






CNA EXECUTIVE SESSIONS ON POLICING

COLLABORATION ACROSS THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM: POLICING AND PROSECUTION

On July 17, 2019, CNA, in partnership with the National District Attorneys Association (NDAA), convened its twelfth Executive Session on policing—*Collaboration across the Criminal Justice System: Policing and Prosecution*. Relationships between law enforcement and prosecution are critical in ensuring public safety. Conflicting needs and priorities, scarce resources, and political and public pressures can strain these relationships. During this Executive Session, CNA and NDAA representatives as well as prominent speakers representing both prosecutors and police discussed the challenges police and prosecutors face when establishing and maintaining (1) local and federal collaborative partnerships with each other and with external criminal justice partners, (2) effective law enforcement-prosecution strategies, (3) data and information sharing, (4) communication mechanisms, and (5) community engagement.

<p>1 local and federal collaborative partnerships with each other and with external criminal justice partners</p> 	<p>2 effective law enforcement-prosecution strategies</p> 	<p>3 data and information sharing</p> 	<p>4 communication mechanisms</p> 	<p>5 community engagement</p> 
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Nelson Bunn, NDAA Executive Director, began his opening keynote remarks by noting that law enforcement and prosecution communities must come together to provide justice to and protect the communities they

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serve. Community advocates' and politicians' calls for increased transparency with regard to data and information sharing have echoed throughout the law enforcement and prosecution professions. Both police and prosecutors have made strides in these arenas by increasing the use of technology (e.g., body-worn cameras), collaborating to ensure that technology and equipment are integrated appropriately in the criminal

justice system, and developing best-practice guidelines for using assets that are often misunderstood by the general public (e.g., asset forfeiture) more effectively. However, as the use of technology and analytics have increased, so has the amount of resources and personnel needed by both agencies. Mr. Bunn closed by stating that it is imperative that law enforcement and prosecutors lead the criminal justice system in innovation, reform, and partnership.

Deputy District Attorney Damon Mosler of the San Diego County, California, District Attorney's Office, opened the first panel, *Challenges Faced by Law Enforcement and Prosecutors*, by describing a fundamental misunderstanding between law enforcement and prosecutors. Each agency often operates in a silo. The two entities can achieve increased collaboration and communication through peer exchanges, co-hosted trainings, and data sharing. One way to increase this collaboration is to assign senior-level prosecutors to each police district—as Memphis, Tennessee, and other



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cities have done. This approach increases communication between the two agencies and allows individuals to build lasting relationships, both institutionally and individually. The prosecutors also participate in community events, helping the community more fully understand the role of the prosecutor in the criminal justice process.

Another challenge faced by the two agencies is a need for increased data and information sharing. [Julie Wartell](#) of the Problem Analysis Group noted that data and needs vary, so local law enforcement and prosecution in each jurisdiction need to determine a common language surrounding data and the definition of success and outcome measures. [Director Michael Rallings](#) of the Memphis, Tennessee, Police Department noted that the criminal justice system places more emphasis on offenders than victims. To address this disparity, the Shelby County District Attorney's Office has begun hiring retired police officers as investigators and victims' advocates to assist with victim and witness cooperation. Stronger institutionalized relationships between law enforcement and prosecution and increased data sharing between the two agencies are needed to effectively protect and serve the communities, victims, and witnesses they represent.

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[Jane Darst](#), Assistant Prosecuting Attorney in St. Charles County, Missouri, opened the second panel, *Effective Solutions for Law Enforcement and Prosecution Partnerships*, by noting that police and prosecutors need to make establishing credible relationships a goal for their agencies. [Chief Bryan Roach](#) of the Indianapolis, Indiana, Police Department stated that Indianapolis has structured communication between the various offices through bi-weekly meetings of Indy's Violence Reduction Partnership. During these meetings, participants from the police department, prosecutor's office, US Attorney's

Office, probation and parole, and others discuss the status of all non-fatal shooting, homicide, and gun violence cases. Other agencies, such as St. Louis, Missouri, have assigned police officers to the Circuit Attorney's Office to facilitate communication. Relational communications (i.e., one-on-one) lay the foundation for official communication structures (i.e., organizational communications that transcend personnel change) and assist each agency when difficult discussions need to occur (i.e., after an officer-involved shooting). Cross-training between the two agencies can also assist with communication. In New York, [Kristine Hamann](#), Executive Director of the Prosecutors Center for Excellence, and a committee of prosecutors collaborated with law enforcement across the state to update protocols, procedures, and training related to the identification and interrogation of suspects. Chief Roach noted that the Bureau of Justice Assistance's National Public Safety Partnership has substantially helped Indianapolis improve law enforcement-prosecution relations by helping the partners remain accountable and focused.

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[Terry Gainer](#), former Senate Sergeant at Arms and US Capitol Police Chief, closed the Session by noting that law enforcement and prosecution now interact more than ever before, but the conversations between the two entities have not changed substantially in the past 45 years. Mr. Gainer noted that now is the time for police and prosecutors alike to challenge themselves to "walk the talk" and push the needle forward so that both professions can continue to grow and advance reforms. To do this, police and prosecutors need to focus and prioritize investigations, develop robust networks of criminal justice partners, make victims' voices heard, and provide feedback on investigations and prosecutions when feasible. All of these endeavors will enhance law enforcement and prosecution partnerships and communications.