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Are We Training Our Detectives? A Survey of Large Law Enforcement Agencies Regarding Investigation Training and Training Needs

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In this study, a mail survey was conducted of 146 of the largest local, sheriff, and state law enforcement agencies in the United States to assess the extent and type of investigation training they receive, and to identify needs. Twenty-nine agencies (20%) responded regarding extent and training for investigators that provided references for agency training programs. Many agencies reported similar courses, delivery systems, and needs. This indicated similar central investigation tasks across agency types, and suggested standardized training courses and delivery systems would likely fit their training needs. Two promising developments concerning online training were noted.

KEYWORDS   Police, training, investigation, investigators, detectives, patrol officers

Historically, law enforcement agencies in the United States have expressed concern about the minimal amount of investigation training that their investigators and patrol officers receive (Horvath, Meesig, & Lee, 2001). Yet very little is known about the formal investigation training curricula provided among different types of agencies across the country, or the types of investigation training wanted. The three primary purposes of this study were (a)

to determine the extent and type of investigation training that large police agencies currently provide to their investigators and patrol officers; (b) to identify additional investigation training needs; and (c) to identify any variances in investigation training and needs by agency type, and by geographic regions of the country.

Crime is an expensive business, and, aside from the human suffering it creates, the economic costs of reported crimes in the United States generally range well over one trillion dollars annually. The nature of crime itself has become significantly complex over the past few decades with the growth of illegal drugs, international organized crime, transnational terrorism, corporate crime, and cybercrime. Moreover, the means to commit crime have become increasingly complex with the development of technology and access to information (Anderson, 1999; Cole & Smith, 2010; Spiess, 2003). It is argued that that the use of modern crime-fighting tools, including technology and forensic science, to address the crime problem will very likely require better educated and trained criminal justice personnel.

In the face of these challenges, the question remained as to how effectively or aggressively current resources are addressing the problem. Although the population of the United States exceeds 300 million people, only about 1.2 million (0.4% of 300 million) law enforcement officers are employed at the local, state, and federal levels. They spend only about 30% of their time on crime control and investigation matters, and only about 15%–20% of them are investigators whose primary role it is to investigate crime. Additionally, they are dispersed across the country among more than 17,000 agencies, almost half of which consist of fewer than 10 officers. Moreover, although the cost to support these agencies exceeds $200 billion a year, it is considerably less than the estimated trillion plus dollar costs of crime, and is roughly one eighth of what is spent on national defense (Bureau of Justice Statistics [BJS], 2011b; Greenwood, Chaiken, & Petersilia, 1977; Kyckelhahn, 2011; Reaves, 2011, 2012; U.S. Department of Justice [U.S. DOJ], 2014).

In assessing the overall performance of police agencies in combating crime, it is known that most crimes are not reported to the police (BJS, 2011a). Further, most of the crimes that are reported are not solved. In fact, only about 47% of the reported violent crimes, and 18% of the reported property crimes are actually cleared (lead to arrests), according to the Uniform Crime Report (UCR). And remarkably, the overall UCR crime clearance rates have remained relatively stagnant for over four decades, despite all the changes in our society, crime, crime rates, and technology (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2015).

These data raise a number of issues about the overall effectiveness of police in dealing with crime, and one of the more pertinent ones is how well trained they are to do their job. In that regard, the specific interest of this article is the training of investigators. However, as patrol officers play a critical role in the police investigation process (most investigators serve several

years as patrol officers before becoming investigators, and the information obtained by patrol officers during their preliminary investigation directly impacts what investigators do), it is appropriate to include investigation training received by patrol officers also (Eck, 1983).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review consists of a brief review of the historical highlights and research studies pertaining to police and detective training during the past 170 years. The terms "agency" and "agencies" were used broadly in this article to refer to governmental law enforcement organizations in the United States (including local, sheriff, and state agencies), and the term "police" includes full-time sworn officers with full arrest powers in local, sheriff, and state law enforcement agencies. Additionally, the term "patrol officer" was used to include law enforcement officers (police officers, sheriff deputies, state troopers, and others) whose primary duties were related to patrol. The terms "investigator" and "detective" were used interchangeably as they are often used that way in the research literature.

Training During the Political and Reform Eras of Policing

Most police agencies in the United States were formed after the 1840s, in response to the increasing civil unrest in cities brought about by social change driven by the Industrial Revolution. During this early period, often referred to as the "Political Era" of policing, police training consisted essentially of an apprenticeship and informal on-the-job training (OJT) of new recruits by experienced officers (Miller, 1974; Trojanowicz & Carter, 1988).

Around the turn of the 20th century, the increasing public outcry against widespread government corruption and abuse (including police agencies) ushered in the "Reform Era," which brought about broader societal changes (Trojanowicz & Carter, 1988). In 1908, August Vollmer, the Marshal of Berkeley, CA, was the first U.S. police executive reported to have developed job-related police training programs and, in conjunction with the University of California, he also introduced the first formalized school of detective training (Christian & Edwards, 1985; Miller, 1974).

At the federal level, in the midst of the national unrest driven by the Great Depression and the Prohibition Era, the Wickersham Commission was created to address Prohibition issues and police practices. It concluded that, almost 100 years after the establishment of the first police agency in the country, there was "absolutely nothing being done which by any stretch of the imagination could be considered as police training" (National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, 1931, p. 70). Although it advocated

training academies and college-level instruction for police, most of its recommendations were ignored at the time. However, following World War II, the federally funded GI Bill for military veterans did generate funding and training programs in universities in a variety of fields, including law enforcement (Christian & Edwards, 1985).

Training During the Community Policing Era

In the 1960s, amid widespread civil unrest and rising crime rates in urban areas, the federal government took a leading role in improving the country's criminal justice system in four major areas: the development of the legal framework, the national infrastructure, selection and training standards, and systemic research.

The legal framework was driven primarily by the U.S. Supreme Court decisions regarding criminal law matters (e.g., *Mapp v. Ohio* 1961, re: unreasonable search/seizure; *Escobedo v. Illinois* 1964, re: the right to counsel for criminal suspects; *Miranda v. Arizona* 1966, re: rights advise for criminal suspects; and *Terry v. Ohio* 1968, re: police probable cause to stop and frisk; Cole & Smith, 2010). Additionally, the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act and the newly established Equal Employment Opportunity Commission placed direct pressures on the police to develop standardized guidelines for employee selection procedures (Christian & Edwards, 1985).

