

# Evaluation of the Certified Crime Prevention Community Program



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Certified Crime Prevention Community program was created in 1998 by a directive from the Governor's New Partnership Commission for Community Safety to promote community safety and to recognize communities displaying exemplary efforts in the prevention of crime. During the course of its work, the Commission identified many outstanding examples of community safety programs. In an effort to honor and bring recognition to these programs, the Commission developed the Governor's New Partnership Community Safety Awards, which turned out to be a resounding success.

Taking a cue from the success of the Awards program, the Commission asked the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to recommend programs that fostered the development of community safety initiatives at the local level. DCJS presented a proposal to the Commission to develop a program titled the **Certified Crime Prevention Community Program**, commonly referred to as CCPC. Based on a study conducted by the Virginia State Crime Commission in 1993, the goal of the program was to publicly recognize and certify localities that have implemented a defined set of community safety strategies as part of a comprehensive community safety/crime prevention effort. Commission members were very enthusiastic about the proposal and approved it unanimously.

The program encourages localities to develop and implement collaborative community safety plans within a flexible framework designed by the Commission. Furthermore, it provides an ongoing process by which communities can reassess and update their plans to address emerging community safety issues. To obtain the certification, a locality must meet 12 core community safety elements/strategies augmented by a minimum of seven approved optional elements either proffered by the locality or selected from a list provided by DCJS.

While the strategies of the Certified Crime Prevention Community Program (CCPC) are rooted in the recommendations of the 1993 Crime Commission study, the focus has been expanded to include additional community safety strategies that are integral to reducing citizen fear of crime, youth violence, gang activity and involvement in drugs.

This program is the only program of its kind in the United States. Participant communities must undergo a rigorous application process and provide proof of overall community involvement and of meeting the mandated and optional elements. The communities are then closely examined by a sub-committee of the Criminal Justice Services Board (CJSB) to ensure that they meet all required elements and have proven their commitment to the safety of the community.

The first communities were certified in 2001 and since that time a total of 14 communities, large and small, rural, urban, and suburban have received the certification. The certified communities represent a population of approximately one-third of Virginia's residents.

Communities achieving initial certification are:

- |                   |                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| City of Bristol   | City of Lynchburg        |
| County of Fairfax | City of Newport News     |
| City of Galax     | City of Portsmouth       |
| City of Hampton   | County of Prince William |
| County of Hanover | City of Radford          |
| County of Henrico | City of Roanoke          |
| Town of Herndon   | City of Virginia Beach   |

Certified communities must go through a similar process every three years to be re-certified. To date, 12 of those certified have reached the re-certification date. One (Bristol) opted not to undergo re-certification and one (Portsmouth) has had its certification date extended until 2010 to achieve the core Accreditation element. This evaluation includes the ten current re-certified communities, as well as Portsmouth, which met all except one element in its re-certification application.

### Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to evaluate whether the stated goal of the Certified Crime Prevention Community Program, as specified in the executive summary of this report, is being achieved. This report is also intended to further satisfy the original concept from 1998 of recognizing those communities displaying exemplary efforts in the prevention of crime.

An additional purpose of reviewing the re-certified communities is to identify the impact, if any, that this program has had on the communities during their first certification period. The evaluation also attempts to identify any patterns or trends noted by the communities participating in this program in crime and the prevention of crime. This review does not claim to be a scientific study of the effectiveness of the programs listed but is intended to shed light on its value and any needed changes to the Certified Crime Prevention Community program, which might improve its utility to communities and its effectiveness in enhancing crime prevention services.

## **Methodology**

The method for examining this program is non-scientific. This evaluation was conducted by reviewing the mandated 12 core elements each community submitted for re-certification and identifying specifically what was noted in the accomplishments and evaluation portions for each element submission. A table was created for each core element and community listing the key efforts, successes, and any failures noted. A spreadsheet was then created with each core element and the information transferred from the table to the individual core element. Each community's information was then noted, giving an overall picture of all of the re-certified communities and allowing an examination for similarities across jurisdictional boundaries in each core element.

The program requires seven optional elements be selected from a list of 22, but allows the locality to submit local options to be approved as alternatives. In this conclusion benefits, which were identified, are listed as well as suggested key findings which identify future needs. The absence of any crime prevention program listed in the core or optional elements does not indicate the program is not active in the certified community but that it was not chosen as a primary element.

The core elements required in the program, which were part of this evaluation, are:

- Existence of a local crime and safety coalition,
- A DCJS certified Crime Prevention Specialist assigned crime prevention duties in the local law enforcement agency,
- A neighborhood watch program,
- Community policing or crime control program,
- Organized distribution of safety literature,
- Designation of staff trained to conduct community safety assessments,
- Functional crime analysis capability,
- A comprehensive school safety audit process,
- A business outreach (watch) program,
- An on-site victim/witness services program,
- A delinquency prevention program,
- The law enforcement agency must be accredited or seeking accreditation.

## **Organization of the Report**

The report is broken down according to the elements, rather than by community, since the evaluation is of the overall CCPC program. Within the report, unique approaches or significant accomplishments which were noted by individual jurisdictions have been included as anecdotal measures and for information purposes. As with most attempts to evaluate any crime prevention effort, it is not likely that any success can be attributed completely to any single program or approach. As indicated with other such evaluations and studies, both scientific and non-scientific, success is more likely to be in conjunction with other crime prevention, community, or enforcement activities. When possible to narrow the scope of success specifically, or at least significantly, to the element, such successes were noted in the report.

Once each element and its indications have been listed, a conclusion of the success of the overall CCPC program is provided. These suggestions are primarily drawn from the indications of needed resources for a program or aspect which appears to demonstrate success in several of the existing CCPC communities.



## CORE ELEMENT 1

### **Local Community Crime Prevention/Community Safety Council or Coalition.**

*Rationale: The rationale for this element was that such a group would help set the tone and direction for all community safety efforts at the local level. The intent was that it would be made up of various entities within the community.*

In the evaluation we learned the coalitions were often pre-existing organizations which were already serving in the capacity of the rationale given. This is consistent with data in the 2009 DCJS document, “The Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia,” based on a survey of law enforcement Chief Executive Officers (CEO), which revealed that 35% work with formal citizen councils or coalitions and most of these councils actively worked on prevention issues.<sup>1</sup> All of the coalitions in this evaluation were active in crime prevention efforts. For example, five were neighborhood advocate/watch-based and four were formed from an existing Chief’s Advisory Committee. Ninety-one percent (91%) of the councils met at least quarterly and half of those met monthly. The average attendance at these meetings was approximately twenty members.

Five of the coalitions reported having obtained funding for crime prevention efforts or aided in generating cost savings to the community crime prevention efforts in some way. Two coalitions have been designated as not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organizations. Most of the funding was obtained through grants and donations sought by the coalitions. Other assistance was brought about through active support by the coalition in budgetary hearings of the governing body.

Eight of the eleven communities reported having addressed citizen concerns in some way. In one community a concern raised regarding increased larcenies in a particular area led the police department to create a three-month awareness campaign to address the thefts. This campaign resulted in a 29% reduction in larcenies from vehicles and is believed to have contributed to a 36% three-year decline in grand larcenies city-wide.

All of the coalitions reported being actively involved in crime prevention training. One coalition assisted in staffing the statewide crime prevention conference and another reported having one of its members, who frequently trains as a volunteer, certified as a Crime Prevention Specialist. Three coalitions also support the local law enforcement and community crime prevention efforts through crime prevention awards to citizens and officers. One of the primary training efforts in communities is the watch-based programs (neighborhood watch, business watch, etc.). Three of the coalitions reported contributing to the increase in watches in their community. One reported a 16% increase in all watch programs, another reported a 10% increase in neighborhood watches, and yet another 5-10% growth within the various precincts of their city. Most had some involvement in the organization and participation in larger events, such as National Night Out.

### **Indications from Evaluation**

The existence of a Crime and Safety Coalition is productive and useful. Based on the evaluations, these coalitions are generally made up of those individuals most supportive of crime prevention and those that are most active in collaborative efforts toward the prevention of crime. These coalitions represent a valued resource in providing additional funding outside of the law enforcement budget. They also provide much needed supplemental staff for training and leadership in organizing prevention-oriented events. This is especially important in view of the DCJS 2009 report of survey findings that only 42% of the responding agency CEOs said they had discretionary funds for crime prevention other than what was needed for the salaries and benefits of their crime prevention staff.<sup>2</sup> The coalitions are able to solicit outside funding and to speak to issues and concerns much more freely than governmental employees or law enforcement staff, which are often restricted by policy. No negative indications were given regarding the independence of the coalitions in the re-certification applications.

The clear indication is that having a coalition made up of community members representing different constituents is primarily beneficial to prevention efforts through advisory, funding, and volunteerism capacities. Use of these coalitions in the re-certified communities has been proven to encourage trust and openness between the community at-large and the police.

