union opposition were the strongest barriers to the concept of consolidation. He explained, “Tradition is firmly established as a dominant pattern in California urban areas. Separation of police and fire departments is such a tradition. Any consolidation effort that moves to change the long-held customs, attitudes, and interests of a community will be a difficult one over the next decade. The larger the agency, the more convincing the arguments for change will have to be. This is due primarily to larger and better organized police and fire associations, who can be expected to be powerful forces of opposition” (Dane, 1989, p. 98). Perhaps the influence of tradition and union opposition are the reasons why many cities have concluded that the concept does not work for them.

### **3. Organizational Design**

Dane’s paper also discusses the organizational designs of consolidated departments. He divides them into five distinct categories: full consolidation; partial consolidation; selected area consolidation; functional consolidation; and nominal consolidation. (Dane, 1989, pp. 4–7) The IAFC/IAFF document titled “Police and Fire Resources—An Ineffective Use of Resources” describes the models by labeling them as: full consolidation, partial consolidation, functional consolidation, and administrative

consolidation (IAFC/IAFF, 2009). Full consolidation normally refers to a department that is fully integrated. Every officer is trained and is able to perform both jobs. The department is organized into a number of divisions, including a police division and a fire division. Partial consolidation refers to the situation where a portion of the members of the department are trained in both professions but separate police and fire structures are maintained. In selected area consolidation, a selected number of members are trained in both police and fire services while being assigned to combined duties in a specific geographical area. Functional consolidation exists where police and fire retain separate services, but one or more duties normally performed by one department, is assigned to the other department. The nominal or administrative consolidation model refers to a merging of command staff under a single leadership while maintaining two separate departments (Dane, 1989, pp. 4–7). It is interesting to note that Dane’s research concluded that the consolidation type that had found the greatest interest among California agencies was what he calls “nominal consolidation.” The way this model is described by Dane reveals the reason for the apparent interest: under this model both police and fire services retain their individual and distinct operational identities while reporting to one chief executive. Dane attributes the selection of this model to a desire to facilitate administrative reporting. His research indicates that the concept is often implemented for political reasons and because of issues between the fire chief, the police chief, and the city manager. He does not consider it a true consolidation model because, he says, it is “too prone to whimsicalness” (1989, pp. 98–99).

#### **4. Cultural Implications**

The emergency medical services, fire, and police professionals make up distinct cultural groups with their own set of personalities and mores. The consolidation of fire and police services entails bringing together those cultures. Departments where the integration occurred a long time ago have had the opportunity to develop their own culture of integration. Departments where the integration is more recent or is in progress will have to go through an important development process that could make or break the deal. Attention must be paid to the cultural implications of a consolidation or merger.

“While the reasons involved can be as divergent as the agencies themselves, research has tended to implicate merger administrators for insufficient attention to organizational culture as a key explanatory factor”(Stinchcomb & Ordaz, 2007).

Stinchcomb and Ordaz performed an exploratory case study of an organization created in 2003 as the result of a merger between the sheriff’s office and the county fire and rescue agency. In that study, Stinchcomb and Ordaz mention the myriad of implications related to a merger of that magnitude. They highlight the importance of paying attention to the organizational cultures of the agencies involved in order to find success. “As with many technologically based initiatives, this merger placed extensive emphasis on aligning the hardware, communications systems, and technical interaction necessary to enable two independent systems to merge functionally into one. What may make it somewhat unique is the extent to which its interpersonal aspects were also addressed, especially in terms of strategies for uniting two distinct organizational cultures” (Stinchcomb & Ordaz, 2007).

In their study, Stinchcomb and Ordaz conclude that taking into consideration the cultural implications of a consolidation was the key to the apparent success of this endeavor. They also acknowledge that their study was completed soon after the merger had occurred and that a more extensive study would be needed later on to determine whether those results had changed over time.

## **5. Effectiveness**

The evaluation of the effectiveness of this model is probably the area of most contention within the existing literature. Throughout the literature there are supporters of the concept who talk about cost savings, unity of command, and better service; yet, on the other hand, critics point out ineffectiveness, degradation of services, tradition, and organizational anomalies as insurmountable barriers.

Wolkinson, Chelst, and Shepard (1985) comment that the concept has been very controversial in recent years. They add, “It has been praised as a method of increasing the cost effectiveness of government’s public protection function in light of the pressures of

tight municipal budgets and fiscal crises; alternatively, it has been criticized for not producing savings or providing a comparable level of public protection as enjoyed under separate departments.”

As a practitioner and member of a public safety department, Frazer (2007) points out the positive aspects of the concept based on his experience. He argues that the consolidation of emergency services under one administrative umbrella has resulted in better public safety service delivery in addition to cost savings. In addition, Matarese et al. state: “Setting up a consolidated public safety agency with its continuity of command and communications presents an outstanding opportunity for local governments to address the operability issue as part of a larger effort to improve delivery of day-to-day services and maximize emergency response capabilities” (2007).

A member of the White Plains Department of Public Safety in New York highlights similar issues. “In White Plains, police-fire collaboration has led to service enhancements that go beyond addressing routine issues. The leveraging of public safety resources has led to greater efficiency and effectiveness for personnel from both agencies. Daily collaboration between police and fire commanders on crime, fire, and quality-of-life issues has established a strong base upon which to build a comprehensive emergency preparedness program” (Bradley & Lyman 2009).

Most of the opposition to the idea of consolidation has come from unions. “Union opposition to consolidation has been led by the International Association of Fire Fighters and the International Union of Police Associations, both affiliated with the AFL-CIO” (Wolkinson, Chelst, & Shepard, 1985). This stance has not changed for over 100 years. “The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) has been on record against PSOs [Public Safety Officers] the longest of any group—since 1877!” (IAFF/IAFC, 2009). The IAFC’s concern seems to be directed towards the fully consolidated departments. It argues that the use of public safety officers disrupts the use of the company unit in the fire ground and comments on the number of personnel potentially in the fire ground. The opinion of the IAFC concludes, “Consolidation exchanges the team concept for individual action. Individual action on a fire or EMS scene leads to unsafe acts, inefficiency and chaos, which too often has fatal consequences” (IAFF/IAFC, 2009).

According to the IAFF/IAFC document cited above, the National Fire Protection Association is also opposed to the consolidation concept. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is on record against PSOs. “After studying the issue for many years, the NFPA released commentary that reads: “We are convinced that there is no advantage, either from the point of view of economy or efficiency, in combining police and fire department functions. It is our considered opinion that a community needs both good police service and good fire service and that the combination of the two results in poorer police service and poorer fire service.” An NFPA representative further reported, “It is our observation that when fire and police departments are combined, the fire department suffers more than the police department and that the overall fire protection of the community is not at the proper level.” (2009).

In addition, the International Union of Police Associations (IUPA) has gone on record against the consolidation concept even though some police associations take a favorable view of the consolidation concept (IAFC/IAFF, 2009). The IAFF and IAFC recognize that the ICMA is one of the main promoters of the concept. “As a major expense, fire departments stand out as targets to the cost-cutters who claim consolidation a ‘solution’ in a growing number of cities. Advocates of consolidation find a forum for their views in the International City Management Association (ICMA), which produces publications and conferences that extensively cover the subject from a city manager’s perspective” (IAFC/IAFF, 2009). The fact that the ICMA is engaged in this debate highlights the financial implications of the consolidation concept, since city managers are the stewards of city funds.

As noted above, the literature related to the consolidation of police and fire services converges and disagrees in areas such as effectiveness, organizational design, cultural implications, historical perspective, and viability. In the post-9/11 world, an issue that has not been examined thoroughly is the effect, impact, or contribution that such a concept can have on the homeland security mission. Matarese et al., (2007) address the fact that police and fire departments today have somewhat different roles as a result of the terrorism threat. They argue that the concept of consolidation may be attractive because it has the ability to extend the capabilities of emergency services.

Bradley and Lyman (2009) highlight some of the changes that consolidation has allowed them to make within the White Plains Department of Public Safety in order to improve the capabilities of the department through a joint command between police and fire special operations, which has made them better able to address new post-9/11 threats. During this research, there has not been much documentation found that related to the contribution that police and fire consolidation models can have on the homeland security project. This is a gap that needs to be addressed. Matarese et al., (2007) pose an interesting question, “As this ‘age of terrorism’ forces local governments to assess issues of interoperability and emergency management, while still competing for scarce resources, should emergency response organizations become combined under one public safety umbrella?” Throughout the literature many authors have discussed the benefits and the disadvantages of this concept, based on financial implications, cultural differences, viability issues, and tradition. This thesis will not address those areas. However, it will use the homeland security mission as a backdrop on which one can examine the concept. As our country continues to deal with multifaceted threats that force our disparate organizations to integrate in a unified effort, are there any lessons we may be able to extract from the consolidated models in order to work together better? What are the contributions that the consolidation of police and fire services has on the homeland security mission?

#### **D. METHODOLOGY**

This thesis will explore the idea of consolidating police and fire departments as a unique way to deliver public safety services to communities in an integrated fashion. The thesis will investigate how the uniqueness of these concepts can fit into our plan to prevent, protect, respond, and mitigate interrelated challenges in a fully coordinated approach.

The hypothesis of this study is that the consolidation of police and fire services enhances communication among disciplines, creates unified leadership and command, and aids in attaining a high level of comprehensive emergency response and planning—and that this improves the execution of the homeland security mission. The outcomes that

will be analyzed are related to historical perspective, organizational design, collaboration perspective, homeland security perspective, advantages, and challenges.

## **1. Research Design**

In order to analyze the issues raised above, the multiple-case-study method, also known as the comparative-case-study method was used. This method allows the researcher to investigate a set of circumstances that define an individual, a group, or an organization in depth and within its own context. Robert Yin presents the following technical definition of a case study: “A case study is an empirical inquiry that: investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (2009, p. 18).

The multiple-case-study method was used to illustrate certain topics in a descriptive mode as they relate to three models of consolidated public safety departments. The three models in the study are: full consolidation, partial consolidation, and administrative consolidation.

