NATIONAL NETWORK FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES
Saving Lives, Saving Communities

GROUP VIOLENCE REDUCTION STRATEGY

Four Case Studies of Swift and Meaningful Law Enforcement Responses

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Center for Crime Prevention and Control
John Jay College of Criminal Justice

JOHN JAY COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
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COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES
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The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (the COPS Office) is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

The community policing philosophy promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime. In its simplest form, community policing is about building relationships and solving problems.

The COPS Office awards grants to state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to hire and train community policing professionals, acquire and deploy cutting-edge crime-fighting technologies, and develop and test innovative policing strategies. The COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders and all levels of law enforcement.

Since 1994, the COPS Office has invested more than $16 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing. More than 500,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office-funded training organizations.

The COPS Office has produced more than 1,000 information products—and distributed more than 2 million publications—including Problem-Oriented Policing Guides, Grant Owner's Manuals, fact sheets, best practices, and curricula. And in 2010, the COPS Office participated in 45 law enforcement and public-safety conferences in 25 states in order to maximize the exposure and distribution of these knowledge products. More than 500 of those products, along with other products covering a wide area of community policing topics—from school and campus safety to gang violence—are currently available, at no cost, through its online Resource Information Center at www.cops.usdoj.gov. More than 2 million copies have been downloaded in FY2010 alone. The easy to navigate and up to date website is also the grant application portal, providing access to online application forms.

NATIONAL NETWORK FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES

The National Network for Safe Communities, launched in 2009 by the Center for Crime Prevention and Control at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City, is a coalition of police chiefs, prosecutors, mayors, community leaders, service providers, street outreach workers, scholars, ex-offenders, and others concerned about the impact of crime and current crime policies on communities.

The National Network brings together jurisdictions from around the country that are actively implementing two effective strategies to reduce violence and eliminate drug markets. The strategy for preventing gang violence, first developed in Boston as "Operation Ceasefire," has been successfully applied in cities as diverse as Chicago, Illinois; Cincinnati, Ohio; and Stockton, California. The strategy for eliminating overt drug markets, first developed in High Point, North Carolina, has been successfully applied in jurisdictions as diverse as Providence, Rhode Island; Hempstead, New York; and Nashville, Tennessee.

The National Network is committed to "saving lives, saving communities" by taking its innovative drug market and group violence strategies to scale and serving the nation's most vulnerable communities. A substantial body of research and field experience shows that these strategies greatly reduce violent and drug crime, reduce incarceration, strengthen communities, and rebuild relationships between law enforcement and communities.

The National Network currently consists of 51 member jurisdiction sites and is designed to support its members by raising the visibility of their work, offering them technical support, recognizing and helping others learn from their work and innovations, supporting peer exchange and education, and conducting research and evaluations.

A smaller set of "Leadership Group" sites is working with the larger National Network to develop, demonstrate, and represent a new national standard in addressing violent and drug crime. The Leadership Group's current members, through commitment of their police chiefs or executive officials, are: Boston, Massachusetts; Chicago, Illinois; Cincinnati, Ohio; High Point, North Carolina; Los Angeles, California; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Providence, Rhode Island; the state of California; and the state of North Carolina.

Please visit www.nnscommunities.org for detailed information on the National Network's mission, its strategies, research findings, media coverage, events, and membership.

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BOSTON, MA, and LOWELL, MA: Dr. Anthony Braga, Rutgers School of Criminal Justice.

CHICAGO, IL: Deputy Chief Brian Murphy, Counterterrorism and Intelligence Unit, Chicago Police Department.

CINCINNATI, OH: Captain Daniel Gerard, Special Services Unit, Cincinnati Police Department.

INTRODUCTION

The National Network for Safe Communities' group violence reduction strategy, sometimes referred to as "Operation Ceasefire" after its original implementation in Boston, holds that violent crime can be dramatically reduced when law enforcement, community members, and social services providers join together to directly engage with street groups and gangs to clearly communicate: (1) a law enforcement message that any future violence will be met with clear, predictable, and certain consequences; (2) a moral message against violence by community representatives; and (3) an offer of help for those who want it.

For the strategy to achieve its desired outcomes stakeholders must be authentic and the messages they deliver must be credible. For law enforcement this means making good on the promise of *swift and meaningful* consequences for the street group as a whole, as soon as a prohibited violent act is committed by even just one street group member after a call-in (or other form of offender notification).

The publication captures examples of successful and creative law enforcement responses to group violence as carried out by police departments at key National Network jurisdictions. It explores:

- How law enforcement partners identified the prohibited violent act that triggered their response
- How the act was linked to a particular street group or gang
- How active group members were identified for special enforcement attention
- How creative levers and sanctions were designed and applied to make the response swift and meaningful
- What outcomes were achieved
- What important lessons were learned

While some of the enforcement actions presented here might have been shaped by specific local conditions at the time of strategy implementation, the ideas, methods, and tactics used can nevertheless be broadly applied in other jurisdictions.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Boston pioneered the group violence reduction strategy as Operation Ceasefire in 1995 as part of the Boston Gun Project—a problem-oriented policing project aimed at preventing and controlling serious youth violence by targeting illicit firearm trafficking and implementing a focused-deterrence strategy. The original Ceasefire Working Group included the Boston Police Department (BPD), federal and state prosecutors, academic research partners, social service providers, street outreach workers attached to the Boston Community Centers program, and, as the operation expanded, members of the Ten Point Coalition, a group of activist black clergy.[1]

The focused-deterrence element of the project entailed direct outreach to and communication with gangs, telling members through a variety of channels that violence would no longer be tolerated and backing that message by pulling every legally available lever against gang members in response to fatal and non-fatal shootings. The approach evolved out of an operation—conducted by BPD's Youth Violence Strike Force (YVSF) on Wendover Street in Boston's Dorchester neighborhood—that was very effective at reducing violence. While the YVSF's efforts may have looked from the outside like a traditional crackdown, the crucial difference was that throughout the operation YVSF officers, probation officers, and street outreach workers told gang members directly *why* they had attracted law enforcement attention and *what it would take to make it stop*. "We're here because of the shooting," officers told gang members. "We're not going to leave until it stops. And until it does nobody is going to so much as jaywalk, nor make any money, nor have any fun."

1. Unless otherwise cited, all information about Boston's first "Operation Ceasefire" intervention is drawn from: Braga, Anthony A. , David M. Kennedy, Anne M. Piehl, Elin J. Waring (2001). *Reducing Gun Violence: The Boston Gun Project's Operation Ceasefire*. National Institute of Justice Research Report, NCJ 188741.

The Working Group partners built on the Wendover Street operation to roll out the first group violence reduction strategy under the name "Operation Ceasefire." The Intervale Posse, a group with a long, violent history that at the time dominated the city's Roxbury neighborhood, was selected as the first target. However, while that particular intervention got underway, in early 1996, a violent internal struggle erupted within another group, the Vamp Hill Kings, culminating in three homicides. Consequently, YVSF's commander Det. Gary French decided to switch the Working Group's attention to this group.

