

# **International Police Program**

**1999 Herman Goldstein  
Excellence in POP Award Submission**

**San Diego Police Department**



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## **BACKGROUND & HISTORY**

The San Diego/Tijuana border crossing is the busiest land border crossing in the world. Everyday nearly 100,000 people travel in and out of the United States through the San Ysidro Port of Entry. San Diego has another, smaller border crossing, the Otay Mesa Port of Entry. This port also borders Tijuana, Mexico. Through these two points of entry pass nearly all of the legal travelers into and out of the southwest region of the United States. Along with the legal traffic comes the illegal traffic.

Some of the illegal traffic is narcotics traffic headed north into the United States for distribution. The flip side of the northbound narcotics traffic is the southbound "dope money" that travels south into Mexico to continue to finance the many drug cartels. The other illegal commodity is the transportation of undocumented persons into the United States.

The illegal activity poses dangerous problems for Mexican law enforcement. Suspect statements, crime witnesses, media investigations and gang intelligence showed that nearly all of the major criminals were being financed by Mexican drug cartels. The money the cartels provided to purchase weapons and high tech equipment put the police on the run. The officer injuries and homicide rate hit an all time high in 1994 and 1995. The criminal element was sending messages to anyone who attempted to address the narcotic trade within Mexico. No official was safe. The news headlines told the story of government officials and police officers ambushed or killed during routine duties.

San Diego Police Mexican Liaison Officers who traveled into Mexico reviewed media reports on the Mexican law enforcement injuries and homicides. The Liaison Officers noticed that a lack of basic officer safety techniques had led to a majority of the officer injuries and homicides. The news accounts reviewed showed officers stopping known felony vehicles alone. They showed officers not using the radio to notify dispatch of a traffic stop. They showed officers not using contact and cover and some passenger officers staying in the police vehicles while the driver officers approached vehicles on traffic stops alone. These were all evidence that training was lacking throughout Mexico.

At the same time, the Tijuana Police Department approached the Liaison Officers. Proud cultural differences would not allow Mexican officials to openly admit they had neglected important areas in training programs. They also could not openly admit that they needed or even wanted help. They could, however, ask questions regarding training issues. These questions resulted in the Liaison Officers volunteering to travel to Mexico and provide basic officer safety training.

It was found that within the Tijuana Police Department and indeed most of the Mexican law enforcement community, basic training issues such as *"notifying dispatch of a traffic stop"*, *"field interview (FI) stance"* or quick *"pat down search's"* for weapons were not being done nor even taught. These basic safety techniques that are often taken for granted in the United States have become the cornerstone of the Mexican training sessions.

The San Diego Police Department's Mexican Liaison Officers created the training foundation. The Liaison team, assisted by other law enforcement personnel then came together and formed the International Police Program (IPP). A short time

later a new feature was added to the IPP. This new element was a once a year, weeklong training academy conducted in San Diego. The San Diego training provides added opportunities and enhanced training due to the available facilities within San Diego.

PROJECT NOTE:

*Inadequate analytical or statistical data was available from all but one of the law enforcement agencies that were trained within Mexico. The only agency with available, adequate and correct statistical information and a documented history was Tijuana, Mexico. A proper analysis could only be completed on this city, partly due to the information it provided and partly due to its proximity to San Diego. We feel that the statistical data and the positive changes within Tijuana reflect the changes within other cities where training was given.*

# International Police Program

## SUMMARY

The San Diego Police Department has a distinguished history in the field of quality training. The training is provided in the basic recruit academy and through bi-annual officer update training. Of the many topics covered, perhaps the most important involve those on officer safety. Because of this excellent training the number of officer assaults and homicides are fortunately, extremely low. This is not the case in far to many Mexican cities including San Diego's sister city, Tijuana, Mexico.

**Scanning:** Morning headlines; *"Two Mexican Officers killed during traffic stop"*. Two days later, an assassination attempt on a high ranking law enforcement official is in the news. Within a week, another headline: *"Ambush of Mexican Officer seen as a message"*<sup>71</sup>. The headlines told the story. Mexican law enforcement agencies were outnumbered and outgunned. Mexican law enforcement training official's aided by the San Diego Police Department indicated a problem that highlighted a lack of useful officer training to the officers of too many border cities of Mexico.

