

Original Article

Volunteer police: History, benefits, costs and current descriptions

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Abstract People in free societies are best governed when members of the community take active participation in the oversight of the community. One mechanism for participation in such oversight is volunteer police. Volunteer police have been part of western policing since the inception of the concept of police, and the practice currently continues. Of benefit to police organizations, modern volunteer police provide financial, personnel and strategic benefits to police agencies. The communities policed benefit from having greater community participation in the policing process. Those who volunteer, as auxiliary or reserve police officers or sheriff's deputies, gain from the participation as well. And the world of security can benefit from having members volunteering with police agencies. After presenting a discussion on such benefits, this article discusses the potential costs and problems of volunteer police. It continues with data on national estimates of volunteer police in the United States, in addition to a more detailed presentation of volunteer police policies and data from a single state and data from single local agency within that state. It also suggests future research needs.

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Introduction

Throughout the history of English and American policing, the volunteer police officer has had a prominent role. This noble practice continues to this day within various volunteer police models. This article explores volunteer policing with a brief history, a discussion of recent volunteer police practices, and data of the phenomenon in one state and a county agency from within that state. Multiple constituencies benefit from having volunteer police, and the major ones are discussed. Goals and potential costs are reviewed as well. In this article, the phrases 'volunteer police', 'auxiliary police' and 'reserve police' have the same meaning, and are used interchangeably. In addition, while some reserve programs include part-time paid and seasonal paid officers, they are not the focus of this discussion. And while there are many volunteer police positions, such as Community Service Aides, Explorers, Search and Rescue teams, Chaplains, Citizens on Patrol, Senior Volunteers, Neighborhood

Watch liaisons and so on, this article examines only those volunteers who are sworn police officers who generally wear identical or very similar uniforms as regular paid officers, are armed, and have either full or reduced arrest authority. Also note that Sheriff's Deputies are often synonymous with police officers, and that deputies are included when only the word *police* is used.

Brief History

Police is a relatively modern concept, with the majority of human history being absent these agents of social control. Most social control before the advent of police was the result of *informal social control*, or the controlling influence on entities other than governmental agencies. The key behavioral control agents were family and community. The *formal* controlling entities, primarily the government, had only military forces as agents of social control. Domestic control was a part of their responsibilities, but crime fighting and order maintenance were not their concerns. They were to prevent or fight insurrection and to enforce tax collection.

The American system of policing is descended from English policing, so briefly looking at the development of English policing and the role of volunteers in it is appropriate. Without describing the entirety of English social control, the precursor to police developing can most likely be traced back to the late 800s, when Alfred the Great had groups of families bond together for mutual support. People were expected to raise a Hue and Cry if there was trouble, to alert others. These families were to police themselves for misdeeds and control the actions of outlanders. Ten families formed a *tithing*, ten tithings formed a Hundred, and eventually a Constable oversaw the Hundred. In the beginning, the Constables were unpaid for their duties (Reserve Police Officer Association, 2014), but eventually became the first tax-supported 'police' official. This evolved into groups of Hundreds within a geographic area, the Shire or county, coming under the direction of the Reeve. This role evolved into the head law enforcement officer in the county, the Sheriff. Realistically, the Sheriff's focus was more on tax collection and keeping the King's peace than protecting the safety and well-being of the commoners (Robin Hood's foe, the Sheriff of Nottingham, is a good literary example). The members of the public were not true volunteers, as they were required to perform their civic duties by royal decree. But they were not paid professionals either.

By the thirteenth century, all men in town had to serve on the *nightwatch*, an unpaid rotating responsibility. Those on duty kept watch for any and all disruptions of domestic tranquility, from fire, escaped livestock, to highway robbers and other thieves. The nature of the job and those doing it – untrained, unsupervised, unmotivated and unpaid – did not make it very effective (for more on the history of English police, see Reith, 1956; Chapman, and St Johnston, 1962; Critchley, 1978; Greenberg, 1984; Klockars, 1985; Greenberg, 2005).

By the mid 1700s the entire social structure of England changed rapidly because of the Industrial Revolution, which led to the urbanization and greater stratification of English society. The informal social control agents (family and community as control agents) and the power of 'forced volunteers' such as the nightwatch were no longer enough to control crime.



With the added conditions of increased population density and poverty, the perfect breeding ground for crime was created. Something had to be done.