Concerning the national infrastructure and selection and training standards, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice was created to undertake a comprehensive review of the criminal justice system and its problems (President's Commission, 1968). In conjunction with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP, established in 1893 to promote professionalism in policing), it advocated the development of Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) councils at state levels to address minimum selection and training standard for law enforcement officers. In 1973, the federal National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals (NACCJSG) was created and subsequently promoted uniform national selection and training standards for state and local agencies. However, the Commission recognized that its recommendations in some areas were limited due to the "lack of reliable information," and it urged further research in those areas (National Advisory Commission [NACCJSG], 1973, preface page). By the 1980s, there were POSTs in 46 states, many of whom had begun developing their own minimum mandatory training standards and job/task analyses to meet federal and state fair employment standards (Christian & Edwards, 1985; Healey, 1994). In 1987, the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST), comprised of the directors of the respective state POSTs, was organized to focus on modeling uniform standards regarding the selection and

training of police. Although IADLEST endorsed in-service training (which included formal investigation training for detectives and patrol officers), the standards and curricula for such training were left to the discretion of individual agencies (International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Training, 2015).

With regard to research, the 1960s also witnessed the beginning of the first major scientific research efforts in the United States regarding criminal justice and police organizations. In 1968, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration provided funding to increase the educational and training levels of police, and the federal government funded a number of research programs in an effort to better understand and address these problems (Christian & Edwards, 1985; Healey, 1994).

In the 1970s and 1980s, the "Era of Community Policing" evolved out of much of that research (Trojanowicz & Carter, 1988). Presented as follows are summaries of the pertinent major literature regarding investigation training.

- The 1977 Rand Report (Greenwood, Chaiken, & Petersilia, 1977) was the seminal research concerning police detectives. In this study a mail survey was conducted of 300 large police agencies, and generated a 51% response rate. More than half of the respondents reported that the only training provided new detectives was on-the-job experience. The study found that most agencies produced an abundance of field-oriented in-house investigative training materials for detectives, and that this was at the time "possibly the largest single source of practical investigative literature" available at the local level (Greenwood, Chaiken, & Petersilia, 1977, p. 39). It was also noted that most agencies restricted the dissemination of this material outside of their organizations, which limited the extent to which it could be shared with other agencies. Further, by stating that crime clearance rates were influenced much more by patrol officers than investigators, it highlighted the importance of investigation training for them.
- During the 1980s, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) conducted the most comprehensive and representative police training needs assessment surveys found in the literature (Phillips, 1984, 1988). The surveys identified 13 detective-related functions that were consistently rated by agencies, regardless of their size or type, as among the top 25% in importance. They included interviews, evidence, criminal intelligence, sources, drug-related matters, searches, crime scene issues, report writing, and court testimony. The results were a clear indicator of the type of formal investigation training that agencies desired; however, the type, content, and amount of training that agencies were actually providing to their investigators and patrol officers remained unknown.
- With regard to patrol officer training requirements, the most current national information was found in the Law Enforcement Management and

Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) census. It reported that new recruits were required to complete at least 700 hours of classroom and field training, and a minimum average of 35 hours of annual in-service training thereafter. However, the census did not provide any specific information regarding investigation training for investigators or patrol officers (BJS, 2010).

• In 1998, a content analysis was conducted on 21 criminal investigation textbooks published between 1975 and 1995 (Horvath & Meesig, 1998). It was found that about 9% of the texts were devoted to introductory matters, 42% was devoted to crime types, 39% related to investigative techniques (interview/interrogation, crime scene activities, etc.), and the remainder covered information disposition matters (post-arrest activities, report writing, etc.). These results were then compared to eight empirical works on the criminal investigation process conducted in the United States, Canada, England, and Japan. It was found that the texts underemphasized a number of areas of the research, including the patrol officer's role, detective post-arrest activities, information collection, and investigation training. Further, they overemphasized the collection of physical evidence, which was collected in less than 10% of police investigations. Essentially, the study identified discrepancies between what was known and what was being taught. It highlighted the need for educational and training materials to be kept current with research and developments in the field.

• In 2001, the first-ever nationally representative survey of state and local police agencies regarding the police criminal investigation process was conducted (Horvath, Meesig, & Lee, 2001). The study, hereinafter called the 2001 study, provided the most current and comprehensive overall picture of investigation training available for police investigators and patrol officers. Its purpose was to update and expand the 1977 Rand Report, and it included 3,123 agencies of all sizes. The 1,746 respondents (56% response rate) employed more than half (over 350,000) of the full-time sworn officers in the country, more than 50,000 (16%) of whom were investigators.

      With regard to investigation training, the survey found that only 39% (562) of all agencies reported that newly appointed investigators were required to undergo in-service classroom instruction on investigation-related matters. The mean number of hours required for such training was 41 hr. The training covered crime-types (e.g., homicide, crimes against property, drugs) investigative techniques (including interview/interrogation and crime scene management), legal issues (arrest, search, court testimony, etc.), and management and administration matters (i.e., report writing, case management, data systems). Thirty percent of all 1,746 respondents received most or all of their training from state agencies, 26% from educational institutions, 18% from in-house personnel, and fewer than 10% each from private organizations, other local agencies, federal agencies or other sources.

The survey found that over 70% of all agencies reported efforts to enhance the investigation role of patrol officers within the prior 5 years. However, only 35% (614) of them required patrol officers to undergo any classroom instruction on investigation subsequent to basic academy training. Among those agencies, the training subjects included investigative techniques (crime scene procedures, evidence gathering, interview and interrogation), legal issues (court testimony), and management/administrative matters (report writing).

Overall, the survey findings revealed that, while policing itself had undergone many changes since the 1977 Rand Report, police investigation training seemed to have been relatively uninfluenced by those changes, in that still fewer than half of the agencies provided formal investigation training for investigators and patrol officers. Nevertheless, agencies reported that training was one of the top three factors that would help them to improve crime clearance rates (the other two factors were more personnel and technology).

Training Resources

In the century since Vollmer's pioneering initiatives in 1908, there have been a number of significant developments in the infrastructure for police and investigation training. At the federal government level, the aforementioned GI Bill, U.S. Supreme Court rulings, federal commissions, LEMAS census, and programs sponsored by the U.S. DOJ and other federal departments have been, and continue to be, major driving forces in this development. A cursory review of current criminal justice Web sites of the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) of the U.S. DOJ revealed programs providing funding and grants for research in all major areas of criminal justice, including training (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015). Also, a variety of OJP and U.S. Department of Homeland Security programs sponsor hundreds of investigation-related training courses for investigators and patrol officers (e.g., Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2015, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, 2015, National Institute of Justice, 2015). While many of them are oriented primarily toward technical, specialized, and advanced training on investigation-related matters, most are offered free of charge and provide a variety of media delivery methods ranging from in-class instruction to television, video, online, and other computer-supported distance-learning courses. Further, they are delivered variously by private organizations, universities, federal, and state agencies. However, similar to the restrictions noted in the Rand study, access to most of the course materials was limited to certified law enforcement personnel and organizations.

