

CNA



THE **STRATEGIES**  
for **Policing**  
**Innovation** Initiative

*REFLECTING ON 10 YEARS OF INNOVATION*

*Christopher M. Sun, James R. "Chip" Coldren, Jr., Keri Richardson, and Emma Wohl*



Strategies for  
**Policing**  
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# THE STRATEGIES FOR POLICING INNOVATION INITIATIVE

## REFLECTING ON 10 YEARS OF INNOVATION

### INTRODUCTION

Law enforcement agencies continue to develop new and innovative strategies to better support and police the communities they serve, from integrating gunshot detection technologies into dispatch systems to improve response times during shootings, to collaborating with local health and social service organizations to address issues such as homelessness or substance abuse in comprehensively ways. Over the past 10 years, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), in partnership with the CNA Institute for Public Research (IPR), has supported law enforcement agencies across the country in implementing innovative policing approaches through the Strategies for Policing Innovation Initiative (SPI, formerly the Smart Policing Initiative). SPI supports not only the development and implementation of innovative policing strategies, but also the research partnerships that result in in-depth analyses and rigorous evaluations of these strategies to advance what is known about effective and efficient policing practices. This report examines SPI's accomplishments since its inception in 2009 and explores some of the major themes across SPI initiatives in both policing and policing research, including the following:

- Reductions in violent crime
- Improved crime analysis capabilities in police agencies
- Evolution of research partnerships with SPI sites
- Collaborative partnerships with agencies, organizations, and community stakeholders
- Integration of technology into policing

### THE STRATEGIES FOR POLICING INNOVATION INITIATIVE

SPI supports law enforcement agencies in building evidence-based, data-driven law enforcement tactics and strategies that are effective, efficient, and economical. SPI represents a strategic approach that helps police agencies figure out what works in crime-prevention and crime-reduction initiatives. SPI sites apply for grant awards through a competitive review process. Once a site receives an SPI award, the CNA team provides assistance to the SPI site as it designs and implements crime control and crime prevention strategies, and as it collects and analyzes data to devise evidence-based solutions to target serious crime problems, such as street robberies, substance abuse, repeat violent offenders, retaliatory violence, or gun violence. CNA documents lessons learned and research-tested practices in the SPI sites to share proven policing innovations nationwide.

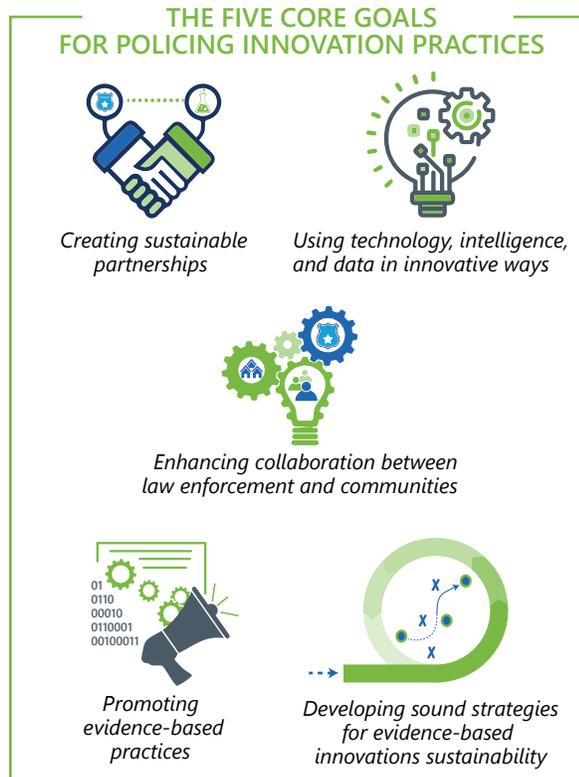
Five core goals provide the foundation for SPI (Figure 1):

- Creating sustainable partnerships between law enforcement and researchers
- Using technology, intelligence, and data in innovative ways
- Enhancing collaboration within law enforcement agencies, with external agencies, and with the communities these agencies serve
- Promoting evidence-based practices in law enforcement agencies
- Developing sound strategies for sustaining evidence-based innovations beyond the project’s funding period

To achieve these goals, SPI sites engage in five key policing innovation practices (Figure 2).

- **Performance Measurement and Research Partnerships.** Supporting decision-making based on what does and does not work in policing is a foundational element of SPI. SPI sites achieve this by partnering with researchers to test the effectiveness of their initiatives and to engage in rigorous systematic research to expand the knowledge base on effective policing strategies and to support decision-making about resource allocation.
- **Strategic Targeting.** Successful SPI sites conduct analyses that help agencies focus policing approaches on the small percentage of people and places that account for large percentages of crime, victimization, and public harm.

Figure 1. Core Goals for SPI



Source: Bureau of Justice Assistance, “Strategies for Policing Innovation.” Accessed January 10, 2019 at [https://www.bja.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?Program\\_ID=80#](https://www.bja.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?Program_ID=80#).

