



Rank and File

REFLECTIONS ON EMERGING
ISSUES IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

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COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

SAI LLC

FROM VISION TO RESULTS

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Letter from the Director of the COPS Office

Colleagues:

As challenges to public safety evolve, so too must our responses. And who better to provide insights on the growing opioid crisis and other emerging issues facing law enforcement than the men and women who face them personally on a daily basis.

It was for this reason that the COPS Office convened a forum of rank-and-file police officers in August 2017. Designed to discuss strategies and debate ideas for reducing crime—in particular illegal immigration, drug trafficking, and violent crime—the forum covered a wide range of issues facing the modern law enforcement officer.

It was a spirited meeting, energized by a question-and-answer period with then Attorney General Jefferson B. Sessions. Throughout the day the officers were encouraged to question their peers and speak their minds, so numerous ideas, techniques, and recommendations were shared by the group. The result was an eye-opening meeting that discussed everything from tactics to reduce violent crime to suggestions for services to support officer wellness.

The 40 officers who participated in this meeting were very forthcoming in presenting their opinions and recommendations. Though they don't speak for all of today's American law enforcement officers, they do provide a perspective that is essential to effectively address problems and create durable, workable solutions. I thank Attorney General Sessions for addressing the group and participating in the discussion and the SAI team for organizing the meeting. On behalf of the COPS Office, I also want to express our gratitude to the participants who were so generous with their time and thoughtful in providing honest assessments of the state of policing and the possibilities for meeting new challenges as they arise.

It is our belief that meetings such as this inspire us all and bring us closer to developing the policies, tools, and resources we need to meet new and future challenges to the safety and well-being of us all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil Keith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "K".

Phil Keith
Director
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

Acknowledgments

It is with great appreciation that we recognize the work of the Office of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) staff members Deborah Spence, Helene Bushwick, and Brenda Auterman, who oversaw the development of the Rank & File Forum.

We also extend our thanks to James Copple, Principal and Founder of Strategic Applications International (SAI), for his expert facilitation design and leadership throughout the event. Additional members of the SAI team included Colleen Copple and Jessica Drake, as well as facilitators Jason Drake, Stephen Manik, Dr. Bernard Murphy, and Darnell Blackburn.

Furthermore, we would like to spotlight the participants and the depth of experience they brought to the table. Each of them was selected to represent their department at the table and be a voice on behalf of their fellow rank-and-file officers. For that, we commend and salute them.

Throughout this document are numerous quotations. Where and when the sources gave permission, we cited the name of the officer and the agency that sent him or her to the forum.

Introduction

On August 16, 2017, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), a component of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), invited 40 rank-and-file officers to engage in meaningful dialogue on numerous contemporary policing issues, share their insight and firsthand experiences as front-line officers, and discuss challenges they face in protecting their communities and reducing crime. The participants in the Rank & File Forum were officers, deputies, and troopers from a wide range of law enforcement agencies, nominated by the heads of their department as some of our nation's front-line leaders (see appendix for a full participant roster).

While the phrase “rank and file” is a historical artifact of military or paramilitary organizations, it has come to identify non-command staff in law enforcement. Initially used as a military expression to describe the rows and columns of soldiers assembled in a field, “rank and file” in the context of law enforcement calls to mind officers’ place in a department and the precision and order they bring to their everyday duties.

This second meeting of rank-and-file officers was a listening session to inform the DOJ on the current issues facing line officers. Throughout the day, many of those present reported feeling marginalized and criticized by those they were sworn to protect. Officer Kenneth Allen, President of the Atlanta, Georgia Police Union stated, “There is a lot going on with law enforcement in this country right now. We are no longer the heroes.” Responding to that concern, then Attorney General Jefferson B. Sessions, who participated in a robust question-and-answer session before the day’s proceedings, stressed that the U.S. Department of Justice “has your back.” Sessions emphasized, “We want to focus on your safety and wellness and to be sure you have the resources to respond to violent crime and other emerging threats to local communities.”

