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Restructuring police organizations: the significance of global experiences for the South African police service

Abstract

This paper examines the lessons that could be learnt by the South African police service from international police organizations' restructuring efforts. An argument will be made that these lessons are vital to reconsider restrictions and shortcomings experienced by the South African police service's restructuring. Firstly, this argument is based on literature indicating that countries across the globe have realized that police organizations are no longer the established hierarchical structures they previously were to endure change, and, as a result, are involved in rethinking their roles, restructuring their organizations and changing their cultures in order to adjust to the changing conditions. This review of the literature lay emphasis on the significance of restructuring in police organizations and summarize the restructuring efforts that various international police organizations have embarked upon to reformulate its organizations' structure and/or to adjust elements of the existing structures. Secondly, this argument is based on the findings of a qualitative study conducted in 2008 and 2011 with the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences unit of the South African police service during this unit's restructuring in 2006 and again in 2010. The aim of this paper is to identify lessons that can be learnt from these international police organizations' restructuring efforts. These lessons are vital to reconsider restrictions and shortcomings experienced by the South African police service's restructuring efforts. The findings suggest that the South African police service could draw from trends that international police organizations pursued in their restructuring endeavors and utilize these lessons as a learning curve and an opportunity to rectify shortcomings.

Keywords: South African police service, restructuring, police organizations, change management.
JEL Classification: Z18.

Introduction and background

In 2006 the SAPS implemented a restructuring initiative to streamline the organization's management and to facilitate efficient and effective service delivery (Steenkamp, 2006, p. 2). Specialized units in the SAPS, among others, the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences (FCS) unit, were restructured into a decentralized structure. Research conducted by Van Graan (2008), as cited in Van Graan and Ukpere (2012, p. 10462; Van Graan & Snyman, 2011, p. 1311; Van Graan, 2012a, p. 36; Van Graan, 2012b, p. 97), evaluated the impact of the restructuring process in the FCS aiming to identify the effectiveness of this process on the functioning of this unit. One of the key findings of this study was that the restructuring of the FCS had a detrimental effect on the service delivery of this unit as well as on the clientele it served. In 2010 the Minister of Police instructed that the FCS be reinstated to its former centralized structure.

1. Problem statement

The public sector is under pressure to prove itself and deliver its remit, and also produce demonstrable improvements that benefit the public and achieve value for money. Consequently, the public sector is constantly changing, with the creation of new start-up bodies and the merging and restructuring of departments and agencies as a result of this pressure (Neyroud, 2007, p. 16). Policing is also being transformed and restructured in the modern world, and, as a result, has entered a new era characterized by a transformation in the governance of security. In other words, policing is undergoing a historic restructuring believed to be worldwide. Baley and Shearing (2001, pp. 7, 1, 35) regard explanations for the current restructuring of policing involve shortcomings of the public police, an increase in crime, the nature of economic systems, the character of government, and the social structure, ideas and culture. The current transformation of policing has not yet attracted the sustained scholarly attention it deserves. Although researchers have "nibbled around the edges" of the topic, the extent, nature and impact of police restructuring have yet to be determined.

The restructuring of the FCS in 2006 was surrounded by controversy and had adversely affected the internal and external service delivery of the unit. Findings in Van Graan (2008) revealed the following:

- The implementation of the restructuring process was characterized by mystification, ambiguity and insecurity;
- The communication style and the approach to the implementation of the restructuring of the FCS, which the SAPS management applied, are disputed;
- The restructuring of the FCS had a detrimental effect on the service delivery of the unit, as well as on the client system it served;

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- The restructuring of the FCS had a negative effect on the morale and productivity of participants;
- Participants regarded the long-term goals and objectives of the restructuring of the FCS to be ambiguous, and, therefore, had their reservations about the feasibility and sustainability of this process;
- Participants perceived the expertise and specialized skills of FCS detectives not to be acknowledged after the restructuring of the FCS;
- Participants perceived the restructuring of the FCS to be unjustified for the continued functioning of this unit;
- The restructuring of the FCS had resulted in the virtual collapse of the partnerships, interaction and working agreements between the FCS and external stakeholders rendering services to the client systems serviced by the FCS; and
- The interaction and working agreements internally among the FCS clusters were significantly hampered as a direct result of the restructuring of the FCS.

