

# PUBLIC SAFETY CONSOLIDATION

A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY ASSESSMENT OF  
IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOME



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**COPS**  
Community Oriented Policing Services  
U.S. Department of Justice

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
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The Internet references cited in this publication were valid as of the date of publication. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the authors nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

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## About the Program on Police Consolidation and Shared Services

Although consolidating and sharing public safety services has received much attention in recent years, such efforts are not new. Moreover, despite the many communities that have in one way or another consolidated or shared these services, the process of doing so has not become any easier. In fact, to say that changing the structural delivery of public safety services is difficult or challenging is an understatement. At the core of contemplating these transitions, regardless of the form, is the need for open, honest, and constructive dialog among all stakeholders. Key to this dialog is evidence derived from independent research, analysis, and evaluation.

To help provide such independent information, the Michigan State University School of Criminal Justice, with the assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), established the **Program on Police Consolidation and Shared Services (PCASS)** to help consolidating police agencies and those considering consolidating increase efficiency, enhance quality of

service, and bolster community policing. Together they also developed resources such as publications, videos, and the PCASS website to assist communities exploring options for delivering public safety services. These resources do not advocate any particular form of service delivery but rather provide information to help communities determine for themselves what best meets their needs, circumstances, and desires.

The PCASS provides a wealth of information and research on structural alternatives for the delivery of police services, including the nature, options, implementation, efficiency, and effectiveness of all forms of consolidation and shared services. PCASS resources allow local decision makers to review what has been done elsewhere and gauge what model would be best for their community.

For more information on the PCASS and to access its resources, please visit <http://policeconsolidation.msu.edu/>.



The image shows a screenshot of the PCASS website and a photograph of a booth at a conference. The website header includes the Michigan State University logo, the title "Program on Police Consolidation and Shared Services", and the PCASS logo. A navigation menu lists: RESOURCES, PCASS PUBLICATIONS, ABOUT US, CONTACT, MULTIMEDIA, and ENDORSEMENTS. The main content area features a photograph of a booth at the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police (MACP) conference. The booth displays a large "S" logo and the text "Program on Police Consolidation and Shared Services (PoCaSS)". Below the photograph, there are three navigation buttons: "PCASS Publications" (with a right-pointing arrow), "Welcome to the Program on Police Consolidation and Shared Services" (centered text), and "PCASS News Highlights" (with a right-pointing arrow). Under "PCASS Publications" is the text: "Police Staffing Allocation and Managing Workload Demand: A Critical Assessment of Existing Practices". Under "PCASS News Highlights" is the text: "PCASS articles released 'Strategies for Police Recruitment: A Review of".





# Introduction

## Origins and practice of public safety consolidation

The provision of public safety services is among the largest tasks local governments undertake. In 2011, local governments in the United States spent \$125.7 billion on police (\$83.5 billion) and fire (\$42.3 billion) protection, more than they spent on any other function but education (Barnett and Vidal 2013). Managing these services is a complex task. About 80 to 85 percent of police and fire budgets are personnel costs (Wilson, Rostker, and Fan 2010; Schaitberger 2003). Collective bargaining agreements, federal and state compensation and labor laws and safety regulations, local legislation concerning minimum staffing, and other restrictions can reduce flexibility in managing these workforces, and public safety employees have received public support for maintaining levels of staffing and service.

Budget pressures have further complicated the efforts of public safety agencies to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), for example, found that most police agencies had experienced budget cuts in the prior year, and 40 percent anticipated cuts in the coming one (2013). For many departments, these are ongoing challenges, dating at least to the Great Recession of 2008–09. Indeed, five years after the downturn, most municipal governments had not returned to their prior revenue and employment levels (House 2013).

As cuts continue, many local governments have found that standard responses (e.g., reducing overtime, instituting special-service charges) have not been enough to reduce budgets. A traditional reluctance to cut public safety services has yielded to hiring freezes, layoffs, furloughs, or even disbanding of departments (COPS Office 2011; Melekian 2012; PERF 2010; Wilson, Dalton, et al. 2010).

Many communities have also explored differing modes of service delivery. As indicated by growing numbers of media reports in recent years, more communities are seeking new ways to maintain public service delivery (Chermak, Scheer, and Wilson 2014). Among these have been greater sharing of services with other communities, contracting for services, and merging agencies, including consolidation of several agencies into a single, metropolitan-wide one. One approach, the focus of this report, has been to consolidate emergency medical services (EMS) and police and fire services within a single community into a public safety agency.

Consolidation of police and fire services into a single agency can be traced to ancient Rome, where urban watchmen provided firefighting services at night and law enforcement services that the army was forbidden to provide by day (Morley and Hadley 2013). Consolidated public safety services were the norm in Great Britain, Germany, and Japan until World War II, when wartime nationalization forced the separation of fire and police services in Britain and Allied reconstruction separated them in Japan and Germany.

In the United States, consolidation of police and fire services dates back at least a century. In 1911, the community of Grosse Pointe Shores, Michigan, merged its police and fire services to create what was perhaps the first public safety department in the United States (Matarese et al. 2007). Oakwood, Ohio, founded what appears to be the second such department in 1924 (City of Oakwood 2015). Sunnyvale, California, similarly consolidated a small professional police force and a volunteer fire force in 1950 (City of Sunnyvale 2005). Other public safety departments more than a half-century old include those in Butner, North Carolina; Oak Park, Michigan; and Beverly Hills, Michigan.

Consolidation had a particular appeal in the 1950s among smaller communities seeking efficiency and cost effectiveness and to capitalize on existing volunteer safety programs (Ayres 1957). During the 1950s, consolidation tended to occur more in cities that had home-rule and city-manager forms of government. One cited reason for consolidation at the time was that while larger cities could achieve some efficiencies and forms of specialization in separate police and fire services, smaller agencies could not expect to achieve these. Hence, smaller agencies would turn to public safety consolidation to most easily achieve efficiencies. At the same time, smaller cities were more likely to have fewer crime and fire problems, possibly making them more suitable for public safety integration because of a smaller workload.

The idea of public safety consolidation became somewhat controversial in the 1960s because of its implications for organized labor and staff training (Wall 1961). At that time, communities were integrating fire and safety services in order to offer fire services to fast-growing communities, to reduce work hours and personnel costs without losing services, and to provide both police and fire services to recently annexed areas that might not support separate police and fire services. At the same time, the International Association of Fire Fighters and the International Association of Fire Chiefs opposed such measures on the grounds that consolidating police and fire services would lead to inadequacies in

both services. A survey of 369 cities with populations from 10,000 to 49,999 found city managers the most supportive of consolidation and fire chiefs the least supportive, with police chiefs more supportive than fire chiefs but less supportive than city managers (Bernitt 1962).

Interest in consolidation intensified in the 1970s as citizens demanded more and better services without tax increases (Berenbaum 1977), just as they would in the first decade of the 21st century as state and local budgets faced their tightest budget restrictions in decades. Advocates for consolidation emphasized (1) developing a public safety culture rather than simply cross-training police and fire officers and (2) implementing consolidated operations that convert fire stations into public safety stations. They also sought to implement the model in medium-to-large cities while recognizing that the model might have particular appeal to smaller communities, particularly in rural areas seeking to maximize resources and provide as broad an array of services as possible (see Marenin and Copus 1991 on public safety consolidations in Alaska). An assessment of public safety consolidation in three North Carolina cities in the 1970s found advantages of more contact with the public, better response, better career opportunities, and cost effectiveness but disadvantages in dual supervision, conflicting opinions over flexibility, preferences among officers for police over fire duties, and perceptions that public safety promotion opportunities were limited (Lynch and Lord 1979).



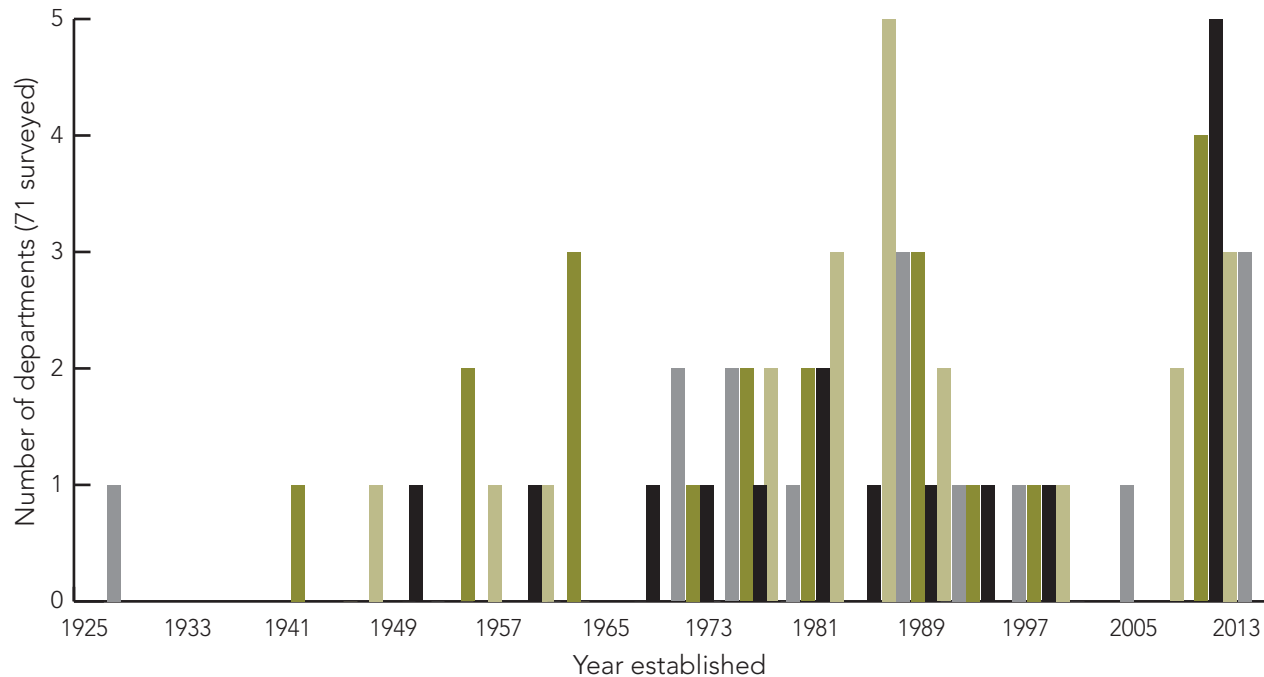
By the 1980s, both the number of cities that had consolidated police and fire services and the number that had deconsolidated had become substantial. As noted, fire professionals have long opposed consolidation, and their objections often led cities that had consolidated police and fire services to later choose to deconsolidate and form separate fire and police agencies. Commonly cited objections to public safety consolidation included the views that police and fire functions were so different as to prevent any one person from doing both well, conflict in the mission of police and fire officers, increased fire-insurance rates in communities with public safety departments, lack of teamwork in fighting fires, greater per capita costs, extensive training requirements, and inapplicability to larger jurisdictions (Farr and Daniel 1988). A survey of public safety directors found that firefighters were among those most opposed to consolidation but that police personnel also mounted opposition as both groups perceived consolidation threatening their individual positions (Crank and Alexander 1990). The survey also found that opposition to consolidated agencies was greater in agencies that had not fully consolidated (e.g., consolidated agencies that still had separate fire and police management structures), in part because of ambiguous lines of authority.

Interest in public safety consolidation increased again after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States, with advocates suggesting it could

help communities better fulfill new homeland security duties given to local agencies (Matarese et al. 2007; Mata 2010). Moreover, advocates suggested that consolidation could help agencies better implement community policing by increasing access to staff and flexibility in its deployment, expanding the role of the police to include more community-based activities generally favored by the public, increasing interactions with the community that can lead to greater information gathering and problem solving, and attracting officers with a broader skill set.

The current number of consolidated public safety departments is unclear. One recent analysis (Bates 2008) found fewer than 100 consolidated public safety departments in the United States; however, ongoing research at Michigan State University (MSU) has identified more than 130 such departments, with the number likely growing. Indeed, an MSU survey of more than half the nation's public safety departments found that one in four such departments was established in the past decade (see figure 1 on page 6).

Figure 1. Surveyed public safety departments by year established



Public safety service consolidation as it is currently practiced in the United States may be

- *nominal*, with executive functions consolidated under a single chief executive but no integration of police and fire services;
- *partial*, with partial integration of police and fire services, cross-trained public safety officers (PSO) working alongside separate functional personnel, and consolidation within administrative ranks;
- *full*, with full integration of police and fire services, cross-trained PSOs, and consolidated management and command.<sup>1</sup>

As this typology illustrates, public safety departments fall on a continuum of integration. Such a continuum, however, tends to oversimplify the vast variation among these departments. In practice, each community that implements this form of consolidation tends to do so a little differently.

1. Other forms of public safety service consolidation have been identified, but these do not result in organizational integration. For more on this, see Lynch and Lord 1979.

### Toward a systematic approach

Despite the number of consolidated agencies, the long history of public safety consolidation models, and their probable growth in numbers as communities seek creative budget solutions, there have been few systematic analyses of such departments. What is known is largely anecdotal and based upon scattered and often dated case studies. Many questions remain about the options for and feasibility of public safety consolidation and what may contribute to their success or failure.

Given the lack of systematic analyses of public safety departments, in this report we gathered and analyzed data and experiences regarding communities that have consolidated and deconsolidated public safety services. By assessing the nature, implementation, and outcome of consolidation efforts, we sought to provide lessons on its context and applicability for decision makers considering public safety consolidation for

their community. For those who have implemented consolidation, we sought to offer lessons on improving its implementation and effectiveness.

## Research methods and outlines

In this document, we review what is known about public safety consolidation and its practice in the field. We rely on case studies of where public safety consolidation has been implemented, as well as some where it has been abandoned. In reviewing common lessons from these communities, we also reference more general literature on the strengths, and weaknesses, of the model.

More specifically, we take a mixed-methods approach that employs multiple forms of information and data collection. First, we consulted the open-source literature for existing knowledge about public safety consolidation. Resources on this topic exist, but they vary tremendously in their rigor. In many areas, we used them to contextualize the data we analyzed and the resulting lessons.

Second, we hosted two focus groups of experts to explore public safety consolidation knowledge and experiences from a large variety of perspectives. The discussions covered a lot of ground, including the impetus for change, transition processes and cultural change, fire suppression, mutual aid, EMS provision, first-line supervision, conflicts of interest, efficiency and outcomes, when consolidation does not work, and consolidation and community policing. The first took place on February 8, 2012, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and included, in addition to members of the research team, 12 mid- to senior-level Michigan-based police, public safety, and accreditation officials knowledgeable about different forms of public safety consolidation. The second took place on March 7, 2012, in Dallas, Texas, and included, in addition to the research team and

representatives from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, nine current and former police, fire, and public safety chiefs and directors knowledgeable about consolidated and deconsolidated public safety departments across the United States.

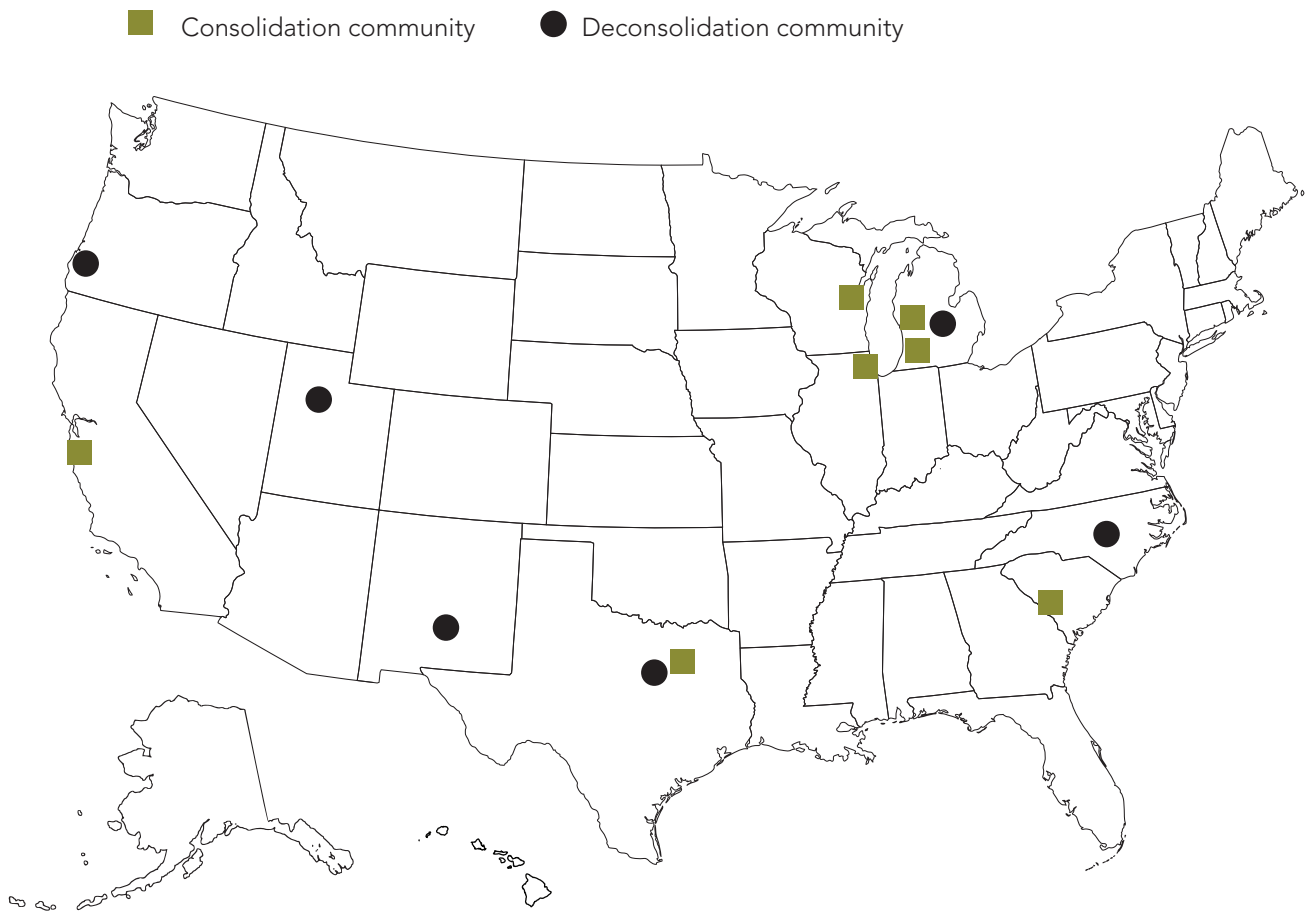
Finally, we conducted a series of case studies to gather rich detail that describes real experiences with public safety consolidation. Collectively, as detailed in the following chapters, we assessed what transpired in 13 unique jurisdictions. To the extent possible, we attempted to develop a diverse sample of case studies that varied by geographical location, date of adoption, form of public safety consolidation, and other community characteristics. Importantly, we further differentiated the sample between those that are currently consolidated and those that deconsolidated. This permitted us to review and contrast the circumstances under which public safety consolidation currently functions and those where it no longer was considered a viable model of service delivery.

To form the basis of each case study, we gathered as much primary and secondary information as possible. This generally included interviews of line staff (across organizational functions), public safety executives, and local officials and, in several instances, ride-alongs with those assigned to EMS or police or fire service provision. We supplemented these original observations with available data, reports, and other supporting materials provided by local officials. For a few case studies, we were able to incorporate existing literature on the consolidation experience. As evident in the substantive review that follows, for some case studies we were able to compile and assess more information than others.

Figure 2 on page 8 depicts the locations of our consolidation and deconsolidation case study communities, which we describe in more detail in subsequent chapters.



Figure 2. Location of consolidation and deconsolidation case study communities



Both the consolidation and deconsolidation sections provide case studies of where public safety consolidation has been implemented and remains in place and where the model has been abandoned. Among the individual case studies, readers may wish to review those communities most similar to theirs. To assist in this, a table summarizing the characteristics of each community appears early in both sections (consolidation and deconsolidation). In addition, both of those sections summarize the common themes among the case studies, as well as the varying advantages and disadvantages communities have experienced. Because fire suppression is a common concern in public safety consolidation, this report

also explores some implications of best practices in fire suppression for public safety consolidation, and it summarizes how some consolidation communities have approached such duties and provides the ratings of their efforts. We conclude with what our research says about communities where public safety consolidation may succeed or fail and note needs for future research.

Rather than offering recommendations on whether to adopt this model, we present this work as a guide on the issues readers may wish to consider regarding adoption of public safety consolidation in their communities.

