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MEASURING POLICE PERFORMANCE

International
experience

Summary

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October 2007



MEASURING POLICE PERFORMANCE

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Increasingly, measuring the performance of the public sector has received considerable attention, including in the policing sector. There is an increased emphasis placed on a financial approach to public management. This includes two dimensions: a political dimension that consists of ensuring that services and regulations provide benefits that are proportional to their cost; and an organisational dimension, that affects the choice of public intervention methods in terms of the organisation and effectiveness of public services. Police services, as well as other criminal justice actors are searching for a police model that is financially affordable, accountable, durable, and compliant with ethical standards. It can be said that police performance is now measured within the context of applying business management principles. It is associated with the emergence of new demands placed on the police and subsequent interventions and models, such as *problem-oriented policing* and *community policing* (i.e. community police, or even local police). In addition, the development of information technologies (IT) has also led to significant changes in police crime recording practice.

Today, police services are generally expected to be able to justify, demonstrate and assess not only their activities, but also the impact of these activities on crime reduction and prevention. Therefore, while there is an emphasis placed on measuring police performance, there is also at times an expectation of *high performance* (eg. New Zealand) or even *police excellence* (eg. Belgium). To achieve this objective, countries have developed different methods, procedures and indicators according to police services.

This ICPC review focuses on methods implemented in nine cities, provinces or countries based on an issue that has proven to be of quasi-universal interest - how to measure the activities of the police to meet the diverse expectations of citizens, leaders and the police themselves. It appears that measuring prevention activities is the most complex among these activities. In this area, the police encounter difficulties in defining indicators of events that have not occurred, and in developing measurement tools for prevention, that often differ from conventional statistical tools.

For each police department examined, we include a table that summarises the main characteristics of the police organisation in the country. There is also a glossary that allows the reader to overcome any cultural specificities of the model, and to better understand the vocabulary related to the evaluation.

In North America

New York

The creator of the computerised data recording system (*Compstat*), the New York Police Department has included in its operating principles the standard of *accountability*. While sometime subject to criticism, the *Compstat* method is now implemented in several countries.

Chicago

The Chicago Police Department has benefited from the support of a team of researchers led by W. G. Skogan for more than 10 years. The creation and implementation of the Chicago's Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) has been the object of ongoing evaluation using a quasi-experimental method.

Quebec

The Public Administration Act of 2000 imposed new requirements on the Sûreté du Québec, forcing it to reassess its indicators. The Montreal Police Service measures its performance by evaluating its programmes and activities on an ongoing basis as a function of their particular objectives, rather than universal indicators.

In Oceania

Australia

At the federal level, Australia compares and publishes the results of all federal services and state services (6) using a common system, and specific indicators established according to the principles of equity, effectiveness and efficiency. At state level, the *Compstat* method is often used, under the name of *Operational Performance Review*.

In New Zealand

New Zealand has adapted the *Compstat* method according to its own principles, in particular transparency and collaboration with police services. An operational performance group has been put created to conduct reviews of services, and a performance measurement system is applied to the country's 12 police districts.

In Europe

England and Wales

Since 1999, police services have been subject to the new demands of *Best Value*, which involves a focus on reassessing methods used to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Since 2004, the performance measurement system has been examined to better understand the demands of citizens.

In Belgium

Police activities are planned on the basis of an analysis of the results of police services and various priorities imposed on these services. The federal government has a *Federal Security Plan* that sets out the integrated management of security. As a result of this plan, zonal security plans have been prepared at the local level on the basis of a strategic seminar that led to an argumentation table.

In France

The main and traditional statistical tool used in France, the 4001 is now complemented by studies by the Observatoire National de la Délinquance, which was launched in 2003. At the same time, the Organic Law for Finance Laws of 2001 requires a management control chain and the development of indicators common to the two main police departments: the National Police and the Gendarmerie.

In South America

Chile

In addition to the measurement tools used by the *Carabineros de Chile*, the *Subsecretaria de Carabineros de Chile*, which depends on the police but is led by a civilian, conducts a survey to evaluate public perception of the police.

The ICPC

The ICPC is an international forum for national governments, local authorities, public agencies, specialised institutions, and non-government organisations to exchange experience, consider emerging knowledge, and improve policies and programmes in crime prevention and community safety. The ICPC staff monitor developments, provide direct assistance to members, and contribute to public knowledge and understanding in the field.

The ICPC's action seeks to:

Enhance awareness of, and access to, its international knowledge base on prevention and human safety policies and intervention.

Promote the implementation of best practices and tools enhancing community safety.

Facilitate rewarding international exchanges between countries and cities, the justice system and civil society associations.

Provide technical assistance and facilitate expert interaction



Document available in French and in English,
soon to be available in Spanish on the ICPC website:

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