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**Compstat: Strategic Police Management
for Effective Crime Deterrence in New York City**

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ABSTRACT

This is a descriptive study of Compstat. It is a popular American police management model innovated in 1994 by then NYPD Police Commissioner. Compstat helps departments to control and decrease crime. In Compstat departments, middle and lower managers are more likely to have an organizational environment facilitating to share knowledge, ideas, experience and cooperation. In sum, it is a simplified but highly sophisticated police management model. It systemically produces crime prevention and public order maintenance strategies created mainly by mid-level managers. This paper examines the Compstat model, its implementation in the U.S. by using research data of the Police Foundation concerning Compstat and non-Compstat departments' strategic policing methods. Comparison of the crime statistics between New York City and the U.S. is asserted as appropriateness of Compstat as a strategic management tool in police administration for effective crime deterrence.

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Compstat: Strategic Police Management for Effective Crime Deterrence in New York City

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Introduction

People want to pursue social activities and develop human relations without fear in a democratic atmosphere. However, the transformational world structure has brought intensive threats to security and new trends in modern life (Etzioni, 1996). This situation changed the traditional family structure and accordingly society. As a matter of fact, the family and the society, the major institutions of order, became ineffective in order to supervise individuals' manners (Messner & Rosenfeld, 2001). Police is a major institution that prohibits law violating people from destruction of public order and security since the foundation of the London Metropolitan Police in 1829.

Policing the community, specifically heterogeneous communities, is still an essential part of a stable and civilized society (Barlow & Barlow, 2001). But, securing the environment causes one to surrender some individual rights (Goldstein, 2000) for the sake of trustworthy social activities. Meanwhile, police administrations still need to make appropriate decisions to satisfy their customers in serving citizens even in the most complex situations (Goldstein, 2000; Mawby & Worthington, 2002). With this respect, police departments principally need to employ a rational decision-making system to facilitate their jobs and increase their strength, knowledge, and skills. Compstat is a widely known police management model among American police departments. It has been used since its innovation in 1994 by New York Police Department to criticize former decisions and former behaviors and also to produce new ones.

This paper evaluates the Compstat model as a police management system for effective crime deterrence and efficient resource allocation. By doing so, the police can aid in developing a peaceful environment for citizens daily activities. Theoretically, this will improve city life which will be less eroded by minor and

major crimes. Compstat is a convenient practical management model that helped many American police administrations to increase their effectiveness and efficiency against not only major crimes but also wrongdoing public behaviors.

This study is an analysis of the use of Compstat in police administrations in the United States of America. The researcher approached the subject using case study techniques to provide a comprehensive perspective covering not only the facts but also the overall conditions related to the use of Compstat model. The latest research highlights the following characteristics of Compstat:

- Accurate and timely intelligence,
- Rapid deployment of personnel and resources,
- Effective tactics, and
- Constant follow-up and assessment (Walsh, 2001).

Furthermore, this study will focus on implementation processes systematically. In a study by Weisburd *et al.* (2003), titled “Reforming to Preserve: Compstat and Strategic Problem Solving in American Policing,” Compstat-like programs in the U.S. were scrutinized and consequently the situation of strategic management implementations were defined among police agencies. The findings of Weisburd *et al.* are utilized to figure out similarities between strategic management and Compstat. With this respect, this paper describes following principles as the core factors of Compstat systems:

- Mission clarification,
- Internal accountability,
- Geographic organization of operational command,
- Organizational flexibility,
- Data-driven problem identification and assessment, and
- Innovative problem-solving tactics (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003).

Throughout the study, following questions are proposed:

- Does statistical data analysis drive police departments through the use of strategic management techniques?
- Do Compstat meetings make administrations collaborate to back up each other in tackling problems?
- Do Compstat meetings motivate managers to improve their attitudes toward community solutions through sharing information and experience?
- Is Compstat the most appropriate strategic police management model?

In this study, readers will be acquainted with the Compstat model in police administration. Every phase of Compstat application will be analyzed. Advantages in reducing crime and maintaining order will be presented. Additionally, tracking personnel performance and collaboration by Compstat meetings will be pointed out.

Supporting Police Managers

Police administrations mostly depend on the competence of managers (Lynch, 1998). However, departments can institutionalize decision-making processes in the management of human resources through the implementation of experimental methods. That process, as a result, will support managers systematically and organization will be deployed strategically (Birzer & Tannehill, 2001). Therefore, personnel may carry out duties deliberately with self-confidence. Moreover, success will bring legitimacy to the police in the eyes of the public. As Simon indicates well-implemented policies create democratic conditions (Simon, 1997), and the society, consequently, would be more humane. For this purpose, police departments should develop intelligence collection systems; furthermore, they should employ a suitable decision-making model to analyze data and make plans to increase the organization's effectiveness and efficiency (Kelling & Sousa, 2001).

Maguire argues (2004) information is power and the latest communication facilities give an immediate possibility to retrieve information accurately. Thus, police departments employ information systems to increase police officers' intellectual capacity to solve social problems and to react efficiently to crime (Maguire, 2004). The quality of work comes from the quality of workers. What can officials do in carrying out their mandate? In this respect, Herbert Simon (1997) recommends that organizations provide an environment that shapes and develops personal qualities and habits. Organizational branches would be more productive when managerial levels support rational and practical instructions. For this reason, managers need accurate information about their jurisdiction and personnel to analyze specific conditions as well as to evaluate organizational performance (Bratton & Knobler, 1998; Maple & Mitchell, 1999).

