

# SUBJECT TO DEBATE

A NEWSLETTER OF THE POLICE EXECUTIVE RESEARCH FORUM



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**PERF Annual Meeting**  
April 28-30, 2011  
Seattle, Washington

VOL. 24, NO. 9 | OCTOBER 2010

## Vice President Joe Biden: Today's Policing Requires a Federal Partnership

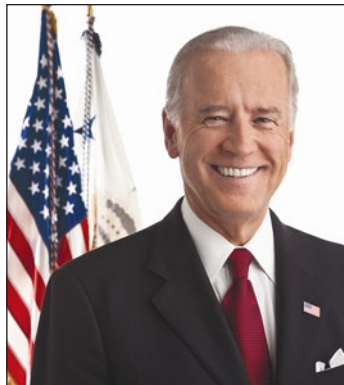
*FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM A SPEECH THAT VICE President Joe Biden made on October 25 at the IACP annual conference in Orlando. The Vice President cited statistics from two PERF projects: our September 2010 survey on the impact of the economic crisis on policing, and PERF's 2009 survey on gang violence. Both projects were part of the Critical Issues in Policing series supported by Motorola.*

Thank you all very much. I'm delighted to be able to speak to you all again. I see a lot of familiar faces in the audience. Many of you have been at this a long time. The first time I met with you was back in 1982, and back then, the conversation was not about the extent of the federal role in helping you fight crime. It was about whether or not the federal government should have *any* role in helping local law enforcement fight crime.

Back then, when these discussions were beginning, the federal role was assisting in crimes that crossed state lines, crimes that involved the use of a telephone, the use of the mail, the use of the Interstate Highway System. What seemed like complex crimes back then involved maybe two different states. It was a really extreme case that involved a foreign government. And now, cases like that are routine. They've become part of your job and your responsibility.

We know that law enforcement is basically a local function. We don't argue with that. That's why we don't have a national police force, why the FBI has limited powers, why the military is limited by what we call *posse comitatus*.

But we also know that your job has changed radically. Your jurisdictions are constantly confronting challenges whose roots are not local at all, from international gangs and drugs and weapons trafficking to human trafficking and terrorism, both homespun and imported. The Internet and technology have permanently blurred the lines. Your jobs have become a lot more complex. You need partners. You need, in my view—and I've been arguing this for over 30 years—national partners.



This is not your father's world anymore; this is not 1950s policing. Police were brave, risked their lives, and did great things then as well, but they didn't have to worry about coca or poppy coming from Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Afghanistan. They didn't have to worry about whether the local prostitution ring they were busting was engaged in human trafficking of young women smuggled into the United States from Mexico, Guatemala, or Russia and other parts of the globe. Back then, they didn't have to worry that the thief they arrested might be part of an international gang.

The Police Executive Research Forum asked local police to describe the nature of their gang problems in their local communities. Seventy percent said they were dealing with national-level gangs. And 43 percent said they were dealing with international-level gangs.

The only known al Qaeda cell to be identified and arrested was a result of the Torrance, California Police Department's investigation [in 2005] into a series of gas station robberies. Today, it's the local cop who is going to discover the terrorist who is working out of a vacant home. You're going to find the bomb in the backpack that has been left in the train station. You're the one who is going to find the person about to put sarin gas into the heating or cooling system of an arena like this. It's the local cop who is the first responder to a suspicious vehicle in Times Square.

Yet local sales taxes and property taxes and general funds are rarely enough to cover the new dangers and new responsibilities in the best of times. And in these very tough economic times, it gets even more difficult.

The recession visited upon your localities is not a consequence of your mayors or governors. It's a consequence of an international meltdown of an economic policy that almost brought us to our knees. Because your resources are even more constrained, I would argue that we [in the federal government] should be less constrained in the help that we give. When we tell you to make sure to take care

>> continued on page 7

# New PERF/COPS Book Provides Comprehensive Guidance on DNA Evidence

WITH SUPPORT FROM THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S COPS Office, PERF has released a new book about law enforcement agencies' use of DNA evidence in criminal investigations. The 216-page publication, *It's More Complex than You Think: A Chief's Guide to DNA*, is designed to help police leaders assess their agencies' forensic DNA needs and make forward-looking policy.

