

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

THE VALUES AND POTENTIAL OF CONSOLIDATION



Prepared by

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I. INVESTIGATIONS: PITTSBURGH POLICE BUREAU

The investigative function of the Pittsburgh Police Bureau is centralized in the Investigations Branch, supplemented by detectives in the patrol zones. The Branch is organized by crime/investigations specialties. An Intelligence Unit in the Administrative Branch houses investigators. Figure 1 displays the organization of the Investigations Branch.

SECTION 1: STAFFING

The Investigations Branch is directed by an Assistant Chief. At the time of data collection (August 2004), the Branch staffing totaled 165:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Assistant Chief	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Two Commander	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	Four Lieutenants	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sergeants	16
<input type="checkbox"/>	Detectives (August 04)	138
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clerks	4

About 18% of the Bureau's sworn officers are assigned to the Branch. Overall ratio is one supervisor to six investigators. The supervisory ratio varies measurably from unit to unit. Investigators work 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. or 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. The Night Felony Squad works from 12:00 am. and 8:00 a.m.

SECTION 2: CASELOAD

Table 1 summarizes Investigations caseload for the first seven months of 2004. The Branch has investigated 2,300 of 11,300 recorded incidents, 20% of the total.

The proportion of recorded cases investigated varied dramatically by offense. All homicides and rapes were investigated. A large proportion of burglaries were investigated by Branch detectives. Less than 30% of robberies and only 2% of aggravated assaults were investigated by Branch detectives. Approximately .1% of thefts were investigated. An undetermined number of cases not investigated by Branch detectives were investigated by Zone Detectives.