To build credibility, the partners decided to launch the operation without prior warning to the Kings. Heavy law enforcement presence on the gang's turf, Dorchester's Bowdoin Street, reduced the neighborhood's street drug trade by close to 80 percent. Probationers were closely monitored day and night, and, as a new tactic, probation officers also visited the parents of Kings members who were not on probation to urge them to keep their sons off the streets. In addition, the BPD made disorder arrests, and on occasion posted officers full time outside the houses of the main players involved in the gang's internal dispute.

Continued review of intelligence and conditions on the street helped the working partners to find still more creative ways to crack down on the Vamp Hill Kings. A member found to be a resident alien was deported. A case involving a King member—carrying a mask and gloves and drawing a semiautomatic weapon against an YVSF officer before dropping it—was adopted by the U.S. Attorney's Office and prosecuted federally. ATF agents joined BPD officers to patrol the streets. Det. French even brought in the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to remove a number of pit bulls the Kings had trained as fighting dogs.

Crucially, while this wide range of levers was being pulled, YVSF and probation officers constantly communicated to gang members that it was their violence that had drawn the attention. At the same time, street outreach workers urged gang members to stop shooting and to take advantage of the services the city and others could offer.

Throughout the process, the working partners were unsure whether the strategy would work. They stayed in constant contact with each other and reshaped the operation based on developments on the ground. However, by early May 1996, the Kings' territory was quiet. It was then that the Working Group decided to hold Operation Ceasefire's first call-in to reinforce the anti-violence message and demonstrate the measures they had taken so far. On May 15, 1996, representatives of law enforcement, the community, and social services met with members of the Kings at the Dorchester courthouse in what has since become the traditional call-in format of the group violence reduction strategy.[2] While an unprecedented calm fell over Bowdoin Street after the call-in, and held steady throughout the summer, the Working Group continued to meet every 2 weeks to review any violent incidents for gang involvement and to decide what steps to take next. It was during this process that the partners discovered the power of maintaining open lines of communication with gang members. Whenever a gang appeared to be heading for trouble or a violent incident occurred, YVSF and probation officers visited key gang representatives to warn them that the focus was firmly on them and they would face the same treatment as the Kings if violence continued. In every instance, the trouble stopped.

> The ability to pull levers on the right people in these groups makes the biggest impact.
>
> *— Dr. Anthony Braga*

The Intervale Posse, on the other hand, failed to respond to the pressure. The Working Group had rolled out heavy interagency presence on Roxbury's streets, and Det. French had been in direct contact with Intervale's leader to urge calm. Yet the violence continued. At the same time, the federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) had stepped up an ongoing covert operation against Intervale in cooperation with the Working Group partners. As a result, in August 1996, 15 key members of the gang

2. For a detailed description of the first call-in, see: Braga, Anthony A., David M. Kennedy, Anne M. Piehl, Elin J. Waring. (2001). *Reducing Gun Violence: The Boston Gun Project's Operation Ceasefire*. National Institute of Justice Research Report, NCJ 188741.

were arrested on federal drug charges and 8 on state charges. This crackdown was followed up with various direct and indirect forms of communication to ensure that other street groups understood exactly what had happened. These included several notification forums at the courthouse and in the Roxbury middle school, one-on-one conversations, the distribution of fliers, and outreach by street workers. "We warned them and they didn't listen," was the message the partners delivered.

Given the incidence of violence and the number of active gang feuds in Boston, the Working Group decided that the Ceasefire strategy would have to be rolled out gradually citywide. Once a particular gang feud was calmed using the approach, the gangs involved were told that enforcement was stepping back but would return the minute violence resurged. However, since the originally targeted gangs were now more vulnerable to other rival gangs, the Working Group made these their next target. They were shown what had happened in the previous crackdown and warned that they would get the same treatment if they provoked or engaged with their rivals. Eventually, Ceasefire encompassed the entire city of Boston.

A U.S. Department of Justice-sponsored pre/post evaluation of Ceasefire found that youth violence in Boston fell by two-thirds citywide in the 2 years after the strategy was first implemented. Crime data indicate that Boston maintained this low level for 5 years (through 2000). Despite these dramatic outcomes that brought national attention to the initiative, Ceasefire disintegrated when a new police chief took office in 2000 and other working partners were beset by internal problems that thwarted the collaborative effort.[3] However, with the appointment of Police Commissioner Ed Davis in 2006, Ceasefire was once again resurrected to address the increase in gang-related homicides that had occurred over the previous 5 years. The initiative was formally reinstated in 2007 and priority was given to its institutionalization. The BPD reported an almost immediate reduction in serious violence following the return of Ceasefire.

3. Braga, Anthony A., David Hureau, Christopher Winship. (2008). "Losing Faith? Police, Black Churches, and the Resurgence of Youth Violence in Boston." Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law, 6 (1): 141–172.

Boston's most recent enforcement action taken in response to gang-related violence targeted two Dominican gangs, Boylston and Mozart, active in the city's Jamaica Plain district. Since 2007, the groups had been responsible for a total 27 shootings. After the working partners held a group call-in the fall of 2010, a homicide occurred that initially remained unsolved. Soon after, however, Boylston and Mozart members were involved in a triple homicide. The incident occurred on an afternoon in November 2010 and involved a run-in between a Boylston member and two Mozart members at a local pizzeria that led to the fatal stabbing of one and the fatal shooting of the two other group members. An innocent bystander was also shot and wounded.

The BPD used its now systematized gang intelligence-gathering methods to quickly identify the gang affiliations of those involved in the killings. "In Boston, 90 percent of group and gang members are well known to community and police," says Dr. Anthony Braga, Chief Policy Advisor to Commissioner Davis and a member of the original Boston Gun Project Working Group. The BPD's Boston Regional Intelligence Center (BRIC) ran reports on the homicide victims to confirm group membership and Dr. Braga analyzed current shooting data in partnership with BPD detectives to obtain additional verification. As a result of these analyses, the partners learned that the instigator of the triple homicide, the Boylston group member, was an enforcer for his group and had in fact been the perpetrator of the previously unsolved homicide. However, since the triple homicide had involved members of both Boylston and Mozart, the Working Group decided to pull levers against both gangs.

Once gang affiliations of those involved in the homicides were determined, the working partners crafted their group enforcement action. The YVSF partnered with BRIC to create a list of active members in both gangs. A sub-working group, comprised of the BPD, the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office, the U.S. Attorney's Office, Massachusetts probation and parole departments, and Massachusetts state police, was charged with reviewing the criminal records of each identified active group member and deciding what sanctions could be brought against each individual. A separate meeting was held with community representatives to determine how they could support strategy implementation.