## **2. Characteristics of the Population**

Three departments were identified as using one of the three described models. These three departments formed three cases to be studied and later compared in a descriptive manner. Each of these models shares the general goal of consolidating public safety services, yet they are organized differently and function uniquely. The central focus was to understand the interaction between the way that these departments are structured and their ability to carry out the homeland security mission.

The Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety located in Sunnyvale, California, is an example of a fully consolidated department; the San Diego Harbor Police Department was chosen as representative of partial consolidation; the White Plains, New York Department of Public Safety was chosen as an example of an administratively consolidated department. These organizations were chosen because they have all been operating as consolidated departments for several decades. The data reviewed from each

agency included its history, organizational structure, and operation. This data was compiled through interviews and through a review of documents that included organizational charts and department Web sites. Two subjects connected to each of three departments were contacted. Of the six subjects contacted, five were either current or former command staff personnel at their respective departments.

### **3. Data Collection Procedures/Instrument**

In addition to the review of written sources, semistructured interviews were conducted with six subjects. The interviews for the Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety command staff were conducted in person. The current Director of Public Safety, Don Johnson, and one of the current deputy chiefs, Ron D'Alba, were interviewed. The interviews for the San Diego Harbor Police Department and the White Plains Department of Public Safety were conducted over the phone due to the long distance. The current San Diego Harbor Police Chief, Kirk Sanfilippo, and officer Randy Benton (Homeland Security officer) were interviewed. From the White Plains Department of Public Safety, now-former Commissioner Frank Straub (when initially contacted he was still the commissioner at White Plains), and former Deputy Commissioner Charles Jennings were interviewed. The subjects representing each of the cities and departments were chosen based on their positions and involvement with the agency. Command-level officials were chosen with the assumption that they would be familiar with the intricacies of the models their agencies represented.

Notes were taken during the in-person interviews. Each of the interviews was audio-recorded. Six interview questions were used. Each one of the questions reflected the outcomes listed above.

The topics related to historical perspective, organizational design, collaboration perspective, homeland security perspective, and advantages and challenges were included in order to establish the background needed to understand how these models work within the public safety services. Different data collection procedures were used in this qualitative approach that included documents, interviews, and participant observation.

The essence of the descriptive and comparative study focused on the collaboration and homeland security perspectives of the chosen organizations.

#### **4. Data Analysis**

A table was created in order to organize the notes taken from each of the interviews. The answers were grouped according to each of the outcomes they aligned with. Once the answers were collated, they were compared across the different cases and conclusions were drawn accordingly.

#### **5. Organization**

Chapters II, III, and IV include the individual case studies that will be discussed. Chapter II discusses the Sunnyvale Department of Public Study as an example of a fully consolidated department. Chapter III discusses the San Diego Harbor Police Department case study as an example of a partially consolidated department. Chapter IV includes the case study related to the White Plains Department of Public Safety as an example of an administratively consolidated department. Each of these chapters is organized similarly, since this is a comparative case study analysis. Each chapter begins with an introduction to the department and the jurisdiction it serves, followed by a discussion of the outcomes mentioned earlier—historical perspective, organizational design, collaboration perspective, homeland security perspective, and advantages as well as challenges related to the way the specific department is organized.

Chapter V presents the findings of the analysis that was performed of each of the case studies. It includes interpretation and discussions related to each of the outcomes that have been identified. Chapter VI includes the summary of the study, the conclusions reached as a result of the analysis, and the set of recommendations going forward.

## **II. FULL CONSOLIDATION: SUNNYVALE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety (SDPS) serves the city of Sunnyvale, located in the southern portion of the San Francisco Bay area in California. The department was established in 1950 as a fully consolidated police and fire department. Prior to that, the city had a police department and a volunteer fire department. SDPS provides law enforcement, fire response, and emergency medical services (EMS) to a population of approximately 138,826<sup>5</sup> with 210 authorized sworn positions. For the purposes of this study, two high-ranking individuals in the organization were interviewed.

### **B. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

In the late 1940s, much of Santa Clara Valley, including Sunnyvale, was agricultural. At that time, Sunnyvale boasted approximately 9,000 people. There was a volunteer fire department and a small, paid police department that served the needs of the city. After World War II, the population of the city increased, and there was a transition in housing as well as industry. As the population grew and the city tried to determine what services it needed to provide, the idea of consolidating police and fire services took hold. The prelude to the creation of the Department of Public Safety began in 1948 when the city charter was being created as the city changed from a general law form of city government to a council/manager form of government. By 1950, the need for a professional fire department was apparent as city officials felt the need to improve the fire class rating the city had been previously given. City Manager Kenneth Hunter and Mayor Walter Jones were in favor of creating a fully consolidated Department of Public Safety. (Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety Yearbook [SDPS Yearbook]).

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<sup>5</sup> The official source for the city of Sunnyvale's population estimates is the most recent California Department of Finance publication (Sunnyvale Public Library Web site).

At the time the city council considered two alternatives: to create separate police and fire departments; and to create a department where safety personnel would be trained to provide police and fire services. The decision was made to implement a generalized approach in the provision of public safety services to the community. “The public safety alternative was adopted on the premise that training and equipping safety personnel to provide both police and fire services would avoid duplication of effort, be more flexible and responsive to community safety needs, and economize operation’s costs” (Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety Web Central [SDPS Web Central]).

### **C. ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN**

The organizational chart for the Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety can be found in Figure 1. The head of the organization is the Chief of Public Safety. Under the chief there are four deputy chief positions: Administration; Special Operations; Fire Services; and Police Services. There are six captain positions that lead the different patrol teams, fire teams, and special operation teams. Additionally, at this level there are civilian managers who lead civilian work groups. The Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety is an example of a fully consolidated department. The basic concept is that all sworn personnel are trained as law enforcement officers, certified firefighters, and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT-b). In addition, there are non-sworn public-safety dispatchers who handle police, fire, and EMS calls (using Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) protocols). Sunnyvale has developed this approach through a system where all personnel can be reassigned from police duties to fire duties, or vice-versa, every one to five years. The rotation is dependent upon specialized assignments, the needs of the department, and a seniority-based system. In addition to this rotation, personnel assigned to police patrol respond to some fire emergencies, as well as some EMS emergencies.

This system works on the premise that most calls that the fire units respond to are not strictly fire-related calls requiring many personnel. It is commonly understood within the first responder community that responses to actual fires, hazardous material calls, mutual aid calls, and other fire related calls require the greatest number of personnel. Conversely, alarm calls and most medical calls do not require as many personnel. In

addition, the majority of the calls that fire units respond to are in fact medical calls and fire-alarm calls. For example, during fiscal year 2008–2009, Sunnyvale fire units responded to a total of 7,082 calls. Of that total, 5,822 or approximately 82 percent were alarm calls (634) or fire response to EMS events (5,188). EMS events and alarm calls are not handled as full-structure fire responses<sup>6</sup> (Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety, Accounting Period Fiscal Year 2008–2009 [SDPS FY08–09]). For first-alarm responses and some EMS responses, fire personnel are supplemented temporarily by officers assigned to patrol. The first alarm response is also supplemented by a voluntary<sup>7</sup> off-duty response from officers who live in town. This particular response is considered over and above the minimum requirements for a response, and although it happens regularly, it is not relied upon.

The assignments into the police or fire division are made at the beginning of the calendar year. As specialties become available within the fire division, police division, or special operations, an officer can apply for these specialty positions; if chosen, that officer makes a commitment of up to five years in that specialty. Officers without a specialty theoretically could switch back and forth between the fire and the police division every year.

The structure of Sunnyvale’s system is grounded in its selection and hiring process, which includes a standard police background investigation. Deputy Chief D’Alba commented that the Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety could be characterized as a police department that cross-trains and certifies its employees to be firefighters as well as EMTs. He added that most officers with low seniority initially focus on the police side. It is there that they develop decision making ability, logic, and the ability to command and control scenes. As a result of the early development that officers receive from the focus on law enforcement-related activities, the officers who are promoted are able to easily transition into a supervisory role on the fire service, as well as the police side, with command-and-control requirements of both. D’Alba observed that

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<sup>6</sup> Full-structure fire responses are first-alarm assignments that respond to an actual confirmed fire, smoke showing, or gas-investigation calls.

<sup>7</sup> This is not a mandatory response by off-duty personnel, but it is a paid response.

during a recent promotional supervisory selection board, which involved outside evaluators including a battalion chief, a police captain, and a city recreations manager, it was noted that the candidates with stronger police backgrounds performed better during the process because they were able to show command and control (R. D'Alba, personal communication, November 18, 2009).

Chief Johnson stated that the rotation system is critical to the successful functioning of the department because it allows officers to manage their career paths and keeps them balanced, and it capitalizes on the internal capacity that officers have within the department for advancement and growth. In his opinion there is much more capacity to perform a broad range of activities in everyone that Sunnyvale hires and every one of the lieutenants, captains, and deputy chiefs that it promotes, something that other agencies are missing. He believes that it does not take a career to become very proficient at performing basic jobs. Therefore, rotation between police, fire, and EMS keeps officers interested and engaged in all aspects of public safety; their potential may be wasted without the ability to rotate (D. Johnson, personal communication, November 23, 2009).