Figure 1

INVESTIGATIONS BRANCH -- ORGANIZATION

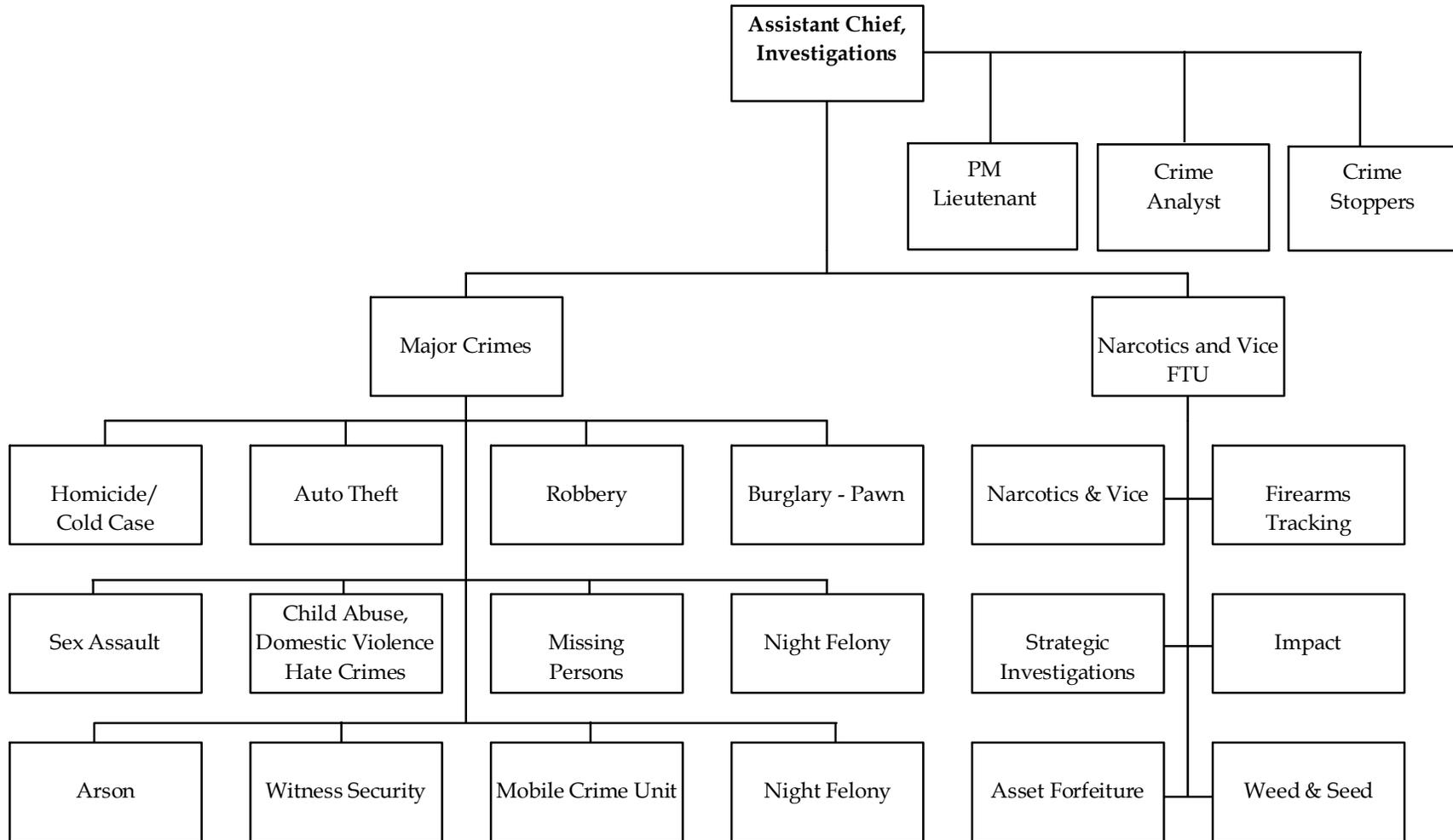


Table 1
CASES INVESTIGATED AND CLEARED BY INVESTIGATIONS BRANCH
JANUARY - JULY 2004

Offense	Crimes January - July	Investigated Investigation Branch*	Clearances Investigation Branch*	Arrests City- Wide	Clearances Citywide January. - July
<input type="checkbox"/> Murder-Manslaughter	27	30 (100%)	26 (87%)	26	24 (88%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Forcible Rape	65	77 (100%)	67 (87%)	25	52 (80%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Robbery	978	283 (29%)	123 (45%)	371	354 (36%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Aggravated Assault	1,249	25 (2%)	12 (48%)	520	685 (55%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Burglary	1,836	1,767 (96%)	451 (27%)	371	456 (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Larceny-Theft	5,664	6 (0.1%)	6 (100%)	580	1,029 (18%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle Theft	1,428	90 (6%)	23 (32%)	142	238 (17%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Arson	52	34 (65%)	22 (76%)	9	11 (21%)**
Total Part I Crimes	11,299	2,297 (20%)	730 (32%)	2,044	2,849 (25%)
* Includes cases from previous years.					
** Assume this is a data report error					

SECTION 3: MAJOR CRIMES

This division, directed by a Commander, is organized by sections, each directed by a sergeant, with the exception of Arson and Auto Theft, which share a sergeant. Major Crimes staffs the Detective Desk, a front-lobby operation, which controls access to the headquarters building and accepts messages and materials for investigators. The Detective Desk is staffed 24-hours-a-day by civilians (four clerks).

Investigations initiate from crime reports from patrol or direct request for on-scene response. Operations forwards crime reports to headquarters. Felony reports are sorted and distributed to the appropriate units for review. Computerized case review and management is not employed, nor is a standardized solvability factors protocol. The supervisor of each unit examines incoming crime reports and assigns the most promising to investigators. Few misdemeanors are assigned to major case investigators. Operations (zone) based investigators may address felonies not investigated by the Investigation Branch. Investigators may, on their own or as a result of a field request, respond directly to a crime scene and initiate an investigation. However, most investigations originate from crime reports to field officers.

Homicide Unit. Directed by a sergeant and staffed by 20 investigators, this unit investigates all homicides, aggravated assaults, all suspicious deaths, suicides (and attempts) and fatal auto accidents. Three officers are assigned to a Cold Case Squad. Minor assaults and most aggravated assaults are left to Zone investigators. Workload, January through July 2004, totaled 169 investigations, an average of 24 per month:

- ❑ 31 homicides
- ❑ 25 aggravated assault
- ❑ 113 other investigations

Average number of cases assigned is 1.4 per month, per investigator. (Excludes sergeant and three cold case investigators.)

Auto Theft/Arson. These units, supervised by a shared sergeant, focus on two very different crime types. Three detectives investigate Arson cases. Five detectives investigate auto theft offenses. Two of the five are grant-funded. All arson and most arson-related cases are investigated. Auto thefts are investigated primarily by zone investigators.

Auto Theft workload, investigations, January through July 2004, totaled:

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----|
| ❑ | Auto Thefts (32% clearance) | 90 |
| ❑ | Part II (auto theft related) | -- |
| ❑ | Other investigations | 56 |
| | - 28 assist zone and insurance | |
| | - 17 Tow pound investigations | |
| | - 6 garage investigations | |
| | - 8 recovered autos | |

Average monthly caseload per officer is 2.5 for auto thefts, three for auto-related crimes, and 1.2 other investigative-related activity, a total of just under seven.

Arson investigative workload (January through July 2004) is:

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------------------|----|
| ❑ | Arson | 34 |
| ❑ | Criminal Mischief and other Part II offenses | 20 |
| ❑ | Other investigations (suspicious fires) | 53 |

Average monthly workload includes five arson, four criminal mischief per month. Cause and origin investigations average seven cases per month. In many cities, cause and origin are also conducted by the Fire Department. One detective appears to be assigned to a clerical function.

Arson investigation is slated for transfer to the County, which assigns three detectives to arson-related investigations and works in conjunction with the fire departments for cause and origin, focusing efforts on finding perpetrators. County Police and Fire provides this service to all Allegheny County communities except Pittsburgh. The city would reimburse the county for arson investigations. It is anticipated that the equivalent of one investigator's salary and benefits would be saved.

