

**TEAMS–GROUPS–TASK  
FORCES IN LAW ENFORCEMENT**



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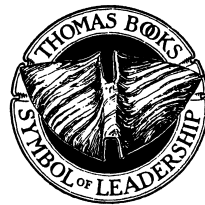
The Wave of the Future

*By*

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*and*

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*This text is in remembrance of our mother, Faye Ione More,  
who died too early in her life span but was an inspiration  
to each of us and will always be remembered.*

*Harry W. More  
Terry L. More*



## PREFACE

Teams, groups, and task forces in law enforcement agencies are becoming progressively more significant as a greater number of agencies have gained experience with their use. It is anticipated that there will be a significant increase in testing this phenomenon as police operations in the American police system become increasingly complex in a rapidly changing world, especially with the threat of terrorism. While managerial response to the team phenomenon has been affirmative in recent years, it seems to be less prevalent in smaller agencies with the exception of some teams and task forces that are interagency in their approach. Because Homeland Security has funded this, the numbers of such units has exploded. Newer efforts include the creation of such organizational entities as:

Coachella Valley Gang Task Force	Multijurisdictional Task Force
Monterey County Joint Task Force	against Children
San Diego Tunnel Task Force	Sexual Exploitation
County Anti-Crime Team	Joint County Gang Prevention
Fugitive Task Force (FTF)	Task Force
Counter Terrorism Action Teams	Multijurisdictional Drug Task Force
Terrorism Task Force	Brooklyn Clergy NYPD Task Force

Vestiges of the quasi-military influence are readily apparent in the creation of Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) more than 40 years ago. This team normally handles critical incidents such as barricaded suspects, hostage situations, armed and dangerous persons, the serving of high-risk arrest warrants, surveillance operations, undercover operations support, and other incidents beyond the capabilities of patrol. Co-author Terry More has exceptional expertise in the team process, having been a member of a SWAT team in one city and then a sergeant in two different multijurisdictional teams (Criminal Apprehension Team and Regional Enforcement Detail) working in a crime-ridden community where the murder rate was substantially reduced. The teams included representatives from five police department, Stanford Uni-

versity Public Safety Department, San Mateo Sheriff's Department, U.S. Marshall's Office, Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, CA State Parole, and the CA Highway Patrol.

SWAT was born out of a need to deal with unusual circumstances, and the initial unit started in Delano, California to deal with a series of protests. Over the years, this has evolved due to an increasing emphasis on terrorism as a result of 9/11. The response to terrorism is still evolving, and there is a continuing emphasis on creating teams that consist, in many instances, of federal, state, county, and local law enforcement agencies.

The intent of this text is to bring to reality the importance of teams to police managers, operational personnel, and members of the community. It is essential to many to become familiar with the team concept and its vital components. Our communities entrust justice officials with exceptional authority and responsibility and an increasing awareness of the need to be held accountable for performance. We are at a crossroads or, as some have put it, a threshold that is exerting new and unprecedented demands on homeland security. The functions and range of responsibilities required to accept such a mandate are well beyond one's traditional view of law enforcement responsibilities that have included preserving the peace, providing services, enforcing the laws and ordinances, reducing crime, and improving the quality of life in our communities.

The learning objectives that appear at the beginning of each chapter allow the reader to grasp the complexity and intricacy of this phenomenon. Also, the questions/discussion at the end of each chapter provide a concise and up-to-date integration of the chapter content and bring together a practical and operational approach that is clearly useful and informative. The questions/discussion is meant to challenge and clarify one's thinking about the concepts and relevancy of each chapter and give insight into the components and variables of the team process. This is a good focal point for classroom discussion and for the creation of essay questions. The references are contemporary and reflect the best available sources.

Chapter 1 sets the tone for the text and allows the reader to gain essential knowledge about groups in an organization with an emphasis on teams, groups and task-forces in law enforcement. This is followed by a chapter on the leader, followed by a chapter on change and its impact on the team as well as team members. Of special interest are chapters that address commitment, accountability, and team performance, which serve as a basis for the behavioral and social skills needed to integrate and foster the creation of a real team. This is the glue that holds the team together and guides it in such a way that tasks are accomplished, which is an essential ingredient of human resource management.

The chapters on counseling and coaching are vital to the professional growth of team members. Another chapter focuses on what it takes to achieve positive results placing the team process in position to deal with results management. The last chapter presents the latest available information on how law enforcement can utilize logic models and apply problem solving to the activities of teams.

—HWM and TLM



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At the federal level, sources included the U.S. General Accounting Office, the Federal Emergency Management Association, and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. Organizational entities at the U.S. Department of Justice included: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, and the Bureau of Justice Assistance.



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## **Chapter 1**

### **THE TEAM–GROUP–TASK FORCE: A PHENOMENON IN THE MAKING**

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

1. Describe the category of team-group-task force.
2. Identify the category of cliques.
3. Identify the various roles in a team-group-task force.
4. Portray the elements of a subculture.
5. Describe the phases of group development.
6. Explain the importance of status.

