IACP



Consolidating Police Services

An IACP Planning Approach

International Association of Chiefs of Police
May 2003

This project was supported by Grant Number 97-DD-BX-0043, awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice.

Points of view in this document are those of the IACP and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Over the past several years, IACP, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, has created a "Services, Support and Technical Assistance Project for Smaller Police Agencies." Through the generous funding of BJA, we have been able to provide both educational documents and direct technical assistance to a large number of agencies. In the course of this project, while responding to requests for direct support on police consolidation, we were able to design a unique planning approach that has now proven successful in several pilot jurisdictions. We are indebted to BJA for its support of the IACP and this project. Without that support, the design and development of this consolidation-planning model would not have been possible.

We are also grateful to the cities of Sparta and Tomah, Wisconsin, and the City of Belvedere and the County of Boone, Illinois, for seeking our help with consolidation, motivating us to design this planning approach, and allowing us to pilot it in their communities. The majority of insights and approaches outlined in this Executive Brief were developed by governing body and law enforcement decision makers in each of these jurisdictions. Their thoughtful approach to consolidation within our retreat context was invaluable to the creation of this policy/planning document.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Intoduction……1
- Types of consolidation
- Preconceptions about consolidation

II. Evaluating Consolidation Potentials: An IACP Planning Model…… 4

A. Initial One-Day Retreat: Exploring the Potential of Consolidation
- Design of the IACP retreat model
- Retreat goals
- Key retreat components
- Retreat breakout group topics
- Retreat keynote speakers: lessons from consolidated jurisdictions
- Concerns of retreat participants

B. Comprehensive Feasability Study: Detailed Exploration of All Consolidation Issues
- Stakeholders roundtable
- Resolving All Consolidation Issues: assessment phase
- Phased transition plan
- Evaluation and adjustment

III. Conclusion……..…..…15

IV. Project Staff and Consultants……16

I. INTRODUCTION

The idea of consolidating law enforcement services continues to interest many police and sheriffs' departments. We present here some expectations from proponents and opponents of consolidation. Consolidation can be an appealing idea for many reasons, particularly to smaller agencies and their governing bodies. Jurisdictions undertaking consolidation activities may anticipate an outcome that will produce a higher volume of police services, lower response time, reduce overtime, duplication of effort, and lower overall operating costs. Consolidation proponents also assume increased agency status, resources, and capacity. The quality of policing is expected to rise under consolidation as a result of more efficient and coordinated use of manpower, more flexibility to meet hours of peak demand, enhanced training opportunities, and improved management and supervision. Consolidation is especially attractive to city and county decision makers in regions with numerous smaller police agencies**,** where fragmentation or redundancy in policing may be present and where fiscal challenges exist.

Opponents of consolidation fear the loss of community independence, and reduced oversight and supervision of a consolidated agency spanning several towns or cities. Opponents also assume that the personal nature of policing in their community will be lost, that response times may not be lowered, and that costs to the smaller community may increase. Expectations versus the actual reality of consolidation outcomes may vary greatly depending upon many factors. For this reason, we recommend that communities interested in pursuing consolidation consider using the following evaluation tools in an effort to thoroughly investigate the matter prior to making any decision.

Since the 1950s, many forms of consolidation have occurred in communities ranging from small towns to large cities. Some of the more substantial consolidations involve larger cities: the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department began contract services to the adjoining city of Lakewood as early as 1954. The Las Vegas, Nevada, Police Department and the Clark County Sheriff's Department went further, joining forces to establish the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department in 1973. Similarly, in 1957 13 separate Canadian police agencies varying in size from 13 to 1,400 personnel merged to create the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force. In Florida, the city of Jacksonville and Duval County went so far as to totally combine their governments to form a single agency under the name, the City of Jacksonville in 1968. More recently, in 1993 the city of Charlotte, North Carolina, combined with the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Department to create the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department.

