

Law Enforcement
Management Institute of Texas

The Texas Chiefs of Police Panel Project



MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM™

Wave II Executive Summary

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Introduction

Since its inception in 2011, the Texas Chiefs of Police Panel Project (TCPPP) has regularly collected information from nearly every Texas Chief of Police as they participate in continuing education courses at LEMIT (the Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas). Every two years chiefs complete surveys as they attend professional development education. These surveys consist of a series of modules, or groups of questions about particular issues. Entering its seventh year in operation, TCPPP has now amassed an impressive collection of information about police leaders in Texas across several years. The information is rich and unique. We are aware of no other project that yields similar insights into police leadership with so many chiefs and across multiple years. Simply, this is a cutting-edge project.

Data for Wave 2 of the TCPPP were collected from September 2013 to July 2015. In order to better track recent changes in policing, some of the survey modules (including the law enforcement crisis module) were replaced in July 2014 (in the middle of Wave II

data collection) to gain information on more topics (including police chiefs' perceptions of innovation and leadership). Of the 1,027 TCPLS participants during Wave II, 613 responded to the TCPPP (59.69% response rate). In total, information was collected with eight survey modules. Results in this report are derived from these 613 responses.

Demographics

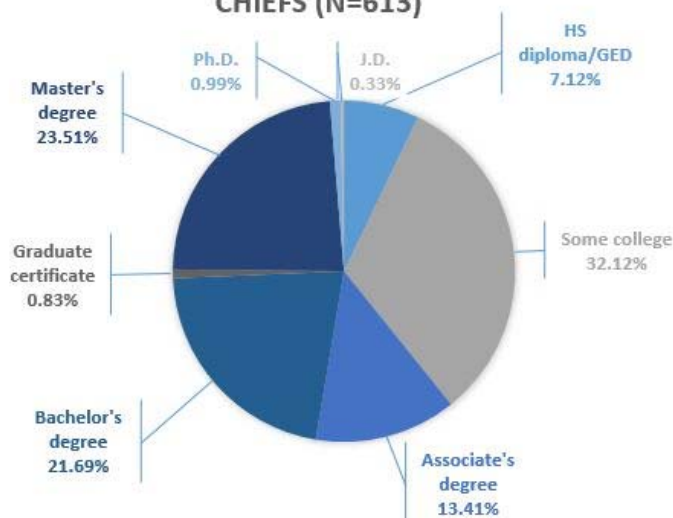
The demographics module is the only permanent fixture of the TCPPP, used across all waves. It collects information about the individual chiefs and their agencies.

Chiefs. Chiefs of police in Texas are, on average, 52 years old (range = 28 – 71). Their tenure as chief ranges from less than one year to 30+ years, with an average of 6½ years. Most have served for more than 28 years in law enforcement, with one chief reporting 67 years of law enforcement experience. For approximately 80% of chiefs, their current position is their first post as chief.

The educational attainment of chiefs ranges from a high school diploma or GED to a Ph.D. (see Figure 1). Approximately half (47.6%) were promoted from within their department, while the others were hired externally. A little over one-quarter of chiefs reported prior military experience.

The majority of Texas police chiefs are male (96.5%), White (80.1%), and married (83.1%). Hispanic/Latino individuals comprise 12.9% of Texas police chiefs, followed by Black/African-American (4.6%), bi-racial or other (1.2%), Native American (1.0%), and Asian (0.2%).

FIGURE 1. EDU. ATTAINMENT OF TEXAS CHIEFS (N=613)



Agencies. Of the 606 chiefs who reported their agency type, 71.6% were local or municipal agencies, 14.7% were special police agencies (including university, park, airport, and port police), 13.5% were Independent School District (ISD) agencies, and 0.2% were state agencies. These agencies ranged in size from zero to 1,447 full-time employees, with a median of 14. Jurisdictions served were split approximately evenly between urban (34.0%), suburban (27.3%), and rural (38.8%) areas.

Law Enforcement Crisis

The Law Enforcement Crisis module measured the seriousness of potential crises (disasters, accidents,

and terrorist attacks) for Texas police agencies and was first implemented in the initial wave of data collection (2011—2013). Continuing in this survey, police chiefs were asked to 1) rank the seriousness of each crisis, 2) report the amount of time their agency spent preparing for the crisis, and 3) report the number of incidents occurring in the previous ten years. Potential crises included, among others, Amber alerts, active shootings, terrorist incidents, industrial accidents, and emergency responses to tornadoes. The findings from the Wave II survey were used for a Master's thesis (Evans, 2014) and reported by Brinser and King (2016).

Perceptions of Political and Working Environment

The Perceptions of Political and Working Environment survey was also carried over from the first wave of data collection, and was designed to measure how impactful police chiefs viewed a number of other institutions and organizations to be, as well as how important a number of agency goals were to their agency. Wave I data were analyzed for a dissertation (Matusiak, 2013), and a number of peer-reviewed papers indicating that police chiefs view their institutional (political) environments as multidimensional and attach different levels of importance to different goals (Matusiak, 2016; Matusiak, King, & Maguire, 2017). Wave II data provided more information about the multidimensional and dynamic nature of these environments. Local/municipal police chiefs, ISD chiefs, and chiefs of special agencies view varying organizations as more or less impactful and different goals as more or less important (Matusiak & Jurek, 2017). Additionally, Texas police chiefs' perceptions about the effects various organizations have on their agencies changed after the events in Ferguson, MO (Jurek, Matusiak, & King, under review).

Networks and Communications in Law Enforcement

The final holdover module from the Wave I data collection was the Networks and Communications module. This module was designed to assess which organizations police chiefs belong to, as well as who they contact in law enforcement. The organization with the greatest membership was the Texas Police Chiefs Association (TPCA; 65.3%), followed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP; 47.8%), the National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial fund (NLEOMF; 16.1%), FBI-LEEDA (12.1%), and TAPEIT (10.0%; see Figure 2).

Fig. 2. Membership in Top 5 Professional Organizations



Time and Task

The Time-Task survey module asked chiefs to report the amount of time they dedicate to a number of different tasks, as well as how important they view these tasks to be. Examples of tasks included on the instrument are meeting with other police chiefs, meeting with the city council or city managers, attending roll call, conducting criminal investigations, and time spent interacting with the media. Data from this project were used for a Master's thesis (White,

2017). White (2017) found that the activities of chiefs varied, with the greatest amount of time spent in meetings (with supervisory officers, line officers, etc.) and time spent out of the office (e.g., in public), and the least amount of time spent performing law enforcement duties (e.g., conducting fire investigations, executing search warrants).

Perceptions of Innovation

Beginning in July 2014, police chiefs were asked to rank how innovative a number of programs and technologies were, including the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS), mobile thumb and fingerprint scanners, ShotSpotter, hot spots policing, and youth mentoring programs. The top five most innovative items were the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), mobile data terminals (MDTs), AFIS, crime lab testing, and computer-aided dispatch (CAD).

Perceptions of Leadership

The final survey module included in the second wave of the TCPPP was about police chiefs' perceptions of leadership. The data collection instrument was modified from Schafer's (2010) study of participants at the FBI's National Academy. Preliminary results from 178 chiefs indicated that leader efficacy was most strongly linked to honesty and integrity, caring for the needs of employees, fairness, having a strong work ethic, and strong communication skills. Conversely, ineffective leaders were characterized as having questionable ethics, neglecting the needs of workers, having a poor work ethic, and ineffective communication (Wells, Schafer, Brady, & King, in progress).

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