## Consolidation in Communities

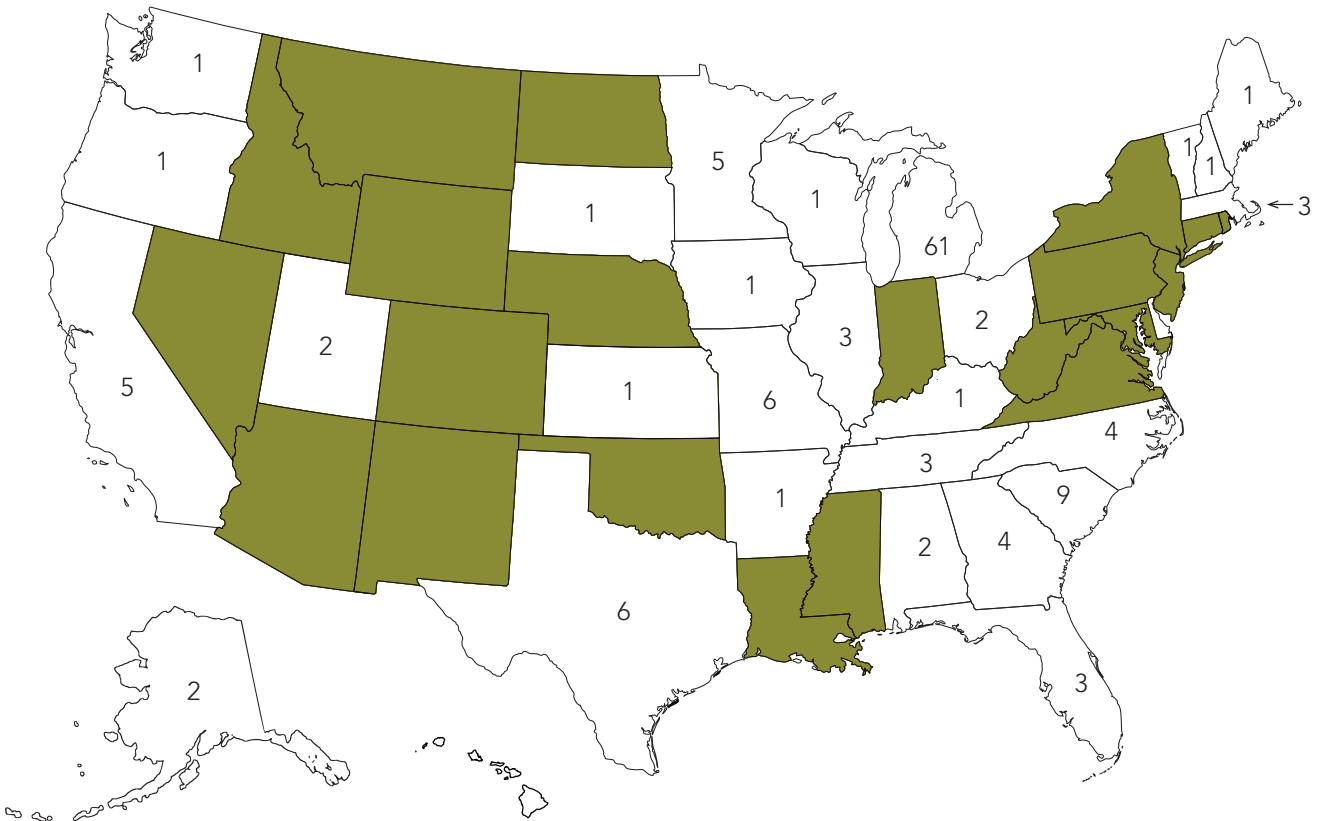
### Case studies

As noted in the introduction, public safety consolidation in the United States has been in use for at least the past century. Ongoing research at Michigan State University (MSU) indicates the model is most prevalent in Michigan, where 60 communities have public safety departments consolidating police and fire services. Nevertheless, as shown in figure 3, the model is present and expanding throughout the United States and is currently implemented in 27 states.

We reviewed the implementation and practice of public safety consolidation in seven communities as far north as Michigan, as far south as Texas, as far east as South Carolina, and as far west as California:

1. Aiken, South Carolina
2. Ashwaubenon, Wisconsin
3. East Grand Rapids, Michigan
4. Glencoe, Illinois
5. Highland Park, Texas
6. Kalamazoo, Michigan
7. Sunnyvale, California

Figure 3. Number of consolidated public safety departments by state



We also summarized some common themes, including the communities' impetus for adopting a consolidated model, their transition to a consolidated department, and cultural issues they may have encountered in their public safety departments.

These communities share many common characteristics (see table 1 on page 11). Five of seven have populations less than 25,000. All seven encompass less than 25 square miles of land. With one exception, the population densities of those communities are less than 4,000 persons per square mile. Their under-18 populations range from 19.6 to 31.6 percent, and their over-64 populations range from 9.4 to 21.9 percent. Non-Hispanic single-race White populations are at least 89 percent in four of the communities. Most adults hold at least a bachelor's degree in four of these communities where annual per capita income is also at least \$45,000. At least two-thirds of households own their homes in most of these communities, and Uniform Crime Report Part I Crime rates are less than 3,000 per 100,000 persons in four of these communities.

In other words, our case studies are relatively small and relatively homogeneous cities with well-educated and affluent populations of homeowners living in communities with relatively low levels of crime for metropolitan areas. Such commonality can aid in drawing lessons from public safety consolidation within them. At the same time, there is some variation that can point to lessons in other communities, including one or more communities with populations exceeding 70,000, population densities exceeding 6,000 per square mile, populations younger than the national average in some and older than the national average in others, a "minority-majority" community,

another with per capita income below the national average, two where most households rent their homes, and two where crime rates exceed 5,000 per 100,000 population—well above the national average of about 3,200 per 100,000 population.

These communities have also received a variety of law enforcement and firefighting accreditations (Bates 2008). Three of the seven communities have received law enforcement accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). Among other measures, accreditation from CALEA (2015b) requires

- development of a uniform set of written directives;
- a preparedness program to address natural or man-made unusual occurrences;
- a continuum of standards that clearly define authority, performance, and responsibilities;
- steps to limit liability and risk exposure.

The proportion of our case study communities that is CALEA-accredited compares favorably with the proportion of all police agencies so accredited. Nationwide, between 20 and 33 percent of police agencies with 25 to 300 total employees (the range for all our case study agencies) have CALEA accreditation (Cordner and Gordon 2009). One of the case study communities (Glencoe) has also been accredited by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). Only 129 fire departments in the United States have received this type of fire accreditation (CFAI 2015).

In the sections that follow, we review the communities, discussing more of their characteristics, the origins of their public safety consolidation, and the characteristics (such as organizational structures) of their public safety department operations.

Table 1. Characteristics of public safety consolidation case study communities

Community	Total pop., 2010*	Land area (sq mi)	Persons / sq mi	% < 18 yrs	% ≥ 65 yrs	Hispanic White single-race non-Hispanic White	% ≥ 25 with bachelor's degree	Per capita income (2012 dollars)	Home-ownership rate (%)	UCR Part I crimes / 100K pop., 2012	CALEA-accredited	CFAI-accredited
Aiken	29,524	20.7	1,426	19.6	21.9	65.5	44.5	32,312	67.8	5,771	Yes	No
Ashwaubenon	16,963	12.4	1,369	21.2	14.6	89.1	27.6	31,204	62.8	4,086	No	No
East Grand Rapids	10,694	2.9	3,650	31.6	9.7	94.3	76.6	52,893	91.1	648	No	No
Glencoe	8,723	3.7	2,224	31.6	14.4	92.0	84.1	99,036	93.1	1,073	Yes	Yes
Highland Park	8,564	2.2	3,823	26.8	17.2	91.6	81.5	122,811	82.3	2,829	Yes	No
Kalamazoo	74,262	24.7	3,009	20.5	9.4	65.6	32.3	18,402	46.3	5,050	No	No
Sunnyvale	140,081	22.0	6,371	22.4	11.2	34.5	56.9	45,636	46.3	1,898	No	No

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2016; FBI 2013

\*All U.S. Census Bureau data are from the 2010 Census.

### Aiken, South Carolina

Aiken is a city in and the county seat of Aiken County. Located in the Central Savannah River area, Aiken is part of the Augusta, Georgia, Metropolitan Statistical Area. Founded in 1835, Aiken became a health resort in the mid-19th century and greatly expanded after a 310 square-mile U.S. Department of Energy nuclear reservation, the Savannah River Site, was built there to develop materials for nuclear weapons.

Aiken first considered public safety consolidation in 1960. Under the proposed scheme, police officers were to be called public safety officers (PSO) and respond to assist firefighters. The city's fire chief would direct the PSOs. The two departments remained separate until 1970, when the fire chief was appointed director of public safety.

The department took several steps to achieve integration in the 1970s. Among them were

- consolidating administrative functions, including communications, records, training, and inspections;
- having police officers attend firefighter training;
- having firefighters attend basic law enforcement training at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Authority.

By 1977, the integration was complete, and public safety operations were put in place.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the city grew significantly because of expansion of the Savannah River Site. As it grew, the public safety department also achieved several milestones:

- The department received the first Insurance Services Organizations (ISO) Class 2 Fire Department rating in South Carolina. The public

safety department achieved this rating through meeting standards on the number of trained firefighters, the condition of fire equipment, the fire safety inspections program, and the state of the fire stations (see ISO Public Protection Classification on page 43 (City of Aiken 2011).

- It created a special response team.
- It upgraded the training facility to include a flammable liquid pit.
- It applied for CALEA accreditation, which it has held since 1998 (WRDW-TV 2011). Aiken has also required all its sworn officers to pass a 32-hour national certification course for first responders, which the city believes has yielded improved response times to medical emergencies both within the city and in adjoining communities (Frommer 2008).
- It opened two additional public safety stations.

Support of local leaders was vital to the transition to a public safety department. A former public safety official for Aiken told a focus group convened by MSU researchers, “When you first do this, there is going to be both positive and negative stories on the local television stations and in the local newspapers. Everybody needs to know upfront this isn’t going to be easy, but you need to stay with the plan, support the plan . . . . Staff knew what the program was: They could accept the change or seek employment elsewhere.”

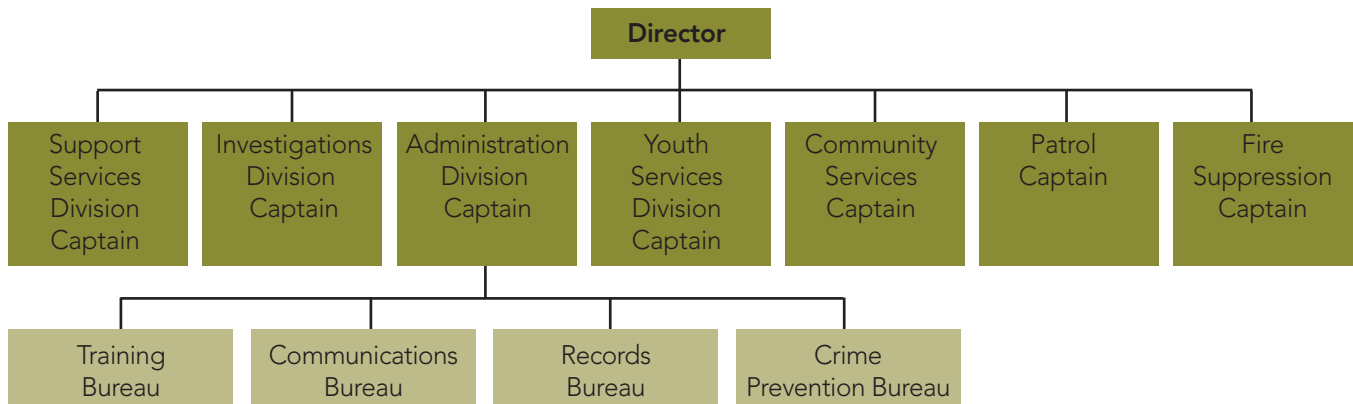
Today the Aiken Department of Public Safety is organized into six divisions under a director (see figure 4 on page 13). The department has 135 full-time employees (89 sworn, 28 civilian, and 18 drivers) and 33 part-time, seasonal, or volunteer workers. As a point of comparison, we note that the city of Anderson, South Carolina, an upstate community of approximately 27,000 persons (compare Aiken’s 29,524 in 2010), has a police force of 147 police personnel (95 sworn, 40 other full time, and 12 part time) as well as a firefighting force of about 60 personnel (AFD 2012; APD 2012).

The public safety divisions and their responsibilities in Aiken include the following:

- Support services—personnel administration, accreditation, policies, internal affairs, communications and records management, crime and statistical analysis, research and planning, maintenance, and traffic engineering
- Investigations—investigations of crimes, interviewing and interrogating criminal suspects, collecting and preserving and analyzing evidence, follow-up investigations for missing adults, development of criminal intelligence, and assistance to victims and witnesses
- Administration—bureaus for training, communications, records, and crime prevention
- Youth services—investigation of cases involving juvenile crime and offenders, programs designed to prevent juvenile offenses, follow-up investigations for missing children, and school-based officer activities



Figure 4. Aiken Department of Public Safety organization chart



- Community services—community involvement, special events, traffic enforcement, education, extradition of prisoners, mounted patrol, animal control, public information, crime prevention, and school crossing guards
- Patrol / fire suppression—preventive patrol, response to requests for service and crimes in progress, investigation of suspicious activities and crimes, medical first responder services, court security, supervision of field training officer program, response to fire and rescue emergencies, pre-fire planning, maintenance of fire apparatus, and coordination of special response team

Each division has a captain in charge. The Patrol / Fire Suppression Division has two captains in charge, one for patrol and the other for fire suppression activities. The patrol captain supervises four shifts; the fire suppression captain supervises a lieutenant, three shifts and their cadets, maintenance workers, and volunteers.

Aiken PSOs respond to a variety of crimes and emergencies (see tables 2 and 3 on pages 14 and 15). For its patrol function, the department assigns patrol officers to one of four shifts, each commanded by a lieutenant. The department also assigns some officers to community patrols in several neighborhoods. (We caution the reader that while reported offenses such as murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft may be defined similarly across communities, other calls for service may not.)

Aiken operates five public safety stations staffed by drivers or operators for responding to fires and emergency medical service (EMS) calls. The department also has 17 volunteer firefighters and trains its public safety maintenance personnel to fight fires as well. In the event of a reported structure fire, for a first alarm, the department deploys

Table 2. Aiken reported offenses, 2011

Offense	Number
Murder	1
Forcible rape	12
Robbery	36
Aggravated assault	69
Burglary	172
Theft	1,095
Motor vehicle theft	49

- two engine companies and a ladder truck with driver or operators, three maintenance staff, three cadets, and a sergeant;
- paged volunteers, of whom three to five typically respond;
- an on-duty public safety lieutenant who assesses the fire, with four or five PSOs responding;
- off-duty PSOs (who have take-home cars) notified as needed.

For a second alarm, the department deploys

- remaining two engine companies;
- off-duty volunteer company;
- on-coming shift to staff reserve engine and ladder or service trucks.

For a third alarm, the department deploys

- reserve engine and ladder to fire staging;
- all off-duty personnel called in;
- mutual aid called as needed.

Fortunately for Aiken, it suffers relatively few structure fires: there was less than one weekly in 2011.

Equipped public safety officers, the former Aiken public service official said, can handle more typical small fires: "If you get five or six public safety officers on a fire early, then you can put out a lot of them and won't need a bigger response."

EMS and rescue calls are more common in Aiken. In addition to Aiken city PSO efforts, Aiken County operates nine emergency ambulances strategically stationed throughout the county, as well as two flexible quick response vehicles. The county also calls on private ambulance and rescue companies as needed.

In addition to the 32-hour certification course for first responders, Aiken requires eight hours of instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of an automated external defibrillator, four hours of training on blood-borne pathogens, and annual refresher courses. Prior to joining the force, Aiken PSOs must undergo a

- reading-comprehension test;
- police officer and firefighter aptitude test;

Table 3. Aiken reported EMS and fire service calls, 2011

Service calls	Number	Percent of total
Fire	174	17
Structure (included with all fire)	37	4
Explosion—no fire	2	<1
EMS and rescue service	242	24
Other hazardous condition—no fire	70	7
Service call	42	4
Good intent	109	11
False alarm	374	37
Severe weather	9	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,022</b>	<b>100</b>

- physical fitness assessment;
- psychological assessment;
- background investigation;
- medical examination.

The department typically receives 20 to 25 applicants for every open position.

New PSOs attend a 12-week program at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy in Columbia. Upon completion, they undergo a three-month field training program based on the San Jose model (SJPD 2015). After 18 months, officers attend an eight-week course at the South Carolina Fire Academy. They then participate in a fire field training officer program where they learn how to drive the apparatus.

In-service training includes legal updates, domestic violence issues, and driving. In-service training is conducted without overtime; one day each month, PSOs from the community services unit work the patrol division, answering calls for service so that patrol officers can attend training. In 2010, the

department provided more than 14,000 hours of training to its personnel.

The former chief noted cultural issues were among the challenges that public safety managers must handle. Police officers and firefighters, he claimed, “have different personalities” and also may have different levels of fitness and education in some communities. One way the department avoids cultural conflict, the former chief said, is to emphasize developing its own officers rather than hiring those from elsewhere who may be “ingrained” in other ways. “We hire those that we teach, and teach them what we want them to learn,” he said.

### *Ashwaubenon, Wisconsin*

Ashwaubenon, a village in Brown County, is part of the Green Bay Metropolitan Statistical Area. It borders Green Bay and surrounds Lambeau Field, home of the Green Bay Packers football team, on

three sides. Part of Austin Straubel Airport, which provides service to Green Bay, also overlaps the village. At close to 17,000 residents, Ashwaubenon has about one-sixth as many residents and one-fourth as much land area as Green Bay. Brown County, which includes both Ashwaubenon and Green Bay, has a population of 250,000.

Ashwaubenon organized a volunteer fire company in 1942 with 10 charter members and a 500-gallon pumper. Population growth in the 1960s, from 1,369 in 1960 to 9,323 in 1970 (U.S. Census Bureau 1972), prompted Ashwaubenon to add a second station in 1970, as well as to increase the number of firefighters to 34. Ashwaubenon would continue to grow in the 1970s, reaching a population of 14,486 by 1980 (U.S. Census Bureau 1993).

Prior to 1967, the Brown County Sheriff's Office provided constabulary services to Ashwaubenon for handling ordinance violations. In February 1967, Ashwaubenon and the county entered into an annual contract for protection by a dedicated sheriff's department officer. In 1977, the contract expanded to include two officers. This arrangement was terminated in August 1981, after the Ashwaubenon Department of Public Safety successfully completed its first year.

Ashwaubenon added EMS and rescue services in 1973. The squad had 14 members in 1974 and expanded to 29 members by 1977. Volunteers would schedule their time with the squad around their normal employment hours, responding from their homes with ambulances and picking up a crew on their way to a call. The rescue squad was initially funded by donations until Ashwaubenon recognized it as a department and allocated \$926,177 for operating expenses in 1974. In 1977, the squad hired three full-

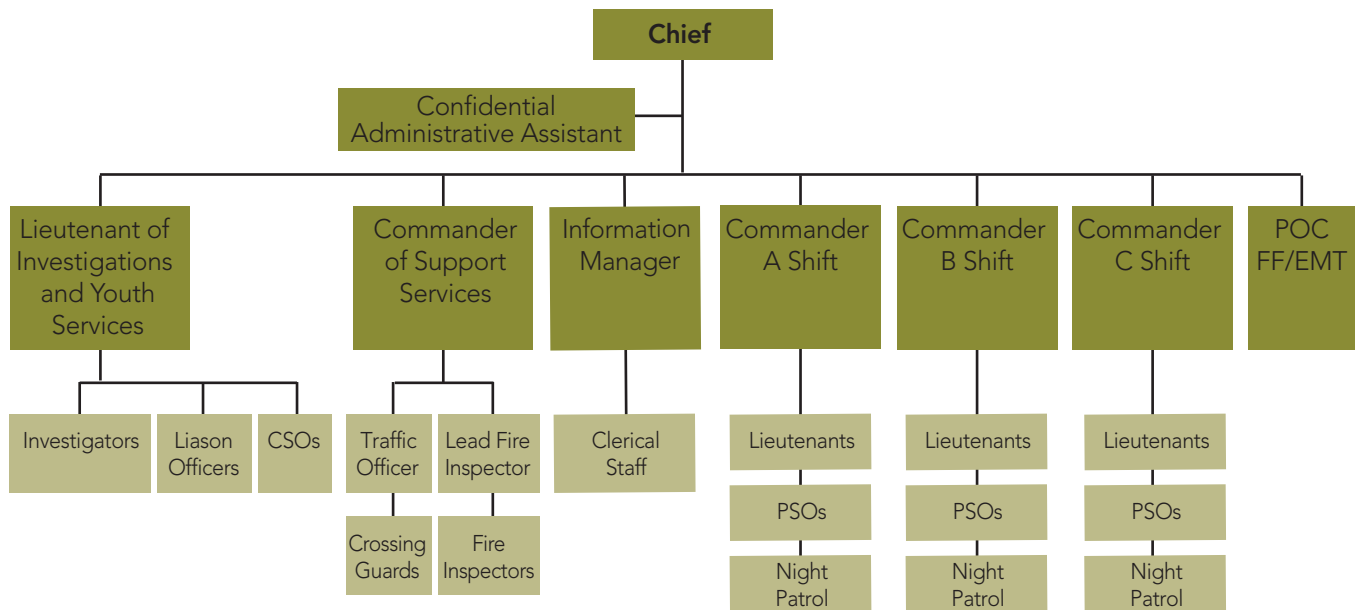
time emergency medical technicians (EMT). In 1978, it provided paramedic training to six members, part of the first cohort of Wisconsin certified paramedics.

