

# CNA Executive Session on Policing: Innovative Approaches to Addressing Violent Crime

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## Introduction

On October 12, 2017, CNA convened *Innovative Approaches to Addressing Violent Crime*, its ninth Executive Session on Policing. A renewed focus on violent crime has brought to light the many innovative approaches that agencies across the nation use to address it. In response to the recent uptick in violent crime rates in some cities, and the use of these innovative approaches, CNA organized a session to review the dynamic landscape of violent crime and its links to other crime types and social problems. The Executive Session also provided examples of innovative approaches and discussed promising practices for addressing violent crime.

This rise in violent crime is not uniform across the nation. Urban communities such as Baltimore, Chicago, and Las Vegas have experienced increases in homicides and aggravated assaults in the past two years, while other cities and more rural communities have not experienced these increases. Public safety professionals are partnering with health professionals and academics in collaborative efforts to tackle these violent crime issues through evidence-based programs. An evidence-based program consists of a research-based model with a rigorous research design that is grounded in empirical knowledge and impacts police operations and practices.

At the Executive Session, CNA representatives and several prominent speakers discussed innovative approaches in response to rising violent crime rates, as well as the changing landscape of violent crime, including drivers of crime and new causes for the increase in violent crime. The session design included two panels and two keynote speakers opening and closing the event. Individuals with perspectives from research, public service, practitioners, and other law enforcement stakeholders participated in the session.

This report provides an overview of the discussions that took place during the session, organized by keynote speakers and panels. For more information on CNA's Executive Sessions on Policing, please contact us at [smartjustice@cna.org](mailto:smartjustice@cna.org).

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## Perspectives from Keynote Speaker Dr. David Muhlhausen, National Institute of Justice



CNA was honored to have **Dr. David Muhlhausen**, newly appointed Director of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), as the opening keynote speaker for its ninth Executive Session on Policing. Dr. Muhlhausen holds a doctorate in public policy and a bachelor's degree in political science and justice studies. Dr. Muhlhausen has written many articles and served as a Senior Justice Fellow at the Heritage Foundation. He has testified frequently before Congress on the efficiency and effectiveness of various federal programs. The House and Senate Committees on the Judiciary have called upon him numerous times to discuss ways to improve policing, and they have also sought his expertise on various criminal justice programs. In addition, Dr. Muhlhausen has taught graduate courses at George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government.

Dr. Muhlhausen began his presentation by highlighting NIJ's mission to use science to inform and advance criminal justice policies and practices. He stressed that studying and analyzing violent crime and how it can be addressed is an important part of this mission. He noted that addressing violent crime is a timely topic, as its reduction is a priority of U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions. Addressing the uptick in crime will be a challenge requiring collaboration across many different institutions.

During his presentation, Dr. Muhlhausen stated the importance of using evidence-based programs to combat violent crime. As an example, he cited CNA's recently completed randomized control study related to body-worn cameras in the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. NIJ wants to know which programs do and do not work, as well as which programs show promise. He added that there is no merit in continuing well-intentioned programs that fail to reduce crime, and that rigorously evaluating programs is one of the NIJ's most important tasks. Dr. Muhlhausen

strongly supports randomized control trials for programs, but he also cautions policymakers on the single instance fallacy, which means that a program that works in one instance may not necessarily work in another.

High profile incidents, such as the riots in Ferguson, Missouri, and the recent mass shooting in Las Vegas, Nevada at the Route 91 Harvest Music Festival, illustrate the dangers and challenges of policing in the United States. These challenges, according to Dr. Muhlhausen, require an evidence-based research approach. This approach is described in the NIJ's Policing Strategies Research Plan, which will be published soon. Dr. Muhlhausen pointed to another resource for law enforcement practitioners, [crimesolutions.gov](http://crimesolutions.gov). This website provides a systemic, independent review process of the effectiveness of justice programs and is a useful tool for police departments.

Dr. Muhlhausen concluded his presentation by stating that NIJ strives to meet the most pressing needs and questions plaguing law enforcement officials. He added that confronting these challenges is a core part of NIJ's mission, which emphasizes using rigorous evaluation to determine what does and does not work in the fight against violent crime.

