

**SPRING 1994 SUPERVISOR TRAINING  
EVALUATION REPORT**

prepared by

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## BACKGROUND

This report describes an evaluation of Chicago's Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) training for supervisory staff (officers with the rank of sergeant and above). The training was conducted during March, April, and May of 1994. The evaluation team employed three different methods to examine the nature of the training sessions and the performance of the trainers; to describe the background of the training participants and their attitudes toward their jobs, citizens, and CAPS; and to assess participants' reactions to the training.

The first evaluation method involved direct observations of training sessions. On the basis of meetings with other research staff and Chicago Police Department (CPD) personnel, the training observers scheduled observations and developed a format for recording their impressions of training. The two training observers were experienced members of the CAPS evaluation team who belonged to the cadre of researchers who studied CAPS orientation training in the spring of 1993. They observed each of the trainers at least once and sat through at least one complete training session during the 2nd and 3rd watches for each training group. Captains and lieutenants formed one training group and sergeants by themselves formed the other. Observers attended sessions from the beginning, middle, and end of the training schedule. Of the eighteen training sessions held for captains and lieutenants, observers attended two complete, two-day sessions. Of the fifteen training sessions held for sergeants, they attended two complete, four-day sessions. In total, they observed twenty-four training days. At each training session, observers took daily field notes describing the setting and content of the training as well as the behavior of the trainers and trainees. They also recorded evaluative comments at the end of each day.

The second evaluation method involved a written questionnaire that was completed by trainees at the start of each training session. These questionnaires were distributed by training academy staff with the oversight and support of the evaluation team. The questionnaire was a shortened version of the one that has been used to track police officers' perceptions and behaviors at other points in the evolution of CAPS. It included 81 items divided into five major headings: job-assignment descriptive questions, police work questions, neighborhood-related questions, program-related questions, and demographics.

The third evaluation method involved personal interviews with samples of lieutenants and sergeants, mostly among those serving in prototype districts. These were conducted at the district station houses, and addressed a variety of CAPS-related issues and topics. Interview questions relevant to training included: Did you participate in the most recent training at the academy for supervisors? Did you find the instructors informative and capable? Was the material presented in a clear manner? Did you feel the material was geared toward adult learners; that is, did you feel "talked down to" or that the materials were too basic? Did you feel that the instructors understood your job? Did you feel that the training directly related to the

job you are doing or should be doing? Was the training useful? How satisfied were you with the overall training?

Three activities occurred prior to supervisory training: curriculum development, curriculum pilot testing, and trainer selection. A planning committee coordinated by Deputy Chief Ramsey constructed the curriculum. Its members were: Lieutenant Tim Oettmeier of the Houston Police Training Academy, Director Barbara McDonald, Deputy Director Nola Joyce, Kevin Morrison, and Margaret Poethig of CPD's Research and Development Unit, Mary Lou Budnick of City Hall, and Steve Gaffigan, an independent consultant. The committee met several times to write and revise the curriculum, which was pilot tested on February 3, 1994 in order to elicit feedback from captains, lieutenants, and sergeants. The committee also helped to select the trainers, who were apparently chosen for their teaching ability, job performance, educational background, and favorable attitudes toward CAPS. The majority of the trainers (6 out of 8) were CPD police personnel; two of the police trainers were from prototype districts. They were all given a training manual and time to practice their sessions in front of neighborhood relations officers at the training academy.

Under the direction of Sergeant Christine Kolman, training academy personnel scheduled sessions, managed the flow of personnel into and out of training, and assisted trainers with overheads, video tapes, and other training equipment. Supervisors were scheduled to begin training on March 14, 1994 after final revisions were made in the curriculum and scheduling changes were approved at the district level. However, academy personnel did not distribute notices announcing the initial training date; consequently, the first day of training was not held until March 21, 1994.

