

Law Enforcement Consolidation Task Force

Accreditation Work Group Report

October 2011

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Accreditation Work Group

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In order to ensure a basic level of quality, the practice of accreditation arose in the United States as a means of conducting nongovernmental peer evaluation of institutions and programs. Through an inspection process, accreditation provides independent and objective evidence of an agency's commitment to excellence in leadership, resource management and delivery of services. The accreditation process provides participating agencies with state and nationally accepted best practice standards.

Numerous studies and department testimonials have demonstrated the financial benefits associated with obtaining and maintaining accreditation. Such an example would be a law enforcement agency that saved \$16,000 annually on professional liability insurance due to their accredited status. Numerous agencies have experienced lower average losses per officer while non-accredited agencies experienced higher losses directly related to risk management, loss control, insurance liability and legal defense of civil lawsuits.

In Florida, state law enforcement agencies and Inspector General Offices utilize a wide range of strategies to accomplish their accreditation function. Persons assigned to the accreditation function were found to be interwoven into the fabric of the agency, performing other required duties such as staff inspections, criminal and administrative internal investigations, emergency response and training. In fact, accreditation was found to represent less than 50% of the duties assigned to most of the full-time employees (FTE) assigned to accreditation. Many agencies accomplish their accreditation staffing needs by sharing accreditation duties between numerous sworn and/or civilian members.

The Accreditation Work Group agrees that efficiencies may be gained if it is determined that units of state law enforcement should be consolidated. Such efficiencies may include a reduction of personnel responsible for the accreditation function and other accreditation related costs. Additionally, several accrediting bodies are currently conducting internal reviews of the accreditation process in an effort to identify efficiencies and cost savings.

It is the unanimous belief of the work group that consolidating the accreditation management responsibilities of all participating state agencies would create another line of bureaucracy and still require each agency to dedicate personnel to coordinate the collection of required proofs of compliance from operational units. Each accredited entity is unique and requires institutional knowledge of the accreditation staff to remain successful in pursuing and maintaining accreditation. It is also critical to note that the transfer of these personnel into one consolidated entity would require the individual agencies to hire additional workers to take over the other tasks these employees perform in addition to accreditation functions.

In the event of consolidation of law enforcement functions or activities, the Accreditation Work Group will remain accessible to the Task Force to provide information and guidance regarding the impact such consolidation will have on the accreditation process

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BACKGROUND

On May 26, 2011, Governor Rick Scott signed SB 2160. Among other things, this bill created the *Law Enforcement Consolidation Task Force*, responsible for evaluating any duplication of law enforcement functions throughout state government and identifying any functions that are appropriate for possible consolidation. The Task Force was also charged with evaluating administrative functions including accreditation, and with reporting to the Legislature any recommendations and plan developed by the Task Force by December 31, 2011. Per the legislation, any plan submitted should include recommendations on the methodology to be used to achieve any state law enforcement consolidation recommended by the Task Force by June 30, 2013. The Task Force expires June 30, 2012.

In addition to drawing from the assistance of appropriate subject matter experts, the Accreditation Work Group is composed of participating state agencies that have law enforcement and/or inspector general components:

- Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Office of Inspector General (FDLE)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)
- Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement (AgLaw)
- Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation (DBPR), Division of Alcoholic Beverages & Tobacco (ABT)
- Florida Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles, Florida Highway Patrol (FHP)
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Inspector General (DEP)
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Law Enforcement (DEP)
- Florida Department of Children & Families (DCF), Office of Inspector General
- Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA)

SCOPE

The scope of the Accreditation Work Group is to examine the various state law enforcement agencies (or divisions) to determine the types of accreditations held, current status of accreditation, resources dedicated to accreditation, and the organizational placements of the accreditation function as they relate to the agency's core mission.

METHODOLOGY

A series of meetings were held with work group members and subject matter experts. It was decided the Accreditation Work Group would provide the Task Force with a definition of accreditation and global analogies, benefits recognized by accredited entities, associated costs, and a review of the status of accreditation functions within state law enforcement.

Two surveys were distributed to state agencies having law enforcement and/or inspector general components in an effort to gain information related to their agency's staffing, accreditation function, types of accreditation, financial resource allocation and support to their agency's core mission.

Responses were received from the following state Divisions of Law Enforcement:

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- Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
- Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE)
- Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement (DOACS AgLaw)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)
- Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco (ABT)
- Florida Highway Patrol (FHP)

Responses were received from the following state Offices of Inspector General:

- Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
- Florida Department of Law Enforcement/Capitol Police (FDLE)
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DOACS)
- Florida Highway Patrol (FHP)
- Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- Florida Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Florida Department of Health (DOH)
- Florida Department of Lottery (DOL)
- Florida Department of Revenue (DOR)
- Florida Department of Education (DOE)

HISTORY OF ACCREDITATION AND BENEFITS RECOGNIZED

HISTORY

Like education, public safety in the United States has no federal Ministry of Law Enforcement or other centralized authority exercising single national control over public safety agencies. The states assume varying degrees of control over public safety, but in general, public safety agencies are permitted to operate with considerable independence and autonomy. Consequently, police departments, sheriff offices, departments of law enforcement, corrections, and forensic laboratories can vary widely in the character and quality of their programs. In order to ensure a basic level of quality, the practice of accreditation arose in the United States as a means of conducting nongovernmental peer evaluation of institutions and programs.

LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION

In 1971, a commission was appointed by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) “to formulate, for the first time, national criminal justice standards for crime reduction and prevention at the state and local levels”. Their efforts resulted in a report, published in 1973, that suggested standards designed to make law enforcement more effective and to provide agencies with guidance in an effort to improve their own operations. Accreditation was considered part of the answer to the problems faced by law enforcement. The report was received by the law enforcement community as being well-researched, documented, reliable and practical. While supported by law enforcement however, no serious effort was undertaken to meet the report’s thirteen recommendations and 107 standards.

As a result of this report, the Department of Justice (DOJ) provided a grant to advance law enforcement by establishing voluntary standards to four executive associations: International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), National Sheriffs Association (NSA), National Organization for Black Law Enforcement

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Executives (NOBLE), and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). The result was the creation in 1979 of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA), a private, non-profit corporation.

FLORIDA'S LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION

In the late 80's to early 90's, several Florida Sheriffs and Police Chiefs authored a feasibility study and prospectus about Florida establishing an independent, voluntary, non-profit law enforcement accreditation program. In 1993, the Legislature passed Florida Statute 943.125, which encouraged the Florida Sheriffs Association (FSA) and the Florida Police Chiefs Association (FPCA) to create an independent voluntary law enforcement agency accreditation program. Representatives from FSA and FPCA developed an accreditation program and formed a Commission to establish standards. The Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc. (CFA) is modeled after the national accreditation program and requires compliance with more than 260 professional standards designed specifically for Florida law enforcement agencies. These standards are practical, easily understood, and achievable even for the smallest law enforcement agency.

Accreditation Process

There are six components of Florida's accreditation process:

1. Standards: The accrediting body, in collaboration with public safety practitioners, establishes standards.
2. Self-study/self-assessment: The public safety organization seeking accreditation prepares an in-depth self-evaluation study that measures its performance against the standards established by the accrediting body.
3. On-site Assessment: An independent team selected by the accrediting agency visits the organization to determine first-hand if the applicant agency meets the established standards. This is accomplished through careful review of policies, procedures, interviews with subject matter experts, observations of actual operations, and hands-on experience, i.e. ridealongs with working officers.
4. Entity Board Review: The Commission or Board of the accrediting body reviews the assessment team's report and interviews the agency personnel, usually the CEO and/or accreditation team. Upon being satisfied that the applicant meets its standards, the accrediting body grants accreditation.
5. Maintenance: The accrediting body monitors each accredited organization throughout the period of accreditation granted to verify that it continues to meet the agency's standards. Most entities require some type of annual self-reporting.
6. Reaccreditation: The accrediting body periodically reassesses each organization to ascertain whether continuation of its accredited status is warranted. With most entities this takes the form of another assessment team visiting the agency and conducting a thorough assessment of the agency's practices.

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BENEFITS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION

The accreditation process provides participating agencies with state and nationally accepted best practice standards. Such standards require agencies to develop and maintain compliance with policies and practices in areas such as organizational management, personnel structure, personnel process, and property and evidence handling. Additionally, standards address numerous other high-liability areas such as vehicle pursuits, vehicle operation, critical incident response, investigative techniques and use of force. Accredited agencies are compelled to operate within the specific standards and are held accountable by the accrediting bodies through the on-site review.

Accreditation provides independent and objective evidence of an agency's commitment to excellence in leadership, resource management and delivery of services. Accreditation is a process that most government officials understand and support. Having an accredited law enforcement agency provides the confidence to expand future development goals, apply for economic recognition, and develop community partnerships.

COST BENEFITS

In his Spring 2010 Professional Paper, *Accreditation by the Commission for Law Enforcement Agencies: Has It Benefited the New Mexico State Police?*, Robert A. Duncan provided a cost benefit analysis related to CALEA accreditation (pgs. 19-20)¹:

“The Miami Valley Risk Management Association (MVRMA) handles risk management, loss control, insurance liability, and legal defense of civil lawsuits for sixteen municipalities in Ohio. MVRMA has a membership that “pools” their moneys to self-insure, and thus has a screening process that accepts only well managed cities into the group. This also may account for the fact that over one-third of MVRMA's police departments are nationally accredited through the CALEA. Police represent the single greatest exposure in terms of insurance claims, liability, and civil litigation to the MVRMA pool, comprising about 41% of the total losses in their member cities, more than the combined total losses for Fire, EMS, Streets and Public Works, and Parks and Recreation.

Over a ten-year period of time, nationally accredited police agencies in the MVRMA pool averaged losses of \$314 per officer, per year, while non-accredited agencies in the pool averaged losses of \$543 per officer, per year. Under this formula, a typical 25-member force with CALEA accreditation should thus incur losses at about \$7,850 per year, and an identical size non-accredited agency should incur losses at about \$13,575 per year. Calculate that over the three-year accreditation period this 25-member force accredited police department would cost \$17,175 less to operate than the non-accredited agency. Since the fee and on-site assessment cost to an agency is about \$10,000-\$12,000 for that same three-year accreditation period, the savings would roughly total \$5,000-\$7,000 for a police force of only 25 members. The savings are substantially more for agencies undergoing reaccreditation, since the fee is only 60% of the initial cost. Savings are also substantially more for larger departments where the fixed accreditation costs are spread over a larger base (Nielsen & Malley, 1999).”

¹ Professional Paper by *Robert A. Duncan*, submitted to the University of New Mexico (Spring 2010), “Accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies: Has it Benefited the New Mexico State Police?”; pgs. 19-20.

