



**COPS**

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES  
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Response Guides Series  
Problem-Oriented Guides for Police

No. 3

# Shifting and Sharing Responsibility for Public Safety Problems

Michael S. Scott  
Herman Goldstein



Center for  
Problem-Oriented Policing



**Response Guides for Police  
Problem-Specific Guides Series  
No. 3**

**Shifting and Sharing  
Responsibility for Public Safety  
Problems**

**Michael S. Scott  
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The Internet references cited in this publication were valid as of April 2010. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the author(s) nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

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## About the Response Guide Series

The *Response Guides* are one of three series of the *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police*. The other two are the *Problem-Specific Guides* and *Problem-Solving Tools*.

The *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police* summarize knowledge about how police can reduce the harm caused by specific crime and disorder problems. They are guides to preventing problems and improving overall incident response, not to investigating offenses or handling specific incidents. Neither do they cover all of the technical details about how to implement specific responses. The guides are written for police—of whatever rank or assignment—who must address the specific problems the guides cover. The guides will be most useful to officers who:

- Understand basic problem-oriented policing principles and methods
- Can look at problems in depth
- Are willing to consider new ways of doing police business
- Understand the value and the limits of research knowledge
- Are willing to work with other community agencies to find effective solutions to problems

The *Response Guides* summarize knowledge about whether police should use certain responses to address various crime and disorder problems, and about what effects they might expect. Each guide:

- Describes the response
- Discusses the various ways police might apply the response
- Explains how the response is designed to reduce crime and disorder
- Examines the research knowledge about the response
- Addresses potential criticisms and negative consequences that might flow from use of the response
- Describes how police have applied the response to specific crime and disorder problems, and with what effect

The *Response Guides* are intended to be used differently from the *Problem-Specific Guides*. Ideally, police should begin all strategic decision-making by first analyzing the specific crime and disorder problems they are confronting, and then using the analysis results to devise particular responses. But certain responses are so commonly considered and have such potential to help address a range of specific crime and disorder problems that it makes sense for police to learn more about what results they might expect from them.



Readers are cautioned that the *Response Guides* are designed to *supplement* problem analysis, not to *replace* it. Police should analyze all crime and disorder problems in their local context before implementing responses. Even if research knowledge suggests that a particular response has proved effective *elsewhere*, that does not mean the response will be effective *everywhere*. Local factors matter a lot in choosing which responses to use.

Research and practice have further demonstrated that, in most cases, the most effective overall approach to a problem is one that incorporates several different responses. So a single response guide is unlikely to provide you with sufficient information on which to base a coherent plan for addressing crime and disorder problems. Some combinations of responses work better than others. Thus, how effective a particular response is depends partly on what other responses police use to address the problem.

These guides emphasize effectiveness and fairness as the main considerations police should take into account in choosing responses, but recognize that they are not the only considerations. Police use particular responses for reasons other than, or in addition to, whether or not they will work, and whether or not they are deemed fair. Community attitudes and values, and the personalities of key decision-makers, sometimes mandate different approaches to addressing crime and disorder problems. Some communities and individuals prefer enforcement-oriented responses, whereas others prefer collaborative, community-oriented, or harm-reduction approaches. These guides will not necessarily alter those preferences, but are intended to better inform them.

The COPS Office defines community policing as “a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.” These guides emphasize *problem-solving* and *police-community partnerships* in the context of addressing specific public safety problems. For the most part, the organizational strategies that can facilitate problem-solving and police-community partnerships vary considerably and discussion of them is beyond the scope of these guides.

These guides have drawn on research findings and police practices in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia. Even though laws, customs and police practices vary from country to country, it is apparent that the police everywhere experience common problems. In a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected, it is important that police be aware of research and successful practices beyond the borders of their own countries.





Each guide is informed by a thorough review of the research literature and reported police practice, and each guide is anonymously peer-reviewed by a line police officer, a police executive and a researcher prior to publication. The review process is independently managed by the COPS Office, which solicits the reviews.

For more information about problem-oriented policing, visit the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing online at [www.popcenter.org](http://www.popcenter.org). This website offers free online access to:

- The *Problem-Specific Guides* series
- The companion *Response Guides* and *Problem-Solving Tools* series
- Special publications on crime analysis and on policing terrorism
- Instructional information about problem-oriented policing and related topics
- An interactive problem-oriented policing training exercise
- An interactive *Problem Analysis Module*
- Online access to important police research and practices
- Information about problem-oriented policing conferences and award programs





## Acknowledgments

The *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police* series is very much a collaborative effort. While each guide has a primary author, other project team members, COPS Office staff and anonymous peer reviewers contributed to each guide by proposing text, recommending research and offering suggestions on matters of format and style.

The principal project team developing the guide series comprised Herman Goldstein, professor emeritus, University of Wisconsin Law School; Ronald V. Clarke, professor of criminal justice, Rutgers University; John E. Eck, professor of criminal justice, University of Cincinnati; Michael S. Scott, clinical assistant professor, University of Wisconsin Law School; Rana Sampson, police consultant, San Diego; and Deborah Lamm Weisel, director of police research, North Carolina State University.

Cynthia Pappas oversaw the project for the COPS Office. Stephen Lynch edited the guide. Research for the guides was conducted at the Criminal Justice Library at Rutgers University under the direction of Phyllis Schultze.

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This guide is a modified version of an article titled "Shifting and Sharing Police Responsibility to Address Public Safety Problems" by Michael S. Scott in *Handbook of Crime Prevention and Community Safety*, edited by Nick Tilley and published by Willan Publishing. The authors appreciate the cooperation of the editor and publisher in permitting this modification of the original article.





## Introduction

The public calls upon the police to respond to an astounding range of problems and to perform an extraordinary diversity of tasks, all the while assuming that police have the expertise and resources to do so. Many of these problems and tasks fall to the police through the default of others: from gaps in government services, to the abandonment of responsibility by private citizens, corporations, and other organizations. This has always been a concern. In recent years, through a more methodical approach to policing, police are increasingly pressing for a more rational distribution of responsibilities based upon a detailed examination of the differing facets of police business.

This guide details the ways in which police can persuade or coerce others to address crime and disorder problems. As such, it differs from other guides in the *Response Guides* series; whereas most *Response Guides* examine the kinds of responses that can be used to address common crime and disorder problems—crackdowns, street closings, publicity campaigns, video surveillance, and so forth—this guide examines how police can get others to respond to such problems, regardless of the form that such responses may take, provided they do not violate basic standards of propriety and legality.