As a first step of the Working Group's law enforcement response, members of the BPD's Drug Control Unit carried out traditional undercover buys in Mozart and Boylston territories. Some of those arrested were found to be eligible for federal prosecution—for example, if they had previous felony convictions involving possession of a firearm. Membership in either of the two targeted violent gangs was added as an additional "filter" to ensure that any federal prosecution was narrowly focused on the right people. Three group members were prosecuted federally while the remaining narcotics and firearms cases were prosecuted at state level. Other levers pulled against Mozart and Boylston members included a significant tightening of conditions on probationers, including an increased number of home visits by police and probation officers.

Dr. Braga stresses that the success of enforcement actions taken against identified group members following a trigger event requires continuous development and refinement of the strategy over time. "This work requires willingness to re-think your path when it doesn't work. In this case, the two groups involved in the triple homicide were the two most violent groups in the city the year before. For Boston, pulling levers on those influential to the group is meaningful to their members. The ability to pull levers on the right people in these groups makes the biggest impact."

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Chicago piloted the group violence reduction strategy in late 2009 in its most violent police district, District 11, which encompasses the East and West Garfield Park neighborhoods on the city's West Side. While the city is notorious for having large numbers of structured and purposeful gangs that are responsible for at least half of all its homicides,[4] social network analysis found that the majority of violence in District 11 is driven mostly by local factions over local issues, mirroring what is known about gang activity in many other National Network jurisdictions.

The working group of Chicago's Violence Reduction Strategy (VRS) held its first offender notification, or call-in, on August 17, 2010 at the Garfield Park Conservatory, located at the heart of District 11. At this meeting, parolees or probationers representing active gangs in the district were told that the next gang-related killing to take place in the district following the call-in would draw the full attention of all law enforcement partners—not only to the perpetrator of the killing but to all group members, for any crimes they may be committing.[5] In addition, they were told that the most violent group in the district would also be targeted by law enforcement.

Amid media coverage that largely misinterpreted and misreported much of VRS' intentions and actions, as well as protestations by current and former gang members that Chicago gangs were not organized enough to control their members' conduct, homicides in the district nevertheless dropped almost immediately after the call-in. However, on August 31 a high-school senior was shot and killed on the 4000 block of W. Jackson. A 23-year old man was arrested one day later as the key suspect in the

4. Egley, Arlen, and Aline K. Major. (2004). Highlights of the 2002 National Youth Gang Survey. OJJDP Fact Sheet, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, FS 200401.

5. The VRS' law enforcement partners are: Chicago Police Department; U.S. Attorney; States Attorney; Illinois Department of Corrections & Parole; Department of Probations; ATF; DEA; IRS; Postal Services.

killing. His criminal and arrest records showed admissions of participation in the Black Souls gang. While another murder had occurred in the district prior to the August 31 shooting, this was the first homicide the Chicago Police Department (CPD) was able to positively tie to a gang faction operating in the target area. Thus it became the trigger incident for calculated and focused law enforcement action against the shooter's group.

The Black Souls previously had not been on CPD's radar as a particularly violent or active gang says Deputy Chief Brian Murphy, head of the Chicago Police Department's Counterterrorism and Intelligence Unit. As a result, identifying its members and their legal vulnerabilities initially posed a challenge to the VRS working group. To ensure that the right individuals would be targeted the CPD set up a roundtable of key personnel from District 11, technical staff from its gang enforcement unit, gang investigations unit, and its deployment operations center, as well as its gang analysts. Drawing on existing intelligence, this team collectively identified some of the Black Souls' key members, in particular from the area where the victim originated. Based on the list of names produced, the CPD's research partner, Professor Andrew Papachristos of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, conducted a social network analysis to create a "two-degree network" of associates. Social network analysis is a discipline that grew out of sociology to map and measure relationships and flows between individuals or groups. It is increasingly used by criminologists to visualize and better understand crime patterns. Papachristos' "first degree" analysis entailed extracting all known associates with whom the identified individuals had been arrested or contact-carded with over the past 3 to 5 years. This step was repeated to identify additional associates of those in the first-degree network, creating the "two-degree network."

The analysis found 10 individuals holding a central role within the Black Souls who had not previously been recorded by the CPD as members of the gang. Their names were sent back to the roundtable group, which verified 9 out of the 10 as key players within the gang. "Now that we had a list of confirmed key network people of the Black Souls, we looked at their arrest history and identified the type of arrests they had been involved in and where those arrests typically took place," Murphy explains. This step of the analysis allowed the working group to focus on certain geographical areas where

high numbers of Black Souls members were being arrested for drug-related crimes. Two locations in District 11 stood out in particular and thus were deemed to be under the control of the gang.

Based on this intelligence, the CPD sent out members of its narcotics unit to begin traditional undercover buy operations. "They spent several weeks working those locations and created good cases against many of the individuals," Murphy recalls. "They built delivery cases, which are higher on the statute levels and involve officers who can testify to the fact that hand-to-hand transactions took place." Once the undercover operations were completed, members of the CPD's gang investigation unit went into the same area to identify individuals and houses that could be potential targets for search warrants and to "just make general arrests," Murphy adds.

Beyond these specific actions taken by its narcotics and gang units, the CPD focused largely on deploying all available resources in the target areas during all shifts, utilizing its gang enforcement units, mobile strike force, and local tactical team. "We'd saturate the areas during all watches," Murphy explains. "Officers were given deployment zones in which they would look for illegal activities and at the same time be that much closer to respond to any calls for service," Murphy says. "For example, we would take advantage of Chicago's gang loitering ordinance. We created a hot spot and if we found any known gang members loitering in that particular area we had the authority to tell them to leave. If they failed to follow that directive we can place them under arrest."

Temporary registration plate missions were another part of the CPD's repertoire of targeting Black Soul members and their territory, Murphy said. Officers would stop vehicles with temporary registration plates in the target area to check expiration dates or whether dates had been tampered with. Often, plates were found to not even be registered to the vehicle they were on. "Those kinds of stops would quite frequently turn into an arrest. Either we'd get a stolen vehicle that way, or we'd get a wanted offender, someone with an outstanding warrant, or we'd get a narcotics or gun arrest," Murphy says. Moreover, the temporary registration plate missions allowed officers to impound vehicles, taking away group members' capacity to carry out drive-by shootings.

Finally, the CPD ran background checks on all Black Soul members identified by the roundtable group and through social network analysis for any outstanding warrants. Details of any wanted group members were included in a VRS profile sheet, a 2–3 page report that sets out information such as the reason for the warrant; last known addresses; vehicles registered to the individual; co-arrestees or others stopped along with the individual; and location of the most recent arrests. This profile sheet is shipped out to officers patrolling the district. "When you give that particular mission to a beat cop or TAC team they feel a sense of purpose. They have all the information at their fingertips and don't need to go out and search six different databases. We can provide them with all the details [in a pdf document], and within minutes they can be out looking for the individual," Murphy says, stressing that this tool had proven very effective in focusing the VRS' resources and attention where it was most needed.