The Concept of Compstat

Adequate use of information and measurement system can transform police departments into learning organizations. Consequently, police organizations may become “[i]ntelligent organizations capable of continuous reflection, adaptation, and renewal” (Maguire, 2004, 1). In recent years, police administrations implemented such kind of systems. The most well known is Compstat, which is, in simple words, comparison of computer statistics. The name Compstat originated from “Compare Stats,” a computer file name from an abbreviated version of “computer statistics” (Silverman, 1999).

Compstat was first implemented by then Police Commissioner of New York Police department (NYPD) William Bratton in 1994. At the beginning of 1990’s, the NY Transit Police, under the command of Bratton, realized that the police could matter on crime as opposed to expert opinion (Bratton *et al.*, 2004; McDonald *et al.*, 2002). A well-organized police department, through rational deployment, coupled with sufficient resources controlled offenders and reduced crime (Kelling and Sousa 2001). In this sense, perpetrators, mostly, will stop committing crime by a timely and adequate police presence (McDonald *et al.*, 2002).

Systemic Knowledge, Resources, Authority, and Feedback to Sub-Units

In “Compstat: An Analysis of an Emerging Police Managerial Paradigm” (Walsh, 2001), the author defines Compstat as “a goal oriented strategic management process that uses computer technology, operational strategy and managerial accountability to structure the manner in which a police department provides crime control services” (p. 347). Compstat generally refers to a “strategic control system developed to gather and disseminate information on NYPD’s crime problems and track efforts to deal with them” (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003, p. 426). There are two core elements to Compstat: (1) a managerial team to deploy human resources, and (2) an Information Technologies (IT) team which deals with computerized information systems to process map, analyze, and report data timely and accurately. The information obtained through this system is disseminated to operational managers who are held accountable for the actions of their sub-unit and their problem-solving techniques (Walsh, 2001). In sum, Compstat

“[p]rovides policing with a leadership style grounded in the traditions of the past while at the same time incorporating the organizational strategies of the present” (Walsh, 2001, p. 356). However, a quick fix to crime-control is not Compstat; it depends on an assortment of factors that must all be present to insure success. Any missing element can damage the effectiveness of this strategy (Walsh, 2001). Compstat is a set of reengineering processes that enhances public safety (Shane, 2004a).

In other words, Compstat is a strategy of policing aimed at specific crimes, criminals and hot spots (O’Connell, 2001; Hoover, 2004a); therefore, the police can avoid squandering their resources. Compstat is also a management style that requires a strict accountability to personnel, in particular, middle managers, for accomplishing mission (Hoover, 2004a).

From the viewpoint of a practitioner, Schick of Los Angeles Police Department claims Compstat, or any Compstat-like system identifies established and emerging crime trends and makes managers allocate their resources efficiently towards targets. In this process, law enforcement should view conditions from a variety of sources, not only crime statistics (Schick, 2004).

Moore (2003) defines Compstat as a system collecting statistical data that shows demands for police service as well levels of police activity. From a broader perspective, Compstat is viewed as a combination of technical and managerial systems that provides accurate and timely crime related intelligence. Furthermore, it is a measurement system of organizational performance and an interactive system that focuses on organization as a whole, and specifies certain policies to accomplish agency’s mission (Moore, 2003). To summarize, Moore (2003) argues that Compstat is a complete process for an administration striving towards organizational goals, where timely and accurate information is provided organization that also evaluate personnel’s performance.

Compstat was a transformation of NYPD that released precinct commanders from traditional constraints and stimulated local units to combat crime, disorder and fear (Henry, 2003). Bratton identified four key Compstat characteristics: (1) Accurate and timely intelligence; (2) rapid deployment of personnel and resources; (3) effective tactics; and (4) constant follow-up and assessment

(Bratton & Knobler, 1998). These elements develop a new operational management model that requires changes in values, goals, mission, accountability, outcomes, and evaluation.

Accurate and Timely Intelligence

Compstat is an information driven management model; it depends on accurate and timely intelligence concerning recent trends. Silverman (1999, p. 98), in his book titled *NYPD Battles Crime: Innovative Strategies in Policing*, described the situation of New York Police Department prior to Compstat:

Most precinct commanders did not see crime reduction as their foremost responsibility. In addition, commanding officers (COs) were essentially on their own in combating crime. Some did well; many did not. The department was not equipped to assist or motivate COs to attack crime and disorder problems. Headquarters was not tracking crime trends in the precincts or evaluating CO performance in fighting crime.

The description of an aimless organization may fit the NYPD as indicated by Bratton (Bratton & Knobler, 1998). In order to abrogate negative factors, NYPD first aimed to have and disseminate crime statistics in a timely manner to the whole organization (Maple & Mitchell, 1999). As a consequence, the proactive police organization can be attained by adequate intelligence focusing on problematic areas (Kelling & Sousa, 2001).