Robbery. Directed by a sergeant and staffed by nine investigators, this section investigates all commercial robberies. Street robberies, person-to-person not committed in a commercial establishment, are investigated by Zone detectives. From January to July, this section investigated 283 robberies, an average of 4.5 cases assigned per month, per investigator. Forty-five percent (45%) of assigned cases were cleared.

Burglary. Supervised by a sergeant and staffed by 17 officers, this section investigates burglaries and felony theft. Zone investigators conduct a proportionally modest number of burglary investigations. One detective monitors pawn shop lists for stolen property, visits the shops to check or locate property and, when linkage can be made, initiates cases. He also inspects shop records to ensure compliance with the city ordinances.

Workload data, through July, totals:

<input type="checkbox"/> Part I, Burglary/Theft investigations	1,767
<input type="checkbox"/> Part II, investigations	10

Numerically, case assignment averages 17.5 cases per month, per investigator. Due to absences/transfer, average caseload is about 20.

Sex Assault and Family Crisis. This unit, which investigates sexual assaults and related offenses, is staffed by a sergeant and 11 detectives. From January through July of 2004 a total of 268 investigations were conducted:

<input type="checkbox"/> Part I Sex Assaults	107 (104 rapes)
<input type="checkbox"/> Part II Sex Assault and related offenses	159
<input type="checkbox"/> Other investigations	2

Detectives assigned to this unit average 3.5 investigations per month.

Family Crisis and Missing Persons. This section focuses on child abuse crimes, domestic violence, Megan's Law, hate crimes, and crimes against the elderly. A sub-unit is responsible for missing person investigations, largely computer and telephone follow-up work. Staffing consists of one sergeant and four detectives.

Workload for the first seven months of 2004 consisted of 198 child abuse investigations, an average of seven investigations per month per detective.

Missing persons cases are addressed by two detectives. For the first seven months of 2004, missing persons investigations totaled 1,062, an average of 76 investigations per month. Most involve phone and computer work only.

Night Felony Squad. Staffed by a sergeant and four officers, this section, covers crime scenes during hours when other detectives are not available, 12:00 am. to 8:00 a.m. The sergeant on this squad carries a caseload. Night Felony detectives conduct preliminary investigations and write initial follow-up reports. They may interview witnesses, supervise crime scene searches, and/or arrest. These detectives have no follow-up obligations. Cases are turned over to specialized detectives after initial, immediate investigation is completed. Between January and July 2004, this unit conducted 379 preliminary investigations, an average of approximately 10 cases per month per investigator.

They are summoned to a crime scene by the Night Field Commander or, based upon type of event, Communications (the EOC) may automatically notify them. This request is fielded through the Detective Desk at headquarters. When not in the field they remain in headquarters.

Witness Protection Unit. Staffed by a sergeant and two detectives, this section assists and supports witnesses of crimes. The program, established in 1994, has handled 512 witnesses. Currently, 43 witnesses and their families are in the program. Activities include ensuring that the witnesses appear in court, providing housing (not secret type) and employment assistance, and tracking witnesses who try to leave the area or avoid court subpoenas. Many clients require drug and alcohol dependence treatment. In some cases, detectives conduct criminal investigations to find witnesses and return them to the city (estimated at less than 20% of their activity). The unit does not provide new identities or relocation services, as provided by the Marshal's Service, but some clients end up in the federal program. The District Attorney is involved with assignment of cases.

Mobile Crime Unit. This section, staffed by a sergeant and 12 detectives, collects and processes crime scene evidence. One detective also investigates computer crimes. AFIS checks and fingerprint-related analyses are conducted. From January to July of 2004, 1,894 crime scenes were processed, an average of 5.2 per 24-hour period.

SECTION 4: NARCOTICS AND VICE

Narcotics and Vice comprises an Administrative Section, the Narcotics Section, Impact, Weed and Seed, and Firearms Tracking. The Division is directed by a commander. A lieutenant assists.

Narcotics and Vice Administration. Administration manages grants, asset forfeiture, reviews use of force by division personnel, and monitors drug seizures. Narcotic and Vice Administration is staffed by a lieutenant, a sergeant, and three detectives who work most, if not all, agency investigations that require surveillance and wiretap, high profile cases, and concern public officials.

Each zone has unmarked cars used for undercover investigations. Vehicles are bought with asset forfeiture money. Seized vehicles are also used. Responsibility for upkeep of vehicles rests with Narcotics and Vice Administration. Approximately 30 vehicles are available. When officers – city-wide – make a VUFA (Violations of Uniform Firearms Act) arrest, they complete a report. This unit keeps track of firearms seizure for the city. Narcotics and Vice Administration processed the seizure of \$350,666 in assets through July of 2004.