Figure 2. Core Strategies for SPI



Source: Bureau of Justice Assistance, “Strategies for Policing Innovation.” Accessed January 10, 2019 at [https://www.bja.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?Program\\_ID=80#](https://www.bja.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?Program_ID=80#).

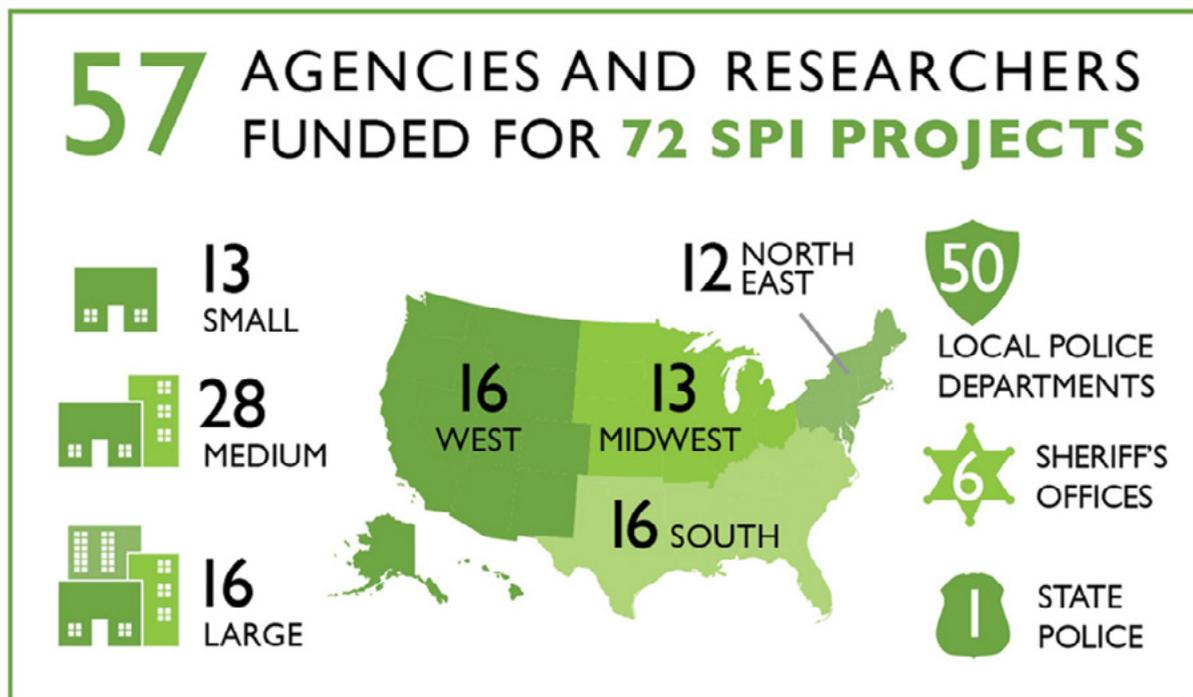
- Making Better Use of Intelligence and Other Data and Information Systems.** SPI helps police agencies build crime analysis capacity and make efficient use of data, intelligence, and information resources. SPI sites use data that go beyond calls for service, offenses reported, arrests, and complaints. They also use police intelligence, research data (e.g., offender- or location-based studies), data from external entities (e.g., hospital, school, and social services databases), and data from fellow justice partners (e.g., probation and parole) to develop their crime reduction strategies.
- Managing and Sustaining Organizational Change.** Successfully sustaining organizational gains and changes that result from new evidence-based approaches is a challenge for all complex organizations, including law enforcement agencies. Thus, SPI sites prepare their organizations to adopt more effective practices so that evidence-based approaches

are sustained through training, revised policies and directives, improved communication, and the establishment of interdisciplinary working groups.

- Outreach and Collaboration.** Public education, outreach, and buy-in are critical to both success and sustainment of crime reduction initiatives over the long term. In addition, collaboration includes police and community stakeholders working together to address crime issues by sharing responsibilities, resources, and decision-making. Thus, SPI emphasizes the importance of communication and outreach at all levels of the law enforcement organization and with external government, criminal justice, and community stakeholders.

Since the inception of SPI in 2009, BJA has funded 57 agencies that have implemented 72 SPI initiatives (Figure 3). These initiatives produced a wealth of new

Figure 3. Law Enforcement Agencies Supported Through SPI, by Agency Size, Region, and Type



Source: CNA tabulations.

knowledge for the policing profession and led to significant reductions in crime as well as sustainable impacts for the agencies and their communities.

For example, the Los Angeles SPI team developed its intervention strategy, called the Los Angeles Strategic Extraction and Restoration Program (LASER). Operation LASER's overall goal was to identify, with laser-like precision based on sophisticated analysis, the violent repeat offenders and gang members who routinely committed crimes in a single district. This district accounted for almost 30 percent of gun crimes in the city. LASER involved both location- and offender-based strategies—most notably, the creation of a Crime Intelligence Detail (CID). CID's primary mission centers on the development of proactive, real-time intelligence briefs called "Chronic Offender Bulletins." The bulletins help officers identify crime trends and solve current investigations, giving officers a tool for proactive police work. Over a 12-month period, the initiative resulted in a 22 percent reduction in homicides per month in the target division and a 5 percent reduction in gun crimes per month, a greater crime reduction than was realized in any other LAPD district for the same year. Through its research partner, the Los Angeles SPI employed a comparative research design with a time-trend analysis component to arrive at these significant findings.