LIABILITY BENEFITS

In a summary document, *Two Risk Management Studies Support Accreditation*, prepared by CALEA, the following two risk management studies were compared to show that accreditation significantly reduces the risk factors associated with police operations²:

“In a December 2002 Project Summary, the Tennessee Municipal League (TML), Risk Management Pool of Brentwood, TN reported the results of a risk management study comparing the loss experiences of CALEA accredited law enforcement agencies with non-accredited agencies, who were insured members of TML. They compared the loss histories of 5 accredited agencies against 23 non-accredited agencies. The agencies were examined for the same eight-year period - July 1, 1994 through June 30, 2002.

The following exposure areas were examined: (1) Workers' Compensation; (2) Law Enforcement Liability; (3) Police Auto Liability; and (4) Police Auto Physical Damage. The police agencies examined were from municipalities within a population range of 10,500 and 55,500 (according to the 2000 Census), employing between 18 and 193 certified police officers. The 23 non-accredited agencies employed an average of 45 police officers serving an average population of 19,493 citizens, or one (1) police officer for every 433 people. The 5 accredited agencies employed an average of 114 officers serving an average population of 35,762 citizens, or one (1) police officer for every 313 people. The analysis showed the following results:

In Workers' Compensation coverage, the 23 non-accredited agencies experienced a rate of 27.21 claims per 100 insured officers, while the 5 accredited agencies experienced a rate of 22.56 claims per 100 officers, or 17.1% less than the non-accredited agencies. The annual loss rate incurred by the non-accredited agencies was \$89,389 per 100 officers, while the accredited agencies experienced losses of \$72,565 per 100 officers, or 18.8% less than the non-accredited agencies.

In Law Enforcement Liability coverage, the non-accredited agencies experienced a rate of 2.231 claims per 100 insured officers, while the accredited agencies experienced a rate of 1.093 claims per 100 officers, or 51.0% less than the non-accredited agencies. The annual law enforcement liability loss rate incurred by the non-accredited agencies was \$34,205 per 100 insured officers, while the accredited agencies experienced losses of \$30,434 per 100 officers, or 11.0% less than the non-accredited agencies.

In Police Auto Liability coverage, the non-accredited agencies experienced a rate of 4.486 claims per 100 insured officers, while the accredited agencies experienced a rate of 3.081 claims per 100 officers, or 31.3% less than the non-accredited agencies. The annual police auto liability loss rate incurred by the non-accredited agencies was \$13,799 per 100 officers, while the accredited agencies experienced losses of \$9,462 per 100 officers, or 31.4% less than the non-accredited agencies.

In Police Auto Physical Damage coverage, the non-accredited agencies experienced a rate of 3.189 claims per 100 insured officers, while the accredited agencies experienced a rate of 1.267 claims per 100 officers, or 60.3% less than the non-accredited agencies. The annual police auto physical damage loss rate incurred by the non-accredited agencies was \$5,193 per 100 officers, while the

² Article “Two Risk Management Studies Support Accreditation”; Retrieved from <http://www.calea.org/content/two-risk-management-studies-support-accreditation>.

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accredited agencies experienced losses of \$2,164 per 100 officers, or 58.3% less than the non-accredited agencies.

As a result of this analysis, the TML Risk Management Pool concluded that encouraging police agencies to seek standardized practices and policies through accreditation was a cost-effective investment of time and resources. All eight rate comparisons over the eight-year study period clearly showed that the accredited agencies performed 11.0% to 60.3% better than the non-accredited agencies.

The TML summary also points out the 11% savings in Law Enforcement Liability severity “compares favorably with the *annual incentive* provided by the TML Pool to its accredited police agencies of \$100 per insured officer, or a 13.5% reduction off of the annual Law Enforcement Liability base rate charged per certified police officer.” The summary further states that “accreditation provides the Pool membership with a sound financial benefit, and provides the individual departments themselves with fewer injuries, fewer damaged vehicles being repaired, and less financial resources being spent in legal defense costs.” In addition to the annual incentive provided by the TML Pool, a *one-time incentive* is provided when the agency becomes accredited in an amount equal to 25% of the agency’s initial accreditation fee. “For professional, defensible police work, the cost of accreditation is money well spent.”

The Colorado Interlocal Risk Sharing Agency (CIRSA) conducted the second study. It compares both Property/Casualty and Workers’ Compensation claims of 22 *state and CALEA accredited* member Police Departments to the claims of 22 non-accredited member Police Departments for calendar years 1999 through 2001. Non-accredited members were matched as closely as possible to accredited members based on geographic region, number of full time officers, and municipal population. (Broken windshield and weather related Property/Casualty claims were not included due to their non-preventable nature). All the claims were valued as of September 2002.

Based on the data used, the following results were reported:

The accredited police departments had 8.3% fewer Property/Casualty claims per fulltime police officer than the non-accredited police departments during the time period chosen.

- The accredited police departments had 7.5% fewer Workers’ Compensation claims per fulltime, police officer than the non-accredited police departments during the time period chosen.
- The accredited police departments per officer incurred costs for Property/Casualty claims were 52.2% lower than the non-accredited police departments.

