

Early Warning Systems: What's New? What's Working?

Ashley Shultz

December 2015





This document represents the best opinion of CNA at the time of issue.

Copyright © 2015 CNA

This work was created in the performance of CNA Independent Research Funding. Any copyright in this work is subject to the Government's Unlimited Rights license as defined in FAR 52-227.14. The reproduction of this work for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited. Nongovernmental users may copy and distribute this document in any medium, either commercially or noncommercially, provided that this copyright notice is reproduced in all copies. Nongovernmental users may not use technical measures to obstruct or control the reading or further copying of the copies they make or distribute. Nongovernmental users may not accept compensation of any manner in exchange for copies. All other rights reserved.

Contents

Background	1
Executive Session Purpose and Speakers	3
Early Warning Systems: What's New? What's Working?	3
Audience Questions:.....	5
Early Warning Systems: What's New?.....	5
Audience Questions:.....	8
Early Warning Systems: What's Working?	9
Findings.....	11
Best practices	11
Challenges.....	11
Audience Questions:.....	12
Conclusion	15

This page intentionally left blank.

Background

CNA—a not-for-profit organization that focuses on operations and applied research to solve tough issues facing communities and governments at all levels—has worked with more than 50 police agencies over the past 10 years on issues relating to use of force, deadly use of force, community policing, citizen complaints against police, ambushes of police officers, violence reduction, innovative policing practices, police–community engagement, and rigorous evaluation of police initiatives. For several years—predating the publicized police shootings of civilians (or deaths in custody) in 2014 in Ferguson, MO; New York, NY; and Cleveland, OH—CNA, through its work with the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Smart Policing Initiative and the Violence Reduction Network, and with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Collaborative Reform Initiative, heard from police officers at all ranks about their desire for better approaches to avoiding such catastrophic incidents.

Many departments across the country utilize an early warning system (EWS)—a data-based police management tool that identifies “at risk officers” who are frequently the subject of complaints or demonstrate patterns of inappropriate behavior that could lead to more serious problems.¹ The system is designed to alert police departments of such behavior and afford them the opportunity to provide some form of intervention, such as counseling or training, before an officer is in a situation that warrants formal disciplinary action, or worse. Early warning systems capture factors such as how often officers are involved in shootings, get complaints, use sick days, or get into car accidents, and then notify departmental supervisors once a specific threshold is reached.²

According to the 1999 National Survey of Early Warning Systems, the most recent survey on early warning systems to date, 39 percent of all municipal and county law enforcement agencies that serve populations greater than 50,000 either had an early warning system in place or were planning to implement one.³ Currently, there is concern about the effectiveness of early warning systems—whether these systems are capturing the right data and alerting supervisors to potential problematic behavior. For example, some officers are concerned they could be flagged down merely because they work in a high-crime area, where they are more

¹ U.S. Civil Rights Commission, *Who Is Guarding the Guardians?* (Washington, DC: U.S. Civil Rights Commission, 1981); S. Walker, G.P. Alpert, and D.J. Kenney, *Early warning systems: Responding to the problem police officer* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, 2001).

² T. Abdollah, “Early warning systems’ aim to ID troubled police officers,” Associated Press, September 7, 2014, retrieved from <http://www.dailynews.com/government-and-politics/20140907/early-warning-systems-aim-to-id-troubled-police-officers>; Walker, Alpert, and Kenney, *Early warning systems*.

³ Abdollah, “Early warning systems”; G. Alpert and S. Walker, “Police Accountability and Early Warning Systems: Developing Policies and Programs,” *Justice Research and Policy* 2, no. 2 (2000): 59–72; National Institute of Justice, *National Survey of Early Warning Systems* (Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, Community Oriented Policing Services, 1999); Walker, Alpert, and Kenney. *Early warning systems*.

likely to use their weapon or physical force.⁴ While the EWS forewarns, it is up to the departmental supervisors as to how they act on the information received.

