

Review of Police Training for Hospitality Zones

December 2011

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Introduction from Responsible Hospitality Edmonton

In the fall of 2011, Edmonton Police Commission presented Edmonton City Council with the need for additional staffing resources for Jasper Avenue, to address the needs of the newest and growing hospitality area. Avison Young; 2011, Last Quarter Report stated: *32 development opportunities outlined, half of the projects are either currently under construction or are expected to have shovels in the ground within the next year supported the premise Downtown is growing.* Council's strong support opened discussion on developing the appropriate training model for the new unit to police Jasper Avenue as a hospitality area.

In 2006, Edmonton Police Services introduced a hospitality policing model for Whyte Avenue. The framework was part of the 2006 Summary Report developed with Responsible Hospitality Institute and Old Strathcona Task Force This model, with unique training methods, proved to be very effective and caught the attention of other agencies in North America. We wondered if other agencies improved upon the Whyte Avenue model, or if new models exist?

To explore this question, Edmonton Police Services, Downtown Division asked Responsible Hospitality Edmonton (RHE) to research other cities and agencies. In response RHE, asked researcher, Kim Bates, to undertake the task *"To provide broad-based information regarding how to frame training for police officers in hospitality zones within the City of Edmonton"*.

Bates polled agencies from major cities across United Kingdom, United States and Canada, including Edmonton Police Service. This report details the key findings any agency can use to review their own police training models in late-night entertainment districts.

Bates report finds that effective policing of hospitality areas starts with the selection of the *"right officers"*. The growing acceptance of community policing orientation is tailored for the diversity of patrons, businesses and neighborhood residents in an entertainment district. Officers' characteristics to a successful policing model include; collaboration, high capacity for cultural and behavioral competencies, dedicated work ethic and customer service orientated approach.

Her report then explores subject areas to preparing overtime officers and delves into important subject areas that need to be given to hospitality officers. Bates research found that Edmonton continues to be a leader in policing hospitality areas with the current work being done in (all 3) hospitality area and the multi-disciplinary Public Safety Compliance Team which includes EPS.

Bates last section, provides discussion points to examine subject areas, training methods to provide safe sociable areas in Edmonton's growing industry.

It is encouraging to learn that other cities have faced similar challenges and, that preparing police members to effectively police hospitality areas requires a matrix of training outcomes to maintain safe and vibrant spaces.

Our hope is the reader will use Bates report to probe open dialogue and discussion. We at RHE will be looking for your learning's.

Responsible Hospitality Edmonton.

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Purpose:

To provide broad-based information regarding how to frame training for police officers in hospitality zones within the City of Edmonton. The research that contributed to this report focused on case studies, best practice guidelines, interviews and information gathered from hospitality organizations and police departments including the Edmonton Police Service.

Summary of Research:

This research project was conducted on behalf of Responsible Hospitality Edmonton in November 2011. Information was collected from a variety of sources with the aim of providing an overview of the diverse approaches taken by various cities in the policing of hospitality zones. Information sources include the Responsible Hospitality Institute website, Problem Oriented Policing website and proposals from police departments to their city halls. Information on the training and managing of hospitality zones was also collected through direct contact with a number of police departments in Edmonton, Alberta; Calgary, Alberta; Toronto, Ontario; Chicago, Illinois; Boulder Colorado and London England.

The following outlines the information gathered from these sources, focusing on areas which were commonly described as those police officers would require the most training in order to succeed in their work.

> Characteristics of officers that would lead to excellence in their work (Ford, et al.):

- Strong community collaboration skills (including the abilities to communicate clearly, solve problems innovatively and build consensus)
- High capacity for cultural and behavioral competencies
- Dedicated work ethic
- Customer service oriented approach.

> Preparedness training for overtime officers

> Subject areas that were identified as important training for police in hospitality zones include:

- Community Engagement
- Licensing and liquor ordinance
- Crime prevention through environmental design
- Various practical skills

> Conclusions and next steps:

- Consider a hybrid mentorship/in-class delivery format for officer training with mentors who have a thorough knowledge of the area and an established presence with various community groups.
- Ensure consistent messaging and well developed frame of reference for training.
- Consider incorporating *Active Learning* techniques for in-class training rather than the traditional lecture style approach.

Introduction:

Increased municipal interest in the policing of hospitality zones has led to the development of various policing approaches in many cities. The result of this is the identification of competency areas which, with focused and deliberate training, can enable police officers to excel. With trained and knowledgeable officers patrolling and engaging their communities, there may be a measurable decrease in crime and a reduced need for enforcement in hospitality zones.

It is advised that when developing an approach to training, hospitality zones be viewed not unlike a "...special event that necessitates formalized strategies, excellent communications, commitment of dedicated resources, special training, adequate supervision and consistent management of operations (Thayer 4)."

The information in this report was compiled through a series of email exchanges with a number of police departments, the Responsible Hospitality Institute, and the Toronto Entertainment District Business Improvement Area, as well as through extensive online research into strategies and tactics implemented by other departments throughout North America and in the United Kingdom. This report outlines subject areas that were identified repeatedly as key to successful public use of hospitality zones.¹

Characteristics and Competencies of a Successful Hospitality Zone Officer:

The underlying theme of the research was the importance of community outreach. While the Edmonton Police Service already uses a community policing model, community policing as it pertains to a Hospitality Zone requires a targeted and specialized approach.