- For an effective crime management process, departments need to know:
- What type of crime is it (i.e. drug sales, robbery, burglary)?
- Where is crime occurring (areas, type of location)?
- When is crime happening (day of week, hour of day)?
- Why is crime happening (motive - i.e., drug related shootings)?
(Walsh & Vito, 2004, p. 59)

If all police know specific information on crimes, offenders, time, and locations, then they can easily focus their efforts on certain problems (Maple & Mitchell, 1999). In NYPD, the computer capabilities, crime-mapping software, created overlay maps showing crime activity in the city. The computer generated maps included narcotics complaints, time, day of the week, location of the crime events, and information regarding police deployment and arrest activity (Silverman, 1999). These characteristics led NYPD to strategic management in fighting and preventing crime (Bratton & Knobler, 1998; Maple & Mitchell, 1999).

Effective Administrative Tactics and Strategies

Crime management is an important police duty. A crimeless environment is better than visible police forces. Therefore, management should find effective and efficient solutions to fight crime and to prevent crime. In addition, the police may enhance the quality of life in neighborhoods (Goldstein, 2000). For that reason, in Compstat, middle managers acquainted with neighborhood environments are encouraged to analyze the characteristics of their jurisdictions and develop specific strategies to tackle problems that deteriorate communal life (Walsh & Vito, 2004). In doing so, police forces, under direct command of middle managers will combat deviant behavior in their area of responsibility.

In Compstat, all units must work together and be responsible for success and failure. Reengineering structure and directing whole units to the same goals enhances the creativity in developing and implementing strategies to carry out mandates in an effective and efficient way (Henry, 2003; Schick, 2004). Police departments have no luxury to squander their personnel, time, and equipment; moreover, people did not give consent to the police to waste the taxes.

Rapid Deployment of Personnel and Resources

Classical policing is driven by calls for service (Walker & Katz, 2002). The police have given only reaction to calls in order to make arrests. However, reactive policing did not contribute to public order (Moore *et al.*, 2000). Police departments with Compstat have information concerning crime, socioeconomic and environmental factors that allow for a proactive strategic police response. Managers are more able to make strategic crime control plans.

Administrators evaluate accurate statistics and discuss at Compstat meetings crime related problems (Henry, 2003). Upon defining specific situations, commanders can send officers to specific areas in order to tackle problems. Before Compstat, Silverman argues (1999) NYPD detective bureaus and other specialty units worked in isolation and sometimes at cross-purposes with precinct patrol commanders. The department was extremely slow to allocate resources and personnel to emerging or growing problems in the precincts (Silverman, 1999). Compstat meetings offer dynamic cooperation for all units through an optimal allocation of resources.

By being able to quickly organize and deploy resources in the field in a timely manner, the police can handle problems before they mature. Schick (2004) indicates that “the Los Angeles experience has shown that the most effective plans require several different units working together, and the best results occur when patrol, investigators, and support personnel bring their capabilities to focus in a coordinated effort.” Being at the right place, on the right time coupled with support of required units makes police forces achieve their responsibilities.

Relentless Follow-Up and Assessment

Departments need to evaluate their past tactics and criticize what worked and what did not. By doing so, organizations will see the beneficial strategies and keep using and developing them in the future. Meanwhile, failures will make managers discover new tactics and interact with successful units, departments, or agencies to build effectiveness and efficacy.

Beginning in the spring of 1996, NYPD Compstat staff developed a system to store detailed records. Important subjects requiring follow-up and resolution were identified in abbreviated or summarized versions. Those issues were promptly circulated to top-level officials, to review and assign responsibility for solution and implementation (Silverman, 1999).

Compstat is a record system that collects, stores, and analyzes information before and after to define success or failure. In this evaluation process, it is necessary to (1) assess the results from the tactics employed; (2) establish the validity of the tactic; (3) know how the tactic worked and state clearly which elements worked best, thereby allowing for the design of tactics addressing future crime problems; and (4) establish when the problem has been abated, allowing for the re-deployment of assets to the next crime problem (Schick, 2004).

Compstat: Rational Decision-Making System

Rationality is essentially concerned with the relation between means and ends. The key to achieving rational behavior is to calculate probabilities and thereby coordinate right means to a given end. In this view, rationality is equated with efficiency. To behave in a rational manner is to behave in such a way that one contributes to the accomplishment of the organization’s objectives.

Complex police affairs make police management a tough duty. Managers command their subordinates according to organizational mandate in a smooth and speedy way in accordance with public administration principles. As stated by Hoover, managers coordinate organizations as a symphonic orchestra by one best way through the principles of public administration (Hoover, 2005). However, managerial branches should be supported by administration to alleviate burdensome tasks. Administration should implement a suitable management model to facilitate decision-making to identify problems, solutions, success, and failures.

Institutionalized decision-making, as a result, will support managers systematically and strategically. Knowledge is power and it is a necessity of organizations while striving toward their commitments. Therefore, law enforcement agencies collect huge amounts of information concerning crime and criminals and provide access to units. However, reactive information support for practitioners may not address problems effectively. Hence, proactive crime analyses, defining threats, offenders, targets, and time, is more likely to enhance law enforcement agencies' performance.