This apparent dilemma—whether these systems work, and whether they serve their intended purpose—prompted CNA to convene an Executive Session on September 24, 2015 in Arlington, VA: “Early Warning Systems: What’s New? What’s Working?” The Executive Session included panels of speakers representing different perspectives on these pertinent questions.

CNA asked a diverse group of practitioners, researchers, and analysts to step forward and discuss these important questions. They responded, and they did so with heartfelt sincerity—in many cases, reaching back to their own experiences with law enforcement, and conveying the lessons learned to the Executive Session’s audience with emotion and insight.

We hope you read this report with interest, curiosity, and an open mind. In this manner, we also hope that you respect the forthrightness of our presenters and audience participants. Lamentably, rare are the sincere, civil, data-informed, and productive discussions on matters such as these facing our nation, though such conversations are happening with increasing frequency, as our federal partners who participated in this Executive Session explain below.

Please also note that this CNA Executive Session was the third in a series that we will continue to convene, so long as the nation has diverse and informed practitioners, community members, and decision makers willing to engage in these important dialogues. The participants in this Executive Session offered numerous suggestions for future session topics, which we will consider. After reading this summary, if you have additional topics to suggest, please send your suggestions to CNA Managing Director Chip Coldren at coldrej@cna.org.

⁴ Abdollah, “Early warning systems.”

Executive Session Purpose and Speakers

This Executive Session provided a venue for representatives from law enforcement, research, the local community, and the federal government to discuss their experiences and perspectives on the current state of early warning systems (EWS).

Opening the session, Cambridge (MA) Police Commissioner Robert Haas introduced the topic of early warning systems. Commissioner Haas discussed how the technology has progressed over the past 15 years but has failed to change in some ways, which has undermined its utility.

Following Commissioner Haas, two panels discussed what is new and what is working with early warning systems. These panels comprised the leaders of the John F. Finn Institute for Public Safety in Albany, NY; the White House; the Las Vegas (NV) Metropolitan Police Department; the Greensboro (NC) Police Department; the State of Vermont, and CNA.

Each Executive Session panel included an opportunity for session participants to ask questions of the presenters. Below, we review each panel session, and include a summary of participant questions and panelists' answers.

Early Warning Systems: What's New? What's Working?

Keynote Address: Robert Haas, Commissioner, Cambridge (MA) Police Department



The Executive Session's first speaker, Commissioner Robert Haas, discussed early warning systems, specifically their varied ability to catch bad employees.

Haas suggested looking at EWS in policing in terms of what our culture is currently facing. This includes bringing inequities and injustices that already exist, and are unlikely to disappear, to the forefront. For this reason, policing faces a critical junction. History illustrates that fundamental systems have a deterring effect on what officers do on the street: when there has been an errant situation, there has been a response from the department.

Haas discussed the path moving forward with regards to EWS. The Cambridge Police Department has had EWS initiatives underway now for three to four years. They are looking at prevention and early intervention in terms why officers do what they do. He noted that EWSs are fundamental to policing: few professions have given the amount of power to individuals with respect to its impact on civil liberties, especially in terms of the use of force. Because of the nature of police work, police officers have great latitude with discretionary authority. EWSs exist to ensure this discretion is being used properly, especially

now as social demands and expectations have grown exponentially over time. In addition, police are the advocates for people in need as they are the individuals police interact with every day. Given the complexity of policing, the characteristics and traits of the policing workforce currently may not be the right ones in terms of “warriors” versus “guardians”: police officers do not do a lot of crime fighting but, rather, are asked to handle a lot of social justice tasks they were never trained to do. If this continues, Haas believes, the policing community is set up for failure.

Haas remarked that EWSs tend to be punitive in nature in terms of sanctions, written reprimands, and the like. This adds a layer of difficulty, because these actions typically are too late. Society wants to catch things of concern sooner and earlier with EWSs.