In 1979, the village merged the fire company and the rescue squad. At that time, there was growing support for the village to form its own police department. Visits to several public safety departments led village officials to consider creating a consolidated public safety department offering police, fire, rescue, and emergency medical services in the village. The idea drew some criticism, particularly among those doubting the same personnel could perform all such tasks. Nevertheless, noting the volunteer nature of the fire department, the fire chief countered, "If you have a butcher in a packing plant who is also a volunteer fireman, he has to be proficient at both jobs" (Village of Ashwaubenon 2015). After six months of study, the village board voted unanimously in February 1980 to implement a public safety department.

The department began operations in August 1980. By August 1981, when the contract between the Brown County Sheriff's Office and the village expired, the public safety department had its own dispatch center, equipment, and 22 full-time PSOs. The department continued to grow through the 1980s, reaching 30 sworn officers, including three investigators, by 1990. The 1990s saw the department move into a new facility and add a school liaison officer to its staff.

Today, the Ashwaubenon Department of Public Safety has 48 sworn officers, including supervisors. Most operations personnel are assigned to one of three 24-hour shifts. Each shift has its own commander, two lieutenants, and eight PSOs. Among the department's personnel are 22 certified paramedics, at least two of whom are on duty at all times. The department also has its own community service officers and liaisons, support services division, and information

Figure 5. Ashwaubenon Department of Public Safety organization chart, 2013



Notes: CSO (Community Service Officer), DTF (Drug Task Force), POC FF/EMT (Paid On-Call Firefighter / Emergency Medical Technician)

management division (see figure 5). In addition, the department that began with two Chevrolet Malibu squad cars now has 10 patrol vehicles (Village of Ashwaubenon 2015).

Comparable municipalities in the area rely on contracting for police services and on-call firefighters or a merged department for fire services. The Village of Allouez (2010 population 13,975; see Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau 2011) recently merged its fire department with Green Bay (Village of Allouez 2015a). The Villages of Bellevue (population 14,570) and Howard (population 17,399) rely mostly on paid on-call firefighters (Village of Bellevue 2015a; Village of Howard 2015). All three contract with the Brown County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement services (Village of Allouez 2015b; Village of Bellevue 2015b; Village of Howard 2015).

Ashwaubenon PSOs responded to nearly 20,000 calls for service in 2012 (see table 4 on page 18). Of these, nearly one-third dealt with traffic offenses. Most crime in the village was relatively minor. PSOs also responded to 67 fire calls, of which only eight, or less than one per month, were for building fires. (Again, we caution the reader that while reported criminal offenses, particularly Part 1 Uniform Crime Report offenses, may be defined similarly across communities, other calls for service may not.)

A 24-hour shift includes eight hours on patrol: Three officers are assigned to work from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.; four are assigned to work from 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.; and one is assigned to work from 7:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. Given a collective bargaining agreement under which the village cannot assign PSOs to patrol from 3:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m., the village employs three to four police officers to work the 11:00



Table 4a. Ashwaubenon type I violent crime

Criminal homicide	1
Forcible rape	4
Robbery	2
Aggravated assault	41
Total	48

Table 4b. Ashwaubenon type I property crime

Burglary	51
Larceny-theft	581
Motor vehicle theft	13
Arson	0
Total	645

Table 4c. Ashwaubenon type II violent crime

Total	1,713
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Table 4d. Ashwaubenon calls for service: Municipal and related

Ordinance violations	185
Assist other agencies	231
Burglar alarms	507
Suspicious activity	1,057
Animal calls	436
Miscellaneous calls	6,058
Total	8,474

Table 4e. Ashwaubenon calls for service: Traffic and accident

Accident damage only	723
Accidents with injury	98
Assist motorists	668
Traffic citations	3,626
Traffic warnings	3,514
Parking tickets	941
Total	9,570

**Table 4f. Ashwaubenon calls for service: Fire and rescue**

Building fires	8
Vehicle fires	15
Other fires	44
Mutual aid	17
Service calls	62
Fire alarms	136
Rescue incidents	1,104
Traffic accident responses	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,387</b>

p.m. to 7:00 a.m. shift. As PSO vacancies arise, these officers receive their firefighter training and eventually join a PSO shift. Supervisors also work on the street and in fire operations, although there is no supervisor on the street after 3:00 a.m. This deployment results in the rather unusual situation in which, from 3:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m., there are nine officers and a supervisor in the fire station and two or three on patrol.

For fire calls, the department deploys an engine with an officer and three PSOs and an ambulance with two PSOs. Should the fire be confirmed or if smoke is visible, the department notifies its 25 paid on-call personnel to respond. If needed, headquarters staff and investigators can also respond to fires. On-duty patrol officers are generally not assigned to fire suppression and do not carry bunker gear in their patrol vehicles, while other PSOs on a shift, as noted, are assigned to a fire station.

The department also participates in the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS), Division 112, which includes 18 communities along with Straubel Airport in Brown County. Division 112's resources include 11 ladder companies, more than 45 engine companies,

14 ambulances, 31 tenders, support units and wild-land equipment, technical rescue teams, and hazardous materials teams. The department requests assistance from MABAS about three times annually.

Most Ashwaubenon PSOs have already attended a 520-hour academy specifically designed for Wisconsin certification in law enforcement prior to joining the department. All prospective officers must be eligible for police officer certification and have earned 60 semester hours of college credit.

Fire service certification is not mandated in Wisconsin but may be undertaken voluntarily. Certification levels include Firefighter I and II; Fire Officer I and II; Emergency Services Instructor I, II and III; Fire Inspector I; and Driver/Operator-Pumper and Driver/Operator-Aerial. All Ashwaubenon officers have Firefighter II certification. Ashwaubenon officers also fulfill requirements for 180 hours of basic EMT certification and 702 hours for paramedic certification.

Wisconsin mandates 24 hours of annual training for police personnel and 18 hours for fire personnel. It

Table 5. East Grand Rapids public service officer training, 2010

Police	Fire	Medical
Weapons qualification	Fires—strategies and tactics	CPR/AED certification
Rapid deployment training	Airboat ops	Medical first aid
Precision driving	Hazmat	Blood-borne pathogens
Defensive tactics	Ice rescue	Patient assessment
Simunitions	Aerial operations	Pediatric treatment
Legal updates	Confined spaces	Airway/Ventilation
Cultural diversity	Extrication	
Felony car stops	Apparatus driving	

also mandates 32 hours for EMTs every other year and 48 hours of refresher training for paramedics in the course of their two-year licensure period. In 2012, the village paid \$25,000 for police overtime training, \$13,500 for fire overtime training, and \$16,500 for EMT overtime training. The total budget for the department in 2012 was \$8.4 million, of which \$7.2 million was for personnel costs.

### *East Grand Rapids, Michigan*

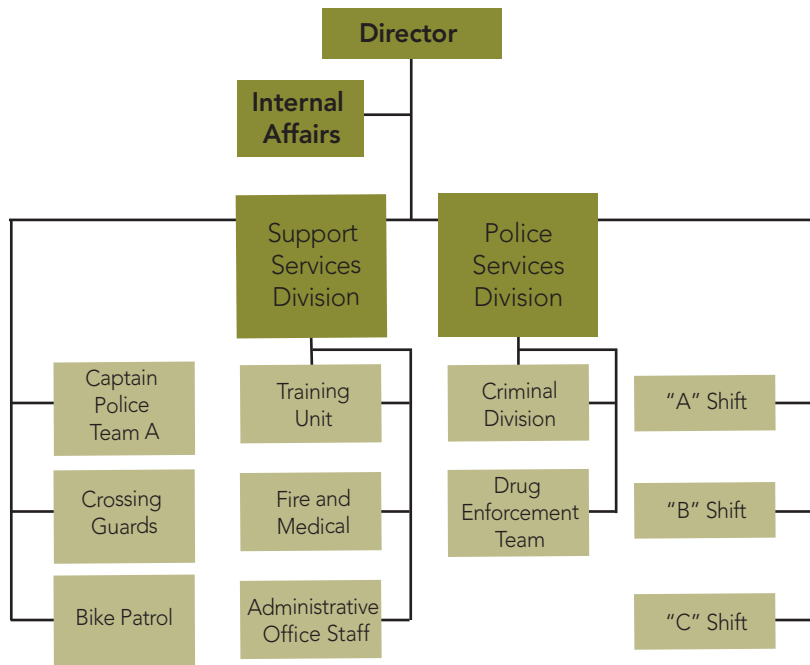
East Grand Rapids, a city in Kent County, is part of the Grand Rapids Metropolitan Statistical Area. Developed around Reeds Lake and the parks surrounding it, East Grand Rapids was established as a village in 1891 and incorporated as a home-rule city in 1926. At nearly 11,000 residents, it has only about one-twentieth the size and population of Grand Rapids, which in turn has only about one-third of Kent County's approximately 600,000 residents (U.S. Census Bureau 2015).

East Grand Rapids established its public safety department in 1985 by combining its police and fire departments into one organization (City of East Grand Rapids 2015). The city initially began considering consolidation in the 1950s in an effort to improve public safety services (Wilson, Weiss, and Grammich 2012). Among reasons for the consolidation, a department leader told an MSU focus group, was to improve fire services.

Even after the police and fire departments were merged, the cultural shift took some time. Yet once older personnel had retired, the department and its employees succeeded in developing a "public safety culture," a department leader claimed. Such a culture, the leader said, differs from those of police work and firefighting. "Firefighters never have to deal with the personalities that police do and are always seen as heroes. Police have had to deal with more of the positive and the negative."

Each day, the department representative told the MSU focus group, PSOs "get a police assignment, a fire assignment, and a medic assignment."

Figure 6. East Grand Rapids Department of Public Safety organization chart, 2011



Each of the 29 sworn personnel is trained in law enforcement, firefighting, and medical first response. The department does not qualify all its PSOs as EMTs because the vast majority of medical service calls it receives do not require such expertise.

The result, the department leader said, is a department of “generalist specialists.” Table 5 shows some examples of police, fire, and medical training provided in 2010 (City of East Grand Rapids 2011).

Figure 6 on page 21 shows the organizational structure for the department (City of East Grand Rapids 2011). Its two main divisions are police services and support services, with fire and medical services being among support services. Each division has a captain in charge. Captains also handle internal affairs for the department.

East Grand Rapids has its PSOs work 24-hour shifts. Each shift has one staff sergeant, one sergeant, and five PSOs.

Most service calls to the public safety department are for traffic-enforcement activities (see table 6 on page 22). East Grand Rapids has relatively little crime; indeed, as shown in table 1 on page 11, it has the lowest crime rate among the municipalities we considered. It also has few fire calls, averaging fewer than 200 such calls per year, with only about 10 percent of those calls being for actual fires and fewer than three per year being for fires in residential dwellings or other buildings (City of East Grand Rapids 2011). Most fire service runs are for activities such as false or unfounded

Table 6. East Grand Rapids, crimes, offenses, and calls for service, 2010

Activity	Number
UCR Part I violent crime	5
UCR Part I property crime	125
UCR Part II crime	234
Fire runs	16
Other fire service calls	146
Animal offenses	115
Juvenile offenses	7
Medical activity	223
Traffic enforcement	4,107
Other traffic activity	1,026
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,004</b>

alarms, downed utility wires, carbon monoxide alarms, or smoke investigations. The lack of fire calls, and thus lack of ability to prove firefighting skills, can lead to lesser acceptance of East Grand Rapids by local fire departments.

City officials claim consolidation helped them realize some efficiencies. Where once 40 police and fire personnel provided services, 29 PSOs now suffice. As a point of comparison, we note that another Kent County municipality of somewhat larger size, the City of Grandville (population 15,596 in 2010), has 28 police officers and a firefighting force of six full-time firefighters and nearly 30 paid on-call firefighters (City of Grandville 2015a; City of Grandville 2015b).

East Grand Rapids officials contend the public safety consolidation realized both improved services and lower costs, with about 40 percent of the city's general fund now supporting public safety services. The department representative claimed the model enhances efficiency by having a single organization respond to complex incidents. An incident in which a person was pinned under another vehicle, for example, would typically require three agencies to respond (police to maintain traffic, fire to remove the vehicle, and EMS to provide medical response to the victim), but PSOs arriving on such a scene can immediately assume the necessary positions.

Public safety consolidation also offers some benefits for community policing, the department representative said. "[Having] people trained in different levels" and tasks can ensure the department is ready to respond to many different types of situations with many



different types of personnel. As he recounted, “We had a day with a lost child that we had all guys out on [the] street, even in an engine, looking . . . I can’t think of any negatives [for community policing].”

### *Glencoe, Illinois*

The village of Glencoe is a residential lakefront community in north suburban Chicago. Its per capita income is nearly four times the average for the state and nation, and its home ownership rate is also very high (indeed, the highest among the communities we reviewed). Though far smaller than Chicago, its population of 8,723 is roughly similar to those of its surrounding Cook County communities. Among its neighbors are Highland Park (not to be confused with Highland Park, Texas, one of our case studies), Highwood, Northbrook, Northfield, Wilmette, and Winnetka. Among these, it is perhaps most similar in size and socioeconomic characteristics to the village of Winnetka (population 12,187; per capita income \$102,187).

Glencoe was incorporated in 1869. In 1914, it became the first community in Illinois and the eleventh in the nation to adopt the council-manager form of government (Village of Glencoe 2015).

The idea for combining Glencoe’s police and fire departments emerged in 1953 and was reviewed by village staff and elected officials. The objective was to “more effectively use the time and abilities of personnel in both departments to handle duties that would complement each of the individual service areas” (Harlow 1994). As the first efforts toward

consolidation, police officers and firefighters trained to learn the duties of both positions. This limited cross-training integrated paramedic services in 1974. By the early 1980s, integration was virtually complete, and the department devised common branding for all public safety vehicles.

Glencoe was the first community in Illinois to cross-train police and firefighters. In 2004, it became the first community to be accredited by both CALEA and the CFAI; it received its initial CALEA law enforcement accreditation in 1994.

The department now has 42 full-time employees:

- One director
- One deputy chief
- Seven lieutenants
- 24 PSOs
- Five communications operators
- Two community-service officers
- One records clerk
- One administrative secretary

As a comparison, we note the neighboring village of Winnetka, with about one and a half times the population, has a police force of 27 sworn officers and 13 civilian employees, as well as a fire department with 24 career personnel (WPD 2013; Village of Winnetka 2015). Figure 7 on page 24 provides the organizational structure of the Glencoe Public Safety Department.

Figure 7. Glencoe Department of Public Safety organization chart



Note: CSO (Community Service Officer)

The department operates five vehicles equipped with computer terminals and emergency items such as fire extinguishers and first aid kits, a paramedic ambulance, two fire pumpers, and a squad pumper truck. Its quarters are in the Village Hall and include special rooms for training, firearms practice, physical fitness, and interrogation, as well as offices, meeting rooms, workshops, a dormitory, a locker room, and a kitchen.

Like East Grand Rapids, Glencoe has a low crime rate. As a result, relatively few of its calls are for criminal offenses or arrests. EMS and fire services outnumber calls for crime, but other police calls are the most common type of calls. In 2011, Glencoe reported the service calls shown in table 7 on page 24. (We again caution the reader that while reported criminal offenses may be defined similarly across communities, other calls for service may not.)

Table 7. Glencoe offenses and calls for service

Offenses and calls for service	Number
Part I offenses	144
Part II offenses	389
Motor vehicle accidents	204
Other police calls	18,357
Fire and EMS calls	2,084

All 33 sworn employees of the department are trained and certified as police officers and firefighters. About half of the staff members are also certified as paramedics, and a few are certified as fire engineers as well.

Upon completion of the recruit selection process, PSOs are usually sent to a state certified police academy for 12 weeks. After the academy, the officer must complete a 12-week field training program. Upon successfully completing that program, the officer will become part of the patrol deployment. The new officer will typically spend one year on patrol. Following this year, the officer will attend a nine-week course sponsored by the state fire marshal. Upon completion, the officer is certified as a basic firefighter and hazardous material first responder. Officers are then assigned to the fire crew for a three-month field training program. Public safety officers can also attend advanced courses in police and fire topics, with some attending the Fire Service Vehicle Operator course.

The department uses a quarterly rotation system to determine officer assignment. Every three months, officers choose whether to work on patrol or in the fire station. These choices are based on seniority and constrained by the need to staff sufficient numbers of paramedics and engineers. Those working in patrol choose one of two 12-hour shifts (starting at 7:00 a.m. or 7:00 p.m.). Those assigned to the fire station work 24 hours on duty and then have 48 hours off duty. Although the department monitors this process to ensure that employees are exposed to EMS, fire service, and police activities, it appears that some employees stay in police or fire assignments for long periods of time.

The minimum staffing on patrol is three PSOs per shift. At the fire station, the minimum is four PSOs per shift, two of whom are certified paramedics. On most shifts, there is a lieutenant who supervises police operations and another who supervises fire operations. Occasionally, one lieutenant will supervise both units. The department has two officers assigned to investigations. Officers assigned to the fire station are responsible for taking offense reports when citizens come to the station. The department also has six paid on-call firefighters.

Glencoe uses an automatic aid system to respond to fires, sharing services with neighboring communities. In the event of any fire call in any of these communities, the response includes

- a Glencoe engine with three PSOs;
- three additional Glencoe PSOs on patrol (who do not don bunker gear unless needed);
- a Winnetka ladder truck;
- a Northbrook engine company;
- a Highland Park ambulance.

Should a fire be confirmed, additional responding resources include

- the Northfield squad;
- a Wilmette engine;
- a Highwood quint.<sup>2</sup>

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2. A quint, or quintuple combination pumper, is an apparatus that serves the dual purpose of an engine and a ladder truck.

Because Glencoe personnel also respond to fire calls in Winnetka, Northbrook, and Highland Park, they acquire significantly more firefighting experience than they would if limited to responses in their own community.

Glencoe also participates in MABAS Division 3 with 18 other fire departments providing service from 40 fire stations by more than 950 firefighters. This system allows departments to serve citizens in ways far beyond the original intent of MABAS. Division 3 participants share costs for specialized teams needed for hazardous material spill control, underwater rescue and recovery, and specialized cave-in or high-angle resources. Division 3 participants also have joint purchasing agreements for fire trucks, engines, ambulances, tools, hoses, and equipment.

In FY 2013, the Glencoe Department of Public Safety had a budget of \$7.6 million, resulting in a per capita cost of \$864. In comparison, we note that Winnetka has an annual budget of \$11.3 million for its police and fire services, resulting in a per capita cost of \$929. Expenses by division include the following:

- Police, \$5.28 million (\$4.61 million for personnel)
- Fire, \$1.55 million (\$1.40 million for personnel)
- Paramedic, \$0.77 million (\$0.72 million for personnel)

### *Highland Park, Texas*

The town of Highland Park is a community in Dallas County surrounded by the cities of Dallas and University Park and about three miles north of the Dallas city center. Like Glencoe, it is one of the

wealthier communities in the nation, with a per capita income more than four times the national level and five times the state level. Though far smaller than Dallas, at a population of 8,564 it is at least roughly comparable to University Park (population 23,068; per capita income \$69,075).