> Officers have all the information at their fingertips and don't need to go out and search six different databases.
>
> *— Deputy Chief Brian Murphy*

Murphy says that all levers pulled against Black Soul members involved local or state sanctions to ensure a swift and meaningful response to the trigger offense after a call-in. "There's nothing swift about federal sanctions," he adds. On October 26—just under 2 months after the murder of the high-school senior—the CPD announced it had arrested more than 60 members and associates of the Black Souls. In addition to the murder charge levied against the key suspect in the August 31 killing, Black Soul members were arrested for 52 drug-related crimes and five weapons-related charges. Six outstanding warrants were served, and the CPD recovered 21g of heroin, 218g of cannabis, 54.5g of crack cocaine, seven cars, and six guns. In total, more than 100 charges were issued. The majority of those arrested face felony charges.

Murphy recommends that any working group initially focuses on identifying key group members using social network analysis, drawing on existing intelligence from specialist units and beat officers, then pinpointing the geographical area to be targeted, before rolling out undercover operations in response to the homicide. "Group members may think for a while it is business as usual because they don't see any response, but in reality it is not," he explains. "We are getting good cases using this approach." The saturation of the area by law enforcement that follows the undercover operations soon enough sends the message that this attention on group members and their territory is linked to the original violent crime committed by one of its members, he says.

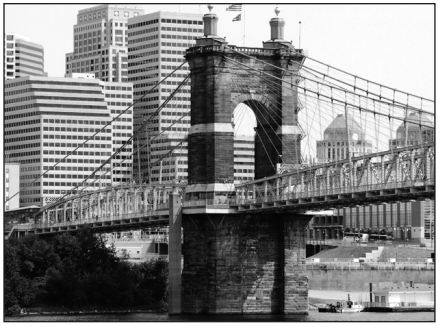
Chicago's working group felt the greatest operational pressures after the call-in in August prompted a press conference by former and current gang members and, in turn, a stream of inaccurate media coverage about the VRS in general and the call-in in particular. "You suddenly had a lot of naysayers and so then pressure comes to 'hurry up and get this thing done,'" Murphy recalls. Urgency should never trump quality of investigations, he stresses. "You can't just make up cases. We had to get good solid cases. So we had to push back on this pressure." Furthermore, the CPD found that targeting a particular area using all available resources at the same time proved problematic. After the Black Souls had been identified as the target group, "we sent narcotics in there with uniform from the district and with gang enforcement—to the point that narcotics asked us to pull back so they could do their work first. So the lesson we learned here was that you need to give narcotics time to build their cases. Going forward, this will be our game plan," Murphy says.

The second promise made by the VRS working partners at the August call-in was to go after the most violent gang in District 11. Analysis of existing intelligence had found this to be a faction of the Traveling Vice Lords. An investigation (Operation Blue Knight) into the illegal drug trade by members of this group was already underway at the time of the call-in and was adopted as law enforcement's fulfillment of that pledge. It netted more than 90 arrests, including 39 felony arrests and 28 arrests on outstanding warrants. Of these, 53 were narcotics-related drug charges and six weapons-related charges.

Commenting on the political pressures that inevitably followed the launch of Chicago's violence reduction strategy, Murphy said the involvement of National Network for Safe Communities co-chair David Kennedy in dealing with this aspect of the work had been helpful. Kennedy wrote an op-ed for the *Chicago Tribune* and attended a CPD press conference to explain that strategy implementation takes time and that it often takes repeated call-ins before group members believe the certainty of "full-house law enforcement" in response to any shootings.[6] "It helped a lot to have an academic come in, someone from outside the police department, to say, 'not only are they on track but they are actually ahead of the game.' Had we said it, it would have looked as though we were defending our own inaction," Murphy suggests. "But once we got to the take-down, it was our turn to say, 'We told you so!'"

6. Kennedy, David M. (2010). "Crushing Gang Violence in Chicago." Chicago Tribune. September 7.

CINCINNATI, OHIO



The Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) is a focused-deterrence or "pulling levers" approach designed to reduce gang and gun violence. Following the principals of the National Network group violence reduction strategy, CIRV (pronounced "serve") contacts gang members through a variety of channels, ranging from the traditional court house call-in and notifications in prisons, jails, or halfway houses, to communicating directly with individuals at their homes or in the streets. The core message delivered in any of these settings is that involvement by any street group member in firearms-related violence will result in intense law enforcement efforts focused on the entire group or gang. At the same time, the partnership offers services and alternatives to group members and articulates community norms against violence.

Launched in May 2008, the Cincinnati Police Department's investigation into the city's Northside Taliband gang was the city's first law enforcement effort undertaken specifically to address ongoing gang violence following an offender notification, or call-in.[7] It was also the first time the department utilized social network analysis (SNA) in a gang investigation. SNA is a discipline that grew out of sociology to map and measure relationships and flows between individuals or groups. It has been applied extensively in the private sector, to understand markets and organizations, and to a lesser degree in the public health field to understand the transmission of disease. Its use in domestic law enforcement and violence reduction remains rare. The SNA methodology applied during the Taliband crackdown has since served as the core template for all of the CPD's subsequent gang investigations.

7. See Appendix I: Engel, R.S., Daniel Gerard (2008). "Executive Summary: Cincinnati's Award-Winning Northside Taliband Investigation."

In April of 2009, a regular analysis of crime hot spots in Cincinnati found that members of the Tot Lot posse were involved in 25 percent of the firearm-involved violence in the West End (District 1 of Cincinnati's five police districts), either as suspects or victims. A working group incorporating representatives from the CPD, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Ohio Adult Parole Authority, and the Hamilton County Probation Department subsequently confirmed Tot Lot as the best organized and most violent gang in the city at that point in time.

Ten members of Tot Lot, including its main enforcer, were mandated to attend a formal court house call-in, but violence in the West End continued, culminating in a shooting of a man in broad daylight and in the presence of children. The combination of events prompted the CPD's crackdown on this particular group, said Captain Daniel Gerard, head of the CPD's Special Services Unit. "They actually shot a man, who at the time had two children with him in his car, outside a fast-food restaurant. It was noon and the place was packed and they walked right up to him and shot him in his car. So while they were already on our radar because of the rash of shootings in the neighborhood, this was the particular event that triggered the enforcement action against Tot Lot," he explained.

The CPD tied the daytime shooting outside the West End restaurant to Tot Lot because it knew that several of the group's leaders had recently been released from prison. "Tot Lot is interesting because, unlike other gangs, its leaders lose their status within the group while imprisoned," Gerard said. Once they were released they were forced to prove to the rest of the group that "they remain the toughest guys on the block." Moreover, the CPD was aware that Tot Lot only had a couple of shooters. The group's main enforcer ended up shooting nine people in the first week of his release, Gerard reported.

From the outset the working group focused on bringing federal charges against Tot Lot's members. Many of the gang's leaders coming back onto the street had served 7 to 8 years in state prisons. "As they were returning to the neighborhood, they started right back where they had left off," said Gerard, suggesting that their time spent in state prison had not resulted in any change in behavior. "It was clear to us that different levers had to be pulled."

