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# The State of **Education** & **Policing** in California

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## Executive Summary

Today's police officers are expected to perform a variety of tasks that cops thirty years ago were not asked to do. For example, officers are now required to identify crime patterns and problem areas, devise solutions for crime and quality-of-life issues, collaborate with community partners, use technology to solve the toughest crimes, be the resident expert in everything obscure, and of course, be the epitome of professionalism at all times. Despite the increasingly demanding expectations, the most recent national data reveal that most law enforcement agencies still only require officers to have a high school diploma. What about California?

This report describes the findings of a recent survey of 162 local California law enforcement agencies (police and sheriffs' departments) on education and other special topics. The study revealed that 82% of departments in California require recruits to possess a high school diploma, 14.6% require some college, and 2.5% require a two-year degree. None of the responding agencies require recruits to have a four-year degree. Many agencies, do however, require lieutenants and above to have a college degree, and 7.3% of agencies require the chief/sheriff to have a master's degree. So, while a college degree is not required to become a police officer, it is required to promote through the ranks.

There was not much consensus among California law enforcement agencies about which perceived advantages of hiring college-educated officers were actual benefits of hiring college-educated officers. The one perceived benefit that most agencies agreed is an actual benefit is that college-educated officers are better report writers. Still, 93% of agencies provide at least one incentive for officers to pursue higher education. The most common incentives are education pay and tuition assistance (offered by 79.6% and 69.4% of agencies respectively). The average education pay incentive for a new officer with a bachelor's degree is 5% on top of base salary; with 82% of agencies paying between 2.5% and 7.4%.

More than one-third (34.9%) of California peace officers working in local agencies have at least a college degree, 6.9% of them have at least a master's degree, and 0.5% have a doctorate. Almost all (91.7%) chiefs and sheriffs in the state have at least a bachelor's degree, 54.5% have at least a master's degree,

and 3.2% have a doctorate. In general, urban counties (specifically those in the Sacramento area, San Francisco Bay Area, and Southern California regions) employ a higher percentage of college-educated officers than suburban and rural counties. Additionally, mid-size and large agencies employ a higher percentage of college-educated officers than do small and very small agencies. Starting salary, which is influenced by a number of regional and other factors, also impacts the percentage of college-educated officers in an agency (the percent of college-educated officers increases with starting salary).

The survey revealed that, while most agencies do not provide supplemental training on problem oriented policing or intelligence-led policing, slightly more than half of agencies are providing additional (beyond POST requirements) training to officers on handling mental health crises, non-violent protests, crowd control techniques, and using less-than-lethal weapons. Only 14% of agencies have a team of specially trained officers to handle mental health calls, most agencies (66.9%) rely on standard patrol officers to handle these situations. Despite much attention on the benefits of citizen oversight committees, only 18% of California agencies have one. Finally, despite the fact that 92% of agencies operate according to a community policing philosophy, only 40% have an organizational structure to match.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Whether or not a college education is necessary for police officers is a topic of debate today. While not everyone agrees that officers need college degrees, officers are increasingly expected to be able to interpret data, solve complex problems, and perform a variety of other multifaceted tasks in a professional and culturally sensitive manner. Some research has found that officers with college degrees do better than officers without degrees on a variety of measures (Smith & Aamodt, 1997). For example, it has been found that college-educated officers perform better in the academy, are involved in fewer traffic accidents, take fewer sick days, have fewer on-the-job injuries, have fewer citizen complaints filed against them, have fewer disciplinary actions taken against them, and use deadly force less often than officers without a college degree (Roberg & Bonn, 2004; Rydberg & Terrill, 2010). It has also been found that college-educated officers are less resistant to change and more likely to embrace new methods of policing, such as Community Oriented Policing and Problem Solving (Roberg & Bonn, 2004). Despite our knowledge about the benefits of college educated law enforcement officers and the increasing focus on intelligence-led policing and problem solving, few departments require a college degree and there is little information about how many officers actually hold four-year degrees.

In 1960, only 3% of officers held a four-year degree; in comparison, 7.7% of U.S. residents 25 and older did (Rydberg & Terrill, 2010; U.S. Census, 2006). By 1974 the proportion of officers holding degrees increased to 8.9% but still trailed behind the general public which was at 13.3% (Rydberg & Terrill, 2010; U.S. Census, 1974). By 1988, 22.6% of sworn officers in the nation were college graduates and for the first time, the percentage of officers with degrees was higher than the general population, which was at 20.3% (Carter & Sapp, 1990; U.S. Census, 1989). Finally, a study conducted in 1994, revealed that 28% of sworn officers employed by very large departments (500+ sworn officers) were college graduates (compared to 22.2% of the general population) (Sanders, Hughes, & Langworthy, 1995; U.S. Census, 2012). While the trend is clearly obvious, we have no more recent information about the number of officers with college degrees. The available information, which is twenty years old, is outdated, no longer useful, and likely inaccurate.



The most recent data on minimum education requirements for entry-level police officers is also dated. According to 2007 LEMAS data, while almost all police and sheriffs' departments have minimum education standards, only 1% of police departments and no sheriffs' departments in the United States require a college degree for employment (Burch, 2012; Reaves, 2010). Only 9% of police departments (7% of sheriffs' departments) require a 2-year college degree and 6% of police departments (3% of sheriffs' departments) require some college. The vast majority of departments (82% of police departments and 89% of sheriffs' departments) require only a high school diploma (Burch, 2012; Reaves, 2010). One study suggested that education requirements may be influenced by the size and demographics of the population served (Roberg & Bonn, 2004). The 2007 LEMAS data provide some support for this assertion; reporting that 38% of police departments and 15% of sheriffs' departments that serve a population size of 1,000,000 or more require at least some college (Reaves, 2010).

Furthermore, although some departments provide incentives to encourage officers to continue their education, little is known about the popularity or use of these educational incentives. The 2007 LEMAS study indicates that 32% of police departments (20% of sheriffs' departments) offer education incentive pay and 37% of police departments (23% of sheriffs' departments) provide tuition reimbursement for sworn officers (Burch, 2012; Reaves, 2010). Once again, medium and large departments appear to be more likely than small departments to offer these benefits. One study found that police institutions that offer educational assistance programs or financial incentives for college degrees report an increase in work quality and overall performance by officers within their department (Roberg & Bonn, 2004).

## II. CURRENT STUDY

The current study surveyed a sample of local level (municipal and county) law enforcement agencies in California about the education levels of sworn officers in the agency and the education incentives available to them. A list of every law enforcement agency in the state was obtained from California Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), which maintains comprehensive and up-to-date records on all agencies in the state. The list obtained from POST included the names of 394 local agencies in California. Contact information was obtained for every agency but one (which was likely taken over by another local agency).



An email invitation to participate in the survey was sent to the chief law enforcement officer (police chief or county sheriff) of 393 agencies. Several emails bounced and an attempt was made to obtain a valid email address for the chief or his/her assistant. A total of 384 agencies (out of 393) received the email invitation to participate in the survey.

Of the 384 solicited agencies, 190 (49.5%) started the survey (answered a few questions) and 162 (42.2%) completed the survey. This is a very high response rate, especially in light of the data requested. In addition to the agencies counted above, 15 agencies emailed that they were unable to participate in the survey because (a) they did not collect/track the requested information (9 agencies) or (b) it was not available in an easily accessible format and, because of budget shortfalls and limited personnel, the agency did not have the staff to compile the requested information or complete the survey (6 agencies).

The survey included 32 questions pertaining to officer education level, perceptions of education on officer performance, education incentives offered, salary and pay incentives, as well as a few questions on community policing and special topics. The survey was web-based and administered through survey monkey during June and July 2012.

As in any study of this nature, the current study is limited by responder knowledge and the accuracy of the data provided by each agency. While the vast majority of agencies appeared to provide valid data, there were 10 instances in which the data provided did not “make sense.” In each case, the person who completed the survey for the agency was contacted for clarification and the reporting error was fixed or the suspect data were removed from the analysis.

It should be noted that small-medium size agencies (10-24 and 25-49 sworn officers) are somewhat over-represented in the officer education data and larger agencies (50-99, 100-249, and 250+ sworn officers) are somewhat under-represented. This is likely due to the fact that it is easier for small agencies to track and report education data for officers than it is for large agencies. Still, there is a sufficiently large sample size in each category to provide general information about the educational attainment of California peace officers.

### III. FINDINGS RELATED TO EDUCATION

#### What is the Minimum Education Required by Most Agencies in California?

Despite the suggested benefits of hiring officers with a college education, the vast majority of California departments (82%) still only require recruits to possess a high school diploma or equivalent (Table 1). A small percentage (14.6%) requires some college and 2.5% of agencies require an AA degree. One agency stated it requires a bachelor's degree to be hired; however this agency's recruitment flyer for entry-level police officer does not indicate such a requirement and correspondence with this agency revealed that, while not an official policy, it is very difficult to be hired by this agency without a bachelor's degree.

