



Citizens for Community Action, Inc.

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I-Cam, I Saw, its an I-Scam of truth

For those that might not know what ICAM is, it is a simple computer software program that allows the general public to view crime in their beat or in their neighborhood and so forth, for some predefined radius. We'll expose some stuff about that shortly. In computer lingo this software essentially runs a query on a database; a query is merely a filter of information setup by predefined conditions that the user decides.

A simple example that illustrates what was mentioned above can be constructed from your own personal phonebook as follows:

Suppose you have one-hundred people in your personal phone book. Let's further suppose that we give your phonebook a name, like myPhonebook.

Each person has an entry in myPhonebook, like name, address, city, state, zip, phone, cellphone, etc.

The phonebook, taken as a single entity composed of very specific types of data, is called a database (technically a flat database). Each entry (a persons name, address, etc.) is called a record.

Now suppose you want to ask the question, "Who lives

in zipcode 60639?" This question is a query on the database. You can, through various software, produce a report to answer that question.

Citizens ICAM

only shows a very small portion of the crime that occurs in the community. It shows the minimum number of crimes that are recorded!

Allegedly there were 13,600 calls to 911.

With complete certainty we can guarantee less than 10% were recorded to Citizens ICAM! The fine work of all the officers in 25 is not adequately reflecting in the stats.

ICAM works in a similar fashion. There is a database that is referenced, similar to myPhonebook, and a query is built programmatically. The results are then printed to ones terminal or screen.

That's the behind the scene actions that are going on.

So what, you might ask.

On September 17, 2003 I attended one of the CAPS meetings to pose a question relating to the statistics that

are generated. The question went like this: At what point does the information that is dispatched from a 911 dispatcher or appear on the pdp become part of the stats that are provided at these meetings? Simple question really, but not so simple an answer because none of the white-shirts seemed to know the answer. They did reveal one important piece of information, which we'll verify shortly, and that was 13,600 calls were made to 911.

The stats that come through for ICAM do not reflect all the work the officers "blue-shirts" do. I pointed that out in that meeting.

Since the white shirts didn't seem to know how information got recorded into ICAM I decide to do some research.

Will the Real ICAM Please Stand Up?

After almost 12 calls to various people, I finally found someone that knew some information. It was ashame I had to made so many calls to find out the answer to such a simple question, but, this is the city that works! Here are the findings:

There are two versions of ICAM. One is called Citizens ICAM and the other is ICAM. The latter version is not

publically accessible and contains a more accurate picture of the real crime numbers.

Regarding the public version, Citizens ICAM, the information contained in that database is based upon physical reports that an officer submits. In other words, if someone gets arrested, paperwork is generated. Whenever paperwork is generated, then an entry is logged into Citizen ICAM.

Citizens ICAM does not reflect, by any stretch of the imagine, a true picture of the crime that is going on in a community, nor does it reflect all the work that the officers "blue shirts" do for any given timeframe.

I would be willing to make a guess that the pay increase the officers are going to get will incorporate statistics on crime into some warped formula. In fact, this administration will probably use those stats as a bargaining chip; more than likely they will use the Citizens ICAM data which only shows the minimum amount of crime!. As a responsible member of the FOP, you should call the union and find out how negotiations are going. Ask some questions like:

1. Are the raises the leadership is fighting for in line with the inflation projections until the next contract is due for renewal?

You could be making more, but getting less. How's that? It's called the buying power of the

dollar. For instance, 100 of today's dollars might be 105 of next years dollars. In practical terms, the groceries I spend \$100 for today, will cost \$105 next year.

2. Some districts are swamped with calls and definitely need more help. Will the contract provide for contingencies allowing officers from one district to be temporarily reassigned to another?

3. Many of the officers are currently required to leave their district and get detailed out to other areas - for years! Should there be a time limit on this detailed out concept?

4, Many districts are visited by people who sit and talk with officers that work the street to find out how they are doing and what problems they are facing. Some districts haven't been visited in months. Should there be a provision in the contract to set up such meetings in a scheduled meeting? If so, what guidelines would you like to see initiated in those regards?

5. Maintenance of city vehicles seems to be an overall problem throughout the various departments of the city and the police department is no exception. Should this be part of the contract under safety issues to the well-being of officers?

These are but some of the things that should be openly discussed. There are others. If you would like to call Wayne and voice your concern,

without fear of reciprocity, then call 773-889-2963. All information remains confidential and under no conditions will names be exposed.

Recently the Lerner Times interviewed me for a story. The newspaper's author seemed to have missed my opening comment pertain to the Chicago Police Department and made it look like Wayne was against all of the Chicago Police Department. Nothing could be further from the truth.

I pointed out to Erika that I made a clear distinction between the officers that work the streets, the people in blue shirts, and those involved in administration, the white-shirts. In fact when I spoke at the Budget meeting held a few weeks back in the 4900 block of Wellington, I told Cline he needs to restructure the department; right now there are no more than 40% of the police department personnel working the streets and the other 60% working in office and administrative positions. I told him those numbers should be turned around!