Narcotics and Vice. Assigned to this section are two sergeants and 11 detectives, one detailed to the DEA. This section is divided into two squads, each supervised by a sergeant. One squad works days, the other evenings. Workload/production data reflects:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Drug Arrests	30
<input type="checkbox"/>	Miscellaneous Arrests	18
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prostitution Arrests	54
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gambling	6
<input type="checkbox"/>	Citations	1

Squad 2 conducts bar checks, nuisance bar investigations, and searches for gambling devices. Workload/ production data reflects:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Drug Arrests	30
<input type="checkbox"/>	Miscellaneous Arrests	18

<input type="checkbox"/>	Gambling Arrests	225
<input type="checkbox"/>	Citations	1

Impact. This section focuses on street sales and distribution of drugs and firearms. It is staffed by two sergeants and 17 detectives, organized as two squads, each with one sergeant, one squad with eight and one with nine detectives. Squads work 6:00 p.m. – 2:00 a.m. or 8:00 p.m. – 4:00 a.m. High crime areas receive greatest attention.

In the first seven months of 2004 Impact made:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Drug Arrests	509
<input type="checkbox"/>	Miscellaneous Arrests	145
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prostitution Arrests	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Citations	4

Weed and Seed. This unit conducts narcotics investigations and operations. Grant funded, it is staffed by a sergeant and three officers who work designated Weed and Seed areas – characterized by high concentrations of a particular crime (e.g., drugs). Weed and Seed officers frequently receive assistance from Impact and Narcotics and Vice investigators. During 2004 they worked four conspiracy cases, an average of 18 months of investigation each. They conduct extended surveillance and tracking of suspects and products, reportedly resulting multiple indictments.

Firearms Tracking Unit. The FTU conducts follow-up investigations of all incidents in which guns are seized by Pittsburgh Police, seizures resulting from violations of the Uniform Firearms Act (VUFA), domestics, mental health commitments, suicides, thefts, and burglaries. This unit consists of a sergeant and four detectives, with two detailed to the ATF Task Force, under grant funding. A considerable proportion of the work involves computerized tracing of firearms, conducted by an ATF-funded clerk for national checks and detectives for local work. Much of the tracking involves street interviews and investigations to identify original purchasers and determine whether straw purchases occurred. When a straw purchaser is located, additional criminal proceedings may take place, for drug, firearm, or other crime violations. While initial activity is computer-based, most follow-up is street level intensive.

When a firearm is recovered as a by-product of other investigations, and the original owner is identified, he/she must be cleared by PIC (through the State Police) prior to the return of the weapon. This is an FTU responsibility.

FTU workload/production for the first seven months of 2004 includes:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Stolen firearms investigations	220
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Firearms recovered	187
<input type="checkbox"/>	Guns recovered	944
<input type="checkbox"/>	Firearms traced	1,141
<input type="checkbox"/>	NCIC stolen checks	436
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pawn checks	338

The FTU has two detectives detailed to the ATF Violent Crime Impact Team (VCIT). VCIT focuses its investigative efforts on the most violent criminals in targeted communities. VCIT investigates:

- Firearms arrest
- Firearms thefts
- Gun Store thefts
- Shooting
- Homicides when a firearm is recovered

Local gun shows are monitored to determine whether “straw purchasers” are present.

SECTION 5: ZONE DETECTIVES

Four detectives are assigned to each zone, six to Zone 3, totaling 22. Zone detectives are part of Operations (patrol) and report directly to Zone Commanders. They have a few formal ties to Investigations Branch detectives. Zone detectives investigate all Part I crimes not accepted by centralized detectives and Part II crimes selected by Zone commanders for follow up.

Zone commanders read offense reports daily to select cases for follow up, either by the reporting officer (if a suspect is identified in the report) or a Zone detective. Statistics are kept in a variety of formats, some of which are Excel-based. In one case, a total of 348 cases were shown for a zone detective for 2003, while in others (as shown below) a smaller number was presented for year to date 2004 (October). From a workload standpoint, 348 cases averages 29 cases a year per investigator (Zone 5). Table 2 illustrates one example of Zone Detective Activity reporting.

The clearances shown on some reports include a large proportion of “exceptional clearances.” In the 348 data set mentioned above, 145 or 42% of the cases were cleared “exceptionally.” Another 23 cases were cleared “exceptionally by arrest,” an unusual clearance. None were cleared by “arrest.” Assuming the “exceptionally cleared by arrest” are, in fact, cleared by arrest, and eliminating the “exceptional” clearance, less than 11% are cleared by arrest (203/23). In other zones, cleared by arrest is used.

Table 2
ZONE DETECTIVE ACTIVITY REPORT

**Zone 4
Part I Crimes**

Year to Date	Unfounded	Year to Date	Cases Remaining	Year to Date	Exceptional Cleared	Year to Date	Arrests	Year to Date	Percentage Cleared	Year to Date (%)
81	1	2	2	76	7	28	0	3	100	40
111	0	1	27	108	5	16	0	19	18	32
105	1	2	2	100	8	49	1	13	100	62
99	0	1	27	98	6	20	0	3	22	23

**Zone 4
Part II Crimes**

Year to Date	Unfounded	Year to Date	Cases Remaining	Year to Date	Exceptional Cleared	Year to Date	Arrests	Year to Date	Percentage Cleared	Year to Date (%)
14	0	0	0	14	0	10	0	0	0	71
38	0	0	7	38	1	2	0	2	14	10
24	0	1	1	23	3	14	0	2	100	69
38	0	0	6	38	0	4	0	0	0	10

Year to date Part I and II arrests: 39

A significant number of drug-related cases are handled by the zone Crime Prevention or Problem Solving officers who work uniform and plainclothes and may call on the detectives to assist. In one zone (2), two of the zone detectives worked a significantly higher number of drug cases, but also indicated little direct coordination with headquarters drug units.