Herbert Simon indicates that administration is composed of decision-making processes (Simon, 1997). In this respect, police departments need to employ rational decision-making systems to facilitate their jobs and increase their strength, knowledge, and skills. There is a necessity for police managers to be aware of the latest developments in legislation, technology, and professional tactics for sophisticated and effective policing.

Police officers, moreover, should have access to communication and decision-making processes (Birzer & Tannehill, 2001). In particular, administrations should consider the long-run significance of policies rather than the short-run. Departments should develop intelligence collection systems and employ comprehensive decision-making models to analyze data and make plans to increase organization's effectiveness and efficiency.

Compstat Meetings: Organizational Consultation

Through Compstat, crime statistics become the best indicator of performance for precincts. Semi-weekly meetings allowed top executives to evaluate security

issues with their mid-level police administrators through tough, probing sessions that review current crime trends, plan tactics, and allocate resources (McDonald *et al.*, 2002). Compstat meetings are a like theater to show the responsible commanders' knowledge of areas and problems, and results in reducing those problems, or efforts to learn from other experience in handling problems (Bratton & Knobler, 1998; Silverman, 1999; Weisburd *et al.*, 2003).

Most importantly, Compstat has broken down the barriers separating the department's Patrol Services Bureau, Detective Bureau and Organized Crime Control Bureau; as a result, a new spirit of cooperation accelerated the rapid deployment of resources (McDonald *et al.*, 2002). In the five-week Compstat meeting period, every new tactic, or strategy was evaluated. Accordingly, failed methods were eliminated and successful ones adopted by other precincts. This large-scale process is replicated at the precinct level continuously by gathering information, innovating new solutions, and analyzing results. Finally, "[t]he NYPD can make fundamental changes in its tactical approach in a few weeks rather than a few years" (McDonald *et al.*, 2002).

Toward Organizational Goals by Middle Managers.

New York Police Department Compstat demands commanders "[t]o demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the crime and quality of life problems existing within their commands and to develop innovative and flexible tactics to address them" (NYPD - Official New York City Police Department Web Site). Compstat gives significant authority to middle managers to handle problems in accord with the agency's policies as well as environmental socioeconomic characteristics.

Middle managers, correspondently, are held strictly accountable for carrying out their mandate (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003). District commanders have 24 hour responsibility for their jurisdiction, including crimes, improving tactics, and staff management. At New York Police Department Compstat meetings, top executives also examine the results of arrests, summonses, minor violations, and quality of life offenses, such as public drinking and public urination, panhandling, loud radios, prostitution, and disorderly conduct (Kelling & Sousa, 2001). By doing so, police administration as a servant to the public gives "a message of intolerance for any other incivilities is expressed" by deterring those behaviors (NYPD - Official

New York City Police Department Web Site). As a result, department can appraise the effectiveness of middle managers in maintaining order.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

Effectiveness, efficiency, and rectitude are the main factors to define “how does a police department perform?” Although effectiveness and efficiency seem to have similar meaning, there is a difference between them. While effectiveness is doing the right thing like catching criminals, efficiency is doing things right like catching criminal with less cost. Rectitude is treating people in the right manner (Bayley, 1994).

Etzioni defines effectiveness as “the degree to which it [a specific organization] realizes its goals” (Etzioni, 1964, p. 8). It is organizational determination of duty. On the other hand, efficiency is “the amount of resources used to produce a unit of output” (Etzioni, 1964, p. 8). It is the most appropriate way of doing things.

The decision-making process in policing has many essential points in evaluating the importance of the evidence, operating forces for investigations and patrol, and deploying the staff strategically in order to bring offenders to justice and protect innocent citizens (Macintyre & Prenzler, 1999). Public [police] managers, in this process discover, define, and produce organizational mandates. Managers are like strategists rather than technicians. They evaluate probable results, in accord with the surrounding political system and operational capacity of organization to eliminate conflicts that obstruct organizational success (Moore, 1995). Police administrations need managers who are able to guide personnel through well-implemented policies toward organizational goals. Hence, they should make elaborate plans to carry out duties successfully.

Principles of Compstat Implementation

Compstat was created through state-of-the art and forward-looking management principles, which characterize “strategic leadership” and “strategic choice” (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003). These principles are as follows:

- (1) Clarify the agencies’ mission by focusing on its basic values and embodying them in tangible objectives;
- (2) give priority to operational objectives over administrative ones;
- (3) simplify managerial

accountability for achieving those objectives; (4) become more adept at scanning the environment to identify problems early and develop strategies (e.g., being “data driven”); (5) increase organizational flexibility to implement the most promising strategies; and (6) learn about what works and what does not through with empirical assessment of what happened (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003, p. 423).

These core elements of Compstat were believed to eliminate the “perceived and documented of traditional policing and the ambiguity of the priorities” (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003, p. 424), and this new implementations will mobilize police agencies to identify, analyze, and solve public safety problems. As Moore (2003) argues, Compstat aims “[t]o change working relationships within the department, to support imaginative problem solving and learning, and changes the basic strategy of a police department to be investigated rather than assumed at the outset” (p. 471). Compstat drives a police administration to use experimental methods to understand problems and find out resolution through a cycle that evaluates past and develop new strategies.