This publication is not meant only for the small number of chiefs and sheriffs in the United States who oversee their own labs. It is intended as a primer for all police chiefs and sheriffs on the effective use of DNA evidence in their agencies' criminal investigations. It is easy for police chiefs and sheriffs to leave the science to their command staff or civilian lab supervisors and never make a concerted effort to keep up with advances in forensic science. There are few things, however, that can break public trust and bring controversy to a department more quickly than an indication that forensic evidence has been handled improperly by the police. To prevent this, it is imperative that all law enforcement leaders understand the basics of forensic DNA evidence, sample collection, and analysis. They must also understand what labs need to be successful and how a good working relationship with key stakeholders is essential to any forensic science program.

The PERF/COPS book is based on information obtained from a survey of 216 PERF member agencies; interviews with police chiefs, lab directors, and topic experts; site visits at several labs throughout the country; and a 2009 Executive Session in Washington, D.C., in which lab directors, police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, and international guests discussed the challenges of managing crime labs and effective outsourcing programs.

Each section of *It's More Complex than You Think: A Chief's Guide to DNA* concludes with a number of important questions for chiefs to ask themselves, their staffs, and their stakeholders. While the questions may appear to be simple, their ramifications can be significant. Following are a number of these "big picture" questions:

**How well informed are your officers about DNA?** Chiefs need to evaluate what their officers and investigators actually know about DNA and DNA evidence collection. Frequently, officers receive only minimal training and information pertaining to forensic DNA evidence during their days in the academy. This information quickly becomes outdated. Agencies should have adequate systems in place to ensure that officers remain up to speed on this crucial investigative tool.

**Who collects DNA evidence for your agency?** Many law enforcement agencies maintain a dedicated crime scene unit, but few have a formal policy in place for situations in which the crime scene unit cannot respond or the infraction is minor, making it difficult to justify calling out the crime scene truck. Effective, efficient, and consistent crime scene evidence collection protocols should be a priority regardless of who is responsible for processing the scene. Whether your agency uses crime scene specialists, patrol officers, or investigators for DNA evidence collection, all need to be provided with adequate tools and training to meet these goals.


**What is the most effective model for your agency's DNA analysis?** Once DNA evidence has been collected, a decision must

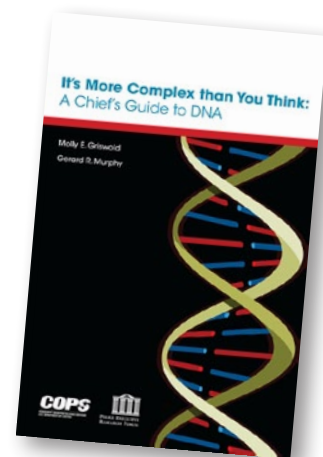
be made regarding where to send it for analysis. Common choices include an agency's in-house lab, a local or county lab, state lab, private lab, and sometimes a federal lab. There are a number of factors that should be considered in making the decision, including the cost, the type of analysis to be done, the availability of resources, and the possible turnaround time.

**What do you know about lab accreditation—and why should you care?** Lab accreditation by a reputable national body (e.g., the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/Laboratory Accreditation Board or Forensic Quality Services International) impacts the credibility of the lab, the necessary budgetary and personnel resources devoted to the lab, and the lab's ability to be eligible for access to the national DNA database through the FBI CODIS program. Accreditation also has a huge effect on a police agency's ability to utilize private labs. Many police departments have been disappointed to realize that, after entering into lengthy contract negotiations with a private lab, the lab could not actually deliver a final product that could be used by the police department for databasing and prosecution purposes. It is important to have a basic understanding of the accreditation status of the lab(s) used by your agency and how any loss or change in accreditation might impact your investigations.

**Do you really know the size and content of your DNA backlog?** Most of the law enforcement agencies surveyed by PERF were confident that they currently have a backlog of DNA evidence. What was surprising, however, was that few agencies were able to articulate even the basic unit of measurement for that backlog (e.g., cases, samples, items, etc.), much less the size of the backlog. Few law enforcement agencies have an accurate understanding of the size or composition of their DNA backlog. In fact, several agencies that undertook large-scale projects to assess their backlogs found large numbers of cases that should not have been there at all. Those cases had either reached the statute of limitations or had already been adjudicated and there was no need for further DNA analysis.