Haas remarked that there are a variety of things the policing profession is trying to accomplish with EWS:

1. Demonstrating to the public that the policing community can police itself
2. Stopping inappropriate behavior and teaching a lesson to those inappropriately behaving in order to change wrong behaviors
3. Sending a message across the entire department about discipline to make sure that others know why action is being taken, and that inappropriate behavior is taken seriously
4. Restoring faith in a community whose issues we can deal with and move forward.

Haas believes that this approach will restore faith not only in the community, but also internally—in the police department itself. This is because the policing community suffers from a “funnel effect”: the nature of the bureaucratic process obscures what is actually going on out in the field—and because the policing community is reactive in nature. This state of affairs is frustrating for administrators. In fact, some are paralyzed trying to move forward in dealing with errant behavior, leaving many wondering how the policing community got to this point with answers like: “It got to this point before my time.” “It’s someone else’s fault.” “The system doesn’t allow me to do the things I need to do.”

Haas remarked that a reputation can tarnish an entire department as the public forms opinions based on what they hear and stops talking to the department because of their experience during the course of an engagement with an officer, or during a response when they tried to file a complaint and experienced the difficult bureaucratic processes firsthand. Haas believes that policing is at a critical crossroads, with the responsibility to make sure that what is going on internally matches up with what officers are doing externally on streets—essentially, community policing.

Haas commented on the applicability of EWS to procedural justice moving forward and what an EWS should look like. He noted that there is too much at stake to continue to rely on antiquated systems or ones that have failed in correcting errant behavior. July 16, 2009, the date of the controversy between Professor Henry Louis Gates and the Cambridge Police Department, was a major turning point for the Cambridge Police Department that made the department look internally at how they train employees in their organization. National and

international scrutiny forced the department to radically change the way it thinks about policing. In a very educated community such as Cambridge, there are high demands and expectations on the public workforce, and the community will not tolerate poor performance.

Audience Questions:

- 1) An audience member asked how basic training changes the culture of policing.

Haas responded that when officers find themselves in crisis, they refer back to training to find alternative ways to deal with the situation. Command-and-control situations and management are very different from each other. There is a paradoxical approach to a response in which procedural justice versus legal authority empowers an officer. Ideally, procedural justice will empower an officer's response. Training is about the officer's role, and thus the policing profession must think about how officers should respond.

- 2) An audience member noted that the existence of EWSs in departments was not a major factor in leading to the changes Haas mentioned and asked what role did EWSs play in the past or will play in the future.

Haas responded that a full-scale change is required—within the department—in order to change how it deals with the community.

- 3) An audience member asked how to introduce mindfulness to the police force.

Haas responded that a social worker who introduced the notion of mindfulness to the Cambridge Police Department met with patrol lieutenants every six weeks. Haas noted that there will be one group that presents the greatest amount of pushback. However, Roll Call training can counteract this pushback.

Early Warning Systems: What's New?

Panel 1: right to left: Rob Worden (Director, John F. Finn Institute for Public Safety), Lynn Overmann (Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Chief Technology Officer for Criminal Justice at the White House), and Zoë Thorkildsen (Research Analyst, CNA)



The body of recent research on early warning systems and their effectiveness is small. Yet new activity in this area has been spurred primarily by recent highly publicized events regarding police shootings, deaths in police custody, and concerns about the police's use of force. This panel took stock of what existing research illustrates about the design and effectiveness of early warning systems, current research endeavors, and what

research still needs to be done to advance our understanding of how best to make use of such systems.

The panel's first speaker, Rob Worden, discussed what is known about current research on, and what remains to be learned about, EWSs.

Worden first discussed what is known about EWSs. He began by noting that this body of knowledge is small. Worden's other observations:

- EWS can be problematic in that measures of misuse of police authority and other behaviors are ambiguous.
- EWS have some structural commonalities across departments, such as performance indicators, selection of officers who seem to be exhibiting problem behaviors, intervention(s), monitoring, and the like. However, there is a lot of variability of performance indicators across departments.
- There is a great amount of administrative commitment associated with EWSs.
- Empirical evidence regarding intervention by EWS is weak and needs to be studied further.