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<sup>1</sup> Schuiteman, John G. 2009. *The Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia*, p21. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

<sup>2</sup> Schuiteman, John G. 2009. *The Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia*, p26. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services



## CORE ELEMENT 2

### **A DCJS-certified crime prevention specialist is assigned to crime prevention duties in the law enforcement agency.**

*Rationale: While the delivery of crime prevention services should be the responsibility of all personnel within a law enforcement agency, there remains a need for a designated staff person who directs, manages and coordinates crime prevention activities while also serving as a resource for the agency's effort. The rationale for this element requiring that person to be a DCJS-certified crime prevention specialist (CPS) is that this will ensure that he/she is on the cutting edge of the field, and that the professionalism of the local law enforcement agency crime prevention aspect will be improved. By virtue of the requirements for certification, the locality can take full advantage of the latest developments in crime prevention.*

All of the communities re-certified and examined for this report were in compliance, with at least one Crime Prevention Specialist (CPS) on staff. While some duties varied, all specialists were responsible for conducting training within the community. Three of the 11 communities had CPSs who also conducted training on a regional or statewide level. The larger agencies did not necessarily have more CPSs than the smaller agencies. During their re-certifications the breakdown of CPS was as follows:

County of Fairfax (15)	County of Henrico (50+)	County of Prince William (10)
City of Galax (3)	City of Lynchburg (2)	City of Roanoke (12)
City of Hampton (1)	City of Newport News (5)	City of Virginia Beach (8)
County of Hanover (2)	City of Portsmouth (3)	

Four of the 11 communities noted that their CPSs, being specially trained to do so, were also assigned the duty of reviewing building plans from a crime risk and safety standpoint. Building plan reviews allow for recommendations toward a safer built environment prior to construction beginning.

Eighty-two percent conducted security assessments due to their specialized training in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), target hardening, and their crime prevention experience. The percentage of those conducting security assessments is directly related to the increased training in this area, a heightened awareness of CPTED strategies and increased requests. This information is supported by the data from the 2009 DCJS survey in which 50% of CPSs surveyed stated they had experienced a notable increase in requests for businesses security assessments, and 49% stated they had experienced a notable increase in requests for physical structure security assessments following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.<sup>3</sup>

Just fewer than 50%, of the CPSs serving in the re-certified communities received bonus pay, important transfers, promotions or awards during the re-certification period.

### **Indications from Evaluation**

The information reported for this element in the re-certification demonstrated the CPS was used in training and in advanced crime prevention tasks, but did not indicate their directing the crime prevention effort for the law enforcement agency, as the rationale planned. The wide variation in the number of CPSs, regardless of agency size, is unexplained in the submissions by the communities and no indications can objectively be drawn as to the cause of this factor. The number of CPSs receiving accolades, important transfers, and promotions indicate the quality of the CPS staff and value given the work they perform.

The information reported indicates the training and specialized skills obtained by CPSs are being proactively used. The lack of the communities reporting CPSs as managers of crime prevention efforts may indicate that agencies are filling the management role by others not certified as a CPS. The indication is that the opinion may be that those non-certified CPS managers do not have, or do not require, the technical knowledge of crime prevention, but rather serve only as managers of crime prevention trained staff, or may be in the process of becoming trained and qualified to become a CPS. An additional indication, based on information received through personal contact with the CPSs, is that crime prevention management courses are needed. These courses will provide the CPSs, and the CCPC community, with the tools to fully implement the CPS as the CCPC rationale was intended.

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<sup>3</sup> Schuiteman, John G. 2009. *The Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia*, p27. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services



## CORE ELEMENT 3

### **A neighborhood watch program with training and documented support of watches.**

*Rationale: Neighborhood Watch has proven to be one of the longest ongoing community-based programs to reduce the opportunity for crime. While it is anticipated that citizens will take ownership of their watch programs, law enforcement and other agencies must provide the leadership and ongoing direction for such programs.*

All of the neighborhood watch programs met at least annually and 82% reported meeting at least quarterly. Each of the communities increased the number of neighborhood watches during the certification period. The number of new watches ranged from an increase of two to an increase of 22 watch organizations and at least one community reported revitalizing two pre-existing watch groups. One community increased its watches by 16%, the largest percentage increase of the CCPCs re-certifying programs. In one community in which a neighborhood watch was revived in 2007, the community reported that, during the first five months of 2008, the overall crime rate in the watch area dropped by 45% in comparison to the same time frame during the previous year. Property-related crimes, of which neighborhood watch is generally thought to have the most influence on, dropped in the same neighborhood by 49%, while violent crimes dropped 26%. Yet another community, which received recognition for its neighborhood watch efforts in 2003, reported a decrease in calls for service by almost 33%. One neighborhood watch's efforts to address a different problem, open air drug activity, led to the watch organizing a clean-up and anti-drug march which heightened awareness of the problem. Following the increased awareness, subsequent efforts by law enforcement resulted in a reduction in the calls for service by 52%.

Approximately 55% of the crime prevention communities reported having several methods of communicating with neighborhood watches other than just telephone or in-person, these included: reverse 911, e-mail and fax alerts, and newsletters. Most of these methods were implemented or enhanced during the re-certification period, as the technology advancements became available. At least three of the programs noted being a source of volunteers within the law enforcement agency and three had members that served in a dual capacity as members of the Crime and Safety Council (Core Element 1 of the CCPC Program) or on the Chief's Advisory Board. One noted the use of active patrols in their program and two noted incorporation of emergency preparedness training.

### **Indications from Evaluation**

The evaluations confirm that neighborhood watch continues to be a foundational crime prevention program upon which others may grow. From the smallest community to the largest, neighborhood watch is viewed as essential to any crime prevention program and ongoing efforts to create new, or revive dying, watch groups are institutionalized. There is no standardized statewide method to be considered an "active" neighborhood watch. Each community is unique in its makeup, its needs and its requirements to become an active watch. Likewise, there is no central statewide organization from which to identify the exact number of neighborhood watches. While there is no method in place statewide of determining an exact number of neighborhood watches, it is not surprising that nine of the eleven re-certified communities were listed as having among the highest numbers of watches in their communities in 2002, the last year such data was gathered.<sup>4</sup> In the 2009 Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia document, 77% of the Crime Prevention Specialists surveyed scored their neighborhood watches as active. Another 17% scored them as semi-active. In the same document, neighborhood watch was ranked as the most effective crime prevention program by the specialists.<sup>5</sup>

The success of neighborhood watch, at least specific to property crime and in the short term, is supported by the data provided by these communities. Whether the reductions are the result of watch group actions, their bringing the problem under closer scrutiny and forcing more action, or a combination of these factors, it is clear that the neighborhood watches were at least a part of the solution.

Neighborhood watches are often led by community activists desiring to see a positive change in their community. As such, they tend to be volunteers and are tapped by advisory boards as was described above. Neighborhood Watch programs appear to channel activism into a positive direction, providing training and appropriate liaison or contact persons for the watch leadership. It is therefore not surprising that watches are used to disseminate important information such as homeland preparedness, home security and the like. While the watches are the embodiment of the principles espoused by Sir Robert Peel in the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829, "that the police are the public and the public are the police," they are fluid and ever-changing to meet the needs of their own unique communities. Indications are that they are open and willing to embrace technological changes for informing and activating their members.

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<sup>4</sup> March 2003. *The Status of Neighborhood Watch in Virginia*. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

<sup>5</sup> Schuiteman, John G. 2009. *The Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia*, Pg. 23-24. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services



## CORE ELEMENT 4

### **Community policing or a crime control planning process.**

*Rationale: The control of crime is the responsibility of the entire community. Therefore, law enforcement must work in partnership with other government agencies and community organizations to plan and implement community safety/crime control strategies. The community must be engaged in the process in order to enable those affected by crime to articulate their perceptions of problems and solutions.*

Only two of the re-certified CCPC programs reported offering an incentive to officers for being engaged in proactive policing, even though all stated that they embrace the idea of community policing. The two offering incentives included one with an annual “bonus” for meeting specific aspects of proactive policing and both included a measure of community involvement in the officer’s annual performance review.

Only three of the 11 CCPCs reported requiring officers to engage in community policing, the one with the pay incentive above was not included in the required category but reported a 66% active officer involvement in community policing. About 64% of the communities reported using a special team or unit for community policing or crime control. Approximately half of the community policing officers regularly attended community meetings.