## APPROACH

For this report, CNA classified each SPI site according to a number of characteristics, including topic area addressed, evaluation approach, successes, challenges, and lessons learned, to identify larger themes across all SPI sites. CNA gathered, synthesized, and analyzed all available data sources on SPI initiatives, including the following:

- **SPI Capacity Assessments:** Since 2011, each SPI site completes an SPI Capacity Assessment to gauge capabilities and capacities along SPI core goals. The assessment provides CNA with a baseline understanding of the site as it develops its SPI initiative. For this report, the assessment provides important information on

research and analytical capacity of agencies as well as the partnerships in place for the initiative.

- **SPI Action Plans:** Once the SPI grant is awarded, an SPI site develops an Action Plan that provides details on the development, implementation, and evaluation of its initiative. The Action Plan serves as a foundational document for local SPI work and provides sufficient operational and research details to understand the theory of action and expected evaluation outcomes for the initiative. For this report, the Action Plans provided details on the topics that SPIs examined, the approaches used, and evaluation methods for the evaluation.
- **SPI Final Reports:** Each site develops a final report that discusses the experience and outcomes of its SPI. For this overview, these final reports provided major findings and successes from the initiative, as well as challenges and lessons learned.
- **News Articles:** Given SPI's emphasis on conducting outreach and developing initiative support with external organizations and stakeholders, local and national news articles routinely highlight SPI sites' progress and accomplishments throughout an SPI initiative. The articles served as a data source for outcomes and impact of SPI initiatives.

## KEY THEMES

SPI is primarily a locally driven initiative, in that BJA does not dictate which crime problems SPI sites must address. As a result, the work of SPI sites (including both challenges and successes) covers a broad range of topics, from the reduction of violent crime in select hot spots, to implementation of new technology, to developing service-oriented approaches to homelessness and people in mental health crisis, to implementing broad organizational changes regarding evidence-based policing. Thus, there have been SPI successes in a variety of important areas. This section examines some emerging and persistent themes



across all SPI sites over the past 10 years. Each topic includes common themes across sites that are similar in the substantive area or evaluation methodology, policing innovations that have resulted from SPI sites, and site highlights that provide an examination of successes for sites.

## Reducing Violent Crime

Although violent crime has fallen nationwide over the past several decades, some law enforcement agencies in 2015 and 2016 saw significant increases in violent crime—particularly those in mid- to large-size cities.<sup>1</sup> Some large US cities (or sectors within them) still experience persistently high rates of violent crime.<sup>2</sup> As a result, law enforcement agencies have developed and implemented new approaches to reducing violent crime and keeping their communities safe.

<sup>1</sup> United States Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation. September 2018. *Crime in the United States, 2017*. Retrieved from <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2017/crime-in-the-u.s.-2017/topic-pages/tables/table-1>.

<sup>2</sup> United States Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation. September 2018. *Crime in the United States, 2017*. Retrieved from <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2017/crime-in-the-u.s.-2017/topic-pages/tables/table-6>.

## Common Themes

Sites such as Kansas City, Missouri; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Cambridge, Massachusetts aimed to reduce violent crime by implementing location-based or offender-focused policing strategies. These included specific approaches such as “hotspot” policing and focused deterrence. Although these approaches exhibited some short-term successes in reducing violent crime, some SPI sites found that these strategies require significant commitment of time and resources to produce and sustain successes.

## Innovation

The 2009 Philadelphia SPI sought to test the impacts of differential policing strategies employed at violent crime hotspots using a randomized controlled design. The SPI site’s staff identified 27 hotspots to receive foot patrol, 27 to receive problem-oriented policing, and 27 to receive offender-focused policing. Within each strategy, the researchers randomly assigned 20 hot spots to receive the treatment and 7 to act as control hotspots. Philadelphia Police Department district captains had discretion to determine deployment of foot patrols within their assigned deployment areas as long as each target area was patrolled a minimum of eight hours a day, five days a week, for 12 weeks.

# SITE HIGHLIGHT

## CAMBRIDGE, MA – 2011



The Cambridge, Everett, and Somerville SPI established Regional Analytics for the Safety of Our Residents (RASOR), a focused deterrence program to prevent future victimization and social harm of offenders identified as prolific perpetrators of crime across the cities. This initiative sought to reduce crime within the three cities and determine whether a focused deterrence approach provided a successful strategy within the region. While other agencies have implemented focused deterrence strategies, RASOR included distinctly different characteristics, such as a regional database to select targeted participants, assignment of a social harm index score to each offender, and an advanced data-driven approach. Because RASOR operated across three jurisdictions with distinct police departments and courts, this unique collaboration exemplified how regional partnerships may be beneficial for focused deterrence strategies. The agencies worked together to share information about impact players, habitual offenders, known associates, crime data, and other information concerning these individuals. RASOR also used a data-driven approach and implemented a research-based process to identify chronic offenders within their communities by employing a regional database to select the targeted participants. Ultimately, there were no statistically significant differences in time to arraignment between RASOR and control subjects in the full sample. Future studies should examine the relationship between dosage (case management time) and impact, as this study suggested that the effectiveness of focused deterrence may be related to the amount of time spent by officers in case management activities.

