

**Police Department Management  
and Operations Study**

**VENICE, FLORIDA**

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# **1. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This first chapter provides a summary of the process utilized by the Matrix Consulting Group to conduct this assignment and provides an Executive Summary of our principal findings and recommendations.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Matrix Consulting Group was retained by the City of Venice to conduct a Management and Operations Study of the Venice Police Department (VPD). The scope of services defined in the City's original request for proposals was comprehensive and focused on the following broad topical areas:

- Management systems including policies, procedures, accreditation, etc.
- Organizational structure of the Department.
- Staffing and deployment of personnel.
- Police patrol services.
- Internal affairs.
- Emergency communications.
- Criminal investigations.
- Service level goals and performance measures.

The project was conducted during the summer of 2005 by the Matrix Consulting Group project team. To conduct the assignment, the members of the project team engaged in a variety of activities, including the following:

- Met with senior management staff in the City.
- Interviewed all members of the command staff in the Police Department.

- Conducted one-on-one and small group interviews with approximately half of the staff in the Police Department in all functions.
- Collected data describing workload, finances, policies and procedures, accreditation, salaries and wages, benefits, use of leave and other key descriptive factors.
- Develop a descriptive profile of the Police Department which was reviewed with staff and the project steering committee. This has been included as an appendix to this document.
- Compared the VPD to a series of best management practices to identify potential issues for further study in the course of this project. This has also been included as an appendix to this document.

The final step in this process has been the development of this final report. The following section provides a summary of the project team's key findings and recommendations.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This section provides a summary of the project team's analysis of the management, organization, staffing and operations of the Venice Police Department. This document also includes a summary descriptive profile as well as a summary of the results of the employee survey, each provided as appendices. The primary recommendations included within this study are summarized in the matrix, which follows:

Finding	Recommendation	Fiscal Impact	Priority
<p>The City and the Police Department need to plan for the upcoming transition between Chiefs of Police.</p>	<p>The City should conduct a search for its next Police Chief using an experienced recruiter. The City should work with the recruiter to define the ideal characteristics of its next Chief. While this recruitment is ongoing, the VPD should prepare a summary of current issues in a wide variety of topical areas including operations, staff experience, litigation, internal affairs, community issues and others.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Many VPD policies and procedures outline specific time-sensitive reporting, audit and inspection processes. However, the system for monitoring these activity/reporting requirements is not active.</p>	<p>The directive system should be reviewed to identify all required time-sensitive reports, audits, and inspections. A schedule should be prepared and distributed to affected personnel, with an additional requirement that copies of the completed reports be automatically routed to the accreditation office for system monitoring purposes.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>The VPD records high liability information in various reports, however there is a clear need for improvement in the analysis of these data for use in assessing and acting on the impacts of these activities.</p>	<p>Specific individuals in each operational function should be identified and made responsible for collecting and reviewing high-liability data, and preparing periodic reports with analyses.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>The VPD does not have procedures in place for conducting staff inspections of all major components to ensure daily operating practices conform to agency policies and procedures.</p>	<p>The Department should develop a schedule to ensure all major areas are formally inspected at least once every three years.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>High</p>

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Finding	Recommendation	Fiscal Impact	Priority
<p>The VPD's system for handling administrative investigations and citizen complaints against department personnel does not ensure that all complaints are properly recorded or investigated.</p>	<p>The VPD's entire internal affairs process should be reviewed and protocols established to ensure all complaints are documented and investigated. The directive governing these type investigations should reflect actual practices with one position assigned the responsibility for monitoring the assignment of cases and follow-up. Upon the conclusion of an internal investigation, the complainant should be provided written notification of the disposition of their complaint. This will provide the Department with documentation verifying that the complaint was handled.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>VPD's internal affairs records are disorganized and co-mingled with personnel records.</p>	<p>Completed internal or administrative investigation documentation should be segregated from other personnel records and purged, when appropriate.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>High</p>

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Finding	Recommendation	Fiscal Impact	Priority
<p>The Department has developed a plan for re-achieving accredited status, but there is little evidence of progress to achieving the plan.</p> <p>The FCA is requiring the Department to provide two years of proofs due to their lapsed status.</p>	<p>If the agency is committed to achieving accreditation, then the Chief of Police should sign a contract with one of the accrediting bodies and get the process officially started.</p> <p>The accreditation manager, with the assistance of subject matter experts in the Department, should identify all policy, procedure, and actual practice deficiencies. Once this is accomplished, the list should be prioritized and responsibilities assigned for making necessary corrections. This would expedite the process considerably. At this time, there does not seem to be an orderly review process.</p> <p>The accreditation manager should construct files and begin collecting proofs of compliance. This will help to verify that policies and procedures are being followed.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Management team meetings do not appear to be effectively utilized or planned.</p>	<p>Executive level management meetings should continue to be held as needed. Command staff meetings should be held no less than at least once per month with an agenda prepared in advance and minutes kept for increased accountability.</p> <p>All areas of the Department should arrange for regular meetings to provide an opportunity to share information and to ensure coordination of activities.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>High</p>

