



Institutional Evolution of the Role of Citizens in Ensuring Public Safety in the United States: A Comprehensive Analytical Review from Early Militias to Contemporary Volunteer Programs, with an Analysis of Citizen Participation Mechanisms within the Fragmented Structure of Public-Private Partnerships

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Abstract

The article is dedicated to analyzing public-private partnerships in ensuring public safety in the United States. It examines the evolution of citizen participation in public safety in the United States, with a focus on legislative foundations and modern challenges. The author analyzes the historical development of volunteer initiatives, from the colonial period to modern programs aimed at supporting the activities of federal and local law enforcement agencies. Special attention is given to the legal framework regulating volunteer activities and its significance for effective crime prevention and strengthening public order. The author explores various approaches to involving citizens in law enforcement activities, assessing their effectiveness within the context of the decentralized governance system in the United States. The article also investigates the mechanisms of interaction between government structures and civil society, emphasizing the importance of trust-based relationships and their role in enhancing the effectiveness of public safety programs.

Keywords: public safety, public order, volunteer, officer, department, integration, citizens, civil society, police, security, legislation.

Introduction

In modern conditions, when security threats are becoming more complex and diverse, the need to integrate citizens and civil society institutions into the process of ensuring public security is becoming more urgent.

Active participation of citizens and public associations in activities to ensure public safety is one of the key elements of the state policy of social partnership between law enforcement agencies and society. It is in the activities of citizens actively participating in ensuring public safety that many countries with developed economies see great potential for effective crime prevention and combating them.



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The United States of America, as one of the leading liberal democracies, has significant experience in involving citizens in ensuring public safety, which can serve as a model for other states, and therefore it is very important to consider the experience of law enforcement activities carried out on a public (voluntary) basis.

The philosophy of citizens taking an active part in ensuring public safety by volunteering to support federal and local law enforcement agencies across the country is particularly noteworthy. Volunteerism is deeply rooted in U.S. culture, where a significant number of citizens take pride in their participation in unpaid activities, including work in government agencies, fire departments, social services, and other publicly significant areas.¹

In the United States, volunteering is viewed by citizens as a way to serve the community, and some people volunteer because they see auxiliary (reserve) police service as an opportunity to help their loved ones, neighbors, and create a safer living environment for their family.

Early forms of participation

The history of citizen involvement in ensuring security, including public safety and policing in populated areas in the United States can be traced back to the colonial period, when early settlers created voluntary formations to protect their settlements. Over time, these practices evolved and transformed, adapting to changing conditions.

The American system of citizen participation in ensuring public safety was mainly formed on the basis of the British model of voluntary policing. Thus, the involvement of citizens in ensuring public order on a voluntary basis, essentially unpaid activity, can be traced back to the 10th century in Britain, where the leader of the community, represented by the lords, appointed the "Constable of the Estate"²(Constable³of the Manor) from among the local inhabitants. The term comes from the Old French word "custable", meaning "keeper of the castle"⁴. The duties of the Constable of the Manor included maintaining the "King's peace" in the area under his responsibility, dealing with petty criminals and disorderly persons, and raising "hue and cry". As the population grew and urbanization increased, the powers of the constables expanded and during the 17th century their duties included specific tasks such as dealing with beggars, night-walkers and⁵, prostitution, vagabonds, suppression of profane swearing⁶, fires, keeping the streets clean, and maintaining order at religious services. In 1673, Charles II issued an ordinance requiring citizens to assist the police, and they could be temporarily sworn in as constables during times of public disorder. The Special Constables Act of 1831⁷, which formed the basis for the modern volunteer police in the United Kingdom.

¹VIMayorov, R. Wolf Citizen participation in policing: volunteer police in the United States and voluntary national teams in Russia. Problems of law No. 5 (59)/2016. P.107

²RAWolf, I. Pepper, A. Dobrin // Reserve Policing in the United States: Citizens Volunteering for Public Service, 2016, The Police Journal 90(2)

³Costable is an archaic term used in medieval England to describe a person who was responsible for maintaining law and order in a particular area.