To that end, the Rank & File Forum focused on the following areas:

- A positive image of policing
- Recruitment and retention
- Identifying strategies to support line officers
- Crime trends and their influence on policing and police strategies
- Officer safety, wellness, and morale
- Community and police relations

The officers in attendance at the forum brought energy, insight, and years of experience to the discussion. The foundation of community policing is a field of dedicated and upstanding rank-and-file officers who can speak into the local community and create partnerships that encourage trust and establish legitimacy.

Principal Deputy Director Russ Washington, then Acting Director of the COPS Office, challenged the participants to engage in open and honest conversation to change “how officers, management, and communities work together to improve officer morale, safety, and wellness; reduce violent crime; and deal with emerging issues such as the growing opioid epidemic.” He went on to express his hopes that “the discussion [would] assess the state of policing from the viewpoint of those who work on the ground.”

A diverse roster of forum participants was invited and represented a variety of departments, programs, and areas of interest. SAI staff conducted pre-forum phone interviews with the majority of the participants before they came to Washington. The interviews were informative and helped develop the agenda, guide the dialogue, and inform this report.

The forum structure was designed to maximize officer participation by introducing each topic through a “springboard presentation” before transitioning to facilitated table talks. Participants were asked to provide specific examples or suggestions related to the topic of discussion, a number of which are highlighted throughout this report. Facilitators found that this format allowed officers to speak openly and generated peer-based collaboration. The officers’ discussions were then reported out to the whole group and many concepts, techniques, and recommendations for improving their profession. This report intends to capture the experiences, opinions, and ideas of the participating officers; and, it should be noted, the officers’ quotes that follow do not presume to speak for the more than 800,000 agents of law enforcement working nationwide. By including and emphasizing the views and impressions of the rank-and-file, this publication offers a glimpse into the daily routine of a unique and demanding profession.

Officer Morale, Safety, and Wellness

To sustain an agency that is prepared to respond to the changing threats to public safety, officer safety and wellness must be a priority for local communities. Advanced training and participation in strategies that promote physical and mental wellness can support officer safety and wellness, along with programs that detract from the stigma and dispel the barriers surrounding mental health care. Comprehensive officer safety and wellness programs can include treatment for an array of challenges that can stem from or lead to mental health issues, e.g., substance abuse, divorce, financial stress, or family disorders. To encourage officer wellness means to help officers to engage in a self-aware, self-directed process of achieving full physical, mental, and spiritual potential. Wellness—the state of being in good health, especially as an actively pursued goal—is a holistic, multidimensional state (National Wellness Institute 2018). A focus on officer safety and wellness through targeted programming and agency culture will improve individual well-being as well as agency morale as a whole. Furthermore, officer safety and wellness has an impact on how officers police the communities that they serve and protect. At all levels of law enforcement, from rank and file to leadership, officers who are equipped to handle the physical and mental demands of policing will build more positive interactions with the community and be more productive in the execution of their duties.

James Cople, the facilitator for the day, opened a discussion around officer morale by asking the group, “If somebody today were entering law enforcement and came to you and asked what is positive about the profession, what could you say?” Participants overwhelmingly emphasized their unique roles as protectors and the high personal reward they find in serving the community. Furthermore, they conveyed that positive community interactions helped develop a sense of self-satisfaction. Sergeant Timothy Guaerke of the Milwaukee (Wisconsin) Police Department said, “Despite media portrayal and national level perceptions, community members really appreciate and feel the need for law enforcement.” Numerous officers also cited that a perk of the profession is the support offered to officers after retirement, noting that this support seems stronger than in other fields. Officer Kenneth Allen of Atlanta, Georgia, looked to the future in highlighting the new era in which policing finds itself: “This [time] is about change. This is a profession that needs to be redeveloped, and new law enforcement professionals get to be a part of that shift.”

