I. Information

In July 1990, the Columbus Division of Police began revising policies and procedures in order to become accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). In July 1999 the Division received initial accreditation and has maintained accreditation continuously since this date. Reaccreditation takes place every three years.

II. CALEA Accreditation Process

A. Application

The Columbus Division of Police applied to CALEA in 1996 to become accredited. Once the application was approved, CALEA and the Columbus Division of Police entered into a contract. The Division was given three years from the date of the agreement to meet all applicable standards.

B. Self-Assessment

A thorough examination is conducted by the Division to determine whether it complies with all applicable standards. The Division then prepares forms and develops proofs of compliance for a mock review by certified CALEA assessors. The Division selects mock assessors from outside law enforcement agencies to review proofs of compliance. When the Division is satisfied that it has completed all compliance, preparation, and planning tasks, the Commission is notified that the Division is ready to become a candidate for accreditation.

C. On-Site Assessment

A team of CALEA assessors visits the Division and verifies compliance of each applicable standard. The assessors are chosen by the Commission from outside the state of Ohio and have a background in public safety while meeting specific criteria established by the Commission. The on-site assessment usually takes four days to complete. At the conclusion of the assessment, a formal report is submitted to the Commission. The on-site assessment occurs every three years after an agency receives initial accreditation.

D. Commission Review

Once the final report has been received, the Commission schedules a hearing for the Division. At the hearing, the Commission reviews the final report and receives testimony from Division personnel and the assessors.
If the Commission feels the Division has met all of the applicable standards, accreditation is awarded. Accreditation/reaccreditation lasts for a three year period.

E. Maintaining Compliance and Reaccreditation

To maintain accreditation, the Division must remain in compliance with all applicable standards. The Division must submit annual reports attesting to continued compliance and report changes or difficulties experienced. The Commission reserves the right to schedule interim hearings if non-compliance becomes an issue.

III. Accreditation Standards

The CALEA accreditation standards are divided into major law enforcement areas with numerous chapters. The major sections and their corresponding chapters are:

Section I Law Enforcement Role, Responsibilities, and Relationships
Chapter 1 Law Enforcement Role and Authority
Chapter 2 Agency Jurisdiction and Mutual Aid
Chapter 3 Contractual Agreements for Law Enforcement Services

Section II Organization, Management, and Administration
Chapter 11 Organization and Administration
Chapter 12 Direction
Chapter 15 Planning and Research, Goals and Objectives, and Crime Analysis
Chapter 16 Allocation and Distribution of Personnel and Personnel Alternatives
Chapter 17 Fiscal Management and Agency Property

Section III The Personnel Structure
Chapter 21 Classification and Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities
Chapter 22 Compensation, Benefits, and Conditions of Work
Chapter 24 Collective Bargaining
Chapter 25 Grievance Procedures
Chapter 26 Disciplinary Procedures

Section IV The Personnel Process
Chapter 31 Recruitment
Chapter 32 Selection
Chapter 33 Training and Career Development
Chapter 34 Promotion
Chapter 35 Performance Evaluation
IV. Benefits of CALEA Accreditation

A. Greater Accountability within the Division of Police
   Accreditation provides the Division with a proven management system of written directives, sound training, clearly defined lines of authority, and routine reports that support decision making and resource allocation.

B. Enhanced Liability Protection
   The Division is better able to defend members against lawsuits and citizen complaints by showing our policies and procedures conform to an internationally recognized set of standards.
C. International Recognition and Professional Approval

There are hundreds of CALEA accredited law enforcement agencies internationally. The Division ranks among the ten largest accredited municipal law enforcement agencies. The primary reason for the Division to become an accredited agency was to enhance its ability to remain one of the best police agencies. CALEA standards are constantly being refined and updated and are based upon “Best Practices in Professional Law Enforcement.” Adhering to these high standards ensures continual operation in the most professional manner possible and to remain a leading law enforcement agency.

D. Improved Personnel System

Division employees are assured that all aspects of the personnel system are fair and equitable as the system is based upon and operated by objective standards.

E. Improved Employee Morale

Accreditation symbolizes professionalism and excellence. It requires improved written directives and training to inform employees about policies and practices; facilities and equipment to ensure employee’s safety; and processes to safeguard employee’s rights.