Generally, group/gang members' individual legal vulnerabilities are identified in intelligence meetings with officers from each of Cincinnati's five patrol districts, the Central Vice unit, the Vortex unit (responsible for controlling street crime, drug trafficking, and quality of life issues), and probation and parole officers. These meetings take place three times a year. "We break up these groups by patrol district and talk to each separately about all the gang activity that takes place in their particular district," Gerard said. As a result, the CPD can draw on current intelligence each time it gets ready to mount a particular crackdown on a group. "In the case of Tot Lot, we had just finished one of these intelligence-gathering meetings and we knew who all the members were," Gerard said. Findings were further vetted with beat officers. In addition, the CPD arrested a group member early on in the investigation who became a confidential informant. Any remaining gaps in intelligence were filled by this individual, Gerard said. At the same time, the department made it a priority to keep information current. Maintaining a laser-like focus on people who were actively involved in violent crime was crucial, Gerard said. "You don't want to waste your time and resources on people who are marginal to activities."

As the CPD proceeded with its investigation, it undertook a complete review of identified Tot Lot members' criminal records. Based on their criminal records, it found all of them to be individually eligible for federal charges. It was at this point that the department reached out to the ATF as a partner and embedded two of its agents in the investigation, Gerard said. The outcome of the joint operation was the federal indictment of 28 people. Charges ranged from armed career criminal (carrying a sentence of 15 years to life), multiple conspiracy counts, conspiracy to distribute narcotics, conspiracy to distribute weapons, and interstate transportation of firearms. Another 30 group members were arrested on state charges as part of this investigation. All 10 Tot Lot members who had attended the call-in prior to the investigation, but who had failed to heed CIRV's antiviolence message, were indicted. One of the 10 went to trial and received a 25-year sentence in the federal system. The other nine pled out.

Gerard stressed that the federal levers had to be pulled for this investigation because it had been clear that for most Tot Lot members state prosecutions and sentences had been a way of life. "People had told us repeatedly they can do 3 years in state prison standing on their head," Gerard recalled. Yet, while the possibility of federal charges had been clearly spelled out during the courthouse call-in, many group members still seemed to be taken by surprise when the working group followed through on their threat, Gerard said.

To ensure that CIRV's anti-violence warning would be heard more clearly by other gangs, the federal indictments of Tot Lot members was a key feature of Cincinnati's next courthouse call-in, Gerard said. "We showed photos of all the [Tot Lot] guys, including the length of their sentences and the locations of the federal prisons where they now were being held—Des Moines, Iowa; Eugene, Oregon; Brownsville, Texas, and so on—including the distances these prisons were from Cincinnati."

Gerard stressed that the Tot Lot investigation had been the result of a true partnership from the outset. Rather than the CPD drawing on outside resources as it moved through an investigation (as had largely been the case during the Taliband investigation) it took the deliberate decision to bring all the partners to the table from the beginning *and* for each and every meeting of the working group. "We had weekly strategy meetings every Tuesday afternoon, and we made sure all our partners were there. We had the feds, we had our local prosecutor, we had federal prosecutors, we had probation and parole. And we all sat down and worked through any issues that we had," Gerard said. "Everybody brought something to the table and we made sure that when we left that room we had a plan of attack. We were all on the same page and clear about what our roles were and what we had to report back on in the next meeting." Given that the Tot Lot investigation went on for over a year, the meetings were crucial for maintaining direct communication among the working partners.

Since the crackdown on Tot Lot, violent crime in Cincinnati's West End has plummeted. "Homicides and shootings dropped off 39 percent [from 2009 to 2010] after this enforcement," Gerard said. Moreover, the CPD was able to close four unsolved homicides during the course of this investigation.

A second example of a law enforcement action taken in response to continuing violence after a call-in involved the East Clifton crew operating in the city's Over-The-Rhine district. The incident that triggered this particular crackdown involved an execution-style shooting of a man at a busy intersection, once again in broad daylight. In this case, while the CPD had some intelligence from its regular working group meetings, much of it was more than 60 days old by the time the incident occurred. As a result, rather than immediately launch a typical undercover operation, police first put the area under surveillance to narrow its focus on the group's most active participants. This was followed by meetings of the local, state, and federal partners to identify the legal vulnerabilities of the key players, determine who was close to them, and formulate points of attack.

> You don't want to waste your time and resources on people who are marginal to activities.
>
> — *Captain Daniel Gerard*

Probation and parole partners were "exceedingly helpful in this process," Gerard recalled. They provided information on whom of the key impact players stood the most to lose under their current terms of supervision or who was particularly reluctant to go to prison. "They'd say, 'He doesn't like jail. If you get a case against him and lay it out for him, he's going to work with you.'" Group members identified by probation and parole thus became a great source of intelligence during the investigation, Gerard said. While the CPD had "a pretty good idea" about who had been involved in the homicide that triggered the East Clifton investigation, no witnesses had come forward. The working partners' ability to identify the weak links within the group provided the opportunity to fill the gaps in intelligence.

The working group also once again made extensive use of social network analysis in this investigation. However, this time the partners found they were dealing not with a hierarchical gang but rather a lose affiliation of individuals. "We found they didn't have a whole lot of ties except for hanging out on the same street. So we learned that we could use social network analysis to bring a gang charge[8] or demonstrate that no criminal

8. An Ohio statute that can add 2 to 8 years to the sentence given for the actual crime.

enterprise was at play," Gerard said. "This was a new experience for us." Social network analysis also helped the working partners to identify a number of people operating outside of the neighborhood under surveillance but who nevertheless were affiliated with active East Clifton players.

While researchers at the University of Cincinnati (UC) had carried out the social network analysis during the Taliband investigation, the CPD now uses in-house staff, trained by its UC partners, to do this work. Furthermore, the staff runs the data at the start, middle, and end of any investigation right up until an indictment is brought. In the Taliband investigation, the analysis came into play fairly late in the process, Gerard said. The current approach further ensures a laser-like focus on identifying a group's most active and central players, he explained.

As was the case in the CPD's previous two gang investigations, the working group once again worked together to determine individuals' legal vulnerabilities. The charges brought against the identified key players ranged from murder and armed robbery to gun trafficking. Six group members were indicted federally and 28 were arrested and prosecuted on a variety of state charges, Gerard said. The East Clifton investigation lasted 6 months in total. Its outcomes were again used in subsequent call-ins to warn other gang members in the city of the certain consequences that any further involvement in violent crime would bring.

While the CPD today routinely involves all of its units in these types of enforcement actions, both the Tot Lot and East Clifton investigations led to an innovation within the department, Gerard reported. Before proceeding with the arrests of the identified individuals, the working partners sat down with CPD's homicide investigators and commanders and showed them their intended arrest targets to see if any of them could be potential witnesses or suspects in unsolved homicides. When these suspects were processed following their arrests, a homicide investigator would sit down and talk with them. At that point, suspects are in shock, especially those facing federal charges, and hence are more open to cooperating with police. "They will say, 'Hey, what can I do about this?' And we will say, 'You can start by talking to this person here,'" Gerard said. Adding this step to its overall approach helped the CPD clear up a total of seven unsolved homicides over the course of the Tot Lot and East Clifton investigations.