Incorporated in 1913, the town initially sought to implement a public safety model combining police and fire services. The town placed its marshal in charge of fire services as well, but when it hired a police chief from Dallas in the 1920s, the town developed separate fire and police departments.

The police and fire departments remained separate until 1977, when the town council voted to consolidate them as well as EMS into a single agency called the Highland Park Department of Public Safety (Fant 1990). Before the consolidation, a single director administered the department, but the department maintained separate functions for responding to police and fire emergencies, each with its own personnel and rank structure. The department had contracted for emergency ambulance services from local mortuaries until 1972, when it trained fire personnel as EMTs, acquired its own patient transport vehicle, and equipped a squad car with first aid supplies. In 1976, Highland Park trained personnel as paramedics.

Although the town council voted to create a public safety department and had a manager advocating the model, the transition took 15 years to fully implement. Implementation was complete, a department leader told an MSU focus group, when the last “single-discipline” person retired. One particular challenge the department faced was integrating police and fire policies.

From its inception, the department provided incentive pay for cross-trained personnel (Fant 1990). Since 1979, it has assigned personnel to 24-hour shifts followed by 48 hours off, regardless of whether they are working police or fire duties. Operations personnel working police duties rotate among three subshifts, spending eight hours on patrol and 16 hours at a station.

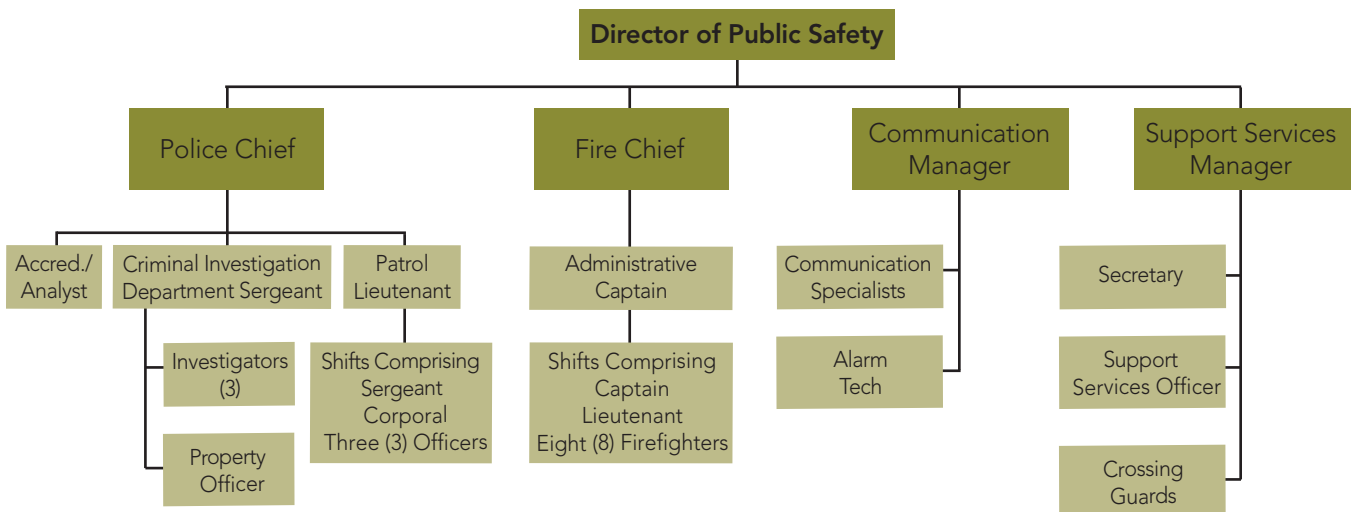
In 1983, the two assistant director positions over the segregated rank structures were deleted, replaced with one assistant who had some consolidated oversight. The department reformatted its fire marshal position to make it third in command and further increased incentive pay for cross-trained personnel (Fant 1990). Today, its pay scale is set at 20 percent above the local market for police services.

In the mid-1980s, the department moved to consolidate rank structures (Fant 1990). In 1984, it placed shift commanders (captain rank) over consolidated services, having one work each shift. In

1985, it placed assistant shift commanders (lieutenant rank) over consolidated services, having one work each shift. In 1986, it added one public safety supervisor (sergeant rank) per shift. Supervisory personnel were also fully trained in both police and fire duties.

The department now has 54 total sworn personnel and 69 total personnel. Of the 54 sworn personnel, 48 are paramedics. Altogether, Highland Park has more than six sworn PSOs per 1,000 population. For comparison, we note University Park, with nearly three times the population, has 52 police personnel, of whom 38 are sworn, and more than 30 firefighting personnel. This gives University Park 1.6 sworn police officers per 1,000 population and more than 1.3 firefighters per 1,000 population—or 2.9 PSOs per 1,000 population. Put another way, controlling for size, Highland Park has more than double the number of public safety personnel for its population than University Park has for its population. Highland Park

Figure 8. Highland Park Department of Public Safety organization chart





also maintains two mobile intensive care units and has actively maintained its EMS. Figure 8 depicts the organizational structure of the department.

For each shift, the town has a minimum of 11 public safety personnel on duty, including four on patrol (one of whom is a supervisor). Among the seven in station, at least two are on an engine, at least two are on a truck, and at least two are on a mobile intensive-care unit. All personnel have police, fire, and EMS duties daily. The department participates in mutual aid agreements with other Dallas County agencies, including those in the cities of Dallas and University Park. A continuing challenge for the department, a department leader said, is training, particularly maintaining certification and having personnel participate in regional special weapons and tactics (SWAT) team training. The department has a sergeant whose only duties are to manage training. New personnel need two years before they are fully qualified for police, fire, and EMS duties. The department also integrates training into each shift.

The department initially received CALEA law enforcement accreditation in 1988 and has received periodic reaccreditation since, most recently in 2013. A Highland Park PSO will also have been to a fire academy at least once, a department representative told an MSU focus group. Nevertheless, Highland Park has not pursued complete police and fire accreditation in all specialties, in part because it offers few opportunities for specialization. The department

representative noted the department is as proficient as others in duties it does fulfill, but it cannot maintain the breadth of specialties that other agencies have.

The department has also built a unique culture, though it faces continuing challenges in maintaining it both inside and outside the station. "There is a cultural difference between police and fire in station life," a department representative told the MSU focus group. "Firefighters can step right in because they've lived in a station, but police officers don't know how to handle it. Those kinds of things are difficult to adjust to. The most difficult transition is taking an officer from a major city or a very rural department . . . Our officers have to be able to be individualistic on the street but part of a team in the station."

As a result, finding qualified, well-rounded candidates for public safety duties remains a challenge. In addition to administering standard tests, the department, its representative noted, works "with a PhD in axiology to help us with hiring and ranking candidates by 18 different characteristics" deemed critical to service in a public safety department. "In our situation," he added, "there are people who don't want to do both, but they self-select away from [the] department, or we do that for them . . . It is reasonable to expect they'll be better at some job tasks than others, but they can be competent at all." The department also requires a four-year degree for applicants because previous applicants without such a degree had difficulty completing training.

Public safety in Highland Park is not, as it has been claimed to be in other communities, a means to save money. The model gives Highland Park a higher

Table 8. Highland Park offenses, responses, and other activities

Offenses, calls, other activities	Number
Part I violent offenses	17
Part I property offenses	198
Accidents	152
Traffic citations	8,410
Home/business checks	5,137
Community contacts	2,563
Fire responses	824
Mobile intensive-care unit responses	396
Fire-prevention inspections	603
Animal calls for service	579

number of police, fire, and EMS personnel per shift than communities of comparable size (indeed, more than double the number of such personnel than neighboring University Park has) but at an annual cost of about \$1,000 per capita.

Overall, the department handles about 12,000 calls for service per year. Service calls and other department activities in 2010–11 are shown in table 8 on page 29.

The community's affluence, stable budget, and desire for PSOs to arrive quickly and know what to do regardless of the situation all contribute to continued support for the model.

### *Kalamazoo, Michigan*

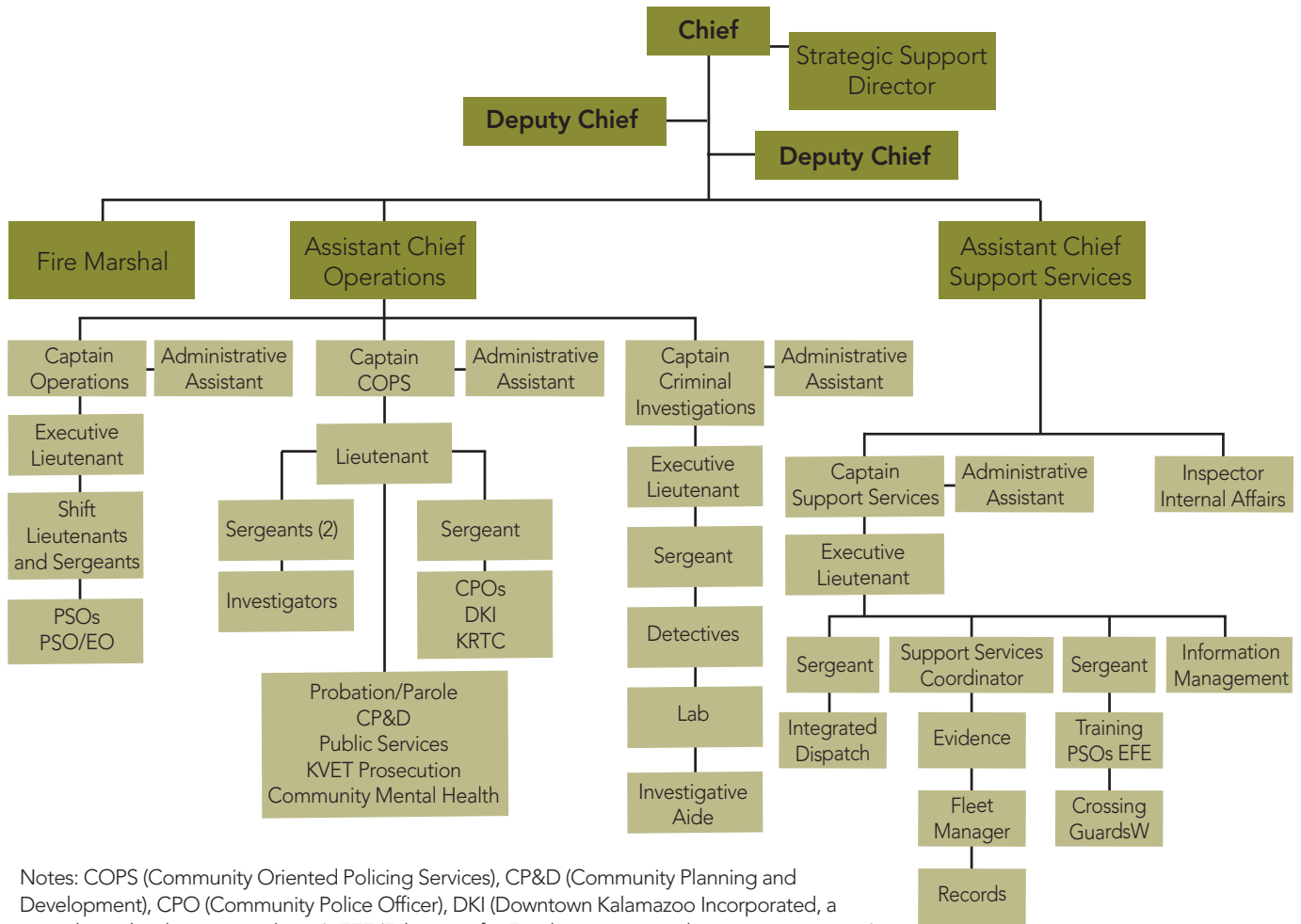
Kalamazoo is a city in southwestern Michigan. The central city comprises nearly one-fourth of the population of its namesake metropolitan area. Originally settled by fur traders, the city grew as an agricultural and paper-manufacturing center in the 19th century and experienced manufacturing growth and decline, particularly in the pharmaceutical and automotive industries, in the 20th century (City of

Kalamazoo 2015). The population of the city has slowly decreased in recent decades—about 13 percent since 1970. Its per capita income is less than three-fourths the state level and less than two-thirds the national level.

To operate more efficiently, the city's fire and police departments merged into a single agency called the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety in 1982, with officers cross-trained in police and fire duties (City of Kalamazoo 2015). An official for the department told an MSU focus group, "The city manager was the impetus behind it. He pushed the idea because we were in very extreme financial straits."

Prior to implementation, the city had 160 police officers and 140 firefighters. Nevertheless, an official noted, "We had seven or eight police officers on a shift, but more firefighters, even though crime was very high." Upon implementation, the city eliminated 21 positions largely through incentives for early retirement. Yet,

Figure 9. Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety organization chart



Notes: COPS (Community Oriented Policing Services), CP&D (Community Planning and Development), CPO (Community Police Officer), DKI (Downtown Kalamazoo Incorporated, a central-city development authority), EFE (Education for Employment, a youth-recruiting program), KRTC (Kalamazoo Regional [Police and Fire] Training Center), KVET (Kalamazoo Valley [Drug] Enforcement Team), PSO / EO (public safety officer / emergency officer)

the official said, the department has managed to put more officers on patrol: “Now we staff 10 in the fire stations and, depending on the time of day, we’ll have 18 public safety officers on the road . . . . The biggest benefit was getting more people on the streets.”

Since the merger, staffing levels have fallen short of initial projections. “The first studies said we’d need 356 public safety officers,” an official said, “but it was never close to that level. The highest was perhaps 270 [or] 280.”

Today the department has 243 PSOs. The operations division is primarily responsible for response to calls for police and fire services. Figure 9 on page 30 presents the organizational structure of the department.

The Operations division receives calls for initial criminal investigations, fire suppression activities, medical services, traffic control measures, and accident investigations. It also is responsible for specialized functions such as traffic enforcement, canine unit, honor guard, special weapons and tactics team, community public safety unit, bomb squad, field training officer program, and Explorers post.

All Kalamazoo PSOs have four-year degrees as well as Michigan Police Officer and Firefighter I and II certifications. They are also certified as medical first responders. Kalamazoo also uses a private ambulance company for EMS. The department dispatches officers to assist on EMS calls but recently stopped dispatching fire trucks for such calls because of the cost of doing so.

There are 191 officers in the operations division, including 39 who choose through the bid-selection process to work full time in the stations and do firefighting and provide EMS. In the event of a fire, personnel at the stations drive the apparatus to the scene, and officers in patrol vehicles are assigned

to respond to the scene. Under this approach, the department can send 18 to 24 officers to a fire. Because the officers in cars often arrive on scene first, they can advise on the nature of the incident and whether response should slow or escalate.

Calls for police service are the most frequent type, perhaps in part because of Kalamazoo's relatively high level of serious crime. As table 1 on page 11 shows, Kalamazoo has the second-highest crime rate of the seven communities we examined and a rate that is about 1.5 times that for the nation. Table 9 shows UCR crimes for Kalamazoo in 2010, the year for which we have call data. Table 10 depicts public safety service calls by type in 2010. The fire calls to which the department responds are divided into four

**Table 9. Kalamazoo offenses known to law enforcement, 2010**

Crimes	Number of reported offenses
Violent crime	
Murder and non-negligent manslaughter	9
Forcible rape	81
Robbery	185
Aggravated assault	446
Property crime	
Burglary	1,039
Larceny-theft	2,320
Motor vehicle theft	175
Arson	36

**Table 10. Kalamazoo reported calls for service, 2010**

Calls for service	Number
Fire	1,766
Rescue	5,688
Police	68,484
Traffic	14,760
<b>Total</b>	<b>90,698</b>

categories—working, cooking, vehicle, and outdoor trash or grass—of roughly equal numbers. The minimum response to a fire call is a lieutenant as a command officer, three engines and a ladder truck, the fire sergeant, two patrol sergeants, and zone cars as needed to ensure that 16 PSOs are on the scene.

Kalamazoo PSOs on patrol work 12-hour shifts through alternating patterns of days. The department has three shifts: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m., and 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. The officers are organized into four platoons. The day shift beginning at 7:00 a.m. has eight to nine officers assigned to it from each platoon, as does the night shift beginning at 7:00 p.m., while the “power” shift beginning at 3:00 p.m. has three to four officers assigned to it. All officers are assigned to one of seven public safety stations and to the engine companies at that station. When that station is dispatched to a fire, those officers will respond as well. The platoon and shift schedule assures that at least eight PSOs are on duty from each platoon at all times to ensure a sufficient response to fire calls.

### *Sunnyvale, California*

As of the 2010 Census, Sunnyvale, located in Santa Clara County, is the seventh-most populous city of the San Francisco Bay Area (U.S. Census Bureau 2016). It is also one of the cities constituting Silicon Valley and is headquarters to several large firms, including Bloom Energy, NetApp, Inc. (formerly Network Appliance), Juniper Networks, Intuitive Surgical, and Yahoo! Inc. (City of Sunnyvale 2015; Sunnyvale official, pers. comm.). It also hosts major facilities for several aerospace and defense companies, including

Lockheed Martin, Northrup Grumman, and Raytheon. Its residential population is nearly 150,000, while its businesses draw more than 50,000 additional workers from beyond the city limits.

The first major settlement of the area occurred in the 1860s, as canneries to process fruit from surrounding orchards were built near newly open rail lines (City of Sunnyvale 2015). The area grew further with the movement of an iron works from San Francisco to what is now Sunnyvale in 1906. Sunnyvale incorporated as a city in 1912 and soon organized a volunteer fire department (City of Sunnyvale 2005). In 1914, Sunnyvale voters established five city departments, including a department of public health and safety with both police and fire services.

Sunnyvale continued its combination of paid police officers and volunteer firefighters through the 1940s (City of Sunnyvale 2005). At that time, Sunnyvale had a paid police force of about a dozen employees in addition to a volunteer police auxiliary and nearly 30 volunteer firefighters.

Adoption of a new city charter in 1949 and the subsequent hiring of a city manager led to discussion of how to improve public safety in the city, particularly fire safety (City of Sunnyvale 2005). The city council considered creating a separate fire department or combining police and fire functions in a unified department of public safety. For fiscal reasons, the city manager favored a department of public safety. The volunteer firefighters strongly resisted this because of their opposition both to the new public safety concept and to paying firefighters rather than investing in equipment. Nevertheless, the city council created a unified Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety in June 1950.

The newly created department included leadership from the police and fire departments as well as several police officers who became PSOs and several newly hired PSOs (City of Sunnyvale 2005). Altogether, a public safety department of about two dozen employees served a city that had grown to a population of nearly 10,000 in six square miles.

Though airing controversy over the department for years, by 1956 the Sunnyvale *Examiner* was praising the department for having achieved “a 20 to 25 percent cost saving in personnel and equipment cost [including] shorter hours and better pay for trained men; a saving in having one headquarters building instead of two; greater efficiency through single administration; elimination of wasteful competition and jealousy between two departments and a greater

pool of trained man power for any emergency” (City of Sunnyvale 2005). The city maintained low crime rates and improved its fire ratings.