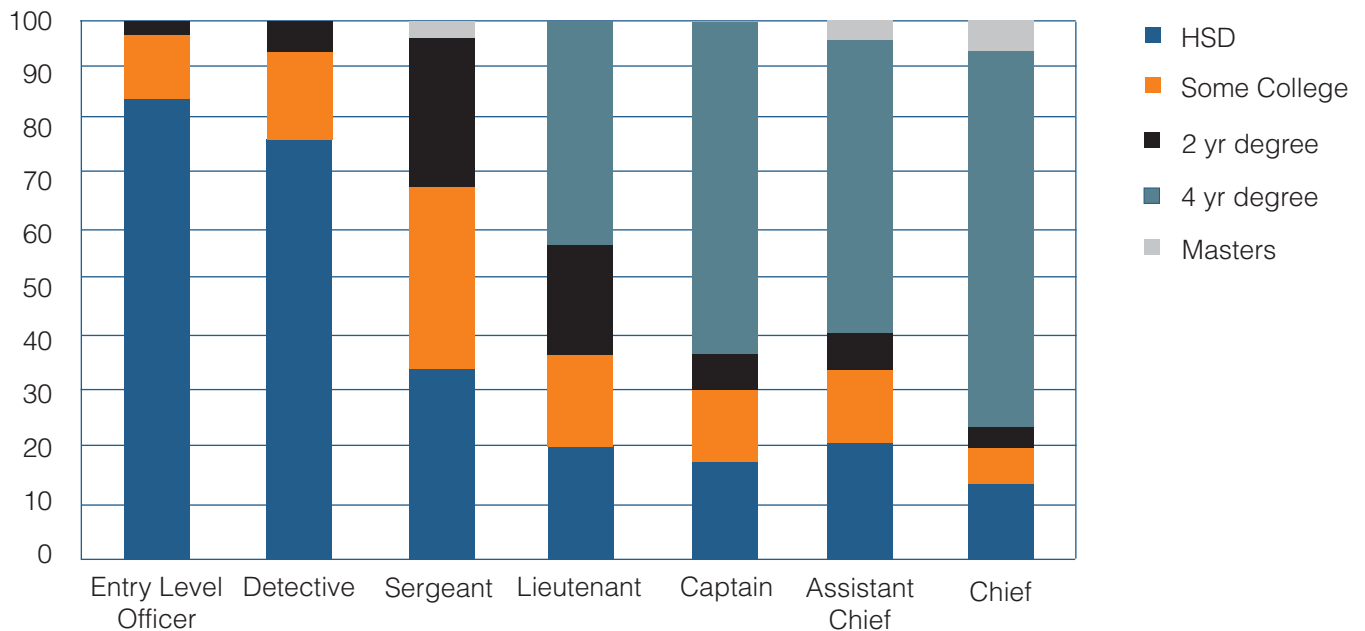
These findings are in line with the latest national information (2007 LEMAS data) but unlike the national sample, in California it is more popular for agencies to require some college than it is to require a 2-year degree. In the national sample, only 3% and 6% of agencies (sheriffs' and police departments respectively) require some college (in comparison to 14.6% in California) whereas 7% and 9% of agencies nationally (sheriffs' and police departments respectively) require a 2-year degree (compared to 2.5% in California).

As can be seen in Table 1 and Figure 1, while a college degree is usually not required to become a police officer, it is required to promote through the ranks. Most agencies want sergeants to have at least some college and while only 4.6% of departments require sergeants to have a bachelor's degree, 41.9% require it for lieutenants, 62.3% require it for captains/majors/commanders and 69.3% require the chief/sheriff to have at least a bachelor's degree. Additionally, 7.3% of agencies require the chief/sheriff to possess a master's degree.

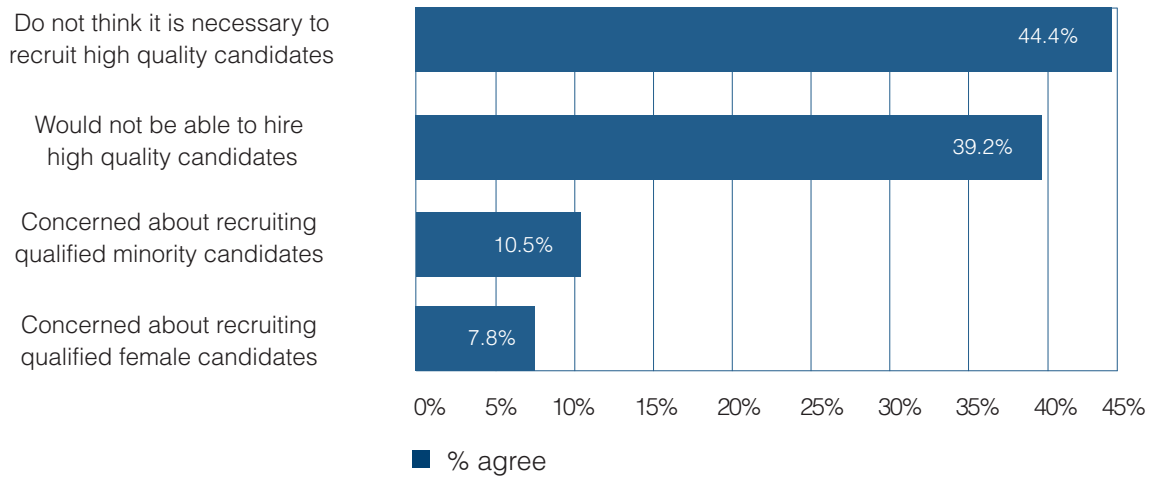
**Table 1:** Minimum Education Requirement of California Agencies by Position<sup>1</sup>

	High School Diploma	Some College	2 year Degree	4 year Degree	Master's Degree
Entry level Officer	82.7%	14.6%	2.5%	.6%	
Lateral Officer	78.3%	16.6%	3.1	.6%	
Detective	75.7%	19.3%	4.3%	.7%	
Sergeant	33.6%	33.6%	28.3%	4.6%	
Lieutenant	20.9%	17.1%	20.2%	41.9%	
Captain/Major/Commander	17.2%	12.3%	8.2%	62.3%	
Assistant Chief/Sheriff	22.0%	9.8%	7.3%	58.5%	2.4%
Chief/Sheriff	16.0%	4.0%	3.3%	69.3%	7.3%

<sup>1</sup>Throughout this report, police and sheriffs' departments data are combined.

**Figure 1:** Minimum Education Requirements of CA Agencies by Position

Only 11% of agencies surveyed have considered requiring a four-year degree. A large percentage of agencies (44.4%) do not think it is necessary to require a four-year degree to recruit high quality candidates (see Figure 2). Additionally, they think it would unnecessarily limit their ability to hire high quality candidates without degrees. Some agencies are also concerned about being able to recruit qualified minority candidates (10.5%) or female candidates (7.8%).

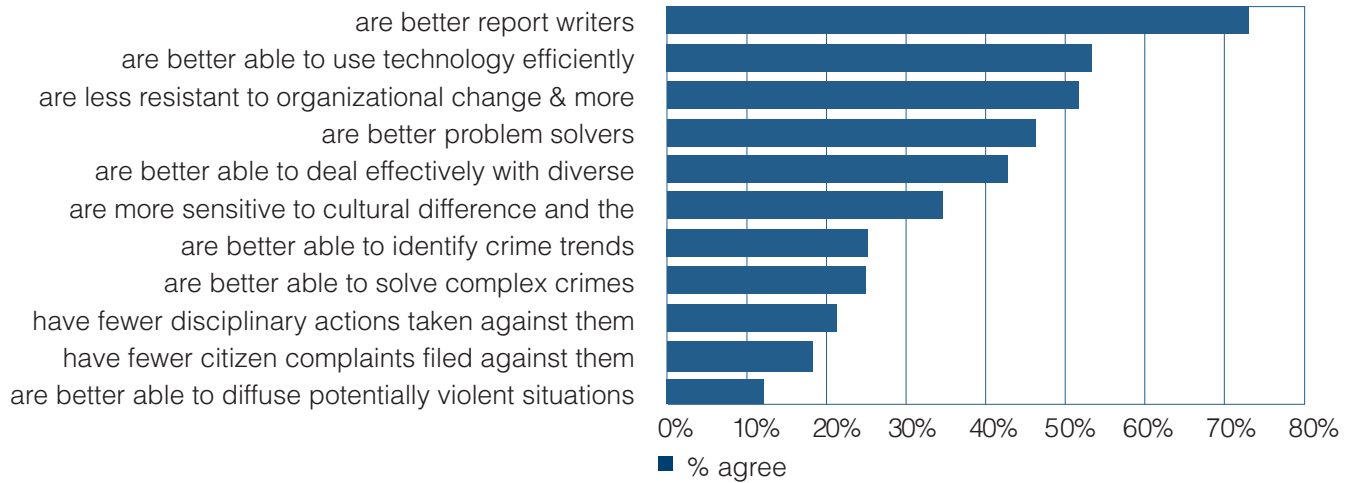
**Figure 2:** Top Concerns about Requiring a Four-Year Degree for Hiring

### Are College-Educated Officers Perceived to be Better Officers?

Although past studies have found that college-educated officers have a variety of benefits over non-college-educated officers (Roberg & Bonn, 2004; Rydberg & Terrill, 2010), this study found that there was not much consensus among California law enforcement respondents about which *perceived* advantages of hiring college-educated officers were *actual* benefits of hiring college-educated officers (see Figure 3). The one perceived benefit that most respondents agreed is an actual benefit is that college-educated officers are better report writers (73.9%). This is not an insignificant finding given the importance of report writing for the job as it pertains to criminal procedure (articulating reasonable suspicion, probable cause, and other legal requirements) and prosecution. About half of the respondents agreed that college-educated officers are better able to use technology efficiently (52.6%), less resistant to organizational change and more open to new methods of policing (52.2%), and are better problem solvers (47.1%) than non-college-educated officers.