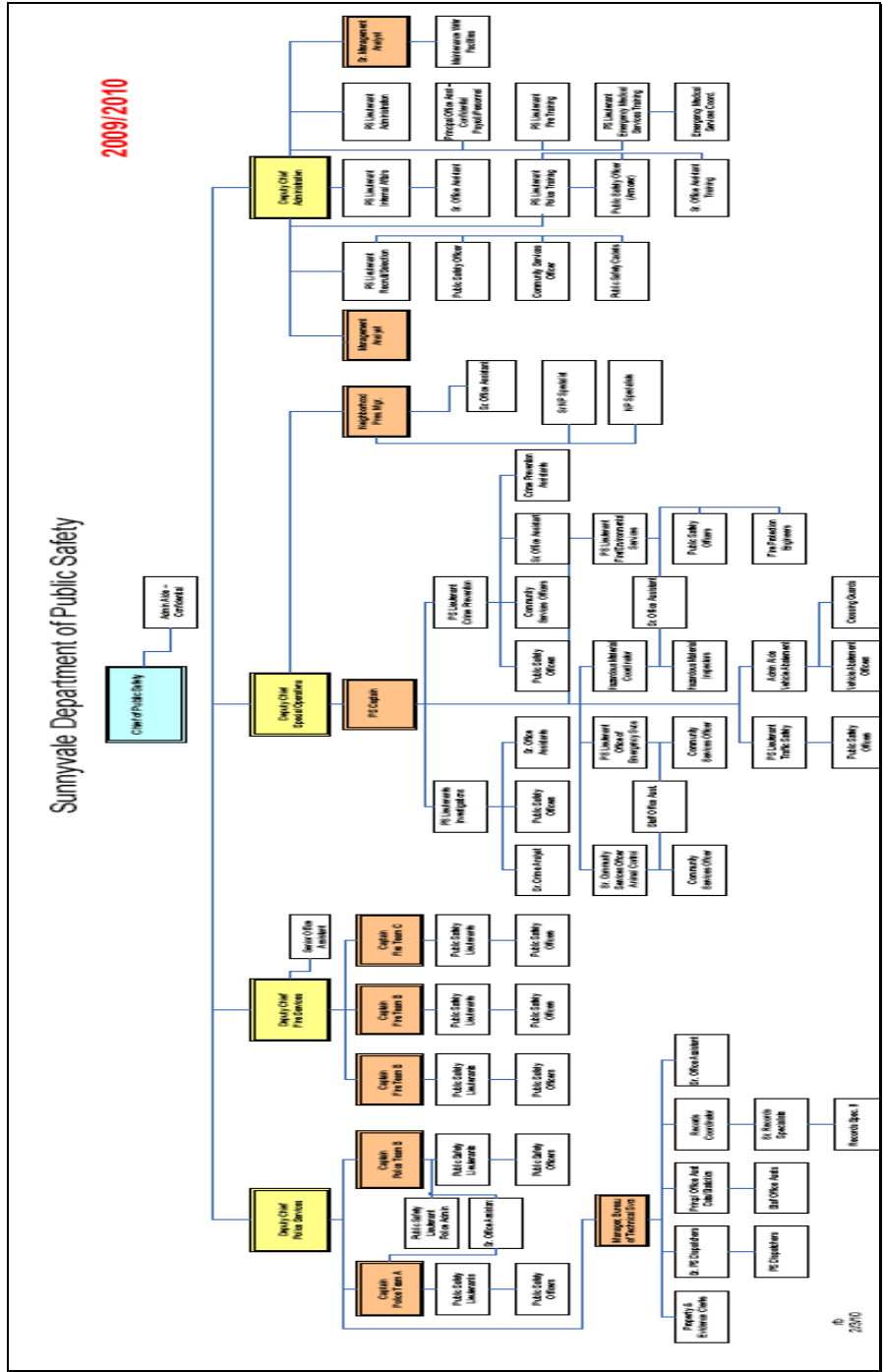


Figure 1. Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety organizational chart.

#### **D. COLLABORATION PERSPECTIVE**

As Chief Johnson explained, the unique structure of the organization is built from the bottom up. He emphasized that the application and hiring process begins with an attempt to find people willing to go into a career that involves three disciplines (police/fire/EMS). According to Johnson, a different perspective is needed to create such an organization. Chief Johnson has spent approximately 30 years in public safety, most of it in Sunnyvale. For a period of three and a half years, he was the chief of police in another city. He then returned to Sunnyvale, taking the position of Director of Public Safety. Through his personal experience, Chief Johnson characterized a traditional police department as having a silo personality. This is reflected in the fact that police personnel show interest only in what they do and almost no interest in EMS or fire-related activities. The chief argues that a drug overdose, for example, has a fire component, as well as an EMS component and a police component. This is where Sunnyvale is different: instead of tunnel vision as they focus on a particular job, there is an overarching view that every event touches all of those disciplines. There is a higher understanding of how events interrelate. This allows the right personnel to resource properly to accomplish the mission (D. Johnson, personal communication, November 23, 2009).

In discussing the department's response to events, the chief explained, "It's a very, cohesive response to whatever the public-safety emergency may be. I think we are the only agency that recognizes public safety emergencies. Others—it's either a police emergency, not my job because I'm in fire, or if it's a fire emergency scene—not my job because I'm on the police side. I think that is the real beauty of public safety, that we take emergencies as our responsibility, whatever the emergency is. Every one of our officers, every one of command staffers, takes it as our emergency; they own it from the time they arrive" (D. Johnson, personal communication, November 23, 2009).

Deputy Chief D'Alba brought up the point that traditionally police and fire have had competing functions. The public-safety model is a good example of how two

competing functions can operate very well together. As a result, there is better command and control, collaboration, and information sharing (R. D'Alba, personal communication, November 18, 2009).

#### **E. HOMELAND SECURITY PERSPECTIVE**

Deputy Chief D'Alba noted that Sunnyvale is ahead of the curve in its understanding and implementation of homeland security issues. He mentioned that in early 2009, he was at a county fire chiefs meeting where representatives from the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) were encouraging fire departments to get involved with the Terrorism Liaison Officer (TLO) program. He felt that while other fire departments were considering how they would be involved in intelligence-related matters, Sunnyvale had already been reaping the benefits of the program. While the homeland security apparatus is trying to determine the role of the fire service in the nation's intelligence efforts, Sunnyvale's consolidation model has allowed its members to fill that role seamlessly. He pointed out a fire call earlier in the year where crucial intelligence information was passed along in the right way at the right time and through the right channels. This was not a call that required any police involvement, so he attributes the passing on of the information to the firefighters' law enforcement background (R. D'Alba, personal communication, November 18, 2009).

Chief Johnson characterized Sunnyvale's homeland security involvement as "ready-made." He attributed it to the fact that officers understand each others' jobs, communicate well, and already have integrated communications. He pointed to the department's response to the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, a response that he described as seamless because those attributes were present (D. Johnson, personal communication, November 23, 2009).

## **F. ADVANTAGES**

Historically, police and fire departments have struggled with each other as they position themselves for the acquisition of resources from the jurisdiction they represent. Deputy Chief D’Alba commented, “Having a combined police and fire department, our service to the community is enhanced because we are not competing for resources in the city. Typically, in most cities, either the police suck up the resources or fire sucks up the resources. So, you either have a good fire protection district and a weak police department or vice versa. That creates conflict within city services, which is felt by the community because many of these events are responded to by the police and fire departments. We don’t have that here. It also allows us to combine resources for what amounts to a force multiplier” (R. D’Alba, personal communication, November 18, 2009).

Deputy Chief D’Alba mentioned that combining resources as a force multiplier is an absolute advantage for the city. It creates the ability to have more police officers or firefighters available to the community, depending on the demands of a particular situation. The city has experienced large-scale events like major fires and demonstrations where the department has been able to come up with great numbers of resources. A city the size of Sunnyvale could never have those resources available in any other way (R. D’Alba, personal communication, November 18, 2009).

During his interview, Chief Johnson also mentioned the department’s response to major incidents. He discussed the response to the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake in regards to the command structure used at the time. Because officers, supervisors, and command staff work closely with each other and know each other’s responsibilities and priorities, communication and organization are not difficult to accomplish during a large event. At traditional agencies, there are different command structures that regulate key public-safety functions. If they have not established some sort of relationship before an event, the command structure will not be unified until trust is gained. The facts that “we know each other’s competence” and “we know that we need to plan for the public safety emergency” become key to the department’s ability to deal successfully with events from

the command perspective. In addition, the fact that the budget is organized with the needs of the public safety department as a whole in mind, minimizes the conflict over limited resources (D. Johnson, personal communication, November 23, 2009).

## **G. CHALLENGES**

Deputy Chief D'Alba admitted that there are tradeoffs that the department makes as a result of the way that it is organized and functions. He mentioned that the department's specialized positions, by necessity, are temporary. The department does not develop the "20-year" detective, for example, or the fire battalion chief who has experience commanding numerous very large events. Because of the department's structure, those roles are often temporary, and therefore, longevity and experience are traded off. Maintaining the balance of training in police, fire, and EMS is a challenge as well. In answer to a follow-up question, Deputy Chief D'Alba commented that this affects somewhat the service that the department provides to the citizens. For example, the department is not capable of offering a paramedic level of service like other fire departments in the area because of the multiple roles that officers have (R. D'Alba, personal communication, November 18, 2009).

Chief Johnson also referenced the training component as a major challenge within the Public Safety Department. He encourages supervisors and managers in his organization to be vigilant and to make sure that their people have the right skill set coming in and that those skills are maintained all along. The chief remarked that those who are watching over the city budget often do not consider that it is, in fact, a budget of what might otherwise be two separate organizations. Outsiders often do not acknowledge that the budget facilitates the training of its personnel for multiple functions. He acknowledged that the department's budget, when compared to traditional departments, is very lean, but some still want to cut it because it appears too large (D. Johnson, personal communication, November 23, 2009).

Another challenge that Chief Johnson recognized was the need to be conscientious regarding the multiple functions that personnel perform. He pointed out that the question needs to be asked, "When is it too much?" He knows that he needs to

balance the desire to perform different functions with the need to provide core services to the community. It is crucial that the personnel coming up through the ranks understand what those core services are so that years from now the department will still be performing those core services. The organization and its personnel can provide other services, but they need to stay true to the core services (D. Johnson, personal communication, November 23, 2009).

## **H. SUMMARY**

The Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety represents fully consolidated department, characterized by sworn members who are all cross-trained between law enforcement, fire, and EMS services. This allows the department to offer a unique public-safety protection to its community, while avoiding duplication of effort and maximizing efficiency. The department's emphasis on the public-safety culture facilitates a comprehensive and unified delivery of service. Developing Homeland Security concerns and approaches have been easily folded into an already integrated system. The consolidation concept as applied by Sunnyvale is complex and certainly not easily maintained, as reflected in the training challenges experienced by the department. It was evident during research that the complexity and challenges faced by the department are considered to be worthwhile as the agency tries to deliver the best services possible to the community.