## TRAINING SESSIONS

### Training Setting

Supervisory training was conducted at the training academy. Captains and lieutenant training took place in room 204, which easily accommodated the groups of twelve persons who attended these sessions. Sergeant training was held in groups of 25 persons and took place in either room 223, which was quite spacious, or in room 106, which was quite cramped. The 3rd watch of sergeants training often began in room 106 and then moved to room 223 when it was vacated by the 2nd watch. During the leadership module of training, both sets of supervisors — captains and lieutenants and sergeants — sat in room 223. The tables in the training rooms were arranged in a U-shape. At the mouth of the U, there was a podium, a television with video equipment, a blackboard, a sketch board, and an overhead projector. There was also a table for materials. In general, the rooms were well lit and comfortable, but occasionally the ambient temperature was either too hot or too cold. The observers wrote the following about training room 106:

*The setting: We are located in a small, cramped room. Chairs and tables are set up horse shoe style. There are extra chairs, tables and desks located along the way. It is very crowded in here.*

*We really suffer during the first half hour of class in that little room.*

*This was a difficult session. It was too hot and stuffy in the room, and I did not have a table. I sat in a corner and wrote just holding my pad.*

### **Training Curriculum**

The training curriculum consisted of the following nine modules.

1. **CAPS Orientation**—presented the nature and scope of department change necessitated by CAPS; described the four critical elements of CAPS, which are proactive problem solving, partnership with the community, support of other city agencies, and department-wide change.

2. **Effective Leadership**—encouraged participants to explore their own leadership style through the use of the DISC and to relate that style to the four critical elements of CAPS.

3. **Beat Integrity**—reviewed CPD's dispatch policy for priority one and priority two calls.

4. **Building Partnerships**—focused mostly on how to run a beat meeting and how to help citizens assume responsibility for problems that they can solve themselves.

5. **Beat Profiling**—explained how to collect and share CAPS-related information among the three watches.

6. **Problem Solving**—offered a dynamic model for solving the problems of crime and disorder in the community. Also reviewed beat plans, sector management meetings, beat team meetings, and other staff responsibilities under CAPS.

7. **Team Building**—examined managers' specific roles and responsibilities in implementing CAPS.

8. **Revisit DISC**—applied in more depth participants' knowledge regarding their personal leadership styles.

9. **Question and Answer**—Deputy Chiefs or Commanders answered managers' questions in an open question-and-answer format.

## Training Resources and Modalities

Most trainers effectively used a variety of training resources including overheads, videotapes, flip charts, and handouts. Early in the training schedule one group of trainers significantly reduced the number of overheads they used in training because participants said they found the overheads distracting.

## Teaching Styles

The training styles and skills of the individual trainers varied greatly, but all of them had obviously mastered the content of the CAPS training manual. Modules were richer and more informative when trainers taught by example and behavior modeling rather than by lecturing from the manual. The least effective trainers were those who read, verbatim, materials from the manual. Contrasting trainer styles and abilities are reflected in these observer comments:

*[The trainer] set the stage by self-disclosure. He is a man of rather hefty build, about 55 yrs. old, one whose presence commands respect by authoritative body language and tone of voice. If it is okay for him to self-disclose his work personality traits in a room full of strangers, then it is okay for them to self-disclose. This is a good job of role modeling. His confusion, and asking for the group's help, role-models team work.*

*I had the most problems with [trainer's] style. He could have given them more structure to work with, as their output was supposed to be structured.*

*This seemed too fast. It's hard to keep up. If they get 2% of the material it is a miracle.*

*Again, they read from the manual. They are using fewer overheads with more success. People seemed less distracted. I especially like the way this group of instructors addressed every question and comment. [The trainer] is dynamic. He brings CAPS to life. These instructors always kept their cool despite times when the audience tried to provoke them and inject negativity into the seminar.*

*[The trainer] is getting much better than he was in the beginning when I observed him teach the lieutenants. It must also be rather intimidating to be teaching your superiors how to run the business. He is getting more sure of himself and less nervous.*

## Trainee Behavior

In general, trainees at every rank were very attentive and cooperative during training. They all seemed to grasp the materials quite readily, and most were willing to participate in exercises and to share their questions and concerns about

CAPS during open forums. Nonetheless, many were dubious about CPD's ability and willingness to institute the massive organizational changes required to implement CAPS. The following are excerpts from observers notes:

*The class seemed to have mixed emotions about the training issues. They were not opposed to CAPS, or most of them did at least not want to come forth and say so, but they had their doubts about whether it would ever come to pass as proposed. Their concerns were that the top management would not go along with the CAPS philosophy.*