There was less agreement about whether college-educated officers are better able to deal effectively with diverse community groups (43.5%), more sensitive to cultural differences and the needs of the community (37.0%), better able to solve complex crimes (26.1%), or better able to identify crime trends (26.1%). Only one in five respondents agreed that college-educated officers have fewer citizen complaints filed against them or have fewer disciplinary actions taken against them than non-college-educated officers. Some respondents commented that it is difficult to make blanket statements such as these; indicating that officer job performance is more nuanced.

**Figure 3:** As compared to officers with only the minimum education requirements, officers with a BA...



For the most part, respondents do not believe that college-educated officers are necessarily better than non-college-educated officers. Most agencies classified college-educated officers better on only 2 to 5 measures (out of 11).

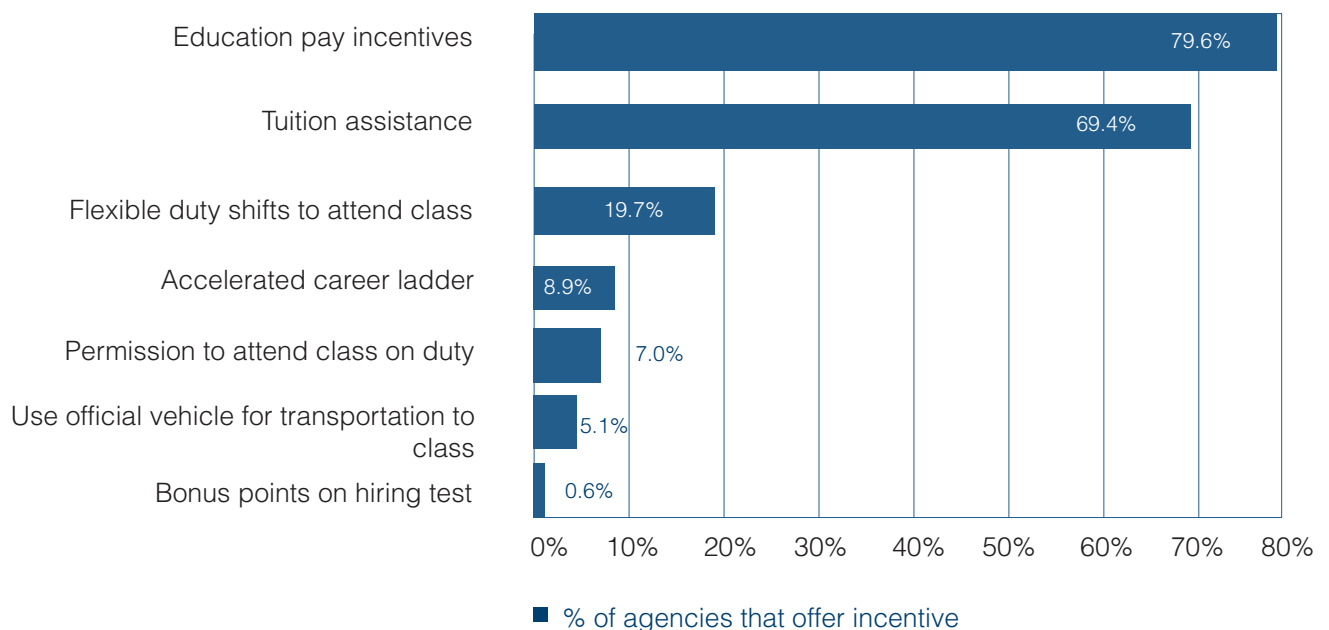
### Which Agency-Provided Education Incentives are Most Common?

Despite a lack of consensus that educated officers are automatically better officers, 93% of agencies provide at least one incentive for officers to pursue higher education. Thus, while respondents may not be comfortable making blanket statements about officers' skills based on education level alone, agencies obviously believe that college-educated officers bring value to the department.

Education pay (additional income for higher education) is the most popular incentive and is offered by 79.6% of California agencies (see Figure 4). Tuition assistance is the next most popular and is offered by 69.4% of agencies. Less popular incentives include: allowing officers flexible duty shifts to attend class (19.7%), offering an accelerated career ladder (8.9%), giving officers permission to attend class while on duty (7.0%), and allowing officers to use an official vehicle for transportation to class (5.1%). The least popular is offering bonus points on a hiring test (0.6%). Interestingly, some agencies provide tuition assistance/extra pay for POST-certified training only – not college degrees.

In comparison to the national sample, California agencies are much more likely to offer education pay and tuition reimbursement benefits. Specifically, the percentage of California agencies offering education pay (79.6%) is two to three times larger than the national averages reported earlier (20% sheriffs' and 32% police departments respectively). Additionally, 1.5 – 3 times more California agencies offer tuition reimbursement (69.4%) than agencies in the national sample (23% sheriffs' and 37% police departments respectively). Besides a difference in philosophy, one reason may be that law enforcement agencies in California are large in comparison to the national average. According to the national LEMAS data, agencies serving medium – large populations (which is most agencies in California) are more likely than small agencies to offer these education incentives. Unlike the national sample however, in California small agencies are just as likely as medium and large agencies to offer education incentives. There is only one significant difference in the incentives offered by California departments based on agency size –very large agencies (250+ sworn officers) are more likely than all the others to allow officers to adjust their shifts to accommodate their school schedule. This is probably because these agencies have the personnel to be able to accommodate such requests without much difficulty while still providing the necessary staffing for public safety purposes.

**Figure 4:** Education Incentives provided by California Agencies



For California agencies that offer an education pay incentive for officers with a four-year degree, the amount ranges from a flat monthly bonus that is approximately 1.5% of a new officer's base salary up to a 16.5% salary increase. Approximately 82% of agencies which reported offering incentives stated that the incentive is between 2.5%-7.4%. The most common education pay incentive is 5% on top of base salary (or a flat pay increase equivalent to approximately 5%). The amount of the education pay incentive is not tied to region; meaning agencies in the northern regions of the state provide essentially the same incentive amounts as agencies in the central and southern regions. Similarly, agencies provide similar incentive amounts regardless of entry-level officer starting salary. The one exception is that agencies which provide education incentives of 10% or more generally pay entry-level officers a salary at or below the median salary for an entry level officer (\$61,380 annually).

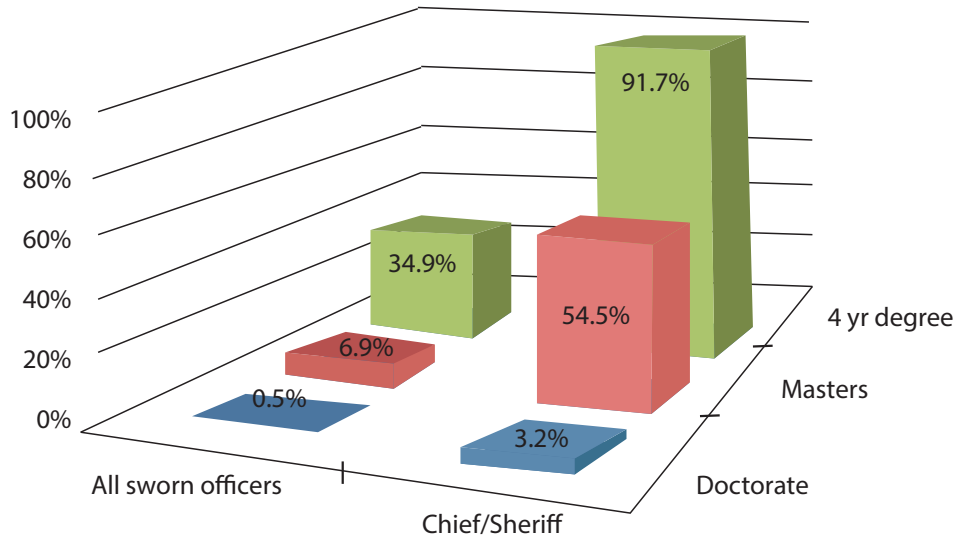
### What Percentage of Sworn Officers have a College Degree?