⁴Costable vs Constable: Meaning And Differences The Content Authority // <https://thecontentauthority.com/blog/costable-vs-constable#:~:text=A%20constable%20is%20a%20law,the%20law%20throughout%20the%20realm>

⁵Marwick, James David, Sir // Sketch of the history of the high constables of Edinburgh; with notes of the early watching, cleaning, and other police arrangement of the city, p.13

⁶JDMarwick // Sketch of the history of the High Constables of Edinburgh: with notes on the early watching, cleaning, and other police arrangements of the city. Edinburgh, 1865. The Making of Modern Law. Gale. 2015. Gale, Cengage Learning. R.12 // <https://archive.org/details/sketchofhistoryo00marw/page/n11/mode/2up>

⁷A brief history of the special constabulary // <https://www.cambs.police.uk/police-forces/cambridgeshire-constabulary/areas/careers/careers/special-constables/brief-history-special-constables>.



A similar development occurred in the American colonies. One of the earliest uses of organized citizen participation in security was recorded in 1636, when the Massachusetts Bay Colony formed battalions to protect against Native American attacks. Night watch systems were then organized in major cities.⁸, which called on all adult males to volunteer to patrol a day or night "watch." In 1636, "night watches" were organized in Boston.⁹, and in 1686 similar activities were organized in New York and in 1700 in Philadelphia.¹⁰. The night watchman walked the streets and neighborhoods reporting fires, runaways, and raising the general alarm when criminal activity was detected. In 1704, citizen patrols emerged in South Carolina.¹¹In 1833, the first day watch was introduced in Philadelphia, and in 1844, a day watch was introduced in New York City as an adjunct to the new municipal police force.¹².

After the Militia Act of 1792¹³the powers of the authorities to involve citizens in the protection of public safety were significantly expanded. Thus, according to this law, every able-bodied white male citizen of the respective states, residing in them between the ages of 18 and 45, was enrolled in the militia. In the early 1800s, volunteer militias appeared, which participated in such actions as "suppressing strikes and riots, providing assistance in natural disasters"¹⁴.

In the mid-17th century, a local sheriff could raise volunteers and organize a sheriff's posse to assist in law enforcement. This power was legitimized in 1878 by the Posse Comitatus Act.¹⁵. The law prohibited the use of armed forces to maintain law and order. This law, which is still in effect, allows the county sheriff to call on local citizens as volunteers to ensure public safety if necessary.¹⁶.

Development of institutional forms of participation

Although citizens have been involved in public safety in the United States since the early 20th century, the legislative framework was created in 1941 as part of the federal law on the creation of the US Civil Defense Corps (Order No. 8757, United States Citizen Service Corps)¹⁷, and later in more detail in the Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950.¹⁸.

In the 1950s-70s, the US government allocated large amounts of money for various grants and programs to help citizens engage in volunteer movements to assist police forces, which resulted in a sharp increase in the number of citizens participating in public order activities during this period.

Most modern municipal auxiliary and reserve volunteer police forces began and were organized as part of local civil defense programs. For example, the Portsmouth, Virginia Police Department Auxiliary was founded during World War II but was not integrated into the police department until the early 1960s. Urban unrest and a sharp rise in crime in the United States in the 1960s sparked increased interest in public safety. Several states began using volunteers to assist police with crime-

⁸CEBartels // Volunteer Police in the United States Programs, Challenges, and Legal Aspects. SpringerBriefs in Criminology Policing. 2014. P.2

⁹<https://docmckee.com/cj/docs-criminal-justice-glossary/night-watch-definition/>

¹⁰The History of Policing in the United States. The History of Policing in the United States, Part 1 // <https://ekuonline.eku.edu/blog/police-studies/the-history-of-policing-in-the-united-states-part-1/>

¹¹CEBartels // Volunteer Police in The United States: Programs, Challenges, And Legal Aspects, p.3

¹²L. Gaines, V. Kappeler, J. Vaughn // Policing in America (3rd ed.), Cincinnati, Ohio: Anderson Publishing Company, 1999.