At the state level, IADLEST reported that all 50 states have POSTs that provide minimum standards models for selection and training of police (with

the exception, as previously noted, of investigation training for investigators).
More than 600 training academies operate in all 50 states to provide an aver-
age of 19 weeks basic training to municipal, sheriff, and state police recruits,
and most of the academies also provide various types on in-service train-
ing to active-duty officers. At least two thirds of the academies offer online
courses, and about half of them also use video conferencing technology (BJS,
2009). In 2005, the Police Chief magazine, (a law enforcement periodical
written specifically for practitioners and sponsored by the IACP), published
a comprehensive article about integrating various online and computerized
distance learning concepts and training measures into agencies (Reiswerg,
2005).

Clearly, the governmental infrastructure for the funding, development
and delivery of police training has improved considerably over recent years,
along with private foundations funding and grants. However it is not known
if it has yet affected investigation training programs for investigators and
patrol officers. With all the increasing costs, complexities and technological
developments impacting crime in the twenty-first century, are most agencies
still relying on apprenticeships and OJT methods that originated two cen-
turies ago? Or are they taking advantage of the new modern day training
infrastructure and opportunities?

METHODOLOGY

As discussed above, the extent and type of investigation training provided
by agencies to investigators and patrol officers has not been well-reported
in the research literature, and such training is probably not available to most
agencies in the United States. The current study was designed to address this
by conducting a survey to collect data on this subject directly from the largest
local police, sheriff and state agency in each state. The largest agencies were
selected because they were presumed to be the most likely to have well-
developed and extensive training programs due to their size and resources
and the diversity of their investigative responsibilities.

The 2008 LEMAS census provided national data on the number of local
police, sheriff, and state law enforcement agencies (17,985), and was used as
the current study population (U.S. DOJ, 2011). The current study sampling
frame in that population included the largest local police, sheriff, and state
agency in each state and the District of Columbia, based on the number of
authorized full-time sworn officers with general arrest powers. A total of 146
agencies were included in the sampling frame.

During January–February 2012, a draft data collection instrument/survey
questionnaire based on previously constructed survey questionnaires
(Horvath, Meesig, & Lee, 2001; Meesig, 2006[1]), was developed and pretested.
The finalized questionnaire was a four-page packet that included a letter of

transmittal on the first page and eight base questions. The first question addressed formal investigation training for newly appointed investigators (whether training was required, optional, or not conducted, and hours of required and/or optional training), and the second question asked agencies to provide investigation training course names and related information (hours in length, taught by whom, how taught, and how funded). The third question asked agencies to provide copies of course syllabuses. Questions 4 through 6 repeated the same three questions for patrol officers. Question 7 asked agencies to indicate the extent to which training was needed regarding lists of types of training, and Question 8 asked agencies to indicate their overall need for training of personnel (investigators, patrol officers, and investigation supervisors), and for making computer/online investigation training courses available.

The survey packet was submitted to the Human Research Review Committee at Grand Valley State University in February 2012, and final approval was granted in April 2012. The packet was mailed, together with a stamped, preaddressed return envelope, to the chief law enforcement administrators of the 146 agencies identified in the sampling frame.

The first mailing took place in April 2012. Follow-up mailings of the packets were made to nonrespondents in August, September, and October 2012. This resulted in a total of 27 usable responses. In an effort to encourage more agencies to respond to the survey, telephonic contact was made with approximately 60% of the nonresponding agencies during the period November 2012–April 2013; however, this generated only two additional responses, for a total of 29 usable responses.

Results

This section addresses the survey distribution and response data, and agency responses to each of the eight investigation training questions in the survey questionnaire. For purposes of clarity and comparison, the results are presented for investigators and patrol officers, where appropriate, and agency type was used as an organizing variable in describing some of the data. Comparisons were not made based on the geographic location of agencies due to the small number of respondents. Throughout this section, the percentages reported have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Questionnaire Distribution and Responses

A summary of the mailings and responses is set forth in Table 1.

The results displayed in the table reflect that questionnaires were distributed to 146 agencies (51 local, 45 sheriff, and 50 state), and usable returns were received from 29, for an overall response rate of 20%. Of the 29 agen-

TABLE 1 Number and Percent of Questionnaires Distributed to and Returned from Agencies, by Agency Type

Questionnaires	Local N = 51[a]		Sheriff N = 45[b]		State N = 50[c]		Total Agencies N = 146	
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Distributed	51	35	45	31	50	34	146	100
Usable returns	12	8	7	5	10	7	29	20
Usable returns as a percent of 29 respondents		12÷29 = 41		7÷29 = 24		10÷29 = 34	—	—
Usable returns as a percent of respondents by agency type		12÷51 = 24		7÷45 = 16		10÷50 = 20	—	—

[a]One local police agency from each of the 50 states, plus one from Washington, DC. Four police agencies were listed in the census as county or city/county police departments. They were counted as police agencies because they identified themselves as "police" organizations. [b]No sheriff agencies were listed for five states (AK, CT, DE, HI, and RI) or Washington, DC. [c]No state agency was listed for Washington, DC.

cies, 12 (41%) were local agencies, seven (24%) were sheriffs, and 10 (34%) were state agencies.

Responses by agency type included 24% of the 51 local agencies, 16% of the 45 sheriffs, and 20% of the 50 state agencies. Overall, the responses by agency type were similar.

Question 1: Formal Investigation Training for Investigators

Agencies were asked if any formal investigation training for newly appointed investigators in their agency was currently required, optional or not conducted. The results are presented in Table 2.

As shown above, 20 (69%) of the 29 respondents reported that it was required. This included seven (58%) of the 12 local agencies, four (57%) of the seven sheriffs, and nine (90%) of the 10 state agencies. Six agencies (21%) reported it was optional, and only three (10%) reported it was not conducted. Two of the three indicated that such training was conducted if available or as needed, and the third agency indicated that an in-house training course (not further specified) was available.

