



## CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT

# PAX 501

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### 1995: A SAFER CITY, A STRONGER PARTNERSHIP

As 1995 draws to a close, we can expect the usual year-end news stories concerning the latest crime statistics and what they mean. In recent months, we have already seen a number of such media accounts, focusing on crime reductions taking place in New York, Los Angeles and other large cities. The New York City Police Department, in particular, has received considerable attention nationally for its aggressive crime control strategies and its impressive results in reducing index crime. New York and other departments are to be congratulated for the success they have achieved in these traditional standards of police performance.

But whether one looks at such traditional standards or standards associated with community policing, our Department need not feel second rate to any other law enforcement agency. When our own year-end statistics are tabulated in a few days, they will show that index crime has declined in our City — and declined substantially for the fourth year in a row. It was four years ago, of course, that our Department began the process of change, conceptualizing and designing the “dual-track” strategy that we now know as CAPS. Four years later, we find that at least 100 fewer people will be murdered in Chicago in 1995 than were killed in 1991. There will be approximately 600 fewer victims of sexual assault, 12,500 fewer robberies, and 2,000 fewer shootings. And this year will see 11,000 fewer burglaries and 10,000 fewer stolen autos than there were just four years ago.

In all, Chicago will record almost *50,000 fewer serious crimes* this year than we did in 1991 — a steady decrease of more than 15 percent over four years. For the crimes of robbery, burglary and motor vehicle theft, the four-year reductions will exceed 20 percent.

From the perspective of traditional policing standards, these are truly outstanding numbers. They reflect the drive, the dedication, and the effectiveness of you individually, as police officers, and us collectively, as an organization. The bottom line is that our City is safer today — our streets, our homes, our schools, businesses, transportation systems and recreational facilities — and each of you shares in the credit for this significant achievement. You have made a difference in the lives of people.

What makes this four-year reduction in crime all the more remarkable is that it has come at a time when our Department was assuming a national leadership role in the area of community policing. Over the last few years, CAPS has emerged as the most ambitious and far-reaching community policing strategy in the nation — and one of the most effective. The university evaluators who have been studying CAPS since the beginning have said that the results thus far in Chicago are among the most impressive they have ever seen in such a short period of time.

This past year, our ICAM system became recognized nationally as a model for beat-level crime analysis. Dozens of law enforcement agencies across the country have requested our CAPS training curricula for use in developing their own training programs. And we continued to find new ways for the community to get actively involved in fighting crime — through beat meetings, District Advisory and Court Advocacy Committees, and most recently, through our unique program of joint community-police training. These are just a few examples of how, in a few short years, our Department has become a leader in community policing — and how we have combined that leadership in community policing with sound and energetic law enforcement to really make a difference in reducing crime.

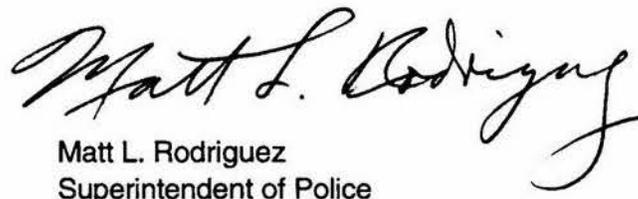
I said from the beginning that CAPS would be a “dual-track approach” — that our Department would continue to clog the courts and fill up the jails and prisons through tough enforcement, but that we would also engage the community in a new and active partnership with the police. As we enter the new year, this partnership remains as critical as ever, in terms of both short-term crime reductions and long-term solutions to the chronic problems still facing our City. Each one of us must constantly seek out new ways to make our partnership with the community that much stronger. For in the long run, it is our partners in the community — and the information, ideas and assistance they offer — that will enable us to do an even better job of protecting life and property and reducing crime.

In considering the many things that need to be accomplished in the coming years as we continue to change our Department, I often think of one of the most successful companies in the private sector, Southwest Airlines. The goal of each and every employee of that organization — day in and day out — is not merely to sell a plane ticket, but in fact, to make each transaction result in a Southwest customer — “for life.”

I cannot help but think of the enormous success our Department could achieve if every one of us adopted a similar objective in the millions of calls we respond to and the millions of other contacts with the community that we have each year. Each of you needs to recognize that in every contact you have with the community, you are not just filling out a report or responding with a code. You, in fact, are presented with an opportunity to make our citizens, our customers, feel that they have been treated so well, so courteously and so effectively that they, too, become a friend of the police — and a partner with the police — “for life.”

I want to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate every one of you who worked so hard this past year to make our City safer and our partnership with the community stronger. Your considerable efforts have not gone unnoticed. They are reflected not only in our official crime statistics, but as importantly, in the lives of Chicagoans who can begin the New Year feeling more secure in their homes, businesses and neighborhoods.

Through your hard work, our Department has begun to establish a new and more comprehensive standard of police performance. It is a standard that I know you will continue to meet, and exceed, next year and in the years to come.



Matt L. Rodriguez  
Superintendent of Police