Public safety problems are commonly addressed through a combination of responses; seldom is a single type of response sufficient. Of course, many public safety problems are adequately addressed by the police in the exercise of their normal authority and expertise. Increasingly, however, police and others are discovering that it is not only the police who have the authority and expertise to respond to many public safety problems; consequently, the police have come to depend heavily upon others to aid them in responding effectively to crime and disorder. There is growing evidence that by addressing the conditions that underlie crime and disorder problems, rather than merely looking to arrest offenders, police can more effectively prevent and control such problems.<sup>1</sup>



There is also growing evidence—much of it found in the literature on situational crime prevention—that demonstrates how public safety problems can be prevented, reduced, and controlled with little or no police involvement, a process by which police unquestionably benefit.<sup>†</sup> Indeed, the very process of producing the *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police*—particularly the review of police reports submitted to problem-oriented policing award programs<sup>‡</sup>—reveals that police frequently conclude that they must somehow get others to respond to problems that would otherwise be inadequately addressed if the police were forced to act alone.

Once the problem and a remedial strategy have been identified, it is important to determine which of the various stakeholders is in the best position to implement and enforce the proposed solution. Depending on the situation, the police, private citizens, industry, or the government may all bear some responsibility for addressing a problem. In some instances, it is clear that the police are the best choice. For example, where a criminal investigation and arrests are necessary, the police are typically responsible, as most other individuals and organizations lack the authority and expertise to perform such tasks. In other instances, however, it is clear that someone other than the police should be responsible. For example, where changes in corporate policies or practices are necessary, it is the corporation, not the police, that has the authority to effectuate the necessary policy decisions. In still other instances, although the response is clear, there may be any number of viable actors who are able to accept responsibility for carrying the response to fruition. For example, where educating, warning, or advising citizens is called for, it is very much an open question whether the police or someone else should be responsible for developing and delivering the message.

There are few firm rules that dictate who is primarily responsible for addressing a particular public safety problem. What rules, for example, dictate who is responsible for preventing and controlling retail theft? Is it the police? The shop? The consumer? The insurance carrier? The difficulty arises because every problem stems from a variety of sources, each of which can plausibly be said to bear some responsibility for its remediation. Much depends on who possesses the skill, knowledge, authority, and resources to implement changes that will effectively reduce or control the problem. However, much also depends on who possesses the political power to avoid accepting responsibility—leaving to others, including the police, the responsibility for dealing with the problem. Although important, the full range of

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<sup>†</sup> See the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing online library at [www.popcenter.org/library-recommended\\_readings\\_2.htm](http://www.popcenter.org/library-recommended_readings_2.htm) for further readings on situational crime prevention.

<sup>‡</sup> The two most prominent award programs are the Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing (administered in the United States) and the Tilley Award (administered in the United Kingdom).



factors that determine legal and moral responsibility for public safety problems, as well as the processes and sources of authority under which such determinations are made, are beyond the scope of this guide.<sup>†</sup>

This guide focuses on problems that police accept as falling within their proper mandate and that they feel obliged to address—even though the acceptance of a measure of responsibility for dealing with a problem should not automatically burden the police with the sole responsibility for it. This guide does not address the problems and duties that police seek to transfer to others on the ground that they do not fall within the proper scope of police power and authority. Many police agencies find themselves performing a variety of duties that have little to do with their core functions. Some argue that tasks such as providing funeral and banking escorts, teaching moral values to schoolchildren, guarding construction sites, transporting probation violators to jail, investigating intrusion alarms, and the like, should not be police duties. To some degree, police have been the victims of their own success in advancing the principles of community policing because some outreach efforts have resulted in citizens bringing problems to the police that the police may not be best suited to address. And although police may encourage citizens to bring crime and disorder problems to their attention in the hope that other agencies will collaborate in addressing them, many problems that are brought forward result in little or no commitment to cooperation.

Although some individuals will not question the basis upon which the police ask others to assume responsibility for addressing a problem, the force of such requests can be greatly strengthened if police can explain persuasively the rationale for the request, including:

- How compliance with the request will address the problem
- The basis for police knowledge about the effectiveness of the proposed response
- What measures police have already taken to resolve the problem
- The limitations of those measures
- The benefits to all concerned if new practices are adopted voluntarily

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<sup>†</sup> How responsibility for addressing public safety problems is apportioned in society has more far reaching implications than can be discussed in this guide. For further exploration of those issues, see Scott (2005).



Police are increasingly seeking to shift and share responsibility for addressing public safety problems, largely because of several trends within and without the police profession, including:

- An increased police emphasis on prevention and proactivity
- An increased emphasis on and capability for conducting detailed analysis of police workloads
- The recognition that incidents often cluster around concentrated sources—common places, offenders, victims, and times—which, if dealt with effectively, can greatly reduce the magnitude of the problem
- An increased emphasis on efficiency, especially in times of tightened budgets and heightened fiscal awareness

Determining and assigning responsibility for addressing public safety problems will become ever more important as the general understanding of what causes problems and what best addresses them improves. Until better arrangements are made within local communities and in society at large for determining and assigning such responsibilities, it will continue to fall to police to analyze public safety problems and to take the lead in apportioning responsibility for addressing them.

Problem-oriented policing depends heavily on strong, mutually trusting partnerships among police and other entities and constituencies, partnerships in which each party assumes its fair share of responsibility. The overriding goal of problem-oriented policing is to adopt responses to community problems that are more equitable and effective for the community as a whole than are current responses. Police should not set out merely to divest themselves of responsibility for various tasks. It is only after careful exploration and analysis that police should conclude that someone else should be doing something different to better control a particular crime or disorder problem.





## Methods for Shifting and Sharing Responsibility for Public Safety Problems

The police can apply a variety of methods to get others to assume greater responsibility for public safety problems.<sup>2</sup> The list of methods in Figure 1 on page 12 is not intended to be exhaustive or definitive, but rather illustrative. One way in which the methods differ is the degree of coercion that police apply to achieve their objective. The list begins with methods that are generally less coercive and proceeds to those that are generally more coercive, although the degree of coercion may depend upon the specific context and not necessarily on the nature of the method applied.