**How closely do you follow new developments in DNA and forensic science?** The year 2009 was an important one in the field of forensic science, particularly with the release of a National Academy of Sciences Report. The NAS Report made a number of recommendations regarding the field of forensic science, including removal of labs from the control of law enforcement. Law enforcement needs to have a place at the table to express its views and provide guidance as the forensic science and legal communities work through the recommendations of the NAS Report.

*It's More Complex than You Think: A Chief's Guide to DNA* can be downloaded from PERF's website at [www.policeforum.org/news/detail.dot?id=72551](http://www.policeforum.org/news/detail.dot?id=72551). Information about ordering hard copies is available at <http://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ResourceDetail.aspx?RID=580>. Up to five copies are available without charge. 



# Our Number One Customer

By Chief Jon Zumalt  
North Charleston, SC Police Department

ACROSS THE NATION, FUNDING for local and state law enforcement agencies has declined. In some jurisdictions, employees have been laid off or have had their salaries and benefits cut. This trend is having an impact on the morale of those who remain in our agencies. But I think we can manage many of these issues by making our employees our Number One customer.



Chief Jon Zumalt

Employee morale is influenced by pressures that are internal (generated by the job itself) and external (caused by personal or family problems). These days, the internal pressures include the need for everyone to work harder for less pay, working with declining equipment, and deteriorating work environments. We are being forced to reduce staffing, but the needs of the community remain the same or increase. With fewer officers, those left to do the work end up going from one call to the next. This leaves little time to decompress between calls—and even worse, little time to be proactive or undertake problem-solving activities. Frozen or reduced salaries have a negative impact on “pay-for-performance”-based compensation structures. It leaves us little room to reward our hard-chargers. And our inability to replace worn-out cars and equipment and keep our facilities maintained takes a toll on how the officers see themselves and how the public views the officers.

There are a lot of external pressures on police officers, and the stand-out issues usually have something to do with money. You hear officers say things like, “We bought the house assuming we would get a raise each year,” or, “I thought I could buy a new truck and work a few part-time jobs to pay for it. But now I need the part-time jobs just to cover the loss of overtime and the furloughs that came this year.” Money problems create stress for families, leading to arguments and damaged relationships. And our employees don’t leave these issues at home. They can’t help but bring their troubles to work, which affects their morale and their attitudes toward supervisors and members of the community.

How can we manage these negative pressures and raise morale? We can’t eliminate the stresses, but we can try to manage the outcomes by making our employees feel like they are our Number One customer.

“Employee customer service” involves open communication, listening, and customer support. Here are a few strategies that I have found useful, none of which involves a lot of money. First and foremost, people want to know the truth. Timely and accurate information increases trust and quiets the rumor mill. Remove the filters and meet directly with all of your employees several times per year. Educate them on budget issues affecting the department and their role in making things last until the fiscal environment improves. Allow best practices to bubble up from the line workers. Accentuate the good things that are happening and openly praise good work. For years I have sent handwritten notes to employees after they make a significant arrest. I do this to thank them for their great work and reinforce their positive behavior. Our employees need to hear this, and it is even more powerful if you tell them

“good job” in a room with their peers present. If this sounds like cheerleading, it is.

Another strategy is to focus on employee physical fitness. For years we have done a great job of protecting our employees from injury with vests and other equipment. We also need to consider what is going on “under the vest.” Research has shown us that an officer is 21 times more likely to die from heart disease than from a violent assault, and that the average life expectancy of a retired career law enforcement officer is much lower than the rest of the population. Teaching our employees about the benefits of exercise and nutrition will result in healthier and more productive employees. During tight budget years you probably don’t have the funding to open a gym or assist with gym memberships. But exercise does not need to be expensive. I provide a \$5.00 pedometer to any employee who wants one, and wear one myself. Simply walking 10,000 steps per day has a significant effect on overall health. And improved physical health has a positive influence on mental well-being and morale.

In North Charleston we also try to help employees manage financial stresses. I suggest bringing in a financial counselor and making attendance mandatory. By attending financial workshops, our employees learn to avoid negative debt and other missteps that can make a tight financial situation even worse. They are taught to delay gratification and wait for that new truck or new home until they are in a more secure financial position. Also they learn to save money, even when they are young.