Weisburd *et al.* (2003) indicates many agencies in the United States implemented at least some of these key elements before adaptation of Compstat, but whether they performed them in the correct way is unclear. A mail-survey¹ was carried out by Police Foundation to find the diffusion of Compstat-like programs among the agencies. 86 percent of the large departments (100 and over sworn officers) and 85 percent of the small departments (50 to 99 sworn officers) responded. A third of the large agencies mentioned that they had implemented Compstat-like programs, and almost half of them said they were planning. Unlike large agencies, only nine percent of the small agencies had implemented and 30 percent of them mentioned to be planning to implement such kind of program. Eighteen departments of these large agencies claimed that they had implemented the key elements before 1994, when Compstat was presented in NYPD (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003).

Mission Clarification

It is obvious that the lowest level of the hierarchy of an organization is the force that carries out policies. An organization needs an operative branch, as well an administrative one. Administrators need to develop a value system that drives the

organization. Internalized motives, rather than coercive sanctions, have greater influence on people (Etzioni, 1996). Public managers should nurture organizational values to motivate their subordinates.

Compstat requires that executives are responsible to define the main characteristics of the department's mission. Mission clarification consists of management's commitment to core duties. Compstat departments set a simple goal using numbers or percents (i.e. reduce crime by 10 percent) (Bratton & Knobler, 1998). It is unlike to set many different goals which are directed by executives (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003, p. 437). Organizational goals, eventually, motivate personnel to accomplish official ends. In doing so, organizations also define their values and purposes rather than personal desires (Rainey, 2003).

Table 1. Mission Clarification²		
	<u>Compstat</u>	<u>Non-Compstat</u>
Public goal of reducing crime or other problem by specific number or percent in the last 12 months*** (n= 428)	48.2%	22.6%
Department handles many different goals selected by the Chief* (n= 428)	31.4%	42.4%

* p < .05; **p < .01; *** p < .001.

Source: Data from Weisburd *et al.*, 2003.

Table 1 shows research data from the National Institute of Justice to the Police Foundation. Compstat implemented departments claimed that almost half of them proclaimed a goal of reducing crime or some other problem by a specific number. Compstat drives departments to define a set of goals more than twice that of non-Compstat departments. On the other hand, a third of Compstat departments aimed to handle many different goals selected by the chief, which reduced the clarity of official mission, whereas non-Compstat departments' rates is 11 percent more in this category.

Internal Accountability

Compstat makes operational commanders accountable for being aware of their decisions, and empirical results of their jurisdictions. Accountability is the

brightest feature of Compstat (Willis *et al.*, 2003) that necessitates to punish failures or reward achievements of middle managers. Compstat seeks to develop an organizational internal accountability system in a police administration (Moore, 2003). It requires motivating personnel to have possession of duty as their personal thing by enforcing accountability and improving the crime-fighting ratio of real owner of department from tenant of department (Silverman, 1999). Therefore, as stated by Silverman (1999), administrations need updated crime information, graphic crime mapping, revised crime strategies, empowered precinct commanders, street-level creative problem solving, and breached unit barriers. “Compstat emerged as the catalyst and arena for these developments” (Silverman, 1999, p. 99). Police managers become more able to evaluate organizational functions by statistical values as well as consider the latest environmental changes in defining policies and tactics by implementation of Compstat.

Table 2. Internal Accountability²		
	<u>Compstat</u>	<u>Non-Compstat</u>
If a district commander does not know about crime patterns in the district, the district commander will be replaced*** (n= 422)	67.6%	46.3%
If crime in a district stays at a high level or continues to rise over many months, the district commander will be replaced*** (n= 421)	42.4%	19.9%
If crime in a district declines over many months, the district commander will be promoted or get a desired job assignment*** (n= 420)	23.2%	12.8%

* p < .05; **p < .01; *** p < .001.

Source: Data from Weisburd *et al.* 2003.

Table 2 indicates that Compstat departments are more likely to punish ineffective managers who have not sufficient knowledge about jurisdiction or fail to decrease crime rate in their districts. In the meantime, successful district commanders are more likely to be promoted or get a desired job in Compstat departments. Statistical results and capacity of commanders are significant in defining

accountability. Internal accountability is one of the core aspects of Compstat, especially defining the sanctions for middle level managers. Removal from their posts in cases of failure to prevent crime is an effective tool to force and motivate them to do their job. However, crime rate is the only criteria to evaluate the success of middle managers.

Geographic Organization of Operational Command

Compstat gives organizational power to the commanders of geographic units while they are held to be accountable to accomplish organizational goals. Operational commanders have the power of decision-making in dealing with matters in their area of responsibility. In addition, differentiated units and specialists give assistance to increase performance under the command of geographic units (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003). Decentralized police management allows district commanders to allocate forces efficiently.

Table 3. Geographic Organization of Operational Command²		
<u>Decision</u>	<u>Compstat</u>	<u>Non-Compstat</u>
	% Yes	% Yes
District commander, line supervisor, or specialized unit commander selects problem solving strategies for low profile problems (n= 430)	90.1%	86.1%
District commander, line supervisor, or specialized unit commander selects problem solving strategies for high profile problems** (n= 433)	69.7%	54.3%
District commander, line supervisor, or specialized unit commander determines routine staffing levels for patrol shifts (n= 433)	38.7%	31.3%
District commander, line supervisor, or specialized unit commander determines beat boundaries (n= 429)	19.0%	13.9%

* p < .05; **p < .01; *** p < .001.