**Analysis:** When an officer dies at the hands of a criminal, all law enforcement suffers, as well as the community they served. Although occurring in Mexico, the assaults and murders of Mexican officers prompted concerns among officers of the San Diego Police Department. Officers of the San Diego Police Departments Criminal Intelligence Unit, specifically Mexican Liaison Officers, traveled to speak to Mexican officials about training and officer actions in the field. As a result of the travel to Mexico, an important issue surfaced that showed a lack of serious officer safety

training, both at several Mexican police academies and for the officers operating in the field. In San Diego's border neighbor city, Tijuana, the lack of officer safety techniques has played a large role in the high number of assaults and officer deaths.

Tijuana, the 5th largest city in Mexico, had twenty-nine (29) officers killed on and off duty via firearm from 1993 to 1996. That high number rivals the officer homicide rate of the largest city within the United States, New York City.

**Response:** Knowing that good officer safety techniques can absolutely save lives, members of the San Diego Police Department traveled to Mexico and started training Mexican officers in the area of officer safety. The training started as localized small classes at Mexican border cities such as Tijuana, Mexicali and Rosarito. The training was designed to cover several important areas. The first issue addressed was basic officer safety. This topic included vehicle stops, high risk vehicle stops, pedestrian stops, building entries, arrest and control techniques and contact and cover. This training was then molded into an annual training academy for Mexican officers. A select group of Mexican officers were invited to San Diego to get nearly one on one training using the San Diego Police Departments state of the art equipment and personnel.

**Assessment:** The number of officer homicides in Tijuana, Mexico dropped by 72% within the three years after the training was implemented. Not only has the number of deaths fallen, traffic stop procedures and interactions with suspects has shown marked improvement with regards to officer safety. Additionally, the local Mexican media story's of officer assaults and homicides has fallen.



## **SCANNING**

### Background on law enforcement in Mexico and Tijuana

- The law enforcement community within Mexico is divided into 4 groups. The Federal police, the Federal Highway Patrol, the State Judicial police and the local Municipal police. The Federal police cover any firearm violations, any narcotic violations and any counterfeiting violations within the Country of Mexico. The Federal Highway Patrol has jurisdiction over all highways within Mexico. The State Judicial police investigate all crimes and arrests made in the municipalities of Mexico. The Municipal police are the local police forces of individual cities.

These four agencies do not communicate. This lack of communication lowers the effectiveness of all of the law enforcement agencies. They also all have a deep seeded fear and in some cases, distrust of the other law enforcement agencies. As a result of this distrust, there is absolutely no cross training within their agencies. *(The focus of most of this submission, the Tijuana Municipal Police, is divided into other groups with various responsibilities throughout the city.)*

- In Tijuana, the first police academy was started in 1986. This academy consisted of 95% classroom instruction with the remaining 5% involving self-defense tactics. There was no driver training, no traffic stop training, no building approach training. There was simply nothing related to officer safety training. The police academy remained that way until 1998 when members of the police command staff in Tijuana agreed to add a degree of officer safety tactics to the Tijuana police academy.

- Applicants for the police academy must be a Junior High School graduate, not have a criminal record, have at least 1-year residency within Mexico and have completed a required 1-year military service. The academy length is 6 months. There is no pay for a new academy recruit. The recruit that makes it through the first 4 months of the academy will receive a small stipend to cover a uniform and a small amount of equipment. Upon graduation the new officer hits the field looking forward to a paycheck of 3000 pesos per month. That translates to about \$290.00 a month in American dollars. Senior officers can expect to earn an average of 5000 pesos a month, nearly \$480.00 American dollars.
- The typical schedule for a Tijuana officer is to work an 8-hour day, six days a week. There is no overtime authorized for any officer. Most of the officer's workdays last 10-12 hours, covering arrests, reports and any traffic duty within the city. This extra work is for the same small amount in pay mentioned above.
- The budget for the Tijuana Police Department is only about 2% of the city's total budget for the year. For the beat cop in Tijuana, this means living without many of the normal items that American law enforcement officers now expect. One of these fundamental safety items is the bulletproof vest. Until two years ago, Tijuana officers were not required to wear one. Many still don't have one and if they do, some still refuse to wear them.  
  
Another budgetary problem is the lack of any advanced training after academy training. There is no Advanced Officer Training. Although primarily a budgetary problem, another issue the Tijuana Police Academy faced was getting senior patrol officers who didn't like

the idea of training anyway, to agree with additional training. The process was extremely political within their department even for items that will improve officer safety.