Cople then asked: “What issues are contributing to low morale throughout the profession?” While there were exceptions, participants shared a common view that a lack of resources has led to the expectation that rank-and-file officers can and should do more with less. However, the issue that dominated the discussion was the undercurrent of negativity law enforcement officers feel is coming from their communities. Agency leaders have become hyperaware of how the actions of individual officers can be viewed, especially in the age of social media and instant communication; but participants felt that in many cases these images are misrepresentations of the truth. This awareness has become a driving force behind behavioral and organizational changes across the country. According to Detective Shaun Willoughby, President of the Albuquerque, New Mexico, Police Union, “Police departments are

managing themselves based on the perceptions that they feel are being projected onto them. Departments are so worried about image and perception that it has become a factor in decision-making.” Also, several participants communicated that a lack of data analysis is an underlying cause of the persistence of negative perceptions. Sergeant David Orr of the Norwalk (Connecticut) Police Department explained that there is a “lack of accurate information being disseminated to the public and a lack of data to provide evidence about what is going on in the streets, especially toward minority groups. There is a major need for statistical, empirical information to support the claims being made.” The insufficiencies of both internal and external communications, as expressed by participants, as well as poor transparency of data analysis, may have led to the misperception that there is a true lack of data available. While there was a consensus among the group regarding the need for improved data collection and analysis, the realities of the power of negative perceptions led some officers to conclude that community concerns regarding law enforcement are not baseless. Officer Timothy Crawford of the Chicago Police Department mentioned his personal experience with traffic stops before his time as an officer, stressing, “There needs to be a change to old policing ways. I was never a criminal, but I was treated like a criminal. That’s part of the reason I became a police officer, to be a part of that change.”

Broken into small groups, the participants went on to discuss officer safety and wellness in more depth, addressing the following five questions:

1. What can the Federal Government do to improve the safety and wellness of local law enforcement?
2. What are the major barriers challenging officer safety and wellness?
3. What would you like your local department to do to enhance officer safety and wellness?
4. What specific services does your department provide to support wellness?
5. What are innovative strategies being used by your department to improve officer safety and wellness?

Discussion around these questions revealed several interconnected and interdependent topics on officer wellness and yielded many recommendations for addressing officer safety and wellness on a national scale. Transcripts of the forum revealed five reoccurring subjects that the forum participants identified as significant challenges to and potential solutions for improving officer safety and wellness: (1) insufficient and inappropriate training, (2) lack of funding, (3) unaddressed mental and emotional health issues, (4) poor community relations and negative perceptions, and (5) disconnect between leadership and ground-level law enforcement.

The following sections break down the details of these identified areas and the recommendations participants provided to address them.

Training

Participants agreed that proper training is the backbone of practical and comprehensive community policing. However, conversation indicated that training sessions are often rushed and made to seem less of a priority than they should be because of time and funding constraints. Insufficient and inconsistent training not only risks the safety and wellness of officers but can also expose the public to harm.

Lieutenant Paul Williams of the Bloomington (Illinois) Police Department expressed frustration with frequently changing training policies: “Departments are constantly shifting from one training program to the next, sending mixed signals to officers about what is expected of them on the job and which training aspects are most important.” The officers also felt that the shift to more computerized training, at the expense of scenario-based training, has resulted in procedural deficiencies that may prove damaging to officers’ safety and wellness.

Officers suggested that the lack of national training guidelines and standards has emerged as an additional challenge to officer safety and wellness at the local level as it can become unclear which training programs and components are most important. In addition, without national standards to establish a more open dialogue within training programs, officers often do not feel provided with a venue that is free of correction or reprisal within which to ask questions, discuss procedures, and develop techniques. Particularly true for in-service training, officers related instances of being discouraged from asking questions for fear of being called out or reprimanded for not knowing the correct answer or action. Participants said this might lead to limitations on officer safety and wellness in the field.