## KANSAS CITY, MO – 2012



The Kansas City SPI implemented a multi-pronged effort to address violent crime through evidence-based strategies. In 2011 and 2012, the Kansas City SPI team planned, implemented, and evaluated a replication of the evidence-based Philadelphia SPI foot patrol experiment. For 90 days, pairs of rookie officers worked foot patrol shifts in four violent crime micro-hotspot areas. Results showed that foot patrol areas witnessed a 26-percent reduction in aggravated assaults and robberies during the 90-day period and a 55-percent reduction during the first six weeks of the study. No reductions were reported in control areas or in catchment areas surrounding the foot patrol areas. Crime did increase in the target areas during the last seven weeks of the study and returned to pretreatment levels after the foot patrol treatment ended.

In addition, the Kansas City SPI team planned and implemented a comprehensive focused-deterrence “pulling levers” strategy called the Kansas City No Violence Alliance (KC NoVA). KC NoVA is an offender-focused strategy designed to reduce violent crime by building on the earlier success of the foot patrol project. During 2014, KC NoVA identified 64 groups composed of 884 violent offenders. The team held four focused deterrence call-in meetings with 149 individuals from the identified groups and offenders. As a result of the focused deterrence strategy, 601 offenders met with social service providers, and 142 offenders received a social service assessment. The SPI team conducted interrupted time series analysis to assess impact and found that the focused deterrence strategy produced statistically significant decreases in homicide (40 percent) and gun-related aggravated assaults (19 percent). While the crime decline effects were largest immediately after implementation, they did diminish over time.



The problem-oriented policing strategy consisted of teams of district officers, working in collaboration with community members and with the support of personnel from police headquarters identifying, analyzing, and implementing strategies for specific problems. The offender-focused strategy used Criminal Intelligence Unit (CIU) officers to identify repeat violent offenders who either lived in the target area or were suspected of being involved in violent crimes there. Team members and patrol officers frequently made contact with these “prolific offenders” using a variety of strategies. Results showed that the offender-focused strategy outperformed both foot patrol and problem-solving strategies. Compared to the control areas, the treatment areas that received the offender-focused strategy experienced a 22-percent decrease in violent crime and a 31-percent decrease in violent street felonies. No significant crime declines occurred in the areas that received problem-solving or foot patrol strategy implementation.

### Increasing Local Crime Analysis Capacity

Law enforcement agencies have increasingly realized the need to promote efficiency in operations and as a result have committed to improving crime analysis capabilities and practices. SPI sites implemented new analytical strategies and expanded existing analytical practices to target persistent issues in their

communities and inform law enforcement decisions. Police departments are implementing crime analysis in order to take advantage of the full array of technology and data available to law enforcement agencies.

#### Common Themes

Sites such as Chicago, Illinois; York, Maine; and Rochester, New York formalized the role of crime analysis in their departments by building policing strategies that utilize analytical intelligence and inform department members of analytical strategies and products. Some SPI sites implemented innovative methods of analysis, such as Chicago’s predictive policing models. Others used more traditional analysis, such as the York SPI’s hotspot mapping, to inform deployment strategies. Ultimately, increasing local crime analysis capacity led to success in better informing department members of crime trends, hotspots, and prolific offenders to inform policing strategies.

#### Innovation

By building on LAPD’s success with LASER, the Chicago SPI addresses violent crime through implementation and evaluation of the police department’s Strategic Decision Support Centers (SDSCs) and a person-based risk model for violent crime victimization. Chicago’s SDSCs bring together police officers and analysts from the University of Chicago Crime Lab to integrate crime

# SITE HIGHLIGHT

## YORK, ME – 2011



The York SPI combined the Data-Driven Approach to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS) and problem-oriented policing—based on the scanning, analysis, response, and assessment (SARA) model—into an effort to identify traffic accident hotspots and areas where speeding and traffic flow are problematic. The SPI site deployed traffic enforcement strategies to reduce accidents, crime associated with traffic incidents, and offenders under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The York Police Department analyzed data on calls for service, arrests, citations, and traffic accidents. The analyses allowed the department to adjust enforcement strategies, inform the public on traffic practices, and evaluate new interventions. Ultimately, the York SPI found no intervention effects on number of crashes, number of citations, or total calls for service. However, the SPI did find that potentially increasing officer time in speeding hotspots may lower the average speed in the area, promoting speed limit compliance. Although the York SPI's analysis was limited by a small sample of observations, the department greatly increased its knowledge and understanding of crime analysis and its strategic use of technology.