2. Aim of this paper

The literature on which this paper is based aims to identify lessons that the SAPS can learn from international police organizations' restructuring efforts. An argument will be made that these lessons are vital to reconsider restrictions and shortcomings experienced by the South African police service's restructuring.

3. Research question

What lessons can the SAPS learn from international police organizations' restructuring efforts that could act as a learning curve and an opportunity to rectify shortcomings in this organization's restructuring processes?

4. Research objective

The objective of this paper is to identify lessons the SAPS could draw upon from international police organizations' restructuring experiences that could act as a learning curve and an opportunity to rectify shortcomings in this organization's restructuring processes.

5. Research method

This paper is exploratory and qualitative in nature and is based on primary and secondary data. The primary data briefly reflect the findings of a qualitative study conducted in 2008 (Van Graan, 2008, 2011; Van Graan, 2012a, p. 35) with the FCS unit of the SAPS during this unit's restructuring in 2006 and again in 2010. Secondary data comprise an overview of literature of restructuring processes in international police organizations. This overview of the literature reflects on restructuring endeavors police organizations in various global countries embarked on and explores the significance of lessons that could be learnt from these world-wide restructuring activities for the SAPS.

6. Restructuring police organizations: international examples

Police organizations worldwide are increasingly faced with challenges to their growingly complex environment. Consequently, these police organizations are obligated to review and adapt their organizational structure in order to address these challenges and to meet the needs of the communities they serve. An overview of the restructuring efforts of the police organizations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Australia, Turkey, Sierra Leone, England and Wales provides the platform for lessons that could be learnt by the SAPS in its restructuring efforts.

6.1. Police restructuring in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The 1992-1995 war left Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereafter Bosnia) with three police forces: Bosniak, Croat and Serb, each with its own jurisdictions (*Bosnia's stalled police reform …*, 2005, p. 3). During and immediately after the war, the police were organized in parallel structures along ethnic lines in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Croats controlled the Western parts which they called the Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosna. The Serbian police had their Headquarters in Pale, while the Bosniak police force was based in Sarajevo and controlled the districts of Central Bosnia. The police were further under the influence of the intelligence services and operated as a tool in the service of the political regime via the respective Ministers of Interior (Wisler, [s.a.], p. 140). Furthermore, according to Muehlmann (2007, pp. 37-40), the police restructuring efforts in Bosnia, driven by the international community, using in particular the leverage of European integration, attempted to achieve a reform that would transform a very fragmented police system into a de-politicized single structure. Once the discussion was initiated in early 2004, police restructuring increasingly dominated the political life and public debate in Bosnia during 2004 and 2005. The Bosnian political system was built on a complex, decentralized, multi-layer and mainly ethno-political power-sharing model. It followed that most competencies were vested on the level of two entities, the Republika Srpska (RS) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereafter Federation). While the Republika Srpska, a more centralized entity, created one unified police body that was regionally subdivided, the fragmented Federation entity created eleven different and independent police forces, all commanded under different regulations. All these police forces were very different in size and had

different legal bases, preventing the formation of one single security area within Bosnia.

In addition, Muehlmann reports the total number of serving police officers was excessive – 16800 police officers in 2004 (a number proportionate to most Western European countries would be 11000). This, along with similar overstaffing in all other parts of the administration system, led to an excessive financial burden, raising fears of bankruptcy at both entity and state levels. Another downside of the system was that the boundaries of police districts had been drawn according to front lines during the war, rather than on technical policing criteria. While the division made sense in some areas, the system created was totally dysfunctional in others. This fragmented system encouraged a tendency of non-cooperation among different police elements and a lack of willingness to create institutional frameworks. As a result, it allowed for ethnically composed policing elements, which acted largely independently from one another and remained under the influence of their wartime political masters. In addition, there was an unhealthy political interference in operational policing – a legacy of the war and also of the country's communist past.

