

# Santa Cruz police chief reveals plan to cut manpower, improve coverage

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SANTA CRUZ — A police reorganization plan that would boost on-line police work while cutting three positions has gone to the city council for its blessing.

It is estimated the reorganization would save nearly \$79,000 of the department's \$3.6 million budget for 1983-84.

Chief Jack Bassett says the most important change would be in duty reassignments that will free more cops for "more field work."

"It will amount to an increase of about 10 percent and we'll have our sworn officer force doing operational work 78 percent of their work time."

He's adding six officers to his patrol beats by pulling four from traffic and two from investigations.

"The patrol section is the primary service delivery point of the department and as such is viewed as the key section for first priority on personnel and other resources," the plan reads.

Bassett says better techniques in han-

dling traffic control and administrative chores will make up in part for the fewer officers.

Bassett says in the detectives section which is losing a total of three persons, including a clerk, "a new emphasis will be placed on development and use of patrol personnel for a higher level of initial field investigation, thus freeing investigating personnel to devote greater effort to a smaller number of more serious crimes."

He adds, "Additionally, the commander (of investigations) assumes responsibility for implementing programs to target career criminals."

Bassett points out that he is 12 officers short in his working force and he's busy screening applicants to fill those positions.

Six of them are filled with officers who are on disability leave or tied up in the police brutality trial that dates back to incidents from 1979-81 before Bassett joined the force.

He's saying that more important than the reorganization changes is a forthcoming duty manual that has been written by a committee of officers.

"It's tighter than I would have submitted," Bassett says in commending his men for setting themselves high standards.

He also commends them for carrying a heavy load while the department is short-handed "with just a minimum of complaining."

Even with all positions filled, Bassett says the department couldn't bear an increased duty load.

His plan functions with a chief, two deputy chiefs, an internal affairs officer, patrol unit, traffic unit, communications section, records section, investigation bureau and a training unit.

The operations deputy chief will command patrol, communications and traffic and the administration deputy will have records, investigation and training.

The internal affairs officer will be at sergeant's rank and work directly under Bassett.

Bassett's plan was submitted to city Manager Richard Wilson and is being considered by the council during its budget hearings this month.