¹³<https://www.mountvernon.org/education/primary-source-collections/primary-source-collections/article/militia-act-of-1792>

¹⁴Greenberg, M. Allen // Citizens Defending America: from colonial times to the age of terrorism // Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005.

¹⁵Legal Information Institute // https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/posse_comitatus

¹⁶<https://www.britannica.com/topic/posse-comitatus>

¹⁷Establishing the Office of Civilian Defense in the Office for Emergency Management of the Executive Office of the President, Federal Register page and date: 6 FR 2517, May 22, 1941 // The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) // <https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/1941.html#8757>

¹⁸<https://www.nj.gov/njoem/laws-directives/federal-statutes.shtml>



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fighting patrols and to form their own volunteer groups.¹⁹In 1972, the National Sheriff's Association (NSA) established the Neighborhood Watch Program.²⁰

Following the riots of 1968 and 1973, three presidential commissions on crime and law enforcement were formed.²¹The committees' recommendations stressed the need to strengthen ties between police and the community.²²For this purpose, local departments were provided with federal grants from the U.S. Department of Justice's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA).²³

Due to the rise in crime rates in the 1990s²⁴The U.S. government has considered expanding the use of citizens as an alternative to increasing law enforcement personnel. However, many of these initiatives have been thwarted by lawsuits brought by police unions and associations.²⁵In some states, the involvement of citizens in police forces has been strictly limited by the judiciary. One example of a volunteer police force with very limited police powers is the New York City Police Department's Auxiliary.

The events of September 11, 2001, demonstrated the increased demand for citizen involvement in public safety work. Since 2002, the International Association of Chiefs of Police has been overseeing the Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) program.²⁶on behalf of the U.S. Department of Justice. The program expanded the use of volunteers as social workers, counselors, health care workers, and other trained individuals to strengthen partnerships with the civil community and improve the effectiveness of state law enforcement agencies.

Cooperation with citizens in security activities has also been established in other law enforcement and security units in the United States. For example, the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary²⁷is one civilian organization that can be used in counter-terrorism operations. Many of its members operate their own boats to assist in maritime security programs.

The Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is a civilian auxiliary of the United States Air Force, created by Pub. L. 80-557.²⁸of May 26, 1948, establishing CAP as a civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. CAP is said to perform more than 95% of all federal search and rescue operations on land.²⁹under the direction of the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center. CAP is engaged in aerial photography and the transportation of medicines, and serves as a reserve for use in counter-terrorism operations.

The U.S. Congress has mandated CAP to stimulate public interest in aviation, aerospace, and careers in the Air Force. To achieve this mission, CAP's 3,000 faculty members conduct hundreds of seminars each year at colleges and universities across the country. These seminars focus on

¹⁹Portsmouth Police Department, Auxiliary Police, accessed July 25, 2013, // http://portsmouthpd.org/?page_id=346.

²⁰National Neighborhood Watch // Our History // Neighborhood Watch Program—National Sheriff's Association, accessed July 25, 2013, // <https://www.nnw.org/our-history>

²¹Crime Commissions // <https://law.jrank.org/pages/825/Crime-Commissions-More-recent-commissions.html>

²²GLKelling, MHMoore // The Evolving Strategy of Policing // Perspectives on Policing 4 // National Institute of Justice, US Department of Justice, and the program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1988) // The Evolving Strategy of Policing // <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/114213.pdf>

²³First Annual Report of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration // <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/annual-report-law-enforcement-assistance-administration>

²⁴R.A. Wolf, I.Pepper, A.Dobrin // Reserve Policing in the United States: Citizens Volunteering for Public Service, 2016, The Police Journal 90(2)

²⁵W. Ross, F. James, A. Dobrin // Reserve Policing in the United States: Citizens Volunteering for Public Service

²⁶Volunteers In Police Service (VIPS) // National Neighborhood Watch // <https://www.nnw.org/volunteers-police-service-vips>