## ROCHESTER, NY – 2012



The Rochester SPI sought to reduce violent crime by developing strategies to help police better identify, assess, and intervene in violent retaliatory disputes. The project involved analysis of dispute-related violence in Rochester and the development of a violence risk assessment tool that would guide law enforcement interventions that target violent retaliatory disputes. The Rochester SPI created a database of shooting incidents that included information about all shootings in Rochester between 2010 and 2012, with data about the victim, the suspect, and the situational characteristics associated with the shootings. The Rochester SPI augmented analysis of the shooting database with focus groups consisting of Rochester Police Department (RPD) investigators and officers, as well as incident reviews of important violent disputes that occurred between 2010 and 2012. Based on in-depth quantitative and qualitative analyses of dispute-related violence in the City of Rochester, the Rochester SPI developed a violence risk-assessment tool to guide RPD dispute-intervention strategies. The results from its SPI effort suggest that the dispute assessment tool was an effective predictor that a dispute will be retaliatory in nature—for every one-point increase in the assessment tool score that a dispute received, the odds of violence occurring in that dispute over time increase by 29 percent. The dedication of the dispute analyst has increased support for data collection and analysis of dispute-related processes. Additionally, the establishment of weekly dispute meetings has ensured that RPD will implement violence reduction strategies at both the incident and retaliatory-dispute levels.

intelligence, data analysis, and technology in daily, real-time approaches to violent crime reduction and prevention. SDSCs are equipped with a suite of information technology resources, including gunshot-detection monitoring systems, access to a network of surveillance cameras, and predictive policing software that identifies the blocks within each district where gun violence is most likely to occur.

The Chicago SPI is expanding SDSCs across the city and evaluating the impact of this expansion on violent crime in the initial districts and citywide. In addition, the SPI is examining the effectiveness of the Chicago Police Department's (CPD) Crime and Victimization Risk Model, designed to identify individuals at risk of being a victim or perpetrator of a shooting and a custom notification system to direct these individuals to support services. Early results from this initiative since 2017 indicated a 26-percent reduction in homicides and a 33-percent reduction in gun crimes in the first two police districts that implemented the SDSCs. The initiative also played a key role in the 13 consecutive months of declining gun violence in Chicago in 2017 and 2018.

## Evolution of Research Partners with SPI Sites

At the core of each SPI initiative is the role of research in examining and evaluating the development and implementation of the initiative in methodologically rigorous ways. Historically, this role has come in the form of a research partner that works closely with the law enforcement agency throughout the initiative. In addition, given the methodological and analytical capabilities of the many research partners, many SPI sites develop close working relationships with their research partners to provide real-time support for SPI operations and increase the analytical capacity of the site. This support manifests itself as planning, problem analysis, and SPI strategy development, as well as process and outcome evaluations.

As more and more SPI sites have had their own internal analytical capabilities from the start over the past few years, the role of the research partner has continued to evolve to where some are playing an

active role in developing crime analyst skills while implementing an SPI initiative. In these cases, SPI agencies and research partners collaborate to build new analytical capabilities for the agency and ensure sustainable analytical practices.

### Common Themes

Based on the results of the capacity assessments, it is clear that research partners have been playing an active role in SPI initiatives across sites and over time. More than 80 percent of research partners across all sites that completed an SPI Capacity Assessment play a key role in law enforcement agency SPI processes such as problem identification, process and impact evaluation, and dissemination of findings. In addition, more than 60 percent of research partners help agencies establish new data-collection methods to address the site's topical focus. These trends indicate a willingness to involve research partners meaningfully throughout the planning and implementation of an SPI initiative.

In addition, the ability to effectively evaluate interventions through a rigorous research design is a key element of the SPI. Involving researchers throughout the intervention process is critical to collecting quality data and generating results based on rigorous methods. CNA examines the methodological rigor of all SPI sites using the Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods (Figure 3). Given the emphasis of the SPI to advance the knowledge base in justice research and establish connections between policing interventions and outcomes, CNA emphasizes that SPI initiatives utilize at least a Level 3 design in which the evaluation includes a comparison of people or places that receive an intervention to randomly assigned or matched comparison groups. In some instances, a statistical modeling method employing statistical controls of explanatory variables will satisfy this requirement.

Over the past 10 years, CNA has observed that an increasing percentage of SPI sites and their research partners utilize evaluation designs that are at or above Level 3 on the Maryland Scale. In many ways, this is a testament to the continued support and emphasis from BJA to expand what is known about effective

Figure 4. Description of Levels on the Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods

<b>LEVEL 1</b>	Correlation between a crime prevention program and a measure of crime or crime risk factors at a single point in time.
<b>LEVEL 2</b>	Temporal sequence between the program and the crime or risk outcome clearly observed, or the presence of a comparison group without demonstrated comparability to the treatment group.
<b>LEVEL 3</b>	A comparison between two or more comparable units of analysis, one with and one without the program.
<b>LEVEL 4</b>	Comparison between multiple units with and without the program, control for other factors, or using comparison units that evidence only minor differences.
<b>LEVEL 5</b>	Random assignment and analysis of comparable units to program and comparison groups.