## Panel 1: Current Innovative Approaches

The first panel focused on innovative approaches agencies across the nation are currently using to address violent crime. The panelists discussed their collaboration with federal and local law enforcement agencies, their communities, and researchers through their work with CNA and the National Public Safety Partnership (PSP). They covered the topics of focused deterrence and crime analysis, with a special emphasis on social network analysis. Panelists included Captain Michael Thatcher, Compton Police Department; Trisha Stein, Director of Administrative Operations, Detroit Police Department; and Chief Joe McHale, Marion, Iowa, Police Department.



### Summary of Discussions

#### Captain Michael Thatcher



**Michael Thatcher** serves as a Captain in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and as the commander of the Compton Police Department. Captain Thatcher began his career as a law enforcement officer in 1986. He has held positions in the Narcotics Bureau, Commercial Crimes Bureau, and Homicide Bureau of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. He also served as a special weapons team leader and as an executive aide to the Custody Division Headquarters. Captain Thatcher holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice management and graduated from the Cornell University Johnson Graduate School of Management Leadership Institute and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Academy. His presentation focused on

the partnerships that Compton has cultivated by working with PSP, increasing community trust, and building crime analysis and intelligence capacity.

*Summary of discussion:*

- Captain Thatcher stated that Compton Station relies on its collaboration with local law enforcement agencies, its federal law enforcement partners—the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS), the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), the U.S. Attorney’s Office, and schools to focus on violence intervention, prevention, and enforcement. Compton has also cultivated relationships in the research realm, which provides the department with invaluable information regarding its gang problems. For example, Arizona State University conducted a gang audit of Compton that provided the department with information about the city’s socioeconomic challenges. The audit broadened the department’s understanding of gang and violence problems and led to enhanced violence-reduction efforts.
- Compton uses LASD.org, the website of the Sheriff’s Department, as a tool to increase transparency and community trust, and to engage in data sharing with other law enforcement agencies and the community. The website also provides crime statistics to the community. The Compton Police Department is building community relationships in other ways. For example, one of the Compton deputies is also a pastor who runs a criminal record expungement clinic and helps coordinate Project Restoration, a re-entry program for offenders.
- Formerly, intelligence on crime in Compton was good but not actionable. Compton thus had to change how intelligence is perceived. The approach to such change begins with leadership and flows down through the ranks, garnering a level of understanding and responsibility among the officers. It is important that everyone in the Department understands the benefits of research, highlights research internally and within the community, and is proactive about communication. Compton has partnered with several federal partners regarding intelligence related to gang and gun violence.
- Compton has its own analysts and crime analysis dashboard, but it also makes use of analysts on the federal side. It is important that analysts and law enforcement officials collaborate and communicate. Feedback is an important aspect of that relationship. Analysts should be informed of successes in the field as a result of their intelligence, but they should also join deputies in the field to see what resources and tactics they can offer to help their counterparts.

## Trisha Stein



**Trisha Stein** is the Director of Administrative Operations for the Detroit Police Department. She provides strategic planning and management of critical projects and priorities. Some of her top initiatives include Ceasefire Detroit and Project Green Light Detroit. Ms. Stein is one of Michigan's most experienced public policy professionals with more than 25 years' experience. Ms. Stein discussed Detroit's focused deterrence approach, community policing, and departmental restructuring.

### *Summary of discussion:*

- Detroit has seen a reduction in crime over the past few years; Ms. Stein believes the reduction is in part attributable to the city's focused deterrence approach. Detroit focuses on group and gang violence. The city has implemented Ceasefire Detroit to help combat violent crime as well as to focus on community policing, prevention, intervention, and re-entry of offenders.
- To increase community policing and collaboration, Detroit's Mayor and Police Chief shared with the community the details of Detroit's violent crime reduction plan. They also implemented call-ins, through which the Detroit Police Department offered help from full-time law enforcement officers to offenders as a method of prevention and intervention. These call-ins include community members, the faith community, and service providers. Detroit has also implemented emergency one-on-one notifications, which the community has embraced. One-on-one notifications involve community members and Detroit Police Department officers providing custom notifications to offenders at their place of residence. The Department uses one-on-one notifications when crime is severe and frequent. In these instances, it may not be practical to wait for a community call-in session.
- Ms. Stein stated that Detroit is adding capacity to Operation Green Light, a public-private partnership that promotes neighborhood safety and development by placing cameras at retail locations, such as gas stations and convenience stores. There have been increased calls for service from Operation Green Light participants. All Operation Green Light service calls are considered Priority One. Detroit has also partnered with ComCast to increase capacity of Operation Green Light.
- The Detroit Police Department also used a technology known as Superior to share and update data among its various partners. Superior and SmartSheet allow partners to share cases, criminal histories, and case details, allowing them to stay connected in real time, access information, and add new details.