In 1960 only 3% of officers throughout the nation had a college degree. By 1974 that number had grown to 9% and by 1994, 28% of officers held a college degree. Twenty years later, 34.9% of officers in California have a college degree. This surpasses the national general public percentage of 30.9% (U.S. Census, 2012). As can be seen in Figure 5, a good percentage of California officers also have a post-graduate degree – 6.9% have at least a master's degree and 0.5% percent have a doctorate. There is no national data to serve as a comparison.

Similar to Roberg and Bonn's study (2004), which found that 87% of chiefs had a bachelor's degree in 1997, this study revealed that 91.7% of chiefs and sheriffs in California have at least a bachelor's degree, 54.5% have at least a master's degree, and 3.2% have a doctorate. The high percentage of law enforcement CEO's with advanced degrees is likely tied to the growing continuing education opportunities available for both police managers (ex. POST's Command College) and the general public (online and professional degree programs for working professionals) alike as well as a strong focus on evidence-based policing practices and other professional improvements in policing.



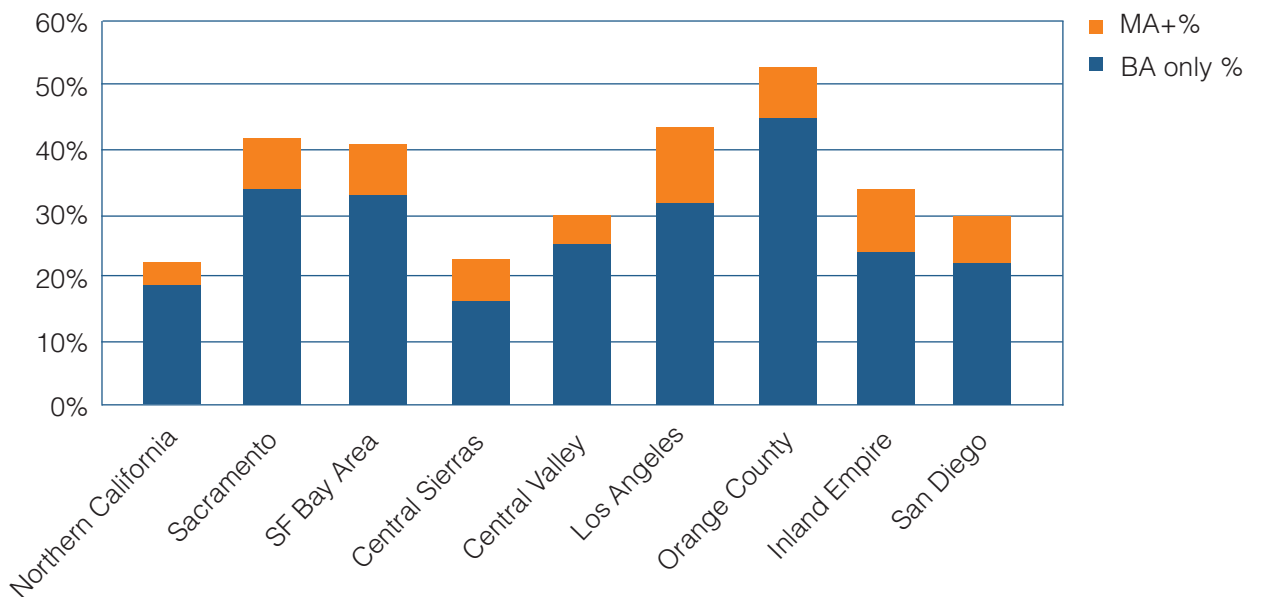
**Figure 5: Average Education Level of Officers in California**



*Variation by Region*

The percentage of officers with degrees varies by county as well as agency factors. As can be seen in Figure 6, some regions have a large percentage of officers with degrees while other regions have a relatively small percentage. The region with the highest percentage of college-educated officers is Orange County (52.6%), followed by Los Angeles (42.2%), Sacramento (40.9%), and SF Bay Area (40.3%). The regions with the fewest college-educated officers are Northern California (22.1%), Central Sierras, (22.7%), and Central Valley (23.6%). See Appendix A for detailed information on each county.

**Figure 6: Officers with at least a four-year degree (BA/BS) by Region**

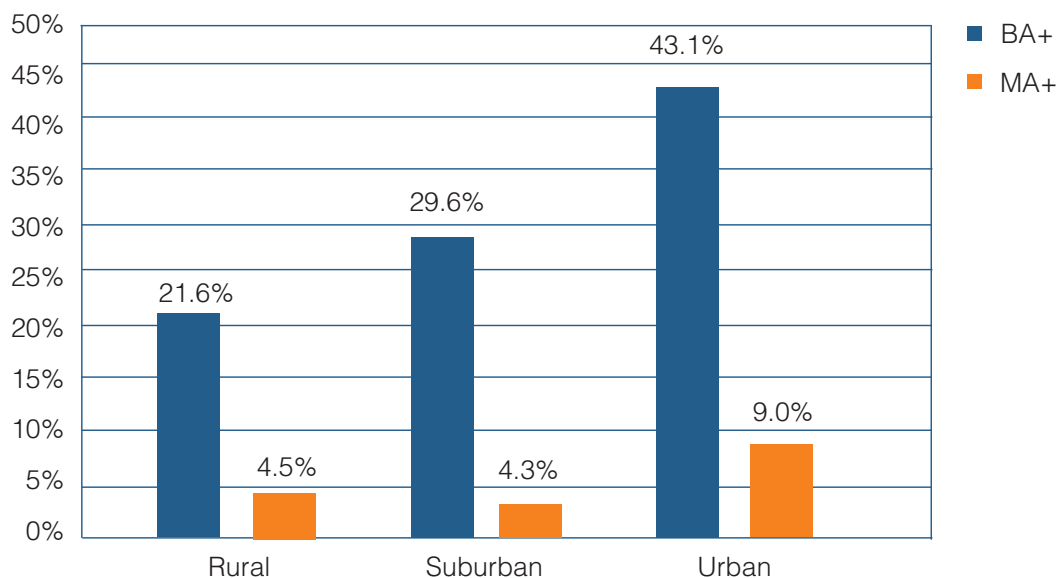


**Table 2:** Percentage of College-Educated Officers by Region\*

	# agencies in category	Two-year degree (AA)+	Four-year degree(BA)+	Master's Degree+	Doctorate
Northern California	18	45.4%	22.1%	4.2%	.1%
Sacramento	8	51.9%	40.9%	7.2%	.5%
SF Bay Area	35	60.2%	40.3%	7.2%	.6%
Central Sierras	5	52.6%	22.7%	5.9%	.0%
Central Valley	15	36.7%	23.6%	2.9%	.4%
Central Coast	11	48.2%	30.0%	3.9%	.5%
Los Angeles	23	57.6%	42.2%	10.3%	.6%
Orange County	9	64.2%	52.6%	8.5%	.3%
Inland Empire	5	43.6%	33.6%	10.3%	.0%
San Diego	5	38.5%	29.8%	7.0%	.9%

\*Regions defined by California Employment Development Department (2004). Northern California includes: Butte, Colusa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Mendocino, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehema, Trinity, and Yuba counties. Sacramento includes: El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, and Yolo counties. Bay Area includes: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma counties. Central Sierras includes: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Inyo, Mariposa, Mono, and Tuolumne counties. Central Valley includes: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare counties. Central Coast includes: Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Cruz counties. Los Angeles includes: Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties. Orange County is its own region. Inland Empire includes: Riverside and San Bernardino counties. San Diego includes: Imperial and San Diego counties. Not all counties listed are represented in survey due to non-response in some counties.