Source: Adapted from Sherman, Lawrence W., Denise C. Gottfredson, Doris L. MacKenzie, John Eck, Peter Reuter, and Shawn D. Bushway. July 1998. "Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising." *Research in Brief*. National Institute of Justice. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/171676.pdf>.

policing interventions, and the success of SPI to improve the research and methodological rigor in police science. Based on the SPI Capacity Assessment, from 2009 to 2011 less than 50 percent of SPI sites utilized a research design of a Level 3 or above. However, from 2013 to 2017 more than 75 percent of sites used a design of Level 3 or above, with all 2017 sites using this type of design (see Figure 4). Note that SPI does not expect a Level 3 or higher research design for all sites, as some sites target organizational change within an agency as a key outcome of interest. The SPI team works closely with the site to develop a responsive evaluation approach that has the highest level of rigor but is also the most appropriate given the site's initiative and outcomes of interest.

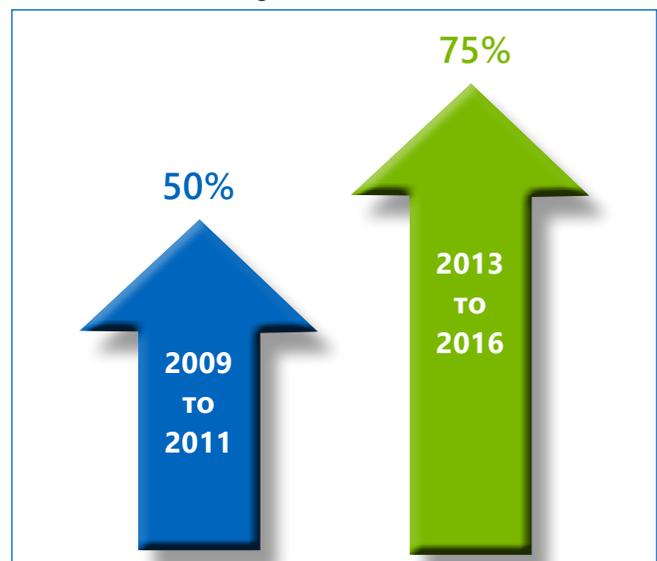
**Innovation**

The Miami SPI is a prime example of the collaborative partnerships that can develop between an agency and a research team. The purpose of the City of Miami Police Department's (MPD) Miami Intelligence and Analytics Project (MIA) is to improve the quality of life and safety for the city's residents, businesses, and visitors by improving the department's analytical capacity to address property crime. To accomplish this, the Miami SPI partnered with Florida International University (FIU) to develop a standardized training curriculum for all investigators and crime analysts

and to focus enforcement and investigative efforts on property crime using data analytics.

FIU embedded two doctoral students to serve in MPD's Crime Analysis Unit to both increase the capacity of the unit and develop MPD's internal crime analysis capabilities over time. To date, this partnership has yielded numerous new crime analysis products to identify, track, and act on property crime trends in the five areas of the city with significant crime. In addition, the doctoral students work directly with Miami crime

Figure 5. Percentage of SPI Sites Using Level 3 and Above Research Designs



Source: CNA calculations.

# SITE HIGHLIGHT

## CHULA VISTA, CA – 2013



The Chula Vista, California police department initiated a new approach to responding to domestic violence calls for service—specifically, repeat domestic violence—based on documented and well-researched efforts in Huddersfield and West Yorkshire, England. This new approach involved a tiered/triaged response, depending on the severity of the call, and routine follow-up by Chula Vista police officers in cases of more serious incidents. The Chula Vista SPI initiative, which employed a quasi-experimental design, documented a 24-percent decrease in domestic violence crimes in the targeted (treatment) area, which amounted to approximately 100 fewer domestic violence crimes per year. Survey research documented a 97-percent approval rating of police response to domestic violence calls in the treatment area, compared to an 81-percent approval rating in the comparison area. More information on this site is available in a Topical Spotlight Report<sup>3</sup> and in a past SPI newsletter.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Strategies for Policing Innovation. 2017. *Focused Deterrence of High-Risk Individuals POP Guide*. <http://strategiesforpolicinginnovation.com/tta/spotlight-reports/focused-deterrence-high-risk-individuals-pop-guide>.

<sup>4</sup> Strategies for Policing Innovation 2014. *SPI Summer 2014 Quarterly Newsletter*, no. 12. <http://strategiesforpolicinginnovation.com/tta/newsletter/spi-summer-2014-quarterly-newsletter>.



analysts to ensure that these products are replicable and easy to assemble on a consistent and frequent basis for use in investigations.

### Increased Use of Collaborative Partnerships With Agencies, Organizations, And Stakeholders

Law enforcement experts have recognized collaborative partnerships as one of the most effective pieces of a crime reduction strategy. Historically, almost all SPI sites have joined with research partners. However, in more recent years SPI sites have developed unique and more innovative partnerships that advance the goals of their initiatives. These collaborative relationships have helped sites attain resources, build networks, promote closer bonds between law enforcement and community members, and support sustainability of their efforts. Although the full effects of these collaborations may not be apparent immediately, they continue to strengthen law enforcement efforts to maintain public safety.

