



February 7, 2008

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR PUBLIC SAFETY MEETINGS

Three forums will be held this month to consider the question of whether Public Safety officers at Smith College should be equipped with firearms. As background for these discussions, this package of information includes the executive summary and conclusions from the report of a consultant who reviewed this question for Smith in the fall. Also included are crime statistics and the results of a phone survey of practices at several other colleges and universities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Should Smith College Department of Public Safety Police Officers be equipped with firearms while in the performance of their official duties?



There are many critical questions to answer, and decisions to be made in regard to arming the law enforcement officers at Smith College. Some of the questions may include: *Is this a good time to equip our law enforcement officers with firearms? Are there reasonable alternatives? What are the perceptions, expectations, needs, and wants of parents and the campus community regarding our ability to deter and respond to violent crime? If this is an appropriate time to upgrade our level of police services, are our officers adequately trained and do we trust their judgment? What is the best method of equipping and arming our officers with firearms? Should Smith College arm its police officers now, provide more training or phase-in the carrying of firearms?*

Although this is a very limited assessment to address one specific question, other related challenges presented to the professionals assisting in this assessment include:

1. Evaluating Smith College's standards on related law enforcement policy and performance issues;
2. Reviewing Smith College's law enforcement, security, and safety objectives for students, visitors, parents, staff, and employees;
3. Reviewing the Department of Public Safety's *mission* and *objective statements*;
4. Reviewing current state of campus security and target hardening; and
5. Evaluating risk and liability issues associated with a perceived failure to act.

In addition to the above items, this assessment went through a variety of steps to obtain what we consider is a reasonably balanced approach to answer the central question. This methodology consisted of seeking input from campus staff and residents; input from local and state law enforcement agencies; input from experienced risk managers and liability professionals; researching available local state and national crime and campus violence data; and reviewing the past and current situations at Smith College.

Heretofore the Smith DPS has done an excellent job in deterring crime and dealing with those incidents that have occurred on campus over the years. In Northampton violent crime for the period measured was up dramatically. This coupled with the current world-wide phenomena of active shooters, underscores the need for more effective crime deterrence and response. This is best addressed with resources College administration can directly control.

One of the more striking observations made by the evaluation team was the fact that many of the faculty and students do not know that officers of Smith College Department of Public Safety are in fact qualified . . . *police officers*. Rather there is a tendency to view their police department as only *security*. This misconception and image problem feeds some of the misgivings about arming officers.

Smith College DPS is a well-managed department that is considerate of the institution's values and heritage. Officers are state police academy graduates with extensive training, background, and experience in the carrying and use of firearms. In the collective history of these officers, there is not one incident of the misuse of a firearm or any other force implement. There is no apparent reason members of the Smith College community cannot place the necessary trust in the hands of these officers. Our conclusion is:

Smith College Department of Public Safety Police Officers should be equipped with firearms while in the performance of their official duties.

Implementation strategy should include increased use-of-force, weapons, and verbal skills training for officers. In addition, appropriate updates to policy and procedures reflecting this force option and limitations on the same is indicated.

Options to appropriately arming the Smith College police officers are few, and not considered as cost or procedurally effective in protecting human life, or responding to violent crime. The law enforcement advisors assisting in this assessment find it absolutely appropriate and necessary for college administration to develop a well-trained and equipped police force capable of responding quickly during life-threatening emergencies. If this task is not to be performed by the police force now working on campus, then an effective alternative needs to be developed and funded. Although not encouraged by the professionals assisting in this assessment, an arrangement with the Northampton Police Department or State Police is an option. Advisors assisting in this project consider it ill advised for the college administration to rely on primary police support from an entity they do not control. Time is a critical factor.