Agencies were also asked to specify the number of hours of training that were required or optional for investigators. Only 23 of the 29 agencies responded to the question (three local agencies and three sheriffs did not respond). Some agencies provided responses for both required and optional training, resulting in 23 agencies providing a total of 28 responses. Nineteen agencies provided an overall mean of 121 hours of required training (range

TABLE 2 Number and Percent of Agencies in Which Formal Investigation Training for Investigators is Required, Optional, or Not Conducted, by Agency Type

Training	Local N = 12		Sheriff N = 7		State N = 10		Total Agencies N = 29	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Training is required	7		4		9		20	
% of 29 agencies		24		14		31		69
% of agency type		58		57		90		—
Training is optional	2		3		1		6	
% of 29 agencies		7		10		3		21
% of agency type	2	17		43		10		—
Training not conducted	3		—		—		3	
% of 29 agencies		10		—		—		10
% of agency type		25		—		—		—

= 16–960). Nine agencies provided an overall mean of 96 hours of optional training (range = 24–280).

SUMMARY

Although agency type responses varied, the majority (69%) of agencies (including 90% of state agencies) required investigation training for investigators, and fewer than half (21%) reported it was optional. The means and ranges of hours of required and optional training varied both within and between the three agency types.

Question 2: Formal Investigation Training Courses for Investigators

Agencies were asked to provide the name of each investigation training course they provided for investigators. Twenty-eight agencies listed from one to 14 courses each, for a total of 147 courses. This was a mean of 5.3 courses per agency (means of 5.6 for 11 local agencies, 4.0 for seven sheriffs, and 5.7 for 10 state agencies).

In order to determine the kinds of courses provided, the 147 courses were sorted into five broad categories based on the similarities of their

titles. These categories were Introductory Courses, Crime Types, Investigative Techniques, Legal Issues, and Management/Administrative Matters. Most course titles were sufficiently clear to be readily sorted into a specific category. Where there was some question regarding the nature of the course, it was placed into the category that seemed most appropriate based on the information available:

- A total of 18 Introductory Courses (12% of 147) were listed. Titles included introduction to criminal investigation (five courses), basic investigation/investigators (seven), investigator development/school (three), new detective/agent (two), detective and principles of investigation (one).
- There were 44 Crime Types courses listed (30% of 147). Subjects included homicide (11 courses), drug-related (seven), crimes against people (four), crimes against property (four), abuse/neglect (four), background investigation (three), and 11 miscellaneous courses (including counterterrorism, cybercrime, critical incidents, forgery, graffiti, bias/gang crimes, fraud, miscellaneous crimes, prison gangs, driving while intoxicated, and sobriety tests).
- A total of 71 courses were sorted under the Investigative Techniques category (48% of 147). Related titles included interview/interrogation (21 courses), advanced interview/interrogation (four), crime scene matters (11), evidence-related matters (six), surveillance (three), accident investigation (three), computers (two), information/technology (two), in-service (two), and 17 miscellaneous courses (including force defense (three), handgun (two), fugitives, concealed trap, executive protection, juveniles, street-level investigation, financial analysis, interdiction, warrants as investigative tools, prisoner debriefing, informants, and covert investigation, and Excel).
- Eight courses concerned Legal Issues (5% of 147). They included search/seizure (four), probable cause (one), court preparation (one), prosecutor office (one), and case law (one).
- Six Management/Administration courses (4% of 147) included three regarding major case management, two on case management, and one on report writing.

With regard to agency type, the responses of the three types of agencies were quite similar in that they varied 12% or less regarding the percentages of total courses each agency type offered within each of the five categories. The percentage range between the three agency types for Introductory courses was 11% to 14%, for Crime Types–27% to 33%, for Investigative Techniques–39% to 51%, for Legal Issues–2% to 11%, and for Management/Administration–2% to 7%.

For each course, agencies were asked to specify the number of hours it was in length, by whom it was taught (federal, state, local, in-house, private,

or other), how it was taught (class, computer, correspondence, or other), and how it was funded (federal, state, in-house, or other).

- A total of 27 of the 29 agencies reported how many hours each course consisted of for 146 courses, and the total number of hours for all the courses was 5,126 hours. This was a mean of 35.1 hours per course, and a mean of 5.4 courses per agency.
- The 27 agencies also reported by whom their 146 courses were taught. Fifty-eight courses (40%, for 1,924 hours) were taught by state agencies, 50 (34%, for 2,107 hours) were taught in-house, and the remaining 38 (26%, for 1,095 hours) were taught by federal, local, private, and other sources.
- With regard to how the courses were taught, 25 agencies responded that 98% (140 of 143 courses) were taught in class, and 2% (three) were taught by other sources. None were taught by computer or correspondence.
- Twenty-five agencies reported that the majority of the funding for 144 courses was provided in-house (88 courses, 61%). states provided funding for 38 (26%), and federal and other sources provided funding for 18 (13%).

SUMMARY

Crime Types and Investigative Techniques courses accounted for 78% of the 147 investigation training courses provided by agencies for investigators. The most frequent Crime Types courses were homicide and drug related, and the most frequent Investigative Techniques courses were interview/interrogation and crime-scene related. Introductory courses accounted for 12% of the courses, and Legal Issues and Management/Administration courses accounted for 10%. The distribution of the percentages of courses in each of the five categories was similar across the three types of agencies. Most courses (74%) were provided by the state or in-house. More courses were taught by the state (40%), but in-house teaching accounted for the most hours taught. Almost all (98%) were taught in classrooms, and almost two thirds (61%) were funded in-house.

Questions 3 and 6: Syllabuses for Formal Investigation Training Courses for Investigators and Patrol Officers

In Question 3, agencies were asked to provide a copy of the syllabuses for formal investigation training courses for investigators, and in Question 6, they were asked the same question for courses for patrol officers. Due to the low response rate, the survey results for both questions are described here.

Three local agencies provided a total of seven syllabuses. Twenty-one agencies (72%) declined to provide syllabuses: eight said they were private/proprietary (one local, two sheriff, five state), four said they were main-

tained by a third party (two local, one sheriff and one state), and nine said they were not available/not applicable (four local, four sheriff, one state). Three agencies provided only general course descriptions rather than syllabuses, and two agencies did not respond (both state).

Of the seven syllabuses received, four were for introductory criminal investigation courses, one was for drug interdiction, one was for evidence specialist training, and one was for cell phone investigation.