These two comparative statistical reviews report a positive correlation between CALEA accreditation and loss reduction, and further provides quantitative evidence that CALEA accreditation significantly impacts a law enforcement agency’s ability to prevent and reduce loss in the area of professional liability. When viewed in combination with the additional, beneficial aspects of:

- enables law enforcement agencies to more effectively defend themselves against lawsuits and citizen complaints;
- gives the chief executive officer a proven management system of written directives, sound training, and clearly-defined lines of authority that support decision-making and resource allocation;
- provides an agency with an organizational change device and the framework for self-audit; and
- gives an agency a preparedness plan and verification of excellence”

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In 1998, the Intergovernmental Risk Management Agency (IRMA) conducted a study³ to determine if there was difference in the frequency and outcomes of liability claims between non-accredited and accredited agencies:

“IRMA police departments were divided into 2 groups; those who had attained the CALEA[®] accreditation, and those who have not. Data collected for all Departments from IRMA claims and financial services, IRMA underwriting and loss control records was as follows: number of sworn officers, number of coverage 25 [sic] (police professional, i.e., use of excessive force, discrimination, false arrest, violation of civil rights) claims from 1993 to 1997, and the severity (both reserved and paid-out) of those claims. In addition, for departments with the CALEA[®] accreditation, we also collected the date of initial accreditation, and the number of reaccreditations completed. Note: The number of reaccreditations does not appear to be a significant factor when comparing frequency and severity results of accredited entities to each other. Frequency and Claims data were then plugged into formulas to find the number of claims per 100 officers and the severity of claims per 100 officers. The data was then compared for the two groups. The following table depicts the results:

	Total # of Sworn Officers	Total Claims	# of Claims per 100 Officers	Total Severity	Severity per 100 Officers
Accredited	627	54	8.61	396,882.76	\$ 63,298.69
Non-Accredited	1342	138	10.28	1,312,089.62	\$ 97,771.21

CONCLUSION:

When the data from non-accredited departments is compared with accredited departments, it evidences a difference of 1.67 claims per 100 officers or over 16% reduction in frequency and \$34,472.52 per 100 officers or 35% reduction in severity in favor of the accredited departments. The reduction in total severity is quite dramatic over the five (5) year period.

IRMA's conclusion is that this study provides us with quantitative evidence that Police Accreditation does in fact significantly impact a law enforcement agencies ability to prevent and reduce loss in the area of police professional liability.”

The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office has documented a multi-million dollar lawsuit in which they prevailed due in large part to being accredited and having standards-based policy and procedure directives.⁴

³ Risk Report Article, prepared by *Frank J. Marino*, for the Intergovernmental Risk Management Agency (Illinois); dated May 11, 1998.

⁴ Article by *Sergeant R. W. "Buster" French, Jr.*, Jacksonville (FL) Sheriff's Office, "\$9M Refused: CALEA Wins for Agency"; retrieved from <http://www.calea.org/node/540/accreditation-works/9m-refused-calea-wins-agency>.

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In 2010, Suellyn Hooper of the Riley County (KS) Police Department wrote an article wherein she analyzed her agency's savings on professional liability insurance⁵:

“The Riley County Police Department, a C-size agency with 182 employees, is located in Manhattan, Kansas, often referred to as the “Little Apple.” It was initially CALEA Law Enforcement Accredited in 1991, becoming the first internationally accredited law enforcement agency in Kansas, as proudly displayed on our department patch.

Following its most recent three-year accreditation cycle, the RCPD was for the first time awarded CALEA Flagship status at its' March 2010 reaccreditation. Many hurdles were faced during this award period: a new chief of police and a new assistant director were appointed in late 2007; two new captains were appointed and an additional captain's position was added; and an entire rewrite of our Policy and Procedures Manual was completed. However, the many management systems, reviews, and analyses in place, as required by accreditation standards, were such that a smooth transition was achieved.

In these economically challenging times, many agencies are looking for cost-cutting measures. Although CALEA accreditation can annually add to or save thousands of dollars in revenues for an agency by providing an aggressive risk management system, it can be hard to quantify. Cutting accreditation was considered at RCPD until it was determined that for the past several years, being CALEA accredited saves the department \$16,000 annually on our professional liability insurance. Our provider, Scottsdale Indemnity Company, requests only that we provide a copy of our accreditation certificate to receive the annual savings.”

In his Spring 2010 Professional Paper cited earlier, Duncan includes information from a 2006 letter received by CALEA from Findlay Township (PA) Police Chief Paul C. Wilks regarding the impact of CALEA accreditation on his agency's insurance premiums (pg. 22)⁶:

“CALEA Law Enforcement Accreditation is a desirable achievement for agencies of all sizes. The Findlay Township (PA) Police Department has been CALEA Accredited since 1993, and is one of CALEA's 26 “A-size” accredited law enforcement agencies (24 members – 17 sworn, 7 civilian). Like much larger agencies, we also realize numerous benefits, both tangible and intangible, as a result of achieving and maintaining our accredited status. Speaking as a chief and as a CALEA Assessor of more than 10 years, I find it is simply not possible to enter the accreditation process and not be a better and more professional agency upon completing the program. As a result of gaining CALEA Accreditation, our insurance rating increased to a “most favorable” rate status, resulting in an immediate reduction of approximately 10% in our insurance premium. This cost savings continues each year that we are accredited — a savings of over \$1,800 in 2006. Furthermore, our accredited status has allowed us to point to staffing and response standards during our budget hearings to support our personnel and equipment needs and requests”

⁵ Article by *Suellyn Hooper*, Riley County (KS) Police Department , “Accreditation Saves \$16,000 Annually on Professional Liability Insurance”; retrieved from <http://www.calea.org/calea-update-magazine/issue-103/accreditation-works/accreditation-saves-16000-annually-professional-> .