All of the submissions reported utilizing statistical data in their efforts for problem solving and 82% stated that they initiated or operated a program known as CompStat (Computer Statistics) or a similar format for problem solving and accountability since becoming certified. CompStat is a program implemented by Chief William Bratton in the 1990s that focuses on the use of computerized data in problem solving and prevention. Under Bratton’s brand of CompStat four elements made up the effort: timely accurate intelligence, rapid response to problems identified, strategic plans and tactics to address the problems and frequent follow up to insure sustainability. Of the two remaining communities that did not report a CompStat-oriented program, one was smaller in which the executive officer had daily interaction with the shift commanders and the other was a large county which implemented a program whose focus is aimed at increasing the community’s acceptance of its own responsibility with minimal government lead. One of the communities that is CompStat driven reported that CompStat actually led to significant reductions in crime in the areas where applied. One of their areas had a 21% reduction in overall crime from the previous year. Others saw a 13% reduction in vehicle tampering, a 40% drop in disorderly conduct and an 80% drop in sex crimes during the summer of 2007, compared to the same period in 2006.

Additionally, the CCPC re-certifications included in their community policing efforts citizen police academies (28%), code enforcement (36%), and work with other outside agencies in community policing (36%). Two received awards for their community policing efforts. Most of the communities utilized their officers in addressing problems through problem-solving tactics or enforcement. Most have had, and included some positive results from, problem-solving projects or special enforcement projects. For example, a CCPC city reported a 19% decrease in violence in an area where problem-solving was applied.

### **Indications from Evaluation**

A major indication from the CCPC submissions is that not all law enforcement agencies are committed to institutionalizing proactive policing agency-wide through incentives or mandates. Indications are that the team approach is still very much in favor among executives in problem-solving. A 2004 Department of Justice (DOJ) research paper indicates that the specialized unit approach is favored among chiefs of police. Overall the chiefs in the DOJ research indicated that the use of special units were an important part of community policing, specifically they supported specialized crime prevention units and the use of community officers.<sup>6</sup> The re-certified communities that reported problem-solving techniques tended to demonstrate positive results in the reduction of crime, at least in the short term. As with the other elements of the CCPC program, success cannot be attributed to one program but is rather the result of a number of strategies employed as part of a larger process. The CCPC rationale in element 4 (Community Policing) is one of implementing various strategies to address and control crime through planning.

A key indication discovered in the analysis of these various CCPC submissions is the move toward a data-driven problem solving process and, perhaps more important, the use of the CompStat, or similar model, to address identified crime trends and increases

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<sup>6</sup> Kadleck, Colleen, Travis, Lawrence F. 2004. *Police Department and Police Officer Association Leaders’ Perceptions of Community Policing: Describing the Nature and Extent of Agreement*, Pg. 58. Washington, DC. U.S. Department of Justice

through strategies and planning. This move has evidently been progressive over the years. A national study in the Police Foundation Reports in 2004 revealed that 58% of the law enforcement agencies reviewed, with 100 or more officers, had adopted or were considering adopting a CompStat modeled program. The largest percentage of those agencies implementing CompStat were agencies from the south, just over 40%, followed by those in the west with just over 30%.<sup>7</sup> Another observation is the importance and growth given the use of code enforcement. The DOJ study cited above noted that building code enforcement was showing promise prior to 2004, in that 55% of those surveyed for that report indicated having implemented code enforcement as part of their overall community policing strategies.

Citizen outreach and crime control planning is being met by all of the crime prevention communities in this report. They are met through incentives, mandates to all agency law enforcement officers, a team approach demonstrated through specialized units or an internal crime analysis-based program. Each of these methods relies heavily on police-community interactions and communication. Guiding officers through incentives to force interaction, an expressed philosophical change requiring more citizen involvement, and specialized units that create an open and inviting environment all contribute to emphasis that crime control must be the responsibility of all citizens, other government agencies, and organizations as well as the police.



## **CORE ELEMENT 5**

### **Organized distribution of community safety information (literature, videos, internet resources) to citizens.**

*Rationale: The distribution of community safety literature serves three purposes: it increases the community's awareness of crime and specific criminal activity; it provides suggestions/activities to reduce or remove the opportunity for crime; and it can be used to build a community safety presence or to forge consensus among groups or interests as to how to approach a particular crime problem. The community safety planners and the crime prevention unit of the local law enforcement agency should develop or obtain the public awareness material and work with other agencies to disseminate it.*

All of the CCPC programs distributed large quantities of literature. Generally the distributions reported were proportionate to the population of the community. All included their distribution of information at training activities in the community and events. Most communities also included distribution via a display rack or kiosk in the law enforcement agency. Some expanded the distribution to other places of public access to include: municipal centers, libraries, schools, the Chamber of Commerce, medical offices, hotels, and recreation centers.

All of the communities reported distributing information in some alternate form, other than written brochures or speaking engagements. Some of these alternate forms of information sharing included: newsletters (36%), electronic alerts via e-mail, phone or fax (82%), use of local media outlets (82%), and via the department's web site (100%). One re-certified program reported they had seen a huge increase in "hits" on their agency website since 2004. The "hits" increased from 2.1 million in 2004 to 3.95 million in 2006.

Five of the 11 communities reported developing new brochures or public service announcements (PSA) as part of a new program to combat a particular crime during the re-certification period. The combination of creating new literature specific to a problem and as part of a larger awareness campaign was reported to be very effective. One of the communities reported distributing 850 flyers related to auto theft prevention in an area experiencing these thefts. After several months of analysis, they discovered the thefts had been significantly reduced. Another community utilized a PSA in an educational campaign aimed at reducing larcenies from vehicles during the holiday season from November 25 through December 26 of 2005. After the campaign, their evaluation revealed larcenies from vehicles had dropped by 60% over the same time period the previous year. Another added police incident mapping on their website and reported an 8% increase in "hits" from 2006 to 2007.

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<sup>7</sup> Weisburd, David, Mastrofski, Stephen D., Greenspan, Rosann, Willis, James J. 2004. *The Growth of CompStat in American Policing*, Pg. 6. Washington, DC. The Police Foundation

Additionally, three communities reported that they had written information in brochure form in languages other than English. All three included Spanish as one of those languages. One CCPC program had noted that the census bureau reported that 16.6% of their county spoke Spanish at home. This led them to increase their already large Spanish translated library by 16 additional brochures, and to translate brochures into the five largest non-English speaking population languages.

### **Indications from Evaluation**

With the information provided by the re-certified programs, it is obvious the distribution of information does have an impact on crime opportunity. The reports of reductions after awareness campaigns bear out the success and support the survey findings from a 1993 evaluation of the National Citizen's Crime Prevention Campaign, which revealed that four out of five adults were familiar with their (NCCPC) campaign. Approximately one-third said they learned from the campaigns, and over half acknowledged they became more concerned about crime after seeing the ads.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, the use of written materials is an especially valued resource in today's economic climate which may limit the availability of officers to attend specialized functions to present crime prevention training. In the 2009 Status of Crime Prevention Report by DCJS, the second most actively used program in crime prevention was the regular distribution of crime prevention information. In the survey, DCJS learned that over three-fourths of any discretionary money provided to crime prevention units was spent on the purchase of printed educational materials.<sup>9</sup> The brochures and literature not only serve as a substitute for a human resource, but also are a cost-effective way of getting information out to a larger audience. The use of literature, in conjunction with a larger awareness campaign, is proven to be an efficient means of addressing specific crime problems. With the use of technology, the cost of printing literature by law enforcement agencies is further lessened where information is made available via an agency website for download by the end-user. The indications of the CCPC reports are that an increasing amount of dependence in the use of the web for distribution of information, resources, and brochures is indeed occurring.

Finally, crime prevention units appear to be responding to indications of changing needs and changing demographics through the creation of new campaigns to address crime trends and translating information to reduce crime in the growing immigrant/refugee populations. Census data from 1990-2000 indicates the non-English speaking population is growing in Virginia. Virginia's English-only speakers declined from 92.7% to 88.9% in the ten years covered. Additionally the Spanish speaking population in Virginia more than doubled during that same time frame. As such, efforts must be taken to provide crime prevention information to those non-English speaking communities, to address the overall crime in the larger community. The evaluations demonstrate that those serving in the crime prevention effort understand the importance of adjusting to meet changing trends and the effort is indicative of crime prevention units using limited resources in the most effective way.



## **CORE ELEMENT 6**

### **Designation of a person or committee trained to conduct community security and safety assessments of at-risk neighborhoods and businesses.**

*Rationale: At-risk neighborhoods are often the source of many jurisdiction-wide community safety problems. These neighborhoods often experience a multitude of problems beyond just crime problems. In order to address the entire range of safety needs for these neighborhoods and the community at-large, community safety planners and law enforcement, working in conjunction with all appropriate government agencies and community organizations, should identify at-risk businesses, schools, and neighborhoods and recommend an assessment be done to identify problems by type, location, time and other critical factors. Once the problems are identified, resources should be pooled to achieve the greatest impact on those problems.*

During the evaluation of this element we discovered that most of the CCPCs viewed this element more in the realm of physical structure assessments than of an at-risk community assessment. Although this misinterpretation was the norm, the communities still took steps to address factors that were relevant to the rationale. While only 45% reported having conducted community assessments with other agencies, and most of those adopted a new nuisance ordinance or worked with code enforcement officials, all of the others

<sup>8</sup> National Crime Prevention Council. 1993. *Uniting Communities Through Crime Prevention*. Washington, DC.

