

*Чабан К., курсант Національної академії  
внутрішніх справ  
Консультант з мови: Лопутько О. А.*

## **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE POLICE AND THE SOCIETY**

The relationship of the police with the community should be harmonious. The community relies upon the police department which must “serve and protect” and the police, in return, rely upon community support and cooperation in order to be effective. [1]

The police deal with the community on several levels: individually, as a group/organization, and as political actors. When it appears that a law enforcement organ represents the interests of the communities to which they perform police duties, there is general harmony. When the police are out of sync with these sentiments, there is discontent and dissension. Also, keep in mind that “Different community groups view the police differently and have varying notions of the priorities and objectives of law enforcement and criminal justice”. [2]

When asked what the main problems are when it comes to police-community relations, police leaders listed “language barriers”, “connection with the community”, “lack of meaningful communication” on both sides and “lack of understanding of police practices” as obstacles to better relations.

The strategies that the police can use in reaching out to the communities are: incorporating accountability and transparency; creating opportunities for educational exchanges such as “citizens’ police academies;” establishing regular neighborhood meetings and maintaining communication and follow-up between these meetings; organizing forums to discuss policies, tactics, or technology of interest to community. [3].

When there are good police-community relations, the police have a better understanding of the public’s concerns (especially those that are crime related), and citizens are more inclined to report crimes that occur to the police, provide tips/intelligence to law enforcement, willingly serve as witnesses, and are happy to participate in jury trials. By extension, the police also become more proactive, thereby preventing crimes before they occur or minimizing their impact, instead of simply reacting to calls for service. Good police- community relations prevent the possibility that the public thinks that the police are simply a mechanism for intelligence collection. When there are poor police-community relations, the police typically lack a basic understanding of community problems, goals, and desires, and the community, particularly those citizens who are experiencing high rates of crime, poverty, and homelessness, perceive police as an occupying and out- of-touch force that does more harm than good. In these situations, police departments primarily assume a reactive mode of response to community problems [4].

Hence the importance of public support in the enforcement of law and order cannot be overemphasized. It is highly important that the citizen and the policeman understand and appreciate each other's problems and viewpoints. A citizen has definite obligations in this matter. He must realize that his security and welfare are, to a large extent, dependent upon the maintenance of an orderly society, which in its turn is dependent upon the efficiency and prestige of the police.

A policeman, on his part, must always remember that law enforcement is not an aim in itself, but is rather a means to an aim. That aim is the maintenance of an organized society that enjoys the support of law - abiding citizens [5].

One police force in a large U.S. city actively pursues strategies to improve community relations. Using various media such as local cable shows, TV advertising, newspaper advertisements, flyers and word of mouth, the majority of the city's various communities were aware of the police outreach and neighborhood initiatives.

The police department, however, was not sure that information was reaching all communities. It commissioned a survey and found that there was a community, where few spoke any English, where the rate of awareness regarding the department's outreach initiatives was particularly low. The department learned that, unlike in most of the city, most received their news via an ethnic radio station, not by watching television. When the police learned this, they started broadcasting ads and providing information on the radio station, enabling them to reach this community more effectively.

The police must also be open and transparent when dealing with the community and describing crime-fighting efforts.

Community members want to be heard when they voice concerns about police actions and they want to understand what to expect.

For example, if a police department is considering providing tasers for use by its officers, police leaders should consult with the community and describe why they are considering using the technology. Police leaders should get feedback from the community and respond to its concerns. At the very least, if a department has decided to purchase a new weapon and has failed to consult with the community, it should organize a forum to demonstrate how and why the weapon is used, why the department has chosen it, how the officers will be trained on it, and so on. Apprehensions regarding certain policies, tactics, and technology can be greatly reduced if the police take the time to consult with, and educate the public about its decisions. [3]

To sum up, I should say that both the police and the community should do all they can to achieve the overall goal: to prevent and combat crime, to protect people's lives and make peace

in the world. We must keep in mind that every person is a part of society and we are responsible for all what is happening around us.

### **Список використаних джерел:**

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