Almost ten years international policing in Bosnia, under the leadership of the United Nations-led International Police Task Force (IPTF) and the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) (which took over from the IPTF in early 2003), tried to cope with the challenges of the Bosnian policing system and to increase its effectivity and efficiency. Furthermore, taking the initiative in 2004 to trigger the restructuring of the Bosnian police was based on a variety of very sound reasons. Politically, it was necessary to create a modern police force, without political interference in operational police work, within an efficient political and legal framework. Economically, it was necessary to make the system sustainable and viable in the long run. From a policing perspective it was also necessary, in order to create a single security space for the country, sub-divided according to technical policing criteria, fit to fight crime and organized crime, in particular. Considering these police restructuring discussions as a "case study" for internationally-led negotiations in the area of security sector reform, the case of Bosnia is a very telling one. It started from a valid point – an insufficient police structure – but it was an internationally imposed discussion, including imposed timelines that fitted the main international proponents, but were not compatible with the importance that such fundamental changes to the security sector (at the very heart of every political system) – signified for the political elite of Bosnia.

After numerous discussions, political agreement on police reform was reached on 7 November 2005, which called for implementation to begin without delay. Police reform, however, entered a different dimension, as it was the most far-reaching reform envisaged by the international community up to that point in time. It was not a technical undertaking, merely about improving security and policing; it also meant decisive changes in the political and constitutional landscape of Bosnia (Muehlmann, 2007, p. 53). In no other country of the region has the international community spent more money on police reform, and fielded larger police reform missions, than in Bosnia. However, no other country has faced a similar crisis over this issue (The worst in class, 2007, p. 9).

6.2. Restructuring Australian police organizations. During the 1980s, in response to government demands for cost-effectiveness and administrative accountability, the Australian public sector endeavored to apply a private sector solution to the public sector problem. New managerial practices were imple-mented, with a view to changing the internal culture of organizations, increasing operational performance, efficiency and cooperation. In a relatively short period of time these managerialist techniques came to dominate public and police administration in Australia and in most English-speaking countries (Dixon et al., as quoted by Fleming and Lafferty, 2000, p. 155). Through an examination of police organizations in Queensland and New South Wales, the impetus for organizational change, particularly in the context of employment practices, has largely been driven by revelations of entrenched corruption and police misconduct. As a result, organizational goals of accountability and cultural change have been the critical influences on the restructuring agenda (Fleming and Lafferty, 2000, p. 154).

Australia's policing system has one federal, six state and two territory jurisdictions. Before the 1980s, these police services were structured on authoritarian, paramilitary lines, and regulated through strict organizational rules and legislation. Recruitment, training and disciplinary processes were conducted internally, with little regard to merit or aptitude. Senior officers preferred this system, and although there were some misgivings within police organizations regarding its effectiveness, there was considerable resistance to change at all levels. However, the move to reconstruct police services as corporate entities was resisted vigorously by senior police officers, rank and file police and their unions. Nevertheless, the restructuring of police organizations was initiated in several police jurisdictions during the 1980s, with the introduction of such managerial

practices as strategic planning, performance management and performance-based contract employment for senior executives (Palmer, as quoted by Fleming and Lafferty, 2000, p. 155).

Budgetary considerations forced police organizations to adopt programme management schemes and to decentralize command. As responsibility for planning and budgeting was devolved to frontline managers, budgetary practices, once concerned solely with the management of police numbers, were refocused on the distribution of limited financial resources and operational outcomes. Furthermore, in line with administrative trends, a process of "regionalization" developed responsibility, authority and control in order to reduce overlap and duplication, improve efficiency and strengthen accountability. As a result, greater local accountability, autonomy, delegation and discretion replaced strong centralization (Fleming and Lafferty, 2000, p. 156).

6.3. Turkish police restructuring. According to Aydin (1996, pp. 39-53), although a certain amount of development and change has continuously taken place, the most rapid changes affecting the nature and context of policing in Turkey have been seen during the past few decades. During the 1960s and 1970s the change was towards more centralization and militarization, but, since then, this police organization has attempted to become a more decentralized and democratic system. There is a slow trend towards decentralization from the existing highly centralized system, and there are some proposals for further organizational changes in future. Social and political disturbances in Turkey, which required reorganization towards a modern professional police, are also the result of not only rapid urbanization and industrialization but also changes in the social and economic situation.