<sup>9</sup> Schuiteman, John G. 2009. *The Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia*, Pg. 23 and 21. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

at least offered security assessments to individual residents and businesses. In one instance a community used its newly created Code Enforcement Team, in a program they dubbed “Crime Prevention Through Code Enforcement,” to address blighted areas. In one of the areas calls for service were reduced by 38% in three months, in another 62% in two months, another 50% and another 23% in the two month period. One of the other locations, which created a Code Enforcement Task Force to address entire communities that were at-risk, noted that since beginning the Task Force in 2001, the overall crime rate in the city had dropped 2% by 2005. They also reported the property crime rate had dropped by 5%. One of the communities using code enforcement officials before becoming a CCPC, reported that since 1996 it had abated 13 properties and removed 55 others from the blighted list through cooperative agreements with property owners.

A community, which focused heavily on this element as being directed at conducting security assessments of individual property, reported burglary had decreased by 14.4% between 2003 and 2005 in their jurisdiction. Another reporting security assessments for this element, but also including five extensive “neighborhood assessments, cited an overall crime rate reduction of almost 3% between 2004 and 2006, which they attribute to the assessment efforts. The number of security assessments reported by the various CCPCs re-certified ranged from five to 166 annually. One reported a 444% increase in security assessments and noted that between 2006 and 2007, during this increase in assessments, they realized a 15% decrease in residential burglaries, 8% decrease in commercial burglary, and an 11% decrease in robberies. Part of their program required a member of the Community Relations Unit to visit any business shortly after it had been victimized in a burglary or robbery to offer an assessment. Another community increased its number of security assessments by 10% between 2006 and 2008, and reported residential burglaries in the city during that time frame being reduced by 3%, with commercial burglaries reduced by 36%. Interestingly, they noted an increase in requests for assessments after the crime prevention staff had made presentations, after a burglary was publicized or property crimes had been committed.

Three of the 11 communities reported being engaged in construction plans review. One of those noted that between 2004 and 2007 it had conducted twelve audits for multi-family complexes, which meet the rationale of this element in a proactive way.

### **Indications from Evaluation**

In the 2009 DCJS Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia Survey/Report, “target hardening” is listed among those programs that were established or re-established in the years 2003-2007 (which includes the re-certification period of many of the CCPC programs). Under the target hardening heading, Code Enforcement and Security Assessments are included.<sup>10</sup> Approximately half of the Crime Prevention Specialist sample in that report also noted that since the terrorist attacks in September 2001, they observed a notable increase in business security assessments and physical structure security assessments.<sup>11</sup> Those performing these assessments have received specialized training and often are Certified Crime Prevention Specialists. (See Core element 2 of this report.)

The indication from the DCJS report, mentioned above, when taken in conjunction with the reported increase in security assessments, is that focus from the at-risk community may have been shifted in light of the terrorist attacks to deal with demands of the locality’s constituents. The increase in requests for assessments at sites deemed high risk for terrorist attack may have trumped the previous efforts to address the at-risk neighborhoods.

Although it would be inaccurate to completely assert the reported information proves success of security assessments with regard to burglary and robbery prevention and the rate of overall crime, it would not be inaccurate to assert they were a contributing factor and that their focus is to address these crimes in particular. The lack of follow-up regarding any recommendations in the assessments provides no measure of how much credence the recommendations are given. However, the mere increase in the number of assessments indicates the value the community places on the process.

Those communities which reported task forces and code enforcement efforts, with regard to neighborhoods, reported short-term successes which were easily attributable to their efforts, including some unintended successes with regard to overall crime rates. No long-term efforts were noted or highlighted in the re-certification reports or evaluations.

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<sup>10</sup> Schuiteman, John G. 2009. *The Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia*, Pg. 25. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

<sup>11</sup> Schuiteman, John G. 2009. *The Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia*, Pg. 27. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services



## CORE ELEMENT 7

### **Functional crime analysis capability.**

*Rationale: Community safety initiatives can only be proactive if community safety planners or law enforcement understand the extent and nature of crime in the community, or within a specific neighborhood, and then work with various appropriate agencies to devise strategies to reduce the opportunity for crime to occur.*

Ten of the 11 re-certified communities have full-time Crime Analysts and the other has three persons trained in basic crime analysis and use of their Records Management System. Eight of the 11 CCPCs have more than one full-time analyst. The primary functions that all of the agencies, including the one without a full-time analyst, perform are: producing regular crime bulletins which identify increases in crime types, crime locations, crime trends and administrative reports. These are produced generally at least monthly and, in some cases, weekly or daily. All of the CCPC crime analyst functions reported providing crime statistics to the community in one form or another. Most also report being used in producing administrative statistical data for use in reports to the governing body, review of response times, details of high call volume times and days of the week, restructuring patrol districts, and so on, which are used in a management capacity.

Nine of the 11 communities increased their crime analysis capacity through the purchase of upgraded or new equipment and/or software, or by adding additional analysts during the re-certification period. Among the increase in analysts was the inclusion of a tactical analyst, a geographic profiling analyst, and of intelligence specific analysts. One unit increased in size by 150% and leveraged over \$300,000 in grant funds from 2005 through 2009 to address analysis needs.

All except two law enforcement agencies implemented and utilize the CompStat or a similar model. Of the remaining two, one is investigating a possible implementation and the other is a smaller agency in which daily interaction with the law enforcement executive is common and accountability is immediate. A number of successful applications of this were given by the re-certified communities. One example is a meeting which profiled a 19.23% increase in violent offenses. The profile resulted in the creation of a task force, including a crime analyst. In four months the violent crime rate dropped by 10% and Part I offenses overall dropped by 6%.

Nine of the 11 communities noted their analysts are in regular contact with investigators and all but one described at least one major crime solved due to the crime analyst's involvement. The involvement ranged from identification of "hot spots" in which directed efforts were planned, leading to reductions of the type of crimes addressed, to notification of trends and assistance narrowing the suspect pool or in creating suspect link analysis and diagrams for prosecution. One community noted that, since a change in their crime analysis system, they have realized success in maintaining a 64% overall case clearance rate.

Several of the evaluations of the re-certified communities noted an increase in the usage of crime analysis and the analysis requests. One reported providing two three-hour basic analysis courses in the basic recruit classes, as well as a one-hour in-service training session. Attributable to this training they noted their requests for analysis had increased by 5% over the previous year. Another reported interest in crime analysis services had grown resulting in a 30% increase in the amount of requests for analysis between 2004 and 2006.

### **Indications from Evaluation**

A clear indication from the evaluation of these programs is that analytical services are on the increase and being used in all aspects of law enforcement. Analysis is being used as a management tool, an investigator's tool, a strategic and tactical tool, and a proactive, or prevention tool. Each of these applications is supported by drafts from the communities which demonstrated their effectiveness. The re-certification applications demonstrated that the value in the use of data for prevention, planning, and investigations is also of value in management and cost-saving aspects to the law enforcement agency. In two of the agencies, management utilized their analysts to provide information which led to realignment of patrol districts and improved efficiency of patrols, equalized work, and improved response times. Also clear is that a CompStat-based model is an attractive model to executives in ensuring accountability and effectiveness of their management team. In fact, the increase in the use of the CompStat model and the problem-solving focus of law enforcement may be the catalyst leading to the increase in the requests for analytical services. This indication supports research findings in a 2004 Department of Justice report which concluded that chiefs identified crime analysis as an important aspect of community policing, except in the case of decentralization. At that time approximately 44% of agencies had implemented geographically-based crime analysis and 30%

had implemented centralized crime analysis, but less than seven percent had implemented decentralized analysis.<sup>12</sup> The drafts of the certified communities indicate the strategies developed during CompStat meetings, and later implemented, are frequently successful in reducing the problem, at least for the short term. Clearly, law enforcement is recognizing the value of a baseline, most often obtained from the crime analyst, in measuring the ultimate success of any applied strategy. The analyst's involvement is as essential to the success of commanders subject to CompStat models as it is to problem-solving responses by line officers.

The drafts from the communities indicate a further need for resources such as: analytical tools, advanced analysis training, and the inclusion of training which identifies the possibilities and uses of crime analysis to the field officer. The Virginia Crime Analyst Network (VCAN) is a non-profit association which currently has almost 100 members from 25 agencies, yet they are unable to provide this needed training. In fact, they are generally only able to provide an annual symposium for Virginia analysts. Commercially available crime analysis courses held on the east coast generally carry a hefty registration cost of over \$500.00, excluding the additional cost of travel. The International Association of Crime Analyst (IACA) rarely conducts training in Virginia and, when they do, the cost for such training is also difficult for analysts to have approved. (Currently, the average cost for the IACA course is \$350.00, excluding travel and lodging.)