²⁷Citizen Police: A Valuable Resource for America's Homeland Security // Office of Justice Programs // <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/citizen-police-valuable-resource-americas-homeland-security>

²⁸<https://uslaw.link/citation/us-law/public/80/557>

²⁹<https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/usaf/cap.htm>



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aerospace fundamentals and advances in the field. Since 1986, under congressional authorization, citizens participating in CAP programs have been recruited to assist law enforcement agencies in counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism missions.³⁰ According to some estimates, more than 64,000 citizens have volunteered to join the CAP.³¹

Also since 1993, the Institute of Emergency Management of the Federal Emergency Situations Agency³² (The United States' Emergency Management Institute – EMI of the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency – FEMA) organizes various courses for individuals on survival after natural disasters. Under the coordination of FEMA, there are more than 2,700 local programs in the country, which involve more than 600,000 people. Participants in this program can be used as "auxiliary responders" in the event of natural disasters and terrorist attacks.

Voluntary citizen involvement is of particular importance in US policing. Volunteer police officers are generally welcomed and valued within the police service, especially within the community policing philosophy. Throughout the United States, community policing programs are part of local police, sheriff's offices, or police agencies.

There are more than 18,000 such organizations in total, and each of them has its own internal policies, local ordinances, as well as laws and regulations that govern their work.³³ This decentralization is partly determined by the size of police departments, which range from ten to ten thousand full-time officers.³⁴ How each of these police departments implements its model of cooperation with citizens and their involvement in security activities.

Although the number of volunteer officers in the United States is poorly documented, recent studies have shown that there are up to 58,500 volunteer police officers and volunteer deputy sheriffs in the United States, with another 19,000 reserve and auxiliary police officers. In the United States, there are more than 77,500 volunteer police officers in total.³⁵

Experts estimate that volunteer police officers make up about 12 percent of the 635,781 professional police departments. Other estimates put their number at 20 percent of the 404,000³⁶ full-time police officers, with volunteers dedicating an average of nine hours a week to their role. Experts point out that 30% of all public safety organizations in the United States use volunteers.³⁷ According to some sources, as a result of these combined efforts, the crime rate has decreased by 26% since the beginning of 1991.³⁸ These figures prove that volunteer police are an important part of the police organization in the United States.

Citizen participation in public safety in the United States has significant positive effects, contributing to lower crime rates. For example, research shows that neighborhoods with active Neighborhood Watch programs have lower crime rates than neighborhoods without such programs.

³⁰Air and Space Force Association (AFA) website // <https://www.afahawaii.org/civil-air-patrol/>

³¹<https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/usaf/cap.htm>

³²Citizen Police: A Valuable Resource for America's Homeland Security // Office of Justice Programs // <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/citizen-police-valuable-resource-americas-homeland-security>

³³MA Greenberg, Auxiliary police: The citizen's approach to public safety. Westport Connecticut: Greenwood Press. 1984.

³⁴A. Dobrin, Volunteer Police: History, Benefits, Costs, and Current Descriptions. Security Journal. 2015. p.18

³⁵A. Dobrin, R. Wolf, IK Pepper, SW Fallik, Volunteer Police: What Predicts Confidence in Training? Criminal Justice Policy Review (1/13) 2017. p.3.

³⁶R. Wolf, C.B. Jones. Volunteer Police, Choosing to Serve. Exploring, Comparing, and Assessing Volunteer Policing in the United States and the United Kingdom. 2018, // p.11.

³⁷JL Brudney, JEKellough, Volunteers in state government: Involvement, management, and benefits // Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, vol. 29(1), 2000, pp. 111–130.

³⁸Laurie E. Ekstrand, Nancy R. Kingsbury // Community Policing Grants: Cops Grants Were a Modest Contributor to Declines in Crime in the 1990s. DIANE Publishing. 2015. p. 14



According to experts, volunteers as police partners are important for police leaders because such activities help create positive relationships between members of the societies and local authorities³⁹, increases the level of trust and cooperation between citizens and law enforcement agencies, which in turn contributes to a more effective response to security threats and an improvement in the overall level of public order.