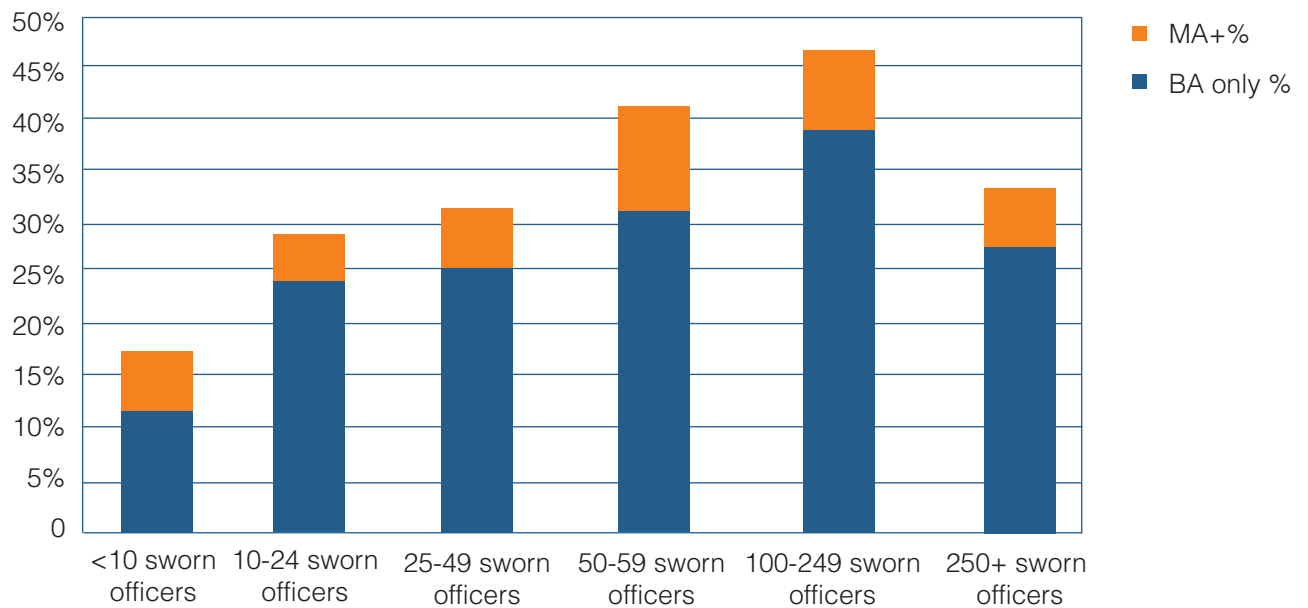
As alluded to in the figure and table above, the type of county also impacts the percentage of officers with college degrees. Figure 7 below shows that there are more college-educated officers employed in urban counties than in suburban or rural counties.

**Figure 7:** California Officers with at least a Four-Year Degree (BA/BS) by Type of County

### Variation by agency size

The proportion of college-educated officers also varies by the size of an agency. As Figure 8 and Table 3 indicate, mid-size and large agencies have a higher percentage of college-educated officers than small agencies. Agencies with 100-249 sworn officers have the highest percentage with a bachelor's degree (46.8%) while agencies with fewer than 10 sworn officers have the lowest percentage (17.2%). Interestingly, agencies with 50-99 sworn officers employ the highest percentage of officers with a master's degree or above (9.2%).

**Figure 8:** Officers with at least a Four-Year Degree (BA/BS) by Agency Size



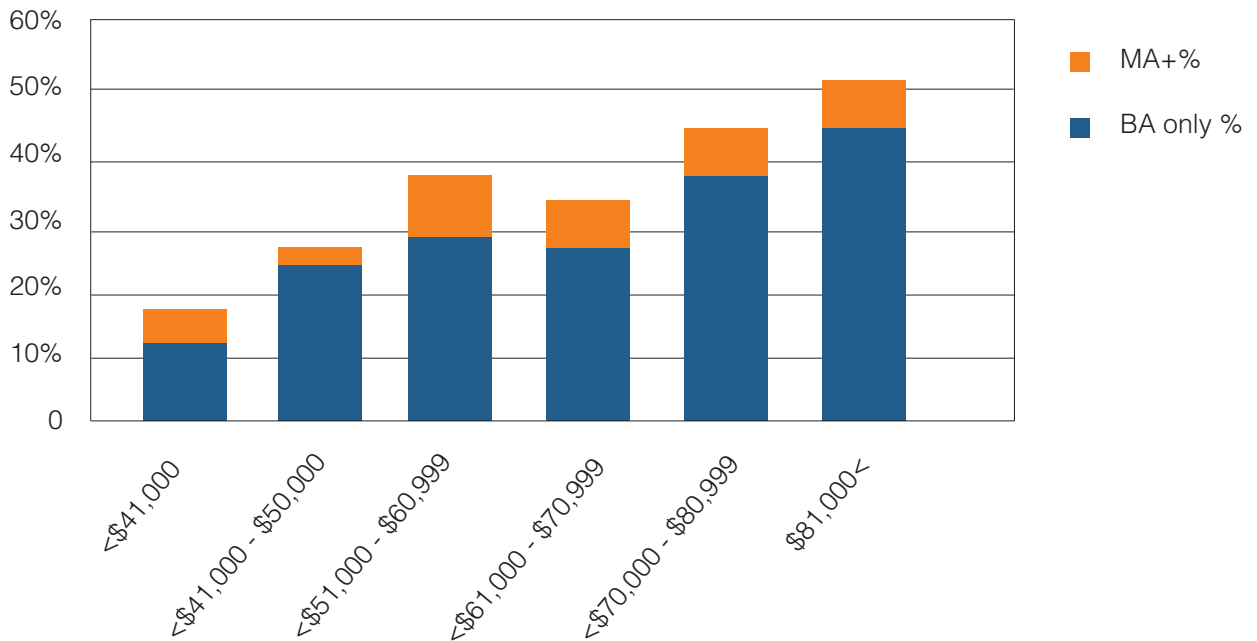
**Table 3:** Percentage of College-Educated Officers by Agency Size

	# agencies in category	Two-year degree (AA)+	Four-year degree(BA)+	Master's Degree+	Doctorate
<10 sworn officers	6	40.0%	17.2%	5.6%	<.1%
10 - 24 sworn officers	44	47.5%	29.7%	5.0%	.4%
25 - 49 sworn officers	31	54.4%	31.7%	6.2%	.5%
50 - 99 sworn officers	29	53.7%	40.9%	9.2%	.5%
100 - 249 sworn officers	20	59.8%	46.8%	7.3%	.4%
250+ sworn officers	3	56.0%	34.9%	6.7%	.6%

*Variation by starting salary*

The percentage of college-educated officers also varies by starting salary. As would be expected, in general, the percentage of officers with a college diploma increases with starting salary (see Figure 9 and Table 4). Of course, starting salary is also dependent on region and cost of living in the region, as well as type of county, surplus/deficit of qualified job candidates, and many other factors. Overall, salaries in urban counties are the highest, averaging \$68,985. Rural counties pay the least (\$43,221 on average) while suburban counties are in the middle with an average of \$55,105. Figure 10 shows the relationship between starting salary and level of education for each region in the state. It demonstrates that, while the highest paying agencies may only require a high school diploma or some college to apply, a college degree is usually required to get hired.

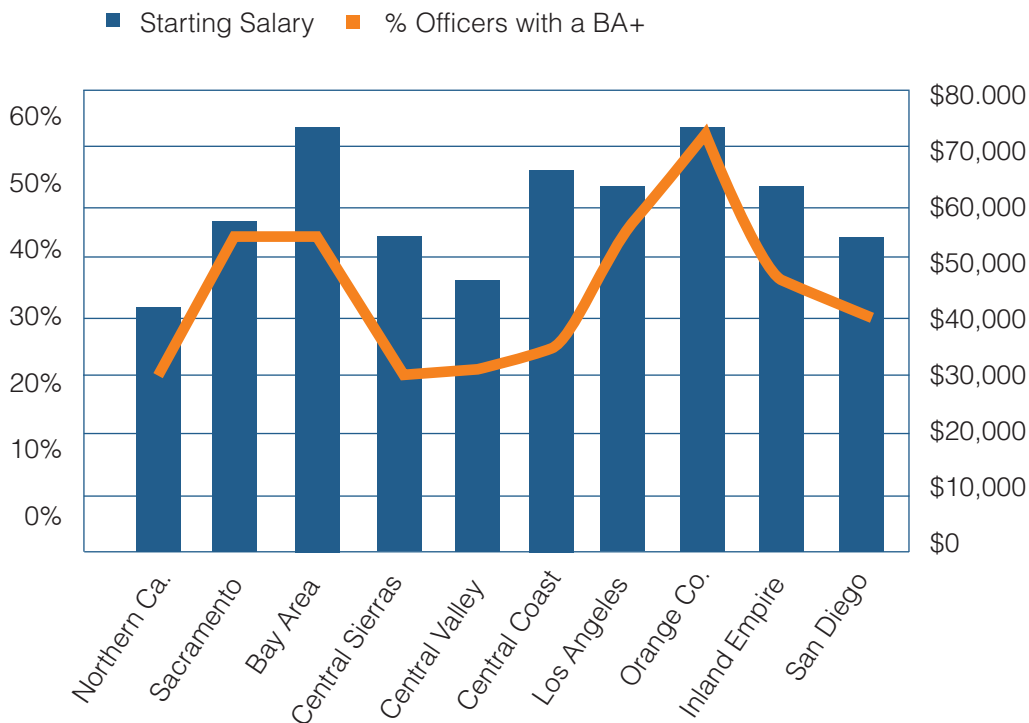
**Figure 9:** Officers with at least a Four-Year Degree (BA/BS) by Starting Salary



**Table 4:** Percentage of college-educated by starting salary<sup>5</sup>

	# agencies in category	Two-year degree (AA)+	Four-year degree(BA)+	Master's Degree+	Doctorate
Less than \$41,000	13	39.9%	17.5%	4.9%	<.1%
\$41,000 - \$50,999	19	44.4%	26.3%	2.1%	.7%
\$51,000 - \$60,999	22	55.3%	37.0%	8.4%	.2%
\$61,000 - \$70,999	29	51.8%	35.6%	7.7%	.7%
\$71,000 - \$81,999	20	64.7%	47.7%	9.2%	.5%
\$81,000	11	67.0%	51.6%	8.2%	.3%

\*Starting salary provided by agency. The survey questions requested the “base pay” for each position (entry level officer...chief/sheriff). Other than education incentives, it did not ask about other benefits. It is quite possible that agencies with lower starting salaries have greater benefits and/or pay a larger share of an officer's benefits costs.

