

Philadelphia Police Department Talks Smart Policing

At the recent Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences meeting, several Smart Policing Initiative (SPI) sites spoke about their projects, including the Philadelphia Police Department. Philadelphia Commissioner Charles Ramsey and Deputy Commissioner Nola Joyce discussed Philadelphia's experiences as a SPI site, and you can watch a video of their presentation online: <http://youtu.be/nansnPu8CZ4>. During his remarks, Commissioner Ramsey reminded the audience:



"The one thing we can never do is become complacent, think we have the situation in hand, because the minute we do this, we start to lose. We have to be very, very aggressive, we have to constantly look for new ways, new ideas, and really take advantage of the resources we have at our fingertips, because it's the only way we're going to have a long-term, lasting impact on our cities, and on keeping our cities safe and secure."

We agree with Commissioner Ramsey about the importance of continuous improvement and innovation in policing, and encourage our readers to learn more about Philadelphia's SPI project on the SPI website at:

www.smartpolicinginitiative.com/SPIsites/philadelphia-pennsylvania.

SPI Spring 2014 National Meeting



Pictured: Lower left – BJA Director Denise O'Donnell, Top right – Department of Justice Assistant Attorney General Karol Mason

From April 29 to May 1, SPI held a national meeting for Phase IV and V sites in Alexandria, VA. Attendees participated in presentations, discussions, and roundtables on Smart Policing concepts, successes, and resources. View podcasts from the sites that attended the meeting and summaries (forthcoming) at: www.smartpolicinginitiative.com/spi-events/2014-spring-national-meeting.

About Us

SPI is a collaborative effort between the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), CNA, local law enforcement agencies, and researchers. It is designed to assist agencies with identifying innovative and evidence-based solutions to effectively and efficiently tackle chronic crime problems in their jurisdictions. As always, please feel free to share your thoughts and experiences with us at SPI@cna.org.



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SPI Case Study: Rochester, New York

Reducing Dispute-Related Violence through Risk Assessment

By Irshad Altheimer (Research Partner)



Project Focus

Rochester is the third-largest city in New York, but relative to other New York cities, it has elevated rates of gun violence. Analysis of the Rochester Shooting Database, created in conjunction with this project, found that nearly 60 percent of all shootings are dispute-related. The goal of the Rochester Police Department's (RPD's) SPI is to develop strategies to help police better identify, prevent, and reduce dispute-related violence. The project used a mixed-methods approach to identify factors that influence the likelihood that a shooting is dispute-related, the chances that such shootings turn deadly, and whether or not retaliatory violence is likely to take place.

Objectives

The project has four objectives:

1. Develop a database of shooting incidents;
2. Develop a risk-assessment tool to identify high-risk disputes;
3. Use the risk-assessment tool to improve response to violence disputes;
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of the tool in reducing dispute-related shootings.

The SPI team has made significant progress on the first two objectives. A database of shooting incidents was created and includes information about all shootings in Rochester between 2010 and 2012, with data about the victim, the suspect, and the situational characteristics associated with the shootings. Analysis of the shooting database was augmented by focus groups consisting of RPD investigators and officers, as well as incident reviews of important violent disputes that occurred between 2010 and 2012. Nick Petitti, Director of Business Intelligence in the department notes:

"The incident reviews provided us a window into the complex nature of a dispute, the kinds of investigative nuances that don't always make it into official police documents and that are

generally only experienced by the individual case investigators. Very rarely does this insight transfer from investigator to investigator or analyst to analyst in a consistent manner."

The SPI team has also created the risk assessment tool, which examines whether certain individual and situational characteristics are present during a suspected dispute. The tool asks whether an incident consisted of violence or the threat of violence; whether it was linked to a previous violent event; whether the previous event involved weapons; whether the victim or suspect has a history of weapon-carrying or weapons violence; and whether the participants had a reputation for violence, belonged to a gang, or were involved with the drug trade. Disputes are scored as high or low risk based on the presence of the factors listed above.

To meet the third objective of using the tool to improve response to violence disputes, RPD will conduct a two-stage implementation (described below). Once these stages are complete, the team will conduct a statistical evaluation of the effectiveness of the risk-assessment tool to meet the fourth objective.