- The four introductory criminal investigation syllabuses were for training sessions ranging from two to five days in length, and listed a total of 57 topics:
  ○ Seven (12%) related to crime types, which included computer crimes (two), injury/death, sex crimes, robbery, property crimes, and juveniles.
  ○ Twenty-three (40%) related to investigative techniques, including interview/interrogation (four), using computers in investigation (three), crime scene activities (three), evidence activities (two), witnesses (two), eyewitnesses (two), social media (two), beginning investigation, cold cases, photography, confidential informants, and statements.
  ○ Twelve (21%) related to legal activities, which included prosecutor-relations (four), search warrants (two), testifying (two), state statutes, public disclosures, probable cause, and Miranda.
  ○ Fifteen (26%) related to management/administration. They were media relations (two), organizational characteristics, roles, family/community relations, investigative resources, investigative technology, supplemental investigation, case management, case studies, justice overview, detective unit overview, technology/electronic support unit, criminal investigation review, and miscellaneous course administrative activities.
- The two-day drug interdiction course topics included drug recognition and clandestine laboratory safety awareness, vehicle searches, roadside interviewing, hidden compartments, and miscellaneous course administrative activities.
- The four-day evidence specialist training course topics included crime scene containment, search methods, crime scene unit protocols, scene logs, damage to obtain evidence, vehicle impounds, types of crime scenes, evidence collection and packaging, casting, diagrams, fingerprinting, photography, mock scenes, digital evidence collection, search warrants, and recording statements.
- The three-day cell phone investigation course topics included case law and documentation for cell phone investigation, a cellular network overview, cell phone collection and analysis, capturing evidence from cell phones, and miscellaneous course administrative activities.

TABLE 3 Number and Percent of Agencies in Which Formal Investigation Training for Patrol Officers is Required, Optional, or Not Conducted, by Agency Type

Training	Local N = 11[a]		Sheriff N = 7		State N = 9[a]		Total Agencies N = 27	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Training is required	2		1		7		10	
% of 27 agencies		7		4		26		37
% of agency type	2	18		14		78		—
Training is optional	7		2		2		11	
% of 27 agencies		26		7		7		41
% of agency type	7	64		29		22		—
Training is not conducted	2		4		—		6	
% of 27 agencies		7		15		—		22
% of agency type		18		57		—		—

[a]One local agency and one state agency did not respond.

SUMMARY

Only three of the 29 respondents provided a total of seven course syllabuses. The main reasons given for not providing syllabuses were that they were proprietary or not available. The seven syllabuses related to introductions to investigations, drug interdiction, evidence specialist training, and cell phone investigations.

Question 4: Formal Investigation Training for Patrol Officers

Agencies were asked if any formal investigation training for patrol officers in their agency was currently required, optional or not conducted. Their responses are set forth in Table 3.

As illustrated in the table, 27 agencies responded to the question. Ten (37%) said it was required. This included two (18%) of 11 local agencies, one (14%) of the seven sheriffs, and seven (78%) of nine state agencies. Eleven agencies (41%) reported it was optional, and six agencies (22%) indicated training was not conducted. Two of the six said in-house training (not further specified) was adequate/available, two said it was not required/not applicable, one said more patrol-specific courses were available, and one provided no reason.

Agencies were also asked to specify the number of hours of training that were required or optional for patrol officers. Only 14 of the 29 agencies responded, (six local, one sheriff, and seven state). Some agencies provided responses for both required and optional training, resulting in 14 agencies providing 16 responses. Nine agencies provided an overall mean of 26 hr of required training (median and mode = 16; range = 2–80). Seven agencies provided an overall mean of 46 hr of optional training (median and mode = 40; range = 12–128).

SUMMARY

A mean of 37% of the respondents provided required training for patrol officers (although 78% of state agencies did). A mean of 41% provided optional training (although 64% of local agencies did). Only 14 agencies provided information regarding hours of training.

Question 5: Formal Investigation Training Courses for Patrol Officers

Agencies were asked to provide the name of each investigation training course they provided for patrol officers. Twenty agencies listed from one to 21 courses each, for a total of 109 courses. This was a mean of 5.5 courses per agency (means of 6.5 for local agencies, 7.0 for sheriffs, and 3.8 for state agencies

As was done previously with regard to Question 2, the 109 courses were sorted into the same five broad categories based on the similarities of their titles. A sixth category—Patrol-Oriented Courses—was added to include noninvestigative courses. And, as in Question 2, courses with less descriptive titles were sorted into the category that seemed most appropriate based on the information available:

- A total of five courses were Introductory (5% of 109 courses). Titles included introduction to criminal investigation (two courses), basic criminal investigation (two), and advanced criminal investigation (one).
- There were 47 Crime Types courses (43% of 109). Thirteen were drug-related (six narcotics/drugs/pharmaceutical, three concealment/interdiction, two drug recognition, one cartels, one street officer), six homicide (three homicide/death, two child death, one fire death), five abuse/neglect (two domestic violence, one abuse/neglect, one abuse/neglect-elderly, one child abuse), four crimes against property (two auto/vehicle theft, one crimes against property, one burglary), three crimes against people (victims, violent, and hate), and 16 miscellaneous (five check/forgery/finance/fraud related, two gangs, two street level, one

post blast, one cybercrime, one DV protection, one cold case, one missing persons, one graffiti, and one sobriety test).

- A total of 42 courses were on Investigative Techniques (39% of 109). Related titles included nine), three annual interview/interrogation courses, seven crime scene matters, six evidence/photography related, five accident investigation (two crash/accident, two refresher/advanced, one motorcycle /yearly in service, two computers, two technology (one information/technology, one Coplink), one surveillance, and seven miscellaneous (two Excel, two force, two guns, one defensive tactics).
- Four courses concerned Legal Issues (4% of 109). They included one search/seizure, one court preparation, one search warrants, and one legal/wrongful conviction.
- Two Management/Administration courses (2% of 109) dealt with case management and report writing.
- There were nine Patrol-Oriented courses (8% of 109). Five were vehicle related (concealed trap, vehicle pursuit, vehicle search, advanced traffic, and commercial vehicle interdiction), and four were on patrol officer training (patrol officer training, crime patrol, driving while intoxicated, and one not clearly specified).

With regard to agency type, the three types of agencies were again quite similar in that their responses varied 17% or less regarding the percentages of total courses each agency type offered within each of the six categories. The percentage range between the three agency types for Introductory courses was 0% to 6%; for Crime Types–40% to 57%; for Investigative Techniques–29% to 43%; for Legal Issues–0% to 6%; for Management/Administration–0% to 3%; and for Patrol-Oriented–6% to 14%.