In many instances, it may make sense to first employ the methods that are relatively non-coercive and to move to more coercive methods only if the former fail to achieve the desired cooperation. (See “Determining the Appropriate Degree of Pressure to Shift Responsibility,” on page 30, for further discussion of this matter.)

In its ultimate form, the police effort to shift responsibility for public safety problems entails assisting others to develop the capacity to identify and rectify problems without further police intervention. A prime example occurs where police work at the neighborhood level helps residents develop what sociologists term collective efficacy, “the ability of neighborhoods to realize the common values of residents and maintain effective social controls.”<sup>3</sup> Short of a complete shift in responsibility, in most instances police look to shift or share part of the responsibility with respect to a specific problem or set of problems, bounded in time and space.

Explanations and examples of the successful application of the various methods for shifting and sharing responsibility for public safety problems follow. For many of the examples, a more complete and detailed account can be found in the original source documents, many of which are accessible online via the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing website at [www.popcenter.org](http://www.popcenter.org).

In many instances, police and others employ a variety of methods to address a problem, thereby complicating efforts to understand precisely the effect that each method has had on the problem. The methods used are not mutually exclusive.

For example, where the police succeed in encouraging another agency to confront the persons causing a particular problem, while at the same time they persuade a legislative body to enact a law imposing special fees for the relevant police services, a combination of methods has been employed.



### **Figure 1. Methods for Convincing Others to Accept Responsibility for Community Problems**

- Educating others regarding their responsibility for the problem
- Making a straightforward informal request of some entity to assume responsibility for the problem
- Making a targeted confrontational request of some entity to assume responsibility for the problem
- Engaging another existing organization that has the capacity to help address the problem
- Pressing for the creation of a new organization to assume responsibility for the problem
- Shaming the delinquent entity by calling public attention to its failure to assume responsibility for the problem
- Withdrawing police services relating to certain aspects of the problem
- Charging fees for police services related to the problem
- Pressing for legislation mandating that entities take measures to prevent the problem
- Bringing a civil action to compel entities to accept responsibility for the problem

Two important notes of caution are in order. First, many of the examples cited below are drawn from reports prepared by police agencies. Although such reports have been widely accepted and considered credible, few of these initiatives have benefited from rigorous and independent evaluation; consequently, the conclusions drawn should not be considered the sort of proof that is demanded by social science. The study of policing would benefit greatly by subjecting police initiatives to more rigorous assessment. Second, some methods



that police may propose to persuade others to assume greater responsibility for addressing public safety problems, such as a newly-crafted ordinance, will undoubtedly face legal challenges. Police should make full use of legal counsel where such challenges are likely. At the same time, however, counsel would be well-advised not to reflexively nix all initiatives that might face such a challenge. Proper legal analysis in the problem-oriented context may, on balance, conclude that the degree of coercion inherent in the new alternative may be less intrusive and more refined than is current practice. An ordinance controlling solicitation for prostitution, for example, may be preferable—in both the resulting fairness and effectiveness—than continued overuse of less discriminate arrest and prosecution.

## Educating Victims and Offenders

Police have long been involved in systematically conveying information to the public on how to prevent crime. They do this through presentations, brochures, and a variety of other programs. Some of these efforts are aimed broadly at the general public; others are targeted at specific constituencies. Educational messages and programs are directed either at potential victims, instructing them on how to avoid being victimized, or at potential offenders, instructing them on how to avoid offending. Central to all of these efforts, however, is the fact that those to whom the message is directed are in a position to take actions that will protect themselves from either victimization or arrest. Such educational materials and presentations are generally low-key; one can take the advice or ignore it. Educational messages to potential offenders adopt a helpful rather than a warning tone: they are aimed at people who are inclined to obey the law, but who might offend out of ignorance or carelessness.

- San Diego, California police analysis found that a high percentage of sexual assault cases were acquaintance rapes involving teenagers. By examining and analyzing the relevant case files, the sexual assault unit identified the patterns of conduct that led to such assaults and then constructed a school-based curriculum designed to inform students on reducing the risk of victimization. The initiative produced brochures—different ones for males and females—that sought to inform students, using language and scenarios familiar to them, about what constitutes acquaintance rape, about how women can avoid being victimized by it, and about how men can avoid being accused of it.<sup>4</sup>



- Based upon the analysis of their experience in dealing with crime and disorder in apartment complexes, some police agencies have developed remedial manuals for both landlords and tenants, and sponsor seminars at which such materials are presented.<sup>5</sup> The goal is to encourage both landlords and tenants to assume more responsibility for conditions in their housing units by employing specific prevention measures, such as the enforcement of occupancy restrictions and prohibitions against illegal activity, control over entry and public areas, the installation and operation of security systems, and so forth. In many instances, persuading property owners and managers to lease only to responsible tenants, to enforce the rules that govern proper behavior on the premises, and to design and maintain properties in ways that discourage problems can be more effective than criminal law enforcement.
- Concerned about the problem of underage drinking, police in Plano, Texas developed an informational presentation for the owners and managers of stores licensed to sell alcoholic beverages outlining the measures that could be taken to help store clerks comply with laws prohibiting the sale of alcohol to minors. Although stern warnings and enforcement were essential components of the initiative, police found that some clerks were confused about the law and about how to detect fraudulent attempts to purchase alcohol. Consequently, the informational programs were more than a way of issuing a polite warning; they in fact helped people who were inclined to obey the law to do so.<sup>6</sup>
- Police in Lancashire, England and in Portland, Oregon have conducted and supported programs designed to educate hotel and motel owners on how to recognize common crimes—ranging from burglary to prostitution to drug manufacturing—and how to prevent them from occurring in their establishments.<sup>7</sup>
- To address the problem of children being hit by cars, police in Hamilton-Wentworth, Ontario spearheaded an initiative to develop educational materials and programs designed to teach children how to cross streets safely. The materials and programs were based upon a careful understanding of how young children best learn and apply new rules and skills and was informed by advice from traffic engineers, educators, childcare professionals, parents, and public health officials.<sup>8</sup>
- Police in Blackpool, England, in partnership with local government, health, and transportation authorities, liquor licensees, community groups, and the media, developed an educational campaign to inform visitors on how to behave in and around licensed establishments in order to avoid becoming either an offender or a victim.<sup>9</sup>



## Making a Straightforward Informal Request

The use of straightforward requests is a natural first step that police take when seeking to have specific individuals or organizations take responsibility for addressing a crime or disorder problem. Naturally, a positive response to the initial request obviates the need for any increased pressure.