*This was a strange group. They seemed to come at this from all directions. Some of them were all for CAPS, others had their reservations. But they all seemed to agree that if they were allowed to do it the way it should be done, it would be nice. Their reservations were on whether that would happen.*

*This group seemed interested in the CAPS concepts. They were enthusiastic about learning the ins and outs of how to manage under this new system. Although provocative at times, they gave the sense of rolling up their sleeves and getting down to business.*

*They enjoyed, joked, and fostered understanding with each other. They were genuinely concerned about problems in districts other than their own.*

*There is a relaxed, yet frustrated atmosphere here. They are feeling free to speak their minds, swear, give positive and negative feedback with little whining.*

## TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

### Descriptive Information

A total of 544 participants completed questionnaires at the beginning of their training session. Large percentages of respondents were male (93%), white (76%), married (78%), and currently assigned to operational services (92%). More of the respondents worked the third watch (40%) than the second watch (36%) or the first watch (24%). Participants' ages ranged from 33 to 62, and on average they were 49 years old. At the time of training, 69% of those surveyed were sergeants, 23% were lieutenants, and 8% of were captains or a higher rank. On the average, they had joined the department when they were 24 years old, had been with CPD for 24 years, and had held their current assignment for 12 years. Slightly more than one-third (35%) had some college training, another 17% were college graduates, and an additional 17% had a graduate degree.

### Participants' Feelings About Their Jobs

Most of the participants generally appeared to be satisfied with their jobs. Approximately two-thirds agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements: "I like the kind of work I do very much" (67%), "I like the employees I work with a great deal" (66%), and "This city's police department is a good organization to work for" (64%). Much lower percentages agreed or strongly agreed that "it would be very hard for [them] to leave the department now even if [they] wanted to" (47%) and that "[they] are very much involved personally with [their] job[s]" (41%); only 18% agreed or strongly agreed that "the major satisfaction in [their lives] came from [their] job[s]."

### Participants' Feelings About Citizens

Participants' feelings about citizens were mixed. One-third thought that "most people do not respect the police," and even fewer (21%) indicated that "the relationship between the police and the people of this city is very good." About half (49%) of the respondents thought that "police know better than citizens which police services are required in an area" and more than two-thirds (72%) felt that "citizens do not understand the problems of the police in this city." However, only 16% believed that "police officers have reason to be distrustful of most citizens" and only 6% felt that "police officers should avoid too much contact with citizens."

### Participants' Feelings About Community Policing and CAPS

More than half of the managers (53%) indicated that they were moderately or very familiar with the concepts of CAPS, and 36% reported that they participated in the CAPS orientation sessions held at the academy in the spring of 1993. In addition, an average of more than eight out of ten felt qualified or very qualified to identify community problems (86%) and to develop and evaluate (82%) solutions to those problems. But only half believed they were qualified or very qualified to use the CAPS model to analyze problems.

A series of items in the survey examined management's orientation toward tasks often associated with community policing. Figure 1 presents the percentage of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with each of those items. As shown, large majorities of participants (at least 8 of 10) believed that police officers should assist citizens, make informal contacts with them, and work with them to solve problems. Significant percentages of respondents also indicated that police officers should be concerned about more than just crime in their beat and that citizens know more about their own neighborhood problems than police officers do. Less than half, however, thought that police officers should involve themselves in solving noncrime problems.

Figure 2 indicates that management staff were quite willing to devote department resources to CAPS-related activities. Specifically, significant percentages were willing to devote moderate or large amounts of resources toward working with citizens to resolve problems, coordinating city services, researching and

solving problems, understanding the problems of minority groups, marketing police services to the public, and patrolling on foot in the neighborhood.

Respondents were only somewhat optimistic about the impact of CAPS. More than half believed that a number of favorable changes are more likely to occur after CAPS is implemented. Some of the changes noted were better police/community relations, more effective use of crime information, and greater resolution of neighborhood problems; but less than half believed that CAPS would lead to more effective use of police resources, expanded police capability, more arrests, reductions in crime, fewer citizen complaints about police, and better relations with minorities (see Figure 3). Furthermore, participants were concerned about the impact of CAPS on police autonomy and workloads: 76% thought that CAPS would lead to "greater demand on police resources," 66% to "more unreasonable demands on police by community groups," and 49% to "blurred boundaries between police and citizen authority."