- An explanation of Mexican law. If an officer is attacked, with a knife, a club or any other deadly instrument, the officer cannot automatically use deadly force. They must be physically assaulted before the option of deadly force can be used. The threat of that force is not enough. Additionally, the force option an officer can use can only equal the force the suspect is using against the officer. Furthermore, if one officer of a two-officer team is assaulted with deadly force, both officers cannot use deadly force. The only officer that can use deadly force is the assaulted officer, the partner must only assist with non-lethal force.
- Lastly, with the implementation the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Tijuana has come into its own as a powerful city. With unemployment down to just 3%, political figures within Mexico City are slowly changing their view of Tijuana as an ignored stepchild. Federal money and grant funds are now being made available for law enforcement in Tijuana to improve equipment or add possible training elements.

1. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM?

A. Lack of training, including inadequate officer safety training.

With a limited history in officer training, very important training issue involving officer safety had not been adequately covered. Additionally, with minimal techniques, and a limited knowledge base in proper training techniques, police units were unable to train on many important officer safety techniques.

B. Officers homicides.

Between 1993 and 1996 a total of thirty-six (36) Tijuana Police Officers died. Twenty-nine (29) of those officers died as a result of a shooting. Of the 29 killed, thirteen (13) of these were violently killed while off-duty, some in ambush style.

2. HOW WAS THE PROBLEM IDENTIFIED?

Officials from the San Diego Police Departments Mexican Liaison Unit watching Mexican media and local news stories noticed a trend in officer injuries and homicides within Tijuana and other border cities. These trends showed officers did not use contact and cover, did not use proper radio safety techniques and did not know how to safely stop and handle known felony suspects or felony vehicles. (MEDIA ENCLOSURES)

Additionally, the Mexican authorities approached the Liaison Unit to inquire about training possibilities.

3. WHY WAS THIS PROBLEM SELECTED WHEN COMPARED TO OTHER PROBLEMS?

The high number of officer injuries and deaths due to a lack of training and education in the area of officer safety and tactics was extremely important. We, as law enforcement neighbors to Tijuana should be able to provide some assistance to slow or stop the abnormally high number of officer deaths.

Additionally, San Diego County, the sixth largest city in the nation, is in a unique situation. Being border neighbors with the fifth largest city in Mexico, the two cities

have become business and community partners in many areas including travel, tourism, education and with the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), economic partners within California. San Diego's local Fire Departments have been training with Mexican Fire Departments for nearly 30 years with great success. The two organizations have traded equipment and regularly train together in Mexico and the United States. With many strong partnerships in place, no formal programs were ever put into effect to assist law enforcement agencies in Mexico the same way.

4. WHAT WAS THE INITIAL LEVEL OF DIAGNOSIS?

- A. The crimes were similar in that they involved officer injuries and officer deaths. Based on suspect statements, witnesses, media investigations of officer assaults and homicides along with gang intelligence, it was found that a majority of these assaults and homicides were related to the increase in narcotic trafficking in and around the City of Tijuana and to increased enforcement of the narcotics rules and regulations.
- B. The area in which the assaults occurred were all within the Country of Mexico and involved several cities. We dealt closely with the City of Tijuana. Many of the assaults involved an off-duty ambush with some of them involving a traffic stop in densely populated areas.
- C. It was also found through investigation that suspected narcotic related killings within San Diego County were positively tied to Tijuana drug cartel's operating in Mexico.

## ANALYSIS

1. WHAT METHODS, DATA AND INFORMATION SOURCES WERE USED TO ANALYZE THE PROBLEM?

The City of Tijuana has kept records of the officer related injuries and deaths for several years. Their Administration Division made the data available for analysis.

The San Diego Police Department's Special Investigative Unit provided news clippings and stories of officer involved shootings and injuries. The San Diego Police Department's Crime Analysis Unit was consulted with the information and provided input. The manner in which the officers were killed, any contributing elements, any known suspects, and possible motivation were all taken into account during this phase.

2. HOW LONG AND HOW OFTEN WAS THE PROBLEM A PROBLEM?

The lack of education in the area of officer safety has long been missing from the training curriculum in Mexico's officer training system. The increase in narcotic trafficking along the border over the last 4-5 year's, brought an increase in the number of officer assaults and deaths. The peak year for officer deaths in Tijuana involving a firearm was 1994 with 11 officer homicides. The second highest year was 1995 when 10 officers were murdered.