Another inexpensive initiative that shows goodwill and can actually produce substantial benefits is to provide a lunch cooler for each employee. Encourage your employees to pack a healthy lunch and save the money they would have spent on unhealthy fast food. For an employee who works five days a week, saving \$6.00 a day on lunch adds up to more than \$1,560 per year. And packing a healthy lunch will improve health, reduce weight, and hopefully improve morale.

In my department I have found that these kinds of employee-focused strategies work. There is a general feeling of well-being in the department, and we have observed the following: The police workforce in our city is dedicated to our values and is always willing to get the job done. Even though calls for service have increased, self-initiated activity also has increased each year. This is occurring when salaries have been frozen and additional health care costs have been shifted to our employees. Accolades from the community consistently outnumber external complaints, and we have only had one grievance in three years with a work force of 325 police officers.

We are in difficult economic times and they may persist for years. Maintaining the crime reductions we have achieved over the past decade will require well-funded police departments. Hopefully the departments that demonstrate excellence in external customer service will receive budget support from their communities, even in hard times. When we focus on the well-being of our officers, they realize that we care about them. By understanding and managing internal and external stresses, we create happier and more productive employees who in turn treat our external customers well. It is our responsibility as leaders to treat our employees as our Number One customer.



# American Police Beat Publisher Cynthia Brown Releases Book about Police Officer Heroism

CYNTHIA BROWN, PUBLISHER OF THE MONTHLY newsmagazine *American Police Beat*, has written a book about the everyday heroism of police officers. The book, *Brave Hearts: Extraordinary Stories of Pride, Pain, and Courage*, profiles 15 New York Police Department officers of various ranks and assignments, who gave Ms. Brown candid, vivid accounts of the work they do and how they feel about it.

New York Police Commissioner Ray Kelly wrote a foreword to the book, which also served as an excellent review. "I have just had the pleasure of reading *Brave Hearts*, a book by Cynthia Brown, that stalwart and perennial friend of the nation's law enforcement officers," Commissioner Kelly wrote. "*Brave Hearts* is about some of the people whose lives and causes she has been depicting and defending for many years in *American Police Beat*. Although this book is about New York City police officers, they represent the values and commitment of law enforcement officers everywhere. ... That commitment, courage, and self-sacrifice have been superbly captured in the profiles of the extraordinary people you are about to meet in the pages of *Brave Hearts*."

Ms. Brown said she has been witnessing the courage and compassion of police officers since the late 1970s, when she accepted a part-time job with the Boston Police Department, organizing police-community meetings in order to reduce tensions in the wake of desegregation and school busing controversies in the city.

"My job was in a busy police station in one of the most crime-ridden areas of the city," Brown said. "I worked there for three years. During that time, I saw firsthand the officers' constant dealings with armed assailants, drug dealers, drunks, rapists, gangs, the homeless, the mentally ill, and a whole range of garden-variety crooks. I was continually amazed at the restraint, humor, and humanity they showed as they went about the difficult task of keeping us safe."

In *Brave Hearts*, Brown tells the 15 officers' stories, with extensive quotations from the officers and photographs depicting the officers' professional accomplishments and personal lives. The stories include accounts of gunfights, rescues, efforts to save suicidal persons, and all sorts of situations in which police are running toward some terrible thing that everyone else is running away from. The stories usually do not go where the reader expects them to go. And some of the stories do not end happily; victims sometimes die. But the impact of the stories is not necessarily in how they end, but rather in the moments of insight that jump out at the reader along the way. Brown has a good ear for the "telling detail" that shows how policing is practiced in the real world, and



Cynthia Brown with Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca and then-Los Angeles Police Chief William Bratton at a ceremony in which she was given the Los Angeles Police Historical Society's 2006 Jack Webb Award

what officers think about the difficult situations they face.

