

POLICE SERVICES

Introduction:

Nearly everyone, even the youngest children, are aware of a police department's general mission to maintain order, protect persons and property from harm by others, and enforce "the law of the land" (including city ordinances in urban areas). The City of Newport's Police Department is no different, although certain priorities and practices are emphasized given the culture of the community.

As any police department is defined by the type and number of personnel available, it seems appropriate to identify the City of Newport's current staffing (1989):

- 1 Chief of Police
- 4 Sergeants
- 14 Police officers (some are assigned as detectives)
- 1 Records Supervisor/Secretary
- 2 Records Clerks
- 1 Receptionist
- 1 Parking Enforcement Officer

Closely related are the 911 Center personnel, who are operated through intergovernmental cooperation and located in the Newport Police Department. This agency dispatches emergency calls for the state, county, and city police departments.

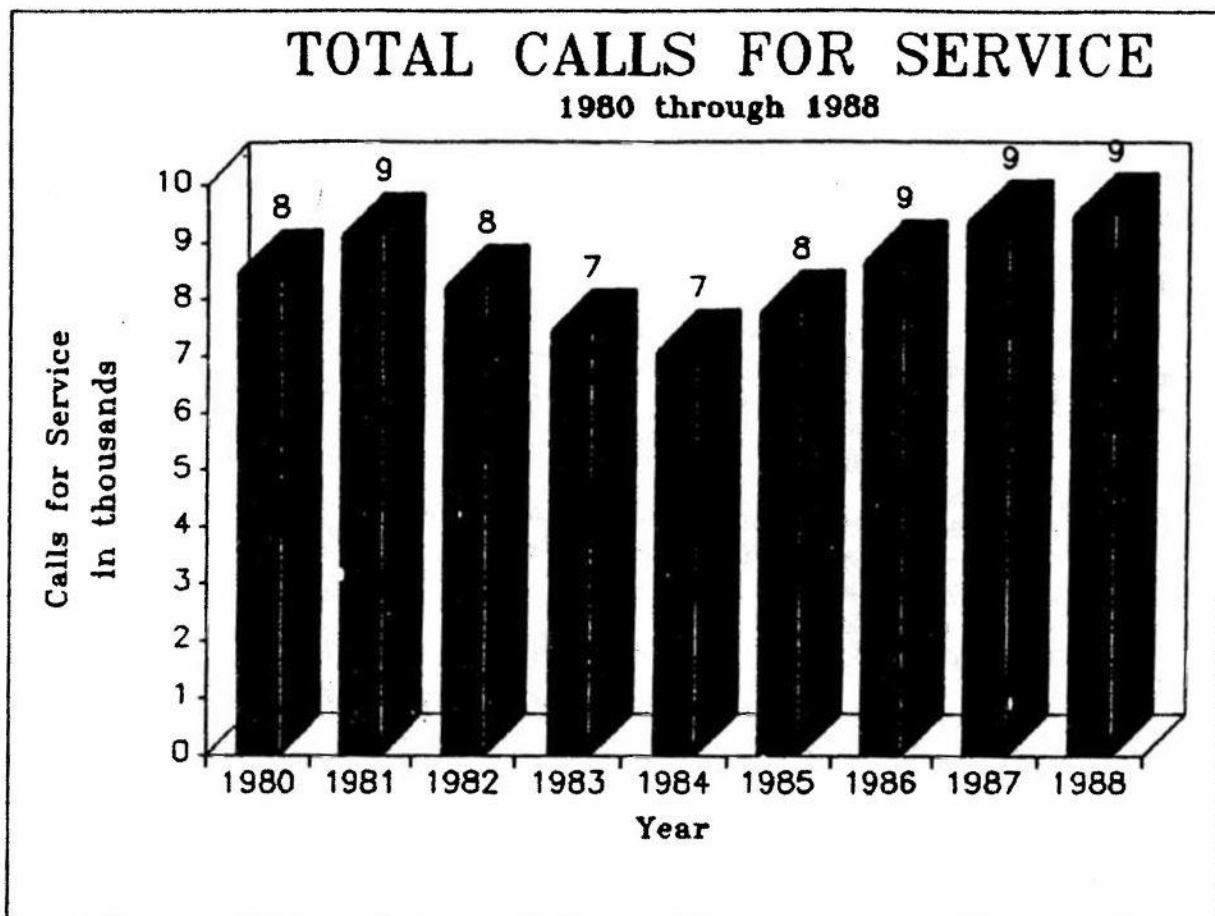
Newport's level of staffing, then, is consistent with a standard recommended ratio of two sworn officers per 1,000 population. While this is a guide, however, it should be noted that a significant non-resident population (namely, tourists) can double the size of the community during any given weekend or event, thus impacting criminal incident numbers.