With the support of the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services, the CPD and its CIRV partners have been training other jurisdictions across the state in their focused-deterrence work. Most of these sites are still in the early stages of strategy implementation and have not yet had the opportunity to develop innovations that move beyond the traditional first steps.

LOWELL, MASSACHUSETTS

Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) is a U.S. Department of Justice-sponsored initiative aimed at reducing gun violence. It integrates five essential elements from successful gun crime reduction programs, including the group violence reduction strategy as implemented in Boston as "Operation Ceasefire": partnerships, strategic planning, training, outreach, and accountability.[9] Lowell, Massachusetts, a city with a population of around 105,000, was selected by the U.S. Attorney's Office in Massachusetts (a partner in Boston's Ceasefire), as one of 11 PSN sites in the state because it ranked above the national average in violent crime among cities its size.[10] Lowell's PSN initiative was aimed both at serious gun offenders and youth gang members, and included a highly innovative law enforcement response to street violence perpetrated by Asian gangs that demonstrates the importance of creative problem analysis for producing successful results in any focused-deterrence approach.

In early 2002, four sets of Asian gangs—two affiliated with the Bloods and two with the Crips—drew the PSN task force's attention with a series of shootings, reports Dr. Anthony Braga, one of the project's research partners at the time. The shootings presented the task force (consisting of the Lowell police department, academic researchers, Middlesex County prosecutors, federal prosecutors, ATF agents, probation and parole officers, Department of Youth Services' caseworkers, and representatives of selected neighborhood-based groups) with a distinct set of challenges. Compared with typical black, Hispanic, or white street gangs, Asian gangs are usually more organized, more secretive, and have a lower street presence, making them less vulnerable to a

9. McDevitt, Jack, Anthony A. Braga, Shea Cronin. (February 2007). Project Safe Neighborhoods: Strategic Interventions: Lowell, District of Massachusetts: Case Study 6. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

10. Ibid.

> This enforcement action was a lesson in adapting the problem-solving process.
>
> — *Dr. Anthony Braga*

traditional pulling-lever strategy.[11] Moreover, according to Lowell police officers and detectives, most Asian gang conflicts [in the city] were personal and vendetta-like and, although some disputes involved drug business and money issues, the bulk of gang violence involved a cycle of retaliation between groups with a history of antagonism.[12] Investigations into the Asian Bloods and Crips factions also revealed substantial cultural differences among them, which, in turn, affected their respective affiliated criminal enterprises.[13] Finally, while police were aware of the groups and factions, there was little intelligence about the particular individuals populating them.[14]

Faced with this combination of challenges, the working partners initiated a detailed problem analysis, drawing on both official data and qualitative data provided by practitioners. The working partners learned that at the top of the Asian gangs' hierarchy were men in their 30s and 40s who had graduated from street crime to organized crime. These older members were engaged in illegal gambling enterprises, such as hosting neighborhood volleyball games for betting purposes, operating video stores and coffee houses for bookmaking operations, or converting auto-shops into casinos, Dr. Braga reports. The older generation had a following of younger members and it was these members that were found to be mostly involved in street violence and shootings, among other criminal activities. "We found that the older gang generation was not involved in violent crimes. Rather, it was the younger generation involved in retaliatory street violence and shootings. But the younger members respected older gang members and aimed to follow in their career paths."

11. Braga, Anthony A., Jack McDevitt, Glenn L. Pierce. (2006). "Understanding and Preventing Gang Violence: Problem Analysis and Response Development in Lowell, Massachusetts." Police Quarterly 9: 20.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., 22.

14. Ibid., 22.

Given this dynamic, and the way criminal activity was divided between the gangs' generations, the working partners decided to target the older gang members' illegal enterprises as a way of compelling the men to instruct the younger generation to end their street violence. Knowing that the younger men revered their older gang members and would likely listen to them, the working partners launched law enforcement actions against the older gang members of the Asian Crips and Bloods in October 2009. When a shooting took place that could be tied to one or both gangs, police would obtain a warrant for businesses owned by older members of the affiliated gang(s) and search the premises for evidence of gambling activities. These searches hindered the gangs' illegal activities and greatly impacted their income as well as their other criminal activities. Most importantly, while executing these search warrants, police officers notified the older gang members of the consequence further violence by younger members of their gang would bring. "When the gang kids associated with you act violently, we will shut down your gambling business. When violence erupts, no one makes money," they were told.[15]

"Between October 2002 and June 2003, the Lowell police department conducted approximately 30 search warrants on illegal gambling business owned by older Asian group members that resulted in more than 100 gambling-related arrests," Dr. Braga says. If a search warrant could not be obtained for a particular location, a marked police vehicle would park outside of the property as an alternative method of interrupting illegal gambling activities.

15. Ibid., 22.

Recognizing the consequences of focused police attention on their enterprises, the older gang members heeded the law enforcement message and began to exert influence over the younger men to put down their guns. Between October 2002 and June 2003, Lowell saw gun assault incidents drop 24 percent from the year-ago period. Homicides fell 50 percent, from four to two, over the same period. Even more telling, no acts of Asian gang-on-gang gun violence were reported during that time.[16]

"This enforcement action was a lesson in adapting the problem-solving process," Dr. Braga says, stressing that to develop innovative and impactful enforcement actions, working partners "must first understand the problem and the resources available in order to pull the right levers for their groups to achieve considerable and long lasting results."

16. Ibid., 22.

APPENDIX

Cincinnati's Award-Winning "Northside Taliband" Investigation

Robin S. Engel and Daniel Gerard

The Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) is a focused-deterrence or "pulling levers" approach designed to reduce gun violence. CIRV notifies gang members that their continued involvement in violence will result in "group consequences," by which gangs are systematically targeted for law enforcement efforts. In keeping with the larger principles of CIRV, an investigation was launched by the Cincinnati Police Department (CPD) into the criminal activities perpetrated by a gang known as the "Northside Taliband." Initiated in May 2008, a 6-month investigation resulted in the identification of over 100 Taliband gang members, a 95-count indictment for criminal activity, 71 arrests of gang members and their associates, 15 gang members charged with "Participating in a Criminal Gang" (a second degree felony), and several gang members facing federal charges that carry life imprisonment terms. Investigators executed more than 50 undercover narcotics buys of crack cocaine, powder cocaine, heroin, ecstasy, and marijuana, and purchased or recovered 22 firearms (including fully automatic assault weapons).

The following CPD units were involved in the Taliband investigation: District 5 Neighborhood Liaison Unit, District 5 Violent Crimes Squad, District 5 Investigative Unit, District 1 Violent Crimes Squad, District 2 Violent Crime Squad, Vortex Unit, Intelligence Section, Tactical Planning Section, SWAT, and Homicide Unit. In addition, the CPD partnered with several external agencies/units including: University of Cincinnati, U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Attorney's Office Southern District of Ohio, State of Ohio Adult Parole Authority, Ohio Investigative Unit, Hamilton County Probation Department, Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office, and Hamilton County Sheriff's Office.