The certified communities have done an admirable job in appropriately applying the crime analysis tools available to the prevention and resolution of crime problems. Funds have been received through creative uses of appropriate grants to expand the growing analysis function but the indication is that the needs for additional equipment, software, and training will only increase. To continue to be effective, funding and lower cost alternatives must be created or identified.



## **CORE ELEMENT 8**

### **Comprehensive school safety audit process. (applicable only to jurisdictions operating schools).**

*Rationale: In order to build on efforts to ensure that Virginia's schools are "safe havens", communities should support local school boards by serving on school safety teams that are responsible for conducting safety audits. The audit process is based on the School Safety Audit Protocol 2000, developed in response to §22.1-279.8 of the Code of Virginia, which has become the standard audit protocol for the Commonwealth. The audit is a site-based activity, and the audit team must coordinate on-site activities with the school principal.*

All of the 11 re-certified communities operate schools and all were not only in compliance with the DCJS mandated annual school safety audit requirements and with the rationale listed in this element, but all exceeded the expectations in the rationale.

The mandate has been in existence since 1996 and, without doubt, Virginia's process and audit is one of the top models utilized across the United States. Each CCPC that is included in this report involved the law enforcement agency in the audit process in some fashion. Ten of the communities involved law enforcement in crisis plan reviews or tactical assessments as well. While one community reported a weakness in not having an "Audit Team" per se, in their new goals and objectives, they included a plan to create and use the team concept for the upcoming evaluation period. Six communities also reported conducting drills or tabletop exercises regarding their crisis plans one or more times during the re-certification period and one noted that they had implemented their plan in an actual incident and that it worked successfully. Some of the law enforcement agencies listed approaches to enhancing the potential success of any crisis plan activation. One had created electronic versions of the school crisis plans which included aerial photographs, floor plans, emergency notification numbers etc. on all police in-car computers. Another created Emergency Procedure Guides for all schools in the division.

In evaluating this element, the re-certified communities differentiated the audit from the physical structure assessment. Six reported having conducted physical assessments at one or more schools, in addition to the mandated audit process annually.

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<sup>12</sup> Kadleck, Colleen; Travis, Lawrence F. 2004. *Police Department and Police Officer Association Leaders' Perceptions of Community Policing: Describing the Nature and Extent of Agreement*, Pg. 58. Washington, DC. U.S. Department of Justice

Ten of the 11 communities reported they had made safety improvements based on the audit findings and recommendations. In several of the school systems installation of cameras was addressed. In one system, 85 schools received video cameras and two-way communications. The audit revealed the need for eight additional School Security Officers (SSO) positions in one community, all of which were filled. In another, schools increased their SSO number by 17% and issued radios for communicating directly with the School Resource Officers. One community installed gun safes in their middle and high schools to store additional ammunitions that might be needed in a crisis. One school system used the audit during their initial planning for a major renovation of its high school. The DCJS School Safety Survey Results report, which is published annually, demonstrates the utility of the process in identifying needs and in reporting their responses to such needs. For example, the 2008 report noted 51% of the schools instituted bullying prevention in the previous year, 26% gang programs, and 5% homeland security programs.<sup>13</sup>

### **Indications from Evaluation**

The ongoing mandate requiring annual school safety audits indicates success in many ways. In the 2008 School Safety Survey Results report, produced by the Virginia Center for School Safety, 100% compliance with the audits is reported.<sup>14</sup> The audits are discovering and correcting problems with safety and security in schools and have been a catalyst to prod schools and law enforcement to seek additional ways to enhance safety within the schools. School security is now being included in construction plans and is being given significant attention by the school systems. The collaborative effort in addressing school safety between the schools, law enforcement and outside entities is resulting in plans which will ensure safer school designs, more effective responses to emergencies, better trained staff, and more cooperation in emergencies. In the 2008 School Safety Survey, 97% of Virginia schools reported conducting crisis plans training. Thirty-eight percent of school administrators in the survey reported meeting with law enforcement monthly. One of the areas addressed in the School Survey is the number of schools reporting the presence of school security personnel at the school at all times during a regular school day. Thirty-seven percent (37%) stated this was true in their school system. Interestingly, one community in the CCPC program in a large school division emphasized the importance being given to this question. This school created a School Resident Program over 30 years ago that exceeds the security presence during the school day question. The residents in this program, which are housed on school property free, provide security-related duties. Twenty percent of these residences are occupied by police officers.

All of the re-certified CCPC programs recognized the importance of a collaborative effort in addressing school safety. The mandate to schools led to the current active partnerships and collaborative safer schools focus.



## **CORE ELEMENT 9**

### **Business outreach program with training and documented support.**

*Rationale: A business anti-crime council or Business Watch can establish links among businesses, as well as improve communication between businesses and the police. It helps reduce crimes in commercial areas, particularly shoplifting, theft, burglaries, purse snatching, drug dealing, and vandalism. Business Watch activities should include crime reporting, Operation Identification, conducting commercial security surveys, providing training on robbery, burglary and fraud prevention as well as personal safety for merchants and employees.*

When first conceived, this element required a formal “Business Watch” but over the years the focus became more one of outreach to businesses with prevention training and efforts rather than limiting the training and prevention programs to members of a formal program. Nevertheless, nine of the eleven programs reported having a formal business watch program and four reported that their businesses met at least quarterly. Forty-five percent of the communities reported an increase in participation in their business outreach efforts during their re-certification period. One program grew by 98%; another reported creating an outreach program specifically for Spanish-speaking business owners and other business outreach programs have expanded by creating partnerships with existing business oriented organizations. A program partnered with their Department of Economic Development which allowed some of the businesses to participate in an Enterprise Zone Grant process to obtain funds for enhancing security. Ten businesses took part in the

<sup>13</sup> Virginia Center for School Safety. January 2009. *The 2008 Virginia School Safety Survey Results*, Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

<sup>14</sup> Virginia Center for School Safety. January 2009. *The 2008 Virginia School Safety Survey Results*, Pg. 5. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

funding opportunity. Another program joined with their Economic Development Authority to receive funding to develop and distribute business-related crime prevention brochures. A tourist area located in one of the certified communities created an entire unit to work solely with businesses. The businesses in the tourist area have funded the purchase of eight defibrillators, hired officers in an off-duty capacity to patrol during special events, and created a program to reimburse (up to \$100.00) tourists who were victims of crime.

All of the re-certified communities included in their evaluation drafts for this element reported that they conducted robbery, burglary and other training for businesses on a regular basis. Sixty-four percent reported that they included Detectives or Business Specialists in conducting the training. In addition to regular training, two of the CCPCs conducted mock crimes to reinforce the training which had been presented. Some major training sessions reported included: a robbery prevention seminar with over 68 businesses (300 individuals) in attendance, a holiday crime awareness and loss prevention conference was attended by over 60 businesses, and one law enforcement agency conducted four mock bank robberies.

All of the programs offered security assessments to businesses free of charge. Of those reporting numbers of assessments conducted, it is estimated that well over 700 were conducted by these 11 communities.

Communication enhancements in this element were also addressed. Eight communities included having initiated or improved an alert system to quickly disseminate crime information to businesses. These included a fax alert, and e-mail or a reverse 911 system. Using the technologies available to get the information out, one community sends out about 150 e-alerts weekly to businesses relative to incidents against businesses. A metropolitan community partnered with the Retail Merchants Association and another community with the Chamber of Commerce to use their e-mail systems for alerts. One e-mail alert system that was created by a law enforcement agency in 2006 grew from eight businesses enrolled to one hundred forty-seven in 2008.

Forty-five percent of the re-certified communities reported a decrease in business crime, relative to business crime prevention programs during their re-certification period. In some cases the reductions are directly linked to actions taken by the business outreach program. In one case the business and police efforts created a system of barring individuals in a business area where crime was increasing. After the implementation of the program and an educational program, crime decreased by 53%. In a shopping center in one of the larger CCPC cities, a business watch was started due to violent offenses. After creating the program, calls for service spiked up sharply and later began to drop. At the time of this report there had been an almost complete elimination of violent offenses and no business robberies had been reported in the area for over 15 months. Another community, located in the Metro-Richmond area, reported a reduction in business robberies from 2005 to 2006 of 50% and claimed the lowest business crime levels in the Metro area.

### **Indications from Evaluation**

The indication from the evaluation of the business outreach program is that business crime is much more costly than the investment in crime prevention. Businesses are taking advantage of the free public resources provided by trained crime prevention practitioners and specialized business related officers in ever increasing amounts. These new relationships are allowing for the free flow of crime and suspect information. The emerging use of modern technologies to quickly disseminate information is arming the business community about crime trends, methods and prevention tips in real time. The reports demonstrate that businesses and law enforcement working together in prevention efforts can succeed, and can create sustainable success. The clear indication is that at the heart of success in the prevention of crime in the business community is the business community's willingness to be involved in crime prevention, information sharing, crime prevention training and frequent interaction.