Implementation

Effective implementation is critical if the tool is to help the police identify high-risk violent disputes. Therefore, the site is first piloting the tool in the southwest quadrant of the city and will then implement the tool citywide. Nick Petitti explains the purpose of the pilot phase:

"The pilot will provide us the opportunity to iron out process-related issues while still experiencing the lifecycle of disputes in a live environment. Documentation and evaluation of the pilot will be crucial components to affecting the successful focal shift toward dispute-related interruption that we hope to accomplish with the full rollout of the project."

During the pilot, the tool will be used as follows:

1. First, the commanding officer responding to the scene of a crime will use the tool to perform a first-level review of the incident.
2. Then, if the incident is determined to be high-risk, the commanding officer will take immediate

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SPI Rolls Out the Welcome Wagon

By James R. "Chip" Coldren, Jr.

We have learned a great deal in the past few months about how our SPI sites are experiencing and dealing with turnover at the police chief and senior command levels. In response to such situations, BJA and CNA developed a "Welcome Wagon" approach to reach out to new and interim chiefs or senior command staff to welcome them to their new agency and to the Smart Policing Initiative; to explain the Initiative in a national context; to encourage them to support Smart Policing in their agency; and to make use of the training and technical assistance (TTA) offered through BJA, CNA, and the SPI Subject Matter Experts. We are also prepared to develop marketing materials for the new executive to use in his or her interactions with local stakeholders. As always, to request this or other TTA, contact us at SPI@cna.org.

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steps to reduce the likelihood of retaliation by contacting participants, engaging in deterrence-focused patrol that targets suspected participants and geographic areas, and providing third-party dispute-resolution services.

3. Crime analysts will conduct a second-level review the next day in order to provide further guidance on the potential risks associated with the dispute.
4. After both reviews are complete, a dispute-resolution group—consisting of police officers, crime analysts, and the research partner—will determine the next steps that police will take to address the dispute. This dispute-resolution group will meet weekly to track disputes.

Lessons Learned

To date, several lessons have been learned during the course of this project. First, collaboration between the research partner and crime analysts is essential. Each brings unique perspectives, experiences, and talents that enhance the project. Second, existing police data provide an excellent resource for development of sophisticated databases that help predict patterns of future violence. The database is even more useful when combined with qualitative incident reviews. We believe that the development of the Rochester Shooting

Database represents an important progression in the movement to maximize the use and benefits of police data. Third, we have come to appreciate that, while disputes often include multiple incidents, those incidents are not necessarily identified as linked in normal patrol or investigative processes. This suggests that there can be substantial value in viewing disputes as a new unit of analysis that helps define the occurrence and nature of individual incidents of crime and can be useful in reducing violence.

More information about the Rochester SPI can be found on their site page:

www.smartpolicinginitiative.com/SPIsites/rochester-ny



SPI SME PROFILE

LIEUTENANT THOMAS WOODMANSEE

Lt. Woodmansee has been with the Madison Police Department for 23 years. His experience includes serving as a Patrol Officer; 2 years as an Undercover Narcotics Officer; and 13 years as a Detective with assignments in Person Crimes, Financial Crimes, General Crimes, and Sensitive Crimes. Lt. Woodmansee spearheaded the Madison Police Department's design and implementation of a focused deterrence model. This specialized unit is dedicated to a focused deterrence approach involving partnerships and collaborative efforts with over 15 law enforcement agencies, state and federal prosecutors' offices, and community resource advocates. Woodmansee and his team have conducted over 100 presentations using this model, including at state-wide and international Problem-oriented Policing conferences. Woodmansee is currently assigned as the Lieutenant of Operations for Madison's West District and is implementing a focused deterrence model at a district level.

Lt. Woodmansee has also assisted the Cambridge and Kansas City SPI sites with their focused deterrence interventions, including reviews of offender call-in meetings. His areas of expertise include: patrol operations, focused deterrence, offender-based policing, domestic violence, and tactical and investigative policing.

Recent and Upcoming SPI Activities

- **York, ME Technical Assistance:** In March 2014, SPI Subject Matter Expert Julie Wartell traveled to York to provide crime analysis training. Dr. Wartell reviewed the data available through the department's CAD/RMS system and assisted the site in planning for future data-analysis tasks.
- **Chula Vista, CA and Brooklyn Park, MN Site Visits:** Representatives from BJA and CNA visited the Chula Vista and Brooklyn Park Police Departments to welcome the Phase V sites to SPI. They participated in presentations, planning meetings, and field visits to areas of interest for each site's project. They also discussed each site's capacity-assessment results and action plans.
- **Indio, CA Community Symposium:** The Indio Police Department hosted a community forum on May 6 to describe their project and outcomes to stakeholders and members of the community.
- **Upcoming Site Visit:** Representatives from BJA and CNA will visit the New York, NY Phase V site on June 4.