The research showed that a dedicated team of officers assigned to hospitality areas may yield the best results. This team works to understand the intricacies of the area and as such, is able to provide a strong, unified, consistent voice for the department. Having a consistent and well-trained group of officers that work the district also helps build expertise about the community and develop stronger relationships with key stakeholders. Allowing the dedicated officers increased flexibility in their schedules in order to meet with community groups and business owners was also recommended by Edmonton Police Service officers currently working in these districts.

Officers dedicated to these areas were possessed characteristics that increase the success of policing in hospitality zones (Ford, et al.) These characteristics include:

1/ Strong community collaboration skills:

Officers will be working with a number of community groups. Understanding how to liaise with them and bring them together for collaboration is essential. Other needed skills include the ability to communicate clearly, resolve problems innovatively and build consensus between divergent groups. Particularly in the downtown core, Edmonton experiences a number of different cultures, age groups, and activities

¹ Success was defined as a marked decrease in crime, a decrease in the need for law enforcement, a noted increase in the public's sense of safety in the area, and typically meant an increase in bar/nightclub revenues.

converging in relatively confined areas. The ability to understand the stakeholders, and develop a collaborative and preventative approach to resolve ongoing problems is key to successfully policing an area.

2/ High Capacity for Cultural and Behavioral Competencies:

A high level of understanding and tolerance for various groups is essential. As challenging scenarios present themselves, understanding of and patience with how different groups communicate, resolve problems and react to situations is necessary to defuse tensions and manage problems in a way that lessens the chances of future negative interactions.

3/ Dedicated Work Ethic:

The dedication for this type of assignment may be higher than for others, due to the high level of community outreach work and the relative difficulty of dealing with alcohol related issues.

4/ Customer Service Oriented Approach:

Officers who are very open-minded, friendly and approachable tend to see a decrease in crime and the need for law enforcement, a noted increase in the public's sense of safety and stronger community support. Officers help build the confidence of the public in the police service when they consider the communities they serve and look for ways to foster collaboration and resolve problems in a manner which satisfies all sides.

The Use of Overtime Officers:

A full training suite is likely not feasible for all officers who may work in these areas. However, mitigating strategies to help overtime officers improve performance should also be considered. These strategies include the following (Berkley and Thayer 481):

- Thorough briefings and detailed enforcement guidelines prior to their shift.
- Provide increased supervision, approximately 1 supervisor (who remains in the zone throughout the shift) for every 5 officers.
- The submission of comprehensive logs that detail enforcement taken and businesses contacted in order to maintain an engaged police presence.

Additionally, overtime officers working in hospitality zones need to be made aware of the type of work they will be engaged with. They should be well informed of the expectations and common concerns prior to their shift. They should also be made aware of their working environment—a crowded, high energy atmosphere where they must balance their ability to be hospitable and personable with tourists and/ or locals with the need to be aggressive when illegal activity is observed (Berkley and Thayer 480).

Suggested Subject Area Training for Hospitality Zone Officers:

1/ Community Engagement:

Understanding community outreach and the role police play in community building is likely the most important of any training. Common among many departments is the development of strong relationships with nightclub and bar owners. Through the research it was noted that this occurred in three main ways.

- The development of nightclub/ bar associations that work with the police to develop guidelines and reporting procedures.
- Training presented by the police department to the nightclub staff that covers, among other things, security and compliance with food and alcohol service. This training should include management, servers and door staff.
- Roving patrol that purposefully meets and interacts positively with bar staff and the public during and outside of peak hours.

The police departments in New York and Toronto have both developed very good best practices documents² on their relationship with their nightclub associations. Both departments' documents provide potential guidelines that would help direct the type of information and training from which officers would benefit.

In both cases it is apparent that through community outreach and development the police have played an essential role in the growth of associations with strong, active engaged and cooperative memberships.

Part of effective community engagement consists of developing a positive relationship with the people who visit the area in the course of an evening. To complement this, a strong foundation in effective tactical communication is essential to defuse situations and build trust within the community.

In the context of this type of community engagement, the training opportunities that stand out include: tactical communication or verbal judo, a thorough understanding of the powers of arrest, presentation skills, project coordination/management, facilitating adult training programs and running effective meeting.

2/ Licensing and Liquor Statutes, Bylaws and Regulations:

Training to acquire a strong understanding of the liquor and licensing laws was recommended by all departments contacted. Part of this type of training would include officers developing and delivering training to nightclub staff. By training the nightclub staff, preventative action can be taken by the staff to avoid substance abuse, identify illegal IDs and maintain a higher level of safety.³ Additionally, it helps to maintain a professional relationship between the officers and nightclub owners. Building these relationships helps to develop crime reporting systems by which nightclubs can more easily comply. Consistency in messaging is increased. With the help of the nightclub staff police intervention in terms of law enforcement was seen to decrease.