Source: Data from Weisburd *et al.* 2003.

Table 3 reveals the authority of Compstat district commanders who are more likely to assign problem-solving strategies for high profile problems. Furthermore, they are also more likely to reorganize routine staffing levels for patrol shifts and set boundaries in comparison with non-compstat departments. Changing crime specific areas requires police departments to develop dynamic crime management tactics; Compstat district commanders, therefore, restructure organization in accord with accurate and timely data to attain desired outcomes.

Organizational Flexibility

Operational commanders do not only have decision-making power in solving problems, but also sufficient resources. In this process, middle managers are able to utilize organizational resources in accordance with strategic planning (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003). Flexibility and innovative tactics are among the key elements of Compstat. These aspects reduce the bureaucracy or bureaucratic elements of the traditional management system.

Table 4. Organizational Flexibility²

A. In Addressing General Items		
<u>Decision</u>	<u>Compstat</u> % Yes	<u>Non-Compstat</u> % Yes
District commander, line supervisor, or specialized unit commander approves flexible hour requests for sworn personnel (n= 428)	75.0%	67.4%
District commander, line supervisor, or specialized unit commander mobilizes SWAT unit to support operations (n= 424)	65.2%	62.9%
B. In Addressing a High-Priority Problem		
<u>Change Made to Deal with Specified Problem</u>	<u>Compstat</u> % Yes	<u>Non-Compstat</u> % Yes
Reassign patrol officers to new units, areas, or work shifts*** (n= 422)	84.3%	68.8%
Use overtime to provide personnel (n= 424)	80.0%	74.3%

Reassign civilian employees to new units, areas, or work shifts (n= 420)	28.6%	21.1%
Reassign criminal investigators to new units, areas, or work shifts (n= 423)	59.3%	50.5%
Reassign other sworn specialists to new units, areas, or work shifts* (n= 420)	65.5%	52.7%

* p < .05; **p < .01; *** p < .001.

Source: Data from Weisburd *et al.* 2003.

Compstat district commanders focus on new crime trends and consequently reorganize their resources. Commanders determine specific unit's involvement. Human resource management can be more productive and efficient by operative managers' assessments. According to table 4, Compstat managers are more likely to change organizational structure. This feature requires managers to be familiar with regional difference among police units. A well-built communication with respective units can make commanders eliminate crisis successfully. Compstat district commanders are highly accountable and are supported by sufficient resources.

Data-Driven Problem Identification and Assessment

Accurate and timely data are required to provide all relevant personnel with information to identify and analyze problems as well to monitor and evaluate organization's response. Silverman argues (1999), in his book titled *NYPD Battles Crime: Innovative Strategies in Policing*, Compstat stores all information, classifies, and presents data in a meaningful form to decision-makers at meetings. Base Crime Strategy Meetings as well as certain precinct commander's meetings stimulate managers to identify crime related problems and their solutions (Silverman, 1999). Particularly, Crime Control Strategy Meetings increase the flow of information between top executives and middle managers about crime trends and quality of life enforcement as stated on New York Police Department's official web site.

Table 5. Data-Driven Problem Identification and Assessment2**The Use of Crime Mapping and Crime Analysis**

<u>Crime Mapping and Other Crime Analysis Tools are Available</u>	<u>Compstat</u> % Yes	<u>Non-Compstat</u> % Yes
Crime trend identification and analysis*** (n= 419)	93.4%	71.7%
Database or statistical analysis software for crime analysis** (n= 433)	88.7%	75.9%
Mapping software for crime analysis*** (n= 433)	85.2%	52.9%
Pin mapping-of specific crimes by type*** (n=426)	91.4%	75.5%
Pin mapping-of crimes by specific suspect or modus operandi*** (n=413)	65.7%	39.9%
Hot spot mapping*** (n=425)	87.9%	65.3%
Pin mapping-of crime activity for all crimes by area*** (n=424)	77.1%	55.3%

* p < .05; **p < .01; *** p < .001.

Source: Data from Weisburd *et al.* 2003.

Crime mapping and other crime analysis tools as shown on table 5 are more likely to be used at Compstat departments. Crime types, locations, and time can be described in digital map format and consequently police forces can focus on hot spots (Shane, 2004b) to deal with problems strategically. Furthermore, Compstat departments are significantly different at defining crime trends and analysis, crime classification based on suspect and modus operandi, and crime area. Once crime related problems are identified, Compstat departments can allocate their resources specifically on the basis of objective priorities rather than assumptions (Ratcliffe, 2004).

Innovative Problem-Solving Tactics

Centralized administration might prevent officers' discretion ability to enhance quality of life. However, Compstat meetings encourage operative commanders, as representatives of their subordinates, to develop strategies through statistics,

research, and other departments' experience as well as outside experts' recommendations. By doing so, departments can find better ways of policing to reduce crime and maintain order.