**Figure 10:** Starting salary and percent of college-educated officers by region

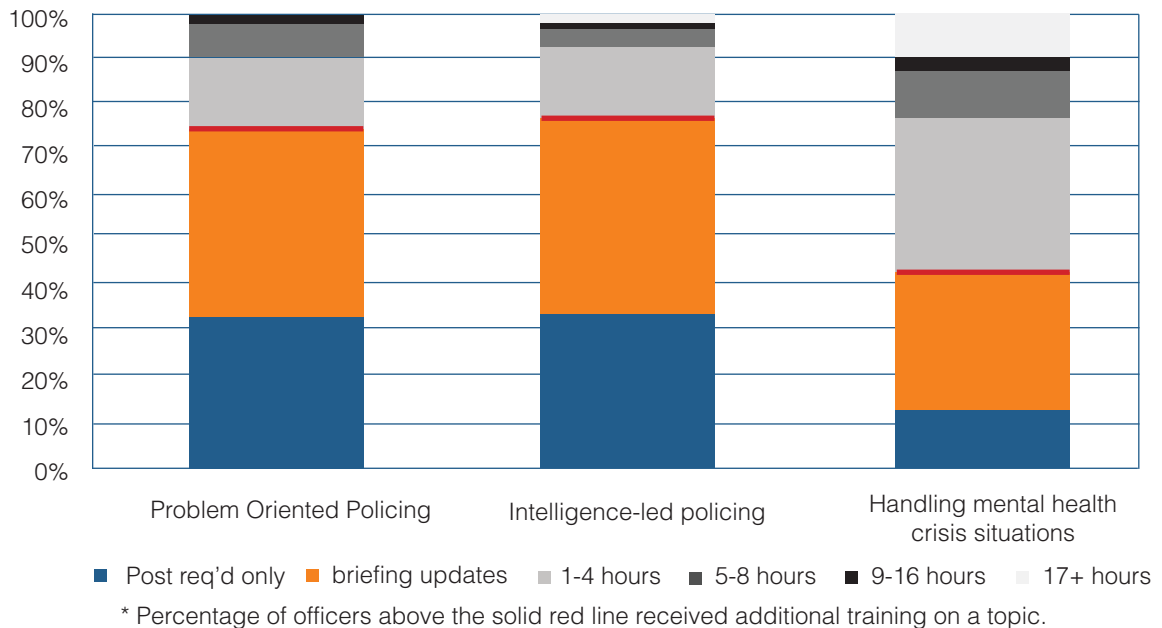
## IV. OTHER FINDINGS

The survey also asked a variety of questions about training, mental health crisis response, citizen oversight committees, and the agency's participation in community policing and problem solving activities. Below are the results.

## Training

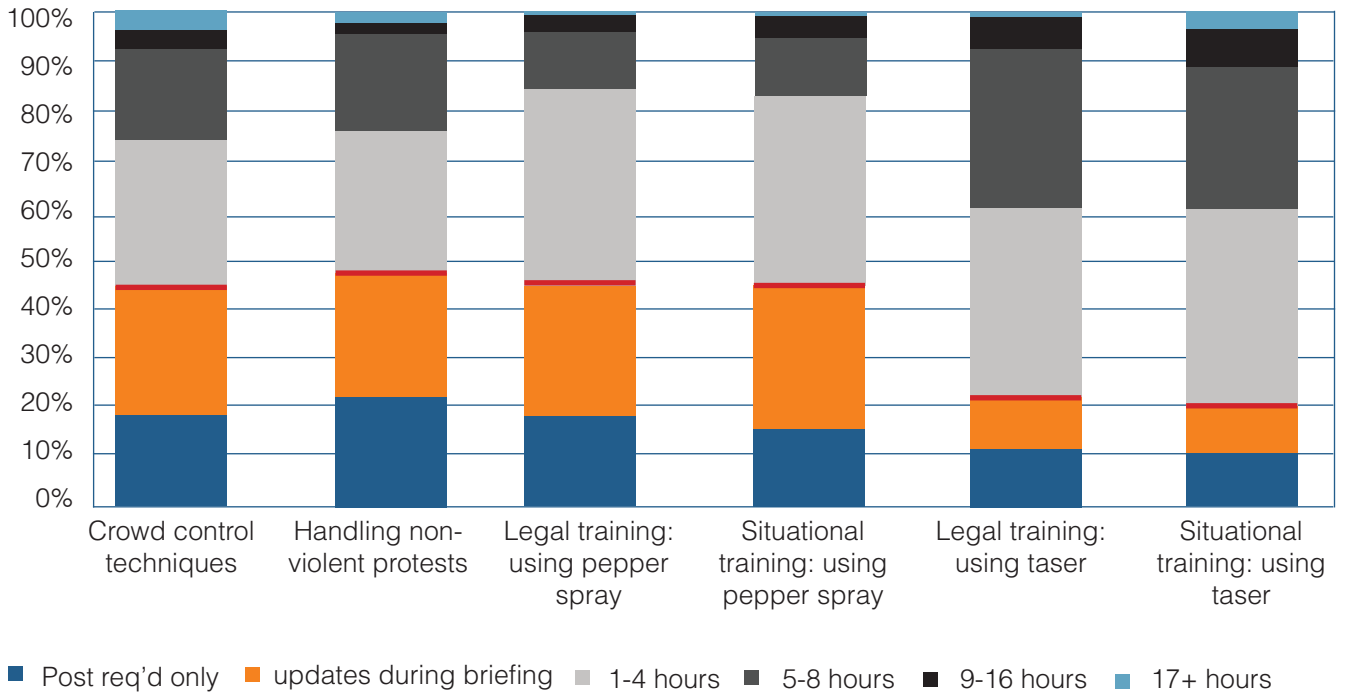
Participants were asked how much additional training (beyond California POST requirements) patrol officers/deputies received in the past two years on specified topics. Despite much recent attention on the usefulness of problem solving and intelligence-led policing as crime prevention strategies, few officers received special training on these tactics. As can be seen in Figure 12, three-quarters of patrol officers received no additional training (beyond POST-mandated training) on problem oriented policing (SARA model) or intelligence-led policing (mapping, hotspot patrols, etc.). California does require that new recruits receive 18 hours of training on “policing in the community” during basic academy; and this learning domain does include problem solving but it does not include intelligence-led policing strategies. Thus, it appears that most patrol officers have NO training in intelligence-led policing.

**Figure 11:** Amount of additional training received by patrol officers



Officers did, however, receive additional training on handling mental health crisis situations, crowds, and less-than-lethal weapons. While 46% of agencies offered nothing more than briefing updates on handling mental health crises, 54% of agencies provided some specialized training for officers over the past two years. Specifically, 31% of agencies provided 1-4 hours of additional training, 10% provided 5-8 hours of additional training, 4% provided 9-16 hours, and almost 9% of agencies stated that they provided 17+ hours of additional training on handling mental health crises (see Figure 11). POST does not require specific training for dealing with mentally ill persons.

**Figure 12:** Amount of additional training received by patrol officers: Crowd control and use of force



■ Post req'd only ■ updates during briefing ■ 1-4 hours ■ 5-8 hours ■ 9-16 hours ■ 17+ hours

\* Percentage of officers above the solid red line received additional training on a topic.

As might be expected, officers spent a good deal of time training with weapons and on crowd control techniques. More than half of agencies reported that they provided extra training on handling non-violent protests and crowd control techniques beyond briefing updates and POST requirements (Figure 12).

