



Coalition of Small Police Agencies
King County, Washington

Special Award Project Summary
"Doing a Lot with a Little"

The Coalition is made up of eleven independent small police departments representing thirteen municipalities. In total, these agencies employ approximately 150 commissioned officers serving a combined population of over 66,000 residents.

The Coalition began to form in 2001 in response to regional decisions that were being made which did not take into account the impacts, needs and limitations of the smaller agencies. As a result the small agency Chiefs' began to regularly meet for over a year to form a common message and present a larger voice in county wide issues that affect all agencies large and small. The outcome was that the King County Chiefs Association took notice and along with the Sheriff hosted a Regional Criminal Justice Summit to define, prioritize and work toward reducing the inefficiencies that encumber our criminal justice efforts. Items such as transporting prisoners, cooperative court agreements, and jail availability were just a few of the items identified and action taken to improve those systems. Had it not been for the efforts of the Coalition the summit along with its ongoing efforts simply would not have materialized.

As the Chiefs met in those formative years they realized that together they could marshal a significant amount of manpower, equipment and expertise. These resources not only could be used during times of emergent need but to help one another in keeping pace with the ever increasing requirements placed on law enforcement. In cooperation with our insurance carriers and city attorneys a Mutual Aid, Inter Local Agreement were agreed upon and approved by all the City Councils. Volunteers have taken the positions of chairman and vice-chairman to formulate agendas and coordinate tasks. All the Chiefs meet once a month to deal with a variety of issues in common and set planning priorities. Additionally the Chiefs have identified a coordinator who meets with all the department training managers once a month to identify training needs for the agencies.

Our focus in 2003 and 2004 has been to implement a training program to meet the needs of the small agencies in areas that are extremely difficult or cost prohibitive for small agency to achieve. The two primary areas of training the Coalition focused on were Active Shooter Response and an Emergency Vehicle Operators Course (EVOC).

Active Shooter Response training is a course of instruction that is based on the lessons learned from the Columbine and other school shooting tragedies. This course provides a common framework that all officers regardless of jurisdiction. For a small agency it is highly likely that every officer from the Chief of Police, to the newest officer on the department, may be called upon to respond. Therefore every member of the department needs to be trained to meet this professional standard.

The average tuition cost per student for this 16 hour course has ranged from between \$250 and \$350. This cost along with any associated overtime costs had severely restricted the small agencies ability to meet this training need.

Every agency in the Coalition in 2003 was assessed a basic training fee of \$250. This fee essentially buys supplies to conduct a variety of training. The funds are managed by one of the member cities Accounting Department. No additional tuition fees were charged for the Active Shooter course and because we scheduled several opportunities to attend training the overtime costs were limited. So far this has resulted in the ability to have 55 properly trained officers respond to our schools and other locations to meet this type of threat at a cost savings in excess of \$11,000.

Four hours of EVOC training per officer is extremely costly and needs to be presented periodically. This training is essential due to the fact that numerous claims against cities are traffic accident related. Constraints are that there are few locations where training can be performed safely, distances to go to some tracks are burdensome, and track rental is expensive. For these reasons many of the smaller agencies had not been able to send officers to this type of training for several years.

In the fall of 2003 we pooled our resources and rented a local track the Pacific Raceway for four days. We also pooled our EVOC instructors at a cost of \$1,000. The track cost \$5,800 for the four days at \$1,450 a day. Many of the agencies simply can't afford the track rental or have a trained instructor on staff. The total cost for all the members to rent the track for a day individually would have been \$15,950. By cooperatively sharing the cost for the track and instructors we saved the cities an excess of \$9,000. Overtime was limited again and a total of 115 officers participated in the training. Once more the result is that we had officers trained to drive safer while serving our communities.

Thought 2003 we conducted additional training sessions in the areas of computer crime, radar operation, taser use, first aid, and many other subjects. All of these were with no additional tuition / instructor cost.

In 2004 we plan to continue our efforts in training all the remaining officers in an Active Shooter Response as well as another EVOC training session. The Coalition is going even further in the spring by having our first Reserve Officer

Academy consisting of 25-30 students. This 240 hour block of instruction covering a variety of subjects will cost \$300 per student and could only be possible due to our cooperative efforts.

Training has not been our only endeavor. Last year the Coalition conducted 3 DUI Emphasis Patrols. Several of the agencies participated resulting in many DUI arrests and traffic infractions that improved traffic safety in those areas.

Large scale mutual aid requests have been very limited; however, a recent south county member asked for and received assistance from 5 Coalition members who provided 90 man hours over a 3 day period. The assistance provided was invaluable in conducting search warrants and meeting the associated security needs in this rapidly evolving investigation.

Our future appears to be certain in that we will band together to work as professionals in solving problems, taking action when necessary, and serving the public need.

Participatory Cities

Algona	Black Diamond	Clyde Hill
Duvall	Enumclaw	Issaquah
Lake Forest Park	Medina	Normandy Park
Pacific		Snoqualmie

Associated Cities*

Hunts Point Yarrow Point

Pending Associated City

Carnation

* = A city that contracts for police service from one of the Participatory Cities