The department grew as the city did. In 1965, a staff of 171, including 143 sworn officers, was serving a city of 85,000 residents over more than 20 square miles of area. The department continued to require both police and fire training of its recruits. A new PSO had to attend basic training on his own time. This included four hours of police training per week for 18 months, or a total of 240 hours, to get the mandatory Peace Officer Standards and Training Certificate. It also included 12 days, or 96 hours, of fire training during

Figure 10. Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety organization chart

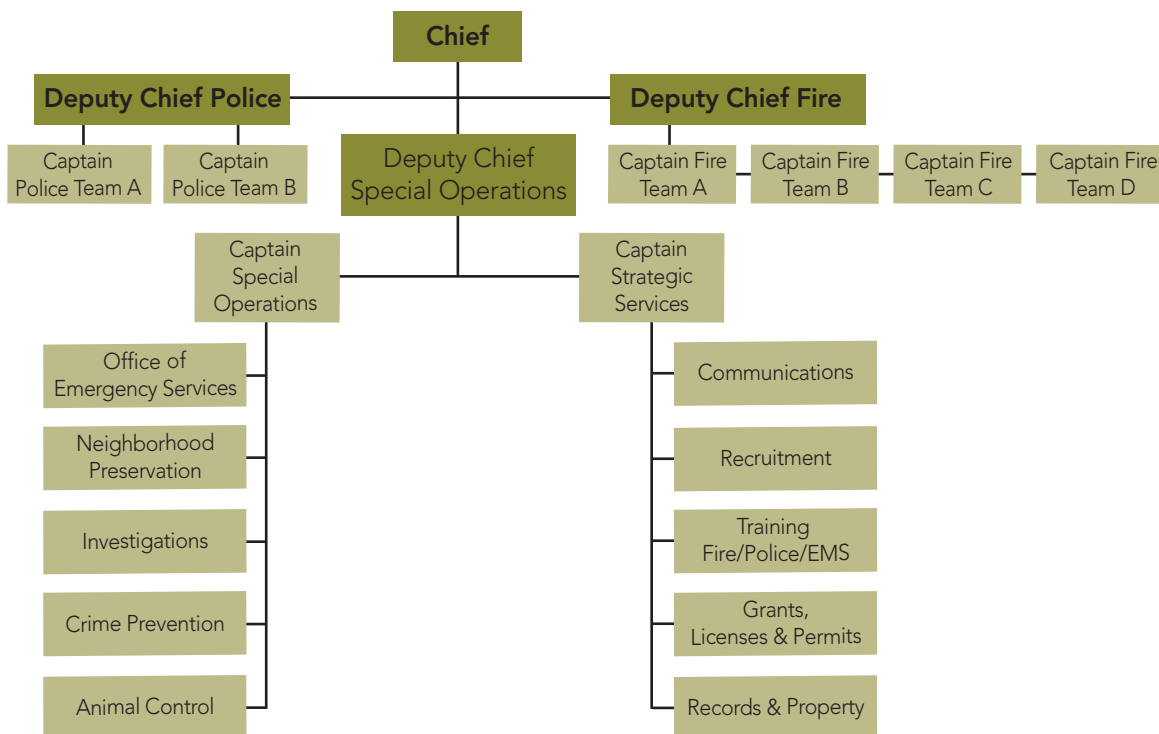


Table 11a. Sunnyvale violent crime known to law enforcement, 2011

Murder and non-negligent manslaughter	3
Forcible rape	21
Robbery	68
Aggravated assault	58

Table 11b. Sunnyvale property crime known to law enforcement, 2011

Burglary	393
Larceny-theft	1,351
Motor vehicle theft	226
Arson	14

the first year. Candidates that entered as certified police officers were still required to participate in the Field Training Officer Program and attend the Fire Academy.

In subsequent decades, Sunnyvale adopted many innovations in police and fire services evolving elsewhere (City of Sunnyvale 2005). It created a special tactics and rescue team, later renamed a SWAT team, in 1974. It developed a crisis negotiation team in 1975. Its mobile field force has managed events including riots in the 1960s, environmental and anti-abortion protests in the 1980s, and anti-war demonstrations in the 2000s. Its canine and emergency medical dispatch units have won statewide recognition. It developed a hazardous materials response team in 1985, a team that is now certified by the California Office of Emergency Services as a Type II HazMat Team. Many of its SWAT operators are also members of the HazMat Team and are trained and operationally ready to be deployed in level "A" personal protective equipment.

Sunnyvale public safety personnel serve on a variety of professional organizations and task forces. These include the county incident management team, a

State Incident Management Team, California Urban Search and Rescue Task Force 3, mutual aid strike team leaders, incident dispatchers, regional instructors, Federal law enforcement task forces, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) technical committees, and California Peace Officer Standards and Training committees. According to a Sunnyvale official, Sunnyvale personnel are sought as subject matter experts in response to criminal multi-casualty incidents. The combination of EMS and fire and law enforcement services experience and training provides a unique resource to those committees. Its public safety officers can communicate effectively across various disciplines and bridge gaps in understanding.

For FY 2015, the department had 198 sworn personnel, 81 support personnel, and more than 50 volunteers donating more than 4,000 hours annually. Its budget of \$79 million includes \$29 million for police field operations, \$26 million for fire field operations, and \$19 million for special operations. Sunnyvale's FY 2012 per capita public safety costs of \$519 were below those for the nearby cities of Palo Alto (\$950 in FY 2012), Mountain View (\$683), and Santa Clara (\$662) (SDPS 2012). Figure 10 on page 33 presents the organizational structure of the department.



The department remains fully integrated. All newly hired sworn personnel complete police, fire, and EMT basic training, known as EMT-Basic. PSOs annually bid on which bureau and shifts they want to work.

A fully cross-trained deputy chief is in command of the Bureau of Police Services, which has two divisions, police operations and traffic safety.

The Division of Police Operations has two patrol teams, each led by a captain. Lieutenants supervise the patrol teams, with the number of officers in each squad varying by time of day. The police-based personnel work a 4/11 shift schedule: four 11-hour work days followed by four off days, with rotating days off based on an eight-day calendar. This results in an average work week of 38 hours and 30 minutes. Nine additional mandatory training days in EMS and police and fire services complete the work year for officers. Training is also conducted on each shift in patrol briefings and through targeted online training programs.

Officers assigned to field operations are equipped with fire personal protective equipment, which they carry in their patrol car, and they can be reassigned to a fire or emergency medical incident as needed. Public safety officers assigned to patrol are dispatched as EMT-Basics to emergency medical service calls and carry a full basic life support first aid kit and an automated external defibrillator.

Table 11 on page 34 presents detail on serious crimes reported to the department in 2011.

The Division of Traffic Safety is supervised by a lieutenant and staffed with PSOs riding BMW motorcycles and focusing on traffic enforcement,

collision investigation, driver checkpoints, traffic safety campaigns, and response to community complaints.

A fully cross-trained deputy chief is in command of the Bureau of Fire Services. Within this bureau are the Division of Fire Operations, with captains leading each of three fire teams, and the Division of Fire and Environmental Services, led by a civilian fire marshal.

Division of Fire Operations personnel work a traditional 24-hour shift schedule. Those working firefighting duties need not wear firearms, but they must have their law enforcement equipment with them. PSOs on patrol duty may be reassigned to law enforcement incidents as needed. The on-duty fire captain functions as a battalion chief and can assume command at any time of any incident in the city, whether a fire or law enforcement incident. The Division of Fire Operations provides first response basic life support EMS, fire suppression, hazardous materials response, rescue, confined space rescue, fire investigation, and statewide mutual aid response services. Off-duty PSOs can also respond to emergencies as needed. Paramedic services are provided by Santa Clara County.

The fire bureau operates six stations and 14 pieces of apparatus:

- Six engines, each with a lieutenant and PSO
- Three engines, each with two PSOs
- Two trucks equipped with 100-foot ladders, each with two PSOs

- One all-risk apparatus that is also an OES Type II HazMat (Rescue), staffed by one PSO and responding in tandem with a truck or engine
- Two nonstaffed reserve engines

The ladder trucks are slated for replacement in FY 2016. Because of development, Sunnyvale will deploy three aerial apparatus (trucks) staffed with two PSOs on each apparatus. The apparatus will be quints with one 75-foot ladder, one 110-foot ladder, and one 100-foot platform.

In the event of a fire, Sunnyvale dispatches

- six apparatus—each with either two PSOs or one PSO and one lieutenant—and the rescue with one public safety officer;
- six to nine additional patrol officers based on occupancy type;
- one battalion chief (captain);
- one county advanced life support paramedic ambulance.

Sunnyvale responds to more than 7,000 fire service calls per year. Of these, about 2 percent are for fires while more than two-thirds are EMS calls (the county handles transport). These numbers are comparable to other Bay Area communities. The department has a station for every four square miles of territory, also comparable to other Bay Area fire agencies. It maintains an Insurance Services Office fire suppression rating of 2.

The Division of Fire and Environmental Services is managed by a civilian fire marshal and provides

hazardous materials and fire prevention/protection engineering services. The division also oversees the hazardous materials compliance unit, which is the certified unified program agency for the City of Sunnyvale. This division is staffed with administrative support personnel, three hazardous materials inspectors, three fire protection engineers, and two fire prevention specialists.

A fully cross-trained deputy chief is in command of the Bureau of Special Operations. Reporting directly to the deputy chief are Internal Affairs, personnel, the department financial analyst, the Special Operations Division, and the Strategic Services Division.

The Special Operations Division is managed by a captain and contains Criminal Investigations, Allied Agency Task Force officers, the Office of Emergency Services, neighborhood (school) resource officers, neighborhood preservation (code enforcement), animal control, parking enforcement, and crime analysis. Fire cause or arson investigation is coordinated through the Criminal Investigations' Persons Crimes Unit. Fire cause or arson investigators are dispersed throughout the three bureaus of the department and are used based on their expertise and training.

The Strategic Services Division is managed by a captain and contains department records, property and evidence, data and statistics, permits and licensing, homeland security, recruiting, police academy and in-service training, fire academy and in-service training, EMS training and certification, grant management, and a 911 communications center. The department is an approved state of California EMT-Basic training program, an approved provider of both

advanced and basic life support continuing education, and an emergency medical technician certifying entity. The cross-functional service model extends into the communications center, where dispatchers are trained to handle police, fire, and EMS or rescue calls, allowing for a single point of contact and immediate assistance upon receipt of a 911 call.

Because all officers are trained as EMTs and equipped with automated external defibrillators and first aid kits, they can respond immediately to incidents with a high probability of cardiac arrest, resulting in a significant number of life-saving events. The cross-training officers receive enables them to work seamlessly in crisis situations, the department claims, citing one example involving a workplace shooting and another in which a woman had killed her infant child and was threatening to kill herself. Initial and ongoing training remains a high priority of the department.

One area where the department faces less of a challenge, a representative said, is in developing a public safety culture. This, he said, is because of the age and reputation of the department; all candidates “are interviewed knowing they’ll be public safety officers.” Nevertheless, he acknowledges some cultural considerations in hiring for the department, noting, “Many believe you can make a police officer a firefighter, but it’s more difficult to make a firefighter a police officer. Police officers are used to taking charge individually, while firefighters are used to working in a team environment led by a company officer who provides direction.” This leads the department to seek candidates who are flexible.

### Common themes in consolidation

Several common themes appear in the case studies discussed here. Among these are origins of the impetus for public safety consolidation, the goals that agencies have sought and continue to seek in public safety consolidation, how public safety consolidation has performed over time, the experiences public safety personnel are likely to have, and issues of developing a public safety “culture.” These are not similar across agencies: e.g., these communities had different experiences leading to their consolidation of public safety services. Rather, these show the range of experiences that may support public safety consolidation.

In most of these communities, public safety consolidation was an idea that evolved over time. Highland Park had the equivalent of public safety departments when first incorporating, though for much of its history it also had separate departments before reuniting them. Highland Park even had nominal consolidation, with a single director over separate police and fire departments, before opting for full integration. Aiken took nearly two decades from the time it first considered public safety consolidation until it finally put it in place in 1977. East Grand Rapids took still longer, first considering the concept in the 1950s, implementing it in 1985, but not achieving what its director considered a public safety culture for years after implementation. Kalamazoo instituted the concept more quickly but in a time when the city was facing a period of decline and tight budget constraints.

The origins of consolidation in each city point to differences in how they view the utility of public safety consolidation today. For most, it is a continued means to gain efficiencies, and they point to costs in neighboring communities as proof of this. Efficiencies can also go beyond costs; as an official of the East Grand Rapids agency noted, having PSOs trained for multiple duties can limit the number of agencies that need to respond to a call.

Yet some communities are apparently willing to pay a premium for having officers with multiple skills. As Highland Park's representative told the MSU focus group regarding the higher costs for his agency, "What sells it is that somebody who arrives at [a resident's] door within two minutes knows what to do regardless of the situation." Sunnyvale touts the ability of its officers to work seamlessly in crisis situations. So public safety consolidation is just as much about quality and quantity of service as it is about efficiency.

In fact, some public safety directors explicitly argue against starting the consolidation process with a focus on efficiency. As the director of a Michigan agency told an MSU focus group, "I've tried to stress that public safety should be professionalized to get buy-in. If you go at it for financial reasons, people will object." The director of a Minnesota public safety agency was blunt with an MSU focus group, saying, "The first question I'd ask about consolidation is motivation. If a finance director thinks they can save a lot of money, then they're going to fail. But if it's to improve services, then you can go from there. There are efficiencies but also a lot of investment on the front end." The Highland Park representative suggests that agencies seeking efficiencies may wish to look

into regionalization of services with other communities rather than developing a fully integrated public safety agency on their own.

Public safety consolidation may help address evolving policing needs, including those for homeland security and community policing. The Sunnyvale representative claims the model enhances community policing, adding, "All elements of the organization now look at community policing, and look at it together. They're more aware when they see things. Everything is our responsibility in this model. There's no passing the buck."

Similarly, the Minnesota agency director said that community policing is well integrated with public safety services in his community. "Everybody's involved," he noted. "The public safety model enhances community building, trust building, and relationship building. Every time we go into your house, we build support for everything we do, including community policing."

The Highland Park representative claimed that community policing is integral to the level of service that his officers provide. He noted, "I have a person dedicated to community relationships and a very strong citizens' crime-watch program. We're driven by it. . . . If we didn't have that, we would be missing a component with citizens. Even if we're interacting with them in different roles, I still think you need to make a special effort to integrate with the community, to leverage the business community, to turn them into eyes and ears for the department. Somebody needs to be pushing that all the time."

PSOs may also be uniquely positioned to work with all elements of the community, provide proactive responses to community problems, improve

collaboration in such responses, foster a shared sense of responsibility in addressing problems, and ultimately empower the community “to make more effective and efficient use of limited public safety resources” (Matarese et al. 2007). Public safety departments can provide a “unity of command” that separate public safety agencies may lack, which can be particularly helpful for addressing homeland security issues (Matarese et al. 2007; Mata 2010). The Sunnyvale representative also noted the benefits of a unified command in responding to a broad array of incidents.

The approaches that each agency takes to public service integration vary by their circumstances. In Ashwaubenon and Sunnyvale, public safety consolidation occurred as part of a larger professionalization of police, fire, and other services. Ashwaubenon had relied on a volunteer fire company and contracted police services before deciding, in the face of population growth, to professionalize both of these within a single department. Similarly, Sunnyvale saw the decision to professionalize its fire department, made at the same time it first hired a city manager, as an opportunity to do so under the umbrella of a public safety department. Sunnyvale has been able to grow this department as the city has grown and its needs have evolved. Aiken, East Grand Rapids, Glencoe, and Highland Park had more established police and fire departments and took a relatively gradual approach to integrating them. Kalamazoo appears to have taken a more direct approach—but, again, its circumstances, particularly budget constraints, may have contributed to this.

Public safety consolidation can take time, especially when it occurs among fairly well-established police and fire agencies. Agencies may confront upfront

costs and needs such as those for increased training and backfilling of staff (Wilson, Weiss, and Grammich 2012). Agencies may also struggle with issues of branding, uniforms, and proper equipment and vehicles. Other obstacles may include labor or facilities contracts preventing differing uses of workforce, buildings, or equipment, as well as reorganization issues. In some areas, organized labor has succeeded in blocking public safety consolidation by seeking changes in local or state statutes or regulations (e.g., by implementing standards that preempt consolidation by reducing staffing in fire stations). In others, administrators have resisted consolidation because of the cultural and organizational changes it may require, as well as confusion and ambiguity about roles and the interpretation of national standards. Hence, it is not surprising to see that those agencies not under pressure to consolidate immediately availed themselves of the time to address these obstacles.

Even among these fairly well-integrated agencies, all of which would be considered fully consolidated in any model or spectrum of considerations for public safety, some differentiation remains both within and across organizations. Aiken, East Grand Rapids, and Sunnyvale, for example, all have separate police and fire divisions within their organizational structure. Agencies also vary in how they approach shifts, with some using 24-hour shifts, some using eight- or 12-hour shifts, and some using a mix of 24-hour and shorter shifts. Put another way, while changes in shift schedules and the opportunities they allow for activity outside work have been one source of opposition to public safety consolidation, public safety agencies have adopted a variety of schedules that may reflect the needs of their communities and officers.

Several agencies also use some external supports for their efforts, including, for example, on-call firefighters in Aiken and Ashwaubenon (which East Grand Rapids also used during a period of transition) and private ambulance service in Kalamazoo. Glencoe and Sunnyvale seek to rotate their personnel through different types of duties, but some inadvertent specialization may still arise, with Glencoe recognizing some officers may remain in police or fire assignments for some time. Ashwaubenon and Highland Park may, among the communities we examined, provide the most integrated model of public safety personnel who are expected to do all things on all shifts.

Yet generalization can lead to some constraints on public safety departments. The Highland Park leader recognizes his department does not and cannot maintain the breadth of specializations that other agencies have. In part, this is because of its relative isolation. Completely surrounded by the larger city of University Park and the much larger city of Dallas, it cannot participate in the type of collaborative relationships available to communities such as Glencoe. Glencoe, through its participation in local collaborative efforts, is able to have its PSOs gain experiences that those in other communities of its size might not. PSOs in larger cities such as Kalamazoo and Sunnyvale, or even in communities such as Aiken, the largest in its county, might gain experiences and needed specializations that PSOs elsewhere might not.

Public safety directors do believe their model is scalable, though they recognize reasons why it might not work in some larger jurisdictions. A

Michigan public safety director told an MSU focus group, "Theoretically, it could work anywhere with appropriate political backing. But do I realistically think it could work in New York? Absolutely not, because the unions there are too strong." Another added, "If it's staffed and managed appropriately, you can have the model anywhere. But the problem I've seen in Michigan is that some cities want to cut back on police and fire so much that they expose themselves to the point that they can't do either well."

Separate police and fire cultures can also pose problems for public safety agencies, both for their own operations and in gaining acceptance from others. The Minnesota director said, "Police officers like being the main event, so there can be an ego clash. Firefighters may perceive police as prima donnas. It took us months to hit that head-on. Sometimes police would refuse to integrate into the scene. It was kind of funny, because they could handle chaos in other situations, but they said they needed specific direction on fires. You also have to have a balance so that patrol officers do some grunt work on fires, and they don't just swoop in, take the fun stuff, then leave. It takes a unique type of person willing to come in and do all these types of things. There are a lot of people we don't hire who make good police officers elsewhere but don't fit with us."

While noting problems in gaining acceptance from other fire agencies, public safety directors say they encounter at varying frequencies some predicted problems of being responsible for both police and fire services. The Minnesota director said, "We had a bank robbery in which somebody started a fire to draw resources, but we responded to both. Crooks [otherwise] don't know that we are a public safety

department.” Another from a Michigan agency said it had never encountered a problem of simultaneous major fire and crime emergencies, but mutual aid agreements would cover such contingencies.

Public safety officials have seen some conflict between their role in providing EMS and in enforcing the law. The Minnesota director noted, “We’ve [had] medical calls that ended up being drug cases. We don’t get too freaked out about that; when we first respond to [medical emergencies], our main job is medical. But sometimes people aren’t forthcoming about why they’re having chest pains at age 28 because they’ve just snorted a line of cocaine.” Conversely, the East Grand Rapids representative said, “We had one time when somebody came up to one of our officers in turnout gear [who] wouldn’t have said anything otherwise.” The Highland Park representative added, “We’ve always had that situation. The courts have said it doesn’t matter. But once a person is in custody, or has a sense of being in custody, it totally changes the rules.”

While many communities have found public safety consolidation has helped them in multiple ways, others have found difficulties balancing all the demands of the model. In the second part of this report, we discuss a few communities that have tried but abandoned public safety consolidation, as well as more general problems that may arise with the model. Next, however, we review in more detail the requirements public safety agencies must meet to provide fire services, where their abilities may be most often questioned.

## Public safety and fire suppression

One of the key questions raised in our study of consolidated public safety departments is how these agencies organize and deploy for fire suppression and how their response stacks up against those of traditional stand-alone fire departments. When assessing fire deployment, most communities rely on three nationally recognized standards:

1. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1710 (for paid professional departments) and 1720 (for volunteer departments)
2. Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) policy 29 CFR 1910.134(g)(4)(i) and NFPA 1500
3. Insurance Services Organizations (ISO) Public Protection Classification

We review each of these in the sections that follow. We note these to illustrate both the standards the public safety departments we examined are already meeting and those that communities wishing to have truly effective consolidated departments must meet.

### *NFPA Standard 1710 and 1720*

Since the passage of NFPA 1710 in 2004, it has been the principal standard for fire service staffing. Even though most communities have not specifically adopted this standard, and most likely do not meet it (NFPA 2011), it is often used to illustrate the need for staffing and equipment.



NFPA 1710 addresses deployment in an urban environment in two ways. First, it posits a response-time standard for the initial fire company to arrive at a fire incident. Next, it defines a set of critical tasks necessary to safely extinguish a fire and perform rescue once a fire grows beyond the initial phase. The standard requires that designated crews perform all of the critical activities in a coordinated, simultaneous effort.