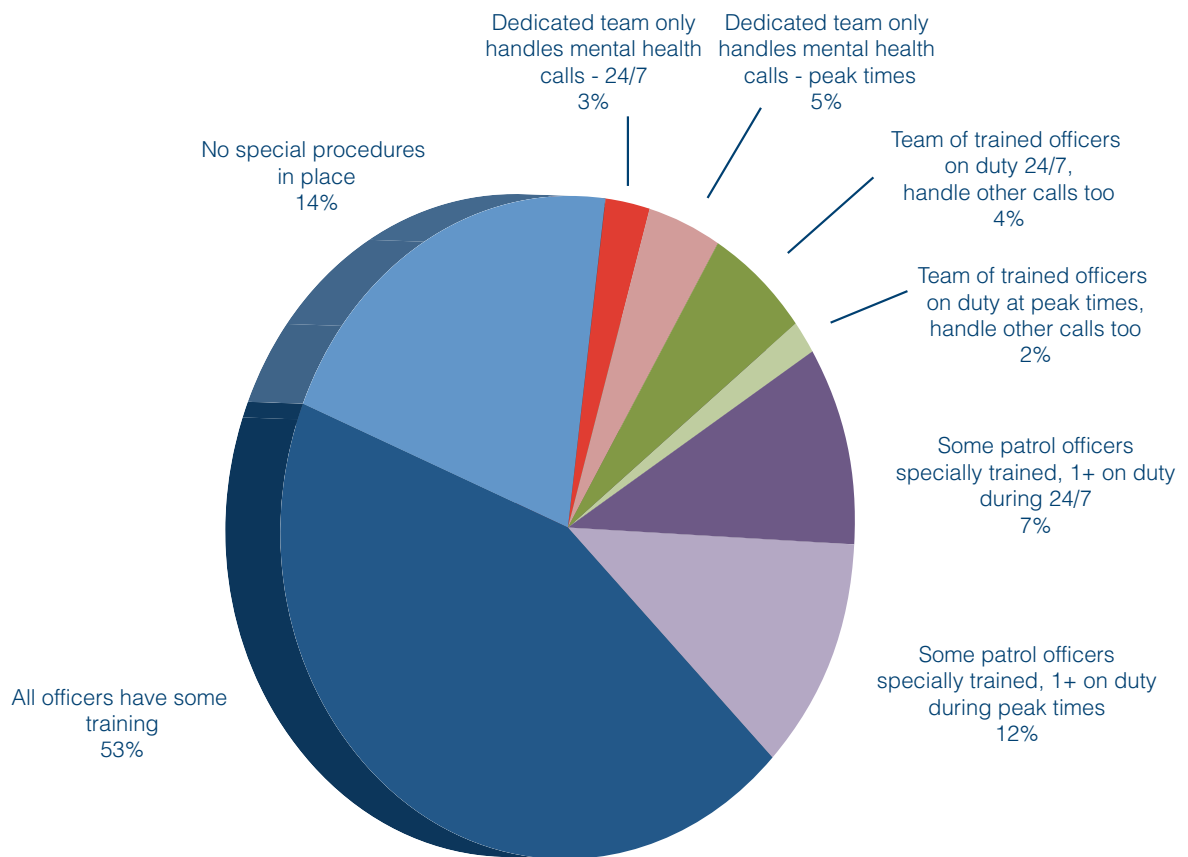
Approximately 30% of agencies provided 1 to 4 hours of additional training on these issues while 19% provided 5 to 8 hours, 2% provided 9 to 16 hours, and 2% provided 17 or more hours of training. Given the volatility of large crowd situations and the potential for them to go very badly very quickly, it would be wise for many police and sheriffs' departments in California to increase the amount of training they offer in this area. While it is encouraging that approximately 53% of agencies are spending valuable time training for these scenarios, experience shows that it is important for every officer in every agency to be fully trained and practiced in properly responding to these emotionally charged situations in which a department's reputation is publicly on the line.



## Mental Health Evaluation Teams

Respondents were also asked whether their agency has a specialized mental evaluation team/mental health response unit for dealing with individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. It was found that most agencies (66.9%) do not have a specialized team for such situations, but rather rely on all patrol officers to resolve the issues on their own.

**Figure 13:** Mental Health Crisis Response



As Figure 13 shows, 19% of agencies have specially trained officers who are on duty either 24/7 or during peak times and 14% of agencies have a team of specially trained officers to handle mental health calls who are on duty 24/7 or during peak times (some of these teams handle only mental health crisis calls, some handle other types of calls as well).

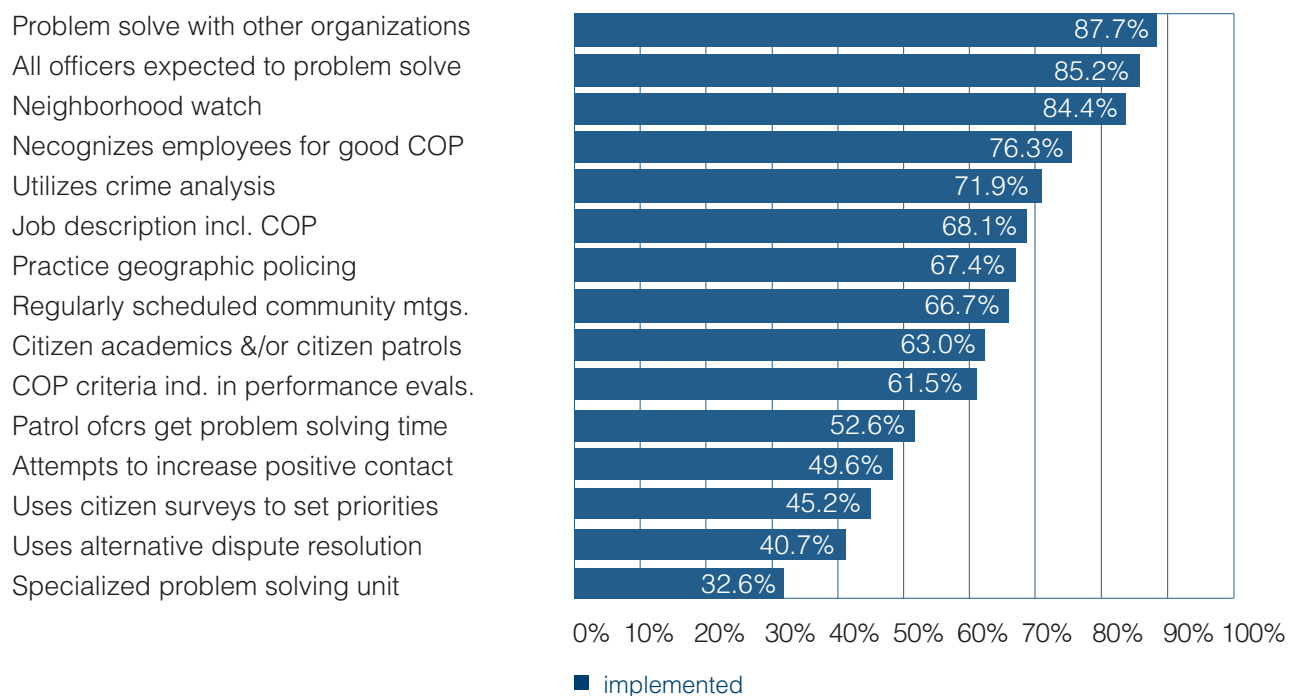
## Citizen Oversight Committees

Citizen oversight committees (COC) are “officially recognized groups composed of members of the community, often non-sworn civilians, who review complaints against police on behalf of the citizenry” (Calderon & Hernandez-Figueroa, 2013, p.1). There has been a lot of discussion about them in the news recently. In particular, citizen oversight committees are a useful tool to improve transparency, accountability, trust, and cooperation between a law enforcement agency and the community it serves. At the time of the survey, only 18% of California agencies stated they have a citizen oversight committee. At least one agency has instituted a citizen oversight committee since this survey was conducted and it is possible there have been more.

## Community Policing

Community policing is a popular policing philosophy which emphasizes the importance of forming collaborative partnerships between law enforcement agencies and community stakeholders to improve crime control and other quality of life issues as well as the relationship between the agency and the community it serves. It is associated with many positive benefits, when fully and properly implemented.

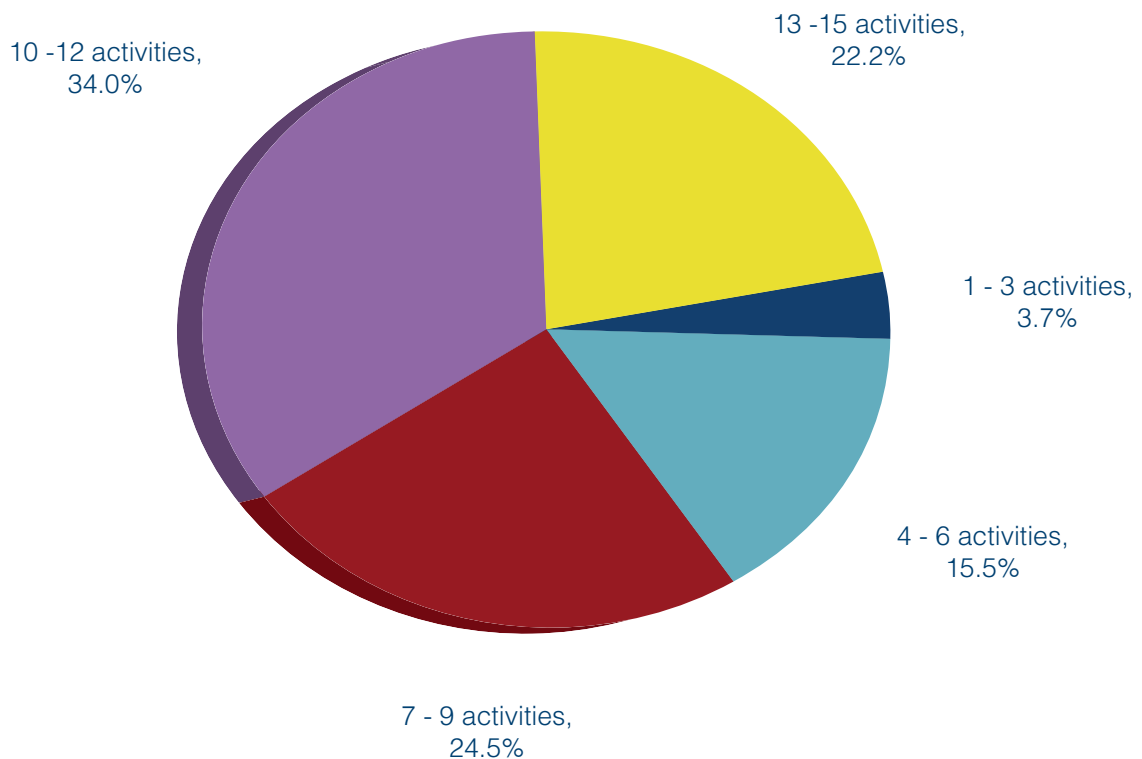
**Figure 14:** The Most Popular Community Policing Activities