SECTION 6: CRIME ANALYSIS AND INTELLIGENCE

A sergeant and eight detectives are assigned to Intelligence, Administrative Branch, Research and Planning Section. One detective is detailed to the Joint Terrorism Task Force operated by Homeland Security and the state.

There is a crime analysis function, staffed with one detective and one officer, assigned as analysts. The Unit tracks organized crime, street gangs, and drug organizations and monitors threat groups. A mix of field work and data entry and data analysis is conducted, collection and dissemination of information about criminals; criminal conspiracies, and terrorism.

Gang-oriented work focuses on tracking gang activity, primarily youth and young adult gangs. Offender Re-entry involves monitoring the re-entry of former felons into the community. Detectives do not "tail," but rather determine employment status and addresses to update intelligence files. Linkages to current criminal activity, if found, results in warrants or return to incarceration. This unit is no longer responsible for dignitary protection.

Criminal Intelligence previously maintained a centralized intelligence database. Prior to initiation of this study, the database crashed. It is un-retrievable. Paper file records exist. There is currently no routine reporting of activity (according to unit offices and the Planning Division Commander). Effort is underway (as of November 3, 2004) to use the Field Daily Activity Report to record the activity of personnel. A new database has been purchased (Analyst Workbook by I2). It is currently undergoing testing.

SECTION 7: INVESTIGATIONS METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Investigator is an assignment. Salary and benefits are the same as those of patrol officers. Assignment generally involves an open position, expression of officer interest, and unit commanders making selections based on interviews and file reviews. There is no set service time. Investigators serve until transferred.

A specific regimen of training is not in place for new investigators. Generally, new investigators are mentored informally by either a supervisor or senior investigator.

Suitable training courses on relevant subject matter are often sought. Over time, investigators attend external training, in addition to department in-service training. Staff indicates that recent reductions and/or absence of outside training funds, have severally reduced professional training opportunity.

The Branch does not employ computerized case management to track investigations. Manual and PC-based files (Excel) are utilized in some units to track cases, sometimes by individual investigators. Each unit produces a monthly case progress report that documents case assignment and clearances. Investigations are recorded in the Bureau's book.

Computer support is limited. Each investigator has or has access to a computer. These computers do not provide access to department databases, NCIC, or the Pennsylvania police information system. Information on warrants and wants, arrest histories, name and license checks requires a phone call to the dispatch center.

Cases are assigned in three ways:

- Most commonly, paper reports are sent from Operations (patrol) to Investigations. Supervisors review all reports and assign the cases that they feel should be investigated. Focus is on felonies and a few serious misdemeanors. Zone detectives handle all Part I crimes not investigated by Investigations and virtually all Part II crimes. Formal solvability factors are not used. Supervisors judge which cases would profit from investigation.

Intelligence and zones follow a somewhat different process. Intelligence reviews all paper copies of reports for cases of interest. Zone commanders read reports and assign them to Zone Detectives based on crime seriousness, patterns, or citizen-generated centers of interest.

- Investigators may respond directly to a crime scene, after being alerted to the offense by monitoring the radio or by contact from field officers. This method is usually restricted to serious crimes.
- Complaints from citizens, government officials, or intelligence reports come to the attention of supervisors, who assign investigators for follow up. This process is common for zone investigators.

Policy does not specify when case reviews must occur. Generally, a review occurs if a case is open for 30 days. There are periodic reviews after that. Case files review did not indicate, uniformly, the presence of follow-up reports within five days of assignment, or periodic additional supplemental reporting.

Comprehensive written investigative guidelines were not found. There are unit orders. Victim and witness interviews are usually audio-taped and summarized in the case chronology. A number of interview rooms are available. Most interview rooms have videotaping capabilities. Investigative functions are generally very good.

Cases are closed/cleared by arrests. Cases also may be unfounded. Exceptional clearances are also widely used. In addition, cases can be closed as "unworkable."

Communication among investigative units within the Investigations Branch appears to be excellent. Communication between Investigations-based detectives and Zone detectives or patrol are reported to be almost nonexistent.

Equipment appears adequate. Each detective is assigned a vehicle, provided with a bulletproof vest, a camera, tape recorder, and binoculars. Investigators, with approval, can access videotaping equipment, wiretap and other specialty equipment.

The Mobile Crime Unit provides forensic support, backed up by the County Coroner's Office which also provides crime scene search capabilities in all serious cases, including homicide.