Here, the police are not simply broadcasting prepared advice on prevention to a large audience. Rather, they are focused upon asking citizens to resolve an immediate problem by taking a specific remedial action. Although the fact that the police are making the request may imply that consequences will follow if the request is ignored, it is often the case that police are merely informing a citizen of something of which she was not aware, and the citizen gratefully and graciously complies with the request.

- Police in Chula Vista, California concluded that new housing developments were vulnerable to burglary simply because many of the homes were not designed to safeguard against it. Based upon their analysis of the problem, police developed a series of recommendations on how new homes could be designed and built to deter burglary and made a complete presentation of their findings to executives of the largest housing development companies in the target area. Ultimately, the developers entered into a memorandum of understanding whereby they agreed to install recommended locks and windows in all new houses and to assist the police with other burglary prevention measures. Although the developers did not accept all of the recommendations, the police achieved some improvement without resorting to confrontation or coercion. Early indicators suggest that the new measures are contributing to significantly improved burglary rates in the target area.<sup>10</sup>
- After an exhaustive analysis of the problem of appliance thefts from houses under construction, police in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina concluded that the best method of preventing such thefts was for builders to delay the installation of appliances until after a house had been purchased and properly secured by its new owner. Police presented their analysis to area builders, several of which voluntarily agreed to adopt the proposed policy. As a consequence, appliance thefts in the target area were reduced significantly.<sup>11</sup>



## Making a Targeted Confrontational Request

One of the clearest results of recent changes in policing is the increased tendency of police agencies to confront aggressively those adjudged responsible for a large volume of incidents that fall to the police to handle. Police typically resort to this more confrontational mode when straightforward requests are ignored.

Typically, police document both how a problem is caused and how it is aggravated by the actions or inactions of others. The resulting documentation is then presented to the offending party, together with a request that preventive measures be taken. The hope is that when confronted with such documentation the party will feel obliged to assume responsibility for taking the requisite preventive measures. However, depending on the specific situation, the confrontation may be bolstered by either a subtle implication or a more overt threat that failure to comply will result in more coercive measures. The potential for more coercive measures argues for a high standard of accuracy by police in documenting conditions.

Community policing efforts, which place a great deal of emphasis on cultivating relationships with citizens affected by problems, also contribute to an increase in confrontational requests. Whether confronting a drug house, a troublesome bar, or disorderliness in a park, police may feel empowered to be more confrontational by virtue of the support they receive from aggrieved citizens.

- Police in Peel, Ontario identified establishments with a high incidence of serving persons subsequently arrested for drunken driving and forwarded the information to the local liquor licensing board. Armed with these data, licensing officials confronted the owners of the problem establishments, advised them to take preventive measures, and offered detailed advice and training for management and staff on how to meet their legal obligations. These confrontational requests were made prior to the initiation of any formal investigation in order to allow the proprietors to comply voluntarily with the law.<sup>12</sup>
- Police in St. Louis, Missouri informed a finance company that a property it had financed was being used for illegal drug trafficking. This suggested to the company that their investment was at risk, perhaps of being seized by the government. Realizing that an outright foreclosure and eviction of the property's elderly resident might bring adverse publicity, the company instead opted to pay the offending resident to relinquish the property and move out. The finance company then took possession of the property, thereby eliminating the drug trafficking problem.<sup>13</sup> In this case, police did not need to ask the finance company to take remedial measures; merely bringing the matter to its attention suggested the proper course of action.



- Police in Miami, Florida persuaded wholesale fruit and vegetable merchants to improve their method for disposing of discarded produce, to clean up and improve the appearance of the commercial area in which they operated, and to improve the traffic flow and parking of commercial vehicles, all as part of an effort to reduce crime and disorder in a large outdoor produce market. These improvements helped to reduce the population of transient criminals in the area and to alleviate traffic congestion.<sup>14</sup>

## Engaging Another Existing Service Agency

Much police business consists of handling problems and cases that fall through holes in the social safety net or that constitute an overflow stemming from the limited resources of other agencies: mentally-ill persons who are not adequately cared for in the community; drug addicts who do not receive adequate treatment services; parks, playgrounds, and housing developments that are not adequately maintained; cars and homes that are abandoned; and so forth. In such cases, police sometimes attempt to shift the responsibility for crime prevention to another government agency or nongovernmental organization that provides relevant services in the community.

In-depth inquiry of the type called for in problem-oriented policing often identifies a default or a gap in services that, if corrected, would reduce or eliminate a problem. Although a particular situation or circumstance may initially be characterized as a crime or law enforcement problem, penetrating inquiry often redefines the problem and more clearly identifies the conditions that contribute to it. Thus, a problem initially reported as disorderly, threatening teenagers may upon further analysis turn out to be a case of strained relationships between senior citizens and teenagers that is brought on by the policies of a neighborhood school. Engaging school authorities in exploring preventive strategies may well result in their taking responsibility for the problem.

Brokering preventive strategies to another agency can create tension if the agency perceives the police initiative as an effort to set the agency's agenda or to off-load work onto it. This is particularly true during periods of government retrenchment when budgets may be limited. Other agencies might not be precisely positioned to provide the type or level of service recommended by police and may need additional resources to meet these new service demands.

Often, public health and safety departments and nongovernmental organizations that serve the disaffected and disenfranchised must weigh the initiatives recommended by the police against other priorities. Therefore, the documentation of the case by the police and the links they are able to establish between their findings and their recommendations can be critically important.



It is equally important for police to establish an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding between themselves and agencies with overlapping interests; applying more coercive measures to shift responsibility is warranted only when trust and mutual understanding have broken down. The whole movement toward greater institutional partnerships has been tremendously important in this regard. Whether such partnerships are mandated by legislation, as is the case in the United Kingdom, or are either wholly voluntary or compelled by executive decree, as is more common in the United States, police requests that other agencies change their policies and practices are better received if the members of those agencies understand and trust the police. Indeed, some individuals and organizations may see such police requests as helpful rather than coercive. In some cases, police documentation of a problem has been used by local authorities and governmental organizations to justify programs they have long advocated. In other cases, private groups have used police documentation to justify expansions in their programs and supporting budgets.

