



INSIDE THE BUDGET

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Maintaining Historically Large Police Force Presents Challenges

Uniformed staffing within the NYPD is scheduled to rise to an all-time high of 41,440 this week with the admission of a class of new recruits into the Police Academy. With attainment of the targeted staffing level, the total number of police officers on the city's payroll would be about 9,400 (or 30 percent) higher than a decade ago. However, for several reasons discussed below, maintaining a force size of 41,440 in the future would require tradeoffs with other city budget priorities.

Background on Uniformed Staffing Issues

The class of 1,589 recruits scheduled to enter the Police Academy on September 29 is to include 1,230 new positions partially funded by the federal Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, commonly known as the Crime Bill. The remaining 359 recruits are being hired to offset recent attrition from the force and are funded entirely with city resources.

The Crime Bill provides localities with three-year grants averaging \$25,000 annually per officer. Local police agencies are required to fund any additional salary and fringe benefit costs. Recipient agencies are also required to retain the funded police officer positions at their own expense for at least one full year following expiration of the grant.

As reported by IBO in May, the \$92.2 million in recently awarded federal funds would ultimately need to be matched by about \$116.0 million in city taxpayer funds—or about \$1.26 for every \$1.00 in federal funds anticipated from 2001-2004. Any wage increases

secured by police officers through ongoing collective bargaining discussions with the city would result in a larger city share.

The latest Crime Bill award brings to 4,730 the number of NYPD uniformed personnel partially funded by the federal government since 1996. Due to expiration of previously awarded grants, 1,600 of the 4,730 positions originally funded by the Crime Bill are now being fully paid for with city resources. By next year, the number of such hires fully funded by the city will rise to 3,500. In 2004, federal grant funding

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BOE Misses Pre-K Goal

The Board of Education (BOE) has fallen short of this year's enrollment goal in the universal prekindergarten program. As a result, \$18.9 million in prekindergarten aid expected from New York State will be deferred for use in 2001/02, assuming that next year's even more ambitious enrollment goal can be met. BOE now expects to qualify for \$127.6 million in state aid for universal prekindergarten this year, rather than the maximum \$146.5 million available under state law.

As discussed in the July 31st issue of *Inside the Budget*, BOE needed to enroll 44,000 four-year olds to qualify for the maximum grant. With the school year now underway, BOE estimates that 38,300 pupils are participating in universal

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for all 4,730 positions will have expired, so that the cost of maintaining a force size at 41,440 beyond that point would be borne entirely by the city.

Also significant is the fact that about two-thirds of the 9,400 officer buildup in the police force over the past decade was initially funded by a 12.5 percent personal income tax (PIT) surcharge enacted in 1991 and subsequently allowed to expire in December 1998. The PIT surcharge was a key component of the *Safe Streets, Safe City* program, which called for a buildup in the size of the city's police force as well as a number of other anti-crime efforts. In calendar year 1998, the last year of its existence, the PIT surcharge generated just under \$500 million, about \$185 million of which was earmarked for police staffing costs. During the nearly two year period since the surcharge expired, other resources from the city's general fund have been tapped to cover police staffing costs previously funded by the surcharge.

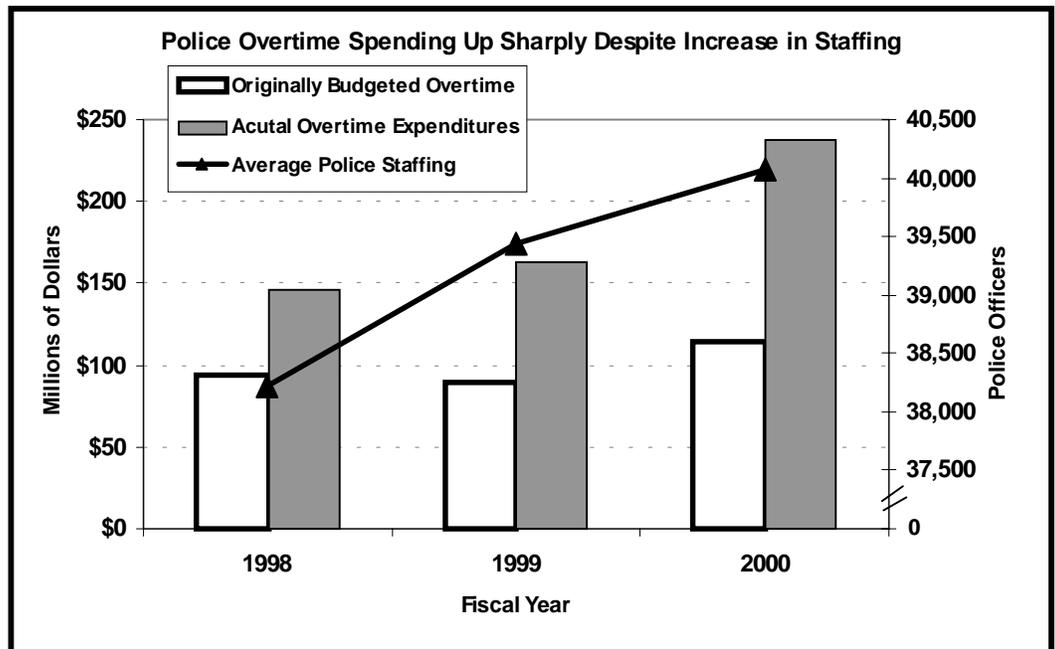
Finally, *The New York Times* reported on September 28 that the NYPD would fall short of filling all 1,589 positions in the recruit class scheduled to enter the Police Academy this Friday. It was reported that only about 1,300 qualified recruits have thus far been identified. In the event that the NYPD is unable to reach the 41,440 force size agreed to with the federal government, the city would ultimately forfeit a prorated amount of Crime Bill funding.