Types Of Consolidation

Consolidation is a matter of degree. Different variations include:

- *Functional:* Two or more agencies combine certain functional units, such as emergency communications, dispatch, or records.

- *Cross Deputization / Mutual Enforcement Zones / Overlapping Jurisdictions:* Agencies authorize each other's officers to pool resources and improve regional

coverage, for example, permitting a city police officer to make arrests in the county and a sheriff's deputy to make arrests in the city.

- *Public Safety:* City or county governments may unite all police, fire, and emergency medical services agencies under one umbrella.

- *Local Merger:* Two separate police agencies form a single new entity. The agencies may be in small communities or metropolitan areas.

- *Regional:* A number of agencies combine to police a geographic area rather than a jurisdictional one.

- *Metropolitan:* Two or more agencies serving overlapping jurisdictions join forces to become one agency serving an entire metropolitan area, as happened in the Toronto area.

- *Government:* A city and adjoining county consolidate their entire governments, creating a "metro" form of government for all citizens.

No one form of consolidation is superior to others. The type selected for investigation depends on the needs, expectations, and degree of cooperation among the stakeholders in particular jurisdictions. The most common form of consolidation is between smaller county and city police agencies (those serving fewer than 50,000 populations). There are over 14,000 smaller police departments in the United States -- some with inadequate operating budgets for personnel -- often limiting community safety services. Consolidation of any kind may appear to offer countless advantages. Pennsylvania, for example, has more than 1,100 police departments, many with fewer than 20 staff, and has established 28 regional police departments by state statute and city charter.

Preconceptions About Consolidation

In any community, almost all stakeholders enter into discussion of consolidation with preconceptions about the value, if any, of blending agencies; i.e., they have either a positive or negative set of expectations. A review of the literature indicates that examples of positive expectations include: a) the consolidated agency may have a greater capacity to respond to crime as well as greater efficiency and flexibility; b) consolidation can possibly save money; and c) sworn and civilian personnel may have greater opportunities for advancement.

Others hold negative preconceptions: a) senior, supervisory, and line officers alike may be threatened by consolidation and aggressively resist change; b) consolidation is likely to increase costs, particularly because of the start-up costs of reorganization, planning, and standardizing equipment, and possible need for a new building to house the combined agencies; and c) officers in line for promotion or advanced assignment in one agency may find they are outranked for these opportunities by their peers in the other agency. Governance of the newly created agency, once consolidation has occurred,

may well mean: a) loss of control by smaller communities; b) confusion about how and where complaints are sent; c) loss of personal interaction with local law enforcement; and d) fragmented oversight of the newly combined law enforcement agency by local community councils and mayors.

II. EVALUATING CONSOLIDATION POTENTIALS: AN IACP PLANNING MODEL

IACP has, in working with various jurisdictions on consolidation, designed a two-phase planning approach including an initial one-day intensive retreat for all key decision makers. Following the retreat, if there is consensus to take further steps toward consolidation, a phase-two comprehensive evaluation is undertaken. The following describes this two-phased exploration approach: (*Note: for this brief, the example of a city-county law enforcement agency consolidation has been used. The planning model, however, applies to exploring all types of partial or comprehensive consolidation.)*

A. Initial One-Day Retreat: Exploring the Potential of Consolidation

All too often, jurisdictions considering consolidation rush into spending thousands of dollars to hire consultants to conduct a study and recommend for or against consolidation. ***The step most often missed is that of gauging existing local city and/or county support for consolidation of any kind.*** If no consensus to move toward consolidation exists, consultant recommendations to consolidate are premature and of little value. Jurisdictions must first gauge if law enforcement personnel, local and county officials, and citizens actually want to proceed with consolidation, and generally view such a step as feasible politically and financially.

To help jurisdictions make preliminary assessments of consolidation potential, the IACP has designed a retreat model for key parties to explore the issues and see if there is a true consensus in favor of consolidation. If, through this retreat model, the parties agree to pursue consolidation, a comprehensive feasibility study can be conducted as a next step. An initial jurisdictional retreat will determine if key decision makers concur that consolidation is a good or bad idea; likewise, the subsequent feasibility study will confirm whether consolidation between particular agencies will or will not be cost-effective.