### **III. PARTIAL CONSOLIDATION: SAN DIEGO HARBOR POLICE DEPARTMENT**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The San Diego Harbor Police Department is the law enforcement authority that protects and serves the San Diego Unified Port District. The department's jurisdiction covers the tidelands around the harbor, San Diego's Lindbergh Field (International Airport), the San Diego Bay, and the harbor areas that touch on the five member cities of the Port District which include San Diego, Chula Vista, Coronado, Imperial Beach, and National City. The San Diego Harbor Police has 141 sworn officers and approximately 25 civilian personnel. (Port of San Diego Web site; R. Benton, personal communication, November 25, 2009). For the purposes of this study, the chief of police and the Homeland Security officer were interviewed.

#### **B. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

During the interview with Chief of Police Kirk Sanfilippo, it was evident that it is important to understand the history of the San Diego Harbor Police in order to understand the uniqueness of the organization today. The port of San Diego became a state special district in 1962. At the time, there were 30 harbor security officers who were transferred from the city of San Diego to the port. The agency started as a non-sworn department, in essence a security agency for the port.

In the 1960s, the FAA did not require law enforcement presence in the airports. It was not until 1972 that the FAA made that requirement. According to Chief Sanfilippo, this caused an operational as well as a cultural shift in the organization. The operational shift came as the agency transitioned from hiring mostly retired military as security guards to a requirement to hire police officers. The cultural shift was more complex since it took many more years for the organization to fully change. Most of the security guards

did not want to become police officers, but now they were required to. In the 1980s, California Penal Code section 830.1 was modified to add peace officer powers to the sworn officers working for the department.

In the period between 2002 and 2003, and as a result of the September 11 attacks, the Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA) and the Aviation Transportation Security Act (ATSA) were enacted. They required additional levels of security related to airports as well as the maritime domains. During this time, the port's resourcing of the Harbor Police and the resulting integration became very important. In the 1980s, the Port had added the responsibility of marine firefighting to the organization. Since there was no regulation related to marine firefighting, this left the agency to its own devices as to how it was going to fight marine fires. It initially received training from the Navy, which was involved in fighting fires on its own vessels. At the time, there were no certification courses, and it was not known what kind of overlap would occur with land-based firefighting. The Port eventually developed its own certification course and acquired its first firefighting/police boats.

According to Chief Sanfilippo, by integrating services in the organization, the Port did not have to staff secondary boats to fight marine fires and did not have to train and place firefighters on ready stand-by, thus saving millions of dollars. The agency was set up with multiple disciplines which include: airport law enforcement, marine policing / firefighting, and tidelands policing (K. Sanfilippo, personal communication, December 8, 2009).



### **C. ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN**

The organizational chart for the San Diego Harbor Police Department can be found in Figure 2. The head of the organization is the Chief of Harbor Police. Under the chief there are two captain positions: Administrative and Homeland Security; Patrol/Marine/Airport Operations. There are six lieutenant positions leading different teams that include investigations/homeland security, communications/records, training/support services, patrol/marine operations (2 teams), and airport operations.

Because of the way the San Diego Harbor Police Department is organized, it is a unique hybrid model. It fits within the category of partially consolidated models. Officer Randy Benton explained that officers are initially hired and trained as police officers since the primary function of the organization is law enforcement. In view of the fact that one of the missions of the agency is marine firefighting, the officers go through in-house fire training specific to marine firefighting. They have no firefighter certifications and do not attend a traditional fire academy.

According to Officer Benton, the officers rotate on a daily basis between assignments. On a four-day work week, the officers work one day in a police vehicle patrolling the tidelands area, one day in a boat patrolling the harbor, one day patrolling the airport in a vehicle, and another day inside the airport on foot patrols.

The marine firefighting performed by the San Diego Harbor Police applies specifically to fighting recreational vessel fires where they have complete jurisdiction. In order to fight structure fires at the marina, the officers provide protection on the water side and require assistance from local fire departments to fight fires on the land side (R. Benton, personal communication, November 25, 2009).

## **D. COLLABORATION**

As a result of the way that the San Diego Harbor Police is organized and functions, it relies on its ability to work with other agencies in order to accomplish its mission. By design, the organization's jurisdiction overlaps many other agencies that span the gamut from local, state, and federal authority.

Chief Sanfilippo related a story demonstrating the organization's collaboration with other agencies. The San Diego Fire Department was interested in acquiring a fire boat and was negotiating with the port of San Diego to make that happen. Even though the Port Act and Code specified that it was the Harbor Police that had the duty to fight marine fires, it left the door open for a contract to be made with one of the member cities to provide that service. The city of San Diego wanted the Port to pay for the equipment and staffing, which would have resulted in an initial expense of \$8–12 million and a recurring expense of \$1–3 million a year. The San Diego Harbor Police had been fighting approximately 12 to 15 vessel fires a year up to that point, and the fire boat that the city was interested in was going to be too big to work in the mostly recreational vessel marina. This was deemed an expensive way to resource an agency. During the negotiations, it was determined that the main reason that the San Diego Fire Department wanted the fire boat was to acquire the ability to supply large amounts of water to land-based pumpers. The Third Fleet is based out of San Diego, and the Navy has a contract tug-boat service. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed to allow the Harbor Police to be able to use the tug boats, which had a large capacity to pump water, and to outfit them with the right equipment to be able to pump large amounts of water to land-based pumpers in case of need (K. Sanfilippo, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

San Diego Harbor seems to be a rare example of systemic, ingrained collaboration. During the interview, Chief Sanfilippo talked about the idea that consolidation of services transcends the organization and includes outside agencies. "Consolidation methods and agencies—it's bigger than just an agency. Consolidation is as big as the mind will allow you to be creative. To partner with the U.S. Navy; there

isn't another port or jurisdiction in the nation that has an MOU with the Navy to use naval assets on contract to help civil authority if we were to have land-side water needs. It's the only one of its kind. Now ... you take that and you say, what else could we partner with another agency to do so that we don't have to do it ourselves, and we don't have to go through the expense?" (K. Sanfilippo, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

## **E. HOMELAND SECURITY**

Officer Benton is the designated Homeland Security officer for the agency. His responsibilities include writing and managing grant programs that the Harbor Police and the Port are involved with. He is involved with the documentation that goes with grants (MOUs with other agencies) and ensures compliance with Department of Homeland Security (DHS) mandates like MTSA and ATSA. In addition, he coordinates procurement of equipment and is the point of contact with state and local emergency management agencies through Homeland Security working groups and through the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI). Officer Benton advised that the department is very tight with all of the regional homeland security efforts going on (R. Benton, personal communication, November 25, 2009).

Chief Sanfilippo spoke about the organization's understanding of the Homeland Security mission. He said that the mission and the national priorities talk about strengthening information sharing and interoperable communication capabilities. In addition, they address CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive) detection and response capabilities, as well as strengthening explosive-device response operations, which include weapons of mass destruction and hazardous materials response. From a desire to address these issues, the department formed a dive team. In addition to search and rescue capabilities, the team was interested in performing random dives throughout the harbor, checking infrastructure, and checking for unauthorized divers in the area. They were also interested in learning about IEDs that were subsurface and attached to infrastructure. The chief mentioned that, keeping those priorities in mind, the department reached out to the Navy again and strengthened collaboration at a different

level. The agency knew that the Navy had an explosive ordinance removal team. Chief Sanfilippo said that they approached the Navy and said, “If we’re willing to come up with a team of divers that we will train to be underwater detection capable, will you be willing to come and remove the device if we found it? So we don’t have to have a removal team. We only need to have a subsurface detection team to do random dives. We could even dive on the naval assets when they come into port if you request it” (K. Sanfilippo, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

## **F. ADVANTAGES**

Officer Benton mentioned that one of the advantages of the San Diego Harbor Police’s consolidation model is that the officers patrol the harbor as part of their law enforcement function, but their boats are fire boats. Since they are out in the harbor patrolling around the clock, 365 days a year, they end up with a faster response to fire-related calls. Instead of having the fire boat sitting at the dock or at a fire station and then responding based on a dispatch call, the officers are already out in the water and can deal with any emergency appropriately. Benton commented that the boating community understands that the department performs both functions. They know that if someone is out on a vessel and having difficulties, he can call the Harbor Police on the marine radio whether it is a police, fire, or search and rescue emergency (R. Benton, personal communication, November 25, 2009).

Chief Sanfilippo addressed the advantages of consolidation from a cultural and leadership perspective. “The reality is unless leaders at every level of these organizations agree to what the culture is going to look like and how we are going to get along, we are going to continue to have silos. We have them still” (K. Sanfilippo, personal communication, December 8, 2009). He went on to say that agencies are still fighting each other for funding. There are still problems with information flow within agencies. This is a leadership cultural issue that some have not yet dealt with. The chief added, “Until the culture is truly established and engrained, and until leaders have been put in place that truly buy into this regional, holistic, global information and intelligence

sharing—and that means oh, by the way, we’re going to share resources as well—we are going to continue to fight the silo battle we have been fighting for the last nine years (K. Sanfilippo, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

Chief Sanfilippo commented that unless the consolidation model has a culture built into it where the state and national priorities are truly going to be the priorities, it is not useful as a model. The San Diego Harbor Police uses the state and national priorities because they believe that they are part of a national effort to stop the threat of terrorism and address vulnerabilities. Sanfilippo added that agencies should be trying to align themselves with a set of priorities based on a culture; and the culture should drive the leader’s decision. “If you don’t have the right leadership, right relationship, right culture, right operational priorities, right training, it doesn’t matter how good a consolidation model is. It won’t work. It’s not just about integrating assignments” (K. Sanfilippo, personal communication, December 8, 2009). Chief Sanfilippo explained how his organization has tried to build an achievement-oriented constructive culture that aligns itself with the state and national priorities when it comes to public safety and homeland security. He said that it is a culture that needs to be self-actualizing where it strives to push people to do things a little bit differently (K. Sanfilippo, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

Officer Benton also spoke about the integrated mission of the organization. As an agency that combines firefighting, law enforcement, and search and rescue, the officers can respond quickly and provide services immediately regardless of the emergency. Benton also mentioned that the agency has a very close relationship with the U.S. Coast Guard. The Harbor Police’s dispatch center is co-located at the Joint Harbor Operations Center (JHOC) and is tied into Coast Guard personnel, Customs & Border Patrol (CBP), as well as Navy representatives. “This is a great benefit because if there’s a terrorism-related event or a major event that happens at the port, we get the information immediately” (R. Benton, personal communication, November 25, 2009).

