



# *Town of Lexington*

## Police Department

**Subject: Crime and Incident Analysis**

**Effective Date:**  
11-1-2011

**Review Date:**  
Annually

**By Order of: Mark J. Corr, Chief of Police**

**Policy &  
Procedure**

# 15C

## **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES**

Crime and incident analysis is a law enforcement agency function whereby data relating to crime and frequently occurring incidents is collected, collated, analyzed, and disseminated. Data is primarily generated from records and reports within the law enforcement agency. Additional data may be obtained from outside sources, such as other law enforcement agencies, other government agencies, private organizations and other agencies of the criminal justice system.

Crime analysis represents a system utilizing regularly collected information on reported crimes and criminals to prevent and suppress crime and to apprehend criminal offenders. Incident analysis identifies patterns of police service calls to help assess how police resources are being used. Crime and incident analysis involves the collection of valid and reliable data, employs systematic techniques of analysis and seeks to determine, for predictive purposes, the frequency with which events occur and the extent to which they are associated with other events. Collecting and analyzing readily available crime and incident data and making the analyzed information regularly available to individual line officers and investigators can make them more aware and consequently more effective.

The information obtained by analyzing the data is used to support management and operations. Patrol units are provided with information that can benefit them in the development of daily operations and tactical plans and to identify potential or actual police hazards that are within the Town. Officers receive information for use in strategic planning as it related to such topics as crime trends, agency resource allocation, crime prevention, and other associated areas. Incident analysis allows the Department to employ problem solving techniques for reducing unnecessary calls or resolve frequently occurring incidents.

## **15C – Crime and Incident Analysis**

It is the policy of the Lexington Police Department to use crime and incident analysis to provide quality information support for the pro-active management of crime prevention, investigative, and suppression strategies while also identifying problems that may effect the quality of life in Lexington.

### **PROCEDURE**

#### **A. Crime and Incident Analysis**

1. The Captain of Operations will be responsible for the crime and incident analysis and may enlist the aide of Patrol Division and Detective Bureau personnel.
2. The Captain of Operations will be responsible for collecting, organizing, analyzing, and interpreting crime and incident data to evaluate past performance and identify criminal activity patterns and trends for operational deployment, tactical intervention, strategic planning and management analysis.
3. Crime and incident analysis shall be organized on five primary levels. These levels shall be:
  - a. Data collection;
  - b. Data collation;
  - c. Analysis
  - d. Report Dissemination; and
  - e. Feedback/Evaluation.
4. When available, resources outside Lexington (i.e. North Eastern Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council -- NEMLEC) should be used to obtain or distribute crime and incident data that affects the region.

#### **B. Data Collection**

1. Crime and incident data may be extracted from any source available to the Department and shall identify all essential information required for analytical and reporting responsibilities. These sources of information may be but are not limited to:
  - a. Department incident reports and follow-up reports;
  - b. Field interview/observation reports;
  - c. Traffic citations or Massachusetts Traffic Stop Data Collection Forms;
  - d. Teletype and dispatch messages and records;
  - e. Internet, news articles; and
  - f. Documentation from other law enforcement agencies.

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2. Complete, consistent and timely reporting of crimes and incidents is essential to effective crime and incident analysis. It is important that all interactions with potential suspects, or persons of interest, no matter how brief are reported in a timely manner. It is equally important for supervisors to regularly review reports by the patrol staff.

### C. Data Collation

1. Crimetrack will be this Department's primary resource for collecting, indexing, and sorting data for analysis. Other data base programs available to Lexington, or through vendors responsible for processing material (i.e. parking tickets) may be used as a data source.
2. Data should be arranged so as to establish relationships between previously established criteria. Listed below is a brief list of suggested criteria:
  - a. Type of crime and frequency;
  - b. Geographic factors;
  - c. Time related factors;
  - d. Victim and target descriptors;
  - e. Suspect and or suspect vehicle descriptors;
  - f. Modus operandi factors;
  - g. Physical evidence information; and
  - h. Property loss.

### D. Analysis

1. Various programs will be used to analyze crime and incident patterns by series and type. These programs will include the creation of spreadsheets and mapping (both physical and computer generated mapping).
2. Analysis of this crime and incident related data and information should be focused in the follow areas:
  - a. Crime series and crime pattern detection;
  - b. Crime-suspect and suspect-crime patterns;
  - c. Crime potential and crime trend forecasts;
  - d. Resource allocation; and
  - e. Problem oriented or community police strategies.

### E. Report Dissemination

1. To be effective, crime and incident analysis must be disseminated to the appropriate personnel and organizational components in a timely fashion. Dissemination may be accomplished through regular or special briefings, meetings, written reports, charts and/or graphs.

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2. If there is a need for an immediate generation of a report due to a “spree” of a particular crime, the Chief of Police shall be briefed as soon as possible on any pattern or trend.
3. The Captain of Operations, or a designee, should attend regional meetings to share with other agencies and organizations trends occurring in Lexington. At a minimum, a Detective will attend the NEMLEC Detectives monthly meeting. At this meeting a prepared monthly report of relevant occurrences in town will be distributed to other attending agencies and organizations. Similar information prepared by outside agencies will be collected and compared with incidents in Lexington. This should be reported to the Department by:
  - a. Hot-Sheet items through log note entries;
    - i. The “Hot-Sheet” is a list of current happenings of interest that officers should be aware of due to their nature. This tool is a quick and effective way to catch officers up to date on noteworthy cases and potential crime trends on a small scale. This information is at the least read at each roll call and at times passed out in paper form.
  - b. Computer electronic bulletin board information;
  - c. Guardroom bulletin board postings; and
  - d. Discussion during roll call.
4. The release of crime and incident analysis information will be strictly controlled due to the confidential nature of the material pertaining to active investigations and uncharged suspects.
5. External requests for crime information for community relations or crime prevention functions will be referred to the Captain of Operations. This may be delegated to the Detective Bureau or assigned to a crime prevention officer, if available.
6. News media requests for crime information will be handled in accordance with ***Policy 54A – Public Information and the News Media.***
7. Outside requests for crime information from attorneys, businesses and private citizens will be referred to Central Records. The release of such information will be done so with the approval of the Chief of Police or his designee and also conform to the Public Information Law.

#### F. Feedback and Evaluation

1. Whenever a crime and incident analysis report is prepared and distributed about a specific trend and/or targeted offender, any officers impacted shall note actions they took as a result of the analysis report.

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Reporting back to the person responsible for the report will help improve the information, or subsequently written reports.

2. All personnel should not hesitate to comment or report on any shortcomings or errors in the analysis report.
3. An annual crime and incident report should be used when preparing annual goals and objections.
4. The Captain of Operations should review annually the number and quality of reports distributed each year. When possible, this review should document the impact that the reports may have had on crime and incident trends.