Worden then discussed current research on EWSs. He noted that current research being conducted by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) consists of two components: surveys and case studies. In the 2007 survey, agencies reported that all of their EWSs vary widely in structure.

Finally, Worden discussed what remains to be learned about EWSs. He acknowledged many questions remain to be answered, including EWSs' ability to predict future behavior and intervention strategies. Any prediction is subject to errors of one type or another. Despite this and the great variety among departments' performance indicators, all departments have a serious shortcoming in terms of underreported complaints. Even when EWSs are used properly and skillfully, police work will still have publicly adverse consequences. For this reason, better intervention descriptions are needed. When interventions fail to have expected impacts, it is because the intervention strategy was not meaningful. Finally, the role of supervision in terms of EWSs remains to be developed, in that EWSs cannot be fully understood outside of the organizational system.



The panel's second speaker, Lynn Overmann, discussed data and technology to improve police department practices, specifically regarding EWSs.

Overmann first discussed using data to help inform police department practices. She acknowledged the wide variety of indicators police departments use, noting there is a lot of overlap. However, there is no pattern behind the selection of indicators by a department. Overmann thinks this is where data analysis could be beneficial to departments. She noted that this selection of indicators without pattern is also detrimental to departments, in that most chiefs of police and departments are generally not technologically savvy. Thus when many could not find an EWS that fit their department's needs or solved its problems, they built their own system (or had it built for them). This practice—the rapid adoption of new technology about which there is little information—is evident around the country in many other aspects and has many implications. Take body-worn cameras, for example. This relatively new technology has been adopted rapidly by police departments around the country in response to public outcry regarding officer-involved shootings. These devices are now producing a massive amount of data with hours of video but there is no standardized method of analysis. Ironically, once a method of analysis is developed, this data could be helpful for EWSs. While a standardized method of analysis is not yet finalized, there are internal and external working groups currently developing such methods. As of late, there is a solution for the audio portion collected by body-worn cameras, but not yet video. Overmann remarked that technology is simply not at this place, yet. However, there is a lot of innovation happening. The U.S. government is considering competitions or prizes to accelerate the development of technological advancements to address this issue. As a result, she thinks technology will be ready in the next two-to-five years.

Body-worn cameras are not the only technology producing a massive amount of data inputs. Overmann discussed the data inputs currently coming into EWSs, such as citizen complaints, and she remarked at the challenges of getting broader community input in terms of citizen complaints. As departments begin to shift from the “warrior” to the “guardian” mentality, it will become increasingly important for departments to reach a broader audience from which they may not already be receiving input, specifically regarding the deployment of officers in a certain way. She believes there is an untapped opportunity in this “market,” one that has sparked the interest of Silicon Valley. The only downside to this is that departments do not function like a market.



The panel's third speaker, Zoë Thorkildsen, discussed the potential to apply the concept of EWS at an organizational level.

Thorkildsen remarked on recent events that the public is all too familiar with—Ferguson and Baltimore—that put police-community relations at the forefront of media attention. As a

result, police departments have begun to focus more on EWSs, and CNA has begun to look into developing an EWS for the organizational level. Such an EWS would be analogous to an officer-level EWS intended to drive intervention at the individual level, in that it would be intended to drive intervention at the organizational level.

Thorkildsen noted that this work began with a literature review to understand officer-level EWS, as well as to learn if anyone has done work regarding organizational EWSs. While EWSs are used by many departments across the country, little is known about their effectiveness or impact on actual outcomes. Not to mention, they vary widely by department, which makes it difficult for CNA to translate the EWS concept to a broader, nationwide level. CNA is looking at applying the concept to a broader level as we think it would be beneficial. In a review of the literature, CNA also found that businesses frequently use systems and indicators analogous to those of police departments; however, we were unable to find close parallels among them. In addition, other public service fields such as schools and hospitals use EWSs at the individual level, but not at the organizational level. Having identified this gap, CNA put together a team to further explore the concept of an organizational EWS.