To take just one example, Brown tells the story of Sam Panchal, a young officer who found himself playing a key role in an undercover investigation of insurance fraud involving hundreds of millions of dollars. Following are excerpts from Panchal's story:

## Chapter Three

### Sam Panchal: The Evidence Collector

*The scam was run by a group of well-organized Indian men. Detectives assigned to the NYPD's Special Fraud Squad were familiar with all kinds of criminal scams run by Russians, Italians, and Asians. But Indians? This was something new.*

*The case ended up on the desk of Jim Feasel, a seasoned detective with the Organized Crime Control Bureau, considered the NYPD's top investigator on insurance fraud. He knew he had to send in an undercover, but no one knew how many Indian cops they had. The detective searched the NYPD's massive database and discovered that among the Department's 40,000 sworn personnel, there were only three officers of Indian descent. Feasel called all three. Sam Panchal, a rookie officer still in his twenties, was the only one who called back.*

*On paper, Sam didn't look like he was ready for such a complicated, dangerous assignment. He had been on the job only a short time. But like most people who meet Sam Panchal, Feasel was impressed. When he learned Sam speaks three Indian dialects—Hindi, Punjabi, and Urdu—it was even better.*

*Feasel admits he was worried about sending this young cop on such a dangerous assignment. But the insurance companies were demanding that something be done, and Sam was their only hope.*

*Once Sam was approved for the assignment, the NYPD began to construct his new identity. Within weeks, Officer Sam Panchal of the NYPD ceased to exist. His name disappeared from the vast bureaucracy, and for almost a year he picked up his pay in cash, always at a different location.*

*Sam went to the limo company that served as a front for the operation and applied for a job. The scene was tense. Sam told them he was Pakistani, but they weren't buying it. "They seemed very suspicious. But I spoke their language and I talked real fast. I kept saying, 'I'm here to make money.'"*

*As they went back and forth, Sam sensed he had to take control of the interaction. "I told them to take it or leave it," he said. That approach seemed to work. Sam got hired.*

*Sam had a new identity, but the job was in the same neighborhood where he lived with his family. That made everything much riskier. For a year, his life was totally transformed, and not for the better. He was forced to retreat into a shell, which was not easy for such a gregarious 23-year-old.*

The scam seemed simple: filing insurance claims on behalf of people who didn't exist, for accidents that never happened. Thousands of claims were filed for visits to nonexistent doctors. The insurance companies were paying on the bogus claims, taking massive losses and passing them on to consumers. But when Sam was told by the crime boss to find people on the street and offer them \$25 to undergo X-rays and then tell them they do it five times a day, he realized there was another group of victims—people whose lives were threatened by high doses of radiation.

The investigation spread widely, and law enforcement agencies in other parts of the country were getting involved. The FBI put so much pressure on a wing of the operation in Virginia, some of their top people were sent to New York to avoid getting arrested. Now people Sam didn't know were asking who he was and where he was from. "They patted me down, but I came right back at them. I asked who they were and what they were doing." The aggressive approach seemed to work. After a few weeks, the Virginia contingent left him alone.

But the Department was worried. "Everyone knew we were sending this kid into the belly of the beast," Feasel said. "It was a nerve-racking year."

It didn't take long for Sam to start rising through the ranks of the criminal enterprise. He had convinced them he was Pakistani, not an easy feat when you're Hindu. He started out as a street-level guy, and by the end of the investigation, was hanging out with the man who ran the whole operation.

Sam accumulated an overwhelming amount of evidence—pictures, videos, tapes of phone conversations, over a hundred in all. Right up until the morning they were arrested, the bad guys never knew Sam was a cop. Over 100 people were arrested by federal and local officers in an 11-state predawn sweep. The evidence was so overwhelming that when the suspects found out that Sam Panchal was a New York City cop, every person arrested pled guilty. The case was a prosecutor's dream.

**Brave Hearts also describes Panchal's struggle to become a cop:**

Sam's choice of a career in law enforcement came as a shock to his family. "It's not acceptable in the Indian culture," Sam explained. "You are supposed to be an engineer, a doctor, or a professor. Police officer is not on the list."

But Sam had always dreamed of being a cop. Like so many people who are drawn to law enforcement, it was more of a calling, a passion, something deep in his soul that drew him to this dangerous and stressful life. "It's all I ever wanted to do," he said.

When he signed up for the police exam, he was 20 years old. He was working as a technician for the phone company and living with his parents. Despite being extraordinarily close to his family, Sam never told them what he was doing. For months he hid his uniform in the car and changed his clothes on the way to the academy. All the time that Sam was training at the police academy, his parents thought he was still working at the phone company.