The "public police" consists of three separate national forces: the civil police and two military police forces (the gendarmerie and the coastal security guards). All the functions performed by the police and other military forces are the same, but normally the police are responsible for policing within the municipal boundaries of cities and towns, the gendarmerie work in rural areas, villages and small towns, and the coastal security guards are responsible for security of coasts and territorial waters. The organizations of all three forces have duplicate structures and facilities, such as separate budgets, central Headquarters, provincial units, training schools and communication systems. The territorial organization of the Turkish national police force corresponds to the administration sub-divisions. There are three kinds of units or departments within the central organization or Headquarters: the principal, assistant and advisory units. Below the large central organization (Headquarters), there are police departments in 76 cities as sub-divisions of the central organization. Each city police organization also has sub-divisions in districts or small towns. At the final level of the national police there are local police stations, attached to the district police commanderates. Despite this large territorial distribution, a vast majority of the police are clustered in the larger cities, such as Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir.

The Turkish police organization has been highly centralized since its foundation and no demands have been made for local police organizations. Centralization has been a traditional feature of the general political and administrative system in Turkish history. Turkey's long tradition of civil disorders has also been one of the factors which produced a police organization as a public order force through a highly centralized and militarized system. Turkey's centralized and militarized style of policing came from the centralized soldiery tradition of France. Therefore, the Turkish police system at present resembles that of the French with regard to tasks, national structure, nature of control, and internal organizational structures. Not only are regulations, standardization and procedures identical throughout the country, but also the Ministry of the Interior has the authority to direct, control and fund the police force (Aydin, 1996, pp. 39-53).

However, there is some evidence of a slow trend towards decentralizing the police force. Partly because of socio-economic and political development, and partly because it is becoming difficult to tackle some local problems from the center, there is a tendency towards localization or regionalization of policing. Although the slow trend towards decentralization of the Turkish police is a development of the past decade, the most satisfactory efforts to change the system have been seen during the 1990s. In the move towards decentralization, some police departments or services have been regionalized or localized, and the municipal police forces and the provincial departments of the police organization have been given more power and responsibilities (Aydin, 1996, pp. 39-53).

During the last years there has been a stronger debate concerning further changes in the Turkish police service and there are a number of proposals for police organizational change. First of all, there are some proposals to change policing at the level of the local police stations. According to statistics issued in 1993, the total number of police stations in Turkey was 1185. It is generally argued that this number of local police stations is more than enough, and as a result, the number of police stations, especially in the major cities, is being decreased. It is also argued that the

police should go to the people, rather than taking them to the police station to take statements and to collect evidence. The other important proposal, which has been put forward for organizational changes in public policing in Turkey, concerns the abolition of the dual policing system: the civil and military police forces. As a result, the role of the gendarmerie should be redefined and its position clarified either as part of the military, or as part of the police under the civil authorities. These current and proposed organizational changes in public policing in Turkey are for the purpose of modernizing and democratizing the police, by reducing the high level of centralization, bureaucratization and the hierarchical personnel regime, in order to make policing in Turkey more legitimate, effective, efficient and accountable to the community (Aydin, 1996, pp. 39-53).

6.4. Restructuring the Sierra Leone Police. Meek (2003, p. 105) describes the story of policing in Sierra Leone as not the most pleasant of tales. Distrusted and chased out of conflict zones during the war, the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) are challenged on multiple levels. Moreover, they are reasserting control for internal security in the country; building up a credible and effective police force, and re-engaging with local communities throughout Sierra Leone to build the trust of the local citizenry in the ability of the police to provide internal security. As a result, the need for developing a policing methodology that would meet these challenges was recognized at an early stage by both the Sierra Leone government and the members of the United Nations and the Commonwealth assistance team. Consequently, some of the key challenges facing the SLP included early questions about the size and structure of the revitalized police force, the type of policing it should engage in, and how policing could be exerted in the country, in the face of the widespread collapse of the criminal justice system.

Britain supported the SLP transformation long before the establishment of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), by deploying an experienced United Kingdom top police officer Mr. Keith Biddle, to assist the government of this country. Such support was overdue for a police department that had been run down by years of war, and undermined by a culture of corruption, exacerbated by the neglect of successive governments which had systematically starved the police of the most basic resources. Consequently, a number of senior officers have been removed or retired, and a major effort has gone into training and a complete revision of rules, regulations and procedures (Malan, Rakate and McIntyre, 2002).