- A police constable in Lancashire, England succeeded in resolving a longstanding problem in which a scrap yard was used to sell stolen vehicles and generally was a source of nuisance to the community. The constable did so not by enforcing the criminal law, as had been tried before, but rather by referring the matter to the local environmental protection agency. That agency found, upon inspection, that the scrap yard was inadequately protected against the emission of hazardous pollutants. Rather than complying with new environmental protection requirements, the scrap yard operator opted instead to close the business.<sup>15</sup>
- Relying on careful data analysis, police in Blackpool, England persuaded outside agencies that the most prolific drug-addicted criminal offenders ought to receive intensive drug treatment and other social services immediately upon release from incarceration. This ran counter to conventional practices, wherein many newly released offenders were forced to wait long periods for drug treatment, by which time most had resumed using drugs and committing crime. Police engaged probation officials, prosecutors, social workers, and drug treatment providers to ensure that qualifying offenders who were willing to accept such services received them in a timely and reliable fashion. A 12-month evaluation indicated that the initiative yielded a 30 percent reduction in reported crime in the target area, no evidence of geographical displacement, and evidence that most offenders participating in the program had committed fewer offenses while receiving treatment than they had in a comparable period before treatment.<sup>16</sup>





- Police in Fremont, California succeeded in persuading the local domestic violence victim assistance program to accept direct referrals from police officers. Police demonstrated through analysis that there was a critical need to give high priority services to repeat victims of domestic violence. Previously, victims themselves had had to seek out such services. An assessment of the intervention indicated a demonstrable reduction in repeat calls for police services to victims of domestic violence. In this instance, although the police assumed a greater responsibility for dealing with chronic domestic violence victims and offenders, their closer working relationship with other service providers enabled them to concentrate limited police and social service resources on the most problematic individuals.<sup>17</sup>
- Police in Charlotte, North Carolina initiated discussions with the Mexican consulate and local banks to persuade recent Mexican immigrants to use secure financial services for bank and checking accounts, wire transfers, and so forth, in order to reduce the amount of cash carried by—and stolen from—immigrants. The police recognized that a lack of trust and understanding of U.S. financial institutions discouraged recent immigrants from adopting safer and less expensive financial practices and further recognized that the consulate and banks were better positioned to convey this message to immigrants than were the police.<sup>18</sup>

## Pressing for the Creation of a New Organization

Police are not always in a position to implement measures that will best address a specific problem, and there may not be any other appropriate entity to do so. Police may then find themselves advocating the creation of a new organization with the mandate and resources to address the problem.

With the increase in efforts to organize neighborhoods, especially in large urban areas, it is frequently not necessary for police to be the primary catalyst of such efforts; instead, police often assume a supportive role. There are also situations in which a community organization grows organically out of concern for a given problem, with the police enlisted in support of the objective. However, as organizations come into existence and are sustained, police find that they are gradually transferring responsibility for specific prevention strategies to the new organizations.



- In an effort to reduce the large demand upon police resources created by divorced parents seeking assistance with the enforcement of child custody orders, police in Fresno, California helped establish and promote the use of the privately owned and operated Child Custody Program. The Child Custody Program assists parents with child custody exchanges by providing a safe facility where parents can exchange children without the need for interaction. The Child Custody Program also mediates disputes between parents about custody orders. Police worked with the courts to develop a process that allowed parents to file their own court reports alleging breaches of custody orders. The new program and procedures reduced the volume of calls for police service for this problem by about half. Thus, the police interest in preventing domestic disputes and violence related to child custody was met in a more efficient manner.<sup>19</sup>
- Police in Glendale, California organized an effort to create a new center for day laborers as a means of eliminating the disorder, drunkenness, fighting, loitering, noise, litter, and traffic congestion attendant to an unregulated day labor market. Police secured commitments from private charitable organizations to operate the center and its programs, which included social services, language improvement classes, and legal and labor negotiation services. The local transportation authority provided the land and a local building supply company donated the materials to construct the new facility and the staff to help operate it. An advisory board comprising representatives of the various stakeholders was created to oversee the center. Police then persuaded local authorities to pass an ordinance that required all day laborers to secure employment through the center. The net result was a dramatic reduction in all aspects of the problem, a marked improvement in the employability, wages, and working conditions of laborers, and a substantial reduction in demands on police and other emergency services.<sup>20</sup>
- Police in Racine, Wisconsin concluded that one solution to cleaning up drug-infested neighborhoods was to purchase problem properties and either convert them for use as community police stations or refurbish and sell them to responsible occupants. In order to accomplish this, police convinced local business leaders to create a private not-for-profit organization that could buy and sell real estate for the purposes espoused by the police and city government. This new arrangement led to the purchase and rehabilitation of a significant number of residential properties and inspired other private redevelopment in troubled neighborhoods. The initiative yielded dramatic reductions in violent and property crime, a concomitant reduction in calls for police services, and a substantial improvement in the housing stock in the target areas.<sup>21</sup>



- Police in Fontana, California worked with over 20 local charities, churches, and businesses to form a new network of services for homeless individuals, many of whom were creating extraordinary problems for police by their criminal and disorderly behavior. The so-called Transient Enrichment Network consolidated services for the homeless, providing a central facility where each individual's special needs—whether mental or physical health, job placement, housing, food and shelter, or substance abuse—could be diagnosed and addressed. This new network inspired police officers to deal more directly with homeless individuals, confident that doing so would lead to improvements in the individual's behavior and circumstances. Early results were overwhelmingly positive: over 500 individuals benefited from the program in its first two years of operation. Moreover, crimes and calls for police service attributed to homeless individuals declined substantially.<sup>22</sup>

## Shaming Delinquent Parties

Public shaming is often an intermediate step between the type of private confrontation described earlier and resort to legal action. The stakes in resorting to public shaming are high for both the police and those against whom it is directed. The police must obviously be on solid ground. Public reputation is of great value to individuals, businesses, and agencies; hence, having police publicly discredit them can have significant long-term consequences. This method of shifting responsibility can be perceived as the most coercive. Consequently, police typically resort to it only after more private methods of persuasion have failed. The police goal is to call to public attention the nature of the problem, the factors that cause or contribute to the problem, the reasonableness of police requests, the refusal or failure to respond to less coercive measures, and the arguments for holding others accountable for their contributions to the problem.