ASSESSMENT CONCLUSION

The proffered limited issue for this Assessment is:

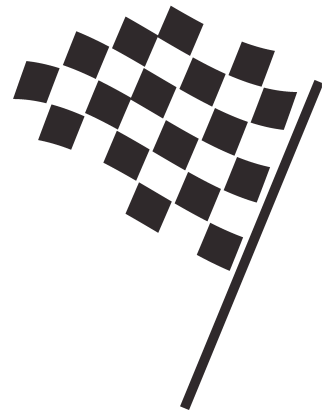
Should Smith College, Department of Public Safety Police Officers be equipped with firearms while in the performance of their official duties?

After considering all of the information gathered and analyzed in this Assessment, and relying on the collective expertise of numerous educators, risk managers, security, law enforcement, and litigation professionals it is recommended that:

Smith College Department of Public Safety Police Officers should be equipped with firearms while in the performance of their official duties.

Given the traditions and tenor of Smith College, this recommendation does not come without deference to other learned professionals, who have expressed reservations regarding equipping of these officers with firearms. Contrary to these opposing viewpoints, the conclusions and recommendations of those closely studying this issue are inescapable. The determination of the experts having studied this issue is, in part, based on the following, as listed in order of priority:

1. All human life is precious, especially the innocent life entrusted to our care at this college.
2. The protection of police officers lives that often go in harm's way while protecting students, faculty, administration, and members of the community are no less important.
3. Parents who send their daughters to Smith do so with the expectation that the college is taking every reasonable step to keep them safe from harm and respond vigorously when their lives or well being is threatened.
4. No college or university can reasonably claim that a life-threatening or mass homicide event will not, or could not occur on their campus.



5. Concerns about personal violent assaults, including rape and sexual assaults, are increasing on campus, and in the community at large.
6. Criminal activity in the community of Northampton is not stable, and has been increasing, especially in important violent crime categories.
7. Critical security infrastructure of the college is not in place. Although campus administration and DPS are making meaningful progress, addressing some critical life-safety issues are cost prohibitive, e.g., houses are scattered, exterior illumination is poor, access, and egress control is weak, etc.
8. When police are called on campus from outside agencies, school officials abdicate their role, control, and influence over the outcome. External police have only one option . . . *to deal with situations as a criminal matter*. Campus police and the administration most often have a myriad of options to a given situation.
9. Police know that during imminent life-threatening calls for service, time does not allow for first responders to . . . *call and let someone else take care of the problem*.
10. It is not practical or economically feasible to train and equip Northampton PD officers to be the primary response to some calls for service but not all. Especially when the campus has its own equally qualified police officers who are available for service.
11. The presence of armed and capable officers is a proven and critical element in both deterring and responding to crime. Smith College is not taking full advantage of this important asset.
12. The nearest special weapons or tactical team is located in Springfield and would require approximately two [2] hours to respond in case of a mass homicide or hostage event.
13. Smith College DPS officers are professional police officers, who meet all of the Massachusetts standards for police officers.
14. Northampton Police Department often calls on Smith College DPS officers to perform police duties adjacent to or off campus. This is an important role in supporting the wider community. In performing such duties officers should be armed.
15. A critical event such as those discussed, coupled with a half-hearted or delayed response would, after the fact, be devastating to the college in

both prestige and economics. Smith College should not be viewed as another college with a safety problem.

16. Concerns regarding the addition of firearms to the DPS force can be addressed by assuring the campus and larger community that the highest priority will be given to the proper screening and training of Smith DPS officers.

December 2007 Consultant Report

IMPLEMENTATION & OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Although inclusion of recommendations regarding implementation of the assessment findings is beyond the scope of this report, the professionals working on this project thought it might be helpful to comment on several key areas:

1. Smith College is currently improving/expanding their security posture; however, there is still a critical need for a comprehensive security assessment that will encompass *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* [CPTED] aspects such as:
 - a. Physical security of houses, and other buildings;
 - b. Key, lock, and access control;
 - c. Security and safety illumination;
 - d. Vehicle access and pedestrian safety;
 - e. Signage;
 - f. Emergency notification;
 - g. Passive and active surveillance systems; &
 - h. Other specified areas
2. Officers should receive an updated *Campus Law Enforcement Officer Liability Course* of at least eight [8] hours, covering the latest use of *force issues, vehicle pursuit, and active shooter cases*, and events occurring on campuses.
3. Officers should receive additional training in *use, care, and restrictions of firearms*. This should be a course of no less than sixteen [16] hours, with practical exercises in firearms shooting, and shoot-don't shoot scenarios.
4. Equip each officer with a positive bar safety handgun that requires the disconnection of the safety before the gun is capable of being fired.
5. Require officers to wear a Level 3 holster that reduces the ability of suspects to disarm officers during a struggle or close contact.
6. Have on hand at the DPS offices at least three rifles and three shotguns for issue in case of critical events. As a more effective alternative, secure these and other tactical equipment in the patrol units when officers assume patrol duties.
7. Have on hand breaching tools, bolt cutters, and other such devices.

8. All officers should be required to undergo demonstration of proficiency exercise with firearms at least every six [6] months.
9. Any officer not capable of passing all required training and proficiency demonstrations should not be allowed to carry a service firearm.
10. Supervisors are to inspect each officer and his firearm for fitness of duty, before allowing the officer to assume a duty shift.
11. Recommend actual arming of officers during the summer of 2008, with training and testing of officers after graduation, with full implementation weeks before the start of the fall term.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Smith College Clery Data – Enrollment 3,164 students

1. On-Campus Crime:
 - a. Murder
 - i. 0 murders reported from 2001 to 2005
 - b. Rape (sexual assault)
 - i. 2 reported in 2001
 - ii. 2 reported in 2002
 - iii. 1 reported in 2003
 - iv. 3 reported in 2004
 - v. 0 reported in 2005
 - c. Robbery
 - i. 0 reported from 2001 to 2005
 - d. Aggravated Assaults
 - i. 1 reported from 2001 to 2005
 - ii. Reported in 2001
 - e. Weapon Possessions
 - i. 1 reported from 2001 to 2005

United States Clery Data – approximately 6,000 colleges reporting

2. On-Campus Crime-4 year colleges:
 - a. Murder
 - i. Decreased 50% from 2001 to 2003
 1. 14 incidents reported in 2001
 2. 21 incidents reported in 2002
 3. 7 incidents reported in 2003
 - b. Rape (sexual assault)
 - i. Increased 15.59% from 2001 to 2003
 1. 2065 incidents reported in 2001
 2. 2206 incidents reported in 2002
 3. 2387 incidents reported in 2003
 - c. Robbery
 - i. Decreased .20% from 2001 to 2003
 1. 1477 incidents reported in 2001
 2. 1644 incidents reported in 2002
 3. 1474 incidents reported in 2003
 - d. Aggravated Assaults
 - i. Decreased 5.34% from 2001 to 2003
 1. 2380 incidents reported in 2001
 2. 2297 incidents reported in 2002
 3. 2253 incidents reported in 2003
 - e. Illegal Weapons Possession

- i. Decreased 1.9% from 2001 to 2003
 - 1. 878 incidents reported in 2001
 - 2. 915 incidents reported in 2002
 - 3. 861 incidents reported in 2003

LOCAL, STATE & NATIONAL STATISTICS

City of Northampton Statistics – Population: 29,287 (2003)

- 1. Violent Crimes:
 - a. From 2001 through 2005 (5 years analysis)
 - i. **Total Violent Crime increased 208%**
 - 1. 37 incidents in 2001 to 114 incidents in 2005
 - ii. Murders increased 0%
 - 1. 1 murder in last 5 years
 - a. 2004
 - iii. **Rapes increased 50%**
 - 1. 6 reported in 2001
 - 2. No Data Available for 2002
 - 3. 0 reported in 2003
 - 4. 8 reported in 2004
 - 5. 9 reported in 2005
 - iv. **Robberies decreased 25%**
 - 1. 12 reported in 2001
 - 2. No Data Available for 2002
 - 3. 14 reported in 2003
 - 4. 18 reported in 2004
 - 5. 9 reported in 2005
 - v. **Aggravated Assaults decreased 11%**
 - 1. 22110 reported in 2001
 - 2. 22018 reported in 2002
 - 3. 20271 reported in 2003
 - 4. 20002 reported in 2004
 - 5. 19715 reported in 2005