## **G. CHALLENGES**

Officer Benton mentioned that, in his opinion, the biggest challenge that the Harbor Police faces is that it is not a specialized agency. Because assignments are rotated daily and officers do not perform certain skills often enough, there is a concern that their skills may become stale. The biggest challenge is to keep the officers capably trained in spite of the rotation of assignments. Officers are responsible for knowing the marine environment; understanding the MTSA; providing security at airport terminals; understanding law enforcement on the water as it relates to maritime security laws; understanding aviation security laws as they relate to ATSA; and applying the California Penal Code. It is a large skill set, and the real challenge is to keep all the officers capably trained in each area. To make matters more difficult, the economy has made an impact on the monies that are used for training (R. Benton, personal communication, November 25, 2009).

According to Chief Sanfilippo, one of the organizational challenges that the department has faced is that because of the way that the Harbor Police developed its consolidated model, it initially missed the value of training and certifications. When he first arrived at the San Diego Harbor Police in 2004, Sanfilippo had to navigate a perception issue with other agencies in the region. “The fire departments of the member cities did not have a great deal of respect or belief that the Harbor Police could come in and professionally, appropriately, and safely put out a marine fire” (K. Sanfilippo, personal communication, December 8, 2009). Members of his department had been taught how to fight vessel fires with the theory and philosophy of the 1970s and 1980s, but their training did not consistently keep up with professional standards of the time. The savings were realized in equipment and personnel; however, the training was lacking. According to Chief Sanfilippo, the value in consolidation comes from good certified professional training on an ongoing basis. This is a concept that was initially missed in the organization but that was understood and addressed. Finally, the Chief discussed another challenge: the expanded homeland security roles that the department now faces. He realizes that the department is currently doing the maximum that can be done; and anything above that is probably going to need extra resources and funds. In a

fiscal environment where this may not be possible, it is incumbent upon the organization to figure out ways to fulfill its obligations and to collaborate with other agencies to perform other functions (K. Sanfilippo, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

## **H. SUMMARY**

The San Diego Harbor Police is an example of a partially consolidated department. While serving a jurisdiction that involves a major port city and an international airport, the department has had to adapt to the rapid changes in the Homeland Security arena. This is characterized by the multiple functions that its police officers perform in a department that has evolved over the years to keep up with the demands of a very complex mission. The public safety culture that has developed within the department has facilitated an environment that is adaptive and efficient. The ability to continue to train officers appropriately to handle the multiple functions they are expected to perform is certainly a challenge. It was evident through the research that the leadership of the organization is committed to balancing and addressing this challenge in order to continue to adapt to the Homeland Security challenges facing the jurisdiction.

## **IV. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSOLIDATION: WHITE PLAINS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The White Plains Department of Public Safety serves the city of White Plains, New York, located approximately 25 miles north of Manhattan. It provides law enforcement, fire protection, and emergency medical services to a resident population of approximately 54,000. The daytime population of White Plains is approximately 250,000 as people commute into the city to work. As the seat of Westchester County government, White Plains houses federal, state, county, and local courthouses. The city is also the headquarters for several major corporations such as Nine West, Heineken, and Snapple (Bradley & Lyman, 2009). For the purposes of this study, two former high-ranking administrators were interviewed.

### **B. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

The White Plains Department of Public Safety was created in 1916 under a single commissioner with budgetary and administrative authority. Bradley and Lyman point out that “in many ways the concept of a single public safety agency never permeated the organizational structure. The police and fire bureaus had separate identities and histories. Although both bureau chiefs reported to the same commissioner and conflicts were rare, neither bureau felt compelled to describe success in terms of the other’s achievements. As a result, new programs were developed and defined individually” (2009). Former Commissioner Frank Straub confirms that the police and fire bureaus operated independently of each other for many years. They each reported to the commissioner, but that was the extent of the consolidation. The commissioner had operational as well as administrative authority; however, he was much more involved in budget and discipline and less involved in day-to-day operations. When Commissioner Straub arrived in 2002, the command structure became much more operationally involved for the first time (F. Straub, personal communication, November 25, 2009).

Former First Deputy Commissioner Charles Jennings explained that the department has gone through some transitions. He said that comparing the organizational structure prior to Commissioner Straub’s arrival and after, there was not much difference. However, under Commissioner Straub’s leadership, the department transitioned from an integration that was purely nominal and existed only on paper to what Jennings called “true integration” (C. Jennings, personal communication, December 23, 2009).

### **C. ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN**

The organizational chart for the White Plains Department of Public Safety can be found in Figure 3. The head of the organization is the Commissioner of Public Safety. Under the commissioner, there are two deputy commissioners. A police chief and a fire chief also report to the commissioner. The police chief is responsible for areas that include administration and training; patrol; traffic; special operations; and detectives. The fire chief is responsible for suppression; prevention; and administration.

According to Jennings, the police and fire bureaus operated independently from each other. In fact, he says that public safety had become a third identity. He mentioned that officers would often talk about “public safety” as if it were only a place on the top floor of the headquarters building and not a concept of operations. When Dr. Straub arrived at White Plains, there was not even a patch for Public Safety, even though it was a public safety department. The police department and the fire department each have their own patches. Even though the organizational chart showed the police and fire departments as bureaus, they were never referred as bureaus. The term “public safety” only existed on paper—it operated as a third identity. He thinks that there was probably a fiscal benefit in terms of management by having one person in charge of the whole budget and administration. But in terms of the officer on the street or the firefighter in the fire house, Public Safety was a non-entity. On Dr. Straub’s arrival, the transition began. Jennings commented, “What we have done in White Plains is to truly integrate that; and I would say that even within an administrative consolidation, there are considerable advantages and considerable leverage you have over the organization” (C. Jennings, personal communication, December 23, 2009).

In order to truly take advantage of the consolidated organization in White Plains, the administration had to build a culture around it. When Dr. Straub arrived, there was a very strong perception in White Plains that the fire department had a second-class status to the police department and was constantly neglected. In fact, at the time of Dr. Straub's appointment as commissioner, there was a move within the fire department to break off from the Public Safety structure and establish a commissioner separate from the police organization. When Dr. Straub began work there, one of the goals of his administration was to put the two organizations on an equal footing. Jennings said that the administration went out of its way to be sensitive to this idea. The administration was attempting to create a public safety feel by carefully considering the role of the police, the role of fire, and equal treatment of both. One of the early attempts to create a shift in perception and culture was to create a Public Safety logo that could be used on patches, uniforms, and equipment. This was significant because previously there had been no reference to public safety anywhere outside of the city organizational chart (C. Jennings, personal communication, December 23, 2009).

Although the idea of a public safety patch encountered some organizational pushback, it eventually made it to the shoulders of some specialized units' uniforms. Commissioner Straub came up with a Public Safety lapel pin. As small a gesture as this appeared to be, it was a very successful decision. The lapel pin became popular—a rallying point for those who wanted to develop the idea of a more integrated Public Safety department. This was a small idea that paid big dividends. There was some resistance within the organization that manifested itself around resentment against the commissioner becoming more involved in operational matters and the essence of the organization (C. Jennings, personal communication, December 23, 2009).