But Sam's mother grew suspicious; she knew something wasn't right. Finally Sam told them the truth. Once his parents got over the initial shock that their son was going to be a police officer, they began to worry that he would get killed. Sam's first assignment out of the academy was the midnight shift at the 43rd Precinct in the South Bronx. For Sam's parents, that was the worst district he could have been assigned to. But for the rookie cop, getting assigned to one of the toughest precincts in the city was a dream come true. "In the South Bronx, we saw a lot of violence, people wasted by drugs, poor people getting preyed on," Sam said. "It was almost overwhelming at times. But there's a thrill to taking the bad guys out that's hard to explain to someone who has never been a cop."

One call Sam still thinks about was a domestic violence call involving an Indian couple. "This guy had beat his wife pretty badly," Sam said. "He started yelling at her in an Indian dialect that he would beat her even more if he got locked up. He had no idea that I was Indian and could understand everything he was saying. He thought I was Hispanic. We ended up locking him up, and I took great pleasure in telling him a few things in his native language while we were driving to the booking center."

Further details of Sam Panchal's story, and those of 14 other exceptionally dedicated police officers, can be found in *Brave Hearts: Extraordinary Stories of Pride, Pain, and Courage*. Each story is well-told, compelling, and rich in detail. *Brave Hearts* is tough and unblinking, yet also touching and inspiring. The 381-page book is available online at [www.braveheartsbook.com](http://www.braveheartsbook.com) or by calling 1-800-270-5317.

—C.F.

## PERF Joins Partnership to Fight Gun Violence

PERF has joined with nine other national law enforcement organizations in an unprecedented effort to reduce gun violence. The National Law Enforcement Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence, launched on October 25, issued a Statement of Principles that will guide its efforts, which reads, in part:

"The level of gun violence in the United States...is unacceptable and demands immediate attention... The level and lethality of gun violence directed at police officers requires an organized and aggressive response from policy makers at the federal, state, and local levels. Elected officials must commit to

closing gaps in the current regulatory system, including those that enable felons, minors, persons with mental illness, and other prohibited persons to access firearms, and those that allow the trafficking of illegal guns.... Agencies must have resources sufficient to prioritize the protection of officers and communities against illegal guns and firearm violence."

In addition to PERF, the coalition includes: the International Association of Chiefs of Police; the Major Cities Chiefs; the National Sheriffs' Association; the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc.; the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators; the Police Foundation; the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives; the Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association; and the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives.



# Applying “Good to Great” Principles As Economic Realities Bring a New Policing Paradigm

By Chief Gary J. Gemme  
Worcester, Mass. Police Department

A PERF SUMMIT IN WASHINGTON, D.C. ON SEPTEMBER 30 explored the impact of the economic downturn on how we police our communities. The insights obtained from a PERF survey and the testimony of more than 100 police officials were dramatic evidence that we are facing a crisis. We heard police chiefs talk about reduced and discontinued training, the need to cut overtime, the elimination or reduction of technology funding, a combination of hiring freezes and layoffs, and the elimination of specialized units in order to shift officers to front-line positions.

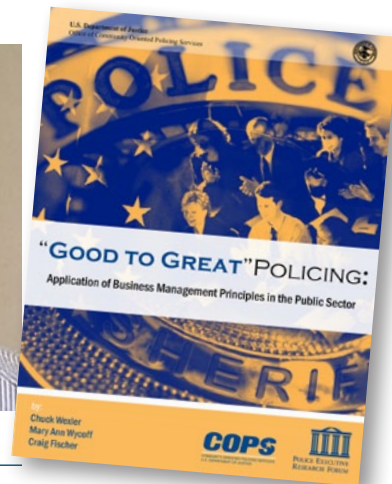
These are serious considerations for departments committed to providing quality service to the public. The strategies for dealing with the downturn vary by department, but generally we heard an assortment of overlapping approaches. It would be a simplification of the challenges of managing a police department in an economic crisis to say there is a single best-practice solution to our current financial predicament. However, I believe that in the current situation there is opportunity to innovate, reorganize, and change the culture in our departments to better deal with the new financial reality facing policing.

The City of Worcester, with a population of 178,000, is the second largest city in New England. As an urban community in the Northeast, not unlike most other cities and towns, Worcester has been forced to significantly reduce its municipal government staff and services over the past several years, a direct result of the national, state, and local economic situation. The Worcester Police Department has not escaped these financial challenges. Since fiscal year 2009, our department budget has been reduced by 4 percent, and sworn staffing has been reduced by 13 percent for a total of 62 police positions, while civilian staffing has been reduced by 7 percent. With personnel accounting for approximately 90 percent of the budget, it is obvious from these numbers that the cost of a sworn police officer, including salary and benefits, is outpacing the community's ability to pay. Our biggest financial challenge is to stabilize staffing within a budget that the community can afford.