Increased partnerships with businesses to address crime are indicated as a precursor for success in prevention. Likewise, strong business leadership in directing emphasis to prevention and identifying needs in the business community are needed to insure successes such as those reported by these communities.



## CORE ELEMENT 10

### **Victim/witness services program.**

*Rationale: The most important step in recovering from a crime is to talk to someone you trust. It is normal for crime victims to have conflicting feelings and thoughts. As a result of being victimized, victims go through many emotions such as fear, confusion, guilt, anger, frustration, irritability, helplessness, low self-esteem or depression. They may also have difficulties with concentration and trusting others. While these reactions are normal, most find that they feel better if they have the opportunity to freely and confidentially discuss any problems or emotions they are experiencing. Victim/Witness programs provide that bridge to recovery for victims of crime. They also serve to educate victims about their rights under Virginia's Crime Victim and Witness Rights Act and services that are available to aid in their recovery.*

In this element the CCPC communities primarily reported data required for the grant-funded Victim/Witness Program reports. The coordinator of the CCPC programs in the localities often reported on the information they received without expanding on the successes or the uniqueness of programs. Even the reporting was difficult to standardize due to the practice of some programs reporting all victims served, while others separated the service by types. It is clear that victims and witnesses in certified communities are being served by these programs. The number served appears to be commensurate with the population of the particular community. For example, one large county reported serving approximately 13,000 annually while a small city served by a rural county program reported about 1,500 annually.

Key areas that most reported as being involved in were: the distribution of literature pertaining to Victim/Witness rights, the collection and distribution of restitution, obtaining grants to continue or expand the programs, assistance with victim protective services and facilitation of awards from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund (CICF). One community reported assisting almost 8,000 victims with compensation in four years in the amount of \$373,857, another distributed \$77,421 in 2008 alone, and the smallest of the re-certified communities awarded over \$45,000 in compensation in the three years of its evaluation.

Grants acquisition was also largely reported in this element. One of the larger cities leveraged over \$746,000 in grant funds to address victim's needs in their three year evaluation period, a smaller city received federal grant funds in the amount of \$895,412 during the three year evaluation period, and another competed for and received a grant from a private employee community fund in the amount of \$15,625.

All of the programs reported distribution of victim rights information and contacting certain victims, after they were identified, with information pertaining to services.

In addition to the standard services provided by Victim/Witness programs, some reported activities they had undertaken toward furthering the protection and service to the victim/witness community. One program developed a Family Violence Fatality Review Team consisting of ten social service providers, law enforcement agencies, and public health officials to examine circumstances surrounding family violence fatalities with an eye toward improving services and preventing violence. One community Victim/Witness program reported that through developing their own website and an increase in referrals by police, they increased their outreach by 6.4%. An all-volunteer Ambassador Program and a Victim/Witness Youth Advisory Board was created in one locality. The Ambassador Program assists in check-in procedures at court, escorts witnesses, and conducts customer service surveys. The Youth Board develops ideas to increase awareness among youth concerning safety and teen victimization.

### **Indications from Evaluation**

The number of victims and witnesses being served in each locality is substantial and the programs are very active in serving those relative to court proceedings and victimization. The program staffing varies in the localities but it does not seem to be based solely upon populations served. The indications from the report are that additional funds are frequently being sought to enhance the basic services provided. The reports indicate staff in these programs are skilled in assisting constituents in maneuvering the paperwork required for compensation through the CICF and to receive restitution. Although these programs are not considered a "prevention program," they do serve in many cases to prevent repeat victimization through court assistance and other aspects of the program.

Lack of access to a Victim/Witness program has not been a problem for communities interested in original certification as a CCPC, or for those re-certifying. These programs are wide spread and "access" is all that is required in the CCPC program. In 2007,

DCIS reported funding 106 Victim/Witness programs in the Commonwealth, most through Commonwealth Attorney's offices. DCIS also identified in the report at least eight other programs, not funded through DCIS, existed at the time.<sup>15</sup> The program rationale is being met with these programs.

A further indication from the CCPC coordinators and drafts is that the Victim/Witness programs do not work closely with law enforcement agencies and crime prevention staff, but do work daily with courts and Commonwealth Attorneys. The prevention aspect could be enhanced, perhaps through more involvement of the Victim/Witness staff in outreach via an educational approach. Additionally the sharing of information concerning services may be expanded through a closer relationship with crime prevention practitioners.



## **CORE ELEMENT 11**

### **A delinquency prevention program targeting at-risk youth.**

*Rationale: Clearly, the needs of at-risk youth need to be addressed and a focus should be placed on proactive solutions and strategies that serve youth before they become offenders or victims. From a prevention standpoint, community-wide collaborative planning stands out as the best way to identify risk and protective factors for youth, identify existing resources addressing the risk factors, and devise short and long-term strategies to meet identified gaps in services for youth.*

The delinquency prevention programs covered in the CCPC programs encompassed a huge number of strategies, organizations and partnerships. The primary programmatic approaches were school-based, community-based, or criminal justice-based.

Far and away, the most prevalent approach reported was the use of school-based prevention programs. While it is assumed all of the communities have some delinquency prevention programs in the schools, only eight of the 11 included delinquency prevention in the schools in their application drafts. Among the most prevalent school-based programs that were reported were: Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), a School Resource Officer (SRO) program, and truancy prevention. Seven of the 11 included DARE or SRO and five noted an organized truancy program. Alternative education programs were also included to a lesser degree in the drafts from the communities for this element. All of the DARE or SRO communities also listed a substance abuse program, in some cases including DARE in that category as well. Likewise, four of the five including DARE/SRO had a violence or bullying prevention program.

The truancy programs ranged from passive to very active. One city reported a program which was operational each school day and encountered an average of 10-15 truants daily. Another created a collaborative effort to truancy prevention which included the courts, the police and the schools. The successful result of their program was from 2005 to 2007 unexcused absences from elementary schools decreased by 12%, middle schools by 7% and high schools by 10%.

One program focused almost exclusively on a school-based approach. It established an on-line service which allowed parents to monitor student's progress, class schedule, attendance, grades and discipline. It also created an alternative learning environment for at-risk students displaying habitual misconduct and created a new alternative vocational school which provides practical job skills and helps to discourage delinquent behaviors for students that are not college-bound. Finally, it had methods for addressing students in need of remediation in the core subjects. Its results are noteworthy. According to 2006 statistics, 83% of its students graduated from high school and went on to attend either a two or four-year institution. Its dropout rate is less than 1%. One final school program included in the delinquency element provided measures for a single middle school that demonstrated significant results, relative to its goals and objectives. In a three-year period from 2006 through 2008, this school realized a 62% reduction in suspensions, a 55% increase in academics, 46% fewer absences and a 55% improvement in relationships.

Seven CCPC applications (approximately 64%) included a community-based delinquency program in their drafts. Five of the communities started a gang prevention initiative during the re-certification period to address delinquency. Other community-based prevention programs included in the evaluations included: a mentoring program (45%), a summer camp effort (36%), an after-school program (36%), an intervention process (27%), and a teen pregnancy or fatherhood initiative (18%).

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<sup>15</sup> 2007 Victim Witness Programs in Virginia, Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

The community with a fatherhood program has had marked success and received the National Association of Counties Outstanding Achievement Award in 2004 for this effort. Approximately 98% of the men referred to the courts in this program had a positive outcome. They also sponsor a five-week parenting course which focuses on use of the family meeting to introduce the discussion of a safe and drug-free environment. The program with the teen pregnancy initiative reported a decrease in teen pregnancy of 3% between 2003 and 2005. Another example resulted from a mentor program. In this program a child whose mother was addicted to crack and whom was left for days without food or electricity was engaged by members of this recreation center-based program. He later went on to become a "Big Brother," volunteered in the local food bank, served on a university's minority recruitment task force, became president of the university's multi-cultural student association and graduated from the university.

Criminal justice-based programs include any program in which a young person might be mandated to participate in by the court or juvenile probation office. One of the success stories shared, which falls in this category, involved a teenager being given community service due to a shoplifting charge. The youth completed the community service in the faith-based program and shortly after became active in his church. He later became the first volunteer youth staff at the church, went on a foreign mission service trip, and has plans to attend college to become a youth minister.

The Serious Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action program (SHOCAP) falls under this category as well. Two communities, both in northern Virginia, reported using this program in their delinquency element. One reported between 2004 and 2006, 75% of those in the program graduated out of it. These participants are placed on probation and the court sets the conditions and terms for each participant. The other community which uses SHOCAP reported it had identified 75 youth participants in its three-year certified period which had additional police interaction, resulting in quick information sharing with the probation officer.