In the mid 1700s in England, the use of ‘special constabularies’, or volunteer police services, grew (Swift, 2007). Soon after, Henry Fielding and volunteer associates created the Bow Street Runners to investigate thievery in London, and by 1763 they had public funding (Pringle, 1958, 1965). In 1798 London had a marine patrol to investigate crimes on the Thames, and in 1804, a horse unit patrolled the downtown area. But it was Robert Peel’s London Metropolitan Police that is considered the first modern police department, founded in 1829 (Miller, 1977). While the current work is not a treatise on early policing, it is important to note that Peel’s founding principles are clearly the forerunner of Community Oriented Policing (COP), and that he promoted the idea that police gain their legitimacy from public support of the role of police, not from the authority of the government, or even worse, from force. Quotes from Peel’s ‘Nine Principles’¹ highlight this:

2. The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police actions.
3. Police must secure the willing cooperation of the public in voluntary observation of the law to be able to secure and maintain the respect of the public.
7. Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence. (Durham UK Police, 2014)

The British colonies in the New World had naturally adopted the British policing models. Almost all colonial policing was conducted by citizen volunteers, although some of the ‘volunteering’ was mandatory (Bartels, 2014). After America became independent from the throne, the policing styles of the English Sheriff/Constable model for local policing remained. By the mid 1800s, both the rapid expansion of the American West and the industrialization and subsequent urbanization of the nation strained policing resources. In the West, volunteer and part-time Posse members supplemented full-time officers quite frequently (Bartels, 2014; RPOA, 2014), while in the cities, the formal models of Peel were adopted to create modern police agencies, with less reliance on volunteer officers.

Modern American volunteer police can trace their roots to the New York City Home Defense League (HDL), which started in 1914. These volunteers had limited training and authority, and were expected to be a resource to respond to natural or man-made emergencies (Greenberg, 1984). New York was seen as a potential target in World War I, and the HDL members would help protect it. Their assistance was needed as the ranks of paid officers would be depleted in the war effort. Protecting vital infrastructure from war threats parallels the use of local police today to supplement Homeland Security resources (Greenberg, 2005). A polio outbreak in 1916 was the first activation of all 8000 HDL members. In 1917 this group was renamed ‘police reserves’, and received slightly more training and authority. The members were initially required to be armed off duty as well, but that requirement did not exist for long. Soon they had to pay for their own equipment

and training (see Greenberg, 1984, pp. 51–58). Owing to the politics of the time, in 1928 almost all of the police reserves were discharged and by 1934 they were disbanded.

During the Second World War, home-defense programs increased but their roles only had limited policing responsibilities, if any. Volunteer police programs had a resurgence in the 1960s, particularly in minority areas. This resurgence was a mechanism to get the public more involved with local policing to legitimize the police as Peel's model would suggest. This expanded to include women in the 1970s, although initially they had to be partnered with a male colleague (Greenberg, 1984). In more recent times, as policing programs have embraced more community-based initiatives, and financial downturns cause police agencies to seek cost-effective solutions, volunteer police programs are an ideal mechanism to address both. These trends will be discussed below.

Benefits of Volunteer Police

To departments

There are numerous groups that benefit from having volunteer police. Police departments benefit, the volunteers benefit and the community at large benefits (this is covered later as part of beneficial results of COP). Police departments that have volunteer officers gain financially from (almost) free and flexible labor. In 2012, the median salary for police and sheriff's patrol officers was US\$55,270 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). With volunteer officers commonly required to serve 8 or 16 hours per month, and many volunteers serving many more (Wolf *et al.*, 2015), the savings add up rather quickly. In addition to savings because of volunteer hours, the departments do not have to hire full-time or paid part-time officers for seasonal needs or special events. The duties of most reserve programs require volunteers to serve at peak need events, ranging from sporting events and parades, to weather emergencies and search and rescue events (Greenberg, 1984).

In 2011, the nearly 700 members of the Los Angeles Police reserves saved the city about \$5 million (Hillard, 2011), and in 2013, the 86 reserve officers of the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office (PBSO) saved the agency \$578,230 (PBSO, 2014a). The 27 (on average) auxiliary officers of Portsmouth, Virginia saved the city over \$5.3 million from 1991 to 2013 (Hyman, 2014), with the 18 volunteer officers in 2013 saving almost \$320,000.² Agencies often rely on volunteers for financial reasons (Hilal and Olsen, 2010), and the US Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office, 2011) recommends the use of volunteers to offset budget cuts because of the recent economic downturns (COPS Office, 2011). While they are primarily referring to civilian help, they do include sworn officers in this recommendation. The unhappy irony is that underfunded agencies that need volunteers the most are least likely to be able to afford them because of start-up and continuing costs (see Potential Costs below).