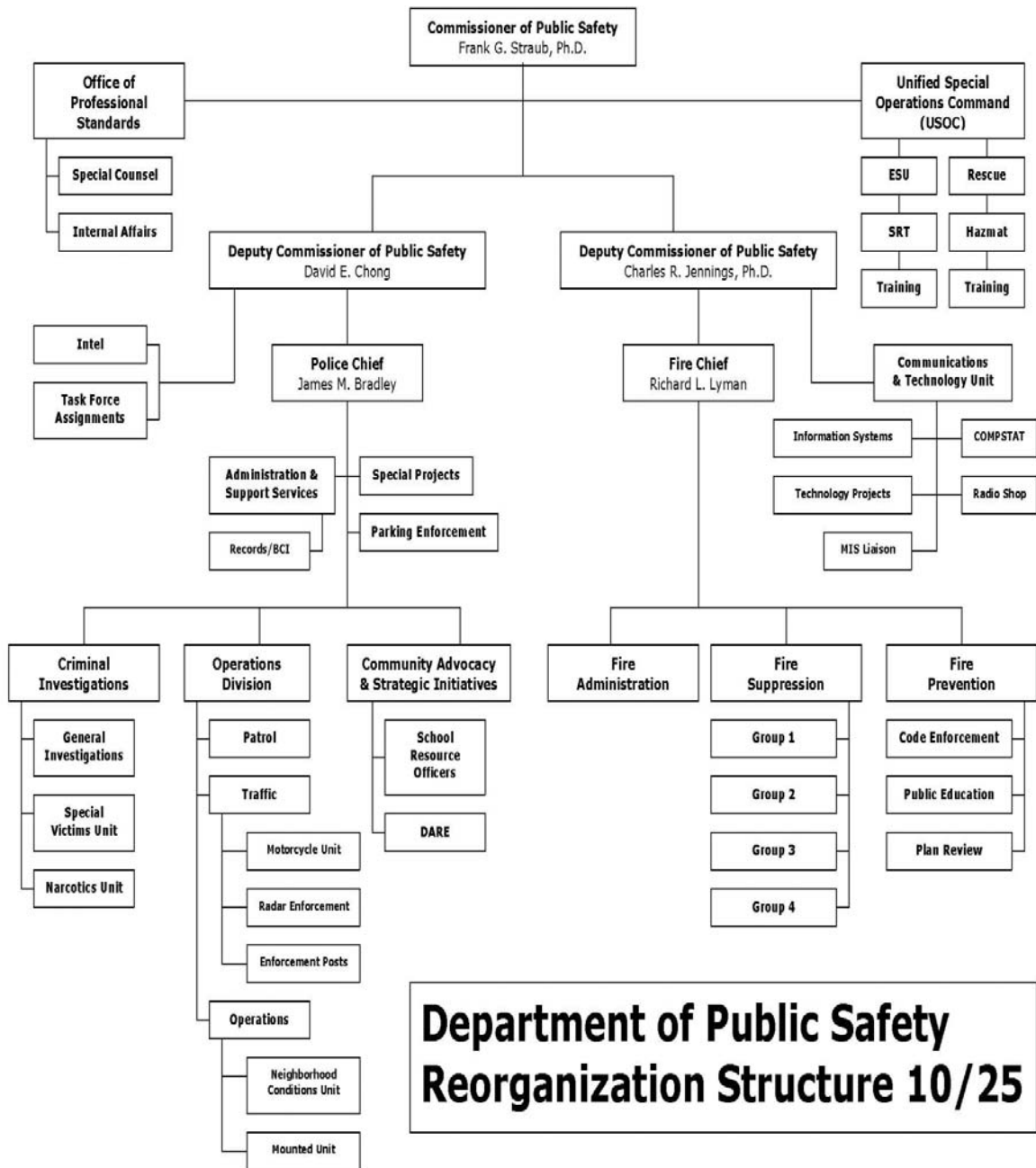


Figure 3. White Plains Department of Public Safety organizational chart

## **D. COLLABORATION**

One of the big changes in the transition toward a more integrated department was the creation of the Unified Special Operations Command (USOC). This occurred between 2005 and 2006 and was instituted by Commissioner Straub. It was a combined unit that brought together police and fire specialized groups. The fire specialized services were made up of technical rescue, building collapse, and hazardous materials (HAZMAT). The police bureau brought in the Emergency Services Unit (ESU), which had a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team and also specialized in technical rescue. A fire deputy chief and a police lieutenant were in charge of USOC and reported to a deputy commissioner. The police and fire teams kept their own specialties that they brought to USOC, but they also cross-trained around technical rescue and HAZMAT (F. Straub, personal communication, November 25, 2009).

Dr. Straub explained that in 2009 the department received approval from New York State to create a Rescue Medic Program. The group will have six police officers and six firefighters. By the end of the implementation phase, nine of the twelve will be paramedics and the other three will be Emergency Medical Technicians–Intermediate (EMT-I). They will be available during the shift as well as on a callout basis to respond to trench rescues and other rescue-type calls. They will be training together in medical emergency techniques as well as rescue techniques. Once the group is operational, they will be part of USOC. These are some of the ways that collaboration has increased as the department has become integrated beyond the paper organizational chart (F. Straub, personal communication, November 25, 2009).

According to Jennings, after all the changes and the push to change the culture of the organization, people realized that it was good for the organization to have a stronger public safety identity. This started in 2002 when Dr. Straub arrived; it was post-9/11, and the department had been caught flat-footed, not adapting to the changes that were occurring. Dr. Straub came from the New York Police Department and brought his counterterrorism experience; he also brought in some people with credibility on the fire side, and this gave legitimacy to the changes. The idea of strengthening Public Safety and

creating USOC was something that came out of the leadership of the organization; it was not something that came from city hall or any other external source. Being close to New York City means that White Plains needs to be ready for potential Homeland Security threats. According to Jennings, Dr. Straub revolutionized the department and made it ready for the post-9/11 world with additional expectations and capabilities. The department was now able to provide services at a higher level than it had been able to do before (C. Jennings, personal communication, December 23, 2009).

Dr. Straub mentioned that because collaboration has been established as an organizational expectation, when there are big events like natural or man-made disasters, the officers can operate better: everybody knows his mission, his job, and who is in charge. He offered an example that showed how collaboration has increased the level of service: White Plains has a very large immigrant population. That fact has created certain unsafe housing situations, where multiple families are living in structures not built to house that number of people. The department created a task force with police, fire, the building department, and the law department so that when an unsafe housing condition was encountered, the agencies would respond together in order to make the structure safe and assist the people living there (F. Straub, personal communication, November 25, 2009).

## **E. HOMELAND SECURITY**

Jennings had explained earlier that the creation of USOC was important in the department's ability to add capabilities related to a post-9/11 world. The job of the unit was to coordinate the entire specialized rescue training between police and fire. This opened up training opportunities related to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) through the Office of Domestic Preparedness. Because of the integration of services in this unit, there was a better allocation of resources by the organization and an increase in the level of training received by both bureaus (C. Jennings, personal communication, December 23, 2009).

Dr. Straub said that the city of White Plains has a robust central business and entertainment district. The department has created a task force that uses police and fire

personnel to help businesses develop emergency response-and-evacuation plans. This ability to work together in these day-to-day operations has translated into a better operational command structure during big events, whether natural or man-made. At a large event either a fire or a police command officer could be in charge of the operation, depending on the nature of the event. Straub said, “The fact that they go and instantaneously set up command and instantaneously set up the incident command system and operate with their protocols gives us a huge advantage” (F. Straub, personal communication, November 25, 2009).

When asked how the department’s organization translates into their handling of the Homeland Security mission, Jennings said, “I think that we are exemplary in the way that we are performing, particularly for an organization our size. I think we do very well; I think we are very serious about the Homeland Security mission. I think [we are] serious about it in a realistic way. It shows in the allocation of resources and training and in the commitment that the organization has made and sustained” (C. Jennings, personal communication, December 23, 2009).

## **F. ADVANTAGES**

According to Dr. Straub, having the police and fire bureaus under the authority of one commissioner allows the organization to leverage resources. This is exemplified in units like USOC with its ability to leverage specialized skills; the task forces that the department can create in order to address problems that affect the entire organization; and the way that the Department of Public Safety is able to use Incident Command System (ICS) command and control techniques throughout both bureaus in a seamless fashion (F. Straub, personal communication, November 25, 2009).

According to Jennings, with this restructuring, communication has been improved considerably as a result of breaking down boundaries of information sharing. This has resulted in increased understanding between the police and fire bureaus regarding their specific missions. In addition to being a benefit to the organization, the community has received an improved level of service from the department. As a result of the increase in communication and understanding between the two bureaus, personnel began “going the

extra mile for the community in solving problems. Now people started looking out of the box—this is not my problem but it is something that the fire department can do; I'll tell them about it. This isn't my issue, but maybe the police can come in and they can do something. This was a real enhanced level of service" (C. Jennings, personal communication, December 23, 2009).

## **G. CHALLENGES**

Dr. Straub mentioned that as a result of the way that the department has increased its level of integration, there have not been too many challenges. At the beginning of the transition, there were some challenges related to the use of COMSTAT. Some personnel in the police bureau were nervous and perhaps skeptical of firefighters being privy to narcotics and organized crime information. However, he said, they have never had a leak in the seven years they have been using the system and it has never been an issue (F. Straub, personal communication, November 25, 2009).

According to Jennings, some of the biggest challenges in applying the consolidation model to the department were related to labor contracts and the difference between the police labor and the fire labor contracts. This manifested itself in the midst of training opportunities that the department wanted to take advantage of out of state. While the department was trying to send police officers and firefighters to different classes through the Office of Domestic Preparedness, issues related to timecards and pay surfaced. Up to this point, the department had done most of its training in-house and had not sent personnel across the country for training. At a certain level and from the viewpoint of the administration, it was easier to send police personnel to training than fire personnel because of the way their contracts were laid out. Eventually, this issue was worked out, but it required flexibility on the part of all involved. Jennings brought up the same issues related to trust between police and fire personnel related to information sharing that Dr. Straub had discussed (C. Jennings, personal communication, December 23, 2009).

## **H. SUMMARY**

The White Plains Department of Public Safety represents an organization that transitioned from nominal consolidation to a functioning administrative consolidation. Throughout most of its history, the department's police and fire bureaus had operated independently. As a result of the transition, the department truly acquired a public safety culture that facilitated a more holistic approach to public safety concerns. This culture has resulted in an increased level of collaboration between first responder services and a coordinated approach to Homeland Security. As a result of its cultural transition, the department now reflects the multijurisdictional goal of the Homeland Security construct. As part of this consolidation of services, the department has encountered challenges that deal with the different labor-related issues that affect the different disciplines that make up first responder services. With its restructuring, the department has made a commitment to deal with those challenges and continue to move towards delivering comprehensive public safety services.

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## **V. FINDINGS: INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

The historical development of the three case organizations is important to an understanding of their functions and missions. The Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety, for example, has had over fifty years to develop into what it is today. Culture had to be addressed immediately since the department transitioned from what had been a traditional police department into a fully consolidated department. As a result of many years and iterations of organizational structures, it has created a culture of consolidation and integration that permeates hiring and officer development, as well as the promotional processes. This culture has resulted in an understanding of the interconnectedness of public safety emergencies and a holistic approach to response.

The San Diego Harbor Police began as a security contingent that patrolled the harbor property. This organization developed into a law enforcement agency and eventually transitioned into having multiple integrated functions. Throughout this organization there is also an emphasis on developing a culture and leadership that supports the organization's structure, functions, and missions through a strong sense of collaboration mixed with a creative approach to consolidation.

The history of the White Plains Department of Public Safety shows that even a department that has operated a certain way for a long period of time can adapt if a collaborative culture is in place. Although White Plains began in 1916 as an administratively consolidated department with one budget and one commissioner, for years the police and fire bureaus operated separately. The consolidation was only nominal. It was not until 2002 that this culture of separation was addressed and began to change. The transition occurred from an organization that operated its police and fire functions separately to an organization that capitalized on its integrated structure by increasing collaborative efforts and developing a collaborative culture.

Each of these agencies purposefully established a new and distinctive culture as it sought to become an effectively consolidated department. Stinchcomb and Ordaz (2007) conclude in their study that considering the cultural implications of consolidation is key to the apparent success of this endeavor. The issue of culture is difficult to overcome and develop. The histories of these organizations show that it has taken time to develop the cultures of collaboration and integration that they now enjoy. Each one of the organizations started with single functions and single missions. Through adaptability and flexibility an environment of innovation emerged where those functions and missions developed into multiple functions and diverse missions. The development of flexibility and adaptability has allowed these departments to support a culture of collaboration and integration not found in departments steeped in tradition. Perhaps the fact that they have shown a willingness to break tradition organizationally and structurally has allowed them to become innovative, adaptive, and flexible.