⁶ Professional Paper by *Robert A. Duncan*, submitted to the University of New Mexico (Spring 2010), “Accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies: Has it Benefited the New Mexico State Police?”; pg. 22.

CIVIL ACTION BENEFITS

In 2009, Ray Johnson, Chief of the Chesterfield (MO) Police Department, reflected their use of CALEA accreditation in defending their agency in a civil action⁷:

“The Chesterfield Police Department, a C size agency with 89 sworn personnel, has been CALEA Law Enforcement Accredited since July 2003 and was named a “Flagship Agency” after its last reaccreditation in 2009. This was given primarily as the result of having achieved a perfect on-site with no file maintenance, applied discretions, or non-compliance issues.

The last on-site assessment team commented on the fact that the CALEA principals of accreditation had been well institutionalized in the Chesterfield Police Department. And, while the value of accreditation had previously been demonstrated several times in several ways over the past few years, it was never more obvious than during a recent court case in which the agency was named as a defendant in a personnel matter between a police department supervisor and a subordinate which ended in civil action.

During the lengthy legal process, which included a week-long jury trial, the agency was able to easily demonstrate their adherence to established guidelines, procedures and best practices in police management. As the trial progressed, numerous members of the agency were called upon to testify about various departmental practices and procedures regarding alleged acts of retaliation; negligent hiring, retention, and training; equipment issue and maintenance; personnel assignments to specialized units and positions; grievance procedures; and performance evaluations — all of which are issues appropriately addressed by CALEA Standards.

Under intense cross-examination by the opposing attorney, it became abundantly clear early on that the agency was on solid ground. Agency personnel were knowledgeable of every aspect of the operation, and were able to offer testimony and provide the necessary record-keeping and documentation demonstrating that the policies and procedures the agency had developed based on the CALEA Standards, were ones which have been tried, tested, and proven as best practices in law enforcement, had all been followed to the letter. Every challenge and accusation of wrongdoing, including alleged retaliation toward the officer bringing the suit, was easily thwarted. After undergoing one particular grueling session of cross-examination, which however, uncovered no chinks in the departments’ armor, the subject police supervisor commented as he left the courtroom, “Thank goodness for CALEA!”

Throughout the trial, it also became obvious that just as important as having the proper policies and procedures in place, was the ability of the officers to demonstrate their knowledge of the agency’s directives and that the directives were being uniformly followed by all employees. Time and time again, attorneys representing the interests of the agency were able to point to the detailed documenting of facts, and strict adherence to policy and procedure as being routine operating procedure for the agency.

⁷ Article by Chief of Police *Ray Johnson*, Chesterfield (MO) Police Department, “Accreditation Helps Defend Agency in Civil Action”; retrieved from <http://www.calea.org/calea-update-magazine/issue-100/accreditation-works/accreditation-helps-defend-agency-civil-action>.

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It quickly became clear that the adherence to guidelines which are derived from the best practices of the international law enforcement community and set forth by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies would not only be respected in a court of law, but would also put the agency in the best light possible when under the bright lights of legal and public scrutiny.

No agency wants to be thrust into a situation in which they are named defendants in a civil suit; particularly when that suit involves a dispute between two of its employees. But should that occur, that agency definitely needs to have its “house in order” and must be ready and able to put forth a firm foundation of professional management practices; all of which are based upon the fundamental elements of CALEA Accreditation. For the Chesterfield Police Department, that foundation lays in their strict adherence to the CALEA Accreditation model as a management tool, a procedural base, and a best practice method which has been ingrained in every employee throughout the agency at all levels of the operation.

Any initial “doubters” within the agency, and for that matter, within the city government who may have previously questioned the direct value of CALEA Accreditation, have done a complete “about face” in their thinking. In fact, at the conclusion of the trial, in which the agency fully succeeded in defending itself, several of the agency command staff reiterated the earlier supervisor’s comment... “Thank goodness for CALEA.” That, coupled with a collective sigh of relief, said it all!”

DISASTER RESPONSE BENEFITS

In an article by Benjamin Munguia, Accreditation Coordinator of the City of Mexicali (BJ) Department of Public Safety (2010), discussed how CALEA accreditation prepared their agency for disaster response⁸:

“April 4, 2010, Easter Sunday, began as a normal holiday. At approximately 3:40 in the afternoon, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake shook the city of Mexicali and the southern part of the Mexicali Valley. As expected for an earthquake of such magnitude, the city and the valley suffered major damage to buildings, houses, roads, and highways and caused disruption to public services such as water, electricity, gas, and telephone. Twelve people received minor injuries and two people were killed.

The incident occurred 10 days prior to the initial on-site assessment for the Dirección de Seguridad Pública Municipal de Mexicali (City of Mexicali Department of Public Safety), an event for which we had been intensely preparing. Our agency enrolled in the CALEA process in March 2008. At that time, written directives for the department did not exist and much of the equipment and vehicles were inadequate. After much hard work and preparation, the agency received its CALEA Recognition award in July 2009 and immediately transitioned into the law enforcement accreditation program.