The Taliband investigation merged traditional police practices with innovative data-driven approaches. Given the volume of evidence associated with a criminal investigation of this magnitude, the CPD engaged academic partners to assist in developing a new database tailored specifically for the collection and management of information associated with the Taliband gang. For the first time, CPD officers systematically documented gang activity across social Internet sites, including more than 1,800 photographs, to document criminal network connections. Using social network analysis software typically utilized in business research, but rarely applied to criminal justice efforts, the "key players" from the Taliband were systematically identified and empirically validated. Likewise, vehicles and travel patterns were tracked using data gathered from Automatic License Plate Readers (ALPR). This information was graphically displayed using GIS mapping software to demonstrate the locations and travel patterns of gang members' homes and criminal activities. These statistical analyses allowed CPD investigators to determine the "impact" players within the criminal network and provided an independent official source documenting the network for prosecution.

The Taliband investigation led to a 40 percent reduction in violent crime in the Northside neighborhood. Using this group focused, data-driven approach, violent crime in Cincinnati is decreasing despite an 800-bed jail closure in January 2009 that effectively cut available jail space in the community by one-third. The Taliband investigation and subsequent arrests have empowered and improved police-community relations. This methodology now serves as a template for future gang prosecutions throughout Hamilton County and the State of Ohio.

Case Overview

The CPD is the lead law enforcement agency engaged with the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV). CIRV (pronounced "serve") is a focused-deterrence violence reduction effort that has established partnerships with over 25 groups/agencies, including multiple law enforcement agencies (local, state, and federal), social service providers, university researchers, medical professionals, business leaders, and community members. A key component of the CIRV approach is to focus law enforcement efforts on criminal gangs that continue to engage in violence. In face-to-face offender notification meetings, members of violent gangs/groups are warned there would be *group* consequences for gangs that continued to engage in gun violence.

The "Taliband" criminal gang was initially identified as one of 62 criminal groups/gangs within Cincinnati as part of the larger CIRV law enforcement process. This particular criminal group, based in the "Northside" community, invoked intensive law enforcement scrutiny when one of its members was murdered on December 28, 2007 by two members of a rival gang, the Hawaiian Terrace Posse (HTP). The HTP was a small gang and most of its associated members were already in prison. Therefore, CPD attention focused on the Northside Taliband. The initial investigation into this gang began in May 2008 and lasted over 6 months. During the course of the initial investigation, it was determined that the Taliband gang was one of the largest, most violent, and most organized of all the criminal networks within Cincinnati. Members of the Northside Taliband had a history of criminal behavior that included burglary, robbery, firearm assaults, firearm trafficking, and drug trafficking. As promised to gang members during CIRV's offender notification meetings, comprehensive multi-jurisdictional law enforcement efforts were focused on the Taliband criminal gang because their members continued to engage in gun violence. Over 100 Taliband gang members were specifically identified over the course of the investigation.

CPD immediately identified the need to overcome obstacles associated with data management capacity, so that law enforcement could efficiently manage the volume of evidence associated with a criminal investigation of this magnitude. Like many police agencies, the CPD has multiple databases that cannot be easily merged or accessed. Therefore, it engaged academic partners from the University of Cincinnati (UC) to develop a new gang database tailored specifically for the collection and management of information associated with the Taliband gang. Within this newly created database—a single repository for all gang-related intelligence—CPD officials documented every known official contact with Taliband gang members for the prior 5-year time period. These contacts included field interrogation reports, arrests, incident reports in which Taliband members were listed as victims or suspects, citations, bond histories, court histories from previous cases, surveillance photographs, and tattoo photographs. In addition, law enforcement monitored more than 25 social Internet websites (e.g., Myspace.com, Urbanchat.com, etc.) daily for Taliband activity. CPD then downloaded all pictures and associated materials indicating criminal gang activity found on these websites and archived them within the database. Likewise, the police tracked vehicles and travel patterns through data gathered from Automatic License Plate Readers (ALPR). This information was graphically displayed using GIS mapping software to demonstrate the locations and travel patterns of gang members' homes and criminal activities.

CPD's academic partners also assisted the investigation with the use of "social network analysis." Network analysis consists of the visual display and empirical assessment of social relations among actors in a network. These analyses were conducted through the use of Analytic Technologies networking software, including a combination of Ucinet, Netdraw, and Key Player software. The objective for conducting network analysis was to document and measure the centrality of gang members, so that those specific offenders could be removed and the network crippled. The software's ability to determine "centrality" of key players includes the capability of providing measures of the importance, influence, and prominence of a particular actor within the network. The software also empirically establishes links between individual gang members based on their official known contacts within the criminal justice system, as well as their own social networking on Internet sites. This analysis allowed CPD investigators to determine who the key "impact" players were within the criminal network. In addition, it provided an independent official source documenting the criminal network for use during prosecution.

On November 17, 2008, police conducted the first of two round-ups of Taliband gang members, beginning with the service of four simultaneous search warrants by the CPD SWAT team. Immediately following the initial warrant service, 85 officers and agents from the CPD, State of Ohio Adult Parole Authority, Hamilton County Probation Department, and U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives responded to the Northside neighborhood. These officers worked in eight joint arrest teams to serve the initial 95-count indictment. As the search warrants were served and arrest teams fanned out through the neighborhood, many Northside residents came out of their homes and businesses to cheer the police effort. The community phoned in such a large number of tips regarding the current locations of other gang members that an additional Crimestoppers phone line had to be added to handle the volume of calls. After more than 40 wanted gang members were taken into custody, the extensive media coverage of this first round-up reiterated that additional law enforcement efforts against Taliband members would follow with additional arrests. Following this success, gang members who were not initially indicted, their lawyers, and in some cases their parents, began to appear at or call the neighborhood police district to turn themselves in prior to the second round-up. They appeared in such large numbers that appointments had to be scheduled with district investigators. Based on additional information provided by these sources, more than 30 additional Taliband gang members were arrested.

The meticulous documentation of Taliband members' criminal activity allowed for prosecution under an Ohio statue that makes participation in a criminal gang a prosecutable offense. Specifically, R.C. 2923.42 prohibits participating in a criminal gang, stipulating that, "No person who actively participates in a criminal gang, with knowledge that the criminal gang engages in a pattern of criminal gang activity, shall purposely commit or engage in any act that constitutes criminal conduct." The offense is classified as a felony in the 2nd degree and carries a penalty range of 2 to 8 years' incarceration. Hamilton County Prosecutors were initially reluctant to charge key Taliband members under the gang statute because there was no prior history of its use within the county. However, members of the CPD team were able to persuade prosecutors of the merits of the case, based in part on the application of social science principles and statistical analyses identifying and documenting the relationships across gang members. The Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office eventually assigned two full-time adult and two full-time juvenile prosecutors to the enforcement team.