Investigators are subject to the standard agency performance evaluation process. An additional dimension is added for investigators. Investigators are expected to maintain a clearance rate above the national average for clearances (Uniform Crime Reports) for the crime type they are investigating.

II. INVESTIGATIONS: ALLEGHENY COUNTY POLICE

The Allegheny County Police Department (ACPD) provides investigative services to about 130 municipalities, not including Pittsburgh. The investigative function is limited to jurisdictions with a police department. ACPD detectives do not have primary authority. They investigate only when requested by a jurisdiction. Homicides are the exception. While an invitation is required, most municipalities have allocated investigative responsibility to the County, informally. There is no legal basis to require transfer of investigative responsibility to the ACPD.

The ACPD Investigations Branch is directed by an Assistant Superintendent. It is organized by unit/crime specialty:

- Narcotics/Vice
- Homicide
- General Investigations.

SECTION 1: STAFFING

At the time of our field work, Investigations staffing totaled 58:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Assistant Superintendent	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lieutenants	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sergeants	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	Detectives	51

SECTION 2: CASELOAD

We are reluctant to portray overall Investigations workload without further inquiry. Caseload data for an entire section, Narcotics/Vice is not documented by the ACPD. We are still trying to control for/clarify a methodological/counting obstacle with regard to General Investigations workload.

SECTION 3: NARCOTICS/VICE

A lieutenant commands this unit, which is staffed by one sergeant and 10 detectives. Narcotics detectives work two shifts, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m., Monday-Friday, unless working a specific case. Unscheduled detectives are on-call. Effort is focused on work with DEA and ATF task forces. They also work vice cases, sports betting, illegal lotteries, and video pay-off poker machines in bars. Cases are generated from complaints and are self-initiated. Case/event totals are not available - are not maintained. Accordingly, workload data for individual detectives is not available. Table 3 displays the total number of arrests made by Narcotics/Vice detectives for the six -year period, 1998-2003.

Table 3				
ACPD ARRESTS - 1998 - 2004 (October)				
Year	Lieutenant	Sergeant	Detectives	Arrests/Per Detective
<input type="checkbox"/> 1998	1	0	13	382/29
<input type="checkbox"/> 1999	1	1	18	366/20
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000	1	1	16	465/29
<input type="checkbox"/> 2001	1	1	15	345/23
<input type="checkbox"/> 2002	1	1	12	312/26
<input type="checkbox"/> 2003	1	1	13	287/22
<input type="checkbox"/> 2004 (October)	1	1	10	282/28

Narcotics detectives attempt to amass 40 or more warrants before executing them, to maximize their resources.

SECTION 4: HOMICIDE

Homicide, staffed by a lieutenant, one sergeant, and 16 detectives, focuses on homicides and aggravated batteries, including traffic, officer, and arson-related homicides. Investigators work Days (12 detectives) and Evenings (4 detectives), Monday through Friday. Two detectives are on call during all hours when there is no shift or daily coverage.

Caseloads for the three-year period, 2001-2003, are displayed in Table 4. Caseload in 2003 was 394 or 24.6 per detective per year, 2.1 per month. Arrests totaled 127. Caseloads include all death investigations as well as assists in various non-homicide deaths and injury cases. Assists account for over 17% of cases handled. Suicides, accidental overdoses, accidental fire, and accidental—other accounted for 128 cases in 2003, or 32% of cases investigated.

Table 4			
CASELOAD 2001-2003			
Event	2001	2002	2003
<input type="checkbox"/> Homicide	26	33	39
<input type="checkbox"/> Arson Homicide	5	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> Vehicular Homicide	3	3	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Attempted Homicide	0	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Accident	1	1	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Aggravated Assault	38	38	46
<input type="checkbox"/> Officer Involved	0	5	8
<input type="checkbox"/> MVA Fatal	31	31	19
<input type="checkbox"/> MVA Non-Fatal	30	22	23
<input type="checkbox"/> Accidental Overdose	*	36	28
<input type="checkbox"/> Accidental Fire	7	8	8
<input type="checkbox"/> Accidental - Other	38	22	15
<input type="checkbox"/> Suicide	54	67	77
<input type="checkbox"/> Attempted Suicide	3	7	4
<input type="checkbox"/> Natural Death	35	37	20
<input type="checkbox"/> Undetermined Miscellaneous	37	45	47
<input type="checkbox"/> Assist	<u>69</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>68</u>
TOTALS	373	397	394
Arrests	91	86	127
* Included in Accidental - Other			

SECTION 5: GENERAL INVESTIGATIONS

General Investigations, commanded by a lieutenant and staffed by a sergeant and 25 detectives, addresses sexual assault cases, rapes, child abuse, property and personal crime (not investigated by other units), credit card, other forgeries, jail-related crimes/offenses, and arson. Detectives also conduct some crime scene searches and run the fingerprint system. Two detectives are assigned to computer and audio-visual lab activities. Two detectives are assigned to evidence control.