#### Common themes

SPI sites, including Sacramento, California; Brooklyn Park, Minnesota; and Atlanta, Georgia, have developed strong community partnerships in order to support the delivery of services to those in need. Sacramento partnered with a local homeless advocacy organization to provide data that would help the department determine what services it should make

available. Brooklyn Park worked with its research partner to implement *collective efficacy*—community problem-solving capacity—by police officers and develop community-based interventions, including programs that would improve access to community services for juveniles, immigrants, and refugees. Atlanta also engaged in community partnership through employing a community resource coordinator at a trauma center to facilitate mentorship and follow up with participants who received intensive support and direct connections to social services.

#### Innovation

Atlanta's SPI initiative, the Program to Interrupt Violence thru Outreach and Treatment (PIVOT), is a collaboration between Atlanta's level 1 trauma center, Grady Memorial Hospital, and the Atlanta Police Department. It has 3 major components; wraparound social services for gunshot victims with intensive follow-up; community policing in 3 high gun violence neighborhoods; and data sharing between public health and law enforcement using the Cardiff Model. More information about this initiative is available on the SPI website and in a recent SPI newsletter.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Strategies for Policing Innovation/Atlanta, Georgia. 2016. <http://www.strategiesforpolicinginnovation.com/spi-sites/atlanta-georgia-2016>; Strategies for Policing Innovation 2018. *SPI Winter 2018 Quarterly Newsletter*, no. 24. <http://strategiesforpolicinginnovation.com/tta/newsletter/spi-winter-2018-quarterly-newsletter>.

# SITE HIGHLIGHT

## BROOKLYN PARK, MN – 2013



Between 2012 and 2016, Brooklyn Park had the highest crime rate in the country among suburbs with more than 50,000 residents.<sup>6</sup> The Brooklyn Park SPI team recognized that much of this crime is concentrated in places characterized by low-income public housing and low-rent apartments. The high population density and heterogeneity and population turnover associated with these locations led the SPI site to assess that the rise in crime was being driven by the lack of collective efficacy. The Brooklyn Park Police Department, in partnership with George Mason University, proposed a strategy that would bring long-term reinforcement of informal social controls, community cohesion, and crime reduction in identified micro-hotspots. The site designed and implemented a rigorous randomized trial to evaluate the effectiveness of increasing collective efficacy and reducing crime through the intervention. Patrol officers would identify, gather, and track all activities of key stakeholders and resources in an effort to address the specific problems at a given hotspot. As a result of the study, the site observed more community cooperation and collaboration with the police, increased calls for service in the treatment areas, and positive crime prevention outcomes.

Survey results in treatment locations showed that people are more involved in problem solving and are more likely to see the police in their neighborhoods. They are more likely to call the police and participate in some engagement with the police. This study has supported the understanding that police can increase collaboration and cooperation, which is something few studies have been able to demonstrate. More information on this site is available in past SPI newsletters.<sup>7</sup>

## SACRAMENTO, CA – 2016



Approximately one-third of Sacramento County's homeless population is unsheltered. Particularly noteworthy differences between 2013 and 2015 counts include a 7.9 percent increase in chronically homeless individuals and a 20.6 percent increase in unsheltered single adults. In partnership with the Sacramento Sheriff's Department (SSD), Sacramento Steps Forward (a nonprofit organization dedicated to ending homelessness in its region), and California State University Sacramento, the site targets its efforts on connecting the chronically homeless with community and social service programs to identify solutions to improve their living conditions and quality of life. These programs provide data on impacted individuals, assist in building networks of service providers, and analyze data for SPI. The SPI site expects to have a positive effect in both targeting homeless individuals for services and linking them to necessary services to get them back on their feet.

<sup>6</sup> Population and demographic information from the US Census Bureau's "American Community Survey, 2012–2016 5-year estimates," "Community Facts," <http://factfinder.census.gov> (accessed September 7, 2018).

<sup>7</sup> Strategies for Policing Innovation (2018). *SPI Summer 2018 Quarterly Newsletter*, no. 25. <http://strategiesforpolicinginnovation.com/tta/newsletter/spi-summer-2018-quarterly-newsletter>; Strategies for Policing Innovation. 2014. *SPI Summer 2014 Quarterly Newsletter*, no. 12. <http://strategiesforpolicinginnovation.com/tta/newsletter/spi-summer-2014-quarterly-newsletter>



## Integration of Technology into Policing

In recent years, police departments have made significant technological advancements to improve their crime reduction efforts. A number of SPI sites have used these advancements to implement innovative approaches to solve crime. SPI sites have integrated body-worn cameras (BWCs) and other surveillance cameras into police operations to enhance transparency and improve security in violent neighborhoods. These technologies support the goals of police departments and the communities they serve.