For Many departments' decisions to create or maintain a reserve or auxiliary police force are motivated by financial savings. According to the US Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office),⁴⁰ program The redundancy saved the Los Angeles police department approximately \$5,000,000.

The main The advantage of having reserves is that departments can use them instead of hiring full-time employees to meet short-term needs. These needs can include seasonal changes in staffing requirements, natural or man-made disasters, special events such as major concerts or sporting events, and even search and rescue efforts or extreme weather conditions.⁴¹

Volunteers can perform administrative tasks such as record keeping. They can also provide specialized skills cost-effectively, eliminating the need for agencies to hire full-time staff.⁴² Volunteers often work full-time in areas unrelated to policing.⁴³ And may have expertise in a variety of areas. These skills may include a wide range of qualifications, including boat and aircraft handling, medical assistance, translation, technical support, canine, equine and even financial and accounting skills. Volunteer experts in these areas may also be used as instructors for training, coaching or running academies⁴⁴.

Volunteer programs can often serve as a special talent pool from which departments can recruit potential full-time employees. There are other benefits that talent pool programs provide to financial institutions.

In addition to better engagement with local communities and increased trust in the police, volunteer policing also provides greater transparency in policing functions.⁴⁵ For example, by allowing volunteers into the organization with free access to police tactics, intelligence, and decision-making, departments open themselves up to greater transparency and community participation.

Conclusion

Thus, it can be concluded that the USA has created an effective mechanism for supporting and developing volunteer activities, which promotes active involvement of citizens in the social and political life of the country, including in matters of ensuring public safety. The developed culture of

³⁹L. RenS, Z. Jihong, MJGaffney, N. Lovrich, Participation community crime prevention: who volunteers for police work? // Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management. 2006, vol. 29(3), pp. 464–481.

⁴⁰Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office). The impact of the economic downturn on American police agencies. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice (2011). <https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/RIC/Publications/cops-w0713-pub.pdf>

⁴¹A. Dobrin. Volunteer police: History, benefits, costs and current descriptions. Security Journal 30(3).

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281544755_Volunteer_police_History_benefits_costs_and_current_descriptions

⁴²Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office). The impact of the economic downturn on American police agencies. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice (2011). <https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/RIC/Publications/cops-w0713-pub.pdf>

⁴³SMHilal, DP Olsen, Police reserve officers: Essential in today's economy and an opportunity to increase diversity in the law enforcement profession. <https://www.policiechiefmagazine.org/police-reserve-officers-essential-in-todays-economy-and-an-opportunity-to-increase-diversity-in-the-law-enforcement-profession/>

⁴⁴A. Dobrin. Volunteer police: History, benefits, costs and current descriptions. Security Journal 30(3).

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⁴⁵J. Gravelle, C. Rogers, Your country needs you! The economic viability of volunteers in the police // Policing and Society. An International Journal of Research and Policy Volume 32, 2022. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10439463.2021.1999449>



volunteerism and the desire of citizens to participate in various security programs contribute to the successful implementation of such programs at all levels.

The historical development of volunteerism in the United States shows that participation patterns have evolved to meet changing challenges and threats, economic and social conditions. This highlights the importance of flexible programs that can respond and adapt to contemporary security challenges.

Legislation plays a key role in this process, not only creating a legal basis for volunteer activities, but also defining the powers, rights and obligations of citizens. Constant adaptation of legislation to new challenges and changes in society is becoming the most important factor in the successful integration of citizens into the processes of ensuring public safety.

In addition, one of the main advantages of the American model is the close interaction of government agencies with local communities, which builds trust and increases the effectiveness of public safety programs.

The US experience can serve as an important reference point for countries seeking to implement or improve their models of civil participation in ensuring public order. However, it is necessary to take into account the socio-economic and cultural characteristics of each country, ensuring flexibility of approaches and readiness to change strategies depending on the specific challenges.

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