- When Chief Craig arrived at the Detroit Police Department, there were no commanders at the precincts. To energize commanders, he promoted them and empowered them to act as “chiefs” of their precincts. Chief Craig also brought in civilian staff. There is now regular communication with the department, mayor, and other community partners.

## Chief Joe McHale



**Chief Joe McHale** currently serves as Chief of the Marion, Iowa, Police Department. Previously, he served at the Kansas City Police Department for 25 years, most recently as the commander of a patrol division. He has a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice administration and is a subject matter expert for the Bureau of Justice Assistance. His discussion focused on social network analysis, focused deterrence, and collaboration.

### *Summary of discussion:*

- Six years ago, according to Chief McHale, Kansas City started a promising platform to reduce crime using social network analysis (a method for mapping social relationships) along with geographic mapping. Kansas City strove to determine the members of the small group that was driving violent crime and to focus arrests and prosecutions on those individuals. With the help of researchers from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, the city implemented a hotspot and focused-deterrence policing approach. This new approach narrows and directs the way the department polices, intervenes, and enforces. Chief McHale believes this approach can be successful in other cities.
- Chief McHale noted that although Marion is a safe community, there are many crime hotspots nearby, an important consideration because “boundaries only matter to law enforcement,” not to offenders. Thus, Chief McHale and other agencies created a multi-agency enforcement and intervention program.
- To spur analytical development within departments and break silos, Chief McHale believes agencies should invest in their human resources, such as crime analysts. He recommends that agencies adopt an evidence-based approach, including crime analysis, and introduce it to the community collaboratively. Chief McHale challenges agencies to invest in an analyst instead of an officer because the agency first needs to show officers what to do to be effective.
- Kansas City initially failed to communicate consistently with other criminal justice entities, such as probation and parole offices. Realizing that individuals on probation and parole were a potential source of crime, they began

conducting prison visits to talk with offenders prior to their release, collecting data on those individuals, and communicating with released individuals. Accountability and communication were key components of these collaborations.

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## Panel 2: Addressing the Changing Landscape of Violent Crime



The second panel focused on the changing landscape of violent crime, including whether crime is increasing, new drivers of crime, and how these developments might alter violence reduction approaches. The panelists discussed their approaches to violent crime and the importance of communication and evidence-based solutions and programs. Panelists included William Jessup, Assistant Chief of Police, Milwaukee Police Department; Jasmine Moore, Violence Prevention Coordinator, Grady Memorial Hospital, Atlanta; and Hildy Saizow, Senior Subject Matter Expert with CNA and Diagnostic Specialist, U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Diagnostic Center.

### Summary of discussions

#### William Jessup



**William Jessup** is the Assistant Chief of Police at the Milwaukee Police Department. He oversees the Investigations and Intelligence Bureau, which consists of six investigative divisions, the Intelligence Fusion Center, and the Risk Management Bureau. Assistant Chief Jessup has more than 25 years of law enforcement experience. He has a master's degree in public administration and has completed several training courses, including the International Association of Chiefs of Police Leadership in Training Organizations, Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command, and the Police Executive Research Forum Senior Management Institute. Assistant Chief Jessup's discussion focused on Milwaukee's approach to violent crime, crime analysis, and collaboration.