The use of outside consultants as a first step can make police agencies and communities feel that others are determining whether or not to consolidate. By contrast, the approach discussed here gives agencies a great deal of say in the decision and promotes greater consensus for an eventual decision by all concerned.

This retreat approach has proven itself an effective way to examine and evaluate the issues that arise in weighing consolidation. It was followed recently by two towns, Tomah and Sparta in Wisconsin, that were considering a merger of 911 dispatch and by two Illinois jurisdictions, the city of Belvedere and Boone County, interested in exploring full consolidation of their law enforcement agencies. *In each of the consolidation case studies presented here, the consensus was to not pursue consolidation at the time. However, since then, consolidation has been revisited in each community. Our intent here is to provide tools to evaluate the consolidation options and emerge with consensus. The choice itself is a matter for the community and it's stakeholders to make.*

Design of the IACP Retreat Model

A look at how the Belvedere Police Department and the Boone County Sheriff's Department went about deciding whether to consolidate can be instructive for other agencies. With advice and technical assistance from IACP staff, stakeholders from the communities of Belvedere and Boone County held a one-day retreat, attended by representatives in police protection, including elected officials, senior officers in the police and sheriff's departments, line officers, civilians from both departments, and concerned citizens.

Prior to the retreat, key stakeholders met and discussed the issues and concerns with IACP facilitators. From these exploratory meetings came both a list of pertinent group topics to explore and a suggested participant list. Once the participant list was finalized, the place and time of the event were determined. Participants were advised that this was a meeting to explore (not resolve) issues and that it would be highly interactive. Space at a local university was secured for the retreat, to avoid any semblance of bias.

Retreat Goals

- Inform participants of preliminary information on consolidation to allow them to decide if there was sufficient reason to continue dialogue, and to continue to study and evaluate the consolidation option.

- Identify the issues that need to be resolved to make an informed decision about consolidation.

- Identify the necessary steps that must be taken to successfully accomplish planning and implementation of consolidation.

From the outset, it was made clear that more questions than answers would be raised at the retreat and that the only consensus to be achieved would be on the interest in, and value of, further analysis of consolidation, if any.

Key Retreat Components

1. Concerns and expectations of participants
2. Facilitator's overview of consolidation issues
3. Issues Panel: Two keynote presentations
4. Breakout group sessions on the identified issues
5. Report-out from breakout groups and action plan

To promote dialogue between retreat participants, four breakout groups were selected. These groups outlined the major topical concerns determined earlier by the stakeholder focus groups.

Retreat Breakout Group Topics

1. *Government Issues* This group was asked to respond to a series of questions on consolidation issues that related specifically to local and county government responsibilities, such as: a) to whom the newly chosen police chief would report, b) how local community governing boards would oversee newly consolidated services, c) how community response to services would be managed (complaint process, etc.), d) how operating costs would be distributed between consolidating communities/jurisdictions.

2. *Police Administration* This group was asked to respond to questions of how a newly consolidated police agency would be managed and run, and by whom.

3. *Police Deployment* This group responded to questions on how officers from the formerly independent departments would be deployed effectively in a new agency configuration.

4. *Public Response* This group responded to questions on citizen response to consolidation and how citizen involvement could be achieved.

Retreat Keynote Speakers: Lessons From Consolidated Jurisdictions

Two keynote speakers with personal consolidation experience, representing the perspectives of a police and sheriff's department respectively, were selected by IACP to open up the retreat. Undersheriff John Gordon of the Jacksonville, Florida, Sheriff's Office had experienced consolidation as a patrol officer. Dennis Nowicki, then Chief of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, had directed the consolidation of the city and county law enforcement agencies.