- Police in Lancashire, England sent letters to the registered owners of vehicles spotted cruising around areas in which street prostitution was a problem.<sup>23</sup> Although the tone of the letters was purely educational, the unspoken effect—and no doubt intention—of the letters was to expose “curb crawlers” to possible shame by creating a risk that others might read the letters. Similarly, police in many jurisdictions collaborate with local media outlets to publicize the arrests of persons caught soliciting prostitutes.<sup>24</sup>
- In an effort to reduce alcohol-related problems in Green Bay, Wisconsin, police officers persuaded local media outlets to expose both the irresponsible practices of certain tavern owners and the reluctant enforcement of alcohol licensing sanctions by certain public officials. This effort, in combination with other actions, resulted in the closing of several problem taverns through stricter enforcement of liquor licensing provisions and a concomitant reduction in calls for police services, all of which inspired new economic development in and a nearly complete transformation of the target area.<sup>25</sup>



- Police in a number of jurisdictions have developed ranking or rating systems by which they communicate to the general public the relative security of different vehicles, alarm systems, houses, apartment complexes, and parking facilities.<sup>26</sup> Operated by British police, the Secured by Design program is a prime example of how publicity for meeting safety and security standards can become institutionalized. This sort of publicity both rewards the manufacturers and operators of responsibly designed and managed products and properties with favorable ratings and penalizes those with unfavorable ratings.
- Seeking to persuade a reluctant owner to improve the management and design of a video arcade in the hope of reducing the problems associated with its disorderly clientele, police in Delta, British Columbia recruited a local university's environmental criminology students to conduct a detailed study comparing the problematic arcade with others in the area. The findings, which clearly demonstrated the inadequacies of the arcade's design and management, were presented to local government officials and reported in the media. As a result of the adverse publicity and persuasive findings, the arcade owner agreed to the requested changes and the city council enacted a new bylaw requiring minimum safety and security provisions for all arcades in the jurisdiction. Attendant calls for police service declined substantially. Perhaps the ultimate measure of success was achieved when the arcade owner began advertising that his arcade was safe and secure because it adhered to the highest industry standards.<sup>27</sup>

## Withdrawing Police Services

Police occasionally seek to force the adoption of preventive strategies by refusing to respond, investigate, arrest, or take other official action where an individual or organization has refused to implement measures that are designed to reduce the likelihood of victimization. If a complete service withdrawal is not feasible, police may respond with fewer resources, which can be done by lowering the priority given to certain types of incidents, by putting more of the reporting burden on the complainant, or by reducing the level of follow-up service after the taking of an initial report.

Typically, the withdrawal or modification of police services occurs in the context of a business operation, where there is overwhelming evidence that a problem would be eliminated if certain measures were put in place, measures which the business owner or operator will not implement based upon a belief that doing so would reduce sales.

The decision to withdraw services should only be made after a consideration of the disparate impact withdrawal might have on those who cannot afford even the most elementary remedial measures. For example, where imposing such a cost forced an already marginal business to close its doors, an additional consequence might be to deprive a depressed neighborhood of a vital business or service.



Complete withdrawal of police service is rare, most likely because police are reluctant to be seen as refusing to perform what others perceive as “their job.” Police may also worry that the failure to respond to a simple request for assistance may result in their failing to attend to a more serious infraction than the one that was originally reported.

Most service withdrawals arise out of commercial transactions that are arguably civil rather than criminal matters. A few typical examples follow.

- Some police agencies refuse to respond to reports of motorists who drive away from self-service gas stations without paying where a station has experienced a high volume of drive-offs but has refused to install a pre-payment system. Alternatively, police may merely refuse to send an officer to take the report of such an incident, instead requiring station staff to file a form with police.
- Police may refuse to investigate a case in which a diner leaves a restaurant without paying, particularly if the restaurant has a poor system for monitoring customers and collecting payments.
- Police may advise shops that have checks returned for lack of sufficient funds that they will not investigate the incident, especially if the store does not require proper identification or does not maintain a registry of those from whom checks will not be accepted. Alternatively, police may require merchants who expect the police to process bad check cases to obtain a fingerprint on the back of the cashed check.

Other than commercial transactions, the most common incident that police refuse to provide service for is intrusion alarms that have not been verified as suspicious. (See the example and reference under “Pressing for Legislation,” on page 24.)

## Charging Fees for Police Services

Some police agencies seek to recover the cost of providing a particular service from the individuals who benefit from the service. The rationale for cost recovery is that those who make excessive claims are consuming more than their fair share of public resources, or at least more than their tax payments reasonably entitle them to. In some jurisdictions, legislation authorizes police to recover the actual cost of police investigations from defendants. In 2003, for example, police in Oakland, California successfully recovered \$35,000 in investigative costs from the owners of a problematic motel.<sup>28</sup> Elsewhere, police and emergency rescue agencies charge thrill-seekers for the costs of rescue if their adventures go awry. Increasingly, police are extending the cost recovery principle to owners whose properties generate an inordinate volume of calls, such as taverns and apartment complexes.



Such fees are not intended as penalties; therefore, recovery is typically limited to the actual cost to the police agency. Nonetheless, the fees provide an economic incentive to individuals and businesses to keep the cost of police services under control by keeping problem behaviors under control.<sup>†</sup>

- Among the most common problems with which police deal are security alarm systems installed in homes and businesses, which account for an extraordinarily large percentage of police business in many areas. In fact, well over 90 percent of all such alarms are false, whether the result of system malfunction, triggering by animals, or operator error. In this situation, the business person or private citizen has taken responsibility for a prevention strategy, but ends up imposing a major portion of the cost associated with that strategy on police. In response, police in many jurisdictions have arranged for the enactment of a fee schedule that escalates based upon the number of false alarms that are handled, thereby pressuring the user to take actions to prevent the alarm from registering falsely. In other areas, an annual fee is assessed in anticipation of whatever services the police may be called upon to render in connection with an alarm, including simply maintaining their readiness.
- Police in Halton, Ontario successfully addressed chronic problems involving alcohol-related crime and disorder—including several full-scale riots—at a large dance club, in part by shifting some of the cost for police service back to the club’s owners. After strict law enforcement and efforts to close the club had proven impractical and ineffective, police successfully lobbied for a change in the liquor licensing law so that licenses stipulated that the cost of any excessive consumption of police resources resulting from efforts to ensure safety and security in the neighborhood of a licensed establishment would be charged to the license holder.<sup>29</sup>