This work did not come without some resistance. When the department began the process, there were those who criticized the acquisition of highly equipped patrol vehicles, the Centinela 1 helicopter, and the mobile command and communications center (C2-M), as well as the application of CALEA standards and process. However, it was precisely this integral safety program that

⁸ Article by *Benjamin Munguia*, City of Mexicali Department of Public Safety, “Accreditation Prepares Agency for Disaster Response”; retrieved from <http://www.calea.org/calea-update-magazine/issue-104/accreditation-works/easter-sunday>.

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assisted in minimizing the severity of the damage caused by this earthquake as compared to other populations who have experienced similar situations.

In comparison to past emergency situations, being in compliance with CALEA standards improved our agency's response to the crisis. ...The acquisition of equipment, the development of procedures, and implementation of training were integral to our agency's response to the situation. We attribute our success in handling the earthquake crisis to the preparations made during our efforts to achieve CALEA accreditation status."

FLORIDA ACCREDITATION TESTIMONIALS

The experience of Florida law enforcement agencies has paralleled the previous commentary of other chief executives and accreditation managers from throughout the nation. Among those speaking to the importance of the accreditation process:

Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles Director Julie Jones: *"The first thing the court system does is look back at your policies. Are you an accredited agency? Do you have policies? And did you follow those policies?...So the accreditation process establishes the foundation for your agency, gives you those policies and then gives you the framework to succeed because the follow-up, the reaccreditation process; that's what makes sure that you fine tune what you've got and follow through with the policies that you have."*

Chief Albert "Butch" Arenal of the Punta Gorda Police Department: *"Accreditation is a management blueprint for running a professional law enforcement organization based on standards set by peers with the state of Florida...It is the gold seal of law enforcement excellence."*

Sheriff Ken Mascara of St. Lucie County: *"Accreditation sets the standard that as the CEO, the Sheriff or the Chief, we ensure to our citizens that we are delivering professionalism in everything we do."*

IMPORTANCE OF THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS FOR FLORIDA INSPECTORS GENERAL

In the October 2007 CFA Inspector General Feasibility Report (pg. 4), the importance of the accreditation process was cited as:

"The vision of Inspectors General in Florida is "Enhancing Public Trust." To that end, accreditation of the investigation process within Offices of Inspector General will significantly enhance the consistency and quality of these investigations. Accreditation is a coveted credential that symbolizes professionalism, excellence, and competence."

Chief Inspector General Melinda M. Miguel, of the State of Florida, Executive Office of the Governor, has reinforced that vision: *"The Chief Inspector General's Office and Agency Inspectors General, in collaboration with the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc., continue our efforts to enhance the professionalism of investigations conducted by Agency Inspectors General. It is through the accreditation program for Offices of Inspectors General investigative function that we enhance compliance with the **Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General**. It is so important to*

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continually strive to raise the level of practice for this profession and accreditation gives us [or Inspectors General] that opportunity to demonstrate our dedication to excellence.”

CURRENT STATUS OF ACCREDITATION WITHIN STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

THE COMMISSION FOR FLORIDA LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION (CFA)

CFA is the state accrediting body for Law Enforcement and Offices of Inspector General (OIG) Investigations sections. Costs for accreditation as set by CFA range from \$900 to \$4,000 based on the number of sworn positions or number of sworn and civilian OIG investigators.⁹ These fees are paid every three years. There is an additional annual \$300 fee for the required accreditation software, *PowerStandards*,¹⁰ which is used for the assessment process.

The CFA reports that the following State Law Enforcement agencies and Offices of Inspector Generals are accredited:

- Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)
- Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement (AgLaw)
- Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation (DBPR), Division of Alcoholic Beverages & Tobacco (ABT)
- Florida Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles, Florida Highway Patrol (FHP)
- Florida Department of Financial Services, Division of Insurance Fraud (DIF)
- Florida Department of Financial Services, Division of State Fire Marshal (DSF)
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Law Enforcement (DEP)
- Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Office of Inspector General (FDLE OIG)
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Inspector General (DEP OIG)
- Florida Department of Children & Families, Office of Inspector General (DCF OIG)
- Florida Department of Transportation, Office of Inspector General (DOT OIG)
- Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Office of Inspector General (Ag OIG)
- Florida Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles, Office of Inspector General (DHSMV OIG)
- Florida Lottery, Office of Inspector General (Lottery OIG)
- Florida Department of Health, Office of Inspector General (DOH OIG)

CFA reports the following state Offices of Inspectors General, Investigations Sections are in the process of seeking initial accreditation:

- Florida Department of Revenue, Office of Inspector General (DOR OIG)
- Florida Department of Education, Office of Inspector General (DOE OIG)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Office of Inspector General (FWC OIG)

⁹ www.flaccreditation.org, Homepage of the Florida Accreditation Office and the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA).

¹⁰ Accreditation assessment software created by Innovative Data Solutions (IDS)

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THE COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, INC.

CALEA is the national accrediting body for law enforcement agencies. The costs for accreditation as set by CALEA range from \$7,125 to \$18,600 based on the number of authorized full time employees for initial accreditation and annual continuation fees to include the costs of the next on-site assessment to range from \$3,470 to \$5,765.¹¹ There is an additional annual \$130 fee for the required accreditation software, *CACE*, which is used for the assessment process. CALEA reports the FDLE and the FHP are accredited.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRIME LABORATORY DIRECTORS/LABORATORY ACCREDITATION BOARD

Laboratory accreditation is required pursuant to the provisions of the Federal DNA Identification Act (42 U.S.C. Section 14132). The American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD/LAB)¹² offers accreditation to public and private crime laboratories in the United States and around the world. Accreditation is offered in the forensic disciplines for which services are generally provided by forensic laboratories. The application costs for accreditation as set by ASCLD/LAB range from \$2,000 to \$8,000, and are based on the number of proficiency tested laboratory personnel. Accredited laboratories pay an annual fee that ranges from \$1,000 to \$35,000 based on the number of proficiency tested positions. ASCLAD/LAB reports the FDLE seven regional laboratories are accredited.