For each course, agencies were asked to specify the number of hours it was in length, by whom it was taught (federal, state, local, in-house, private, or other), how it was taught (class, computer, correspondence, or other), and how it was funded (federal, state, in-house, or other).

- A total of 15 agencies reported how many hours each course consisted of for 98 courses, and the total number of hours for all the courses was 1,757 hours. This was a mean of 18 hr per course and a mean of 6.5 courses per agency.
- Fifteen agencies also reported by whom their 98 courses were taught. Forty-six courses (47%, for 764 hours) were taught in-house, and 23 (23%, for 399 hours) were taught by other sources. Federal, state, local, and private sources accounted for 29 (29%, for 594 hr).
- With regard to how courses were taught, 15 agencies reported that a total of 95 of 97 courses (98%) were taught in class. One was taught by computer (unknown if online) and one was taught by other sources.

- Sixteen agencies reported that funding for 99 courses was primarily in-house (71%), with the remainder of funding coming from federal (14%), state (13%), and other (2%) sources.

SUMMARY

Crime Types and Investigative Techniques courses accounted for 82% of the 109 investigation training courses provided by agencies for patrol officers. The most frequent Crime Types courses were drug related and the most frequent Investigative Techniques courses were interview/interrogation (these were also among the most frequent courses for investigators). Introductory, Legal Issues, and Management/Administration courses accounted for 10%, and the remainder included Patrol-Oriented courses. And, as with investigators, the distribution of the percentages of courses in each of the categories was similar across the three types of agencies. Most courses (70%) were taught in-house and by other sources. Almost all (98%) were taught in classrooms, and more than two-thirds (71%) were funded in-house.

Question 6: Syllabuses for Formal Investigation Training Courses for Patrol Officers

See Question 3, wherein the agency responses to Questions 3 and 6 were combined.

Question 7: Need for Additional Investigation Training Courses

Agencies were presented with four of the categories of investigation training used in Questions 2 and 5–Crime Types, Investigative Techniques, Legal Issues, and Management/Administration (The Introductory Course category was not included, as the course topics in those courses could be sorted into the other four categories—see the introductory course syllabus descriptions in Question 3. Also, the noninvestigators Patrol-Oriented category was not included). Under each category they were provided a list of different types of training, and were asked to indicate the extent to which each type was needed by their investigators and patrol officers by marking either None, Slight, Moderate, or Large. A "None" response was assigned a value of 1, and a "Slight" response was assigned a value of 2. "Moderate" and "Large" responses were assigned values of 3 and +4, respectively. To facilitate comparisons between investigators and patrol officers, and with data from prior studies, the Moderate and Large responses were combined and the means for each type of training were tallied. The number of agencies that responded to each type of training, along with the mean of their Moderate to Large responses, was presented in Table 4 under each category. Then, for each

TABLE 4 Agency Moderate to Large Mean Percentages Indicating a Training Need for Investigators and Patrol Officers in Four Categories of Investigation Training

Categories	Patrol Officers		Investigators	
	Number of Agencies	Moderate to Large Mean%	Number of Agencies	Moderate to Large Mean%
Crime Types				
1-Violent	26	58	23	39
2-Property	27	52	23	48
3-Narcotics	26	50	23	48
4-Vice	26	31	24	25
5-Fraud/White Collar	27	59	23	30
6-Computer/Cyber Crime	28	71	25	36
7-Juvenile/Gang	26	46	23	48
8-Counterterrorism	26	59	23	43
Grand Mean		53		40
Investigative Techniques				
1-Interview/Interrogation	27	63	24	79
2-Crime Scene	26	58	22	64
3-Evidence Handling	26	39	22	69
4-Surveillance	26	58	21	43
Grand Mean		55		64
Legal Issues				
1-Arrest	25	48	23	70
2-Search/Seizure	25	56	23	78
3-Work with Prosecutors	25	44	22	59
4-Court Testimony	25	56	23	74
Grand Mean		51		70
Management/Administration				
1-Report Writing	26	39	22	82
2-Case Management	26	54	22	55
3-Information Systems	26	50	21	57
4-Community Policing/Investigation	26	39	21	62
5-Problem-Oriented Policing	27	30	22	73
6-Crime Analysis	27	41	23	44
Grand Mean		42		62
Combined grand mean of all types of training in all categories	25–28	50	21–25	59

category, the grand mean (the mean of those means) was calculated for each of the four categories. And the Combined Grand Mean at the bottom of the table is the mean of the four category grand means.

The table reflects that for investigators, at least half of the agencies indicated a moderate to large need for training in three of the four categories: Crime Types (grand mean = 53%), Investigative Techniques (grand mean = 55%), and Legal Issues (grand mean = 51%; the Management/Administration

grand mean was only 42%). For patrol officers, at least half of the agencies also indicated a moderate to large need for training in three of the four categories: Investigative Techniques (grand mean = 64%), Legal Issues (grand mean = 70%), and Management/Administration (grand mean = 62%; the Crime Types grand mean was only 40%).

In comparing moderate to large investigation training needs rankings between investigators and patrol officers without regard to agency type:

- Agencies identified greater overall training needs for patrol officers than for investigators, in that the combined grand means (mean of the grand means) of all four categories of training were 59% for patrol officers and 50% for investigators.
- Within the four categories, the highest ranked specific type of training need for investigators was computer/cybercrime (71%) in the Crime Types category, and for patrol officers it was report writing (82%) in the Management/Administration category. The lowest ranked need for investigators was Problem-Oriented Policing (30%) in Management/Administration, and for patrol officers it was vice (25%) in Crime Types.

When agency type was taken into consideration, the results were similar. All three agency types identified greater overall investigation training needs for patrol officers than investigators. The combined grand mean of all four categories for local agencies was 52% for investigators versus 66% for patrol officers. For sheriffs it was 47% for investigators versus 54% for patrol officers, and for state agencies it was 49% for investigators versus 53% for patrol officers).

SUMMARY

At least half of all agencies indicated moderate to large needs for investigation training for investigators and patrol officers, and their need for such training for patrol officers was greater than for investigators. Viewed by agency type, all three types also rated their overall investigation training needs for patrol officers higher than for investigators.