In addition, police departments benefit by often hiring from the pool of volunteers. Police work is not for everyone, and the fit of individuals to specific agencies is not always beneficial to both parties. Volunteer programs can often serve as an *ad hoc* apprentice program from which departments might recruit potential full-time officers. There are non-

trivial costs with hiring, training and equipping officers (see Potential Costs below). If an officer is not a good fit, and has the added cost of collecting a salary, the costs for the agency are increased. Turnover of employees is a large cost in any agency or business (Boushey and Glynn, 2012), and hiring from a group of people who are known to the agency to be successful and fit in reduces the risk of turnover. Some agencies have the volunteers go through the early intense training and Field Training programs as volunteers, so that the agency does not have to shoulder the costs of the initial training if they hire from a volunteer pool. The agency can determine if the person is a good fit with minimal financial risk.

Volunteer police can help overburdened full-time officers by covering less serious calls, freeing the full-time officers to respond to or spend more time investigating more serious calls. Volunteers can provide back up during calls, either as a second officer in a car or in a second car. They provide manpower during special events or in times that require manpower surges, such as natural disasters or seasonal population peaks. In addition, and with less fanfare, volunteers may assist in administrative assignments such as record keeping (Greenberg, 1984).

Another benefit volunteers can provide to departments is with special operations units, in which special skills (such as technical diving, boat operations, medical, interpreting, technological or even financial and accounting skills) are needed and the members of the full-time ranks might not possess (Hilal and Olsen, 2010). Volunteers often hold full-time positions in areas outside of policing (Wolf *et al.*, 2015) and can have expertise in a variety of fields. Experts in these areas can also be used as instructors for in-house training or at academies. The community-at-large can be a large pool of talent from which to draw volunteer officers.

In summary, Greenberg (1984, p. 165) says that, 'A carefully screened and trained auxiliary police unit should help police departments in at least 10 ways:

1. An increase in police professionalism should take place as a result of a better understanding of the police role and the public's role in the achievement of social control.
2. The institutions of American democracy may be better protected because of the additional resources available to defend them.
3. The peace and stability of neighborhoods is preserved by the presence of uniformed civilian auxiliaries on street patrol.
4. The use of auxiliaries provides a pool of qualified personnel for use in emergencies and for any extra assignments.
5. Individuals contemplating a police career may gain valuable insights and the police may recruit better qualified candidates.
6. Individuals desiring to contribute their time and expertise may experience a deep sense of worth and self-respect and also foster social solidarity and norm reinforcement.
7. A constructive alternative to the tendency to engage in vigilantism is provided and the presence of citizens should encourage positive police performance and provide a measure of accountability back to the community.
8. Many police officers and supervisors of auxiliaries should experience a greater sense of job satisfaction as a consequence of their contacts with police volunteers.
9. Auxiliaries can provide feedback regarding policy and programs. They are a unique evaluation resource as a result of their dual statuses.

10. The use of auxiliaries for the delivery of a wide variety of social services is almost unlimited. They can be used to attack the social causes of criminal behavior’.

To volunteers

There are other benefits to the individuals volunteering in addition to making sure that policing and the specific department will be a valuable professional path to take. Some volunteer as reserve officers without the goal of ever becoming a full-time paid officer, although one English study suggests that the majority of their volunteer police aspire to become full-time paid officers (Pepper, 2014). In contrast to this, however, a recent large survey of American Sheriff’s Offices found that the primary motivation for volunteer officers was a sense of community service, with personal development, personal interest and offering useful skills following in importance (Wolf *et al*, 2015).

Volunteer officers who do not wish to become full-time paid officers have wide-ranging motivations for volunteering (Nesbit and Brudney, 2010; Wolf *et al*, 2015). Some volunteer for the sake of giving back to the community and the opportunity for personal fulfillment (Berg and Doerner, 1988; Wolf *et al*, 2015). Generically, people who volunteer are more likely to ‘exhibit positive emotions and social skills including openness, agreeableness, and extraversion’ (Matsuba *et al*, 2007), and are twice as likely to donate financially to charities as those who do not volunteer (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2014), indicating that the desire to help is probably a stable personality trait revealed in multiple outlets. Volunteering for police allows this type of person the ideal outlet for their need to help.