THE AIRBORNE LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION COMMISSION

The Airborne Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission (ALEAC) is the accrediting body for Air Units utilized by governmental agencies in support of public safety and is comprised of 74 standards. Costs for accreditation as set by ALEAC for the FHP is \$8,500 which is based on 2 or more aircraft sites and 15 or less aircraft. The fee includes all costs associated with being accredited to include accreditation, assessors and travel costs. The accreditation cycle is three years.¹³ ALEAC reports the FHP is in the process of obtaining accreditation.

¹¹ www.calea.org, Homepage for the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA)

¹² www.asclclab.org – Homepage for the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD/LAB)

¹³ www.alea.org - Website for (ALEA) The Airborne Law Enforcement Association and ALEAC.

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Current Status of Accreditation within State Agencies

State Agency	Types of Accreditation				
	CFA LE	CFA OIG	CALEA	ASCLD/LAB	ALEAC
DEP	X	X			
FDLE	X	X	X	X	
DACS/AgLaw	X	X			
FWC	X	X*			
DBPR/ABT	X				
HSMV/FHP	X	X	X		X
DCF		X			
DOT		X			
Health		X			
Lottery		X			
Revenue		X*			
Education		X*			

* The particular agency/section is in the process of seeking initial accreditation and under agreement with CFA.

ACCREDITATION STAFFING

Based on the data below it is evident that state agencies utilize a wide range of strategies to meet the staffing requirements to obtain and maintain accreditation. All agencies surveyed indicated that persons assigned to the accreditation function were found to be interwoven into the fabric of the agency, also performing other required duties such as staff inspections, criminal and administrative internal investigations, policy writing, emergency response and training. Few agencies have the luxury of having one employee dedicated strictly to the accreditation function; many agencies accomplish their staffing needs by spreading accreditation duties among numerous sworn and or civilian members. The organizational placement of the accreditation function varies between each agency.

Staffing assigned to the accreditation function and the percentages of time dedicated **solely** to the accreditation process are as follows:

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Agencies – Divisions of Law Enforcement						
	DEP LE	FDLE	AgLaw	FWC	ABT	FHP
Staffing	1 Sworn FTE 30%	1 Sworn FTE 35%		1 Sworn FTE 90%		1 Sworn FTE 40%
	1 Sworn FTE 20%	1 Civilian FTE 90%	1 Sworn FTE 50%	1 Civilian FTE 90%	1 Civilian FTE 90%	1 Sworn FTE 40%
		1 Civilian FTE 5%	1 Civilian FTE 50%			1 Civilian FTE 30%
		1 Civilian Lab FTE 50%				1 Civilian FTE 40%
						1 Civilian FTE 5%
						1 Civilian FTE 65%

Agencies – Offices of Inspector General					
	DEP OIG	FDLE OIG	AG OIG	DHSMV OIG	DCF OIG
Staffing	1 Sworn FTE 15%	1 Sworn FTE 5%,			1 Civilian FTE –15%
	1 Civilian FTE 2%	1 Civilian FTE 5%	1 Civilian FTE 20%	1 Civilian FTE- 5%	1 Civilian FTE –25%
	DOT OIG	Health OIG	Lottery OIG	Revenue OIG	Education OIG
	1 Civilian FTE 20%	1 Civilian FTE 15%	1 Civilian FTE 2.5%	1 Civilian FTE 12%	1 Civilian FTE 25%, 1 Civilian FTE 10% , 1 Civilian FTE 10%, 1 Civilian FTE 10%, 1 Civilian FTE 10%, 1 Civilian FTE 10%

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ORGANIZATIONAL PLACEMENT OF THE ACCREDITATION FUNCTION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE CORE MISSION

The organizational placement of the law enforcement accreditation function varies between each agency; however, all the inspectors general accreditation functions are located within their respective Offices of Inspector General. Of the agencies surveyed, they provided the following information regarding the organizational placement of their accreditation function and the relationship of accreditation to their core mission:

Agencies – Divisions of Law Enforcement						
	DEP LE	FDLE	AgLaw	FWC	ABT	FHP
Organizational Placement	The accreditation function within DEP/DLE is located within the division's Office of Training and Professional Standards.	Assigned to the Accreditation Standards Investigations and Compliance Section within the Office of Inspector General. The Forensic Quality Manager in the Investigations and Forensic Sciences (IFS) Program and is responsible for ASCLD/LAB-ISO accreditation.	Assigned to the Administrative Services Bureau, reporting directly to the Bureau Chief	Assigned to the Office of Policy and Planning within the Division of Law Enforcement.	Located within the Professional Standards Unit in the Bureau of Law Enforcement	Assigned to the FHP Accreditation, Policy, Inspections, and Forms Unit and reports to the Program Operations Manager, who is functionally the Chief of Staff and a direct report to the Director of the FHP.