In summary, due to this investigation, CPD arrested 71 gang members and their associates. A 95-count indictment on a gang specification was lodged against the 13 adults considered the most active within the gang. Two additional key juvenile members were also charged with a gang specification. Some five of these 15 key players have pled guilty and have been sentenced to incarceration terms ranging from 2 to 4 years, combined with 2 to 3 years of post-release control for the gang specification alone. The remaining gang members are awaiting trial. Several are also facing federal charges for drug and firearm offenses, which carry potential life prison terms. In addition, two Northside businesses that served as Taliband hangout locations—Reflections Jazz Lounge and Orlando's Bar—had charges filed against their liquor licenses by the Ohio Investigative Unit and are currently closed to the public.

The elimination of the Taliband Gang from the Northside community resulted in a year-on-year 40 percent reduction in both violent crime and overall crime in this neighborhood. Community leaders and both local and state political officials commended CPD members for their diligence and innovations in this gang investigation. Moreover, CPD's Community Relations Section is working directly with Northside residents to engage in both short-term and long-term problem solving efforts to sustain these initial crime reductions over time. As a result, empowered residents also took proactive steps to secure stability in their newly reclaimed neighborhood, including the launch of the "Citizens Against Drugs" initiative. On any street that included a crack house, residents erected "Citizens Against Drugs" signs in every front yard, leaving the crack house as the only place without a sign. This approach was employed three times over an 18-month period, and each time the crack house's residents moved within two weeks of the signs going up.

Following the larger principles of the CIRV effort, the purpose of the gang round-up day was to send a very clear, deliberate message to all individuals who continued to associate with violent gangs. In addition to the media blitz that followed, nearly 100 members of *other* known criminal gangs that were under court supervision were gathered at offender notification meetings just three weeks after the first round-up day. CPD Chief Thomas H. Streicher, Jr., addressed these gang members directly and detailed exactly what steps the CPD-led law enforcement team had taken to eliminate the Taliband Gang. This investigation and the resulting arrests sent an unequivocal

deterrence message to the larger gang population in Cincinnati. In the 3 months following the initial round-up, the number of gang member involved (GMI) homicides reached its lowest level since the launch of CIRV, falling to three from eleven in the 3 months prior to the crackdown. There were no GMI homicides in the first month after the enforcement action.

Innovations

Investigators faced several initial challenges and limitations. These challenges included: (1) the initial use of data sources that were not systematically compiled and merged into a useable format; (2) the lack of a central database to collect and classify evidence; (3) initial reluctance from the Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office to prosecute a criminal gang case; and (4) limited involvement of officers from other local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies on investigative and arrest teams. To overcome these challenges, the CPD successfully merged exemplary police practices with social scientific data-driven approaches. The innovative investigative model that resulted led to a highly integrated local, state, and federal gang law enforcement partnership.

As a first step of the new investigative model, a new comprehensive and user-friendly database was developed to specifically document the criminal activity and social relations of Taliband gang members. This database was tailored by academic partners specifically for use with criminal gangs based on input from CPD officers, along with contributions from state and federal prosecutors. Once the database was created and populated with information covering the past 5 years, advanced statistical analyses were performed to identify key impact players for additional charges, and map geographic locations for criminal activity and likely travel patterns.

The visualizations created using network analysis software convinced initially reluctant prosecutors that the strength of this gang case could be easily demonstrated during prosecution. Further, this data-driven approach persuaded the heads of three additional law enforcement entities (Ohio Adult Parole Authority, Hamilton County Probation Department, and ATF) to enter into a full-time investigative partnership with the CPD. This is the first time that these law enforcement agencies worked collaboratively in a large-scale gang investigation.

Significance

The overwhelming success of the Taliband investigation has led to a significant change in the investigative culture at the CPD. The traditional CPD investigative approach of focusing on individual perpetrators has been modified to a new focus on "group enforcement." The successful investigation, apprehension, and prosecution of violent gang members required a more sophisticated, data-driven approach than had been typically utilized. The CPD now routinely monitors gang memberships, activities, geographic locations, alliances, feuds, criminal activities, social relationships, impact players, etc. This information is systematically gathered and documented every 4 months by CPD investigators and their academic partners. The information is collected from knowledgeable CPD, probation, and parole officers, and then patterns are identified and documented, and graphic displays are distributed.

The methods and tactics used during the Taliband investigation are currently being replicated in four large-scale, CPD-led gang investigations. These additional investigations have included the use of tailored databases, social network analysis, spatial analysis, and continuous documentation of Internet websites frequented by gang members. Representatives from probation, parole, and ATF are now integrated into the new investigatory models. Both county and federal prosecutors attend monthly team meetings to discuss strategies for success in gang prosecution cases. This feedback has intimately informed and focused CPD's efforts throughout the investigations.

CPD's officers' successful use of innovative tactics and development of law enforcement partnerships have been presented at every level within the CPD. In-service training now focuses on data-driven gang investigative approaches, where the database, analyses, and tactics are clearly demonstrated to officers. Violent Crime Squads from all five CPD patrol districts have embraced this model and are implementing it on a smaller scale within the districts.

A full-time CPD unit has been formed to monitor Internet websites frequented by gang members. This daily intelligence is entered into databases for use by investigators and patrol officers interacting with gang members. Information, photographs, and videos gathered from these websites are shared within CPD and with other enforcement agencies regionally.

The Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) has identified the CPD/UC research team as modeling best practices in gang enforcement and has provided funding for CPD officers to train other agencies and lead gang information gathering sessions in six Ohio cities (Cleveland, Dayton, Youngstown, Toledo, Canton, and Mansfield). The CPD has also hosted police officials from around the world, including officials from England, Scotland, and Turkey, to learn about its gang enforcement efforts and investigative techniques.

Most importantly, the community has gained additional confidence and legitimacy in the CPD, and police–community partnerships are strengthening. After the gang was eliminated, violent crime in Northside decreased approximately 40 percent compared to the same time frame 1 year prior. Community residents have regained their neighborhood, and are actively working with CPD's problem solving unit to implement long-term strategies designed to sustain crime reductions over time. Other residents are actively seeking this same type of investigatory work in their neighborhoods.

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The National Network for Safe Communities' group violence reduction strategy holds that violent crime can be dramatically reduced when law enforcement, community members, and social services providers join together to directly engage with violent street groups and gangs to clearly communicate: (1) a law enforcement message that any future violence will be met with clear, predictable, and certain consequences; (2) a moral message against violence by community representatives; and (3) a genuine offer of help for those who want it.

For the strategy to achieve its desired outcomes, stakeholders must be authentic and their messages credible. For law enforcement this means making good on the promise of swift and meaningful consequences for a group or gang as a whole when a prohibited violent act (usually shooting or killing) is committed by one of its members.

Group Violence Reduction Strategy: Four Case Studies of Swift and Meaningful Law Enforcement Responses captures examples of successful and creative law enforcement responses to group violence as carried out by police departments and their partner agencies in key National Network jurisdictions.

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