The pre-war strength of the SLP was 9 317, comprising a majority of unarmed general duties officers and a paramilitary Special Service Division (SSD). By the time Sierra Leone's civil war was officially declared over in January 2002, approximately 900 members of the SLP had been killed in the ensuing ten years of war, and a considerable number had suffered the amputation of limbs by the rebels. The SLP's strength was reduced to a low 6 600, after which it has seen a slow build-up to the present strength of some 6 900. The requirement will probably be assessed at more than 9 300 police officers (Malan et al., 2002).

In discussions on reform of the police, the government of Sierra Leone and its international partners all recognized that building a new police force in Sierra Leone would require a dramatic departure from old-style policing in the country. The SLP needed to become a transparent and accountable service that was trusted by local citizens as much as by the national government. As a result, the SLP was launched on a course of development with the "aim of creating a community police service, which is accountable to the people and is not an organ of the government". It follows that this approach requires decentralizing the police force to local level and bringing in the support of local communities, including the paramount chiefs, youth organizations and local organizations, as well as members of the public. Moreover, in terms of structure, the SLP is top heavy, with more supervisors than operational members of the force. As a result, many officers have been reassigned from traffic duty to criminal investigations (Meek, 2003, pp. 106-108).

In addition, and in support of Meek (2003, pp. 106-108), Gbla (2007) states that these recommendations and suggestions culminated in the Sierra Leone police restructuring programme. The government also released its Police Charter, which, among others, outlines the role of the police force in relation to the government and the people, with emphasis on equal opportunity, professionalism and local needs policing. Subsequently, the police force released its Mission Statement. It follows that various activities have been undertaken by the police restructuring programme to realize the principles and values of the Police Charter and Mission Statement, such as the operationalization of the local needs policing concept. The concept stresses the need for involving people in a partnership with the police to maintain law and order. A community relations department at police Headquarters is tasked to work in concert with all divisional commanders to promote local needs policing, develop and implement various crime prevention strategies with local unit commanders, and provide an efficient link between the police and the community. Additionally, a complaints, discipline and investigations department has been established

that deals with complaints from the public about issues of police discipline and corruption and takes appropriate corrective action. Moreover, a change management department was also established, which, among others, aims at improving the efficiency and productivity of police force members, especially with regard to management of its affairs. It also seeks to groom Sierra Leonean police officers for leadership positions. The former special security department has been transformed into an operational support group, whose functions include controlling internal upheavals and performing all operational duties related to security.

Finally, the restructuring programme has put in place oversight mechanisms to watch over the police. One such mechanism is the police council, the highest police body, with power to provide civilian oversight of policing in Sierra Leone. The restructuring programme also makes provision for the appointment of women in senior positions in the force.

The force structure presently provides for four provincial commands, coinciding with the administrative provinces of Western Area, Northern Province, Southern Province, and Eastern Province, each under the command of an Assistant Commissioner. At the next level of organization are the police divisions at district level (five of which have been established in the wake of successful disarmament). The idea is to expand the police divisions to twelve districts as the peace process progressed. The SLP is, furthermore, considering establishing approximately 30 community-level policing units. Like any police agency, the SLP also has specialist branches, such as a Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and traffic police. The SSD will not, however, be disbanded, but is going to be "repositioned" to act in support of community policing, rather than being used, as it was in the past, as the armed wing of the ruling party (Malan et al., 2002).

Furthermore, according to Meek (2003, pp. 109, 114), in its current policing approach the SLP is focused on working with communities, and not engaging in aggressive behavior or policing tactics. It follows that by engaging with communities, traditional rulers and the district councils, the SLP should also start to meet its service delivery objectives and implement crime prevention measures. As a result, commanders have started to work with communities to identify issues of concern and possible remedies, while local rulers have been consulted to work out systems of cooperation between traditional methods and 21st-century policing. According to the Acting Inspector General, the largest challenge facing the SLP is personnel management – after years of neglect and infiltration of corrupt practices, a culture of management needs to be rebuilt. This includes increasing funding for the police, as well as decentralizing the police force away from the capital, Freetown.