Table 5 displays workload for the two-year period, 2002 and 2003, and 2004, through October.

Table 5				
GENERAL ASSIGNMENT WORKLOAD				
Year	Incidents	Arrests	Detectives	Detective Caseload Year/Month
<input type="checkbox"/> 2002	1,739	725	25	70/6
<input type="checkbox"/> 2003	1,687	916	25	67/6
<input type="checkbox"/> 2004 (October)	1,348	472	25	54/5

Non-investigative assignments blur the accuracy of caseload computations since the agency does not maintain specific records for each detective. The numbers reflect overall unit investigative workload, but not that associated with the additional duties.

SECTION 6: METHODS AND PROCEDURES

No clearance data is maintained. Clearances are reported by the jurisdiction in which the incident occurred.

III. INVESTIGATIONS: DISTRICT ATTORNEY

The District Attorney employs a cadre of investigators. His 26 investigators appear to be engaged in a variety of tasks, including drug investigations through the District Attorney’s Narcotics Enforcement Team (DANET) system, as well as follow-up

investigations necessary for effective prosecutions. During an interview, the DA noted a focus on political and public corruption as well as drug-related violence.

The District Attorney is forging a plan to consolidate City and County investigations under his leadership. His proposal forwards a staffing complement of 175, significantly less than the current combined level of the three agencies, 266.

IV. THE CASE FOR CONSOLIDATION

Our Phase I report to the Act 47 Commission noted, in Section 3: An Alternative Vision: The Pittsburgh – Allegheny County Metro Police Department:

“Merger and transfer recommendations suffuse the fiscal recovery debate. In lieu of the piecemeal approach to mergers and transfers that seems to be unfolding, the ICA, Act 47 Team, and city and county police should pursue their search for cost-effectiveness by at least considering the viability and advantages of total consolidation – creating a Pittsburgh-Allegheny County Metro Police Department. ... the local governments involved have, in fact, started down this path. The communications merger that has occurred, those now being mandated (by Act 47), and those being discussed can readily be viewed as building blocks. The notion of a consolidation should be put front and center.” (p. 27)

Consolidating the investigations functions of the PPB, the Allegheny County Police, and the County District Attorney would be a logical and natural progression toward Metro policing. Investigations consolidation embodies the potential for productive leveraging of assets, modest economies of scale, and, most coveted, measurably enhanced citizen and community safety and police performance.

THE MODEL

Considering dominant staff size, clearance performance, technical support capacities, and scope of current investigative and patrol operations, we recommend transfer and merger of Allegheny County Police Department and District Attorney investigative operations to and with those of the Pittsburgh Police Bureau. After careful examination of alternatives, the following factors lead to recommendation of the PPB-led model.

- **Staff Size.** Investigative force strength of the PPB is 187, 165 (Operations Bureau) and 22 (Zones). Comparative staffing is 51 for the County Police and 26 for the DA, 77 in total.

- ❑ **Specializations and Concentrations.** The PPB appears to have superior resource capacity in several core investigative concentrations. Family Services, including Victim Services, Witness Protection, and Cold Case come readily into focus.
- ❑ **Clearance Performance.** Pittsburgh’s clearance rates vary by offense category. In every instance, however, clearance rates are well above national average, especially for departments serving similar population.

Part I Offenses - City Wide 2004 (September)	Total Reported Cleared - PPB 2004 (September)	Percentage Cleared - PPB 2004 (September)	Cleared Nationally 2003	Cleared - Cities Over 250,000 2003
❑ Homicide	30	97%	62.4%	60.1%
❑ Forcible Rape	82	79%	44.0%	47.8%
❑ Robbery	1,231	36%	26.3%	23.0%
❑ Aggravated Assault	1,573	56%	55.9%	50.6%
❑ Burglary	2,342	26%	13.1%	11.0%
❑ Larceny Theft	7,779	18%	18.0%	14.2%
❑ Motor Vehicle Theft	1,769	17%	13.1%	10.1%
❑ Arson	79	26%	16.7%	10.9%

Aggressive use of “exceptional” clearances by the PPB remains to be studied to understand clearance performance. Review of rape statistics through July 2004, for example, found more than half of the clearances to be exceptional – clearances that do not involve an arrest, often for legitimate and unavoidable reasons. On the other hand, a more modest 10% of clearances of robberies during this period were due to exceptions. Clearly, Pittsburgh appears to clear (solve) more cases than the average police agency and many more cases than police agencies in its population class. Exactly how much more is still an open question. We were not able to assemble clearance rates for the County Police.

- ❑ **Investigative Support.** The performance and effectiveness of investigators is facilitated and enhanced by the system within which they function. Comprehensive and readily retrievable information from intelligence databases, special investigations databases, such as sex offender files and offender re-entry data, and crime analysis are essential investigative assets.

The PPB has a crime analyst and an intelligence function. We are not aware if these assets are available to the ACPD and DA investigators. None of the agencies appear to have the database capabilities that they could/should.