### Participants' Reactions to Training

The vast majority of both the lieutenants and sergeants interviewed made favorable comments about training. They were generally satisfied with the experience and thought it was very useful and necessary. A lieutenant and sergeant, respectively, reported the following about the training sessions:

*It was one of the greatest inservices I have been to since joining the department. They finally gave us something we could sink our teeth into. . . . I guess this time they were careful on their selection of instructors. They asked for a lot of input, and we had the freedom to say what we wanted. We were even free to criticize.*

*[Training] was excellent, and I'd have to say that this was the best inservice I've been to in my sixteen years on the job. It was well-thought-out. I have no complaints.*

The participants reacted very positively to the instructors. In general, the respondents stated that the trainers were capable and well informed, and that they presented the material in a clear, orderly, and practical fashion. A sergeant noted that previous CAPS training was "a little abstract. The problem last year was that they asked questions like, 'would you rather be a tree or a forest.'" Similarly, a sergeant indicated that "last year it was just theory. I mean the program hadn't started, so you couldn't really make it too practical." Most important, the lieutenants and sergeants felt that the trainers knew their (i.e., the supervisors') jobs, which one lieutenant observed, "was the real difference between last year's [CAPS training] and this year's [CAPS training]. Last year, they ate the civilians alive. They took exception to everything the [civilian] trainers said." Many of the supervisors interviewed indicated their preference for sworn trainers over civilian trainers. The following are excerpts from the interviewer's notes regarding the

**trainers:**

*Yeah, they had street guys, not empty holsters. I gotta give them credit this time for doing that.*

*They were police officers!*

*At least they were cops. I don't have anything against civilians.*

*They were people from the street.*

*They weren't asking questions like, 'What's a beat?'*

Lieutenants' and sergeants' comments also suggested that they regarded the trainers as highly credible and reliable sources of information who "understood the skills that are needed [to do the job]." Moreover, it was clear that the respondents appreciated the opportunity to help develop the training materials. In the words of a lieutenant:

*They initially used Booz-Allen stuff and got lots of complaints, so they went back to the materials developed by the subcommittees. They saw the light. They put it together from an operational standpoint. It's more down to earth.*

In addition, respondents reported that the trainers were not condescending to them as last year's CAPS trainers apparently were--"last year was like for kiddies" said one lieutenant--and they effectively involved in the actual training process participants from the prototype districts, which enhanced the training sessions for all the trainees.

The involvement of trainees from the prototype districts in communicating information about CAPS made them feel like an integral part of the training, and they had a chance to share their direct experience in CAPS with nonprototype officers. In the words of a nonprototype sergeant, "We learned from the prototype people who were there. We heard about their mistakes." The prototype trainees also corroborated many of the trainers' comments and provided object lessons to illustrate the trainers' points. According to a lieutenant from a prototype district, "I was called on quite a bit to explain things because I'd already been through it. We all had name cards sitting in front of us that listed our district, so the instructors knew who to ask."

The prototype trainees' cooperation in the sessions seemed pivotal in helping the trainers bring the other participants on board with CAPS. One prototype lieutenant reported, "I enjoyed talking about CAPS to the nonprototype people and seeing the attitude change as the training went on." Another prototype lieutenant explained the "conversion process" more elaborately:

*There were people who had their doubts, but those of us who were involved [in CAPS] the first year told them that we had the same doubts, but that they'd like it. We all pretty much want the same thing, but I guess we differ on how we'll get there. It wasn't like there was fighting or anything. It's just that they don't know the program like we do. We told them to give it a chance. After they try it, they'll see that it's certainly no worse than they have it now.*

**A few of the participants had negative comments about the CAPS training. The most common complaint, given by trainees from the prototype districts (especially sergeants), was that the training was repetitive. The following comments are examples of these reactions:**

*We've already been through it all. . . . People from the prototypes should [have] come for an hour a day. That's all that was needed.*

*Just reading [the material] would have been enough for me. It was three useless days. We done [sic] this before.*