Other benefits to the individual volunteer include the opportunity to represent their community, such as a minority or politically developing one, in the police process. Given recent community/police distrust, this could be a community activist’s opportunity to engage in the community/police process from both sides of the table. Others may volunteer as a way to gain legitimacy in other professional endeavors, such as in related security fields. For example, in a contacted agency, a third of the volunteer officers were security officers for the local school district and needed a law enforcement agency to hold their certifications. Other volunteers benefit financially as some private security companies pay higher rates for certified officers, even if they are volunteers. And some volunteers may even be retired or ex-police officers who want to keep their certifications active, either for nostalgic or financial reasons. Finally, the opportunity volunteering as officer provides for excitement (Berg and Doerner, 1988). Commonly, volunteer officers are mid-career in other fields (Wolf *et al*, 2015) and use volunteering as, to quote one volunteer, ‘a midlife crisis’. In summary, the individuals who volunteer to be an officer gain from the activities, or they likely would not be doing them (Rand, 1964).

Unfortunately, there is limited research about these individuals as most individual-level research about the characteristics of police volunteers focus on civilian volunteers, not sworn ones (Ren *et al*, 2006; Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2014; International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2014). Non-sworn volunteers are most likely very different from sworn volunteers. For example, Ren *et al* (2006) find that more women than men volunteer for police programs, which is not the case for sworn volunteers. Wolf *et al* (2015) found that over 90 per cent of the sworn volunteers were male. Further research needs to be done to fully document the characteristics and motivations for volunteer officers.

To security

The security world can benefit from volunteer policing as well. As noted above, individual volunteers employed by various security entities may gain from their positions as volunteer officers both in terms of job opportunities and salaries. In addition, the field of security as a whole may do well to embrace volunteer police. Traditionally, the police protect public interests while security agents have protected private interests and assets (Shearing and Stenning, 1981; Wakefield, 2003; Joh, 2004). Along with this, security is more focused on disorder reduction and loss prevention than enforcing laws (Nalla and Heraux, 2003). But those lines are blurring, and the capabilities, training and legal knowledge for the protectors need to incorporate both worlds (Wakefield, 2007; Ruddell *et al.*, 2011). Hutchinson and O'Conner (2005, p. 131) note that 'We stand on the brink of a more complex future in which alliances of (public, parochial and private) agencies and interests are drawn together in intricate networks of policing'. The police, community and private security are co-producers of public safety and crime control in the United States (Brewer and Grabosky, 2014). A natural bridge between these agencies (with both interacting with the greater community) and interests would be volunteer police, employed by security agencies. Security personnel engaged in volunteer policing could make excellent leadership in the private security world, as they have formal training, experiences, operational familiarity and relationships with police. There is some research that suggests private security has some public image issues (Manzo, 2010), and having volunteer officers working as security might improve this image.

Strategic Benefits: Professional and Community Oriented Policing

While there are benefits to the departments that have volunteer police officers and to the officers themselves, there are also strategic benefits to having volunteer officers that will include benefits to the community. The two most common and time-tested strategies of policing that are used today are both enhanced by having volunteer police officers. These are Professional Policing and COP.

Professional Policing developed in the 1920's in response to the failures of the ineffective, corrupt and brutal policing systems in turn-of-the-century America. The ultimate goal of the professional policing is crime control. This is accomplished by a group of rigorously selected, well-trained and well-educated professionals whose primary, if not sole function, is to fight crime. In this model, police try to achieve this goal with three techniques: patrol, rapid response to calls and after-the-fact investigations (Alpert and Moore, 2001). These all rely in some way upon manpower. With these three techniques, departments seek to reduce crime through deterrence by the presences of the police, or through incapacitation from catching criminals, which in turn should lead to both specific and general deterrence. Supplementations by volunteer police officers support all of these techniques of professional policing. Volunteer police can supplement the regular police in times of economic downturns or even strikes, too. This strategy, though, may not always work as a long-term solution. For example, when 3000 police were laid off in New York City in the mid 1970's, the auxiliary reduced their patrols in solidarity. They did not want to be seen as 'scabs' (Greenberg, 1984).

The primary responsibility of most volunteer police is to augment patrol. If the volunteers add additional cars on patrol, the visible deterrence and response times improve. The increased numbers of on-duty cars can also provide for a larger community coverage area. Serving as a second officer in a car providing immediate back up can increase visibility and effectiveness in crime fighting tactics used in professional policing. Also, skilled volunteers can provide special services based on their non-police training and employment (such as a volunteer who might be a medical doctor or a lawyer, or any number of professions), with criminal investigations and even supplement the pool from which the department draws officers for undercover details (Greenberg, 1984; Arwood *et al*, 2005; Ferranto, 2011; Scoville, 2014).