Activity Levels:

Offenses have been categorized into three divisions: Part I Crimes include assault, robbery, rape, murder, burglary, theft, auto theft, and arson; Part II Crimes are those of fraud, vandalism, sex offenses, gambling, liquor violations, disorderly conduct, and runaway juveniles; and Part III Crimes consist of all lesser offenses.

Table 1 (page 361) shows the Newport Police Department's total calls for service over the past nine years. A good indicator of the overall activity level, the graph shows that little has changed over the years. Looking closer, however, one finds an increasing number of offenses being processed, particularly for Part I and Part II crimes, which add measurably to the department's work load (see Table 2 on page 362).

Table 1



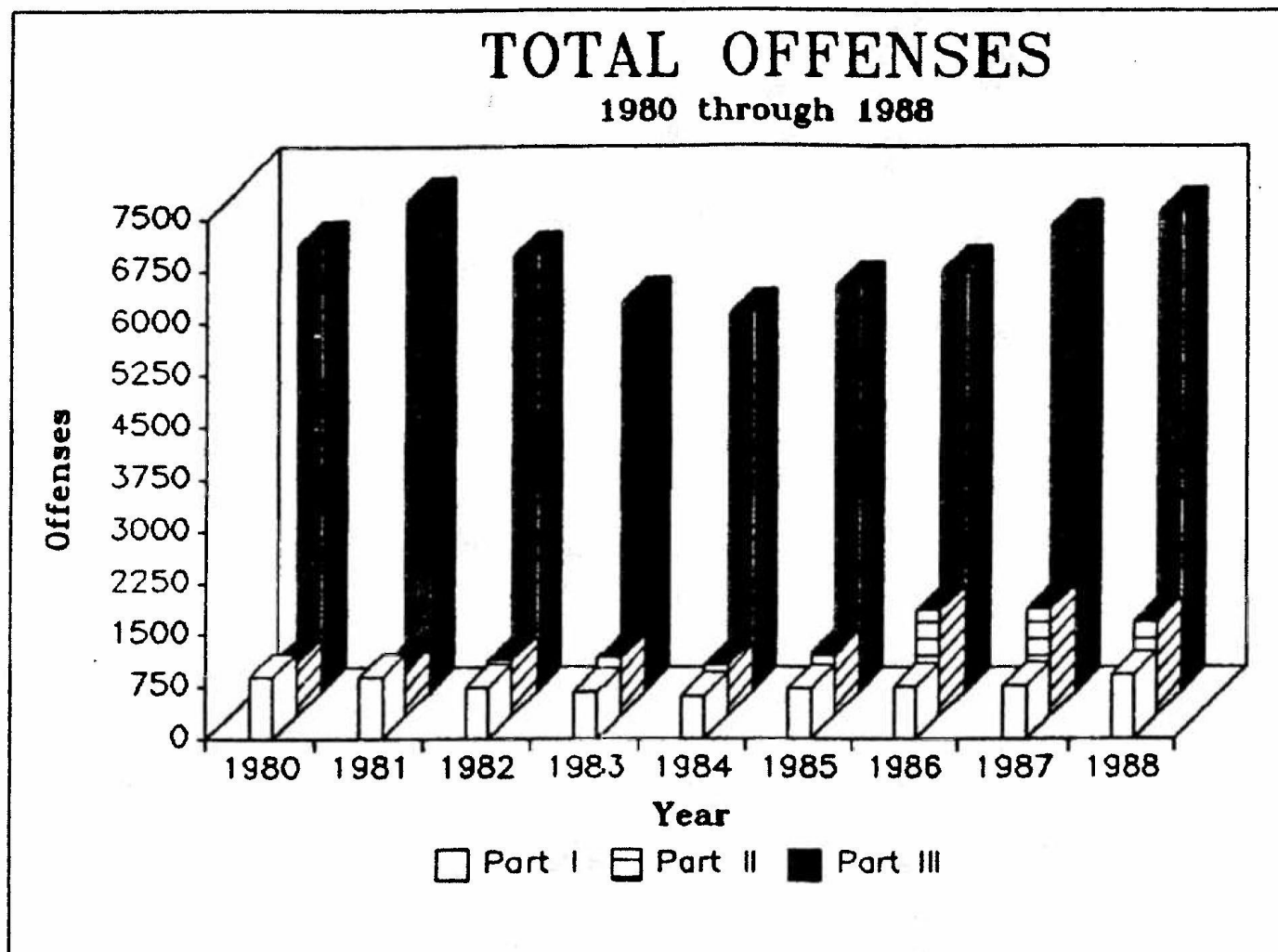
Source: City of Newport Police Department files.