State of Massachusetts Statistics – Population 6,433,422 (2003)

- 1. Violent Crimes:
 - a. From 2001 through 2005 (5 years analysis)
 - i. **Total Violent Crime decreased 4%**
 - 1. 30,587 incidents in 2001 to 29,237 incidents in 2005
 - ii. **Murders increased 21%**
 - 1. 145 reported in 2001

2. 173 reported in 2002
3. 142 reported in 2003
4. 169 reported in 2004
5. 175 reported in 2005
- iii. **Rapes decreased 7%**
 1. 1856 reported in 2001
 2. 1777 reported in 2002
 3. 1798 reported in 2003
 4. 1799 reported in 2004
 5. 1732 reported in 2005
- iv. **Robberies increased 18%**
 1. 6476 reported in 2001
 2. 7169 reported in 2002
 3. 7985 reported in 2003
 4. 7467 reported in 2004
 5. 7615 reported in 2005
- v. **Aggravated Assaults decreased 11%**
 1. 22110 reported in 2001
 2. 22018 reported in 2002
 3. 20271 reported in 2003
 4. 20002 reported in 2004
 5. 19715 reported in 2005

United States Statistics – Population 290,809,777 (2003)

2. Violent Crimes:
 - a. From 2000 through 2004 (5 years analysis)
 - i. Total Violent Crime
 1. decreased 4%
 - ii. Murders
 1. increased 4%
 - iii. Rapes
 1. increased 5%
 - iv. Robberies
 1. decreased 2%
 - v. Aggravated Assaults
 1. decreased 6%

Smith College Public Safety survey of other colleges and universities

College/University	Sworn Department	Armed
Amherst	Y	Y
Assumption	Y	Y
Babson/Olin	Y	N
Bowdoin	N	N
Barnard	N	N
Bates	N	N
Becker	Y	Y
Bentley	Y	Y
Boston College	Y	Y
Boston University	Y	Y
Brandeis	Y	Y
Bridgewater State	Y	Y
Brown	Y	Y
Bryant	N	N
Bryn Mawr	N	N
Carleton	N	N
Carnegie Mellon	Y	Y
Clark	Y	Y
Colby	N	N
Columbia	N	N
Cornell	Y	Y
Dartmouth	N	N
Duke	Y	Y
Emory	Y	Y
Emerson	Y	N
Emmanuel	N	*Chief Only
Endicott	N	N
Fitchburg State	Y	Y
Framingham State	Y	N
Hampshire	Y	N
Harvard	Y	Y
Hofstra	N	N
Holy Cross	Y	N
Merrimack	Y	N
Middlebury	N	N
MIT	Y	Y
Mount Holyoke	Y	N
Northeastern	Y	Y
Oberlin	N	N
Pomona	Y	N
Salem State	Y	Y
Simmons	Y	N
Springfield	Y	N

Stonehill	Y	N
Suffolk	Y	N
Swarthmore	Y	N
Trinity	N	N
Tufts	Y	Y
Umass Amherst	Y	Y
Umass Boston	Y	Y
Umass Dartmouth	Y	Y
Umass Lowell	Y	Y
Umass Worcester	Y	Y
University of Hartford	Y	N
Wellesley	Y	Y
Wentworth	Y	Y
Wesleyan	N	N
Western New England	Y	Y
Westfield State	Y	Y
Wheaton	Y	N
Worcester State	Y	Y
WPI	Y	Y
Yale	Y	Y
64 Total	47	34

Sworn and Armed	31
Sworn and Unarmed	14
Not Sworn	14
Chief Only Armed	1