Both keynote speakers stressed important lessons learned from their experience of consolidation. Chief Nowicki of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department was brought in from Chicago to oversee the new consolidation effort. The city and county felt that new, independent leadership would help ease the transition. He described how the communities of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County had gone through a well-designed planning and implementation process over a number of years, eventually consolidating in 1994.

Chief Nowicki described how both community governments strongly supported the merger. He believes that without across-the-board support, consolidation would have failed. Citizens' input was sought early on. The majority of citizens in the city and county viewed consolidation as an effective way to provide law enforcement services. While there was some initial resistance to consolidation by law enforcement officers in both departments, ultimately they acclimated to the new agency. Upon arrival, Nowicki designed and carried out a survey of all officers. He asked for their concerns and advice, and invited those who cited serious concerns into his office to talk.

Under Chief Nowicki, the new department adopted a community-oriented policing model. This philosophy served as a foundation for change and growth within the new agency.

Sheriff Gordon, who was a city patrol officer in 1968 when consolidation occurred in Jacksonville, Florida, said that the process of consolidation and, adjustment to this process, takes many years. He made it clear that creating a new agency causes officers great difficulties in the shedding of their old identity and assignments for new ones. He mentioned that several holdout officers who never fully accepted consolidation left the department through general attrition or retirement.

Gordon stressed that police leaders, officers, civilian employees, and citizens all need substantial time to adjust to consolidation. Early resistance tends to give way to acceptance only with time and experience. But after the growing pains, he said, consolidation proved to be a more efficient and harmonious approach to law enforcement.

Concerns of Retreat Participants

After opening keynote presentations, each retreat participant was given an opportunity to voice what they believed were the key concerns that needed to be addressed in considering consolidation. The following are examples of the concerns raised by Belvedere and Boone County stakeholders:

General Concerns

- How would a cost-benefit analysis be carried out? How have consolidations fared in such analyses?
- Would the new agency move in a new direction philosophically? Should it?
- Would consolidation affect the rest of the criminal justice system? How?
- Would consolidation respond to the growth of the city, county and region?
- What would happen to the sheriff's office, as they knew it?
- What would happen to the police department, as they knew it?

Political Concerns

- Who would make the key decisions about the consolidation process?
- How could the process be designed to ensure that stakeholders have a role in decision-making?

Operational Concerns

- Would the quality of service provided residents rise or fall?
- Would consolidation lead to duplication of services?

Administrative Concerns

- Would the sheriff head the agency with the chief as his deputy, or vice versa?
- How have other consolidated agencies arrived at an equitable management plan for the new agency?

Financial Concerns

- Would consolidation cause taxpayer costs to increase or decrease?
- Would hidden costs make consolidation more expensive than expected?
- Is consolidation generally viewed as a best use of tax dollars?
- How could stakeholders manage funds in a way that balances public safety and spending concerns?

Personnel Concerns

- Would the seniority and job assignments of officers and civilian employees be protected?
- Would promotional opportunities increase or decrease?

Legal Concerns

- What contractual issues would arise when two distinct agencies combine?
- What other legal issues would arise?

These questions were used as a framework for breakout group discussions at the retreat. Breakout groups were balanced, all of them populated by members of both county and city law enforcement. After breakouts had done their work, a spokesperson for each group reported out on their concerns and final opinion. In the case of Boone County and Belvedere, there was a clear consensus that participants saw sufficient potential in consolidation to proceed with a second step: a comprehensive feasibility study.

B. Comprehensive Feasibility Study: Detailed Exploration of All Consolidation Issues

Once jurisdictions arrive at consensus to proceed beyond a retreat's preliminary discussions to a formal feasibility study, then a series of additional steps is called for. These planning and implementation steps are all part of a complete feasibility study. The issues and concerns raised at the one-day retreat serve as the foundation for all subsequent investigation:

1. Roundtable discussions with key stakeholders
2. Retention of consultants to conduct an assessment of all aspects of consolidation
3. Development of a phased transition plan to create the new entity, if recommended
4. Design of an evaluation plan to determine the level success of consolidation, if chosen, and make adjustments as necessary

Stakeholder Roundtables

The IACP planning model calls for a series of post-retreat roundtable discussions for key stakeholders to further assess the concerns of employees and citizens.