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Finding	Recommendation	Fiscal Impact	Priority
<p>The Police Department Does Not Utilize Available Management Information Systems or Data to Manage Operations.</p>	<p>The Police Department should engage in a process of developing short, medium and long-term goals. This should be accomplished in conjunction with the City's management and policy makers.</p> <p>The VPD should be authorized to hire a management / crime analyst position. This civilian position should be focused on a wide range of analytical tasks in support of the Department's managers and operations. This should include focus on the budget, operations, crime trends, etc. This position should report directly to the Chief of Police.</p> <p>The Police Department should seek expanded training for all staff who need to utilize information systems. This should include personnel in records, dispatch, property / evidence, investigations and patrol. This training should be focused on the specific modules that each person might utilize in the course of their current assignments.</p> <p>The Department should develop a series of specific performance measures for purposes of evaluating operations. These performance measures should be reported to the City Manager on a monthly basis.</p>	<p>\$ 73,000</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>The Organizational Structure of the Police Department Meets Key Objectives for Command and Control of Operations.</p>	<p>The Department organizational structure should remain unchanged. However, the City and the Department should move to consolidate the two senior managers (Deputy Chief and Captain) into a single classification.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>NA</p>

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<p>Policies and procedures for property and evidence can be improved.</p>	<p>Protocols concerning property/evidence inspections and audits should be instituted and require that sufficient samplings of high-risk items are audited no less than annually.</p> <p>Personnel assigned to the property/evidence component should place more emphasis on identifying property eligible for disposal.</p> <p>The after-hours refrigerated storage unit should be modified to accommodate multiple items and the locking mechanism installed properly.</p> <p>Use of the secured garage bay for evidence storage should be discontinued until the area is tested and free of mold.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Analysis of proactive levels within the patrol division shows that the Department is overstaffed, even when considering the City's unique geography and service commitments.</p>	<p>Based on the unique geography of the City of Venice and workload consideration, the Patrol Division needs approximately twenty-five (25) patrol officer positions. As a result, the Division is overstaffed by six (6) patrol officer positions. As a result, patrol officer staffing should be reduced by six (6) positions.</p>	<p>(\$372,000) per year.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>The VPD is understaffed at specialty unit functions including parks and marine patrol. The linear parks near the intra-coastal waterway present a unique need for patrol services.</p>	<p>The City should utilize three (3) officer positions to provide patrol coverage of the parks and provide evening patrol of the intra-coastal waterway.</p>	<p>\$186,000</p>	<p>High</p>

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Finding	Recommendation	Fiscal Impact	Priority
Management of proactive time can be improved to ensure that time in patrol is planned efficiently and spent effectively.	The VPD should develop formal performance expectations regarding the use of proactive time. A problem oriented policing approach to management of proactive time should also be utilized. In addition, a Crime Analyst position should be added to identify crime trends and patterns and to perform analysis of existing problems within the community.	NA	High
The VPD is not meeting established benchmarks for traffic enforcement efforts.	The Patrol Division should increase traffic enforcement activities by utilizing patrol officers' available time.	NA	High
Based on current spans of control, the patrol division is overstaffed at the supervisor level.	Based on the current span of control and administrative responsibilities, the VPD can reduce the number of supervisor positions by two (2).	(\$190,000) Annually.	High
Should the Department utilize a twelve hour shift schedule for non-specialized patrol functions, the current number of supervisor positions would be justified.	Moving to twelve hour shifts would create the need for two additional supervisor positions above the recommended target due to the increase in number of shifts. As a result, the project team does not recommend this change.	NA	NA
The Detectives Bureau does not utilize an effective formal system for screening, assigning, and monitoring case workloads. However, the Bureau is adequately staffed based on current workload.	<p>Maintain the current level of staffing at the Detective position.</p> <p>Maintain the current level of staffing at Detective supervisor positions.</p> <p>The VPD should develop a more formal approach to screening, assigning, and monitoring case workloads.</p>	NA	High

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<p>The workload generated by dispatch functions within the VPD suggests that opportunities exist for consolidation with Sarasota County. However, the current approach of utilizing dispatch personnel to provide after hour services for walk-in visitors should be considered in evaluating cost savings potential.</p>	<p>The City and the VPD should explore the potential cost savings and feasibility of consolidating dispatch services with Sarasota County.</p>	<p>Unknown</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Policies and procedures are in place to ensure proper records management. Workload supports current staffing levels within the Records unit.</p>	<p>Make no changes to current records organization and staffing.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>NA</p>
<p>While the cost savings associated with contracting out for crossing guard services are not great, the City can reduce its liability for these personnel.</p>	<p>The City should pursue vendors who provide crossing guard services.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>The size and use of the VPD's current vehicle fleet is appropriate given functions and services provided.</p>	<p>Make no changes to the current fleet.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>NA</p>
<p>The VPD has sufficient space to support current operations. However, the current facilities used to support training are in need of renovation.</p>	<p>Continue to utilize existing space at VPD headquarters. Explore options for renovating the outside training facility including finding additional space for a training room at headquarters.</p>		<p>Medium</p>