During the first stage of this work, CNA developed a draft list of indicators to be tested in a pilot Organizational Early Warning System (OEWS). The OEWS was created using two main sources: 1) looking at officer-level indicators and attempting to develop analogous measures for department-level indicators, and 2) developing some indicators that made sense from the department level, such as a department's use of social media.

During the second stage of this work, CNA convened five pilot sites—police departments across the country willing to help determine if the development of such a system is feasible. Having determined the feasibility of such a system, CNA then determined that the next stage of this work will involve CNA working with these five pilot sites to test the data collection process. Based on the outcomes of this testing, CNA will refine the indicator list. Then CNA will discuss the idea of intervention with these pilot sites, specifically looking at what sorts of interventions departments need in an attempt to answer departments' questions of whether a Ferguson or Baltimore could happen to them.

Audience Questions:

- 1) An audience member asked if any of the video technology is using the kind of facial recognition technology developed by Paul Ekman.

Overmann responded that the challenge with the video technology is the movement of the camera itself and the ability to translate such visual data.

- 2) An audience member commented that EWSs are being observed in a silo. As a profession, law enforcement needs to decide what the goal of law enforcement is in the nation. There is no correlation between the number arrested and crime rates.

Overmann believes this extends beyond deciding what the goal of law enforcement is to what is the goal to be achieved. She believes this is trying to achieve safety and trust within

communities. She noted safety has been achieved, but trust has not, particularly in certain communities.

Police Commissioner Haas remarked that the Lincoln Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has done great work with respect to analytics.

- 3) An audience member commented that training can change the law enforcement profession, and that this begins with basic law enforcement training in each state. In order to effect cultural change in policing, needed training must be identified, developed, and then taught at the academy level.

Overmann believes that the solution lies with cognitive task analysis. She noted that there are experts in every police department who can tweak training to model such analysis.

- 4) An audience member commented on new technological advancement as analogous to plugging a moral compass into a bad squad.

Overmann acknowledged training as a main factor to prevent this. She thinks another way to identify great people within departments is to have those most respected by their peers become trainers.

Worden believes that most misuses of force were not attributable to officers wanting to use brutality but, rather, to the challenges with which they were faced.

Early Warning Systems: What's Working?

Panel 2: left to right: Kirk Primas (Assistant Sheriff, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department), Ken Miller (Chief, Greenville Police Department), and Julio Thompson (Assistant Attorney General, State of Vermont)

Effective utilization of Early Warning Systems (or their approximations) is an emerging art, with effective use depending on such factors as the quality of existing data, agency expertise regarding the development and use of such systems, the extent to which internal consensus on their use exists, and more. This panel featured presentations from several law enforcement agencies that have taken a progressive approach to rethinking EWSs as a proactive tool for increasing accountability, addressing training gaps, and improving officer performance.





The panel's first speaker, Kirk Primas, discussed the current state of policing and EWSs in terms of what works and what does not work.

Like previous speakers, Primas stated that EWSs are not effective. The major focus of EWSs is on the officer, not the department; hence, EWSs are not being used to effect the organizational change for which they were intended. Primas also shares Haas' belief that the policing profession is currently facing a critical era that will not quickly or quietly pass. Thus the profession must embrace the demands for social change. While this will be challenging, it is not something the profession cannot overcome. Like Haas, Primas also believes that in

order to positively change EWSs, the leadership must be supportive of the chief's vision. This is critical, as it requires change at the cultural level.

Primas discussed why law enforcement agencies get into trouble. He noted that the problem stems from how departments are using EWSs, and on whom they are using these systems. More problematic, however, is knowing that a problem exists, but that it takes a tragic event to force a law enforcement agency to solicit help in resolving the problem. While departments know how to get into trouble, they do not know how to avoid trouble. And while they are tackling these issues at the officer level, they are unsure of how to compile all of this information in order to better understand the underlying systemic issues at play.