## Pressing for Legislation

In addition to having recourse to the many laws that directly proscribe illegal and harmful conduct, police have long been aided by a variety of municipal ordinances and administrative regulations that are designed to manage and control the conditions that foster and engender offending and harm. These reflect a legislative judgment that certain businesses, organizations, and individuals are responsible for ensuring that the activities in which they are engaged are carried out in a safe and orderly fashion; a prime example is the extensive regulation of the sale of alcoholic beverages. Police now commonly establish conditions for issuing permits for public events such as parades, festivals, demonstrations,

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<sup>†</sup> Fees differ from fines in that fees merely recoup the government’s costs while fines may exceed the government’s costs, imposing punitive costs. Either fees or fines can be effective incentives to encourage those required to pay them to change their policies and practices so that police are less likely to be needed.



and street parties—conditions that require event organizers to provide for the public's safety and to prevent disorder and crime. The primary responsibility for such measures rests with the license or permit holder. The police role is secondary: to reinforce the responsibility of the license or permit holder through regulatory enforcement. By virtue of the special knowledge they have acquired by analyzing crime and disorder problems, police are often in a position to propose specific new laws and regulations that assign responsibility for controlling criminogenic conditions to certain individuals, businesses, or groups, and that impose penalties upon those who fail to do so.<sup>†</sup>

The adoption of such measures is typically preceded first by informal public discussions and later by formal public hearings. The police may be among the proponents; occasionally, they are the initiators. And in the typical scenario, the individuals upon whom the new regulatory burden will fall oppose the proposal. The evidence in support of such a proposal is sometimes more anecdotal than statistical and efforts may be made to introduce data that are imprecise or unverifiable. One exception to this pattern is the heated debate over whether to require convenience stores to keep two or more staff on duty at specified hours of the day; this debate has drawn heavily on studies that measure the value of the strategy, and has been especially contentious because of the conflicting results of those studies.

- To reduce residential burglaries, some cities have implemented building codes that mandate design and construction features that prevent burglary. Some codes, such as the one implemented in Overland Park, Kansas, in 2003, go well beyond simply requiring locks on doors and windows and regulate features such as lighting, natural surveillance, and door and window strength.<sup>30</sup>
- As part of an initiative to reduce assaults with glass objects on the streets of Liverpool, England, police in Merseyside persuaded the Liverpool City Council to enact a regulation making the proprietors of licensed establishments responsible for preventing bottles and drinking glasses from being removed from their premises. Police then persuaded the Home Office to approve new legislation authorizing police to confiscate glass containers carried on the streets in the city center of Liverpool. These legislative actions helped to reduce dramatically the number of glass-related injuries in the target area.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>†</sup> Legislative enactments of this sort are to be distinguished from those which merely give police more authority to arrest offenders, provisions which while potentially useful, reinforce the notion that police bear primary responsibility for controlling problems.



- Police in Salt Lake City, Utah persuaded the city council to enact an ordinance requiring companies that sell home and business intrusion alarm systems to respond and investigate any alarm activation prior to summoning the police. Known as “verified response,” this policy nearly eliminated police responses to false intrusion alarms. Evidence to date suggests that this policy has had no adverse effect on the underlying problem that intrusion alarms are intended to address—burglary—and has yielded substantial savings in police resources that are then available for more productive activities.<sup>32</sup> Interestingly, the verified response policy supplanted a more commonly-used means of shifting responsibility for false alarms: charging customers fees to offset the cost of police response. The fee system reduced the volume of false alarms, but not to the same degree as verified response.
- Police in Fresno, California assumed a primary role in reviewing applications for business licenses and permits and in recommending general and specific conditions under which such licenses and permits could issue. The conditions were tailored to the public safety problems posed by the particular business. Fresno police concluded that their new and more active role in the licensing process had resulted in significant reductions in calls for police services to a number of businesses.<sup>33</sup>

## Bringing a Civil Action

There are several avenues by which police and others can bring legal actions to force individuals and organizations to implement measures to prevent crime and disorder.<sup>34</sup> This strategy is normally reserved for the most egregious conditions and is employed only as a last resort, because, with some exceptions, the process is difficult and the costs are high. Among the numerous forms of civil actions police may either initiate or support are nuisance abatement orders (in the United States), anti-social behavior orders (in the United Kingdom), civil injunctions and restraining orders, civil asset forfeitures, civil fines, enforcement of codified regulations, and evictions.

Studies relating to the problem of drugs inevitably focus attention on drug houses. The search for an alternative to simply acquiring evidence and making arrests has led police to dust off largely unused abatement proceedings and to obtain new specifically tailored legislation that enables them, through a court proceeding and upon the presentation of adequate evidence, to seize properties associated with a high incidence of crime. Their authorization to do so, punctuated by some successful efforts, is intended to force landlords to take greater responsibility for controlling the activities that take place on their properties. It is the threat of an abatement action that often renders targeted confrontational requests effective.





In one of the more novel uses of civil actions, the Safe Streets program, based in Oakland, California, trains local citizens to acquire the evidence needed to petition in small claims court for the abatement of a drug house, without any need for a lawyer; any receipts from sale of the premises are distributed among the petitioners. Police involvement in this process is limited to cooperating with community members seeking police documentation of criminal activity occurring in or near the subject premises.

An emerging, although unsettled, development in the United States is for police to support civil lawsuits against gun manufacturers and distributors as a means of controlling gun-related violence. Regardless of what one thinks of the merits of such suits, their success would provide an extraordinary example of how police and local government could compel a large industry to assume a significantly greater responsibility for the harm associated with its products.

- Police in Oakland, California filed a civil suit against the parent corporation of an international motel franchise for failing to control drug dealing, prostitution, and assorted crime and disorder on its property.<sup>35</sup> The suit followed repeated attempts by police to educate the property manager and corporate executives about the problems at the motel, requests for improvement, and warnings of possible legal consequences. In this case, police steadily increased the pressure on the corporation in a careful and measured manner. Indeed, the special unit of the Oakland Police Department that brought the civil action had developed a formal process for documenting such problems and for bringing increasing levels of pressure to bear upon property managers and owners.
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Burnaby, British Columbia collaborated with tax, fire, building, health, immigration, and licensing officials to inspect and file code violation charges against the owner of three blocks of flats that were being used for large-scale illegal immigrant drug trafficking. The owner resisted efforts to improve the management of the properties, which were later closed by the government and emptied of tenants. This led to the geographic displacement of the drug market to a nearby public transport station—where police persuaded the managers to make design improvements to deter drug dealing—and the displacement of the base of operations to other nearby blocks of flats—where police helped property managers form an information sharing network to prevent problem tenants from securing leases. An assessment by police concluded that drug trafficking, related crime, and citizen complaints all declined substantially.<sup>36</sup>