While professional policing has been the primary policing strategy in the past century, it has its shortcomings. Most damning is that it does not effectively achieve its primary goal, crime control (Skogan and Frydl, 2004). Goldstein (1990) pointed out that professional police are more interested in the appearance of efficiency and order than actually helping the public and ignore the differing needs within the community. By design professional policing creates social and physical distance between the public and the police (see Carter and Radelet, 1999; Uchida, 2001; Walker and Katz, 2002). Police can develop an ‘us versus them’ mentality and sub-culture, and have difficulty relating to people other than police. Police interaction with minority communities in the late 1960s and early 1970s stand as exemplary of this effect, and is likely still an issue. Regardless of its flaws and effectiveness, it is still a primary strategy of modern police and volunteers are an asset in its implementation.

COP evolved as an answer to some of the concerns with the professional model (Greene, 2000; McDonald, 2001), such as the ineffectiveness of patrol and investigation and the social barriers between police and the public. Hand-in-glove, getting minorities involved in policing is one of the original founding goals of COP (Manning, 1977; Radelet, 1986; Greene, 2000), so that those being policed were represented within the ranks of those doing the policing – giving legitimacy to the police. COP’s goals were less about crime control and more about general issues of public concerns, that is, increased accountability to the public, non-emergency services, order maintenance activities, community service, fear reduction and ‘creating a more harmonious relationship between the police and the public’ (Greene, 2000, p. 302). COP goals are reminiscent of Peel’s original ideas of policing.

The goals of COP are to strengthen feelings of safety and reduce fear and elicit cooperation from citizens by forming a bond between community residents and the police. In this strategy, police are members of the community who interact with and are part of the larger public. Having members of the community volunteer to be police officers is the very essence of community policing. Volunteers are people who come directly from the community, who are not ensconced into the subculture of policing, and impact the way police see the community and how the community sees the police. One study of police supervisors found a strong relationship between the support for volunteers and an agency’s community policing philosophy (Phillips, 2013). Volunteers can be the bridge between the police and the community policed.

Potential Costs and Concerns

Volunteer police are not a completely free resource for agencies to take advantage (Brudney, 1999). Some departments pay for the prospective volunteers to go through education and



training to become certified, the physical and aptitude tests, the polygraph and psychological tests, and background investigations. Other agencies require the volunteers to support themselves for all of these costs, with many departments splitting the costs with the volunteers. To a varying degree, the agencies pay for uniforms and equipment. This can include multiple uniforms, a duty vest, associated gear, firearm, ammunition and radio, and can cost up to \$6000–7000 for the initial equipment outlay. These are usually up-front, one-time costs, and would have to be spent on paid officers as well. The agency usually covers workman's compensation, death benefits and other forms of insurance. In 1976 President Ford approved a federal law ('The Public Safety Officers Death Benefits Act' 42 USC 3796) that provided death benefits for families of police and firemen and it includes volunteers (Greenberg, 1984).

The benefits of volunteer police discussed above show strong reasons for having volunteer police programs, but there are a few potential problems as well. In addition to financial costs, there are potential issues of social cost. Volunteer police may face resentment from paid officers, as they can potentially cut in to overtime pay and off-duty details. The use of unpaid officers could lead to conflicts with unions as well (Wallace and Peter, 1994). As such, volunteer officers may risk isolation and have limited acceptance from the paid officers. The limited research on the topic (see Phillips, 2013) suggests that volunteers are accepted within the police subculture. Any lack of acceptance of the volunteers most likely will not carry over to the public, as the volunteers often appear identical to the full-time paid officers. The public cannot tell volunteers from paid, but the distinctions are known within the ranks.

Other issues that volunteer police might face include social confusion by the volunteers. It might be difficult for them to explain to others why they spent the time, money and effort to volunteer for a job others do for pay – a job that is inherently high-risk. Volunteering also may cause strain in the day-to-day full-time jobs of the volunteers, both in terms of time commitments and social distances. To the full-time police, volunteers might not be embraced fully as police, but in the non-police world, they might be given whatever pejorative characteristics given to police.

Volunteer police also share in the regular police burdens as well. They may face the same risk of lawsuits, negative public interactions, possible injury, stressful situations, psychological trauma and familial pressures that paid officers face, without the social support within the ranks of the 'regular' police.