The histories of these organizations show that, at some point in an organization's history, there must be a willingness to break from tradition and to come out of the silos that have been created. There must be organizational flexibility and adaptability that allows a culture of collaboration and integration to begin and thrive. These three cases demonstrate that this can occur at different times during an organization's development but that it is crucial that a culture develop and mature.

## **B. ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN**

Even though the case studies showed that the three organizations operate under different consolidation models, their overall structure is similar. All three have a single position at the top that has command over the entire organization because their missions transcend disciplines. This is representative of a unity of effort<sup>8</sup> and unity of command across disciplines that, according to the literature, are not seen in traditional organizations and may enhance collaboration. Hocevar, Thomas, and Jansen (2006) argue that

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<sup>8</sup> The Department of Defense defines unity of effort as the “coordination and cooperation toward common objectives, even if the participants are not necessarily part of the same command or organization—the product of successful unified action” (DoD Dictionary of Military Terms).

collaboration does not occur between and throughout organizations for reasons that include a history of distrust and leadership, systems, and structures that do not support collaboration.

Within each of these organizations, there are organizational pillars that support their design and maintain their structure. The idea of establishing a culture of consolidation and collaboration is the cornerstone, and it is demonstrated through the emphasis on an entire process that starts at the selection process for the employees of the organization and continues throughout their careers even as they rise through the ranks. This process institutionalizes collaboration in a way that allows an enhanced level of services accomplished through the leveraging of resources.

### **C. COLLABORATION**

Collaboration is at the core of these organizations regardless of the consolidation model they use. This was exemplified by the development of the concept of a public safety emergency rather than a police, fire, or EMS event. This demonstrates an understanding that events are interrelated and need to be addressed in an integrated fashion. Sunnyvale's case study represents the possibility of fully integrating disciplines that at times have been at odds in the field. The case involving San Diego Harbor Police shows how the organization was given a complex list of missions that it chose to address by creating an organization able to perform multiple functions. The organization discovered that many functions can be addressed through a multi-agency, multidiscipline, and multijurisdictional approach, as long as there is an emphasis on creativity while forming collaborative efforts. The White Plains case illustrates that an agency exhibiting organizational bias can overcome it by creating a collaborative culture, here one that resulted in the forming of USOC and the various task forces discussed in the study.

Pfeifer (2007, p. 207) argues that organizational bias stems from a desire of the members to belong to an omnipotent group that excludes those who are not part of it. He believes that organizations like the NYPD and FDNY did not consider sharing critical reports involving the impending tower collapse during 9/11. He argues that years of interagency fighting created a bias so strong between organizations that it was impossible

to overcome during a major crisis. Pfeifer (2007, p. 214) concludes, “Finally, there is the need for building a synergistic response network for preparedness. This point cannot be overstated. The term network implies interconnection into a cohesive fabric. In the context of incident response, this cohesion is possible only through a thorough familiarity with the capabilities and limitations of each member of the network, and a willingness to overcome organizational bias to ensure a free flow of information among all of the members.”

Pfeifer (2007, p. 213) also refers to several key functions and behaviors that must occur in order for organizations to overcome organizational bias. These functions and behaviors include but are not limited to synergy; dependence; common language; everyday interaction; interconnectedness; cohesiveness; familiarity; and free flow of information. The three organizations studied exemplify these characteristics in their structure, communication, and success in addressing varied needs within the communities they serve. The command structure of these models is unified even as it spans multiple disciplines, resulting in greater ability for these agencies to overcome organizational bias.

Organizational bias appears strong when agencies compete for limited resources. This often pits organizations against each other. Under these conditions a sense of dependence is not possible. However, consolidated departments share resources and creatively look for ways to leverage available funds, training, and equipment. Consolidated departments also show their interconnectedness through cohesive response, which comes as a result of a common organizational language, daily interaction, familiarity, and flow of information.

Just because a department is consolidated does not mean that it has capitalized on the benefits of integration. However, within consolidated departments that take advantage of integration, there is a sense that whatever happens to one part of the organization or within the jurisdiction it serves affects the entire entity. The connections are clearly felt even across disciplines with a long history of lack of communication and coordination. In contrast to the traditional approach of agencies that suffer from organizational bias and

struggle to remain independent from each other, an effectively consolidated department creates a culture of integration, interconnection, and innovation throughout the entire organization.

#### **D. HOMELAND SECURITY**

In the three cases studied, the departments attributed their ability to understand and support the Homeland Security mission to their organizational structure (consolidated models). They claimed that their structures develop, maintain, and encourage:

- 1) Better information sharing;
- 2) Better understanding across disciplines;
- 3) Integrated communications;
- 4) Strong ties to regional efforts;
- 5) Holistic view of public safety;
- 6) Daily collaboration which translates into big event collaboration;
- 7) Added capabilities;
- 8) Leveraged resources.

All of these are advantages when compared to the interaction that has been reported throughout the literature among traditionally organized first-responder services. The 9/11 Commission Report cited teamwork, collaboration, and cooperation at an incident site as critical to a successful response (2004, p. 396). The Homeland Security establishment needs to find models that show ways to increase teamwork and collaboration. These findings can be used as a vehicle to accomplish collaboration and coordination; reach common goals; establish trust and strong professional relationships; and deal with scarce budget resources.

Even though questions regarding leadership differences were not asked, several of the administrators interviewed highlighted the need for new kinds of leaders within the Homeland Security community. Within the developing field of homeland security, these

men noted that leaders must be able to handle interactions with people from organizations with different structures, cultures, missions, and goals. These new leaders may be called to influence and be influenced by others with fundamentally different ways of looking at the homeland security mission and to accept and grow from these other leaders within the field.

#### **E. ADVANTAGES**

The interviewees from the different case studies arrived independently at some similar conclusions regarding the advantages of the consolidated models in their service to the community and to the homeland security mission. The representatives of all three departments noted the enhanced response capability that came from increased communication between emergency response divisions or bureaus that increased the level of service to the community by leveraging the available resources. Each of those interviewed spoke to the advantages of interconnectedness within their consolidated departments as a result of a common organizational language, daily interaction, familiarity, and flow of information. There was a more cohesive response reported to daily emergencies as well as major events. As a result of shared command in these departments, there is a greater unity of effort in daily response and larger events.

#### **F. CHALLENGES**

The reported challenges were related to the way that the organizations are structured. For example, training accounted for one of the main challenges, although each department faced unique training issues. Sunnyvale reported that the training aspect was difficult to maintain since its officers are trained in three functions with different skill sets and certification requirements. San Diego reported a similar concern with the number of functions, areas of knowledge, and skill sets it is required to maintain. In contrast, White Plains reported that its training challenge has been related to differences in labor contracts between the police and fire personnel. For example, while the department encourages continued cross-training between police and fire personnel in rescue skills,

the fact that the two bureaus operate under different labor contracts can be an obstacle in developing joint skills useful in their involvement in homeland security-type capabilities.

Both Sunnyvale DPS and San Diego HP reported that maintaining officers as generalists as opposed to specialists presents unique challenges in a consolidated department. Departments that are either fully or partially consolidated require their personnel to perform multiple functions that require a larger skill set than a traditional police or fire department where the skill set refers only to one and at the most two disciplines.<sup>9</sup> In contrast, White Plains faced obstacles, at least initially, not from the need to cross-train its employees but from a sense of organizational bias as it attempted to change the culture of the department. However, all interviewed subjects confirmed the overall benefit to their departments and communities once these challenges were addressed and managed.

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<sup>9</sup> The reference to two disciplines deals with traditional fire departments that have personnel who engage in fire response as well as EMS response.

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## **VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. SUMMARY**

The way we define emergencies and the way that we organize the services that deal with them present a dilemma. When emergencies are exclusively characterized as police problems, fire problems, or emergency medical problems, the logical response is to organize emergency services separately. This allows for artificially created silos among response agencies. Emergencies ignore artificially created boundaries. From the routine, to the seasonal, to the catastrophic, very few emergencies are only a police problem, a fire problem, or an emergency medical problem. Most emergencies from the routine to the catastrophic require a cohesive multidisciplinary approach. There is a need to define and approach emergencies differently so that a collaborative environment can be supported.

Fire and police departments have long and respected traditions of service to the public in this country. The consolidation of police and fire services is a deviation from those traditions. A public safety department, as some consolidated departments are called, operates differently from a traditional police or fire department. These departments consolidate services, functions, or command structures in order to provide emergency services to the communities they serve. There are different consolidated models depending on the structural organization of the departments. For the purposes of this study, the consolidation models have been described as full consolidation, partial consolidation, and administrative consolidation.

The question researched in this study is: How might public safety consolidation models improve the execution of the homeland security mission? The hypothesis of the study is that consolidated departments, because of their organizational structure, their focus on multiple functions, and their multidisciplinary approach to emergency services can improve the execution of the homeland security mission and therefore need to be examined as professionals seek to find smart practices in the homeland security field.

After categorizing the three different consolidation models that were used in the study, three agencies were identified and chosen for a comparative case study. The Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety in California was chosen as representative of a fully consolidated department. The San Diego Harbor Police Department, also in California, was chosen as representative of a partially consolidated department. The White Plains Department of Public Safety, located in New York, was chosen as representative of an administratively consolidated department. Specific information related to the individual departments found in organizational documents and Web sites was used in order to obtain a descriptive picture of each of the agencies included in the study. These sources were supplemented by a set of six semistructured interviews with agency representatives. Five of the six representatives interviewed were current or former command staff. The results of the interviews were collated and coded. A cross-case synthesis form of analysis was performed on the information, and the results were included in the findings chapter.

## **B. CONCLUSIONS**

The claim of this thesis is that understanding and investigating the consolidation of police and fire services models is a positive addition to the homeland security dialogue. This dialogue continues to develop as public safety professionals engage in the process of understanding the multidisciplinary nature of homeland security. At the core of the efforts to secure the homeland lie concepts like collaboration, interoperability, unity of effort, and unity of command. As this new approach develops, there have been many efforts aimed at enhancing the way that agencies work together, but those efforts have often fallen short of the intended target. Until now, the problem has been approached as a cognitive problem and dealt with as such. This research has indicated that the problem can be addressed as a structural issue. Following are conclusions derived from this study:

- 1) Police and fire consolidation offers a mode of improving the homeland security mission. The consolidated models appear to be ready-made for the homeland security mission as departments organized in this fashion have institutionalized

interconnectedness, interoperability, and collaboration. Homeland security is inherently multidisciplinary. Its mission cannot be advanced by perpetuating the artificial silos that have been created through tradition. Interconnectedness, interoperability and collaboration need to be institutionalized to be effective. These consolidated models offer a way to institutionalize collaboration. The literature reviewed has shown that other approaches to increase collaboration have fallen short.