Primas discussed EWSs best practices. He noted that what works in a successful law enforcement agency is different for every agency, because every agency is different in terms of its unions, laws, demographics, and the like. Even with knowledge of best practices and specific items that get departments into trouble, it is unknown if EWSs could prevent a catastrophic event from happening.

Primas remarked on the future work with OEWSs at CNA. He noted that once indicators have been determined, the pilot sites will need to determine if they have the data necessary for these indicators. If the data are available, then the pilot sites will need to determine if they want to capture it—and, if so, how to measure it. Primas cautioned that one OEWS will not work for every department across the country. However, one of the most important indicators will be how the department relates to the community: if a department lacks a good accountability system on officer performance, it will fail. He further noted that culture will not change unless action is taken to effectively change it. The community is demanding change, and the policing profession should oblige.



The panel's second speaker, Ken Miller, discussed the Greensboro (NC) Police Department's findings, best practices, and challenges regarding its EWS.

Miller noted that his department's EWS is structured fairly similarly to other departments' across the country. He noted his department's being "event count-driven," highlighting the need for officer intervention. Miller remarked that departments typically differ in terms of who evaluates the system and

administers the intervention.

Miller claimed the work by Sam Walker in 2004 as the watershed moment for EWSs. Since then, Miller's department has determined several findings, best practices, and challenges through its use of EWS:

Findings

- Employee participation is important, as this makes change easier to accomplish.
- EWSs ultimately address at-risk behavior common to all departments: use of force, citizen complaints, collisions, pursuits, and injuries.
- Departments need academic collaborations in this field, specifically with program design, data collection, and the like.
- EWSs capture the following intervention types: counseling, training, employee assistance programs (EAPs), other (something the department has yet to conceptualize), or no intervention required (for false positives). Of these intervention types, most officers in the Greensboro Police Department fell into counseling, training, and EAPs.

Best practices

- Utilize technology to reduce redundancy of paper forms.
- Create a guidebook to document what an EWS is and is not.
- Utilize document management to normalize data. Most EWSs have pre-populated fields, which are only as good as the data entered, to redundancy and normalize data. In addition, this is easier for supervisors and commanders to review.
- Do not allow for printing of information in the system.

Challenges

- EWSs are pragmatic, but they lack academic rigor. Departments are driven primarily by Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Standards (CALEA) criteria. Once a department builds an EWS to meet accreditation standards, they do not evaluate the system over time, as this is not a requirement.
- Using event counts or algorithms of problematic behavior greatly impacts officer and, ultimately, departmental morale. Event counts catch more people than needed, while algorithms miss people needed, and are impractical, expensive, and time consuming.

- Supervisor evaluation efficacy can be problematic in that supervisors look at cases in isolation and fail to look for underlying patterns.

Miller noted that the path forward involves a willingness of time, energy, research, and funding to support the building and designing of an EWS that will prevent a repeat of history.



The panel's third speaker, Julio Thompson, discussed the consequences of supervisors' intervening.

Thompson noted that EWSs are a part of a bigger trend in departments emphasizing technological solutions more heavily over the years. However, little thought is given to what happens during intervention when an officer sits down one-on-one with his or her supervisor. In fact, many departments give little thought to what happens when officers are flagged—specifically, who should mentor them and how to know if this is beneficial. Thompson believes a lot of “mentoring and counseling” is occurring without a robust understanding that the meeting between an officer and his or her supervisor in a room to discuss problematic behavior identified by an EWS is a big psychological transaction. This is because an officer may have a moral investment about the citizen complainant, or the officer may have talked to many people about the meeting before it ever takes place. There are a number of problems that arise during the intervention process—resistance, union presence, invoking Garrity or Weingarten rights, or overtly tuning out, among others. Thompson suggests that departments give thought not only to EWS, but also to the intervention component.