Question 8: Overall Need for Training

Agencies were asked to indicate their overall need for investigation training for personnel (investigators, patrol officers, and investigation supervisors), and also regarding computer/online investigation training. Again, similar to Question 7 and Table 4, the four options they were asked to choose from were None, Slight, Moderate, and Large, and their responses were treated similarly. In Table 5 below, the Moderate and Large responses were com-

TABLE 5 Agency Overall Moderate to Large Needs for Investigation Training, by Agency Type

Overall Investigation Training Needs	Moderate to Large Mean			
	Local N = 11[a]	Sheriff N = 6[a]	State N = 10	Total Agencies N = 27
Making investigation training available for new investigators	64	64	60	63
Making refresher/advanced training available for investigators	73	64	80	74
Making basic investigation training beyond the basic police academy available for patrol officers	64	83	80	74
Making refresher/advanced training available for patrol officers	73	83	60	70
Making investigation management training available for investigation supervisors	73	64	80	74
Making computer/online investigation training courses available	64	64	60	63
Grand Mean	69	70	70	70

[a]One local agency and one sheriff agency did not respond.

bined, the means of the combined responses were tallied by agency type, and a grand mean of those means was then calculated.

As can be seen in the table, all six categories were ranked as moderate to large training needs by at least 60% of each of the three agency types, and the combined overall investigation training need for all six categories (the grand mean) was 69% for local agencies, and 70% each for sheriff and state agencies. Two categories, both in the sheriff agency type column, received the highest ratings (83%): making investigation training beyond the basic police academy available for patrol officers, and making refresher/advanced training available for patrol officers. Three categories, all in the state agency type column, received the lowest ranking (60%): making investigation training available for new investigators, making refresher/advanced training available for patrol officers, and making computer/online investigation training courses available.

SUMMARY

At least 60% of each agency type ranked moderate to large needs in each of
the six listed categories.

DISCUSSION

The first purpose of this study was to determine the extent and type of
investigation training currently provided to investigators and patrol officers
by our large agency survey respondents. Regarding the extent of training,
more than half (69%) of the respondents provided required training for
investigators, and fewer than half (37%) provided it for patrol officers. Fewer
than half provided optional training to investigators (21%) or patrol officers
(41%). Agencies provided more than four times as many hours of required
training for investigators than for patrol officers (means of 121 hours vs.
26 hours per agency), and listed almost one third more courses available for
investigators (147) than for patrol officers (109). However, the mean number
of courses provided per agency for investigators (5.3) and patrol officers
(5.5) were similar.

As for the types of training, the courses and delivery systems provided
for investigators and patrol officers were similar. Most of the courses con-
cerned crime types and investigation techniques (78% of investigator courses
and 82% of patrol officer courses). These percentages were quite consistent
with what the 1998 content analysis reported regarding the amount of infor-
mation found in these two categories (81%) in criminal investigation texts.
The remaining 20% or so fell into the Introductory, Legal Issues, and Manage-
ment/Administration and Patrol categories. The three types of agencies also
provided similar delivery systems (at least half of the courses were taught
by state/in-house resources; 98% were delivered in classrooms; and at least
80% were funded by state/in-house resources).

The second purpose of the study was to identify agency investigation
training needs for investigators and patrol officers, and it was found that the
needs were similar overall. When the agency moderate to large needs re-
sponses to the types of training in four categories (Crime Types, Investigative
Techniques, Legal Issues, and Management/Administration) of training were
combined, it was found that at least half of all three agency types identified
a training need for investigators (50%), and patrol officers (59%). Addition-
ally, a mean of 70% of all agencies indicated a moderate to large need for
more training for personnel (investigators, patrol officers, and supervisors)
and computer/online training.

The third purpose of the study was to identify variances in the extent
and type of investigation training and needs between investigators and patrol
officers by agency type and geographic region. With regard to the extent

and type of training, some variances were noted; however, there was mainly agreement among agency types. For investigators, more than half of all three types reported that such training was required, and fewer than half reported it was optional. For patrol officers overall, fewer than half reported it was required or optional, but there were some exceptions by agency type. Some differences between agency types regarding hours of training were also noted. With respect to the type of training, the range of the mean number of courses provided by the three types of agencies for investigators was 4.0 to 5.7, and for patrol officers it was 3.8 to 7.

Regarding variances in investigation training needs, the three agency types were actually quite similar. About half indicated they had a moderate to large need for training for investigators (52% local, 47% sheriffs, 49% state), and a little more than half indicated they had a moderate to large need for training for patrol officers (66% local, 54% sheriffs, 53% state). Similarly, the three agency type needs for overall investigation training for personnel and computer/online training were virtually the same (69% local, 70% sheriffs, 70% state).

In sum, in the 2001 study, agencies identified investigation training as one of the top two priorities for future research, and one of the three primary factors affecting clearance rates and investigative effectiveness. The current study responded to these issues by describing the status and programs of the survey respondents' training programs. It found the following:

- Since 2001, training had increased for investigators, but not for patrol officers, who the research has shown actually have a greater influence on clearance rates than investigators.
- Agencies reported a greater need of investigation training for patrol officers than investigators. However, little progress had been made in that regard since at least 2001, even though agencies to a large degree control the training of patrol officers.
- For the first time in the literature, 147 courses agencies provided to investigators and 109 provided to patrol officers were identified by specific names and sorted into categories. This information can serve as informative references for the investigation training programs of other agencies and teaching institutions. However, only three agencies provided syllabuses regarding course content. So the details regarding what is being taught in all the other courses have still never been documented or evaluated in the research literature.
- The similarities in course titles, delivery systems, and needs across agency types indicated a similarity of the central tasks among detectives. This was consistent with prior research (Horvath & Meesig, 1998; Phillips, 1988), and suggested that standardized training packages would likely suit the needs of most agencies.

- Agencies were still not incorporating free online courses into their investigation training programs.

Comparisons with Other Studies

As mentioned earlier, only large agencies were included in this study as they were presumed to be the most likely to have more extensive investigation training programs. Although it is difficult to generalize findings beyond the small group of respondents, the information they provided can be compared with past studies to gain a broader perspective of the issues, and to inform future research.

Three studies are compared with the current study: the 1977 Rand and 2001 studies, and a third unpublished pilot study conducted in 2006.[1] They span a 37-year period of time and addressed various aspects of formal investigation-training matters. All were mailed surveys, but the sample sizes and response rates varied considerably. In the 1977 Rand Report, 300 large agencies were included in the sample, with a 51% response rate. The 2001 study sample included 857 large agencies, and their response rate was 71%.[2] The 2006 study included 92 large agencies, with a 28% response rate, and the current study sample was 146 large agencies, with a 20% response rate. Comparisons are made below between the studies where appropriate.