*There was not too much new information [about CAPS]. It was mostly a rehash.*

**Other complaints reflected participants' skepticism about the police administration's support of CAPS.**

*Those of us from the prototypes know that it's [CAPS] not perfect and that we can't do anything if there's no support from above. It's real bogus to tell us to change if there is no change from above. The command structure needs to change, but let me tell you, we have to wait for those guys to die.*

*You know, I have a lot of respect for [Deputy Chief] Ramsey. But he should have more direction--more support from the command structure. There should be more support from . . . downtown.*

**Finally, one lieutenant believed that the training failed to emphasize how CAPS affects "personal issues," such as people being upset about broken partnerships and changes in days off.**

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**1. The physical environment certainly has some influence over the success of training sessions. Sergeants training was adversely affected by the size of training room 106, which was clearly too small to hold groups of 25. Crowding made trainees feel physically uncomfortable, and produced its share of claustrophobia among participants and observers alike. Furthermore, crowding precluded latecomers from having a desk for notetaking, and their noisy arrival to the training**

room was disruptive to the other trainees as they inched and stumbled their way to an available chair along the wall. In addition, the academy could have done a better job in modulating the temperature in the training rooms, which, at times, was either too hot or too cold. The temperature and physical comfort of the training areas are under CPD's control and should not be regarded as incidental components of the training experience.

2. This year's CAPS training curriculum was very well constructed and clearly germane to CAPS operations and functions. The observers reported that "effective leadership" and "building partnerships" were particularly useful modules. "Leadership" emphasized in very concrete terms how supervisors' different styles and approaches to management problems influence their interactions with subordinates and affect their ability to handle CAPS-related assignments. "Partnerships" used videos of beat meetings to illustrate how to perform this activity well or poorly. It provided very graphic examples of real scenarios that the trainees could identify with and understand. In short, these modules worked because they did not just tell supervisors how to do something, they showed them how to do it. Also, they drew participants into the training by helping them envision themselves in realistic situations.

3. Related to the preceding point, training modules that involved only a rehashing of manual material were very ineffective, boring, and unengaging. Most important, trainers should avoid reading information that participants have in front of them. Manuals should be a point of departure for presentations and discussions and a storehouse of information for participants' future reference. In addition, trainers should be careful not to overuse overheads and to remove overheads from view after they have finished discussing them. There were obviously too many overheads made for and used in supervisors' training. During future sessions, overheads should be employed more sparingly, and only to amplify, illustrate, or emphasize information.

4. The majority of trainers performed very well, but some manifestly did better than others. The observers reported that all the trainers were knowledgeable about the material but were not equally adept at communicating that knowledge. Those who are not accomplished at training due to a lack of training background or experience should be given more time to prepare and to practice in front of a critical audience. Hence, training for trainers is critical.

5. The decisions to enlist prototype personnel to do the training and to mix prototype and nonprototype trainees in the classes were excellent. Indeed, the results of this evaluation argue strongly for doing so in future CAPS training sessions. In fact, we recommend that all the trainers responsible for discussing materials that are directly related to CAPS be selected from the prototype districts, which has several advantages. Prototype personnel-trainers can readily provide examples of how CAPS is actually done, can share their triumphs and tribulations in implementing CAPS, and can more effectively allay trainees' anxiety about CAPS

and disabuse them of their misapprehensions about the program. Prototype trainers have immediate credibility with trainees and are also more likely to be vigorous proponents of the CAPS model.

6. As suggested above, trainers who genuinely support the CAPS model are crucial to the success of training. Compared to last year's orientation sessions, there were very few occurrences of trainers undermining CAPS. Moreover, there were no observed incidents of blatantly negative comments about the program. This year, attacks against CAPS were relatively benign and subtly communicated through trainees' attitudes, nonverbal cues, and references to traditional policing and the CPD culture. Police officers need to see CAPS as an advantage over traditional policing and as a change for the long-term betterment of CPD and the citizens of Chicago. Those who have been through CAPS and view it in distinctly favorable terms are the best vehicles for bringing other officers on board with the program. Also, trainers should continue to emphasize that officers already possess many of the skills and knowledge necessary to make community policing successful.

Finally, trainers should not have to rush through their materials because of time constraints. Cramming four days worth of training materials into two days of lieutenants training was a mistake. As a general rule, the academy should over- rather than underschedule time for CAPS sessions.