Overtime Issues

NYPD overtime expenditures in FY 2000 totaled \$237 million, or 46 percent more than in 1999 and 63 percent higher than in 1998. The \$237 million in NYPD overtime expenditures during FY 2000 was more than

double the amount originally budgeted by the Mayor and City Council, as shown in the accompanying chart. According to the recently released Mayor's Management Report (MMR), the additional overtime expenditures in FY 2000 were attributable to planned anti-crime and quality-of-life initiatives, planned and unplanned public events, and work performed by civilian employees in facilities maintenance, traffic enforcement and Y2K computer preparation projects.

The 63 percent jump in overtime expenditures from 1998 to 2000 occurred against a backdrop of a 5 percent increase in the average size of the police force. Over the same period, there was a 3 percent decrease in total arrests, with major felony arrests dropping by 15 percent. Misdemeanor narcotics arrests rose by 33 percent from 1998 to 2000.



Civilianization

For many years, observers of NYPD operations have pointed to the Department's use of hundreds of police officers to perform duties that could be adequately and less expensively performed by civilian personnel. Civilianization of these functions would allow more officers to be deployed in direct law enforcement activities. During the course of City

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Council budget hearings this past May, NYPD representatives estimated that there were over 400 civilianizable positions within the agency. An audit released last year by the City Comptroller identified a total of over 1,200 civilianizable positions within the Police Department.

The NYPD's ability to attain even its own more modest civilianization objectives has been hampered by diminishing federal support for police civilianization. Total civilian staffing within the NYPD was 8,984 as of June 2000, but is currently scheduled to fall to 8,538 as of June 2001 and to 7,883 by June 2003. The decline is in part attributable to the gradual expiration of grant funding from a federal program referred to as COPS MORE (Making Officer Redeployment Effective), another component of the 1994 Crime Bill. The objective of COPS MORE is to enhance direct policing activities by law enforcement officers through the funding of civilian support staff and technological initiatives. As a result of the expiration of the COPS MORE grant, the number of NYPD civilians fully funded by non-city sources fell to 575 in June 2000 from a high of 1,828 in July 1997.

The nationwide total of \$37 million being made available by the federal government through this year's COPS MORE program is less than 10 percent of that offered in the last round two years ago. According to officials in Washington, the NYPD elected not to apply for this year's considerably slimmed down version of the COPS MORE program. Given that the Crime Bill grant recently awarded to the city for uniformed police personnel requires the city to maintain staffing of 41,440 uniformed police personnel, any police officers retiring or otherwise leaving the NYPD until 2004 will need to be replaced with other uniformed police personnel. Any attempt by the city to replace retiring police officers with less costly civilian personnel (without forfeiting federal funds) would first require securing a waiver from officials in Washington.

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prekindergarten this fall, the third year of the initiative to make preschool available to all four-year olds.

The Board's inability to enroll 44,000 is primarily due to two factors. First, many areas of the city lack the classroom space both in BOE facilities and in community-based organizations needed to serve all eligible four-year olds. Second, in some neighborhoods that do have classrooms available, demand for half-day sessions has been lower than anticipated, leaving some seats unclaimed. The schedules of working parents often make full-day preschool/child care programs more attractive than the universal prekindergarten program's two and one-half hour sessions.

Qualifying for the \$18.9 million in deferred money next year will be difficult. Space shortages will be exacerbated in 2001/02 when the universal prekindergarten program is scheduled to expand further. A November 1999 IBO report, *Implementing Universal Prekindergarten in New York City*, discussed the challenge facing BOE of finding sufficient classroom space for prekindergarten while simultaneously trying to ease overcrowding and reduce class size in grades K-3.

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