The problems surrounding the lack of officer safety training has been ongoing for many years. Safety tactics were never taught, either by lecture or in practical application or role play.

3. WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THE PROBLEM AND WHAT WERE THEIR RESPECTIVE MOTIVATIONS, GAINS AND LOSSES?

The principal groups involved in this problem were Mexican law enforcement and the suspects involved in the assaults and homicides. Narcotic trafficking was pushed to the forefront in many law enforcement departments along the border when the United States Government insinuated a cut in funds if no cooperation or progress was made in curbing the drug trafficking.

The gains and losses were as follows:

- If the Mexican law enforcement units make an impact on drug trafficking the cartels lose money. **(Suspects lose/Law enforcement wins)**
- If money or drug shipments are interrupted, the cartels might strike back by assaulting or killing a Mexican law enforcement officer. **(Suspects win/Law enforcement lose)**
- If drug traffickers can intimidate law enforcement in Mexico with assaults and killing of officers, they can become more effective in safely crossing their illegal merchandise into the United States or in moving it through Mexican border city's without being molested. **(Suspects win/Law enforcement lose)**
- Increased officer safety training in the class and in a tactical application provides law enforcement the expertise to survive on and off duty attacks. **(Suspects lose/Law enforcement wins)**

4. WHAT HARM RESULTED FROM THE PROBLEM?

The loss of any life surrounding illegal activity is serious and sad. It takes on more serious ramifications when the loss of life is that of a law enforcement officer, tasked with protecting the citizens of their area. It's even more ominous when the suspects involved can attack and kill at their leisure thereby driving a knife of fear into both the unarmed citizens on the street and the armed law enforcement officer.

Additionally, if the officers remain unable to protect themselves or the public, the suspects will gain an incredible foothold on the community in which they prey. This problem could continue to grow and potentially impact law enforcement in San Diego.

5. HOW WAS THE PROBLEM ADDRESSED BEFORE THE POP EFFORT?

It was not addressed prior to this project. The communities involved had a sense of loss and increased fear but were powerless to make a change. Their voice was silenced by the fear of speaking out. Law enforcement was in an uncomfortable position in that they were forced to follow the actions of their highest-ranking supervisor. If an officer was killed and the ranking officer responded in disgust and anger, the subordinate officers could respond the same way and attempt to seek out and apprehend the suspects. If, however, the high-ranking officer said very little and seemed uninterested, the subordinates had to respect his actions and go about their work, keeping their anger or fear hidden.

These types of feelings have been around for years and are deeply rooted in the Hispanic law enforcement culture. These same feelings can also be found in mainstream Hispanic culture.



6. WHAT WERE THE RESULTS OF PRIOR RESPONSES?

There were no results because there had been no response. On the rare occasion when law enforcement took a stand against suspected offenders, the suspects would retaliate with another violent killing or assault. A cruel display of this process occurred in Mexico City after two law enforcement officers from Tijuana finished testifying in court against a suspect. As they walked away from the front of the courthouse a car drove by and brutally assassinated them.

On another occasion, a local Mexican newspaper attempted to make a public stand against suspected narcotics elements that were tied to several officer homicides. The paper printed stories about the narcotic dealings of the group. The editor of the newspaper was ambushed shortly thereafter on a public street. During the ambush, three gunmen opened fire on the editor and his bodyguard. The bodyguard was killed, and the editor was critically wounded. One ranking member of a Tijuana drug cartel was also killed. Five innocent civilians standing on the street were also wounded. This type of public display of deadly aggression was commonplace.

7. WHAT DID THE ANALYSIS REVEAL ABOUT THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM?

As described before, the media's investigations, suspect statements, witness accounts and gang intelligence revealed that narcotics activity played a major role in the assaults and deaths of the officers. Additionally, the peak year for officer deaths coincided with a tightening of restrictions along the United States/Mexican border as a result of a United States titled Operation Gatekeeper. The Mexican government was also attempting to tighten the hold on the narcotic trafficking. This resulted in several

assassinations of high ranking government officials involved in the arrest and prosecution of any narcotic offenders. The killing of the high ranking officials received substantial media coverage and served notice on the community, including law enforcement that the narcotics cartels could get to anyone who attempted to stand in their way.