When asked about their agency’s policing philosophy, 92% of respondents stated that their agency embraces a community policing philosophy. However, when asked about their agency’s organizational structure, only 40% stated that it is in accordance with a community policing philosophy. The other 60% stated theirs was most akin to a traditional organizational structure.

Additionally, respondents were provided a list of 15 community policing activities and asked to identify the ones their agency has implemented. The most popular community policing activities implemented in California law enforcement agencies are: (1) problem solving with other organizations, (2) expecting all officers to routinely problem solve, (3) neighborhood watch, and (4) recognizing employees for good community policing work. Figure 14 illustrates each of the activities and the percentage of departments which have implemented them. In general, the larger the agency, the more COP activities have been implemented. Most agencies in the state have implemented at least 10 (of the 15) listed activities (Figure 15).

**Figure 15:** Number of community policing activities implemented



## V. CONCLUSION

California agencies are more likely than agencies nationwide to offer education incentives to encourage officers to pursue higher education and to attract college-educated recruits. These incentives, along with the generous salary and benefits packages offered to many peace officers in the state seem to have worked, as almost 35% of officers in California are college graduates. This is very different from 50 years ago when only 3% of officers held college degrees. Of course, policing was very different back then too. With a focus on intelligence-led policing, community partnerships, and problem solving, as well as changes to higher education that allow more working professionals to pursue college and graduate degrees, it is likely we will continue to see this percentage rise in the future.

**Appendix A****Percentage of College-Educated Officers by County<sup>12</sup>**

County	# agencies in category	Two-year degree (AA)+	Four-year degree(BA)+	Master's Degree+	Doctorate
Alameda <sup>c,f</sup>	6	62.9%	46.4%	4.2%	1.2%
Amador <sup>a,g</sup>	2	61.7%	21.1%	<.1%	<1%
Butte <sup>b,d</sup>	2	46.4%	33.0%	5.5%	<.1%
Calaveras <sup>a,g</sup>	1	66.7%	16.7%	NA	<1%
Contra Costa <sup>c,f</sup>	10	66.1%	40.3%	10.3%	1.2%
Del Norte <sup>a,d</sup>	1	7.7%	7.7%	<.1%	<1%
Fresno <sup>b,h</sup>	4	45.5%	28.0%	3.1%	<1%
Glenn <sup>a,d</sup>	2	38.8%	10.3%	<1%	<1%
Humboldt <sup>a,d</sup>	1	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	<1%
Imperial <sup>b,m</sup>	2	31.7%	24.7%	4.3%	<1%
Kern <sup>b,h</sup>	3	28.6%	18.2%	3.2%	1.9%
Lake <sup>a,d</sup>	1	33.3%	25%	<1%	<1%
Lassen <sup>a,d</sup>	1	72.4%	20.7%	6.9%	<1%
Los Angeles <sup>c,j</sup>	21	56.5%	42.2%	10.7%	.6%
Madera <sup>a,h</sup>	1	42.9%	28.6%	<1%	<1%
Marin <sup>b,f</sup>	3	41.5%	26.5%	5.7%	.5%
Mendocino <sup>a,d</sup>	2	57.6%	22.9%	3.3%	<1%
Merced <sup>b,h</sup>	1	35.7%	21.4%	7.1%	<1%
Mono <sup>a,g</sup>	1	44.4%	33.3%	<5.6%	<1%
Monterey <sup>b,i</sup>	2	45.1%	28.3%	<.1%	<1%
Orange <sup>c,k</sup>	9	64.2%	52.6%	8.5%	.3%
Placer <sup>b,e</sup>	4	49.5%	43.4%	5.4%	<1%
Riverside <sup>c,l</sup>	3	44.3%	39.4%	12.3%	<1%
Sacramento <sup>c,e</sup>	2	58.4%	41.6%	10.8%	.6%
San Benito <sup>a,l</sup>	1	31.8%	22.7%	9.1%	<1%
San Bernardino <sup>c,l</sup>	2	42.4%	24.9%	7.3%	<1%
San Diego <sup>c,m</sup>	3	42.9%	33.2%	8.8%	1.5%
San Joaquin <sup>b,h</sup>	2	42.4%	25.8%	.7%	<1%
San Luis Obispo <sup>b,l</sup>	4	50.4%	34.0%	3.7%	.9%
San Mateo <sup>c,f</sup>	8	67.8%	46.4%	7.2%	<1%
Santa Barbara <sup>b,j</sup>	2	69.7%	43.0%	7.0%	.6%
Santa Clara <sup>c,f</sup>	3	51.2%	46.4%	6.2%	.9%
Santa Cruz <sup>b,l</sup>	4	51.8%	28.8%	4.9%	<1%
Siskiyou <sup>a,d</sup>	4	47.2%	15.9%	3.0%	.5%
Solano <sup>b,f</sup>	4	52.5%	28.2%	5.0%	<.1%

	# agencies in category	Two-year degree (AA)+	Four-year degree(BA)+	Master's Degree+	Doctorate
Sonoma <sup>b,f</sup>	1	46.2%	30.8%	7.7%	<1%
Stanislaus <sup>b,h</sup>	1	27.2%	27.2%	<1%	<1%
Sutter <sup>a,d</sup>	2	53.1%	37.3%	9.6%	<1%
Tehama <sup>a,d</sup>	1	45.5%	27.3%	<.1%	<1%
Tulare <sup>b,h</sup>	3	30.6%	19.4%	4.0%	<1%
Tuolumne <sup>a,g</sup>	1	28.6%	21.4%	7.1%	<1%
Yolo <sup>b,c</sup>	2	49.0%	35.0%	6.5%	1.6%
Yuba <sup>a,d</sup>	1	61.8%	29.4%	2.9%	<1%

<sup>1</sup>The following counties are not represented because no agency within the county completed the survey: Alpine, Colusa, El Dorado, Inyo, Mariposa, Modoc, Napa, Nevada, Plumas, San Francisco, Shasta, Sierra, Trinity, Ventura.

<sup>2</sup>In some cases, only one small agency within a county completed the survey. These counties percentages may appear to overly high or low in comparison to other counties.

<sup>a</sup>Rural county

<sup>b</sup>Suburban County

<sup>c</sup>Urban County

<sup>d</sup>Northern California Region

<sup>e</sup>Sacramento Region

<sup>f</sup>SF Bay Area Region

<sup>g</sup>Central Sierras Region

<sup>h</sup>Central Valley Region

<sup>i</sup>Central Coast Region

<sup>j</sup>Los Angeles Region

<sup>k</sup>Orange County Region

<sup>l</sup>Inland Empire Region

<sup>m</sup>San Diego Region

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Christine Gardiner is an associate professor of criminal justice at California State University, Fullerton and a member of CSUF's Center for Public Policy. Gardiner received her Ph.D. in Criminology, Law and Society from the University of California, Irvine. She was awarded a prestigious National Institute of Justice Dissertation Fellowship to support her research on the effects of Proposition 36 on Orange County practitioners. Her areas of expertise include crime policy, policing, and juvenile delinquency. She was recognized as CSUF's 2012 Outstanding Service Learning Instructor for her innovative service learning course, "Policing the City." Prior to her work at CSUF, Gardiner worked as a police explorer, an intern probation officer, a police dispatcher, and a crime analyst.

## The Center for Public Policy

The Center for Public Policy at CSUF is a nonpartisan research institute dedicated to exploring public policy issues in Orange County and the surrounding area. The center conducts public opinion surveys and provides a setting for faculty and student research on applied policy relevant to the region.

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