Finally, volunteer police are almost never able to gain experience that full-time officers have. Considering that volunteers may patrol for 8 or 16 hours a month, or even 24 or 32, it can take years for them to accumulate same experience full-time officers accrue in much less time. This is an issue of both officer and public safety. On the other hand, it seems volunteer police are much less likely to become complacent in their duties, since they are engaged in them so infrequently.

Current Volunteer Police

National

National bureaucratic interest in volunteer policing seems limited. The largest data system regarding police, the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports, collects data on numbers of police, but limits the collection to full-time paid officers (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2013). The

Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) previously conducted a survey about civilian volunteer programs, Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS), but the funding has been cut (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2014). The survey collected data about all volunteers in police departments and cannot give estimates on sworn volunteers. There are very few national estimates of how many sworn officers are volunteers. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) surveys collect these data from a sample of agencies, but BJS did not report the numbers from the most recent available survey, 2007. The only available national estimates are from 2003 (Hickman and Reaves, 2006a, b). These reports do not specify if the reported data are for volunteers, but report the estimated numbers of full-time sworn reserves and auxiliaries, and part-time sworn reserves and auxiliaries (as well as non-sworn). These are the closest approximations for volunteer officers currently available. And although the 2007 BJS reports did not include these estimates, they supplied the numbers for this article (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014). Only the sworn reserve and auxiliary data are presented in Table 1, excluding the non-sworn reserve and auxiliaries.

Table 1 shows that between 2003 and 2007, the number of sworn reserve and auxiliary officers remained relatively stable. The number of full-time sworn decreased slightly, but the number of part-time sworn increased slightly. While the numbers of full-time sworn reserve and auxiliary officers are similar between police departments and sheriff's offices in both 2003 and 2007, police departments had more part-time sworn than sheriff's offices in both 2003 and 2007. However, of the police departments that have reserves or auxiliaries, they average about six officers per department, while the sheriff's offices with reserves or auxiliaries have almost 16 officers on average, as the percentage of sheriff's offices that use full-time sworn reserves or auxiliaries is almost double of police departments and higher for part-time as well. Both police departments and sheriff's offices are much more likely to have part-time reserve or auxiliary officers than full-time (mid 30 per cent as compared with 7 per cent for police, and 44 per cent as compared with 12 or 13 per cent for sheriff's offices) (Hickman and Reaves, 2006a, b; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014). It will be interesting to see what the trend did after 2007, when the national economic downturn began in earnest. The numbers might increase, as agencies could rely on volunteers more as a cost saving measure. Or they could decrease, if agencies were unable to support the costs required to have a reserve or auxiliary program.

Florida

A review of every state volunteer police program is beyond the scope of this article, so one state, Florida, is described. Florida has well-documented and high standards for volunteer police. An introduction to the state rules and regulations concerning volunteer police follows. In addition, a review of a single agency's program in Florida will be highlighted.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) recognizes three types of police officers: full-time, part-time and auxiliary. Florida statute refers to these as 'Law Enforcement Officer', 'part-time Law Enforcement Officer' and 'auxiliary Law Enforcement Officer' (SS 943.085-943.255). It is impossible to separate volunteers from paid officers within the counts of part-time and auxiliary, but both titles may include volunteers. Auxiliaries are most likely to be almost exclusively volunteers.

**Table 1:** Reserve and auxiliary in police departments and sheriff's offices (2003 and 2007)

	<i>Percentage of agencies using</i>	<i>Total number</i>	<i>Average number^a</i>	<i>Percentage of agencies using</i>	<i>Total number</i>	<i>Average number^a</i>
2003	7%	Police full-time sworn 5376	6	35%	Police part-time sworn 26 625	6
	13%	Sheriff's Office full-time sworn 5209	13	44%	Sheriff's Office part-time sworn 20 844	16
		Total full-time sworn 10 585			Total part-time sworn 47 469	
			Total: 58 054			
2007	7%	Police full-time sworn 5255	6	32%	Police part-time sworn 28 340	7
	12%	Sheriff's Office full-time sworn 5826	16	44%	Sheriff's Office part-time sworn 19 441	15
		Total full-time sworn 11 081			Total part-time sworn 47 781	
			Total: 58 862			

^aOnly includes agencies with sworn reserves and auxiliary.