In addition to the assassinations, the numbers of off duty ambush deaths increased. Historically, the death of an off duty officer didn't draw the same type of media coverage that the murder of an on-duty officer did. Targeting off-duty personnel had the same desired effect as public murders but exposed the suspects and their criminal organizations to much less public scrutiny.

A majority of these deaths, whether on-duty or off-duty, involved traffic stops or an unexpected ambush. Both types of incidents with prior training and education could have been avoided.

8. WAS THERE AN OPEN DISCUSSION WITH THE COMMUNITY ABOUT THE PROBLEM?

No, the community in Tijuana is not consulted on law enforcement issues. There is often no consultation between elements of the same law enforcement agency or between local, State or Federal agencies. Again, deep seeded cultural prejudices and fears keep communication between law enforcement and the community to a minimum. Even today, Mexican law enforcement officials do not openly discuss these issues with American law enforcement.

## RESPONSE

### 1. WHAT RESPONSES WERE UTILIZED?

The responses seemed at first to be typical in that they involved the training and education of police officers. This response takes a unique twist when you see that the police officers being trained are from Mexico and the trainers are American law enforcement officers. Mexico's unique legal structure and operating guidelines are significantly different from that of the San Diego Police Departments and American law enforcement in general.

Officers from the San Diego Police Department traveled to Mexico to train officers in their own environment. This training occurred several times a year. Once a year, a select group of law enforcement officers were chosen to travel to the United States for a week of training. This training involved both classroom instruction and real life scenarios. All of the scenarios involved the use of paint balls; vehicles/traffic stops and room entries with live paintball fire from both the role players and Mexican law enforcement participants.

### 2. HOW DID THE RESPONSE CORRELATE TO THE ANALYSIS?

In formulating the correct response some of the officer assaults and homicides within Tijuana, Mexico were broken down and analyzed. Several specific mistakes could be seen with analysis. The typical types of incidents were as follows:

*Traffic stop and double officer homicide: Two-officer unit on a traffic stop. Neither officer notifies dispatch of the location of the stop. The contact officer steps out of his vehicle and the passenger officer stays inside the patrol car. The driver of the suspect vehicle runs to the contact officer and shoots him once in the head. He dies*

*on the road outside of his patrol car. As the contact officer was shot, the passenger in the suspect vehicle runs to the patrol vehicle and shoots the passenger officer three times as he sits in the patrol car. The suspects flee in their vehicle.*

**Actual situation involving stolen vehicle and narcotics transportation:** *A lone police Captain stopped a semi-truck that was reported stolen. Two trailing vehicles were following the semi-truck and stopped behind the Captain. When the Captain approached the semi-truck, the occupants of the two vehicles exited and shot the Captain, killing him. The semi-truck drove away running over the body. The suspects abandoned the semi-truck, which was loaded with Man'juana.*

**These types of incidents were not unusual when looking at officer homicides within Mexico. The training given to the Mexican officers covered the basic officer safety needs. The training given covered the following:**

- **Arrest and control procedures.**
- **Contact and cover procedures for one, two and three officers.**



*Mexican police officers use newly learned technique of "contact and cover" to safely direct a suspect. (San Diego Police Instructor)*

- The approach of a vehicle during a "routine" traffic stop.
- The approach of a vehicle during a felony high risk traffic stop.



*Mexican officers practice a felony high-risk traffic stop as S.D.P.D. instructors stand by.*



*SDPD instructor directs Mexican officers during high-risk vehicle stop.*

- Radio procedures during vehicle operations and traffic stops.
- Normal pedestrian traffic stops.
- Felony high-risk pedestrian traffic stops.



*Mexican officers seem confused while practicing a pedestrian hot stop on a S.D.P.D. instructor.*



*San Diego Police instructors demonstrate the correct position for the pedestrian hot stop as Mexican officers observe.*

- Tactical building approaches and entries for alarms, burglaries and robberies.



- Firearms training and practice.



*Mexican officer's fire weapons on line in a live fire practice session.*

Mexican officers also learned about teamwork and experienced camaraderie that had rarely ) been part of any previous teachings. The officers, often maligned for being associated with "illegal activity" or "shaking down" tourists, showed pride while they performed the training exercise and classroom training. Officers from both sides of the border developed a mutual trust of each other and genuine friendships were seeded. Several ongoing, mentoring relationships were also established.

3. WHAT CRITERIA WAS IMPORTANT TO THE DEPARTMENT BEFORE IMPLEMENTING THE RESPONSE?

The safety of the any American officers who traveled into Mexico to teach was important. Furthermore, the security of any information taught was paramount.