# Considerations for Shifting and Sharing Responsibility for Public Safety Problems

## Making the Case for Shifting Responsibility

The process leading up to police efforts to shift or share responsibility typically involves:

- Documenting the magnitude of a specific problem
- Identifying the conditions that contribute to the problem
- Establishing a link between those conditions and the individual, business, or organization deemed responsible for them

Thus, gathering detailed information, including statistical data, is an integral part of the process before it moves forward. Because the police are using gradually increasing degrees of government power, such studies must be carried out meticulously to assure accuracy and fairness, and, when resulting in a proposal, to present the strongest possible case.<sup>†</sup>

Much of the body of knowledge that police rely upon to argue for shifting and sharing responsibility for addressing problems is based upon insights they have acquired through years of experience and, less commonly, upon rigorous research. The value of police expertise is sometimes underestimated by those who rely only upon the highest standards of social science and policy analysis to inform policy decisions; conversely, such expertise is sometimes overestimated by those who believe that “street smarts” outweigh research-based knowledge. Much police knowledge about the prevention and control of crime and disorder is largely untested. That does not totally diminish its value, and there remains a critical need to capture, test, and refine police expertise, thereby contributing to a more formal body of knowledge to support police practices.

## Measuring the Effectiveness of New Responses

Quantifying claims of effectiveness can be tricky, because police often apply several different responses to a problem, some involving direct action (police enforcement, police presence) and others involving indirect action (persuasion and coercion of the type described earlier). Determining the effect of each response in isolation can be methodologically challenging. For more detailed guidance on measuring effectiveness, see the companion guide in the *Problem-Solving Tools* series, *Assessing Responses to Problems: An Introductory Guide for Police Problem-Solvers*.

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<sup>†</sup> For guidance on conducting good problem analysis, see *Crime Analysis for Problem Solvers in 60 Small Steps* and *Problem-Solving Tips: A Guide to Reducing Crime and Disorder Through Problem-Solving Partnerships*.



Some people may feel uncomfortable about the police dealing with citizens in so heavy-handed a manner. Such concerns are certainly justifiable where requests and threats are made without supporting facts. Thus, a high standard of care in gathering and examining the facts can be an effective protection against abuse. In addition, in-depth inquiry into a specific problem may isolate its cause and may even identify specific measures that have the potential to effectively prevent it. Collecting hard data about a specific problem can play a central role in convincing others of the seriousness of the situation and can also serve as evidence where the preventive strategy involves legal action. Police should realize that efforts to shift responsibility can become an adversarial process in which they had best be prepared to document thoroughly both the conditions being exposed and the evidence that the person named is indeed responsible for them. And they should be confident that the measures they are proposing are likely to be effective. This is particularly true where the proposed shift in responsibility has the potential for a major economic impact, because in such cases police can anticipate that their activities will be challenged in the courts, where judges will weigh the adequacy of the evidence offered in support of the proposed regulation.

## Determining the Appropriate Degree of Pressure to Shift Responsibility

Much of the art of policing consists of determining and applying the degree of pressure or coercion that is appropriate to a particular situation. Police officials who seek to shift or share responsibility for public safety problems should consider, among other factors:

- The justification for the pressure in the first instance, including the cost to the police and to the community of maintaining the status quo
- The reasonableness of police requests, including the standards of proof police must carry to establish such reasonableness
- The probability that a new set of responses to the problem will have long-term preventive value
- The likelihood that key constituents will endorse or accept the new proposals, which is influenced by the complexity of the issue at hand
- The nature, degree, and consequences of resisting police attempts to share or shift responsibility, including the potential risks and costs to the police organization and its officials for pressing controversial proposals<sup>†</sup>

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<sup>†</sup> See Buerger (1998) for an interesting discussion of the new political landscape that police will find themselves in as they press for indirect action to control crime and disorder.



No single factor will dictate which method or degree of coercion should be employed. Rather, the decision should be based upon a comprehensive analysis of the breadth and seriousness of the problem, the likely effectiveness of the proposed solution, and the probability both of cooperation from the various stakeholders and of support from the general public.





## Conclusion

As police come to better understand the conditions, practices, and behaviors that give rise to specific public safety problems and can determine with greater certainty the responses that are most effective in preventing and controlling them, they will be in a better position to shift and share the responsibility for dealing with such problems. Doing so will strengthen the police as an institution by increasing their capacity to perform the functions that are legitimately within their mandate and expertise and will also reduce the need for police to attempt to solve problems that are beyond the limits of their experience and resources. Most importantly perhaps, it will move society toward a style of policing that is more effective, efficient, and equitable.







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## About the Authors

### Michael S. Scott

Michael Scott is the director of the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing and clinical professor at the University of Wisconsin Law School. He was formerly chief of police in Lauderhill, Florida; served in various civilian administrative positions in the St. Louis Metropolitan, Fort Pierce, Florida, and New York City police departments; and was a police officer in the Madison (Wisconsin) Police Department. Scott was a senior researcher at the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), and chairs the judging committee for the Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing. In 1996, he received PERF's Gary P. Hayes Award for innovation and leadership in policing. Scott holds a law degree from Harvard Law School and a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

### Herman Goldstein

Herman Goldstein is Professor Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School and the original architect of the problem-oriented approach to policing. His first experiences in working with the police were in Philadelphia as a graduate student in governmental administration at the University of Pennsylvania and subsequently as an assistant to the city manager of Portland, Maine. He spent two years observing the on-the-street operations of the police in Wisconsin and Michigan as a researcher with the American Bar Foundation's Survey of the Administration of Criminal Justice, and then participated in the analysis phase of that landmark project. From 1960 to 1964, he was executive assistant to the superintendent of the Chicago Police Department, O.W. Wilson, the widely recognized architect of the professional model of policing. Goldstein has published widely on problem-oriented policing, the police function, police discretion, the political accountability of the police, and the control of police misconduct. He was co-author of the American Bar Association *Standards Relating to the Urban Police Function*. His 1977 book, *Policing a Free Society*, is among the most frequently cited works on the police. He first described the problem-oriented approach to policing in a 1979 article, which he expanded upon in his 1990 book, *Problem-Oriented Policing*.







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