Some of the ideas participants advanced for improving training included the following:

- Departments should provide regularly recurring training on leadership, use of force, de-escalation, crisis intervention, and mental health safety for all officers and command staff.
- It would be helpful if there were a national-level training guide for all law enforcement agencies that includes regularly updated training recommendations.

Funding

After observing and noting its effects in their departments, forum participants shared that a lack of funding can lead to a breakdown in officer safety and wellness. Funding deficits can be used to justify the gutting of training budgets, which leads to poorly designed and ineffective training courses that create gaps in knowledge and stifles the professional growth of field level officers. Inadequate funding also limits officers’ access to potentially critical mental, emotional, and physical health services, which have become either grossly underfunded or absent for many departments across the United States. Officers also reported that a lack of funding for research around wellness issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is detrimental to improving the health and wellness of officers nationally.

Lack of funding for facilities, community programs, and equipment—particularly body cameras—was cited as a barrier to officer safety and wellness. Body cameras can play an essential role in understanding the varying perceptions that may surround interactions with community members. Participants talked about how inadequate equipment can lead to procedural incorrectness and, in the case of not having body cameras, a hesitation to act. A randomized controlled trial (RCT) carried out in conjunction with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) indicated that the use of body-worn cameras (BWC) shortened response times to resolve complaints and “reduced complaints and use of force reports” by “de-escalat[ing] aggression or hav[ing] a ‘civilizing’ effect on the nature of police-citizen encounters” (Braga et al. 2017). Regarding interaction with community members, officers said community engagement opportunities are critical to building community relationships. However, they also have seen that a lack of funding limits the amount of community engagement programs and events that their local departments can host.

Funding directly affects staffing levels by impacting both recruitment and retention. Increasingly, officers are asked to work extended hours, which amplifies fatigue and stress and often leads to burnout. These working conditions contribute to low morale, and safety risks can become consequences of budgetary decisions. In addition, while many participants agreed that being under the direct jurisdiction of state and local governments may be more benefit to officer safety and wellness than relying on Federal Government funding, it was proposed that increased spending at all levels of government will prove essential to the positive progress of officer safety and wellness.

Recommendation. The DOJ, tribal, state, and local governments should introduce budget lines to support training programs that address the need for more scenario-based training, emphasize the importance of procedure to officer safety and wellness, and include classroom-based courses that establish a greater sense of community and cultural awareness.

Participant suggestions regarding funding for law enforcement included the following:

- All levels of government should introduce budget lines to support training programs that address the need for more scenario-based training, emphasize the importance of procedure to officer safety and wellness, and include classroom-based courses that establish a greater sense of community and cultural awareness.
- All levels of government should ensure sufficient resources for department-level support programs, e.g., officer wellness programs such as peer-to-peer or cop-to-cop support programs, health and nutrition programs, and employee assistance programs (EAP).
- The DOJ should continue to fund—and potentially increase funding for—community-policing efforts, local law enforcement equipment, and hiring.

Addressing mental and emotional health

There was consensus that unaddressed mental and emotional health issues remain a recurrent challenge to officer safety and wellness. Sergeant Ken Schollenberger of the York (Pennsylvania) Police Department spoke to this issue: “As a group, law enforcement officers have severe mental and

emotional challenges that go unaddressed. Officers tend to only talk to one another, which normalizes experiences and emotional trauma. This is dangerous because it results in a bubble in which officers are afraid to speak up when they need assistance. Providing officers access to resources is critical.” While some resources are available to support emotional and mental health, participants stressed that the stigma around mental health is so strong that most officers fail to use those resources. Attendees also said that, in some cases, an officer who speaks up about mental health challenges might face retribution, which dissuades others from being transparent and from pursuing resources to help remedy their own issues. Participants persistently highlighted the stigma surrounding post-traumatic stress as being particularly pervasive and dangerous and noted that this stigma largely contributes to the inadequacy of resources available to combat the often resulting disorder, PTSD. According to Officer Kelly Kasser of the Columbus (Ohio) Police Department, “People suffering with PTSD become secretive because they are afraid of losing their jobs if they speak up and ask for help. We must normalize PTSD and other mental health issues.”

