

## Preface

The growing complexities of the internal security environment, the widening frontiers of criminality, the increasing involvement of the police in social, economic and environmental conflicts, and frequent breakdown of law and order in different parts of the country, have brought the police to the centre-stage of governance. There is, consequently, a growing consensus that police systems across the country need to evolve suitable structures and processes to deal with these existing and emerging challenges.

Unfortunately, the police in India is largely perceived as a pliable tool in the hands of unscrupulous politicians, rather than as an independent and impartial instrument to enforce the rule of law. In most of the States, politicization of most of the institutions of governance has resulted in the abuse of public offices for partisan, personal and unprincipled ends. As far as the police Force is concerned, this process has seriously affected morale, discipline and performance. The insidious network of politicians and delinquent elements in society aggravates the problem further, resulting in a tremendous loss of efficiency in the management of law and order, and of crime.

A crucial area of neglect in most police organizations is the management of transfers process of senior police officials, including Superintendents of Police. The SP, as the in-charge of the district police, is at the cutting edge of the police organization, and his efficiency and effectiveness impact directly on the overall performance of the police

within a jurisdiction. Over a period of time, the average tenure of SPs has shortened and, in most of the States, political leaders have acquired a decisive role in determining the continuation of SPs at places of their posting. This has seriously and negatively affected morale, discipline and performance in the Force.

It was within this context that the Institute for Conflict Management planned a study on the Impact of Frequent Transfers on the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Superintendents of Police.

Commissioned by the Bureau of Police Research and Development, Ministry of Home Affairs, the Study makes an attempt to empirically establish and demonstrate the linkages between the security and length of tenure of SPs, and their performance in crime and law and order management.

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Equally significant are the efforts of the staff and associated members of the *Institute for Conflict Management*, who shouldered many visible and invisible tasks and responsibilities during the project.