Relationship to the Agency Core Mission

DEP LE:

Accreditation supports the core mission of our organization by ensuring; through policies and practices that the most cost efficient services are delivered to the citizens and visitors of the state of Florida. By ensuring that the accreditation standards are met, the deliveries of law enforcement services are that much more effective.

FDLE:

Was the first state agency in the nation to be accredited by CALEA in July 1990 and the first state agency in Florida to be accredited by CFA in 1996. In 2006 and 2009, FDLE received Meritorious Recognition for maintaining accredited status for fifteen or more continuous years and was recognized as a CALEA Flagship Agency for demonstrating success in the accreditation process from CALEA. The Flagship Agency Program was designed to acknowledge the achievement and expertise of some of the most successful CALEA accredited agencies that have met the criteria of having at least three successful on-site assessments with unconditional reaccreditation awards. ASCLD/LAB-ISO accreditation is essential to providing quality forensic services to the state's criminal justice community. Additionally, the Federal Bureau of Investigation requires any agency submitting DNA data to the National DNA Index System (NDIS) or acting as the state Combined

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DNA Index System (CODIS) administrator to be accredited by ASCLD/LAB or Forensic Quality Services, Inc (FQS). FDLE serves as Florida's CODIS administrator as well as providing the majority of DNA data for the system. FDLE's accreditation efforts stand in direct support of FDLE's fundamental values of Service, Integrity, Respect and Quality.

AgLaw:

The implementation of systems to comply with accreditation standards allowed the Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement to align our police services with current milestones established as standards for professional policing. Since the Agency was only created in 1992, and the sworn employees received full state-wide law enforcement authority in 2002, the transition from a strictly-regulatory mission to a full-service law enforcement mission was facilitated by utilizing accreditation standards. With facilities and personnel spread-out throughout the State, having standardized equipment and practices has allowed AgLaw to maintain focus on our core mission of protecting Florida's agriculture and its consumers through professional law enforcement.

FWC:

The mission of FWC is to protect Florida's natural resources and people through proactive and responsive law enforcement services. Becoming an accredited agency has helped toward that end. The FWC received initial accredited status in February of 2009. The agency has seen a very rewarding transformation from being a law enforcement agency having one core mission with splintered approaches to success, to an agency that has come together with all components pulling in the same direction. Standardization of our policies, procedures, equipment, etc., has caused the agency to be able to deliver professional law enforcement services at a level not experienced before.

ABT:

Prior to the implementation of accreditation, the Bureau of Law Enforcement did not have formal policies and procedures in place. Training bulletins and random standard operating procedures were utilized but no tracking system for accountability. Only the minimum CJSTC training requirements were documented for sworn members. Since receiving initial accreditation through CFA in October 2006, the division has developed a precise written directive system and implemented the PowerSuite software program for policy management, online training, and training record management. Accreditation has benefited the Bureau of Law Enforcement by providing uniform standards which are recognized statewide. Applying accreditation standards has helped identify the necessary training and equipment required and provided employees with uniform policies and procedures ranging from promotions to discipline.

FHP:

Our Mission: Providing Highway Safety and Security through Excellence in Service, Education and Enforcement. Accreditation is integral in supporting the mission of the FHP by introducing standards that provide a blueprint for achieving excellence through establishing best practices, accountability, transparency, and achievement.

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Based on research conducted by the work group, it should be noted that over the past 24 months CALEA has adopted several changes to their process in an effort to promote efficiency and cost savings. These initiatives include, but are not limited to, modifying their on-site process which resulted in cost savings to participating agencies, the transition to electronic publications, and partnering with Innovative Data Solutions (IDS), to allow for electronic assessments. CALEA Deputy Director Craig Hartley has assured the work group that CALEA staff will continue to pursue efficiencies and cost saving measures as they move forward.

CFA Executive Director Lori Mizell has committed to conducting an internal review of the current state accreditation process in an effort to identify efficiencies and cost savings. It should be noted that CFA, in partnership with IDS, assisted with the development of the IDS electronic assessment system now utilized by CALEA.

The Accreditation Work Group agrees that efficiencies may be gained with the recent development of accreditation software for electronic assessments in anticipation of more effective utilization of time during an on-site assessment and associated costs. Specifically, there may be a reduction in costs associated with building paper files, allow for the remote review of files by assessors, shortened time frame required to conduct an on-site and ultimately a decrease in on-site assessment expenses.

CONSOLIDATION OPPORTUNITIES

The Accreditation Work Group discussed the possibility of consolidating the accreditation management responsibilities of all participating state agencies. It is the unanimous belief that such efforts would create another line of bureaucracy and still require each agency to dedicate personnel to coordinate the collection of proofs of compliance from operational units. Additionally, each accredited entity is unique and requires institutional knowledge of the accreditation staff to remain successful in pursuing and maintaining accreditation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the belief of the work group that accreditation brings value to participating agencies and should be continued. As stated in FSS 943.125, "It is the intent of the Legislature that law enforcement agencies in the state be upgraded and strengthened through the adoption of meaningful standards of operation for those agencies."

Due to the fact that the majority of state law enforcement entities are voluntarily participating in a state or national accreditation process, it is recommended that all state law enforcement entities be encouraged to become accredited.

In the event of consolidation of law enforcement activities or functions, the Accreditation Work Group will remain accessible to the Task Force to provide information and guidance regarding the impact such consolidation will have on the accreditation process.