6.5. Restructuring police services in England and Wales. During 1998, Police Chief Charles H Ramsey announced a sweeping restructuring of the England and Wales Metropolitan Police Department that eliminates the top-heavy system of organizational bureaus, replacing them with a more streamlined organization that puts more police resources in the community, cuts bureaucracy and holds department managers accountable for addressing crime and disorder problems in their geographic areas of responsibility. According to Ramsey, his restructuring plan would strengthen community policing by placing a wider range of police resources in the seven police districts, where they are more accessible to the community, and by focusing those resources on reducing crime and solving problems in the city's neighbourhoods. This restructuring would not alter the current boundaries of police districts or police service areas (PSA). In addition, Ramsey is of the opinion that this new structure represents nothing short of the wholesale transformation of the Metropolitan Police Department from a bureaucratic, incident-driven agency to a streamlined customer-driven service organization (Chief Ramsey announces…, 1998). This restructuring plan constitutes the following:

- *Eliminate bureaus:* The current structure creates excessive bureaucracy and makes coordinating across units cumbersome. Consequently, the four existing bureaus (Patrol Services, Support Services, Technical Services and Human Resources) are being eliminated. It follows that they are being replaced by a more efficient organization that promotes teamwork, communication and accountability.
- *Establish geographic accountability for fighting crime:* The new structure organizes police districts into three Regional Operations Commands (ROCs) – North, Central and East. Each ROC will be led by a regional assistant chief, whose office will be located in the community, not at police Headquarters. The regional assistant chief will be accountable for managing resources and coordinating crime-fighting efforts throughout the region.
- *Create full-service police districts:* The role of the seven police districts is being dramatically expanded from a narrow focus on patrol to the full range of police services needed to solve crimes and address neighbourhood problems. In addition to PSA patrol services, the districts will include violent and property crime investigations,

focused mission teams, and operational support and customer service units. By placing violent and property crime detectives in the districts, the over-specialization of personnel who only investigate one type of crime, is being eliminated.

- *Streamline business operations:* Administrative and technical functions are being consolidated under a new corporate support structure. Led by an assistant chief, this single structure will better coordinate the delivery of services in four key areas: human services, business services, training services and operational support services (*Chief Ramsey announces…*, 1998).

Furthermore, in September 2005, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) published the report "Closing the Gap", which examined the police service's capability to deliver protective services. The report concluded that the current structure of 43 police services across England and Wales was no longer fit for purpose. Consequently, the report promoted the position that larger strategic forces would be better placed to deliver services, and that such forces could offer significant savings in organizational support costs (Flett and Collier, 2005, p. 1). As a result, Government concluded that police forces needed to have a minimum of 4 000 police officers, or 6 000 police officers and staff combined, to provide effective protective policing services covering terrorism, major crime and civil emergencies (Paterson, [s.a.], p. 1).

Subsequently, according to Loveday (2005, pp. 339-340), the 43 police forces of England and Wales would be replaced with 12-15 regional strategic police forces. However, one consequence of the report and the Home Secretary's response to it, was the request made to all police authorities and forces to present a business case to the Home Office by the end of 2005, identifying the future structure of policing in the region and the pattern of amalgamation they might favor. In the course of this exercise it was found that alternatives to amalgamation, collaboration and federation had both been closed down by the Home Secretary, who concluded that only the option of amalgamation was now acceptable to his department. In what proved to be almost unprecedented in terms of speed of implementation, the Home Secretary gave deadlines for all forces to provide him with plans for future amalgamations on a regional basis. However, as currently constituted, many police forces were unable, in terms of manpower and resources, to support a range of protective services, and this had to be addressed with some degree of urgency. In response to this, many police authorities agreed, albeit reluctantly, to draw up business plans for restructuring. On the other hand, it also became apparent in the short period within which this exercise was conducted, that there were significant differences of opinion between tripartite members as to what form the eventual outcome of reform was likely to take.

As a result, the following restructure proposals are examples of police restructuring in England and Wales.