### Common Themes

Sites such as Detroit, Michigan; Miami Beach, Florida; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Phoenix, Arizona, use technology to improve their policing approaches. All these sites acquired new surveillance technology to substantiate the activities of officers and citizens. In addition, all of the SPI sites' goals and objectives either directly or indirectly included crime reduction as an explicit outcome of their SPI. Some of the sites based those objectives on the research-supported theory that people will improve their behavior when they know they are being recorded. The findings from these initiatives will provide a deeper understanding of how this technology can help improve police and community behaviors.

### Innovation

Miami Beach implemented a mixed-method, multilayered approach to the study of BWCs. The research team analyzed official police department data on arrest rates, citation rates, repeat calls for service, warrants, and overall engagement. The Miami Beach Police Department wanted to address concerns with the methodological rigor of previous BWC impact evaluation studies and the lack of attention to some of the more concerning issues in policing. Previous BWC evaluation studies had not tested specific topics in policing related to BWCs such as activation, non-patrol units, criminal investigation departments, training, cost-effectiveness,<sup>8</sup> or adjudication. Miami Beach expects to provide new insights into these problems to develop sufficient evidence regarding the use of BWCs. In addition, the Miami Beach SPI will be one of the first to examine the impact of BWCs on prosecutions, convictions, and sentences, recognizing that the Phoenix SPI examined these same issues for domestic violence cases.

<sup>8</sup> Since the Miami Beach SPI award, CNA conducted a study of the cost-effectiveness of body-worn cameras in Las Vegas, NV. See Braga, Anthony, James R. Coldren, Jr., William Sousa, Denise Rodriguez, and Omer Alper. 2017. *The Benefits of Body-Worn Cameras: New Findings from a Randomized Controlled Trial at the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department*. Final report to the National Institute of Justice, 2013-IJ-CX-0016. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/251416.pdf>.

# SITE HIGHLIGHT

## DETROIT, MI – 2016



The City of Detroit experienced a high volume of violent crimes that typically occurred in small clusters of street blocks, with some common features characterizing repeat locations. The high level of violent crime led the city to adopt a unique approach through an initiative called “Project Green Light.” The SPI site partnered with several local businesses, including gas stations, convenience stores, liquor stores, and other establishments that experienced elevated risk. All of the partners pay a fee in order to have high-definition cameras installed within and around their establishments. Crime analysts at the Detroit Police Department’s Real-Time Crime Center monitor these cameras and relay relevant and timely information to dispatch or officers on the scene as needed. Detroit continues to expand the “Project Green Light” initiative and has already employed cameras in more than 300 locations.

## MILWAUKEE, WI – 2015



In several Milwaukee neighborhoods in which poverty, violent crime, and distrust for law enforcement were common, building community trust between officers and city residents has risen to top priority. The Milwaukee Police Department and its research partner, the Urban Institute, conducted an implementation and evaluation of BWCs. Increased transparency resulting from the use of the cameras can help support or reject many claims or complaints while improving public confidence in the local police department. In collaboration with its research partner, the police department conducted a randomized controlled trial by assigning cameras to officers in different patrol units. They evaluated changes in citizen complaints, use of force, and other citizen encounters with the police. Their research findings indicate that BWC officers conducted fewer stops and were less likely to receive a citizen complaint, but there was no observed effect on use of force during the study period.<sup>9</sup> More information on this SPI site is available in a previous SPI newsletter.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Peterson, Bryce E., Lilly Yu, Nancy La Vigne, and Daniel S. Lawrence. 2018. *The Milwaukee Police Department’s Body-Worn Camera Program: Evaluation Findings and Key Takeaways*. Urban Institute. [https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/98461/the\\_milwaukee\\_police\\_departments\\_body\\_worn\\_camera\\_program\\_3.pdf](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/98461/the_milwaukee_police_departments_body_worn_camera_program_3.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> Strategies for Policing Innovation. 2016. *SPI Fall 2016 Quarterly Newsletter*, no. 21. <http://strategiesforpolicinginnovation.com/tta/newsletter/spi-fall-2016-quarterly-newsletter>.



## CONCLUSION

Over the past 10 years, the Bureau of Justice Assistance has supported more than 50 SPI sites in developing innovative approaches to controlling and preventing crime, reducing victimization, and increasing public safety. The SPI sites are indeed pioneers in police administration and police science; through their experiments, the entire field is improving its knowledge regarding effectiveness and efficiency. CNA and BJA have learned as much from the SPI sites as the sites have learned from the training and technical assistance support provided to them.

SPI sites are law enforcement agencies at the cutting edge of policing practices. CNA has had the privilege of supporting all SPI sites since their inception, and the common themes and innovative practices summarized here illustrate how SPI sites are not only making an impact, but are also improving the methodological rigor of police science and changing the law enforcement landscape in areas such as justice research and collaboration with partners. As all true innovation comes from meeting unmet needs, the justice community will continue to benefit from the challenges, successes, and insights from SPI sites, trying different strategies to meet emerging and persistent needs within the communities they serve using rigorous evaluation approaches.



# CNA

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