I believe that these financial challenges should be approached from the perspective of the business model described in Jim Collins' best-selling book *Good to Great*. This model is as applicable in a downturn as it is in a growth period. When PERF introduced the “Good to Great” concept to policing, it championed the need to get the right people “on the bus”—and in the *right seats* on the bus, and the importance of getting the wrong people off of the bus. The model is about people, vision, and discipline. It is about defining what your organization is passionate about and what services you can provide best. *Good to Great* also features the metaphor of the flywheel. As explained in Collins' book, leaders aiming to improve their organizations should think in terms of turning an enormous flywheel that is 30 feet in diameter and weighs 5,000 pounds. The goal is to get the flywheel rotating on the axle as fast and for as long a time as possible. The point is that it takes time and the combined efforts of many people making many decisions and doing



Chief Gary J. Gemme




many things to achieve success that is built to last.

I believe that every budget cut or other change in our police organizations should be made through the prism of the “Good to Great” model, which is about building an organizational structure for the long term. The reality is that the cost of sworn personnel has brought about a new policing paradigm for the future. The ability of a community to pay for sworn police positions is limited. Smaller, more efficient and effective departments are the new reality. With this in mind, it is important to select the right command personnel to downsize and reorganize your department. We need to consolidate commands by putting the right people in the right positions, letting them know where we want the organization to go, and giving them the freedom to get there. This will result in a flatter organizational structure, where command, supervisory, and line personnel have more responsibility, authority, and creativity to carry out the mission.

All decisions should be based on a long-term “Good to Great” strategy. It is important to resist cuts that result in short-term savings but may have long-term negative consequences. Consider the long-term effects of cutting training and technology. We can save money over the long run by supporting software development projects that improve internal management systems, increasing efficiencies in the scheduling of personnel, overtime tracking, and court attendance. The same argument applies to maintaining community policing and specialized units when the benefit of these initiatives reduces overall calls for service.

Tough and painful decisions need to be made during these unprecedented times. As stewards of public funds, it is incumbent upon us to make decisions that are in the long-term best interests of the community.

**Additional information:** A PERF/COPS Office report, “Good to Great” Policing: Application of Business Management Principles in the Public Sector, is available online at <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ResourceDetail.aspx?RID=427>. 

of the tunnel going into New York, the bridge over the Hudson River or the San Francisco bridges, or the chemical plants that line the Delaware River in Delaware, we don't send federal officials to do that. We turn to you.

So the truth is that international needs have required you to widen your focus from problems on the street to even bigger problems.

The fundamental goal of the COPS program was to shift toward community policing, which is expensive, and to assume some federal support for helping you keep citizens safe, because so much of what happened on your streets was beyond your control.

The raw numbers of adding 100,000 cops was never the goal. The goal was lowering crime rates. Now that the COPS program has been proven so successful in helping drive down crime because of your incredible implementation of it, is now the time to stop? Fighting crime is like cutting grass. You cut your grass on a beautiful summer weekend and it looks great. You let it go for a week, it gets a little ragged. You let it go for a month, it looks bad. You let it go for the summer, you've got a jungle.

Unless we think that somehow we've taken the instinct out of all human beings to commit crimes, then I don't understand how it makes sense—unless the population is drastically reduced—to spend less next year than you did the previous year on fighting crime. There is no such thing as success being permanent.

So we can't lay off because crime rates are low. And we can't cut back because the economy is tough. What we have to do is make tough choices in what we spend on.

President Obama and I strongly support the notion of local government. But we believe that national challenges require national leadership, whether it's in education, health, law enforcement, international drug trafficking and human trafficking, or international gangs. That's why I believe that the federal government should be your backup. Our goal isn't to supplant what you do, but to augment what you do.

Nothing in our approach over the last 25 years takes any authority out of your hands. We don't tell you what to do with that cop that we partially fund. It's just a matter of more resources. We know that you know what to do with the money to make our neighborhoods safe.