Table 2: Florida Department of Law Enforcement law enforcement auxiliary officer basic recruit training program

<i>Law enforcement auxiliary officer prerequisite course</i>	<i>Course hours</i>
Law enforcement auxiliary introduction	27
Law enforcement auxiliary patrol and traffic	19
Law enforcement auxiliary investigations	17
Dart-firing stun gun	8
First-aid for criminal justice officers	40
Criminal justice firearms	80
Criminal justice defensive-tactics	80
Law enforcement vehicle operations	48
Law enforcement auxiliary officer program total	319

Full-time and part-time officers are required to attend a full academy or its equivalent, and pass the State Officer Certification Exam (FDLE, 2014a). The academy is a minimum of 770 hours (FDLE, 2014b), but participating academies often require around 850 hours. Part-time officers may be paid but also may be volunteers, and are often referred to as ‘Reserve 1’ Officers, even though this is not a formal state designation. ‘Auxiliary law enforcement officers’ require entry-level certification as stated by Chapter 11B-35, Florida Administrative Code, and Chapter 943, Florida Statutes. Auxiliary Officers are often referred to as ‘Reserve 2’ Officers. Auxiliary officers take a 319-hour training academy, with identical high-liability requirements as the full academy, and do not have to take the State Officer Certification Exam (FDLE, 2014c). The required hours are reduced to 271 hours if the hiring agency does not require the Law Enforcement Vehicle Operations course (see Table 2).

Auxiliary officers in Florida are ‘any person employed or appointed, with or without compensation, who aids or assists a full-time or part-time law enforcement officer and who, while under the direct supervision of a full-time or part-time law enforcement officer, has the authority to arrest and perform law enforcement functions’ (943.10 (8)). Anecdotally, ‘under direct supervision’ has been expanded to include situations in which auxiliary officers are in radio contact with a full-time officer, and even cell phone contact. In appearance, auxiliary officers are usually identical to full-time officers, except their badge may say ‘auxiliary’ or ‘reserve officer’. Note that Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) auxiliary officers wear a different color pant to distinguish them from full-time officers (FHP, 2013). FHP reserve officers wear the same uniforms as the full-time officers (FHP, 2011).

An interesting note is that when off-duty, auxiliary officers are in some ways legally recognized the same as full-time officers and other situations they are not. For example, auxiliary officers are held to the same restrictions as full-time officers in terms of holding public office while they are employed as volunteer officers. That is, they may not hold public office (Florida Office of the Attorney General, 2014). Contrary to this, off-duty actions such as arrest authority or carrying a firearm under the auspices of the hiring agency are not protected (SS 943.085-943.255).

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement has provided data about auxiliary officers for this article (see Table 3; FDLE, 2014d). There is on average slightly more than one auxiliary officer per police department, but more than 11 per sheriff’s office, following the

Table 3: Police counts in Florida (October 2014)

	<i>Police agencies in Florida</i>	<i>Fully-sworn officers^a</i>	<i>Number of auxiliary employments</i>	<i>Fully-certified auxiliary</i>	<i>Auxiliary certified</i>	<i>Not yet certified</i>
Police	287	19 101	295	160	122	13
Sheriff	67	20 427	747	399	337	11
State	55	4657	286	60	225	1
Total	409	44 185	1328	619	684	25

^aIncludes the fully sworn auxiliary employments.

national trend that sheriff's offices on the whole are more likely to employ auxiliaries. Most likely, most police departments have no auxiliaries and a small number have the bulk of them. For example, it may appear that state level agencies average about 5.5 auxiliary officers per agency, but the distributions are not shared evenly between all agencies. A single state agency has the bulk of all State-level auxiliaries – the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles – has 238 (83 per cent) auxiliary officers. The agency with the second largest number is the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, with 32 (11 per cent). The remaining agencies with auxiliaries have six or fewer auxiliary officers.

Overall, it appears that local police departments in Florida are less likely to take advantage of the benefits of auxiliary programs. Both police departments and sheriff's offices have more fully certified auxiliaries than auxiliary-certified officers, but the state agencies have almost four auxiliary-certified auxiliary officers for every fully certified auxiliary officer. About 3 per cent of all law enforcement officers in Florida are auxiliary – either fully certified (1.4 per cent) or auxiliary-certified (1.6 per cent).