6.5.1. North Yorkshire Police Authority. According to the article *Restructuring proposals for North Yorkshire Police* (2006, p. 12), the Home Secretary intended to seek parliamentary approval later that year to amalgamate North Yorkshire Police (NYP) with the three other police services in the Yorkshire and Humber region, to create a regional police force from 1 April 2008. As a result, this new Force would have approximately 12 000 police officers, 8 000 police staff and a budget of just under £1 billion. This strategic amalgamation of existing forces could produce the necessary scale of organization to address the existing deficiencies of the majority of forces in England and Wales in tackling serious crime. The issue was all about creating the necessary specialisms within police forces, to be able to effectively tackle major crime and public order incidents, serious and cross-border crime and counter-terrorism – the "protective services". It was, furthermore, anticipated that by pooling the existing protective services capacity within the region and then re-allocating them – even without investing further resources – it should be possible to make significant improvements to effectiveness. However, this would be a very large organization in terms of geographical coverage and resources. In addition, many people felt that local people would lose control of policing, and that, as a result, resources currently spent in this area would be allocated to high-crime areas elsewhere in the region. It was, furthermore, argued, on the other hand, that whenever there was a major crime incident in the area, police officers from communities throughout the force needed to be utilized to deal with such incidents. Consequently, this took officers from the very areas where they were most valued by communities – close to the communities. Objections to those proposals had to be lodged with the Home Office by 11 August 2008.

6.5.2. Police forces in the East Midlands. According to Coleman and Birkin (2006), the Home Secretary was proposing to merge Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Northampton-shire, to form a single East Midlands "Force" from April 2008. Alongside, the proposal was a commitment from the Home Office to strengthen local policing. As a result, community policing

teams were being established across the Country to deal with local problems such as antisocial behavior. The Home Secretary pledged that there would be such teams in every area in the country by April 2008. The merger process has, therefore, been driven by the need to improve what has become known as "protective services" across the region, both now and in the future. It follows that the five forces in the East Midlands were assessed as unable to meet the required standard in both level and range of protective services, due largely to funding issues, and recognized the need to reconsider how protective services are delivered.

However, as a major turning point, Tendler and Webster (2006) announced that government plans for the £1 billion merger of police forces across England and Wales had collapsed. As a result, this decision marked the end of the biggest police reform for 40 years, which was proposed after concern that smaller forces were failing to cope with high profile investigations and counter-terrorism operations. In addition, there were concerns about bills which could include millions in IT costs, redundancies and pensions. One of the biggest areas of concern was that different forces required different levels of precept, the section of the annual tax bill for policing. Consequently, if merged forces took the precept of the force with the highest level, that would be unfair for thousands of council tax payers. On the other hand, if the lowest level was set – suggested by ministers – the new forces would run into cash crises.

7. Findings and recommendations

The above analysis provides an insight on how restructuring in the SAPS can be improved. Thus SAPS could draw from trends emanating from international police organizations in their restructuring endeavors by utilizing these lessons learned when considering restructuring the SAPS.

The rationale for the adopted police structure in Bosnia was typified by clear communication of the restructuring strategy. Police reform in Bosnia was further characterized by widespread discussions among role players. Although these extensive discussions were internationally imposed, including prescribed timelines, continuous dialogue and cooperative behavior was maintained. The prolonged leadership provided by the IPTF and the EUPM to the Bosnian police reform process signifies the importance of constant managerial involvement during and after restructuring.

Drawing from the continuous dialogue maintained during the Bosnia police reform it is recommended that the SAPS management should design and maintain strategies to ensure that the organization's internal and external communication, as well as the management of information, is reliable and transparent. Furthermore, the management of the SAPS should apply a more open and cordial communication style when implementing restructuring. The SAPS should have detailed strategic plan to support effective internal and external communication and information management, in order to facilitate efficient communication during restructuring. It is also recommended that the SAPS adapts its communication style and method of implementing change processes that is in line with democratic ethos. It follows that the SAPS should resort to a consistent consultative approach, characterized by transparency as well as participative decision-making during change. Explicit time lines should be created to set a clear view of the future and to direct the restructuring process.

Moreover, it is recommended that the SAPS clarifies the rationale for restructuring prior to process initiation. Consequently, the SAPS management should remain focused on the reason for the restructuring, and, therefore, timeously and unambiguously communicate the motivation, necessity and underlying principles of the restructuring process to members and other external role players. The communication process should be characterized by consultation and information sharing, to comprehensively acquaint personnel with the change process, in order to prepare them for change. This implies that the SAPS must continuously engage in dialogue and participative decision-making with its employees and other important role players. As a result, the organization will have an improved understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed structure, as well as an enhanced understanding of the subsequent changes in the SAPS.