The Chicago Police Department hand picks officers based on a high level of performance on the midnight watch in the city's hospitality zone. This zone has more

² While the New York Nightlife Best Practices are readily available online (see bibliography) see addendum 1 for the Toronto Entertainment District Nightlife Establishment Best Practices.

³ Refer to addendum 2 which contains the training outline, instructor notes and PowerPoint used by the City of Boulder Police Department to train nightclub staff. Some of this could be reworked into a police officer training document.

than 900 liquor licenses (72 late hour). They receive their training for this work on the job. The officers become specialists in Licensed Premise enforcement/investigations through on going roll call training. To accomplish this, the department has a specialized 'Liquor Enforcement Inspection Taskforce' which has a defined set of guideline to monitor problem locations and enforce various liquor and licensing laws.⁴

It was common for the other departments contacted to advise thorough liquor and license law training outside of that which hospitality zone officers might normally receive. This training would be offered to officers outside of Edmonton's Public Safety Compliance Team (PSCT) to strengthen the team's work and ameliorate the officers' ability to enforce the laws.

Integral to this, and in conjunction with it, is the development of a sustainable and formalized knowledge sharing tool which officers are able to understand and work with.

A more in-depth understanding of the laws and more effective communications with the PSCT would allow officers to enforce laws in a more timely and consistent fashion.

Training opportunities that would be helpful include fire code for industry and public safety, the gaming and liquor act, provincial and municipal statutes and direction on interdepartmental communication skills. A support document to training that would assist the officers on the job includes a portable information package specific to the hospitality districts.

3/ Compliance Teams and Environmental Design:

Part of having a safe hospitality zone is being cognizant of how simple adjustments to the environment can have significant impacts on the way people behave within it. The Calgary Police Service has put together a team called the Licensed Establishment Multi-agency Group. The team consists of Bylaw, Police, Fire, Alberta Gaming and Liquor Control, Business Licensing, Planning and Health and Building Inspectors, and occasionally receives input from a City Councillor's office. As a group they discuss the impact a venue or event will have on a community. The group then consults with the venue or event organizers with recommendations that should be acted upon to comply with legislation prior to the venue or event's opening date. This results in a more streamlined permit approval process. It also prevents delays in construction and organization, which is costly in terms of money and potential development. The work of this team is then backed by stringent business licensing conditions. Law enforcement reinforces this process by developing plans in advance of an opening date to address containing the premises and ensuring that such things as proper cameras, lighting, and evacuation procedures are in place. While it would be hard to train officers for this type of collaborative team work, it is possible to identify officers who possess the characteristics that would allow them to be better representatives of the police. Additionally, assigning an officer who is a systematic thinker, an effective communicator and presenter, and who is positively connected with the community would likely help provide a more informed opinion on the type of role the police would be able to play.

⁴ Refer to addendum 3 for specific documents pertaining to these guidelines.

There is significant research that has gone into the urban design as it relates to crime prevention—Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. Officers would likely benefit from a general understanding of the effects environmental design on the use of public space. An officer's ability to identify specific design elements that will help decrease crime, nuisance and, in turn, increase public safety would be beneficial to the development of a healthy vibrant hospitality zone.

4/ Practical Skills Training:

This training is likely already being offered through current training modules and includes such things as learning how to patrol on a bike, how to manage crowds and how to perform inspections and crowd counts. Within the current training, if it does not already exist, it is recommended to highlight how such skills pertain to a Hospitality Zone patrolling. Should officers find themselves working in these zones, a solid basis in these types of skills will be necessary for them to be seen as knowledgeable, respected and responsive in the community engagement aspect of the job.

Conclusion:

The Edmonton Police Service is in a good position to train officers in advance of major construction and development of the downtown core. Edmonton is already seeing significant changes to downtown with large residential construction projects that will likely lead to the increase of restaurants, bars, nightclubs as well as the number of people who will converge on the area to enjoy themselves. The training provided to officers working in hospitality zones is fundamental to building a positive and engaged police presence. While tactical skills are important to the development of effective patrolling, EPS should also consider the importance of deploying officers into leadership roles within the zones. These officers should possess the soft skills that are perhaps even more desired when building community relationships and planning the development of an effective policing strategy for the area.

While research did not uncover any cities that had a structured module specific to training police to work in hospitality zones, it did uncover specific subject areas where additional training would likely be beneficial in conjunction with what is learned on the job. A proactive approach to police training in hospitality zones may mean a smoother transition for downtown Edmonton from what it is now to what it is expected to be in the near future. A police presence that is trusted by stakeholders and looked to as a leader within the field of hospitality zone policing will no doubt put the Edmonton Police Service at the forefront of strategic planning on an international level.

Next Steps for the development of training:

- Identify officers who fit the characteristics outlined above and who would excel in hospitality zone police work.
- Identify the best means of training – likely a combination of on-the-job mentorship with in-class learning.
- Ensure all mentors are working from the same frame of reference so that trainees are receiving a well rounded education.
- Identify appropriate in-class training for officers including adult learning, cultural and behavioral competencies, extensive comprehension of licensing

- Research training programs such as NAIT's *Becoming a Master Instructor* that would likely help officers develop highly effective and responsive training programs.

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