Knowing that the drug cartels have infiltrated many law enforcement agencies posed a unique problem in regards to the information being taught. All of the information that was taught and the specific tactics used had to be screened for security issues. As noted before, Mexican laws and regulations are far different from that of the United States and limit the powers of police officers. The issues that were going to be taught to the Mexican officers had to be applicable to the officers in their home country or state.

Finally, the issue of selecting the correct Mexican candidates to attend the training sessions was important. Any officer that was suspected by their department of being involved in any illegal activity of any kind was excluded. The long-range plan was to train a select group of Mexican officers and have those highly trained and motivated officers return to their respective departments and teach the tactics they had learned.



This plan continues with another select group of Mexican officers being trained in portions of the San Diego Police Departments Regional Academy.

4. WHAT DID YOU INTEND TO ACCOMPLISH WITH YOUR RESPONSE (GOAL)

The primary goal was simple, lower the number of Mexican officers assaulted and or killed while conducting "routine" patrol duties. The secondary goals were perhaps more lofty. The image of many Mexican law enforcement agencies has long suffered at the hands of a few corrupt officers. While this training was designed to improve Mexican law enforcement safety tactics, our underlying goal was to teach Mexican officers self respect, self worth and show examples of integrity and morality related to law enforcement.

The San Diego Police Department Officers, the United States Border Patrol Agents, the San Diego Sheriffs Deputies, the San Diego County District Attorney's Investigators and other local Law Enforcement Agencies have shown the Mexican officers that they have friends in law enforcement that care about their jobs and their safety. Conversations with officers who have completed the training has indicated that partnerships that have been created, has helped make strides to slow the corrupt ideas within some of the Mexican law enforcement agencies.

5. WHAT DIFFICULTIES WERE ENCOUNTERED DURING THE RESPONSE IMPLEMENTATION?

From the outset of this project, hurdles have been encountered. An ongoing struggle comes from American law enforcement officers with a negative mindset towards Mexican law enforcement as a whole. This prejudice cannot be overcome until the

American officers see a change or see the Mexican officers attempting to make a change for the better.

Another hurdle was the coordination of travel for the Mexican officers into the United States for the week of training. United States Immigration issues were addressed, with travel questions and documentation problems being resolved.

A week of intense training involving specific training sites, transportation to and from the training sites, meals and supplies were not free. The cost issues for this program, including the training sites, materials, housing and sustenance were met through community donations and help from the City of San Diego and the San Diego Police Department.

Another issue that presented some difficulty was the difference between Mexican and American laws. Some of the American tactics cannot be used in Mexico. It would be illegal for Mexican officers to do some of the things we are allowed to do, based on our Constitution and court decisions. Certain training items had to be tailored and taught to suit Mexican law. An open dialogue with the Mexican officers being trained helped to solve this problem.

6. WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THE RESPONSE?

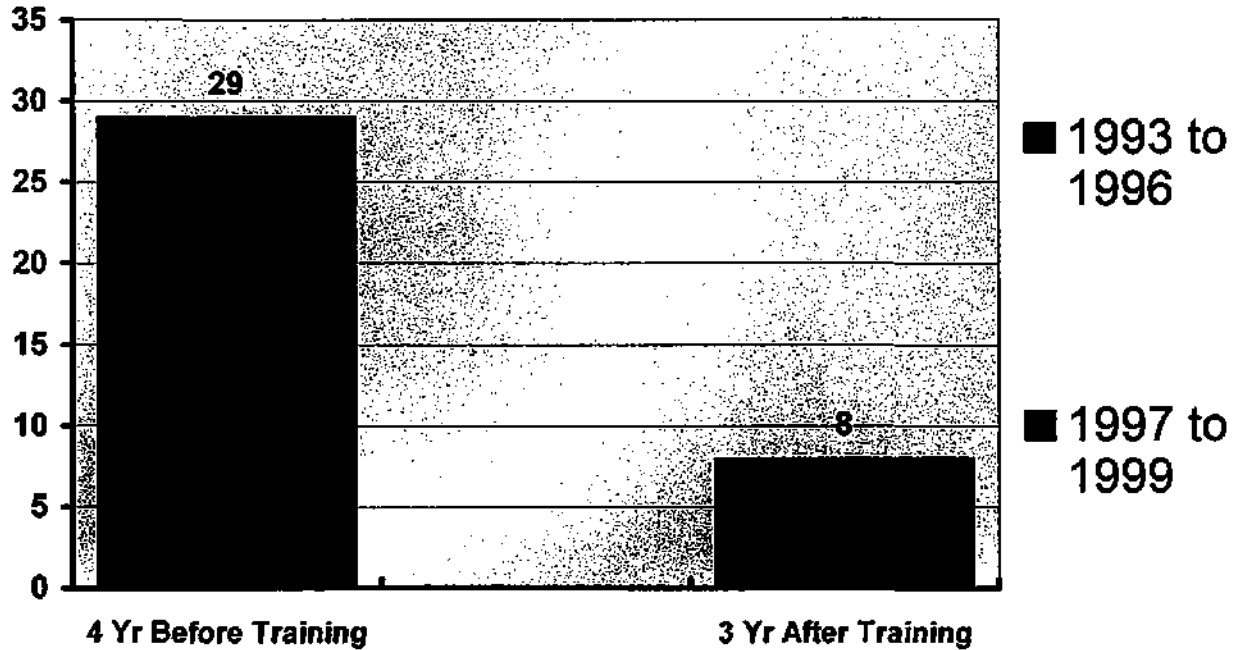
The initial response involved only members of the San Diego Police Department's Special Investigative Unit, specifically, the members of the Mexican Liaison Unit. They conducted training the first few times in 1996 by traveling into Mexico. The program was so successful it was expanded to include a 3 day training session which involved the San Diego County Sheriffs Department, the United States Border Patrol, the United States Navy, the County District Attorneys Office, the California Highway

Patrol and volunteers from the San Diego Police Department. The training was expanded in 1998 to cover 5 days of training. Additional agency involvement included the United States Customs Service and the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

# ASSESSMENT

## 1. WHAT WERE THE RESULTS?

### **Tijuana Police Homicide Rate from 1993 to 1999**



The officer homicide rate has fallen. The officer injury rate has fallen. Mexican officers are now teaching and assisting their fellow officers with safety issues. The Tijuana Police Academy for the first time has realized that officer safety tactical training is useful and necessary for street officers. The academy is now teaching and practicing officer safety issues. The idea of ongoing training is now a viable idea and is being seriously considered. The use of an incentive program for continued education and training appears to be a possible solution to get the experienced veterans to think about additional training.

Two years ago, the idea of cross training Mexican officers in the San Diego Police Department's Regional Academy was unheard of. Now, with the training inroads that

have been achieved through the International Police Program, the idea does not seem to be a mistake but is considered a viable, workable training solution.

2. WHAT WAS THE METHOD OF EVALUATING THE RESULTS?

Statistical data provided from Mexican authorities was evaluated. Unfortunately, the data didn't cover all of the necessary areas. Until recently, Mexican authorities didn't use the practice of crime analysis, as we know it. The data they provided was data previously used but was never considered for its broader implications. Further data that is useful and necessary for a complete study was not available at this time.

Other means of evaluation such as the reports in the Mexican news media on officer homicides and injuries were used. Additionally, speaking to officers, as they were trained provided insight about the results of the training. The officers spoke of this training in their cities and are now teaching other officers better safety tactics and concepts.

3. HOW LONG WERE THE RESULTS EVALUATED?

The IPP training program started in 1996. Visible results started to be seen towards the latter part of 1998. The statistics that were available from the Tijuana authorities from 1993 to present were evaluated. Mexican law enforcement is now attempting to compile other statistics that will be evaluated.

4. WHAT RESPONSE GOALS WERE ACHIEVED?

The bottom line is that the number of officer involved assaults and deaths has fallen. As seen in the graph in the Assessment Section #1, the percentage of officer

homicides has fallen by a remarkable **72 percent** since training was implemented. Follow-up training by Mexican officials will continue to benefit officers in Mexico and make the border region safer for the citizens of Mexico and the hundreds of thousands of visiting American tourists.

Additionally, many of the officers who have attended the training spoke of their improved self-image and of being prouder to be in law enforcement. This underlying goal can aid in making change in an entire organization.

5. **HOW COULD THE RESPONSES HAVE BEEN MORE EFFECTIVE?**

Addressing safety-training issues for all officers sooner could have lessened the learning curve of the officers on the street. The political nature of law enforcement agencies in Mexico and their commanders in dealing with new issues, makes it extremely hard and time consuming to make substantial changes.