That's why when President Obama and I took office, even though we were in the midst of the worst economic meltdown since the Great Depression, we knew we had to step up for law

enforcement. We knew the state and local budgets were getting squeezed more than ever before. Your mayors were having to decide whether to keep their current staffing levels or cut them.

And many of your jurisdictions have made cuts. Roughly two out of 10 law enforcement agencies in the last two years had to lay people off. Four in 10 local law enforcement agencies have hiring freezes for sworn positions. And an equal number have discontinued special units such as drug and gang units, gun enforcement units.

When we took office, we said we had to do more and we did. We put \$2 billion for Byrne and JAG and a billion dollars for COPS in the stimulus program. Nearly 4,700 of your law enforcement officers on the beat today wouldn't be there but for this investment.

Let me say something that's never part of anybody's script, but I want you to know I know it. There's a direct correlation between the safety of your patrolmen and the number of cops available to you. This isn't just about making neighborhoods safer; it's also about keeping your troops safer.

We continue to support you not just through funding, but through policy. In every discussion we have, from the allocation of spectrum to immigration and information sharing, [Homeland Security Secretary] Janet [Napolitano] and [FBI] Director Bob Mueller ask one question. After they go through what their needs are, one question comes up in the Situation Room constantly. How many times have I heard Janet say, "We've got to look at the effect on local law enforcement."

So it's not just the funding piece; it's the policy decisions we make. We get it. The President and I recognize that it's you who stand between safety and violence.

And one more thing, we owe your spouses, your children, your mothers, your fathers, who every single day have that nagging concern when you strap on that firearm, every time you walk through the door, no matter how long you've been doing it. Your spouse, your mother, your father, your child has that little sinking feeling. They know the risks you take. There's a great phrase by the poet John Milton, who said, "They also serve who only stand and wait." So we owe your families too.

And that means we need to keep insisting that the federal government be part of the solution without telling you how to use the money or do your jobs. Our communities depend on it.

So I want to say thank you and God bless you all. May God protect every man and woman who puts on a badge and all of our troops abroad.

Thank you very, very much.



POLICE EXECUTIVE  
RESEARCH FORUM

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT

**Charles Ramsey** | Commissioner,  
Philadelphia Police Department

VICE PRESIDENT

**Charlie T. Deane** | Chief, Prince  
William County, Va., Police Department

TREASURER

**William M. Lansdowne** | Chief,  
San Diego Police Department

SECRETARY

**Tim Dolan** | Chief, Minneapolis  
Police Department

AT-LARGE MEMBERS

**Edward Flynn** | Chief, Milwaukee  
Police Department

**William Blair** | Chief, Toronto Police  
Service

**George Gascón** | Chief, San Francisco  
Police Department

EX OFFICIO MEMBER

**Sir Hugh Orde** | President, Association  
of Chief Police Officers (UK)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:  
**Chuck Wexler**

EDITOR:  
**Craig Fischer**

The Police Executive Research Forum is a nonprofit association of progressive police professionals dedicated to improving services to all our communities. ■ *Subject to Debate*, published by the Police Executive Research Forum, welcomes input from PERF members and other interested parties. Please submit articles, ideas and suggestions to Craig Fischer, PERF, 1120 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 930, Washington, D.C. 20036. Phone: (202) 454-8332; fax: (202) 466-7826; e-mail: cfischer@policeforum.org. ■ Contributors' opinions and statements do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of the Police Executive Research Forum. ISSN 1084-7316. ■ Subscription price: \$35/year.



POLICE EXECUTIVE  
RESEARCH FORUM

SUBJECT TO DEBATE  
1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 930  
Washington, DC 20036

Pre-Sorted  
First Class  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 4889  
Suburban, MD

## SUBJECT TO DEBATE

### Vice President Joe Biden: Today's Policing Requires a Federal Partnership

PAGE 1

New PERF/COPS Book Provides  
Comprehensive Guidance on DNA Evidence **PAGE 2**

Our Number One Customer **PAGE 3**

*American Police Beat* Publisher Cynthia Brown  
Releases Book about Police Officer Heroism **PAGE 4**

PERF Joins Partnership to Fight Gun Violence **PAGE 5**

Applying "Good to Great" Principles  
As Economic Realities Bring a New Policing Paradigm  
**PAGE 6**