RESPONSE RATE COMPARISONS

The absence of participation by 80% of the agencies in the current study sample is noteworthy, especially after agencies had identified investigation training as one of their top three research priorities in the 2001 study. This may have been due to the lack of agency resources or other factors, but none were mentioned as reasons for not responding to our repeated survey mailings, e-mails, and telephonic contacts over a 15-month period of time. Rather, most of our inquiries went unanswered. Whether the minimal response is unique to the current study, or whether it serves as an indicator for future problems in investigation-related survey research of this nature, remains an open question.

DATA COMPARISONS

In both the 1977 Rand Report and the 2001 study, fewer than half of the large agencies required formal investigation training for investigators, but in the current study, 20 (69%) of the 29 respondents required such training. Interestingly, 16 of those 20 agencies had also previously responded to the 2001 study, and comparisons of their responses reflected that, in the 2001

study, only nine (56%) of them had required training. But now, after a period of little more than a decade, all 16 of them did, which is an increase of seven, or 44%. Although the number of agencies involved is small, this is still a noteworthy increase. However, in the 2001 study, only five of these agencies required formal investigation training for patrol officers, and in the current study, only six did. So while investigator training increased appreciably, patrol officer training did not.

In the 2001 study, 51% of the large agencies said that most or all of their courses were taught by state or in-house resources, and 98% said they were funded by the same. Reflecting minimal change in the current study, at least half said their courses were taught by state or in-house resources, and at least 80% said they were funded by the same.

Although the 2001 study did not provide specific data on training needs for investigators or patrol officers, it did identify training as one of the three primary factors affecting crime clearance rates. In the 2006 study, more than half of the agencies said they had moderate to large training needs for investigators (67%) and patrol officers (55%). In the current study, the numbers were 49% and 58%. With regard to overall investigation training needs for personnel, 81% of the agencies in the 2006 study identified their overall needs as moderate to large, and in the current study, 70% did so.

In all, the reasons for the low agency response to the current survey remain unclear. The current study reflected a large increase in the percentage of survey respondents requiring formal investigation training for investigators since 2001, but not for patrol officers. The 2001 and current studies reported very little change in by whom courses are taught and funded. Additionally, the 2001, 2006, and current studies all reported that training was a high priority by identifying moderate to large needs among at least half of the responding agencies for types of training and for types of personnel.

The Future

The trends in police training have increased over time—slowly at first during the Political and Reform Eras, and then more quickly during the Community Policing Era, as police organizations responded to the growing demands for justice and law enforcement in our society. Now with the explosion of information technology and its impact on all walks of life, the police knowledge base, training standards, and infrastructure have expanded commensurately for many types of police training (patrol, specialized units, etc.; BJS, 2010).

Yet several contradictions are identified:

- Firstly, with the plethora of police and investigation shows on television or as in movies (most of which end up by solving crimes), it is readily apparent that dealing with and solving crime is of continuing public interest.

Yet, in spite of this interest, and in the face of all the technological and forensics advances, the overall UCR crime clearance rates have remained persistently low and stagnant over the past four decades (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2015).

- Secondly, the agencies themselves identified training as one of the top three factors affecting crime clearance rates, and training is probably the one factor that they have the most direct control over. Yet, many agencies still do not require investigation training for investigators or patrol officers.
- Thirdly, despite the wealth of information currently available concerning crime and policing, little is known about how well investigators and patrol officers have been trained to investigate and solve crime.

On the positive side, there are two evident points that provide some optimism for the future. First, although the agency needs areas have remained relatively consistent over time (i.e., the Phillips (1984 and 1988) and current studies), the specific course teaching materials in those categories must be kept current (i.e., Edwards (1993) and the 1998 content analysis) to reflect ongoing societal changes (legal issues, research, community policing, etc.). The optimistic note here was that OJP and other organizations at the federal level seem to be in a position to readily address many of these changes through the national online distance learning training infrastructure. Such changes could include facilitating the expansion and updating of online courses and course content, promoting increasingly user-friendly delivery systems, and providing a focus for rigorous training evaluation programs.

The second point concerns Question 8 in the current study, wherein 63% of agencies indicated a need for making computer/online investigation training courses available, but none of them reported that their current training programs included any of the online courses that were actually already available. Whether this was due to the lack of awareness or other reasons remains unclear. But again, the optimistic note here is that many of the federally sponsored online investigation training services make courses available at little or no cost to certified agencies and police academies with Internet access regardless size or location, and they are often offered on an individual self-study basis and at flexible times. The availability of up-to-date online training services that minimize the drain on agency resources, that deal with expressed agency training needs, and that agencies themselves can control, seems to minimize many old training barriers. This should appeal to many agencies to improve their investigation training programs for both investigators and patrol officers in the future.

In conclusion, we posed a question earlier about whether most agencies still relied on the training practices of two centuries ago to provide training, or whether they were taking advantage of the new modern day training infrastructure. The answer to the question seems to be mixed at best. The LEMAS census indicated that patrol officer training has advanced well beyond

the "absolutely nothing" bemoaning of the Wickersham Commission over 80 years ago. But our present knowledge of formal investigation training provided by agencies for investigators and patrol officers seems not to have progressed much beyond the minimal amount of reliable information that the 1973 NACCJSG identified over 40 years ago. The available data indicates that many agencies are still not requiring investigation training, and it is not known what those agencies that do require such training are teaching. Agencies have willingly identified their training priorities and needs as high since the 1980s, but there are still no standards for investigation training programs, despite the high public interest and stagnant crime clearance rates that have existed over the same period. And agencies do not seem to be taking advantage of the increasingly available and affordable national online infrastructure to improve the investigative skills of their personnel, even though it seems to be well within their capabilities and best interests to do so. In any case, one thing does continue to remain as clear today as it was two centuries ago—the crime threat and the societal costs of crime proceed apace.

NOTES

1. The 2006 study was a four-page survey questionnaire sent to 92 large (100-plus sworn officers) local, sheriff, and state agencies with investigators and that required training for investigators. It included four questions similar to the current study (Questions 1, 4, 7 and 8). Twenty-six agencies responded (all different than the 29 in the current study), for a 28% response rate, but after the first mailing the study was suspended due to administrative exigencies.

2. In the 2001 study report, most of the data regarding training was not sorted by agency size or type. In the current study, the data for only large agencies were obtained by selecting for large agencies only in the 2001 study data base.

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