

Measuring Performance in a Modern Police Organization

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Executive Session on Policing and Public Safety

This is one in a series of papers that will be published as a result of the Executive Session on Policing and Public Safety.

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Introduction

Perhaps everything the modern police executive needs to know about performance measurement has already been written. But much of the best work on the subject is both voluminous and now more than a decade old, so there is no guarantee that today's police executives have read it. Indeed, it appears that many police organizations have not yet taken some of its most important lessons to heart.

I hope, in this paper, to offer police executives some broad frameworks for recognizing the value of police work, to point out some common mistakes regarding performance measurement, and to draw police executives' attention to key pieces of literature that they might not have explored and may find useful. I also hope to bring to the police profession some of the general lessons learned in other security and regulatory professions about the special challenges of performance measurement in a risk-control or harm-reduction setting.

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