Not surprisingly, the increase in offenses has led to an increase in the number of persons arrested (see Table 3 on page 363). If there's a positive here, it may be that the level of juvenile arrests has remained relatively constant.

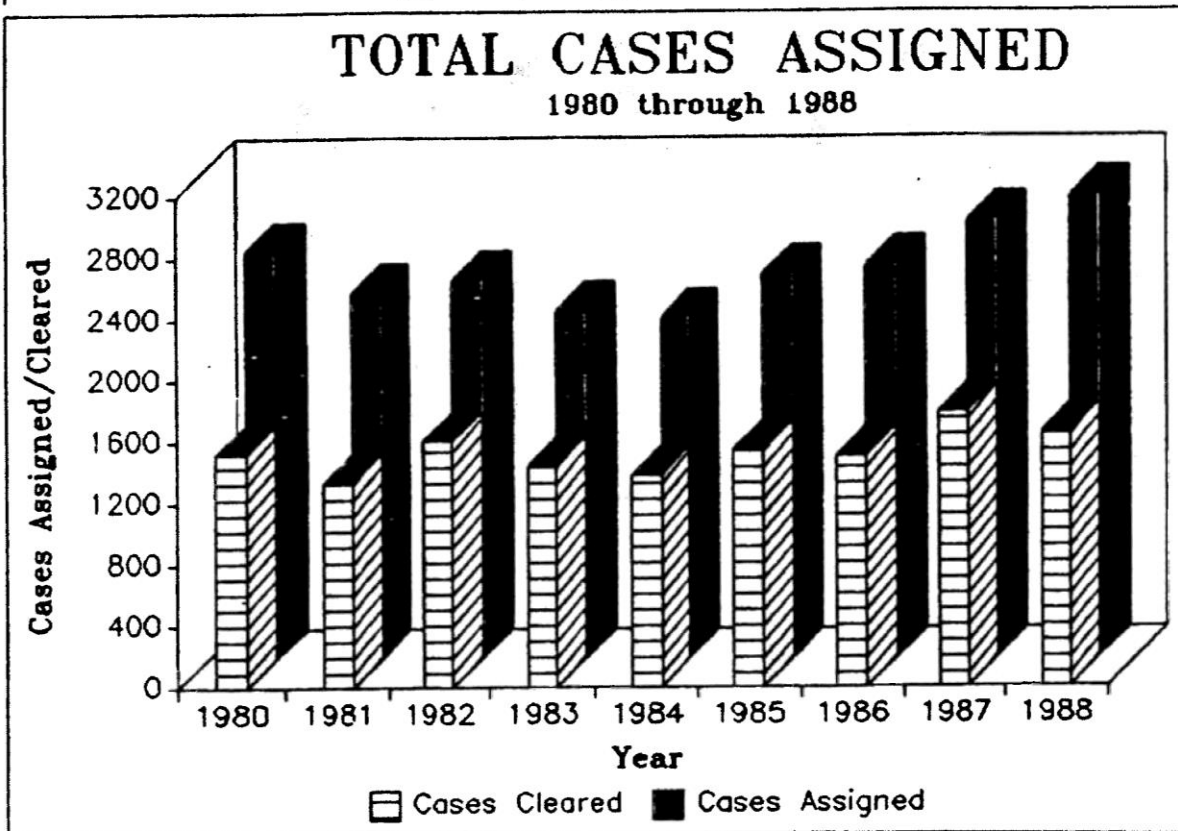
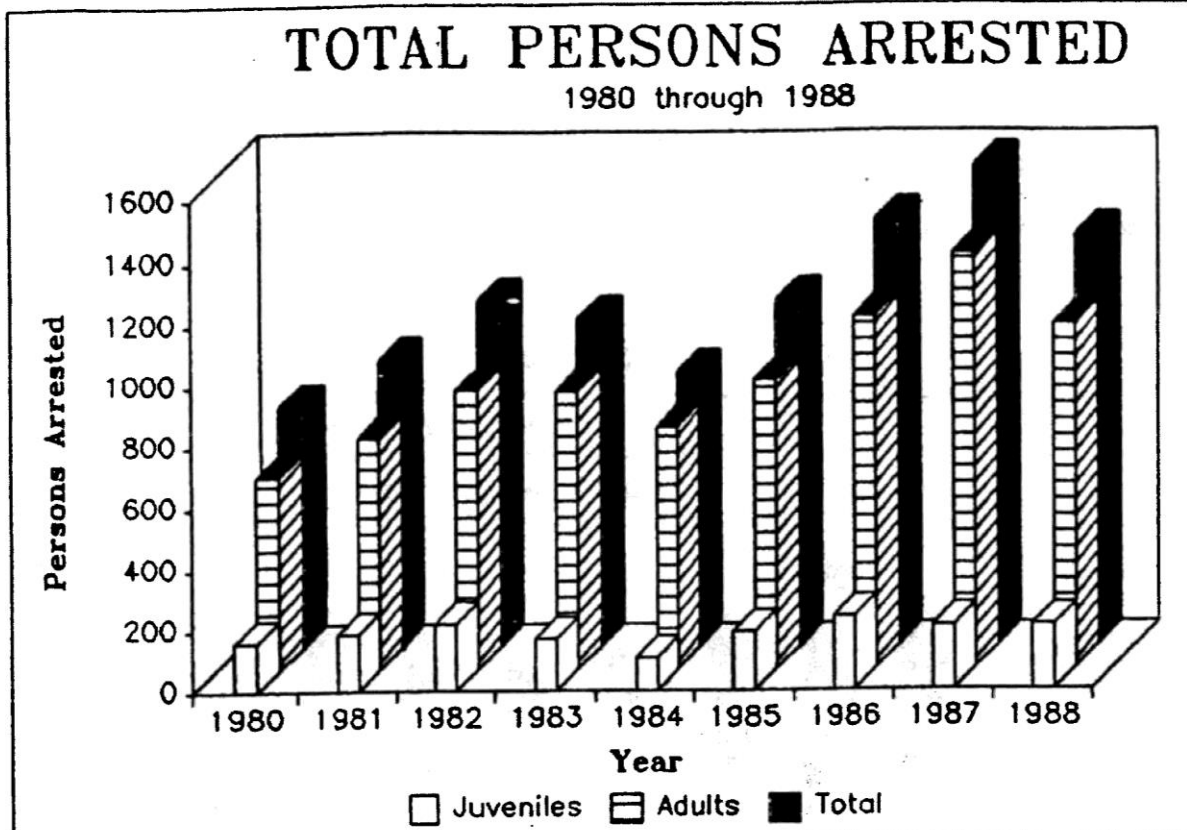
As a measure of efficiency, Table 4 (page 363) shows a relatively constant ratio of the number of cases cleared as a percent of the total assigned. Also, "holding steady" is the number of accidents (Table 5 on page 364). This is a positive indicator, given the greatly increased numbers of vehicles on the road, both resident and non-resident.