Table 6 shows that Compstat departments are more likely to use technology to identify problems. IT systems and mapping tools are generally basic means supporting Compstat management to understand problems. Besides, research evidences as well as outside experts' recommends are more likely to be utilized in problem solving strategies. By this manner, police practices will be based on scientific evidence, so that agencies can find what works best as Sherman recommended (Sherman, 1998). Compstat is a kind of problem-solving tool that is appropriate to public management but mostly to police as Weisburd *et al.* argues (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003). Departments can shift into proactive policing by an elaborative implementation of Compstat procedure through assembling signals of accurate statistics and cumulative environmental data.

Finally, table 6 indicates that Compstat departments are more expected to focus on crime specific strategies such as targeting career criminals and checkpoints in dealing with crime and order. As a result, departments will allocate their forces in relation to criminal features such as time, location, type, and offender (Kelling & Sousa, 2001). This will lead to organization efficiency, as Etzioni claimed, “[t]he amount of resources used to produce a unit of output” (Etzioni, 1964, p. 8) by one best way.

Table 6. Innovative Problem-Solving Tactics²

A. The Use of Technology		
<u>Technology Used for Problem-Solving</u>	<u>Compstat</u>	<u>Non-Compstat</u>
	% Yes	% Yes
Database or statistical analysis software for problem solving** (n= 433)	69.0%	54.3%
Mapping software for problem solving*** (n= 433)	66.9%	38.5%
B. Problem-Solving Strategies		
<u>Importance of the following in deciding which tactics or methods to use to solve a high-priority problem</u>	<u>Compstat</u>	<u>Non-Compstat</u>

	% Yes	% Yes
Research evidence suggesting this was the best approach* (n= 418)	39.6%	28.7%
Other departments' reported previous success with the approach (n= 416)	32.4%	28.9%
Outside experts recommending this approach (n= 418)	15.1%	11.5%

C. The Use of Tactics in Problem-Solving

<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Compstat</u>	<u>Non-Compstat</u>
	% Yes	% Yes
Increasing arrests for targeted offenders** (n= 427)	73.8%	59.8%
Check points* (n= 427)	31.2%	20.6%
Targeting repeat offenders** (n= 427)	56.0%	42.0%
Gun seizures** (n= 427)	27.0%	15.0%
Improving victim services* (n= 427)	22.7%	14.0%

* p < .05; **p < .01; *** p < .001.

Source: Data from Weisburd *et al.* 2003.

Discussion and Conclusion

In today's world, policing needs a more scientific approach (Sherman, 1998) to more complex situations, more diverse society and more mobilization (Vickers, 2000). Hence, police managers should consider their jurisdictions' crime types (mugging, pick pocketing, etc.), criminal profiles (juvenile, adult, woman, drug addicted, etc.), times and places (when and where crimes occur) in planning human resource management (Wilson & Kelling, 2000; Kelling & Sousa, 2001; Willis *et al.*, 2004). Particularly, the prevalence of organized crime and subtle terrorist activities should increase the concern for deployment processes to acquire an effective and efficient outcome (Henry & King, 2004). Thus, police managers need substantial support to simplify their duty, on the other hand, they should be highly sophisticated in addressing crime, and crime related problems (Firman, 2003). To this end, Compstat can be beneficial management model to departments, because it develops a progressive cycle that discovers proactive

approaches and utilizes results to assess managerial decisions (Bratton & Knobler, 1998; Maple & Mitchell, 1999; Silverman, 1999).

Strategic Collaborative Crime Prevention Tactics.

Compstat provides a set of easily understood actions to help law enforcement leaders to solve complicated problems (Firman, 2003). It is a practical way of collecting statistics in order to provide organizations with accurate and timely measures of policing activity and the level of crime (Moore, 2003). Police departments can utilize proactive methods in fighting crime; furthermore, mobilization and allocation of resources become more flexible (Firman, 2003). Knowledge based approaches to problem-solving is a necessity in modern complex policing. Therefore, the accurate information gathered by Compstat can be a device in discovering “one best way” of problem solving.

Although a diverse array of information provides advantages in comprehending roots of problems, managers are trapped by cognitive limitations in processing information to reach rationality. Compstat makes individual operational commanders discover new ways of solving problems and learn successful methods from other units. Statistics shed light on the validity of preferred policy by specific and clear interpretation of IT team. In doing so, administration gives importance to innovation and whether it contributed to organization effectiveness and efficacy. That cycle keeps organizations in progress towards the best way of getting the job done (Moore, 2003).

Increasing Credibility of Compstat.

Compstat as a problem-solving tool is popular for police administrations. Compstat has spread among agencies for two reasons; first, it shows promise in controlling and reducing crime, and secondly, some of its key elements have already been implemented by many agencies throughout the U.S. (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003). Compstat is one of the best current systems available to police administrations as an integrated problem-solving technique and accountability measurement system.

Compstat is based on past organizational paradigms combined with elements of strategic management from the business sector (Walsh, 2001). Through

implementation of Compstat, police departments can employ innovative technologies and problem-solving techniques; they can empower their traditional organizational structures (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003). The most significant aspect, accountability in realizing organizational missions is measured mostly by crime statistics. Managers, however, can feel themselves uncomfortable if their whole efforts are not considered by the executive team. Furthermore, for the sake of eliminating criminal behaviors, harsh policing tactics, which is a critical point of Compstat, may erode department's credibility. Therefore, a friendly meeting atmosphere should be created to drive commander officers to share their knowledge and challenge offered techniques. It is advised not to allow any confrontation during Compstat meetings (Hoover, 2004b).