Participant ideas for improving the mental and emotional health of officers included the following:

- Whether in law enforcement, health agencies, insurance companies or government, the definition of wellness should include both a sense of physical and mental well-being.
- Mental and emotional wellness education, with a focus on holistic coping mechanisms and peer-to-peer communication, should be built into training and curricula across all law enforcement agencies in the United States.
- Departments should incentivize officer wellness as well as providing guidance and appropriate resources by employing life and wellness coaches, creating wellness units within departments, and encouraging engagement with local mental health organizations to increase support for officers and their families.
- The DOJ should support an awareness-raising campaign to inform and educate law enforcement agencies as well as the general public about post-traumatic stress and its effect on officers.
- Law enforcement agencies at all levels of government should support policies that destigmatize psychological therapy and provide officers with an avenue to combat law enforcement’s long-standing bias against those who may seek mental assistance. Similar to existing chaplaincy programs, the establishment of in-house mental health divisions could address officers’ mental and emotional needs on a daily basis while normalizing therapy as an accepted practice to ensure that officers do not face stigma and are not punished for seeking mental health support or treatment.

Police-community relations

Repeatedly noted by the participants as a variable in officer safety and wellness was the idea that in some communities, poor police-community relations have led to a negative perception of law enforcement. The officers in attendance at the forum identified two separate behaviors that have likely led to this disconnect and further jeopardized officer safety: (1) Community members operate from a

place of fear and discontent when interacting with police officers, and (2) members of departmental leadership are often influenced by and make decisions based on external perceptions. This position was echoed throughout the discussion and included a belief that some departments react to the publicity problem before investigating the facts of a complaint. Participants frequently said they felt more should be done to improve the media's understanding of policing and the public's expectations of law enforcement. It was a consistently raised point; the officers believe that a lack of knowledge and understanding of their job by the public has led to mistaken impressions, negative perceptions, and unfounded complaints.

Ideas from the participants for improving police-community relations included the following:

- Public relations campaigns should be sponsored to improve community perceptions of officer actions and behavior through an expanded understanding of the responsibilities and procedures that guide those in the rank and file.
- Law enforcement agencies at the tribal, state, and local levels should implement strategies to increase opportunities for effective community-police interaction, such as Citizens Police Academy, Clergy Academy, Cadet Police Academy, and Youth Neighborhood Watch.
- Departments should conduct annual communications audits to assess the effectiveness of internal and external communication to ensure strong relationships with the local community and media.
- Law enforcement agencies should explore restorative justice techniques at the departmental level and include evidence-based practices that improve police-community relationships and provide victims with a voice in the process.
- All levels of government should continue to explore and research the effectiveness of officers wearing body cameras as standard uniform protocol.

Building collaboration between leadership and field officers

At times, rank-and-file officers see officials as detached from the wellness of their staff and disconnected from policy development. The impression is that politics and leadership's obligations distance them from the daily experience of the boots-on-the-ground officer. Several officers indicated a feeling that the demands of their jobs, especially in understaffed agencies, are not fully recognized and create problems for officer mental and physical health. For example, officers discussed the sheer number of hours that they are working as a potential danger to officer safety and wellness as well as to public safety. A 2002 study funded by the National Institute of Justice found that more than 50 percent of officers were impaired as a result of fatigue when involved in on-the-job accidents. Possible solutions for long work hours and reciprocal fatigue were brought up in the small groups, yielding suggestions involving mandated times for rest during a shift or scheduling regulations to ensure that officers are not overworked. Participants reported a desire for departmental leadership to engage more with their

subordinates to build an open and supportive environment in which all officers feel heard, understood, and appreciated. Establishing a culture in agencies in which a continuous feedback loop is open and encouraged can close the perceived gap between leadership and the rank and file. Participants expressed a desire to be advocated for by leadership, especially with regard to officer safety and wellness policy creation and implementation.