- *Employees* The attitudes and perceptions of sworn officers and civilian employees must be determined. Support for the consolidation plan must be attainable, if it is not already in place.

- *Labor Unions* If one union represents officers in the departments contemplating merger, planning is easier. If two or more unions exist, they may be concerned about their future, their influence in policy decisions, and the job security of their members. These issues must be resolved early on.

- *The Public* While a public referendum may not be necessary, officials in the consolidating jurisdictions must have sufficient evidence that a majority of citizens are aware of a consolidation plan and accept it. This may be accomplished through a citizen survey, public forums, or focus groups.

Resolving all Consolidation Issues: Assessment Phase

Once all participating parties agree that a formal feasibility study should be pursued, it should be funded and undertaken by a professional organization or by appropriate representatives of the jurisdictions themselves. Some of the many issues that a feasibility study should address are discussed below. Where relevant, examples of findings and recommendations, overall benefits and deficits of consolidation determined by the Belvedere-Boone retreat breakout groups have been added as examples of what the funded assessment must resolve.

1. Departmental Values and Traditions

    - *Perceived Identities*: Departments typically have very strong identities. Officers and staff take a great deal of comfort in these identities. Consolidation activities must allow for an understanding of this initial loss of identity, and suggest timeframes for officers to adopt and adjust to the new agency's identity.

    - *Philosophy:* No two departments share an identical law enforcement philosophy. While crime prevention and response are givens, one department may focus on special programs and initiatives, while another may have a single community-oriented, problem-solving approach. The new agency must blend these into one overarching agency philosophy.

    - *Cultures:* Law enforcement agencies develop unique cultures: department-wide perspectives, attitudes, and informal coping mechanisms. The culture of each department must be assessed and respected during the consolidation study. It is reasonable to expect that each department's personnel will

maintain a core of identity elements while relinquishing others to effectively assume the identity and culture of the new agency.

2. Legal Issues

- *Statutory Issues:* How will city, county, and state statutes support or limit the consolidation plan?

- *Legal Evaluation:* Who will be responsible for evaluating and resolving legal issues of agency dissolution and redesign? What must be done to satisfy all legal requirements?

3. Government and Funding Issues

- *Cost-Benefit Analysis:* An assessment of total costs, both short and long range, and a formula to estimate and allocate those funds must be developed. Are there hidden costs? What are they? Will the transitional investment upfront costs be outweighed by the long-term cost benefits?

  Belvedere-Boone Breakout Group Recommendations: The feasibility study would need to identify current costs, including direct and indirect costs and benefit packages. The funding level of the new agency needs to be studied. Short-term costs might increase, notably infrastructure, but long-term costs might decrease. Alternative revenue sources can be sought to fund the new agency, such as passage of a public safety levy by referendum or creation of a general reserve fund.

- *Funding and Shared Costs:* How will revenue acquisition change? Who will receive these revenues? Will levels of revenue change? How? How will costs of the new department be shared by the two jurisdictions: Will they be prorated? Split evenly? Who will decide?

  Boone-Belvedere Breakout Group Recommendations: Both the city and county already have authority to receive and spend monies, so there is no need for new authority. A 50-50 split of the new department's cost would be the most reasonable, since the department would serve all city and county residents equally.

- *City and County Practices:* Consolidation could cause significant changes in programmatic, revenue, and funding practices in both jurisdictions. These changes must be planned for early on.

- *Management:* Who would manage the new agency? How would the command structure be set up? How could it accommodate the expectations of officers from both former departments?

Belvedere-Boone Breakout Group Recommendations: State statutes would dictate that the sheriff head the new agency; a position of undersheriff could be created for the chief. Other options are worth considering, but this would be the simplest approach.