SPI Sites Present at Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Meeting

By Vivian Elliott

On February 19–22, 2014, representatives from 17 SPI sites and CNA attended the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA. At the meeting, CNA facilitated three panel presentations and one roundtable discussion. During these panels, SPI sites discussed the implementation, evaluation, and impact of a number of Smart Policing strategies, including:

- The implementation and evaluation of cameras to improve public and officer safety (closed-circuit television cameras at Washington State University in Pullman, WA, and body-worn cameras on officers in Phoenix, AZ);
- A data-sharing initiative in Evans County, GA to improve policing coordination between multiple law enforcement agencies in a rural county;

- The development of a prediction model to understand and develop targeted interventions for burglary and truancy in Indio, CA;
- The use of offender-based strategies to reduce crimes committed by chronic and repeat offenders (social network analysis in Glendale, AZ, and offender-notification meetings in Kansas City, MO);
- The use of strategic officer patrols to reduce crime and improve police-community relations in chronic crime locations (saturation teams in Las Vegas, NV, and citizen contacts in Frisco, TX); and
- The use of various evidence-based strategies to address gun violence (Los Angeles, CA strategic extraction and restoration program; Baltimore, MD gun offender registry; Rochester, NY review of retaliatory violence involving firearms).

The SPI roundtable provided participating sites with the opportunity to openly discuss a number of lessons learned related to data-driven decision-making, organizational impacts, sustainability, and training and technical assistance in Smart Policing.



Adam Bossler presents on Evans County, GA SPI



Ivan Carillo presents on Indio, CA SPI

THE READER'S CORNER – FOCUSED DETERRENCE



By James R. "Chip" Coldren, Jr.

Focused deterrence refers to problem-oriented policing strategies that apply deterrence theory to high-risk people through direct communication of specific messages regarding consequences for illegal behavior and positive incentives for law-abiding behavior.¹ Often referred to as "pulling levers" strategies (Kennedy, 1997), and closely associated with "offender call-ins," law enforcement agencies across the country, including several Smart Policing sites, are implementing focused deterrence strategies as part of their strategic approaches to crime reduction.

Focused deterrence emerged from David Kennedy's work with Boston's Operation Ceasefire in the 1990s, which then spread across the country through such initiatives as Strategic Approaches to Community Safety (Roehl et al., 2008), Project Safe Neighborhoods (McDevitt et al., 2006), and Drug Market Interventions (Hipple & McGarrell, 2012). It has great intuitive appeal, due to several aspects:

- *Collaborative approach* (it requires participation by numerous justice system and community stakeholders);
- *Lever-pulling* (typically, it targets offenders who are already involved in the justice system, so the messages about direct consequences for illegal behavior are credible); and
- *Legitimate options for offenders* (resources are offered to offenders who decide to change their behavior).

Interestingly, while the focused deterrence strategy has been popular for about 20 years, there have been few rigorous tests of its effectiveness. Braga and Wiesburd (2012) recently conducted a Campbell Collaboration systematic review of research literature on focused deterrence and found it to be a promising practice (significant reductions in crime were found in 9 of 10 studies), but none of the study designs used randomized controlled trials (most of them used quasi-experimental designs).

SPI has presented information about focused deterrence in the following webinars (available on our website at <http://www.smartpolicinginitiative.com/tta/webinars>): Targeting Offenders; Offender Notification Meetings; Focused Deterrence and Offender Call-Ins. CNA has also provided technical assistance regarding offender call-ins to several SPI sites, primarily through the solid efforts of Subject Matter Experts Scott Decker and Tom Woodmansee. We encourage our readers to consider implementing focused deterrence strategies, and testing them with the most rigorous research designs possible. Please contact us (SPI@cna.org) if you would like to discuss your interest in this strategy further.

References

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¹ More information is available at <http://www.crimesolutions.gov/PracticeDetails.aspx?ID=11>.