



ARCHIVED - Archiving Content

Archived Content

Information identified as archived is provided for reference, research or recordkeeping purposes. It is not subject to the Government of Canada Web Standards and has not been altered or updated since it was archived. Please contact us to request a format other than those available.

ARCHIVÉE - Contenu archivé

Contenu archivé

L'information dont il est indiqué qu'elle est archivée est fournie à des fins de référence, de recherche ou de tenue de documents. Elle n'est pas assujettie aux normes Web du gouvernement du Canada et elle n'a pas été modifiée ou mise à jour depuis son archivage. Pour obtenir cette information dans un autre format, veuillez communiquer avec nous.

This document is archival in nature and is intended for those who wish to consult archival documents made available from the collection of Public Safety Canada.

Some of these documents are available in only one official language. Translation, to be provided by Public Safety Canada, is available upon request.

Le présent document a une valeur archivistique et fait partie des documents d'archives rendus disponibles par Sécurité publique Canada à ceux qui souhaitent consulter ces documents issus de sa collection.

Certains de ces documents ne sont disponibles que dans une langue officielle. Sécurité publique Canada fournira une traduction sur demande.

Measuring Policing Complexity: A Research Based Agenda

**Richard C. Bent, Paul Brantingham,
Fiona Young, Patricia Brantingham**

ASC 2011

Purpose and Scope of the Study

- To determine whether it is feasible, at present, to describe and define “police work” in a way that points to the complexity of the work in which police forces engage.
- If so, to determine whether it is feasible to identify measures of police work complexity that could be used to:
 - Provide an index number that could be used to better understand the context of police statistics;
 - Provide a measure that could be used to better forecast policing workloads;
 - Provide a set of policing complexity measures that could be used as control variables in the use of some reasonable police performance measure, and;
 - Provide better input to the front end of the British Columbia Criminal Justice System Simulation modeling project.

Main Study Components

- Literature Review
- Definition of policing complexity
- Modeling the policing process
- Review use of complexity indices in the Justice System in BC
- Developing a typology of policing complexity
- Description of potential policing complexity metrics
- Review of data availability relevant to policing complexity
- Identification of key issues in developing a policing complexity index

Literature Review Summary Findings

- **No** examples were found that describe either the development or use of a policing complexity index.
- Very little of the literature examined describes policing complexity as a specific approach to performance measurement.
- The literature suggests that elements of a full model of policing complexity might include:
 - Context variables
 - Police organizational and administrative characteristics
 - Workload character and volume issues

Definition: The policing context

Policing operates in an often fluid or ever changing environment where a variety of forces act on police agencies which serve to influence, direct or otherwise impact on police service delivery

These include:

- Government, Community and internal priorities
- Constitutional, statutory, and case laws touching both substance and procedure
- Resource levels
- Geography
- Economy
- Demographics
- Technology

Levels of Policing Complexity

- **Category 1:** Strategic Policing and Strategic Police Management
- **Category 2:** Technically complex or complicated policing and management
- **Category 3.** Regular policing and routine management

Characteristics of Complexity

- **Characteristic A: Impact/Risk**
- **Characteristic B: Urgency**
- **Characteristic C: Priority**

Measures of the Complexity of Police Work

- **REACTIVE:** Responses to call for service.
- **PROACTIVE:** Much contemporary police work is proactive.
- **RESOURCES:** Police activities are governed by the available resources.
- **CONTEXT:** All police work is conditioned by **context**.

Potential Measures of Policing Complexity

- Crime Metrics
- Workload Metrics
- Administrative Metrics
- Capacity Metrics
- Context Metrics
- Community Context Metrics
- Legal Context

Preliminary Findings

- We are breaking new ground!
- Data review promising, need further exploration on other indicators
- Range and variety of police work raises concerns about challenges of limiting the focus to a 'court funnel' only
- Range of issues identified with developing single index/single metric
- Stakeholder consultation and engagement needed in relation to:
 - Purpose and use of PCI
 - Is a PCI the best option
 - Definition and typology
 - Appropriateness & relevance of indicators
 - Adoption & implementation issues

Potential Areas for Future Study

- A study to assess whether and how the complexity of policing has increased.
- A study to assess whether the cost of policing has increased in real terms and if so, to examine why and how costs have increased.
- Specific examination of workflows in policing.
- A study developing appropriate performance measures for policing at the Provincial level coupled with a study developing an index of context variables to aid understanding of performance variation.

Potential Areas for Future Study

- A study examining the capacity and capability impact on different police occupational groups (managerial, specialist, general duty) of increased complexity in police work.
- A number of data studies are recommended to support further work on performance measures and resource analysis. Work will be needed to develop appropriate metrics and their data sources to support complexity analysis.

Contact Information

- Dr. Paul Brantingham
 - branting@sfu.ca
- Richard Bent
 - rcbent@sfu.ca