Audience Questions:

- 1) An audience member asked what EWS departments are using.

Primas stated that the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) is using IAPRO and Blue Team.

Miller stated the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department created its own EWS that the Greensboro Police Department uses.

- 2) An audience member asked for further comment regarding the speakers' departments' use of community surveys.

Primas cautioned that there is a danger associated with using too many surveys. He noted that LVMPD decentralized its community survey process and is seeing generally better customer service as a result. The department has yet to determine how to measure these findings; however, it is leery of conducting a community survey soon, because the community is burnt out of doing surveys.

- 3) An audience member asked if there has been a study that looks at whether there would have been an indicator of a potential problem if a department had run an officer through an EWS.

Thompson is not aware of such a study existing. He remarked at hearing of career autopsy and looking at those issues or predictors, but is unable to comment in great detail.

Closing Remarks

Ellen Scrivner, Law Enforcement Consultant



Ellen Scrivner has worked as a psychologist with police departments, as well as with the U.S. Department of Justice, helping to shape the ways police do their work. She noted that EWSs have not changed much over time, and so it is important to take a look at these systems to find out what can be done to make greater changes.

Scrivner said she started her career as a police psychologist, and as a result has an issue with calling these systems “early warning” instead of “early intervention.” She thinks they should be called early intervention systems (EISs) as it makes more sense in terms of what to accomplish and how they should be perceived by the community.

Scrivner discussed the way EISs were supposed to work. She noted that EISs might not have worked as well as originally planned. The lack of research has been detrimental to EISs, because it is impossible to say they are working the way they are intended. The EIS was supposed to be proactive and really change problematic behaviors, instead of reactive and disciplinary in nature. As previously discussed by many of the speakers, there is a great deal of variability among the indicators across departments. Thus a picture has not emerged of what the system should look like, who should be involved, or how supervisors should use it.

Also previously discussed by many of the presenters was the system of accountability, transparency, and building trust within a community. This is what departments and community members alike thought EISs were doing. Scrivner noted that like many things, the EIS got stale without continual improvement. So what we are presented with, Scrivner observed, is a great opportunity to take the EIS in an entirely new direction, and to focus these systems on what they were *not* originally. She predicts that the next generation will expect something along the lines of an OEWS. It has been a difficult time for law enforcement. And while it is important to not rely on progress already made, forward movement cannot occur unless the law enforcement profession is willing to make some of these changes. Scrivner thinks the work CNA, among others, is currently doing will help move the profession in this positive direction.

This page intentionally left blank.

Conclusion

The themes that emerged among the panels at this Executive Session and in the speakers' comments centered on what is new in early warning systems (EWS), and what is working—and not working—in these systems:

It is clear that EWS technology has not changed much during the past 15 years. Currently, EWSs capture only the factors that are dependent upon a police department's preferences.

While many police departments across the country utilize an early warning system to be alerted of problematic behavior and afford them the opportunity to provide some form of intervention, such as counseling or training, before an officer is in situation that warrants formal disciplinary action, there is little research on the *effectiveness* of EWSs.

Because of this deficiency in research on EWS effectiveness, the concern remains whether systems are capturing the data needed to identify and then alert supervisors to potentially problematic behavior.

Addressing these central questions is crucial to the field of policing, in that we heard from police officers at all ranks about their desire for better approaches to avoiding catastrophic incidents such as Ferguson and Baltimore—incidents potentially caused by problematic officer behavior.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

This page intentionally left blank.



CNA

This report was written by CNA's Safety and Security (SAS) division.

SAS's work helps improve decision-making during crisis operations and fosters innovative answers to challenges in the areas of first response; emergency management; public health and agriculture; homeland security; risk-management policy development and operations; and response and recovery capabilities at a national level.





CNA is a not-for-profit research organization that serves the public interest by providing in-depth analysis and result-oriented solutions to help government leaders choose the best course of action in setting policy and managing operations.

*Nobody gets closer—
to the people, to the data, to the problem.*