- *Salaries, Benefits, Promotions:* Salaries, benefits, and promotion protocols would need to be standardized so that all officers are assured of consistent treatment.

  Belvedere-Boone Breakout Group Recommendations: Salaries and benefits should be brought up to the higher of the two agency's levels. The added costs could be split 50-50 between the city and county.

- *Perceived Benefits and Drawbacks of Consolidation:* Benefits may include an increased level of service, more officers in the field, greater efficiency, reduced direct and indirect costs, increased training and promotional opportunities. Liabilities would include loss of control by individual agency leaders, increased legal liabilities for both former departments, tension between officers from both former departments, and resistance to change by officers, civilian employees, and possibly the communities themselves.

4. Operational Issues

- *Deployment:* How will officers be deployed? How will patrol sectors or districts be designed? How will patrol allocation per shift and sector be determined? How will preliminary deployment decisions be evaluated after implementation?

  Belvedere-Boone Breakout Group Recommendations: At least the same number of patrol officers now on duty in each department should be maintained. Detective staffing levels should be decided by the new agency leadership.

- *Special Units:* Most departments have a number of special units that target drugs, homicide, gangs, etc. If both agencies had the same units, how would this be resolved to the satisfaction of unit personnel?

- *Logos and Patches:* New logos for cruisers, new patches, and new uniforms would be an urgent issue, since they would send a visible signal that the former agencies are gone, and the new agency has its own unique identity.

- *Training and Educational Standardization:* All future training and educational requirements would have to be standardized. Each officer in the new agency must have access to and participate in requisite training and educational courses. These courses must be identical for all officers.

  Belvedere-Boone Breakout Group Recommendations: Consolidation would be an opportunity to revamp existing FTO programs for new

officers, while giving veteran officers reorientation. Variations in city ordinances and county codes would be an issue. Making consolidation a win-win situation would be feasible, but it would require officers being open to change.

- *Procedures, Policies, and Protocols:* All new agency procedures, policies, and protocols, must be in place and personnel trained on them before consolidation occurs. In this process, there would be opportunities to blend the best of prior agency policies into the new, and to improve and update all policies.

  Belvedere-Boone Breakout Group Recommendations: There should be a thorough evaluation of existing policies, procedures and protocols and improvements of those found to be weak. Sufficient time, money, and effort must be put into this critical task to make all necessary changes. The chosen policing philosophy should be incorporated into all policies, procedures, and protocols at the outset.

- *Perceived Benefits and Drawbacks of Consolidation:* Operationally, several anticipated drawbacks of consolidation might include: (1) difficulty adapting to a new configuration, (2) shift changes, (3) revision of patrol areas, (4) adjustments to rank structure, (5) potential reduction of patrol strength in either the city or the county. Operational benefits might include: (1) enhanced knowledge and skills of the two blended departments, (2) the new agency's flexibility in responding to community needs, (3) additional resources available to meet community needs, and (4) improved communication among officers.

  Belvedere-Boone Breakout Group Recommendations: There would be gains for the county, but losses for the city in overall service, unless the total number of officers was increased. There would be significant start-up costs, and it might take many years to recoup them.

5. Facility Issues

- Evaluation of the age, condition, location, and operational efficiency of the existing sheriff's department facility, as well as age, condition, location and operational efficiency of the existing city police facility.

- Assessment of the feasibility of using either the sheriff's facility or the city's facility, with appropriate expansion and renovation to meet needs of the newly combined department.

- Assessment of the cost of upgrading either the county or city facility to meet the consolidated agency's space needs, compared to other available options including building new and adaptive re-use of an existing non-law enforcement facility (for example, unused government property).

- Determination of the best course of action to resolve all facility issues relative to consolidation, focusing on timetable of completion, cost, and who will take responsibility for managing this component.