*Summary of discussion:*

- Assistant Chief Jessup noted that he has seen the changes in Milwaukee's violent crime rates and the challenges that officers face first-hand. Milwaukee saw a steady drop in crime, with a reversal in the past few years, especially with regard to gun violence. Because of this rise in crime, Milwaukee has taken an innovative approach to combatting crime. When Milwaukee joined PSP in 2016, the decision was made to focus on a place-based strategy that encompassed 2 percent of Milwaukee's landmass but was responsible for 10 to 11 percent of the city's violent crime. Milwaukee follows a "10-10-10" philosophy, which states that 10 percent of the crime is committed by 10 percent of offenders in 10 percent of locations. In addition to this strategy, Milwaukee implemented a people-based strategy, in which they challenged crime analysts to create an algorithm to identify prolific juvenile and adult offenders.
- Milwaukee also implemented an innovative approach with regard to their CompStat model. All federal partners attend and participate in Milwaukee's CompStat meetings. After the weekly meeting, a memorandum is prepared to share what was discussed, what the action items are, and the crime trends within the target area.
- When Chief Flynn joined the Milwaukee Police Department 10 years ago, it had no crime analysts. Today, it has 20, which is considered a force multiplier. Assistant Chief Jessup noted that the department encourages line officers and analysts to build relationships so that there is a constant exchange of information. The analysts provide line officers with a guide so they know where to focus their attention, while the officers provide the analysts with knowledge on how their intelligence has helped, and what is happening in the field.
- Assistant Chief Jessup also noted that violent crime is trending toward younger offenders, especially with regard to car-jackings and robberies. The juvenile justice system has not adjusted to the changing landscape, so many individuals are not being sanctioned until they are adults and a serious crime has been committed. Social media also plays a large role when crimes are committed by juveniles. These platforms allow youth to brag about the criminal acts that they have committed, which provides information to law enforcement.
- Collaboration is key in Milwaukee, according to Chief Jessup. Benefits multiply when agencies work together and direct their actions toward key hotspots. Milwaukee currently has partnerships with the FBI, the DEA, and the USMS. Since joining PSP, Milwaukee has educated the community on the strategies

that they are implementing. Milwaukee is currently developing metrics that are most useful in programs built on community collaboration.

## Jasmine Moore



Jasmine Moore currently serves as the Project Coordinator for the Atlanta Program to Interrupt Violence through Outreach and Treatment (PIVOT)—a hospital-based, violence-intervention program seeking to reduce firearm-related injury recidivism. Ms. Moore also addresses community violence as an Alternative to Violence Project Facilitator. She has a master’s degree in public health with a focus in global health leadership and completed an internship with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Ms. Moore’s discussion focused on Atlanta’s approach to violent crime, research collaboration, and data-sharing.

### *Summary of discussion:*

- Ms. Moore discussed violent crime as involving violent injury, which constitutes a public health threat. She described violence as an epidemic that, like any other epidemic, spreads through communities in ways that can be measured and treated. In Atlanta, Ms. Moore works with the Atlanta Police Department and Grady Memorial Hospital to implement a hospital-based violence-reduction program. She stated that violent crime offers opportunities for collaboration between law enforcement and healthcare as a natural link to solve problems for communities experiencing high levels of violence.
- Ms. Moore noted that violent crime has been changing in Atlanta, and that change is hard to define. Although homicides are down by 33 percent compared to last year, non-fatal shootings, gun seizures, and shooting incidents are rising. The majority of Atlanta’s crime is focused in two of six zones. To help combat the rising crime, Atlanta introduced PIVOT, a three-pronged program that includes community-oriented policing by two PIVOT officers, data-sharing, and wraparound treatment and social services. PIVOT is a trauma-informed care approach, which is an important aspect for law enforcement to consider because trauma does not stop after an arrest.
- In developing PIVOT, the Atlanta Police Department worked extensively with a research partner who helped shape the PIVOT process and filled in gaps in the literature. Communication between the Atlanta Police Department, the research partner, and Grady Memorial Hospital is constant.

- In 2015, Atlanta implemented the Cardiff Model, a strategy based on established practices in the United Kingdom. The Cardiff model exploits non-police data (e.g., hospital emergency room data) to identify violent crimes (e.g., shootings) that do not come to the attention of the police. Because it is a replication of proven public health practice, and information is de-identified, concerns about HIPPA violations are minimized. (HIPPA is a health protection act that requires the confidential handling of patient health information.) When collaborating with hospitals, where patient privacy is a priority, it is important for law enforcement personnel to capitalize on de-identified information.

## Hildy Saizow



Hildy Saizow is a Senior Subject Matter Expert for CNA with the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Strategies for Policing Innovation, and a senior diagnostic specialist for the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Diagnostic Center. She has a master's degree in the administration of justice. Ms. Saizow is a community crime-prevention and anti-violence specialist who has worked in the United States and abroad on collaborative approaches to public safety. She served as president of Arizonians for Gun Safety. Her discussion focused on the recommendations provided by the Diagnostic Center to St. Louis, gun violence in St. Louis, and collaboration.