NFPA 1710 requires that a minimum of four firefighters arrive at a moderate risk fire (i.e., a fire with a moderate probability of occurring with a moderate consequence) in less than six minutes and 20 seconds 90 percent of the time—or that a group of 14 firefighters arrive within 10 minutes and 20 seconds for 90 percent of such fires. These time guidelines include one minute for dispatching and 80 seconds for firefighter “turn-out time.” For most fire departments, the four-firefighter complement is achieved when a second unit arrives at the scene.

The standard recognizes that some locations may not be completely covered, noting

A.4.1.2 There can be incidents or areas where the response criteria are affected by circumstances such as response personnel who are not on duty, unstaffed fire station facilities, natural barriers, traffic congestion, insufficient water supply, and density of population or property. The reduced level of service should be documented in the written organizational statement by the percentage of incidents and geographical areas for which the total response time criteria are achieved.

It would be unreasonable and financially infeasible, for example, to expect a four-minute travel time to locations on the extreme edge of a community during

a snowstorm. In addition, fire departments should evaluate their compliance on a heuristic rather than day-to-day operational basis. For example, it would be very difficult to comply with the standard when the department has already committed all its resources to another emergency. For such circumstances, the standard recognizes, for the purposes of compliance, participation of staff from neighboring jurisdictions, contract service providers, or volunteer firefighters. This allows departments to bolster their ability to respond to areas of the community that they may not be able to cover on their own.

### *OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard and NFPA 1500 Occupational Safety and Health Standard*

The OSHA and the NFPA have specific occupational safety and health standards for firefighters who must enter an environment deemed to be “immediate[ly] dangerous to life and health (IDLH).” Typical structure fire conditions contain smoke and toxic products of combustion that would trigger application of this standard.<sup>3</sup>

OSHA allows the incident commander on fire response to decide when an IDLH environment exists. For firefighters in such an environment, these standards require respiratory protection and that at least two firefighters enter the structure together, while another two firefighters outside stand ready to perform firefighter rescue. This is commonly known as the “two-in/two-out” rule. The two-in/two-out requirement does not take effect until firefighters begin to perform interior structural firefighting: i.e., firefighting to control or extinguish a fire in an advanced stage of burning inside a building.

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3. These rules do not apply to incipient stage firefighting using portable fire extinguishers or small hose lines without the need for personal protective equipment.

Some fire departments interpret this OSHA standard as requiring each first due fire suppression vehicle to be staffed with four firefighters. This OSHA standard does not require that the firefighters be from the same suppression company or that they arrive simultaneously. For example, a three-member fire company and an incident commander would satisfy the requirement. OSHA regulations include a provision that allows one of the two people “out” to engage in another activity such as serving as incident commander or safety officer, as long as such other responsibilities do not jeopardize the individual’s ability to perform assistance or rescue activities needed for the safety or health of any firefighter working at the incident. As is the case with NFPA 1710, adherence to existing standard operating procedures and mutual aid / auto aid practices contribute as much to compliance with the OSHA standard as do strict minimum staffing policies.

Each of the public safety departments meet these NFPA and OSHA standards. Table 12 on page 44 summarizes the deployment scheme used for fire calls for each of our case study public safety departments.

### *ISO Public Protection Classification*

The ISO evaluates the adequacy of a community’s fire protection system and issues an ISO class rating. Communities are rated on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being the highest designation. Some insurance companies use these ratings as one consideration in calculating fire risk when underwriting policies. Other relevant characteristics for calculating fire risk include type of occupancy, actual loss experience, built-in alarm and suppression systems, competitive environment for insurance, and maintenance programs.

ISO (2013) evaluations consider several aspects of how a community responds to the fire risk:

- Fire alarm and communications systems, accounting for 10 points of the total classification score
- Fire department resources and operations, accounting for 50 points of the total classification score, with personnel availability accounting for the largest part of the fire department evaluation
- Water supply, accounting for 40 points of the total classification score, with the evaluation covering water distribution design, type, installation, inspection frequency, and condition of fire hydrants
- Community risk reduction, accounting for 5.5 points of the total classification score, with the evaluation covering fire prevention code adoption and enforcement, public fire safety education, and fire investigation

In evaluating community fire protection, the ISO also considers the distribution of fire companies, with built-up areas expected to have a fire company within 1.5 road miles and a ladder service company within 2.5 road miles, allowing for a response time of three minutes and 20 seconds for an engine company and four minutes and nine seconds for a ladder service company (ISO Properties, Inc. 2015 ). A final step involves potentially adjusting the rating by divergence—the difference between the highest and lowest partial scores. This is meant to account for the likelihood that overall performance is only as strong as the weakest component of the system.

Figure 11 on page 45 summarizes 2103 ISO ratings for the departments we studied and those for communities across the United States (most of which

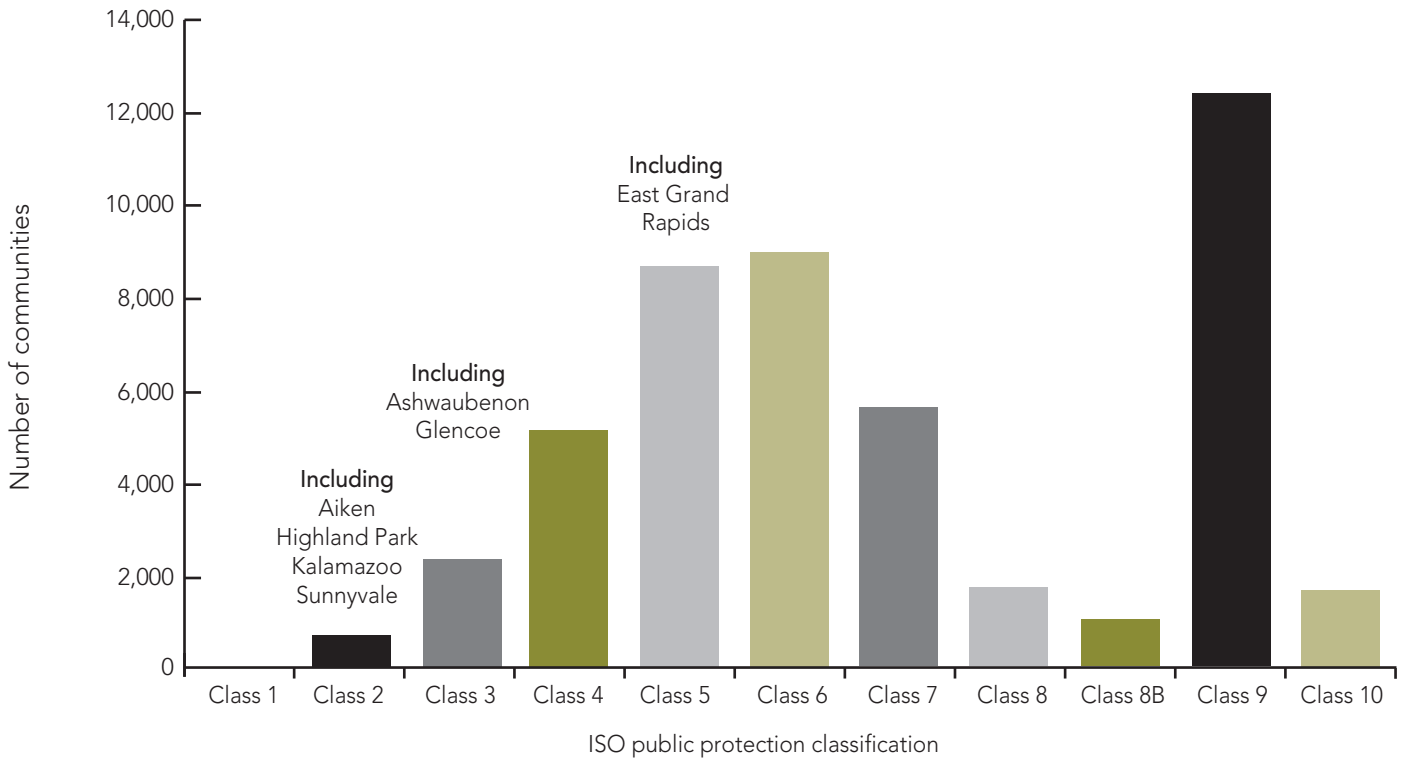
Table 12. Deployment scheme by public safety department

Department	Deployment scheme
<b>Aiken</b>	<p>On the first alarm, the department deploys two engine companies and a ladder truck with driver/operators, three maintenance staffers, three cadets, and a sergeant; paged volunteers, of whom three to five typically respond; an on-duty PSO lieutenant who assesses the fire, with four to five officers typically responding; and off-duty PSOs (who have take-home cars) notified as needed.</p> <p>For a second alarm, the department deploys the remaining two engine companies, an off-duty volunteer company, and on-coming shift personnel to staff a reserve engine and ladder / service trucks.</p> <p>For a third alarm, the department deploys a reserve engine and ladder to fire staging, all off-duty personnel called in, and mutual aid called as needed.</p>
<b>Ashwaubenon</b>	<p>The department deploys an engine with an officer and three PSOs as well as an ambulance with two PSOs. Should the fire be confirmed or if smoke is visible, the department notifies its 25 paid on-call personnel to respond. The department also participates in the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System, Division 112.</p>
<b>East Grand Rapids</b>	<p>Officers work 24-hour shifts. Each shift has one staff sergeant, one sergeant, and five PSOs. Four paid on-call firefighters “serve as initial attack and rescue personnel on a working fire” and otherwise supplement the PSOs in firefighting duties. The fire division also provides services through inter-departmental agreements.</p>
<b>Glencoe</b>	<p>The department employs an automatic aid system to respond to fires, sharing services with neighboring communities. In any of these communities, the response to a fire call includes a Glencoe engine with three PSOs, three additional Glencoe PSOs on patrol (who do not don bunker gear unless needed), a Winnetka ladder truck, a Northbrook engine company, and a Highland Park ambulance.</p> <p>Should a fire be confirmed, additional responding resources include a Northfield squad, a Wilmette engine, and a Highwood quint.</p>
<b>Highland Park</b>	<p>For each shift, the town has a minimum of 11 PSOs on duty, including four on patrol (one of whom is a supervisor). Among the seven in-station, a minimum of two are on an engine, two on a truck, and two on a mobile intensive-care unit. The department participates in mutual aid agreements with other Dallas County agencies, including those in the cities of Dallas and University Park.</p>
<b>Kalamazoo</b>	<p>Personnel at the stations drive the apparatus to the scene, and officers in patrol vehicles are assigned to respond to the scene. The department can send 18 to 24 officers to a fire. Because the officers in cars often arrive on-scene first, they can advise on the nature of the incident and the necessary equipment and manpower for an appropriate response.</p>
<b>Sunnyvale</b>	<p>The department dispatches six apparatus, each with either one PSO and one lieutenant or two PSOs; six additional patrol officers; and one battalion chief (captain).</p>

have separate police and fire departments). Four of the public safety departments we studied attained the classification of 2, which placed them in the top 2 percent of the 49,010 communities participating in the ISO rating process. Two more had a class 3 rating,

placing them in the top 7 percent. One had a class 5 rating, placing it near the top third of all communities. (Only 50 communities across the country, none of them included in our research, held a class 1 rating at the time of our study.)

Figure 11. Distribution of ISO class codes



Source: ISO 2016a

Fire suppression is critically important to community safety and security. As such, any form of service delivery must consider effects on common benchmarks used to assess fire performance. The fundamental changes in the delivery of service resulting from public safety consolidation can lead to concern that poor fire-suppression performance will result. Nevertheless, all of the public safety departments in our case studies meet the requirements of NFPA Standard 1710 and the OSHA

Respiratory Protection Standard, and six of seven have an ISO rating of 2 or 3, placing them in the top 7 percent of communities nationwide. While these findings do not demonstrate the extent to which all public safety departments meet these standards, they do show that public safety departments can perform fire suppression as well as other communities considered among the best based on widely used U.S. standards.



## Deconsolidation in Communities

### Case studies

Though a growing number of communities over time have consolidated their EMS and fire and police services into a single public safety agency, many others, having consolidated, later deconsolidated, placing these services into separate agencies once more.

Deconsolidation is not a new phenomenon but rather one that has occurred at least since the 1950s (Farr and Daniel 1988). Deconsolidation may occur after a public safety agency has been operating for a few months or a few decades. One summary of deconsolidation efforts attributed their demise “more to the lack of support from the officers involved in the program and from improper organization and administration than to the inherent weaknesses in consolidation theory” (Farr and Daniel 1988, 36). Similarly, as noted earlier, a survey of public safety directors suggested consolidation was likely to be opposed more strongly where it was only partially rather than fully implemented (Crank and Alexander 1990).

Yet a closer look at communities that have deconsolidated finds reasons for doing so that are almost as varied as the communities themselves. These included, in addition to opposition from employees, legal prohibitions, overall savings that failed to materialize, reduced fire-insurance ratings, and public opposition (Farr and Daniel 1988).

In this chapter, we review deconsolidation in six settings as far north as Michigan, as far south as Texas, as far east as North Carolina, and as far west as Oregon:

1. Alamogordo, New Mexico
2. Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) International Airport, Texas
3. Durham, North Carolina
4. Eugene, Oregon
5. Meridian Township, Michigan
6. West Jordan, Utah

The information available on these deconsolidations varies widely, in part because some deconsolidated some time ago. In the case of DFW International Airport, deconsolidation did not occur in a community

**Table 13. Characteristics of public safety deconsolidation case study communities**

Community	Total pop., 2010	Land area (sq mi)	Persons / sq mi	% < 18	% ≥ 65 yrs	% single-race non-Hispanic White	% ≥ 25 with bachelor's degree	Per capita income (2012 dollars)	Home-ownership rate (%)	UCR Part I Crimes / 100K pop., 2012	CALEA accredited
Alamogordo	30,403	21.4	1,419	23.5	16.8	56.8	17.5	22,872	61.9	2,887	No
Durham	228,330	107.4	2,127	22.7	8.8	37.9	48.6	27,748	50.6	5,090	Yes
Eugene	156,185	43.7	3,572	18.2	12.6	82.0	39.8	25,567	49.9	5,337	No
Meridian Township	39,688	30.5	1,302	20.8	13.3	77.7	63.7	37,204	61.4	2,488	No
West Jordan	103,712	32.5	3,195	35.2	4.6	74.6	23.8	22,236	77.3	2,955	No

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2016; FBI 2013; CALEA 2015a

but rather in a major transportation facility, also limiting contextual information—although occurring for reasons we thought important to include here. As a result, our case studies of deconsolidation are not always as detailed as those of consolidation but remain equally important for policymakers seeking to determine the appropriate means of delivering public safety services to their communities.

In contrast to our consolidation case study communities, our deconsolidation case study communities are relatively large, heterogeneous communities. While five of our seven consolidation case study communities had populations of less than 30,000, our deconsolidation case study communities vary in population from 30,000 to nearly 230,000 (comparisons that follow exclude DFW International Airport). Our deconsolidation case study communities, ranging from 20 to nearly 110 square miles of land area, are larger than our consolidation communities, all of which have less than 25 square miles of land area. Our deconsolidation communities, varying from 37 to 82 percent non-Hispanic White, are also more diverse than our consolidation communities, all of which are at least 89 percent non-Hispanic White. Concerns about diversity helped boost deconsolidation in one community. Only one of our deconsolidation communities has a majority of college graduates, while four of our seven consolidation communities did. Our deconsolidation communities also tend to have lower per capita income and lower home ownership rates than our consolidation communities.

The diversity of our deconsolidation case study communities enables us to better examine the differing reasons municipalities may have for again

separating their police and fire services. Table 13 on page 47 summarizes the characteristics of our deconsolidation case study communities. (Table 13 excludes DFW, a major transportation facility rather than a municipality. We will discuss some relevant background characteristics of DFW when presenting the case study for it.) Except for Eugene, all our deconsolidation case studies are of fully consolidated agencies devolving into separate police and fire agencies. Eugene sought only nominal, administrative consolidation before later separating police and fire agencies into their own entities and eliminating the public safety director position responsible for overseeing both. As a result, our work focuses on reasons fully consolidated agencies separate but also offers some insights on decisions to deconsolidate agencies only nominally consolidated.

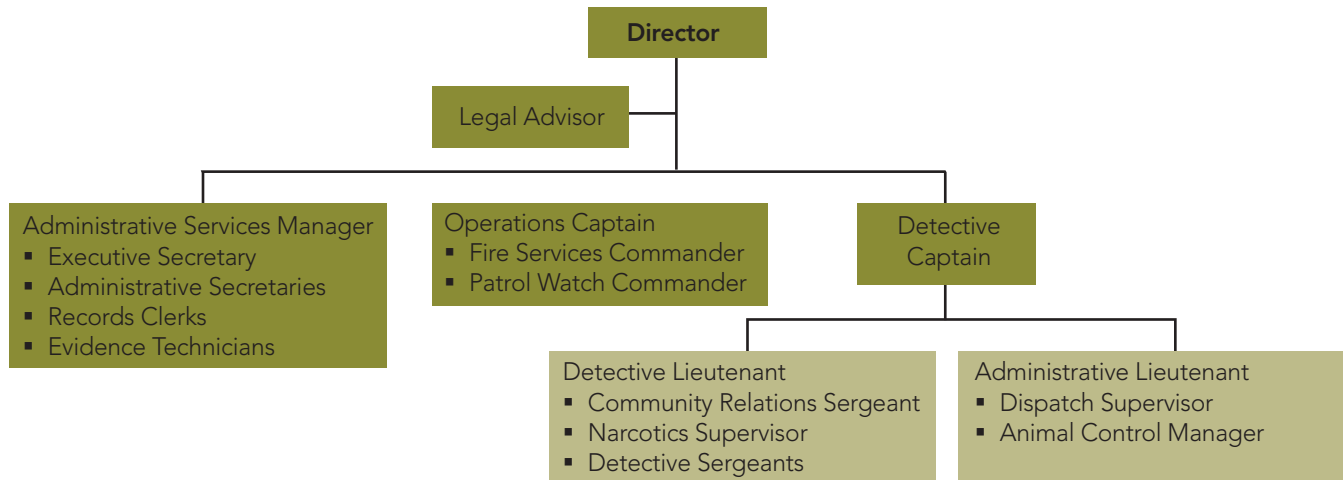
### *Alamogordo, New Mexico*

Alamogordo is the ninth-most populous city in New Mexico and the seat of Otero County in the south-central portion of the state. Established in 1898 as a rail junction with a nearby mountain railroad (City of Alamogordo 2015), the city is adjacent to Holloman Air Force Base, which supports nearly 6,000 military and civilian personnel and a nearly equal number of dependents, creating an estimated annual economic impact of \$482.1 million (Holloman Air Force Base 2015). Alamogordo is also near White Sands National Monument, which draws about 500,000 visitors each year (White Sands National Monument 2015).

Alamogordo implemented a public safety department in 1967 (Bear 2013a). Its transition toward deconsolidation may have begun with the retirement of its former director, who announced his plans to



Figure 12. Alamogordo Department of Public Safety organization chart



Source: Berkshire Advisors, Inc. 2012

leave the department in 2011 after 26 years with the department (Barbati 2011a). The former director had first been hired as a PSO in 1984 and became director in 2001. At the time of his hiring, the city operated the local ambulance service, for which officers served as EMTs and drivers and had police officers and firefighters in the same agency. The city had one of the lower crime rates in the state and had improved its ISO rating to 4.

Following the former director's resignation, a captain who had been second in command was promoted to interim director (Barbati 2011b). The interim director identified departmental problems that included staffing, vehicles, and the possible need for a future facility. The department did appear to have fewer sworn officers than other public safety agencies serving communities of similar size. For example, in 2010, Alamogordo had 70 sworn officers (and 42 additional civilian employees), while Aiken, South Carolina, a slightly smaller city, had 90 sworn officers (and 25 additional civilian employees) (FBI 2014). Figure 12 indicates the department's organizational structure at the time.

Allegations that department leaders asked PSOs to change information regarding a 2009 fatal accident report and other issues led to a split vote by Alamogordo city commissioners on dismissing the interim director in June 2012 (Barbati 2012c). Though the interim director was not removed at that time, he did retire in September 2012, having (like his predecessor) worked 22 years with the agency (Barbati 2012b). The city then placed interim leadership of the department with the interim city manager and assistant city manager. The interim leaders, like the outgoing interim director, identified staffing and equipment levels as areas of concern, as well as officer training and ISO ratings.