The management of the SAPS should remain actively involved in all the phases of organizational restructuring and should not distant itself prematurely from the restructuring process. This implies that the SAPS management should pursue organizational restructuring until the goal and objectives of the restructuring process are successfully entrenched in the organization.

The Australian police organizations with its business oriented management practice as opposed to the undemocratic, top-down management style in those organizations helped to improve aspects such as managerial control, local accountability and decision-making at the lower hierarchical levels. The command structure is, thus, streamlined and user-friendly, which in, turn, develops improved responsibility and control of managers at the lower

levels. As a result, strategic planning, communication and the management of performance at these lower hierarchical levels are, furthermore, improved.

Organizational restructuring has been used by Australian police organizations as a strategy for improving efficiency, accountability, autonomy, delegation, discretion, communication and service delivery. It is, therefore, recommended that the SAPS should rationalize its management approach and command structure, with an impetus for greater local accountability, autonomy, delegation and discretion. A democratic organization, such as the SAPS, should further apply a user-friendly style of communication, as opposed to the enforced top-down style, in order to promote transparency and accountability during restructuring. Furthermore, the SAPS should be more diplomatic in their approach during the implementation of its change processes, which, in turn, will help to promote participative decisionmaking and consultation with key stakeholders.

Similar to the sentiment in Australian police organizations, members of the SAPS also had reservations regarding the effectiveness of this organization's restructuring efforts, resulting in considerable resistance to change. Learning from the Australian experience, it is recommended that the SAPS should clearly communicate the benefits of the planned change before and during restructuring programs to enhance employees' enthusiasm and commitment.

The highly centralized Turkish police force was previously characterized by separated police forces that lead to unnecessary duplication of structures. On the one hand, this highly centralized structure resulted in weakened capacity at station level with insufficient resources, inadequate authority and stagnation of skills transfer. On the other hand, the duplication of structures resulted in unclear function differentiation and the shifting of accountability. The regionalization of some police departments in the quest towards decentralization resulted in local police forces having been given more power and responsibilities.

Drawing from the experience of the Turkish police restructuring the SAPS should strive to implement a flatter organizational structure than it currently has. The achievement of such a structure will necessitate rooting out unnecessary duplication of functions through reducing the levels of command. As a result, station commissioners will have the necessary powers and decision making authority within their precinct. Hence, additional police members will be deployed at station level, and authority will be developed downwards to enable police officials to have more responsibility when performing their functions. There will be a need to boost capacity at station level with sufficient resources through training, skills transfer with adequate authority and accountability of station commissioners.

The SLP adopted an improved community-based orientation. Engagement with such communities was encouraging and emphasizes the significance of continuous communication, consultation and interaction with all role players during change efforts.

Drawing from the SLP's consultative approach during restructuring, it is recommended that the SAPS should focus on timeous and constant communication and consultative decisionmaking with members and external role players regarding the implementation of restructuring processes. In addition, the SAPS should maintain and foster cooperative behavior internally and externally with all role players prior, during and after the implementation of a restructuring effort. Orientation programs, such as the community-based orientation initiative implemented by the SLP, should be prioritized by the SAPS.

The implementation of a flatter organizational structure to England and Wales' Metropolitan Police Department added a new dimension to the department's scope of services. As a result, internal service excellence and customer centricity have become interwoven in operational functions. This structural change has, therefore, transformed the department from primarily providing a support function to a department that provides streamlined, accessible customer-driven services and contributing to a culture of accountability among officers. Through this restructuring initiative, the allocation of dedicated police resources resulted in support of the core operational needs of the department. Drawing on this experience of England and Wales Metropolitan Police Department, it is proposed that the SAPS resorts to a more streamlined structure that would increase accountability, improve communication and efficiency in service delivery. The allocation of resources would be simplified resulting in strengthening capacity at station. As a result, bureaucratic challenges will be eliminated.

Conclusion

The lessons identified from international police organizations' restructuring efforts proves to be vital when one reconsiders the restrictions and shortcomings experienced by the South African Police Service's restructuring. These lessons explain how and where restructuring has taken place in such police organizations and substantiate the significance of such changes for the SAPS.

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