Significant Crime Reduction.

The use of Compstat as a strategic management tool can increase organization's knowledge, identify crime spots in the community, and contribute to reducing crime. The New York City Police Department implemented Compstat in 1994 and had great success in reducing crime. According to FBI-Uniform Crime Reports (UCR), as is shown in figure 1, there was a 64.5 percent decrease for Index offenses (homicide, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson) reported to the police in New York City from 1994 to 2009, where the U.S. nationwide change for same period was -19.4 percent.

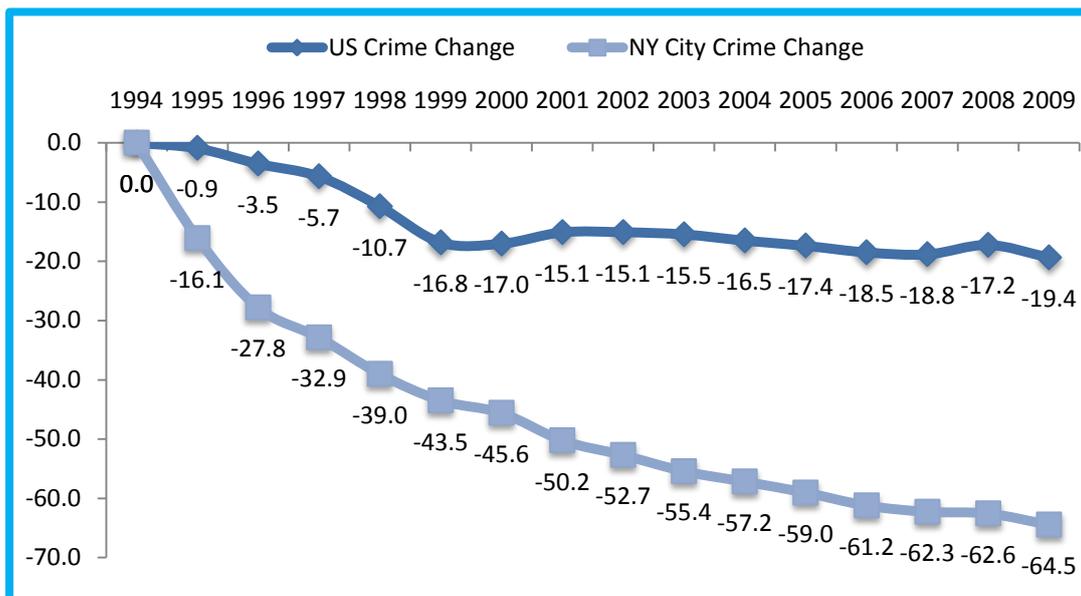


Figure 1. The U.S. and New York City Index Crime (homicide, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson) cumulative percent change, 1993-2007

Source: FBI and <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/ucr>.

Although some scholars argues the improvement of social life conditions reduced crime rates in the United States, the crime reduction in New York City for the same period is significantly different. We can conclude that there has been a general inclination of decrease in crime rates in the U.S.; however, crime management policies by Compstat might impact on criminal activities. As a result, it tripled the crime reduction in the New York City in comparison with the U.S. general rates.

Compstat is a catalyst for a dynamic policing.

Compstat seems the most appropriate police management model that keeps whole organization ready for a dynamic policing. As has been noted by Maguire (2000), the police as “communicators of risk knowledge” should collect, analyze, and disseminate data “to feed a never-ending process of risk classification and profiling” (p. 318). Compstat which necessitates brainstorming, collaboration, and up-to-date information can be a convenient solution to intensive threats to security in the transformational world. On the other hand, although traditional Compstat meetings are open to public and related institutions participation there has been an inclination of eradicating that feature among Compstat departments (Willis *et al.*, 2004). As has been noted by Willis *et al.* (2004) *external information exchange*, seventh result of Compstat implementations should be promoted by the executive team to increase the level of contribution of other institutions, in particular society and academic world’s members. There should not be a hidden agenda. So that, Compstat meetings would produce right policies and appropriate implementations to improve quality of life in a democratic manner rather than militaristic way.

Insecure social environments could produce public fear as well as a feeling of insecurity among citizenry. In this respect, the police should provide public safety and enhance the quality of life. As pointed out by Wilson and Kelling (2000, p. 9), “[s]erious street crime flourishes in areas in which disorderly behavior goes

unchecked.” Although crime is a community-wide problem, the police is the main body responsible for confronting crime and encouraging people for more cooperation with the police. It is better to find a way of policing that develops more professional officers while considering citizens’ demands by implementing scientific methods rather than assumptions.

Notes:

1. In order to distinguish the differences and similarities between Compstat and non Compstat departments’ policing implementations, the author used the results of the research, which was supported by Grant 98-IJ-CX-0070 from the National Institute of Justice to the Police Foundation.

2. Tables 1-6 are modified from Weisburd, David, Stephen D. Mastrofski, Ann Marie McNally, Rosann Greenspan, and James J. Willis “Reforming to Preserve Compstat and Strategic Problem Solving in American Policing.” 2003. *Criminology and Public Policy*, 2(3): 421-456.

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