The city commissioned a consultant's report (Berkshire Advisors, Inc. 2012) on its public safety department, in part "to analyze the operations of the department and make recommendations on how those operations could be made better" (Barbati 2012a). The report, released

in October 2012, found several significant problems with the department. Specifically, the problems included the following:

- “Infighting and factionalism,” some “center[ing] on the integrity and competence of department leaders,” plagued the department. “[S]ome within the department accuse[d] key managers and leaders of being at best untruthful and at worst corrupt.”
- “Key units within the department [felt] undervalued and marginalized.” In particular, fire operations staff saw themselves as “second-class department employees” and resented having to “‘clean up’ after public safety officers.”
- “Department leaders lost the confidence of much of the DPS workforce.” The management of the department, particularly its director, were “not viewed as effective managers or leaders.” Reasons cited for this lack of confidence included “lack of visibility, perceptions of favoritism, lack of a vision for the department’s future, slow decision making, and lack of appreciation for the work performed by DPS staff.”
- Relations with the Otero County Sheriff’s Office were strained. In particular, the department and the sheriff’s office disagreed “about when sheriff’s deputies should provide law enforcement services in Alamogordo.” The long-standing situation had deteriorated “to the point that establishing productive relationships on issues of common concern will be difficult,” although individual employees of both agencies reported cordial relationships. (Berkshire Advisors, Inc. 2012)

The report’s findings on fire services reflected longstanding concern about these within the city. Under the public safety department, the city’s approach to fires was to

- staff three stations with a fire equipment officer (FEO), whose job is to drive apparatus and hook the apparatus to the hydrant, not fight fires; a fourth station with a fire safety officer and an FEO; and a fifth station with a PSO;
- have FEOs drive equipment to the scene and wait for PSOs to arrive when receiving a fire call;
- have PSOs don gear when arriving and then attack the fire;
- use available paid on-call staff to fight fires as needed.

The consultant suggested that this mode of delivery provided “a reasonably fast response to fire emergencies at a fraction of the cost of a standalone fire department.” Nonetheless, the report noted several problems with this arrangement. First, the consultant noted the lack of cost effectiveness for assigning a PSO, whose compensation was significantly higher than that for FEOs, to stations. Second, it noted delays in fire response because FEOs did not attack fires.

The consultant suggested that over time “fire professionals” should command fire scenes. At the time of the study, the department had a patrol sergeant or lieutenant assume incident command at a fire scene unless a fire command person was on duty. The consultants recommended that the department allow staff with specific skills and experience in firefighting to assume command. Finally, given

Figure 13. Proposed restructuring of Alamogordo Department of Public Safety, 2010



Source: Berkshire Advisors, Inc. 2012

concern regarding the lack of fire training, the consultant suggested FEOs and fire officers “be encouraged to participate in physical fitness training during their shifts.”

The new organizational structure suggested by the consultants placed fire and police operations each in their own division, rather than under a captain of operations as had been done. It also placed animal control (whose employees had told the consultant they felt undervalued), code enforcement, and administrative and support services in separate divisions (see figure 13).

Ultimately, rather than choosing to reform the public safety department, the city sought to split it into two agencies, with separate fire and police departments (Bear 2013a). The city charged the police department with “preserv[ing] order, enforc[ing] all ordinances and laws in the city, preserv[ing] the peace, mitigat[ing] the results, and render[ing] aid in the case of disaster or accident” and the fire department with “mitigat[ing] the results and render[ing] aid in the case of disaster or accident, ensur[ing] safe transport of hazardous cargo, and . . . prevent[ing] and extinguish[ing] accidental or destructive fires” (Alamogordo City Commission 2013).

The separation of the departments, the city’s mayor said, would reduce “the burden on the city’s police officers and provide them with a greater incentive to stay in Alamogordo,” allow police to “receive pay that is comparable with similar-sized cities where police are only police [and] not cross-trained as firefighters,” and help reduce fire insurance rates in the city (Bear 2013a).

The city’s new public safety director also suggested the separation would improve both police and fire recruiting and retention (Bear 2013a). From 2010 to 2013, the department lost 48 officers, noted the director, including eight through retirement and eight through termination, with the remainder going to other work or other agencies (Barbati 2013). More generally, the director also sought to reduce crime, increase traffic and fire safety, promote multi-agency partnerships, enhance the professionalism and organization of the department, regain state accreditation lost in 2011, and increase the department’s budget.

The city commission ultimately voted to split the department in April 2013 (Bear 2013b). The move, the city contended, would save \$230,000 from the city budget, with an increase of \$183,000 in the fire

budget being more than offset by a decrease of \$423,000 in the police budget. Police officials at the time of the separation said the department had suffered from too many new members and insufficient resources for training.

Fire training benefited from the separation. Before the July 1, 2013 separation of the police and fire agencies, the city's firefighters completed New Mexico state certification processes, meeting local, state, national, and international standards in firefighting (Bear 2013b).

Whereas some public service agencies had consolidated to provide better services, including providing professional fire services, the Alamogordo deconsolidation appears to have resulted from the need to improve both police and fire services. Where some cities had consolidated to effectively shift resources from firefighting to patrol operations, Alamogordo may have been providing too few resources to both functions—and at too high a cost, given the premium cross-trained PSOs can command. It appears that leadership problems in the agency over time may have affected the effectiveness of public safety operations as well.

Given its relatively recent deconsolidation, Alamogordo offers continuing lessons both in troubles facing public safety agencies with too few resources as well as in how deconsolidation can help municipalities again provide necessary police and fire services to their community.

### *Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, Texas*

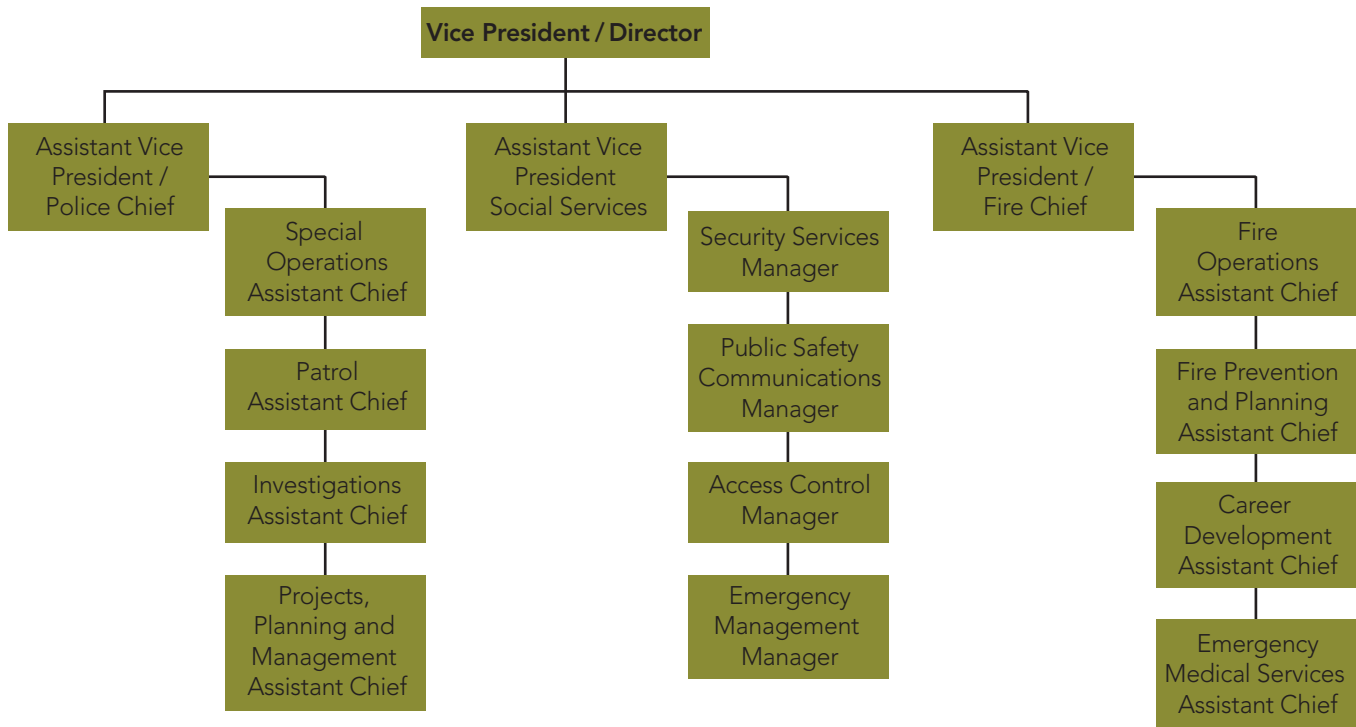
DFW International Airport, which opened in 1974, is one of the busiest in the world (DFW International Airport 2014). Its annual number of operations, 648,803 in 2011, ranks fourth-highest in the world, and its annual number of passengers, 63.3 million in 2011, ranks sixth-highest. It serves 20 passenger airlines, has seven runways, and covers nearly 30 square miles.

Though the airport has no residents, a department leader told an MSU focus group, in many ways it is equivalent to a city of about 200,000 population, given daily airline and passenger traffic as well as employees who work on airport grounds. The airport's department of public safety was fully integrated from its inception. It built four stations at four corners of the airport, as well as a station close to the central terminal, to reach all parts of the airport quickly, basing its response times on how quickly a squad car could arrive.

The model offered some flexibility for the department in its service to the airport, the department leader said. Its two-officer squad cars were equipped with firefighting gear in their trunks. Officers responding to airplane crashes, the leader noted, were able to quickly arrive on scene with protective gear, then revert to police duties as needed.

Under the fully integrated model, the department modeled shifts and rank structure based on policing needs. New employees would start as police officers, then go through a fire academy, then work in a squad car, and then transfer to fire duties to allow more time for education and training in fire duties, with officers alternating in duties as their careers advanced.

Figure 14. Organizational structure of DFW Airport Department of Public Safety



Though the fully integrated model worked “fairly well” for many years, the department representative also acknowledged some troubles with its administration. Many police officers didn’t want to do firefighting, he noted, because “they didn’t see firefighting as part of their job . . . . We never overcame that.” The agency was large enough, he said, that if officers didn’t have a desire to work on one side, “there was enough opportunity to gravitate to do what you can do.”

The department representative noted that “there was always a different culture” of those working police and firefighting duties, adding, “If there were a major accident, those working police wanted to gather evidence, do traffic control, but firefighters had a whole different perspective” on what needed to be done. The department also had some trouble gaining acceptance from other area firefighting agencies. “If you say you’re a lieutenant or sergeant, it just doesn’t compute” with area firefighters, he said.

What ultimately drove partial deconsolidation, the department leader said, was the desire for specialization. Homeland security duties expected of police agencies following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States were “one drive for specialization,” the leader told the MSU focus group. “So was the desire for SWAT and other teams. The focus was more on security of the airport and the airlines. Resources were more focused on that and less on fire service. The firefighters felt like they were the stepchildren of the department.” The partial deconsolidation, he noted, has allowed the reintroduction of some more “traditional” aspects of firefighting, including, for example, dorms for firefighters.

Some department employees resisted deconsolidation, the leader noted, particularly firefighters working off-duty policing jobs. The

decision in 2003 to partially deconsolidate was therefore implemented gradually; those wishing to remain as PSOs were able to do so, while newly hired personnel had to choose between police or fire.

Today the department has about 200 police officers and a nearly equal number of firefighting personnel, with about 100 civilian support staff. The number of sworn personnel is about two-thirds what the agency had in 2001 (FBI 2014). Though retaining only a modest degree of integration, the department representative said the police and fire agencies work well together under a single director. Figure 14 on page 53 shows the department's current organizational structure.

While, as earlier noted, many have suggested public safety consolidation can improve the abilities of a community to fulfill homeland security duties, the DFW Department of Public Safety offers a cautionary example of how specialization that may be also required for homeland security can work against full integration. Future work may consider whether agencies expected to assume more specialized roles, particularly in homeland security, may find separate agencies more suitable for their responsibilities.

### *Durham, North Carolina*

Durham is likely one of the larger and older cities to attempt full integration of police and fire services in a single public safety department. Permanent settlement of the area dates to 1701, with growth spurts coinciding with development of the local tobacco industry, establishment of Duke University

and North Carolina Central University, and development of Research Triangle Park (Durham Convention & Visitors Bureau 2015).

Particularly rapid periods of growth occurred during the 1920s, when the city's population grew from 21,719 to 52,037, and from 1980 to 2010, when the city's population grew from 100,831 to 228,330. For most of the 20th century, the population of the city was a little less than two-thirds White and a little more than one-third Black. The Hispanic population has grown rapidly in recent years, from less than 1 percent in 1970 to 14 percent in 2010, with non-Hispanic White and African-American populations now about equal (Gibson and Jung 2005; U.S. Census Bureau 2015).

Two circumstances led Durham to consider and implement public safety consolidation in 1970 (Robbins 1975; Lynch and Lord 1979). First, Durham was facing a growing crime rate and wished to put more police officers on the street. Second, Durham firefighters, like those elsewhere at the time, were seeking to reduce their weekly hours.

Reducing firefighter hours without changing total firefighter workload would have cost the city an additional \$400,000 annually (Lynch and Lord 1979). At the same time, the city council contended that only 2 percent of firefighters' time was spent fighting fires and that even including inspection and maintenance work the city would still be using firefighter hours inefficiently.

Durham implemented consolidation in stages (Robbins 1975). In the first stage, it established two public safety companies while reducing the number of fire companies from 11 to 10. Firefighters saw

Table 14. Personnel required to produce services of a public safety company in Durham, 1973

PSOs, all working 42 hours weekly	Patrolmen working 42 hours weekly and fire staff working 56 hours weekly	Patrolmen and fire staff, all working 42 hours weekly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 public safety supervisors</li> <li>• 16 PSOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 patrolmen</li> <li>• 3 fire captains</li> <li>• 3 fire drivers</li> <li>• 6 firemen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 patrolmen</li> <li>• 4 fire captains</li> <li>• 4 fire drivers</li> <li>• 8 firemen</li> </ul>
Total: 20	Total: 28	Total: 32

Source: Robbins 1975

their work week reduced from 72 to 66 hours weekly, while PSOs worked 42 hours weekly, the same as police officers. PSOs included both new recruits and volunteers for the new positions from the police and fire agencies (Lynch and Lord 1979). Each public safety station had four units (one per shift), with a unit comprising a public safety supervisor and four PSOs. One of the PSOs drove fire apparatus, while the other three and the supervisor had police-patrol duties. Fire calls were given highest priority when received.

In the second stage, the city created three more public safety companies while reducing the number of fire companies to seven and the weekly hours of firefighters to 56 (Robbins 1975). By the end of the second implementation stage, public safety companies covered 75 percent of the city's area (Lynch and Lord 1979). By 1977, the city had established an eighth public safety company, and PSOs were responsible for 94 percent of the city's geographic area.

Public safety consolidation in Durham relied on the multiplicity of public goods, under which governments may realize savings by having one unit undertake the production of several public goods, such as when the same department repairs streets in the summer and clears snow in the winter (Robbins 1975; Bish 1971). For police-fire consolidation,

this assumes separate departments are operating inefficiently and that employees of one could assume some duties of the other.

In its initial years, the public safety model did appear to deliver some efficiencies to Durham (Robbins 1975). Just before and after implementation of consolidation, total public safety expenditures grew more rapidly than total city government expenditures in Durham, primarily because of personnel costs, including the greater salaries paid PSOs, as well as the number of personnel hired to provide patrol services. After implementation, this cost growth decelerated. The city also realized some nonmonetary benefits from the model, including attracting better-qualified applicants, reducing response times, and addressing some services the city government had sought to improve. Table 14, showing the number of personnel by type needed to staff a public safety company or provide equivalent service under differing work-week scenarios, illustrates how the city sought to provide equivalent services with fewer personnel.

In the late 1970s, Durham was hiring only PSOs to fill police, fire, and public safety vacancies but still maintaining a separate fire agency (Lynch and Lord 1979). Yet, over time, the concept faltered because of opposition from local unions seeking more jobs,



civil rights groups seeking more jobs for African Americans in rank and command positions, women who thought stringent PSO requirements restricted their opportunities with the department, and firefighters who consistently opposed the concept (Coe and Rosch 1987).

In 1981, the department hired a director who had risen through the ranks of the Durham Police Department, rather than, as the first two public safety directors had been, somebody without a police or fire background (Coe and Rosch 1987). Under the new director, scheduling for in-service training was decentralized, resulting in some failures to ensure all PSOs continued to receive required training.

Firefighter resentment of consolidation also persisted given continuing use of a 56-hour workweek for firefighters coupled with a 41-percent hourly pay differential (Coe and Rosch 1987). PSOs had their own resentments over pay; they started at a higher rate of pay than police officers and firefighters elsewhere but received effectively no differential in comparison to those elsewhere by the time they reached the top of the pay scale. Many firefighters were active in civic organizations and able to foment opinion against the consolidation. For its part, the department gave less attention to public relations, including documentation of its success in fire and rescue efforts.

The public safety department also had a lower proportion of African Americans in its ranks and leadership than was present in the city population and in the city council, and its numbers did not change as the population did (Coe and Rosch 1987). In the early 1980s, while African Americans constituted 43 percent of the city's overall work force and nearly half the city's

population, they made up only 26 percent of the public safety and fire departments as a whole, with no Black officers serving at the chief or assistant-chief level. Many civic organizations also viewed public safety consolidation as part of a management style more concerned with minimizing the costs of government than with providing quality services to all residents of the community.

In 1984, a city council majority requested a consultant's study of Durham public safety (Coe and Rosch 1987). The study contended that the city could save \$1.8 million by returning to separate police and fire departments and that firefighting efficiency had been eroded by inadequate training, poor coordination at fire scenes, and poor location of stations. The findings on savings assumed that separate departments would pay police officers and firefighters less than PSOs; that Durham needed less police and fire services; and, most importantly, that the ratio of line staff to supervisors could be increased.

Three events concurrent with city council consideration further weakened the case for Durham public safety consolidation (Coe and Rosch 1987). In one, the agency disclosed that it had falsified some records to show training that had not occurred. In a second event, the agency took more than 20 minutes to respond to a possible break-in at a city council member's home. In the third, while PSOs initially indicated support for the department, they indicated stronger preference for a shift schedule that would allow time for moonlighting than for a consolidated agency. These circumstances prodded the council to abolish the public safety department and again establish separate police and fire departments.

The Durham experience offers several lessons for those wishing to maintain public safety agencies over time (Coe and Rosch 1987). These include the consistent opposition partially consolidated agencies will receive from firefighters as well as possible resentment from both firefighters and PSOs over their roles in the agency. This requires management to work to keep the support of the rank and file for the consolidated agency. Another lesson is in management skills to ensure both that adequate training is provided and that the diversity of the agency matches the diversity of the community. Management should also work to document its successes and problems; when the Durham agency management neglected to do this, a consultant's report did so for them, focusing more on the problems. Finally, public safety consolidation proponents may need to pay more attention to nuances of community politics, as well as more attention to other advantages besides efficiency.

### *Eugene, Oregon*

Eugene, the second-most populous city in Oregon, was first settled in 1846, when Eugene Skinner built a cabin in the area (City of Eugene 2015). Population and industry (e.g., flour and saw mills) grew in tandem until the city was incorporated in 1862. The city hired its first marshal in 1863 and organized its fire department in 1872 (EPD 2015; ESP 2015.). The city grew with connections by telegraph, the Territorial Road, and, especially, completion of the Oregon-California Railway (now the Southern Pacific) in 1871. The population passed 1,000 by 1880, 10,000 by 1920, 50,000 by 1960, 100,000 by 1980, and 150,000 by 2010 (Gibson and Jung 2005; U.S. Census Bureau 2015).

Today Eugene is perhaps best known for being home to the University of Oregon.

Eugene citizens adopted the council-manager form of government in 1944 (City of Eugene 2015). The city council has eight members elected by ward and a mayor elected at large to preside over the council.

The police and fire agencies operated independently until they were nominally consolidated in 1985 (Obadal 1998). Ostensibly, a former department leader told an MSU focus group, the departments consolidated to streamline operations, share administrative support functions, and resolve some political problems. The consolidation, the leader said, also included municipal court services and paralleled other consolidations then implemented by the city manager, such as parks and library services in one department and finances and human resources in another department.

The intent, the leader said, was to "reduce reports to the city manager. It looked like streamlining, but it added another layer of administration," including three new administrative positions. At no time were police and fire functions themselves consolidated (Obadal 1998). Rather, these functions maintained separate personnel who were not cross-trained, and the new department did not have cross-functional PSOs. Police officers continued to do police work while firefighters continued to provide EMS and fire services. Police and fire services shared training facilities, the former leader told an MSU focus group, but did not share training classes.