The PPB has strong information/intelligence gathering assets in the field – the Zone investigators a robust patrol function. These assets could be exploited to a far greater degree. Neither the County Police nor DA can match these assets.

The foregoing enumeration of support for the PPB as the lead agency is in no way meant to convey that the County Police and/or DA’s investigators or investigations function are in any measure less effective, professional, or have no advantage assets themselves. In our judgments, simply, the preponderance of advantage assets rest with the PPB.

VALUE ADDED - COUNTYWIDE

Criminals not only ignore jurisdictional boundaries, they are often abetted by the inescapable costs of law enforcement fragmentation: absence of inter-operable data systems; failures of human/organizational information exchange, either absent or untimely; turf issues; uneven, sometimes conflicting, priorities; un-leveraged assets. Organized crime and serial violent offenders, in particular, exploit fragmentation. Localized enforcement is particularly unsuited to emerging 21st Century crimes, such as cyber-crime, and to Homeland Security response. Consolidation offers an opportunity to avoid the costs of fragmentation, fashion an infinitely stronger, better coordinated 21st Century investigations response, likely to result in a demonstrably superior public protection capacity.

Positives that should become collectively available through consolidation include:

- **Coverage and Public Service.** Research and experience demonstrates conclusively that linking victims and witnesses with investigators as quickly as possible increases case closures and reduces further victimization. Currently, the County does not regularly field investigators on Saturdays and Sundays, at weekday levels, if at all. Combining staffs would allow for weekend coverage.

- **Information Pooling.** Combining investigator knowledge and information bases, such as they are, should enhance scope and quality of investigations information assets across the country.

- **Resource Flexibility.** With enhanced staff capacity, investigations managers will have greater flexibility to “move resources in response to changing needs, more saturated gang or drug response, for example.
- **Supervision, Training, and Mentoring Upgrades.** The County Police appear to be understaffed at the investigations supervisor level. We note for example, two supervisors (lieutenant and sergeant) for 26 General Assignment detectives. A 1-13 ratio is not desirable. Fusing County and PPB supervision could reduce this ratio to a more manageable and desirable level. We believe the PPB has sufficient capacity to stretch supervisory ratios.
- **Performance Management and Measurement Systems Migration.** The PPB employs a COMPSTAT-style investigations management and performance measurement system. We believe that broader application, to all investigators in the County, would increase effectiveness and productivity – produce a more favorable outcome – investment ratio.
- **Economies of Scale.** Data from the PPB and the County Police indicate several pockets of modest caseloads, establishing a potential for some combining and reduction in staffing, modest in nature. Supervisory levels offer little, due to stretched ratios in ACPD. Economies may well be available in: evidence processing, collection, storage, and retrieval; crime scene investigations; purchasing; and clerical support. Non-line staff can usually absorb workload.

A total of 15 positions seem to be possible recover targets.

- **Arson investigations.** Consolidation could lead to reduction of one detective.
- **Evidence and property control.** If consolidated, the City’s evidence room could handle. This would lead to the reduction of the two detectives positions the County currently details to this function.
- **Audio/visual.** Currently the County details two detectives to maintenance and use of audio/visual/computer tools. Current city staff could address this service thus reducing two detective positions.

- Economies of scale may also be found in the area of crime scene investigations. Combining the efforts of the County and City Detectives may permit the saving of one position.
- Combining the County and City investigations will permit seven-day-a-week coverage. Using County call-out procedures could reduce reliance on the Night Felony Squad saving a sergeant and four detectives. (There could be some financial offset due to increased overtime.)
- Bringing average caseloads in the County General Assignment Unit to the average caseloads in Pittsburgh's related units could realize saving of two detectives.
- Bringing average caseloads of the County's Homicide Unit to the current average caseload of the City's Major Crimes could realize a savings of two detectives.

At \$80,000, potential savings are \$1,200,000, first year and thereafter. Six of these positions were identified in our Phase I report. Nine are additions to the previously identified 11.

- Enriched Leadership Potential.** Expanding the size of the cadre of investigators ensures a more competitive promotional environment and a deeper pool of future commanders and supervisors.
- Standardization of Case Preparation.** County prosecutors should be able to introduce greater consistency in report preparation, case preparation, and other prosecutorial requirements, both correlates of effectiveness.

V. RISKS AND COSTS

It would be disingenuous to fail to at least list the risks and costs of consolidation.

- Feelings of loss of control by either the City or the County and less focus on current goals and objectives.
- Inconsistent retirement and pension programs as well as possible salary differences may require adjustments.
- Initial confusion about jurisdiction from the public.

- ❑ Redrafting policy and procedures of both agencies to reflect new entity.
- ❑ Retraining personnel for new policy and procedures.
- ❑ Elimination of agency identity with associated loss of culture and history.
- ❑ Realignment of legal and budgetary issues that may differ between the City and the County.
- ❑ Initial higher costs to absorb alleged higher cost of County retirement.
- ❑ May be differing levels of investigative expertise requiring re-training and or re-assignment.