Finally, one community noted a decrease in juvenile arrests during the re-certification evaluation period as part of its evaluation of the delinquency element. The number of juvenile arrests decreased by 111 between 2004 and 2005. However, the community attributed this drop, not necessarily to less crime, but rather to their use of non-traditional sanctions as an alternative to the criminal justice system.

### **Indications from Evaluation**

The obvious theme demonstrated in all of the delinquency efforts is to occupy all youth, and especially those deemed at a higher risk of becoming delinquent, with productive activities, life skills, education, and responsible care and oversight. It is not surprising most of the programs are school based, since that is where youth are a captive audience and best served with educational opportunities.

Each of the programs listed in the above overview address one or more of the risk factors above in some way. For example, the DARE program teaches decision making processes, the truancy programs force students into a learning environment and if they refuse to learn, the criminal justice program provides the incentives to make learning more attractive than the alternative. Mentoring programs seem to give the at-risk child a responsible role model, when they lack one in the home, or at least support the effort which is already being made in the home. After-school efforts occupy students at those high risk times of the day when they are often unsupervised and most likely to get into trouble. The goal is to ensure youth are equipped to become productive members of society with the education and life skills to succeed. The importance of delinquency prevention to the overall crime prevention effort of communities is driven home in the DCJS Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia Report, which notes that 34% of the grant-funded programs identified by the respondents were youth-oriented. The Crime Prevention Specialists surveyed in the report revealed that more of their work time was dedicated to youth than to other population groups. The respondents also reported that 33 new youth related programs were established or re-established between 2003 and 2007 and 22 of those were programs of the type and nature listed above. Interestingly, both the law enforcement executives and the crime prevention practitioners ranked youth as number one in needing more attention.<sup>16</sup>

Nationally, the indications are that crime prevention efforts with regard to youth are succeeding. The recently released F.B.I. figures for 2008 juvenile arrests demonstrate a 2.8% decrease from 2007 arrests.<sup>17</sup> The Virginia exclusive data comparison from 2007-2008 indicates there was a slight increase in arrests of juveniles in Virginia in 2008 (1,274 more arrests).<sup>18</sup> The increased arrests in Virginia indicate Virginia crime prevention practitioners are correct in the amount of attention given the youth focus in their prevention efforts.

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<sup>16</sup> Schuiteman, John G. 2009. *The Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia*. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

<sup>17</sup> *2008 Crime in the United States*. F.B.I. UCR Report. <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2008/arrests/index.html>

<sup>18</sup> *2008 Crime in the United States and 2007 Crime in the United States*. F.B.I. UCR Report. <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2008/arrests/index.html>



## CORE ELEMENT 12

**Local law enforcement agency must either be accredited or seeking accreditation from the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC) or the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies Inc., (CALEA).**

*Rationale: Local law enforcement agencies will have a crucial, indispensable role in helping localities to achieve and maintain certified crime prevention community status. Therefore, it is important that these agencies be able to demonstrate consistently that they meet minimum standards of professionalism and service. Accreditation assists law enforcement agencies in meeting basic standards of performance, which, in turn, can serve as proof that a locality is committed to maintaining its certification status. Virginia accreditation is virtually cost-free, and therefore does not represent an obstacle to achieving minimum professional standards.*

All except one of the communities met this element and were re-certified. One which had been certified as seeking accreditation during their original certification failed to obtain the accreditation in the time allotted for re-certification and has been granted an extension to obtain the accreditation in order to re-certify in the CCPC program. Their stated cause for failure to become accredited was the frequent change of executives during the re-certification period.

Six of the remaining ten communities are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies Inc. (CALEA), which is an international accrediting agency. Two of the ten are accredited by the Virginia Law Enforcement Standards Commission (VLEPSC) only and the remaining two are dually accredited by CALEA and VLEPSC. One of the dually accredited agencies boasts they were the first full service sheriff's office in Virginia to achieve this distinction.

One of the CCPC programs had its law enforcement agency accredited for the first time during its evaluation period and the others had multiple re-accreditations. Two of the law enforcement agencies had received meritorious accreditation due to their being accredited for 15 or more years. Two of the certified communities Accreditation Managers serve as assessors, one as a CALEA assessor and the other as a VLEPSC master assessor. The VLEPSC assessor was also reported in that community application as being the Secretary of the Virginia Law Enforcement Accreditation Coalition and serving on four of its committees.

### Indications from Evaluation

The importance of a strong executive commitment is proven in both the CCPC and the Accreditation processes. Both require the establishment of goals and strategies to maintain a professional agency. One of the indicators of the evaluation is that without a strong committed leader at the helm, the efforts toward achievement of accreditation and the law enforcement programs required for certification as a crime prevention community become slowed or sidetracked. Committed executives in the accreditation process are committed in the CCPC process as well. In most of the CCPC programs it is the law enforcement agency which takes the leadership to monitor, evaluate, and coordinate this community program. The fact those law enforcement agencies which have re-accredited over and over have maintained their certification as a crime prevention community is directly linked to the dedication to professionalism of their leaders. The similarities in the process of accreditation and CCPC certification may contribute to the desire by law enforcement executives to continue in this community program and to voluntarily accept responsibility for moving it through the governing body as required for re-certification every three years.

In law enforcement the standard of professionalism is an accredited agency. If the CCPC program is charged with identifying the communities which are exemplary in their crime prevention efforts, it is reasonable a professional law enforcement agency will be a large part of that effort, if not at its foundation.



## OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

Each of the communities had selected seven optional elements in its original application and was required to evaluate and report on the status of those programs in their re-certification. Due to the number of different programs (24), and that some of the potential options were included in the required core elements, they were not examined for similarities and findings. For example, one of the optional elements, DARE, was reported frequently as part of the delinquency prevention core element and listed as an optional element.

## Indications from Evaluation

In examining the chosen optional elements, we were able to identify a trend in the top five programs, that is to say that five or more of the communities that re-certified included certain programs in their optional elements, indicating the popularity of those programs. In order of inclusion the top programs were: School Resource Officer (10), National Night Out (10), TRIAD (8), Crime Stoppers (7), DARE (6), and Domestic Violence programs (5). Interestingly, the top four of these programs were also listed as among the top seven “active programs” as reported by the crime prevention specialists sample in the 2009 DCJS Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia report.<sup>19</sup>

The inclusion of these elements as options not only demonstrates their popularity, but may also demonstrate the effectiveness attributed to the programs, and a reflection of the changing demographics and needs of Virginia’s population. For example, the 2008 Virginia School Security Survey Results Report revealed the program which most schools (17%) listed wanting to implement was the School Resource Officer (SRO) program. The survey also reported that only 29% reported having had an SRO present at all times during the school day.<sup>20</sup> Another DCJS report, *The Status of Virginia SROs: 2007*, reinforced the desire through a gradual increase over a number of years. It estimated that in 2007 there were 100 DARE-specific officers and 574 SROs in Virginia’s schools. The number of SROs represented an 8% increase over the last time they had been counted in 2004.<sup>21</sup>

National Night Out is a well known awareness campaign which has been growing in participants and focus since the mid-1980s. Nationally, over 37 million people took part in the National Night Out event in 2008. Virginia won eight awards for its participation in 2008, and three of those went to CCPC certified communities.<sup>22</sup>

The inclusion of TRIAD in the most popular optional elements is a testament to Virginia in identifying service needs and providing appropriate services according to those needs. The Virginia Department of Aging projects by 2030 the number of persons 85 years of age or older will double and will represent 2.4 percent of Virginia’s population.<sup>23</sup> TRIAD provides the age-specific prevention programming which serves the senior population.

The conclusion which may be drawn from the trend is that either successful or well-known programs are more likely to be replicated. As these programs grow, the desire to participate in them increases and thus perpetuates their growth. Communities selection of the top optional elements seem to have one characteristic in common, none of them are stand-alone programs. All of the top options are programs which include a collaborative approach with law enforcement and other partners. The SRO and DARE programs require a partnership of schools and law enforcement. The National Night Out element includes businesses and neighborhood watches or other neighborhood organizations. TRIAD partners the senior population with senior programs and law enforcement and guides the approach through the Attorney General’s Office. Crime Stoppers programs require a minimum partnership of media, law enforcement and a non-profit Board of Directors and, finally, the efforts in domestic violence join social services, victims advocates, private shelters, courts and others to serve the prevention needs of their constituents.



## KEY FINDINGS

The general finding from this examination of the Certified Crime Prevention Community Program is that the program continues to be of value for the purpose it was originally created: to recognize exemplary communities making significant efforts to prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime. Another significant finding is that the program application process has been proven to be an excellent guide for a comprehensive evaluation of prevention services available within a community.