The department of public safety had a fire chief who headed a fire and EMS division and a police chief who headed a police services division (Obadal 1998). Both the fire chief and the police chief were deputy directors in the public safety department and reported to the department director. The municipal court had its own division also headed by a deputy director. An administrative services division provided business and personnel management for the department, while a technical services division maintained emergency communications, records, and data services.

Identity problems plagued the department from its creation (Obadal 1998). At the time of the consolidation, the police chief retired and the fire chief became director of the agency but, the former leader told an MSU focus group, was never accepted by police officers. Similarly, firefighters felt ignored by their one-time chief. In hiring a second director, the city chose a candidate without background in either police or fire.

Though it lasted 12 years, the consolidated department never became truly unified (Obadal 1998). Firefighters referred to their division as the fire department, and police officers referred to their division as the police department. It is unknown whether the city evaluated the success of the consolidation and, therefore, whether it saved money or improved services.

In 1997, a new city manager decided to place police services and EMS and fire services in separate departments again, with municipal court services becoming part of an administrative services department (Obadal 1998). The decision, the former

leader told an MSU focus group, stemmed from the new manager wanting to have “more contact with police and fire chiefs. She wanted them to be part of the executive team.” As the manager told city staff at the time, “Creating separate departments will give me the chance to have closer interaction with staff on the policy and operational questions facing these two vital public services. . . . Another benefit of this move is that it will increase the stature of these operations in the community” (Obadal 1998).

Reflecting on the model in Eugene, the former leader told an MSU focus group, “We didn’t have a fully integrated model. I don’t know if it didn’t work. I do know it didn’t work as well as it could. What wasn’t working about it is there were a lot of convoluted management lines. Many police and firefighters never saw it as a consolidated department at all. They had integrated administrative functions but no overlap in training. The consolidation created more layers of bureaucracy. The budget process probably was more efficient, but the city was dealing with two different unions and sets of grievances, and the additional administrative layers were not more efficient.”

Though it is unclear whether the consolidation benefited the city, the former leader suggested to the MSU focus group that police and fire departments did benefit in some ways that continue. These included passage of a bond issue that paid for a new training facility, as well as a fire instructor who received police training, helping to make the police and fire departments stronger partners.

At the same time, the deconsolidation had led to a “perceived loss of power and identity” for the police and fire departments, as services that

had been subordinate to them, such as training and communications, received their own divisions (Obadal 1998). These services would again become subordinate once police and fire services received their own departments.

In addition to illustrating the administrative complexity that may arise with nominal consolidation, the Eugene experience offers some insights on how to successfully deconsolidate. An analysis of the deconsolidation process in Eugene suggested that participants in the deconsolidation process “have decision-making authority within the areas they represent;” that those leading deconsolidation “have to live with the outcome of the process;” that the team “have clearly stated goals and objectives;” that city leadership “should think through the goals, objectives, constraints, and expectations” of the deconsolidation; that deconsolidation include “a system of evaluation . . . ideally . . . tied to the goals and objectives specified by” city leadership; and that the process use strategic planning (Obadal 1998).

### *Meridian Township, Michigan*

Meridian Charter Township is in Ingham County. Founded in the early 1800s, today the community is part of the Lansing metropolitan area, adjacent to East Lansing, home of MSU, and near the state capitol (Charter Township of Meridian 2015). It is the third-most populous community in the Lansing metropolitan area (U.S. Census Bureau 2016).

In addition to the required functions of assessment, tax collections, and elections, Michigan townships may also perform planning, zoning, fire, police, recreation, and other services (Michigan Townships

Association 2015). Charter townships have “additional powers and streamlined administration for governing a growing community” and may seek charter status “to provide greater protection against annexation by a city” (Michigan Townships Association 2015).

For many years, Meridian had separate police and fire departments. In addition to its chief, the Meridian Police Department has two lieutenants, seven sergeants, and approximately 30 officers, as well as five support staff (MTPD 2011). The fire department, though originally organized as a volunteer service, is now a full-time professional force with 32 full-time firefighters and officers (MTFD 2015).

Meridian Township first considered consolidating police and fire services in 1972 (Kohl et al. 1997). At that time, the township superintendent recommended that the community take steps to develop a public safety program. Even in the 1970s, the use of the public safety model was well established in Michigan. A 1975 consultant’s study recommended that the township dissolve its police and fire departments and create a public safety department.<sup>4</sup> The consultants suggested that the creation of a public safety department would result in

- an increased number of cross-trained personnel;
- a single command structure;
- better response times for police and fire;
- reduced unproductive time for firefighters;
- long-range reduction in costs.

The consultant recommended an incremental implementation with voluntary cross-training. That

<sup>4</sup> Much of the historical context material for this study is derived from interviews with key stakeholders and from Kohl et al. 1997.

is, the consultant suggested that members not be compelled to transition from their traditional discipline but that new employees perform both tasks. The consultant further suggested that the transition could take as long as 10 years.

The township subsequently launched a comprehensive internal study that included visiting more than 20 public safety departments. The study generally endorsed the public safety concept but reported that the township should expect strong opposition to this innovation.

In 1981, almost 10 years after discussion about public safety consolidation began in Meridian, the township supervisor indicated that public safety could be successful if the township could manage employee concerns that jobs would be lost through such action. The supervisor recommended that between 18 and 24 employees be cross-trained and that an evaluation be conducted after two years. No action was taken on these recommendations.

In 1989, township staff once again addressed the implementation of public safety. The model proposed at that time called for a small group of officers to be cross-trained but with most personnel continuing to perform traditional police and fire duties. In 1990, the police chief announced his retirement. The township board elected to appoint a police chief rather than a public safety director but left open the idea that the township would later adopt public safety.

Throughout this long period of debate, both police and fire departments complained of inadequate staffing. By 1994, staffing issues and the resultant costs for overtime prompted significant steps toward

consolidation. Michigan allowed Meridian to establish a fire academy, and all firefighters were certified to Firefighter I level. In addition, all police officers were trained as medical first responders, and some officers and supervisors were trained in the fire academy. Likewise, firefighters who volunteered were trained as police officers, ultimately going on patrol with fire gear and getting certification as PSOs.

“Before we started the fire academy, township firefighters did not have certification for their position,” a former department leader told MSU researchers. “Our first step was to make sure firefighters, police officers, and medical responders all had the certification needed for their jobs.”

By the end of 1996, the department staff included 61 certified firefighters and 44 certified police officers, and 73 employees had medical responder certification, including paramedics. By increasing training in all three areas, the department had actually increased its number of firefighters by 53 percent, its number of police officers by 32 percent, and its EMS personnel by 85 percent.

Yet opposition to the program persisted over time. A former official with the Meridian Township Police Department before consolidation told MSU researchers that much of the opposition stemmed from the popularity of the fire department. The department, the former official said, provided several advanced medical services that police officers could not quickly learn—services whose expense had also prompted consideration of consolidation. In addition, the former official claimed, the size of the township, coupled with a relatively low population density, made implementation difficult.

During the implementation period, firefighters continually campaigned against township trustees who supported the consolidation, eventually replacing them on the board with trustees opposed to consolidation. The former department leader claimed that other issues may have led to the change in the township board but also noted that election results meant “things were going to change because of the platform of the new trustees to get rid of public safety.” When the chief executive at the time accepted a public safety position elsewhere, the trustees declined to fill the Meridian Township position, instead hiring a police chief and reverting to separate police and fire agencies.

Looking back on his time at Meridian Township, the former leader said, “The public safety merger was ahead of its time. There wasn’t a significant enough financial need to force it along. Public safety is a way of doing more things . . . better at lower costs.” Nevertheless, he added, perhaps only events such as recent budget crises in Michigan can lead to making such changes. “There was no dispute regarding the savings, but the opposition of the firefighters got more press attention. Dissension, not details, was reported, so readers heard of dissension, not details of improvements and savings.”

Not surprisingly, there are divergent opinions about the public safety program in Meridian. Law enforcement officials thought the program was successful in that it increased patrol staffing, and police officers responded favorably to their enhanced role as firefighters. In contrast, firefighters felt that their capabilities had been diminished under the

plan and that Meridian’s provision of paramedic service also provided an obstacle to implementation. Firefighters also noted that many public safety departments provide first response to EMS calls but do not perform the more time consuming task of ambulance transport, claiming Meridian’s performance of ambulance transport reduced the amount of firefighter time that might be otherwise available for police patrol.

Interestingly, as recently as 2011, Meridian Township considered engaging a consultant to study the feasibility of public safety consolidation (Charter Township of Meridian 2011). The former leader suggests that any community pursuing public safety consolidation realize that “you can run public safety for years and be successful with it, but it can still fail when politics come into play. Public safety isn’t just a long-term commitment; it’s the ability to fulfill a long-term commitment that needs to be implemented and to survive political processes influenced [in many ways].

### *West Jordan, Utah*

The city of West Jordan has a long history but a record of recent development. The area received its name shortly after Mormon pioneers settled in the Salt Lake Valley in 1847, when Brigham Young gave names to the valley and its surrounding mountains and streams (City of West Jordan 2015). The river running west of the city he called the Western Jordan, with the land between Big Cottonwood Creek and the point of a nearby mountain becoming known as West Jordan.

The land was sparsely settled at first; its population in 1853 was 361 (City of West Jordan 2015). Nearly 90 years later, in 1941, the population of West Jordan remained below 2,000, but residents petitioned the county commission for incorporation as a town (Moosman 1994). By 1967, West Jordan had become a city yet remained largely a rural area (City of West Jordan 2015).

In recent decades, the population has increased rapidly, from 4,221 in 1970 to 27,235 in 1980, 42,892 in 1990, 68,336 in 2000, 103,712 in 2010, and an estimated 108,383 in 2012 (U.S. Census Bureau 1993; U.S. Census Bureau 2016). Today, it is the fourth-most populous city in Utah.

West Jordan has had fire protection services for much of its history (WJFD 2015). In 1950, fire protection in West Jordan was provided by Salt Lake County, but in 1951 the town authorized construction of its first fire station. From 1952 to 1976, Salt Lake County continued to provide fire apparatus while the city provided a part-time fire chief and 10 volunteer firefighters.

In 1977, the town created a fire department, having rejected a proposal to form a fire protection district with the county. At that time, the first full-time firefighter was hired.

Shortly after creation of the fire department, West Jordan moved to a public safety consolidation model. In 1979, it placed the fire department under the direction of the chief of police with a police lieutenant managing fire operations (WJFD 2015).

The city formally created a public safety department in 1982. It opened its second fire station in 1980 and its third fire station in 1987. By 1994, the department established its own ambulance service and employed 25 full-time firefighters and 29 part-time firefighters, of whom nine held certification as police officers (WJFD 2015). Altogether, the city had 62 sworn police officers at this time (FBI 2013).

In the 1990s, the city was growing more rapidly than it ever had. As the city grew, the department of public safety experienced increasing demands for service coupled with the departure of 16 firefighters who joined other fire departments (WJFD 2015).

The problems prompted the city to convene a task force to review the city's police, fire, animal control, and EMS needs (Baker 1999d). Some committee members questioned the need "to fix something that isn't broken" as well as "whether separating departments would be worth the associated costs" (Baker 1999d).

Yet how to best serve a large and growing city was among the most prominent problems the task force considered. The task force chairman suggested "that consolidated departments with cross-trained personnel seem to work best in smaller cities," adding, "once you become a bigger city, [police and firemen] start to conflict with one another" (Baker 1999d).

Indeed, 40 of the city's 45 firefighters at the time presented a letter to the city council expressing their preference for autonomous police and fire departments (Baker 1999d). They contended that "rapid city growth and expanding responsibilities



for both police and fire divisions have made it increasingly difficult for the current public safety director to represent both divisions adequately” and that “police and fire safety are becoming increasingly technical fields” (Baker 1999d).

In ultimately deciding to abandon consolidation, council members agreed that city growth had eliminated the feasibility of the model. One council member noted that “the officers have become specialized out of need and function . . . making the cross-training a waste,” adding, “There’s no purpose to it. . . . We need to get rid of a system we’re not using” (Baker 1999c).

In splitting the departments, the council also sought to make its police and fire salaries more competitive with nearby cities (Baker 1999c). Though the city paid a premium wage to its cross-trained officers, it continued to lose officers to nearby communities that paid police and fire officers still more money.

The deconsolidation did have some costs associated with it. In addition to the costs of hiring a new fire chief (with the public safety director eventually becoming police chief for the city), the city also maintained salaries for PSOs and increased funding for some unmet police needs such as unserved warrants (Baker 1999a). The deconsolidation also prompted some reorganization of the larger city government, shuffling responsibilities between the city manager and assistant city manager to accommodate what were now separate police and fire departments (Baker 1999b).

The city’s mayor at the time suggested that cooperation, rather than consolidation, was the best way to improve city services (Evans 2000). In particular, she claimed deconsolidation had allowed the city to improve its community policing services and to work with neighboring fire agencies to improve fire services across cooperating communities. She suggested that the cities of the Salt Lake region would ideally move toward “‘functional consolidation,’ which allows for local control but metropolitan-like cooperation” as the area continued to grow (Evans 2000).

The city’s police and fire departments continue to operate independently. Its number of personnel for EMS and police and fire services are comparable to those of other large cities in Utah, as are its expenditures (City of West Jordan 2013). It has a higher average number of households per fire station but fewer total fire and medical calls than other large Utah cities. Its number of patrol vehicles is below that of other larger cities, and its number of violations, police calls, and arrests tend to be lower as well. At the same time, its ratio of sworn officers to residents is somewhat higher than that for other Utah cities.

### Common themes in deconsolidation

As in our case studies of successful public safety consolidations, so also in our study of deconsolidations there are several common themes. Perhaps the most prominent are the desire for greater specialization, the need to serve large communities with diverse requirements, difficulties in managing public safety agencies, and difficulties in demonstrating the continued utility of the model.

Desire for specialization was particularly evident in all our deconsolidation cases. In Alamogordo, the city sought to improve its fire coverage and to provide more specialization and career advancement opportunities for both police and fire officers. At the DFW International Airport, separation occurred when the department perceived that the need to specialize its police services to fulfill homeland security needs might result in an inability to adequately respond to fires. In Eugene, the city manager's desire to hear from both fire and police leaders about their unique concerns, rather than through a single public safety manager, spurred administrative deconsolidation. In Meridian Township, the popularity of the fire department and its advanced services may have meant public safety consolidation would always struggle for acceptance. In West Jordan, rapid growth led city officials to conclude that specialization was needed rather than the common department that had served the city for many years.

Related to these concerns, the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) and the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) raise concerns about inadequate training, personnel development, and on-the-job experience. (IAFF n.d.) Consolidation, the two associations contend, inevitably leads to cuts in fire training and reduced on-the-job experience for what is seen as a secondary profession of firefighting and can even reduce the proficiency of police officers at their jobs. They claim that PSOs may also face conflicts in reporting to both law enforcement and firefighting supervisors.

Concerns about large or diverse communities are evident in several cases of deconsolidation. With but one exception, Alamogordo, all the deconsolidation communities we studied were larger in area than the consolidation communities in our case studies. In Durham, concerns that the public safety department might not be addressing all the needs of a diverse population contributed to the push for deconsolidation. In Meridian Township, a relatively large expanse of area, a former official questioned whether the public safety department could work. In West Jordan, as noted, rapid growth led officials to question how best to serve the community, with city officials openly questioning whether PSOs could remain technically proficient. Even in Alamogordo, community officials came to question whether public safety was an appropriate model for a community without opportunity to draw on other specializations nearby.

Management difficulties were evident in at least three cases. In Alamogordo, some unique problems helped push deconsolidation. Eugene had less contentious problems, but, the desire of the city manager to have more direct contact with police and fire leaders prompted deconsolidation. In Durham, concerns that department leadership did not reflect or adequately address the needs of a diverse community contributed to deconsolidation. For many communities, the IAFF and IAFC contend that "planning is inadequate or nonexistent" (IAFF n.d.).

Finally, in some cases, failure to demonstrate the continued utility of the model may have led to deconsolidation. Analyses of Durham are most explicit on this, but this failure may have been evident in Meridian Township as well, given the former director's comments about the effect of politics on the ultimate fate of deconsolidation there.

## Conclusion

Communities may consolidate public safety services in many ways. In addition to the nominal, partial, and full consolidation models, communities may vary in their reasons for consolidating services. Several of the communities we examined consolidated public safety services in an effort to professionalize their firefighting capabilities, which had been provided largely by volunteers. At least one consolidated for fiscal reasons, though some experts caution against such a move for short-term savings. In contrast, one consolidated not so much for fiscal reasons but to have each officer able to provide nearly any police, fire, or medical service when arriving on the scene, a model that can be more expensive than separate services.

Consolidation has worked well in some communities. In several communities we studied, consolidation has led to efficiencies and savings, including in comparison to neighboring communities. The consolidation communities we studied have also met several firefighting standards, resulting in ratings exceeding those for more than nine in 10 U.S. communities.

Most of the consolidation communities we examined considered the move over time. Some have been able to expand their public safety departments as their communities have grown. All have sought to foster a public safety culture and, even if maintaining separate police and fire divisions, to have PSOs trained in all aspects of police work and firefighting. Leaders of these agencies have found such a model to be responsive to the needs of their communities.

Political will and resolve to implement public safety consolidation has often been a necessary but not sufficient requisite.

Yet we also found several communities where the model has not worked, where support was never fully achieved, and where leaders subsequently deconsolidated the departments. In some cases, this was because the communities did not find the model to be responsive and, therefore, concluded that separate police and fire agencies would better serve their needs. Some agencies also found their growth or evolving needs required more specialization that consolidation could not offer but separate fire and police agencies could. In at least one case, consolidation added a layer of bureaucracy that worked against streamlining of operations. In two other cases, leadership problems led to deconsolidation. The deconsolidation communities we studied were also typically larger and more heterogeneous than our consolidation communities, raising questions of whether public safety consolidation can serve needs of large and growing communities.

If there is one overarching lesson in our case studies, it is that consolidation of police and fire services is neither a panacea nor a one-size-fits-all solution. Rather, communities must carefully assess for themselves alternative models of delivering police and fire services, which ones may best serve their circumstances, and how best to implement any changes. In many cases, the traditional model of

separate police and fire services may prove best. In some cases, however, a consolidated model may work best for a community, allowing it to provide a full range of services with greater efficiency than it might otherwise realize. We offer no recommendations on whether communities should adopt this model:

Each community will differ in needs and resources. This guide has, however, outlined the range of issues communities may wish to consider regarding the applicability of public safety consolidation of local police and fire services.

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## About the COPS Office

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Community policing begins with a commitment to building trust and mutual respect between police and communities. It supports public safety by encouraging all stakeholders to work together to address our nation's crime challenges. When police and communities collaborate, they more effectively address underlying issues, change negative behavioral patterns, and allocate resources.

Rather than simply responding to crime, community policing focuses on preventing it through strategic problem solving approaches based on collaboration. The COPS Office awards grants to hire community police and support the development and testing of innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders, as well as all levels of law enforcement.

Another source of COPS Office assistance is the Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA). Developed to advance community policing and ensure constitutional practices, CRI-TA is an independent, objective process for organizational transformation. It provides recommendations based on expert analysis of policies, practices, training, tactics, and accountability methods related to issues of concern.

Since 1994, the COPS Office has invested more than \$14 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing.

- To date, the COPS Office has funded the hiring of approximately 127,000 additional officers by more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies in both small and large jurisdictions.
- Nearly 700,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office-funded training organizations.
- To date, the COPS Office has distributed more than eight million topic-specific publications, training curricula, white papers, and resource CDs.
- The COPS Office also sponsors conferences, roundtables, and other forums focused on issues critical to law enforcement.

The COPS Office information resources, covering a wide range of community policing topics—from school and campus safety to gang violence—can be downloaded at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov). This website is also the grant application portal, providing access to online application forms.







These are part of a series on police consolidation and shared services developed to help those organizations exploring options for sharing, consolidating, or regionalizing public safety services with other public sector entities. This report seeks to shed light on the implementation of various forms of police-fire consolidation, particularly emphasizing the variety of ways public safety agencies address fire suppression. The goal is to provide police administrators, local decision makers, and other stakeholders an overview that will help inform discussions about consolidation in their communities.



**COPS**

*Community Oriented Policing Services*  
*U.S. Department of Justice*

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To obtain details about COPS Office programs,  
call the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770.

Visit the COPS Office online at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).

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