A new jail facility has been approved by the Lincoln County voters. Once built, it is expected to begin housing prisoners in 1992. This will provide badly needed space as the current facility is consistently at its capacity (26 persons). Routinely, criminals are turned away who would otherwise be incarcerated.

Table 2

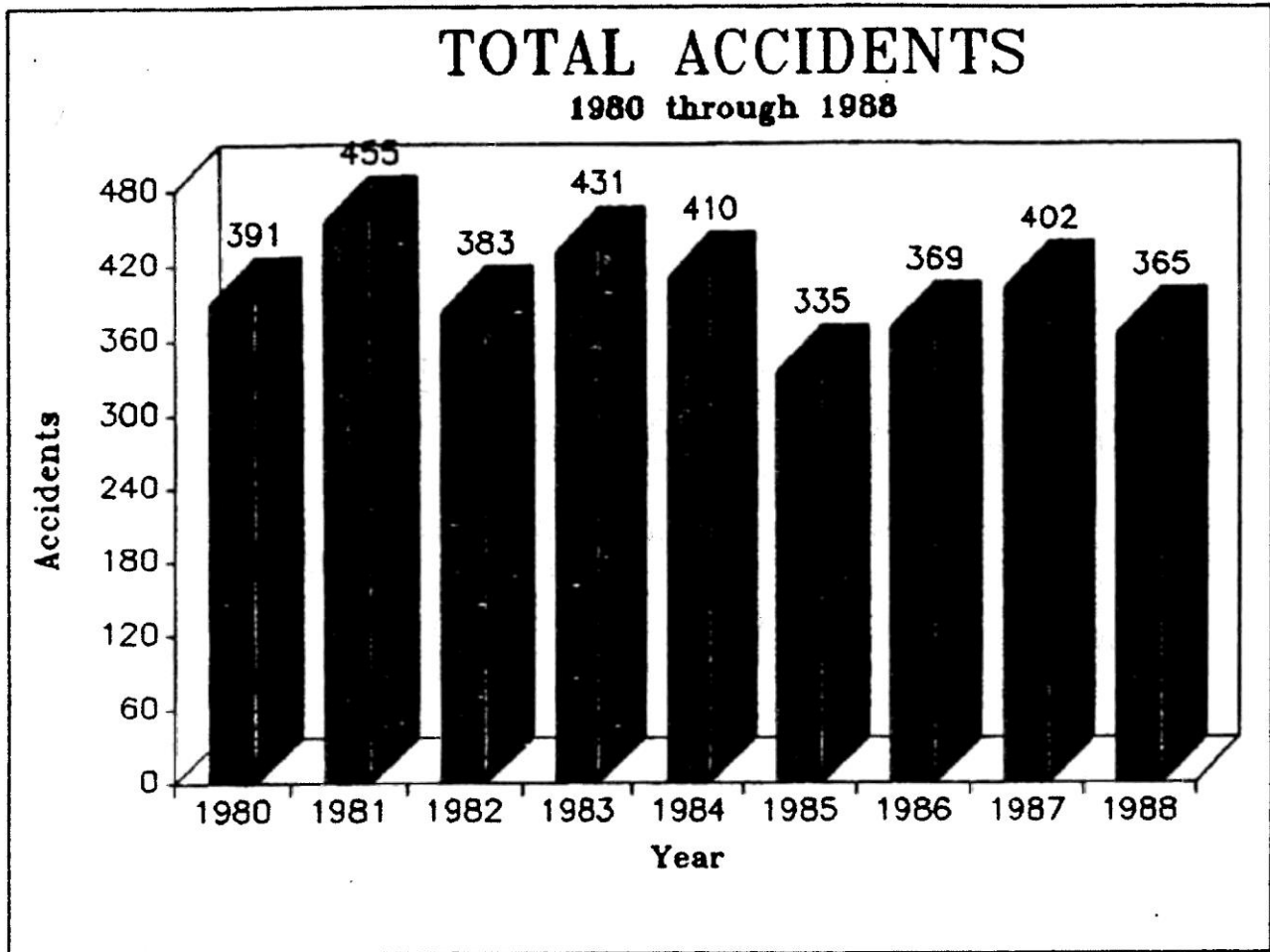


Source: City of Newport Police Department file.



Source: City of Newport Police Department files.

Table 5



Source: City of Newport Police Department files.

Conclusions:

- 1.) The personnel level is adequate according to customary standards. However, given the non-resident population and current incident levels, additional staffing could be justified if local residents wished to support a higher level of enforcement.
- 2.) Serious crime has increased in recent years.
- 3.) Total calls for service have paralleled the total offense rate. They are at slightly higher levels than those of 10 years ago, although the levels declined for several years in the early 1980's.

- 4.) While caseload burden has increased, the department has been able to keep efficiency levels comparable with periods of lesser activity.
- 5.) The new Lincoln County Jail facility is expected to measurably lower the rate of incidents by keeping convicted offenders off the streets, which will act as a deterrent to others.

GOALS/POLICIES
POLICE SERVICES

Goal: The Newport Police Department seeks to improve the quality of life for Newport and its visitors by protecting persons and property from harm from others through the enforcement of federal, state, and local laws and ordinances.

Policy 1: The department shall monitor and evaluate community support for increasing the number of patrol officers.

Policy 2: The department shall continue to maintain efficiency and morale through the training and upgrading of personnel, as well as investment in computers and other support technologies.

Policy 3: The department, as part of the city's general fund, shall use a portion of the hotel/motel room tax revenues to help pay for police services necessitated by non-resident service demands.

Policy 4: The department shall encourage public education for crime prevention through programs of the department and by others.

Policy 5: The department shall support educational and crime prevention programs among youth, particularly through the schools.

Policy 6: The department shall work cooperatively with interagency efforts as appropriate (e.g., drug enforcement, tactical teams, etc.).