Palm Beach County

Within Florida, some police agencies make great use of volunteer police and through strong departmental support reap various benefits from the programs. One such agency with a large reserve program is the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office PBSO. PBSO is a large agency with about 4000 employees, 1500 of whom are sworn law enforcement officers. They also have 2700 (non-sworn) volunteers (Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, 2014b). PBSO has a very active Reserve Unit, and uses the officers for a wide range of actions ranging from first responder road patrol functions to specialized units such as Narcotics, Warrants, Community Policing, Marine Unit, Mounted Unit, Children's programs, DUI checkpoints and special events throughout the county. The PBSO Reserve Unit in 2013 had 86 reserve deputies, of whom 33 were auxiliary certified (Reserve 2) and 53 were full-time certified (Reserve 1). Fulfilling the goal of using reserve programs for both the agency and the individual volunteer to determine if they are suitable for each other, PBSO hired 21 (24 per cent of the reserves) to full-time paid employees in 2013 (Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, 2014a). PBSO reserves are required to volunteer a minimum of 16 hours of road patrol details a month, although members of specialized units have this requirement waived. The program has a reserve Captain, three reserve Lieutenants and eight reserve Sergeants.

Table 4: Beach County Sheriff's Office Reserve Unit hours

<i>Hours</i>	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Road patrol	3401	14.76
Cresthaven initiative (community policing)	2033	8.82
Prisoner transport	1296	5.62
Auto theft	270	1.17
Parks division	212	0.92
Peanut Island	707	3.07
Marine unit	494	2.14
Narcotics	239	1.04
Detective bureaus	2970	12.89
Bike patrol	66	0.29
SWAT special events/call out	2159	9.37
Training/special assignment	9202	39.92
Total	23 049	100

Table 4 shows the breakdown of hours volunteered by the PBSO Reserve Unit. The data shown reveal that the various goals of volunteer policing are being met by this volunteer program. They engage in professional policing actions (such as road patrol and detective bureau, 14.8 and 12.9 per cent of all volunteering time, respectively), COP (including the Cresthaven Initiative and bike patrol, 8.9 and 0.3 per cent) and reduce the work load strain of the full-time officers (prisoner transport, 5.6 per cent). These actions together also fulfill the other major goal of volunteer policing: saving money. The Reserve Unit saved the county \$578 230 in 2013 (Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, 2014a), although this is a crude estimate. It is a simple multiplication of the number of hours volunteered by a base hourly rate. It does not include costs accrued by the reserves, but also does not include any monies generated by the reserves, such as fines paid or assets seized.

In light of the discussion above regarding the potential benefits to the agency, the volunteers themselves, the community and the strategic benefits of having volunteer officers, PBSO appears to be an agency that recognizes the advantages of having volunteer officers and is willing to make the investment to reap the dividends. It can be a model for other agencies wishing to start or expand their volunteer officer programs.

Conclusions

There is a great need for data on this topic to guide police agencies, communities and volunteers in decisions concerning volunteer police programs. With limited estimates of the number of reserve and auxiliary officers providing the only national data related to volunteer police officers, the true impact of these programs cannot be known. Information about the numbers, size, costs and savings would be an improvement on the *status quo*, but collection of richer details would be even better to evaluate the impact of volunteer police programs on budgets, personnel issues, community satisfaction and the volunteers themselves. In addition to accurate counts of participation and budgetary data, possible data topics would include state- or agency-level information such as any distinction between part-time paid officers and volunteer officers, the training and certification requirements for volunteer

officers, and a measure of responsibility for paying associated costs of the programs (agency supported, volunteer supported or a mix). Individual-level data could include the demographic characteristics of volunteer officers, their education, the number hours of volunteering they are required to perform and the number of hours they actually serve. Qualitative data might explore their motivations, rewards and other interactive experiences.

Volunteer police have been part of policing for as long as there has been policing. The current use of volunteers is beneficial to the supporting agencies for budgetary, personnel and strategic reasons; to the individual volunteers; and to the community policed. The initial outlay for volunteer programs should be seen as an investment that will pay dividends for years to come. Volunteer programs are worth the effort (Phillips, 2013) and show the community that they are a necessary part of the policing equation in a democracy. Sullivan and Transue (1999) posit that the key to optimal governance and oversight is the participation of those governed in the process of oversight. Democracies depend on an ethic of civic participation. Volunteerism is this belief in action, and volunteer police are a perfect manifestation of these ideals.

Notes

- 1 There is some historical debate as to whether Peel came up with these himself, or later scholars attributed them inappropriately to him (see Lentz and Chaires, 2007).
- 2 These are not net savings; they do not include associated costs or gains, such as fines or seized property. These figures simply represent a multiplication of hours volunteered by an hourly salary constant.

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