2) As a result of their organizational structure, consolidated departments develop an environment that promotes inter-disciplinary communication, unity of effort, unity of command, and collaboration. The collaboration deficit that appears within first responder disciplines is not a cognitive issue but a structural one. By addressing the structure of the organizations that are responsible to respond to complex interrelated emergencies, areas like communication, command, and ultimately collaboration are enhanced. The consolidated models researched have developed structures that support all of the aspects of collaboration.

3) The development of a multidisciplinary culture surfaced as an important element within these organizational models that allowed consolidation to occur and maintained collaborative efforts. This is a difficult endeavor that requires creativity and an ability to adapt to changing conditions. The presence of a multidisciplinary culture is an essential step towards maintaining an environment where collaboration is prominent. The development of that culture requires leadership and a total commitment by the organization to change and maintain that culture.

4) The idea of consolidation goes beyond the title of an organization. Consolidated departments that capitalize on their ability to integrate functions, disciplines, or missions are able to deliver an enhanced level of service to the community. Creative and innovative leaders in public safety departments have discovered ways to leverage the assets of their officers to create maximum benefits for the community and for the homeland security mission. They actively look for ways to incorporate the best training and structure so that the department is truly integrated to its fullest potential.

5) The concept of consolidation, especially when it is applied in its fullest form, allows for the creation of very rounded individuals who understand the different aspects of public safety and are committed to the multidisciplinary aspect of homeland security. Through cross-training the fire service as well as law enforcement can benefit from having practitioners who understand both services. Each of the first-responder disciplines benefits from having individuals with the ability to innovate, think critically, and lead. The fire service has been grappling with its place in the homeland security mission because the perception has been that the mission is law enforcement–centric. By achieving an understanding of a general public safety approach to emergencies, the fire service and law enforcement can benefit from this closer association.

### **C. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Considering the conclusions outlined above, it is evident that one of the principal considerations in forming and maintaining effective consolidated departments is organizational culture. The development of organizational mores that support a multidisciplinary disposition seems to be what allows these organizations to accomplish the goals that the homeland security dialogue encourages and expects. Following are recommendations that stem from the research:

Recommendations for traditionally structured departments:

Consider restructuring first-responder services and create departments that achieve the multidisciplinary aspect of homeland security.

Traditionally structured departments often struggle to meet the growing challenges of multifaceted expectations in the homeland security climate. They need to investigate the feasibility of creating consolidated departments. In order to accomplish this, there must be:

a) Visionary leadership. Hocevar, Thomas, and Jansen (2006) point out that leadership systems and structures need to support collaboration. The administrators who

were interviewed during this research commented that leadership is one of the key ingredients in creating a collaborative culture. Change of this magnitude in an organization needs to be started and supported from the top.

b) Willingness to change structure and create culture. In addition to leadership, the structure of an organization must also support collaboration. Artificially created disciplinary silos can be overcome through structure change. The case studies showed that interdependence can lead to the creation of a collaborative culture. This culture needs to be created, supported, and maintained, allowing it to affect the entire organization.

c) Supportive city government. Without the full support of the city council, board of supervisors, city manager or mayor, changes of this magnitude cannot occur. There must be an expectation from the city leadership of receiving comprehensive and efficient public safety services from first-responder agencies. This expectation can fuel the needed changes.

Develop a training curriculum that exposes police/fire to each other's experiences through college courses in criminal justice and fire science; police and fire academies; advanced development courses for current personnel; command level courses.

It is understood that there will be instances when consolidation is not possible in certain jurisdictions for a variety of legitimate reasons. However, the ideas contained within the findings and conclusions should be implemented. The 9/11 Commission report stated that the response to the attack of the Pentagon, although not flawless, was mainly a success for three reasons: strong professional relationships and the trust established among emergency responders in the area; the adoption of the Incident Command System (ICS); and the pursuit of a regional approach to response. As exemplified by the Arlington County area, these goals are achievable and can be used to improve the collaboration between jurisdictions and disciplines, and perhaps even encourage the integration of key areas.

In order to create that type of environment, I recommend the creation of a training curriculum for first responders, designed to foster collaboration by exposing them to each other's professional profiles, training, practices, and experiences. The objective of this

training would be to achieve the above-mentioned goals in order to improve the response capability of first responders in the homeland security arena. The ultimate outcome would be an improvement in the working relationship between law enforcement, the fire service, and EMS personnel. The training will encourage and develop strong professional relationships and trust among first responders by providing a way to know and understand each other better.

These strong professional relationships would facilitate the use of the Incident Command System. Because it is a flexible organizational structure, the ICS provides the ability to organize incidents of varying sizes. It requires its participants to have prior knowledge related to the roles they may take during the event and how those roles interact with each other. The interaction between the participants' roles is what allows the incident to be dealt with appropriately. If there are strong professional relationships in place prior to the event, the interactions are much more efficient. If all of this occurs in the regional arena, a regional approach to major responses is much easier to accomplish. The goal of this training would be to clearly present the benefits of such an integrated approach to major homeland security threats.

Recommendation for consolidated departments:

Establish an organization of consolidated departments from across the United States that would serve to advance the interest of America's public safety departments.

The establishment of such an organization would allow several important things to occur. First, it would be a vehicle through which the multidisciplinary message can be disseminated through training and education. Little is understood about the consolidation concept and models. An organization like this would be able to give a voice to the concept and a way to expand its creative ideas.

Second, this would create a forum where organizations can discuss innovative ideas as well as challenges. The crux of consolidation is that it is innovative and creative. Through the case studies, it was evident that there are advantages, as well as challenges, that are associated with the implementation of the concept. A national association of

public safety departments could provide the medium where advantages and challenges are highlighted, discussed, and resolved or advanced.

Third, this would create an opportunity for consolidated departments to leverage their model and increase their visibility and presence nationally. Generally, people do not like what they cannot understand. If the consolidated idea remains a mystery among first-responder organizations, then it is an idea that will not be implemented widely, regardless of its merits.

Recommendation for the Department of Homeland Security:

The Department of Homeland Security should continue and expand its support of multidisciplinary exercises like the San Francisco Bay Area UASI (Urban Area Security Initiative)–sponsored Urban Shield.

Urban Shield is a multidisciplinary training exercise designed to test the involved agencies' ability to create, support, and maintain a 50-hour sustained response to 25 different scenarios involving police tactical teams, as well as fire and EMS responses.

Multiple agencies<sup>10</sup> were involved in the planning and execution of this event, and they spent hours planning and constructing the variety of scenarios designed to simulate terrorist attacks, natural disasters, hostage situations, and more. Each of these scenarios was typical of a situation where a large-scale, multiple-agency response would be required in “real life.” Sunnyvale DPS SWAT team competed in this event in 2007, 2008, and 2009, and evaluators consistently remarked on the innovative way the team approached scenarios due to its cross-training and multidisciplinary background. As the events were debriefed by the teams, valuable feedback was gained from each scenario and from each department about how interoperability, communication, and execution could be improved. The Department of Homeland Security has supported this event through grant money. This support should continue and be expanded to different areas of the country.

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<sup>10</sup> There are 101 public and private sector organizations identified in the Web site as supporting agencies (Urban Shield Web site).

More agencies should be encouraged to participate in such regional events and Homeland Security dollars should be invested in providing these kinds of opportunities for teams to plan, train, and respond to simulated large-scale emergencies. Both consolidated departments and traditional departments would benefit from participating in regional events such as Urban Shield, which require agencies to communicate with others and break out of their silos to creatively plan, execute, and debrief these exercises.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) needs to take a position highlighting the advantages of consolidated departments by encouraging, and supporting their efforts to accomplish the homeland security mission.

The findings of this research highlight the comprehensive approach to public safety that consolidated departments embody. This approach fulfills the multidisciplinary focus that DHS promotes. Issues like interoperability, collaboration, and unified command are strongly represented within the structures of consolidated departments. DHS can take the opportunity to identify and promote these accomplishments by supporting these departments and acknowledging the contribution that such organizations provide to the homeland security mission.

#### Recommendation for the International City Managers Association:

The International City Managers Association should continue to support the consolidation idea by encouraging increased interdependency between police and fire departments; strengthening the idea of public safety emergencies; increasing the expectation that police and fire departments deliver public safety outcomes.

The ICMA has been one of the supporters of the consolidation concept. By helping to spread the concept of public safety emergencies and increasing the interdependency between police and fire departments, the ICMA can continue to support efficiency within first-responder organizations. The ICMA could also sponsor further research that would compare traditional structured police and fire departments with consolidated departments' crime statistics, fire loss, and customer satisfaction so that remaining questions related to these issues can be answered.

#### **D. FUTURE RESEARCH**

This thesis suggests that consolidated departments, because of their organizational structure, their focus on multiple functions, and their multidisciplinary approach to emergency services can improve the execution of the homeland security mission. The research suggests that the concept needs to be considered a smart practice in homeland security.

The idea of consolidating police and fire services requires quantitative research in addition to the qualitative intent of the case studies that were presented. This research needs to be followed up by measuring crime rates, quality-of-life issues, customer satisfaction, and fire loss within the cities that have consolidated departments. The research could compare metrics with those found in jurisdictions that operate with traditionally organized police and fire services. The focus on metrics would be complimentary to the case studies. The metrics could show if there is a substantial difference in service between consolidated departments and traditionally organized departments as related to crime rates and fire loss. It would also be interesting to find out if there is a difference in the support the communities give these departments and their feeling of safety. The purpose would be to further understand how changing the structure of first-responder organizations affects their contribution to the homeland security mission and to their service to the jurisdictions they serve.

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