**T**he study of a team-group-task force in law enforcement is becoming increasingly important as more and more agencies have experienced their use, and it is anticipated that there will be a significant increase in testing this phenomenon as police operations in the American police system become increasingly complex in a rapidly changing world. Although managerial response to the team phenomenon has been positive in recent years, it seems to be more prevalent in larger agencies with the exception of some team-group-taskforce units that are interagency in their approach. When individuals are brought together, they act differently. Something occurs that has proven to be beneficial to individuals as well as those who become part of a collective entity. Support and conformation from each member results in the creation of a force that seriously employs the skills and knowledge of each in such a way that the totality of response exceeds that of just a collection of individuals.

It has been found that creating and managing teams in the workplace can lead to effective outcomes, but it is essential that managers learn how to maximize team output. It takes an understanding of the group process if a team-group-task force is to be maintained. It is essential to know how and when to use teams. Teams differ as to the output that is anticipated. Some give advice, others work on projects, and still others produce an output that is an organized action. The latter type is a combat response team or a special weapons and tactics (SWAT) unit. Overall, a team-group-task force creates outcomes that cannot be obtained by any other method.

### DEFINITION OF A GROUP

The term *group* is somewhat foreign to the police lexicon, but it is used by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and will become increasingly popular. It is generally accepted that a group can be defined as “two or more persons that interact with each other as well as influencing other members to achieve a specified objective(s).” Two major components are apparent in this definition: (1) influence, and (2) interaction (More & Miller, 2011). Some authorities suggest that a small group generally has up to nine members, and the top might be around 25. In some narcotics raids, 20 or more agents are used to ensure officer safety. A large group can have no limit in terms of numbers. It should be kept in mind that the definition of a group is not poured in concrete, and the universality of the meaning of the term varies considerably in the behavioral management literature. In this text, a group does not exist unless it has a common purpose or aim. In law enforcement, this might mean a group that concerns itself with a process such as investigative or arrest procedures. Interaction is predicated, in most instances, as occurring in a joint meeting, with members in attendance, or in more recent years by means of an electronic medium (Egolf, 2001).

Interaction among members of a group can be limited or extensive and can involve a few members or call for the utilization every member. What is important is the intensity of the interrelationships and its impact on the objectives under consideration. It has been suggested that body language is an important component of the group

process, and a team leader should take this into consideration when conducting meetings. In terms of a time interval for a group, it can exist for a designated period of time or through infinity. Both temporary and permanent groups have a place in law enforcement.

### CATEGORIES FOR TEAM-GROUP-TASK FORCES

Groups are of varying types in our society and this is especially true within the law enforcement community. In police circles one will find agencies that use the following terms—group, team, and task force. More recently, another term has emerged: *partnership*. This occurred in one city where cooperative efforts came into existence when federal drug and immigration officials and a local police agency worked together to address a spike in violence and a gang problem. In another instance, the FBI, Highway Patrol, and the Department of Motor Vehicles worked as a task force to design security features for drivers' licenses. Functionally they can be identified within a frame of reference of four categories. Authority groups dominate the managerial scene and are reflective of the bureaucratic nature of many law enforcement agencies. Normally these are found to be vertical in nature: There is a clear cut chain of command, and relationships between units are set forth in a formal manner within the organization. Rank prevails throughout the organization, and there is no question as to who is in charge. Orders go from top to bottom, and an authority group is composed of employees of varying ranks from superior to subordinate. This notion can be illustrated by viewing the organizational arrangement of a patrol division starting with the commanding officer and ending with the patrol officer on the beat with varying levels of management in between (see Fig. 1.1).

**Figure 1.1**  
**Team-Group-Task Force Categories**

- 
- Authority
  - Task
  - Mutual Interest
  - Companionship
-

### **Authority**

This group is a creation of top management and is imbued with the authority to get things done. It is a formal component of an organization. It is usually described as a vertical group and has representatives of several levels within the organization. As such it can have members of varying ranks, and those of superior ranks issue orders. Even when it is a request rather than an order, rank prevails and everyone responds accordingly. The authority group can deal with a wide range of organizational needs, such as reviewing the real purpose for the existence of the organization. Other assignments can include preparing reports regarding the total management system or drafting policy statements to comply with recent court decisions. Or it can be concerned about an analysis of Information Technology (IT) or adoption of an improved computer system for investigations. The real task in many instances is to look at the “Big Picture.” In summary and substance, an authority group has power. In some agencies, it is called a top management team and in others a command group.

### **Task**

The task group is, in most instances, a provisional organizational entity created by executive leadership for the purpose of completing an explicit assignment or a job. In some instances, this type of group has been identified as a task force and more responsive than a command group. Experience suggests that the unit’s performance can be highly productive in a shorter period of time if it is given adequate support. In many instances, the task group crosses organizational boundaries that are outside of the traditional structure and communicate their activities by coordinating throughout the organization as a means of working toward goal attainment. Every activity is focused on defining a task and achieving results. Usually the task group’s role is to advise, not implement. Sometimes this category is labeled a project team, and in other agencies it is called a cross-functional team.

### **Mutual Interest**

The mutual interest group is the result of the shared relevance of member concerns about specific and easily identified issues. The inter-