### *Summary of discussion:*

- Ms. Saizow noted that St. Louis has a gun violence rate five times the national average for cities with more than 200,000 residents. The clearance rate for gun assaults is extremely low. Because of these challenges, the Diagnostic Center provided four recommendations to St. Louis. These recommendations include: 1) Develop a community-wide approach that goes beyond the police department, 2) Refocus the police department to engage in more proactive strategies, 3) Focus on non-fatal shootings, and 4) Strengthen police and community relationships.
- According to Ms. Saizow, levels of physical disorder and trust in the police are the distinguishers of violence rates and gun violence in St. Louis. Areas of high gun violence tend to have very low levels of trust in the police. Because of social media and peer pressure, juveniles are also subject to negative relationships with authorities.

- Ms. Saizow stated that data analysis is critical to addressing violent crime. Despite years of research, St. Louis still has problems with chronic gun violence. After conducting focus groups in high-poverty neighborhoods, the Diagnostic Center became aware of the high accessibility of firearms. This kind of accessibility leads to a higher level of violence and a change in the landscape of violent crime. The recommendations that OJP provided to St. Louis address these changes.
- St. Louis hopes to bring a trauma-informed approach to the violence- reduction initiative, according to Ms. Saizow. Collaboration is key to this approach; for example the police department can help connect service providers to community members and vice versa. For this approach to be effective, all parties need to be in agreement, to understand the landscape from a trauma-informed lens, and to be able to connect with the community members and crime victims who need assistance.

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## Perspectives from Rodney Monroe



**Rodney Monroe** is a recognized innovator and practitioner of community policing with more than 30 years' experience in law enforcement. He currently serves as a Senior Fellow at CNA. Mr. Monroe has served as Chief at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD), the Macon, Georgia, Police Department, and the Richmond, Virginia, Police Department. In addition, Mr. Monroe is an Executive Committee Member for the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Mr. Monroe has bachelor's degrees in interdisciplinary studies and criminal justice. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and the National Executive Institute.

Mr. Monroe began his speech by noting that no crimes affect people more than homicides or shootings. He stated that, "When you talk about violent crime, you talk about opportunities for law enforcement to touch the hearts and minds of citizens and to get them more engaged in the community." While at CMPD, Mr. Monroe developed a homicide support group that brought together detectives, prosecutors, the families of victims. Because of this initiative, CMPD saw an increase in homicide closure rates as well and in the numbers of victims and witnesses coming to court.

Mr. Monroe conducted similar outreach in the Richmond Police Department. Through an organization call Boaz and Ruth, he helped to provide life skills services to individuals re-entering the community after incarceration. Since engaging in these outreach activities, Mr. Monroe has received an overwhelming number of requests from other organizations to speak about his involvement in these activities. He noted that, once people see that you care, they will share information. He cited as an example the PIVOT program at Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta.

Mr. Monroe concluded his address by stating that while analysis and data are important, touching hearts and minds can provide a greater impact on the community. Mr. Monroe stated that, "Talking about statistics allows you to get down to finer parts of the problem, but every problem you are dealing with at its heart is about a person." How you assess that person, address that person, and deliver services to that person is what matters, he added.

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## Conclusion

Violent crime continues to capture the nation's attention. Panelists and speakers at CNA's Executive Session on Policing, *Innovative Approaches to Addressing Violent Crime*, discussed the changing landscape of violent crime as well as the current approaches being implemented across the nation to address it.

These approaches focus on evidence-based programs, collaboration, crime analysis and intelligence gathering with a focus on social network analysis and focused deterrence. All of these methods are designed to reduce the rate of violent crime and to cultivate collaboration and community relationships.

Violent crime affects communities across the nation. This panel provided perspectives from practitioners in both the public health and criminal justice arenas. CNA encourages public-health and justice-system agencies to increase collaboration, expand their current efforts, and use emerging evidence-based practices in their approaches to violent crime. Numerous resources are available, including research partnerships, U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance toolkits, and inter-agency collaboration. Putting these resources to use through evidence-based approaches will help to fill the gaps of missing information needed to create sustainable change. It is critical for these institutions to continue their discussions, research, and collaboration efforts to effect lasting change that can lead to reduced rates of violent crime.

To review CNA's work on addressing violent crime, please visit our [website](#). Questions, comments, and suggestions for future Executive Session topics can be directed to [smartjustice@cna.org](mailto:smartjustice@cna.org).

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