Phased Transition Plan

This final section assumes that a successful retreat and comprehensive feasibility study have been completed, with the final outcome a strong recommendation to consolidate, accompanied by a strategic plan. At this juncture, the consolidating agencies are positioned to take a series of action steps to put the consolidation in place. The order in which tasks are accomplished, and the time provided for each, is the last hurdle. Solid planning at this transitional phase will ensure that both agencies enter into the new agreement in a positive manner. The following are some examples of issues requiring attention during the transition:

Staff Concerns Staff may show concern about their futures – assignments, supervision, and rank. A careful plan for a period of adjustment would be necessary to calm staff anxiety and clarify job status.

Administrative Concerns As the administrations of the former agencies dissolve, plans would need to be made for a slow, careful transition to the new administrative structure. At the same time, uninterrupted supervision and leadership of all employees would prove especially important.

Facility, vehicles, and Equipment As consolidation proceeds, the two agencies may move into a new or renovated facility. Planning, completion, and setting a timetable for occupancy of this facility will be of critical importance. Equally important is the design, acquisition, and phasing in of vehicle identification (new logo), and new uniforms and patches.

Evaluation and Adjustment

A process and outcome evaluation of the consolidation should be put in place to parallel consolidation steps. This evaluation will provide critical information on consolidation progress and allow for course corrections when and if needed. The consolidation planning team must agree in advance on the objective indicators of consolidation's success, including personal satisfaction indicators. The evaluation plan must allow for these criteria to be documented and measured in both objective and subjective ways.

Surveys would be a good means of measurement. Individual and group surveys or focus groups would be effective ways to obtain the input of officers and departmental employees, and gain insight into their concerns. Citizens have unique and differing reactions to consolidation and should be surveyed too. Informal community surveys or focus groups could be completed at community meetings, while formal hard-copy surveys could be mailed if resources were available.

The evaluation would also have to incorporate identification of problems and sufficient resources to remedy them. Adjustments would not be indicators of failure but rather of a solid planning and implementation process.

III. CONCLUSION

Consolidation of police services, whether partial or complete, among two or more agencies has been an issue of interest to governing bodies and police agencies for decades. In some jurisdictions, movement toward such consolidation has been smooth and uneventful. In others, the concept has been met with great negativity. In all cases, the cost-effectiveness and operational efficiency of consolidation have been the key factors in final decision-making.

There are three ways one can view consolidation: First, from a historical perspective, how effective and efficient have other consolidations been nationally? Second, what are the current short-term costs of consolidation? Third, what are the long-term benefits of consolidating? If jurisdictions weigh all of these variables and predict a long-term benefit, consolidation will be likely.

The IACP urges those considering consolidation to avoid simplistic assessments. Determining that consolidation brings substantial immediate costs is not a sufficient reason to discontinue investigation. Nor is discovery that consolidation will bring no long-term financial savings to either jurisdiction sufficient to discontinue investigation, unless financial aspects are the only aspects of interest to the jurisdictions. Consolidation must be viewed in the totality of police services, officer and citizen satisfaction, and the capacity of the new agency to better serve the public and fight crime. Looking at this larger picture, jurisdictions may adopt consolidation even with level or increased costs to bring stronger policing to their constituents.

In order to facilitate rational and informed decision-making about consolidation, the IACP has created a two-part planning process to aid police and their governing bodies in assessing all aspects of partial or complete agency consolidation. Pilot demonstrations of this planning approach have proven successful in jurisdictions in Illinois and Wisconsin to date. This Executive Brief is intended to serve a guidebook for other jurisdictions across the United States to address consolidation in an effective and successful manner.

IV. PROJECT STAFF AND CONSULTANTS

Chief J. Scott Finlayson, Springville, Utah, Police Department and President, IACP State Association of Chiefs of Police (Final Report Review)

John R. Firman, Director of Research

Elaine F. Deck, Project Coordinator

Carmen E. Barnes, Project Assistant

Wesley D. Mahr, Research Fellow

Bryan A. Murphy, IACP Research Center Intern

Peter Slavin, Principal Writer

Frederic D. Moyer, President, Moyer Associates, Inc.: Cover Art