As part of this report, data was viewed in the context of overall victimization and in violent victimization, which included the offenses of: forcible sexual offenses, robbery, aggravated assault and homicide. It should be understood that each community was not examined

<sup>19</sup> Schuiteman, John G. 2009. *The Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia*, Pg. 23. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

<sup>20</sup> *2008 Virginia School Security Survey Results*. Pg. 16. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

<sup>21</sup> Schuiteman, John. 2007. *The Status of Virginia SROs:2007*, Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

<sup>22</sup> National Association of Town Watch Website. <http://www.nationaltownwatch.org/nno/>

<sup>23</sup> Byrnes, Kevin F. *Virginia's Destiny-The Reality Is In The Numbers presentation*. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Aging. [www.vda.gov](http://www.vda.gov)

in detail concerning the data, thereby rendering an exact causal determination for the reductions noted impossible. The data is simply provided to demonstrate the commitment of the communities to prevention and as a snapshot of changes in the categories of crime. Since the Criminal Justice Services Board and the Department of Criminal Justice Services certified the first communities in 2001, data was examined from 2000 through 2008. Nine of the eleven communities demonstrated a decrease in offenses of one kind or another from 2000 to 2008. Of those reductions, six were in overall juvenile (under 18 years of age) victimization, six were in juvenile violent victimization, six in senior victimization or presented no change, and three demonstrated decreases in the adult victimizations category (ages 18-64). In order to get a more current snapshot of victimization demographics, the data was also broken down over the last three years of the certifications (2006-2008). The table below indicates the specific reductions in victimization, or those with no change, by community over the last three years of 2006-2008.

Community	18-64 overall	18-64 violence	Under 18 overall	Under 18 violence	65 + overall	65 + violence
Fairfax County		X	X	X		
Hanover County		X		X		No change
Henrico County	X		X	X	X	X
Prince William County	X	X	X	X		
Galax City	No change	No change				X
Roanoke City		X	X	X	X	X
Lynchburg City					X	X
Hampton City	X	X	X	X	X	X
Newport News City	X	X	X	X	X	X
Virginia Beach City	X	X	X	X	X	
Portsmouth City		X	X	X		

The certified communities consistently sought to maintain or improve their crime prevention programs after receiving the certification. In fact, most of the programs were improved and updated to meet emerging trends and to serve their constituents more effectively, as well as efficiently building on the national trend toward community involvement and the recognized benefits of technology as a tool.

Several specific adjustments were made to address changing trends. The large increase of the Internet, web pages, and telephone technology use for making information more widely available without increasing the demand for human resources is one example. Another example is the use of crime analysis and the newly available software to access, analyze and effectively apply crime data in resource allocation through CompStat styled programs. The quick adjustment by Crime Prevention Specialists to address terrorism, as well as other crime, in providing assessments proved to be an even more valuable asset than previously known. All of these and the flexibility in addressing the growing immigrant and aging population demonstrates that crime prevention practitioners are mindful of the need to constantly be watchful of changing trends so prevention is addressed early on rather than after a problem arises.

The implementation and operation of many crime prevention programs was found clearly to be linked to funding opportunities for the programs. Funding is essential if prevention programs are to continue. Many of the elements in the CCPC program are frequently grant-funded, either through government or foundation grants, in part or in whole. The strength of the CCPC Core Element 1 Coalition was often found linked to the generation of funding. The purchase of crime analysis equipment, the operational expenses of Victim/Witness offices, and several optional elements were also very dependent on outside funding. In the DCJS Status of Crime Prevention Report referenced throughout this evaluation, 37 of 45 grant-funded programs addressed youth and senior citizens programs. Eight of the eleven CCPC programs examined in this report received SRO funding through Byrne Grants and others received funding for other crime prevention programs.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to the grant funding aspect, DCJS programs augmenting and supporting localities have played a large part in the successes of the communities. The Crime Prevention Specialist program has resulted in better trained staff with regard to prevention techniques. As mentioned above, this readily-available resource was used immediately after the terrorists' attacks of 2001. The training of SROs by DCJS and the mandate overseen by the Department regarding school safety audits have created a safer environment in schools and forced sometimes unwilling examination of potential weaknesses in the school environment.

<sup>24</sup> Schuiteman, John G. 2009. *The Status of Crime Prevention in Virginia*, Pg. 23. Richmond, VA: Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services



The CCPC programs individually seem to be effective in crime prevention generally, and it appears that the comprehensive approach is a recipe for success. The true value of the CCPC program appears to be in guiding communities in the comprehensive approach. Through standardized minimum mandated elements, technical assistance from DCJS, and an ongoing effort by local communities to continually evaluate and respond to the changing needs of the community, prevention is being achieved. One police chief active in the certification stated the CCPC program and process was very valuable to him in understanding the internal operations of many community services which might not otherwise be known to him.

Other benefits realized by participants in the CCPC program during the evaluation period included: enhanced status in federal grants due to “collaboration” requirements which were demonstrated through the use of the comprehensive CCPC program application documents, the CCPC status was used for economic development and marketing potential for one community, and the CCPC designation was used in supporting other recognition applications through the All American City program and National Association of Town Watch. Comments from the participant communities indicated that the program also aids in resource allocation by identifying the most successful crime prevention programs through the evaluation process and identifies weaknesses in programming. During the evaluation process, additional resources in the community were identified in order to meet or strengthen the application. The requirement of a resolution from the local governing body stresses the importance which local leaders give to proactive community services.

The CCPC program remains sought after by communities. In the last six months of 2009 a town received their original certification, several others were re-certified and nine other jurisdictions have expressed interest in the program or are conducting self-assessments to begin the process.



## **NEEDS SUGGESTED BY EVALUATION**

The needs suggested in the evaluation are generally related to funding of crime prevention programs and training.

The importance of Crime Prevention Specialists in many of the programs suggests an on-going need for training of these credentialed practitioners. A specific need discovered is directed at management of the crime prevention unit. While the CPS element demonstrated the CPSs were apparently rewarded for their work, their filling the role as supervisor/manager of the law enforcement crime prevention efforts were found somewhat lacking, therefore not totally meeting the rationale of the element. The evaluation points to a need for specific training for crime prevention supervisors and management. Such training would prepare the CPS to advance and to serve in the capacity of managing crime prevention efforts and programs for their jurisdiction rather than just performing the function of prevention.

Continued assistance to schools in the annual audit process and in training of SROs is an immediate need, in order to hold the ground of safer schools in Virginia. Many of the SROs are also Crime Prevention Specialists and provide services outside the schools as well. Continuation of school-based prevention training in the form of the School Resource Officer program is very much needed and desired. The rapport developed between officers and students as well as with faculty and staff not only leads to prevention but also to identifying and addressing existing criminal activities. Cross-training the SRO in all crime prevention related functions may be necessary to maintain availability of the existing prevention programs within the communities suffering shrinking budgets. Likewise, increasing the use of trained volunteers, where appropriate, may be necessary to offset costs without losing valuable crime prevention programs.

The growing effective use of the crime analyst in CompStat and in problem solving strongly suggest the need for cost-effective analysis training in Virginia. In Virginia, the growth of current crime analysis programs began in the late 1980's when crime analysis was included as one of the approved program categories of the Byrne Grant Program. Between 1993 and 2001, the DCJS Crime Prevention Center trained more than 350 crime analysts representing more than 50 localities from all regions of the Commonwealth. In 2000, the first Crime Analysis Vendor Fair was held, promoting networking and product information sharing among the state's crime analysts. In 2002 the agency spearheaded the formation of an association for crime analysts which became the Virginia Crime Analysis Network (VCAN). Currently more than 100 people representing 40 different jurisdictions are a part of VCAN. Training funding for advanced analysts may prepare the experienced analyst to teach basic courses through their association (VCAN) or through other venues.



Additionally, law enforcement agencies should avoid simply relying upon the patrol officer to seek out information and intelligence from the analyst. The lack of knowledge by the line officer regarding what is available results in the information not being effectively used. Training of the usefulness of data in investigations and prevention planning should also be directed at line officers charged with problem-solving responsibilities. Funding sources might be directed to assist in updating old data management systems and in improving access to information for analysis and crime mapping.

The re-certification applications suggest changing demographics, while being addressed to some degree, will become a greater need in the future and resources may need to be developed to assist prevention organizations (private and public) in outreach to Hispanic and aging populations, the two demographics that are most rapidly growing.

An improved relationship between the victim-witness staff and crime prevention staff is also indicated. This relationship needs to more effectively communicate the services which are available prior to an incident which forces victims and witnesses to seek available help at a difficult time. Crime prevention staff, already charged with literature distribution, conducting of safety and security presentation and community interaction would be an asset to Victim-Witness programs in sharing information they have available, and in engaging needs from the “non-reporting” victim communities.

Finally, a need was identified to review and update the Certified Crime Prevention Community Program Manual and to clarify any ambiguous language to ensure the manual is as clear and user-friendly as possible. The manual update was completed by the Law Enforcement Subcommittee of the Criminal Justice Services Board and DCJS staff and adopted in December 2009.