Although not in our control, the political process in Mexico created a lack of continuity in the training direction. Each time a new politician is elected or placed in office, the law enforcement communities throughout Mexico change. These political changes produce law enforcement changes in upper and lower management. These changes throughout law enforcement slow organizational progress because of the need to re-train the new law enforcement leaders. Unfortunately, many times, new administrators and political servants require additional convincing before they allow further training or travel for training.

One last item that could have improved the type of training and the way the training was implemented would have been better record keeping in Mexico surrounding all officer injuries, assaults or deaths. This record keeping could have shed light on

specific deficiencies almost immediately so they could be addressed. This record keeping would also show training that is working and that which is not.

6. DOES THE RESPONSE REQUIRE CONTINUED MONITORING TO MAINTAIN THE RESULTS?

No, continued monitoring is not necessary. However, the training programs should continue to provide all law enforcement in Mexico the safety tactics they deserve. The International Police Program (IPP) will continue to train Mexican personnel in Mexico and is anticipated to grow every year.



*Then San Diego Police Chief Jerry Sanders presents a certificate of completion to then Tijuana Police Chief, C. Juan Manuel Nieves Reta.*

## **CLOSING REMARKS ON PROGRAM**

Success has brought several unexpected rewards. One such reward that has reached across several international boundaries is the new dialogue that has occurred between the San Diego Police Departments Criminal Intelligence Unit and the Federal Government of Mexico. The policies and procedures for effective interaction have completely changed for the better. No longer does there exist miles of consuming "red tape" in dealing with relatively simple cross-border issues. What used to require countless calls to the U.S. Consul General, the U.S. Attorneys office, the Mexican Government, or other international intermediaries, has been reduced to one or two simple telephone calls. The efforts of the IPP training program have proven to several Mexican government authorities that cooperation with the San Diego Police Department can be accomplished with ease. Furthermore, with the success and the increased media coverage of the International Police Program, companies are approaching the group to offer corporate sponsorship as a partner in this training endeavor thereby opening even more avenues to fund training elements.



## **AGENCY AND OFFICER INFORMATION**

1. The San Diego Police Department as a whole supported the project. The Chief of Police and his administration supported the idea and lent monetary assistance to support both the training abroad and the annual training event in San Diego. The Police Department's Pistol Range, academy resources and area stations donated materials and space for the training efforts. Officers throughout the department volunteered their time as trainers and as mentors to the Mexican officers when they visited San Diego. The Department's Mexican Liaison Office, within the Criminal Intelligence Unit, spearheaded the initial problem analysis. They were instrumental in the development and implementation of the overall training process.
2. The San Diego Police Department committed resources for this training, such as the Police Pistol Range, the Fire Arms Training Simulator or FATS System, ammunition, police training vehicles, classrooms and arrest and control training mats. Personnel schedules were adjusted to allow for any training.  
  
The annual weeklong training event held in San Diego was funded by donations from the community at large. Several local sponsors recognized the value of this training and committed several thousand dollars to feed, house and transport Mexican officers when they were in San Diego. Additionally, the City of San Diego and the Office of San Diego Police Chief donated funds in support of the project.
3. Although the problem-oriented policing model was used, it required an ever so slight modification to suit the very different issues within Mexico.

## **PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION**

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The following personnel were involved in the training of the Mexican officers in Mexico or in the United States. Their knowledge and assistance was invaluable.

Sgt. David Contreras	Officer Javier Carranza
Sgt. Juan Gonzales	Officer Ernie Servin
Sgt. Fausto Gonzalez	Officer Jose J. Cuervo
Sgt. Tony McElroy	Officer Luis Acevedo
Sgt. Reggie Frank	Officer Francisco Torres
Sgt. Carlos Medina	Officer Juan Cephaz
Sgt. Marshall White	Officer Carlos Ronquillo
Sgt. Alan Hayward	Officer Patti Clayton
D.A. Invest. Reyes Franco	Officer Art Perea
Det. Albert Leos	Officer Cesar Perea
Det. Oscar Vasquez	Officer Yolanda Nerio
Det. Miguel Penaloza	Officer Martin Castro
Det. Raul Delgadillo	Officer David Soliven
Officer Douglas Braca	

U.S. Border Patrol Agent Matt Torres  
California Highway Patrol Officer Jose Gutierrez