12.1. INTRODUCTION

Total Systems Intervention (TSI; Flood & Jackson, 1991; Flood, 1995a; or Local Systemic Intervention, see Bob Flood's earlier chapter) is a metamethodology for organizational and societal problem solving that was developed at the Centre for Systems Studies, University of Hull, and that has been applied in many organizations around the world. TSI is an approach that helps those involved in intervention to think creatively about the problems faced, to choose an appropriate model(s) and/or methodology(ies) for the circumstances, and to use those approaches to develop and implement innovative change proposals. This chapter reports on an intervention employing TSI in the North Yorkshire Police, covering, first, implementation and, second, evaluation of some of the results.

12.2. CONTEXT

Policing in the United Kingdom follows a doctrine of policing by consent, which is under pressure through proliferating workload, has had its confidence shaken by high-profile adverse publicity, and is under threat of closer financial scrutiny by a government committed to cutting public sector expenditure. There has been a shift in opinion from the government, from the public (e.g., through Community Liaison Groups), and from within the force itself for more proactive policing involving closer community contact rather than reactive policing with blue flashing lights (Green, S. M., 1995).

The York Division of the North Yorkshire Police (NYP) began to respond to the new context in 1989, with Bob Flood's involvement, by the removal of a tier of management and some devolvement of power to local commanders. However, a need to move away from the traditional bureaucratic militaristic organization was recognized, toward a more
organic model in touch with and responsive to its environment. Traditionally, however, policing had been undertaken on a shift basis, which encouraged reactive policing because it did not allow officers sufficient involvement to develop the knowledge of, and bonding with, the local community necessary for operating in an organic manner (Green, 1992). The argument had strengthened for a geographic policing model which became known as Local Area Policing (LAP).

In 1994 the York Division of the NYP decided to move to a LAP operational structure. LAP aims to integrate the police with the communities by bringing them into closer day-to-day contact, leading to better intelligence, and giving ownership to officers who get to know a patch, its offenders, and who will be responsible and accountable for actions taken 24 hours a day. The goals of LAP may be summarized as:

- Engendering an internal culture change whereby officers are empowered and senior officers empower
- Enhancing information flow through greater communication both internally and externally, i.e., increased approachability and responsiveness
- Improving intelligence by building on the success of community beat officers who, although only few in number, accounted for the vast majority of information that fed into operations
- Increasing effectiveness and efficiency by PCs, sergeants, and commanders, designing processes
- Moving from a traditional militaristic model to a community-based organic structure
- All leading to more efficient and enjoyable policing.

However, there was resistance within the force to this change because the shift teams had become like families and LAP would tear these apart. TSI was employed as a framework for internal marketing in order to deal with attitudinal and political resistance and to allow officers to gain ownership over change. This chapter examines how TSI was first implemented and then evaluated in the LAP context of the York Division.

12.3. PROCEDURE

LAP was implemented in the York Division in four geographic regions which we shall refer to as A, B, C, and D, determined by a (widely representative) Steering Committee (including Bob) and actioned by the Management Team (also involving Bob). The Management Team decided that policing operations should be arranged in this way with CID supporting each area locally under centralized control. This was perhaps contrary to the overall participatory spirit but it was dictated by severe time pressure which necessitated a starting framework (that remained open for renegotiation). This kind of dilemma is faced increasingly in organizational intervention today. An Implementation Team of three was established to make LAP happen in York (a female PC and a male sergeant, coordinated by Bob). The TSI-driven deliberations of these bodies were too extensive to detail here; however, Appendix 1 provides an example of TSI at work in a joint meeting of the Steering Committee and the Implementation Team.