Additional suggestions for building collaboration between the leadership and the rank and file included the following:

- Law enforcement leadership should participate in the same training sessions as rank-and-file officers to equalize experience, bolster camaraderie, and ensure a shared understanding of policies and job expectations across all levels of law enforcement agencies.
- Law enforcement agencies should facilitate regular policy and procedures audits based on data analysis and relevant outcome measures.
- Law enforcement agencies should review and continually update policies and practices based on evidence-based research in policing, including feedback from officers in the field.

Strategies and Tactics to Reduce Violent Crime

In 2016, the number of violent crimes reported in the United States increased by 4.1 percent from 2015, continuing a trend that began in 2012 (FBI 2017). As defined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the category of violent crime includes murder, rape, nonnegligent manslaughter, aggravated assault, and robbery. As a result of this increase in violent crime reports, it is imperative for both public safety and officer safety and wellness that local departments understand potential underlying causes of violent crime and implement informed, innovative strategies to address the issue at both local and national levels.

When asked about the origins of violent crime in the current policing environment, participants cited several contributing factors. Overarching themes were poverty, generational shifts, lack of community education about law enforcement, and critical emerging issues. They believe that strategies for reducing violent crime must therefore focus on addressing these causes. Further, officers said these causes are often intersectional in nature. Thus, the relationship among them must be taken into consideration when establishing tactics for addressing violent crime.

Poverty

Participants—supported by a body of literature showing the correlation of poverty to violence and crime—sought to address the underlying systemic violence associated with poverty. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), low-income individuals and families are disproportionately affected by violent crime, and such exposure damages the health and development of individuals, families, and communities (Sackett 2016). Officers validate findings in the literature with their own experience, sharing that their time walking the beat has unveiled that unemployment, family disintegration, and economic dependency are all symptoms of the violence that officers see every day, and these same symptoms create alienation and frustration in all segments of society.

Some of the ideas participants raised concerning the impact of poverty on crime included the following:

- Policy makers, seeking to reduce violence and crime, need to promote strategies that create opportunities for education and training to enhance the chance of employment.
- Local law enforcement agencies should build stronger partnerships with social services and mental health organizations seeking to address the underlying causes of poverty and improve the quality of life for all citizens.

Generational shifts

Participants stressed that reducing violent crime requires an understanding of the nuances and lifestyle of today's younger generations, particularly with regard to the rapid technological advancement and social media availability that was not influential even one generation ago. Participants suggested that this new age of technology and rapid information sharing, particularly among youth, has sensationalized crime in a way that was not possible in prior generations. Further, it seems that this rapid sharing of information, especially videos of criminal activity, can encourage additional crime and violence even in locations far removed from the initial crime. Officers believe that the ability of any individual to communicate about crime and violence via social media platforms and potentially reach millions of youth is very dangerous, leading to groups of young people becoming misinformed and potentially influenced to engage in criminal behavior themselves. Participants suggested that this phenomenon may also be influenced by the negative perception of law enforcement that they feel is portrayed through the media, creating a disregard for law enforcement and potentially further encouraging youth to engage in violent activity. Therefore, the officers believe that understanding the role of technology and social media as an influencer of crime is important for ensuring safety and wellness for law enforcement officers as well as for reducing crime.

There was also a perception on the part of participants that the current generation of youth has a unique disregard or disrespect for the law, which in part has been influenced by a shift in parenting in younger generations. For example, one participant observed that "There is a lack of accountability on the part of parents. Twenty or 30 years ago, you didn't hear of parenting classes. We just learned how to parent in a way that held our children to higher standards." Officer Matthew Segal of the Richmond (Virginia) Police Department stated, "People do not have the same sense of personal responsibility today. People are no longer expected to not commit crime. Rather, the city or state is expected to prevent crime." In other words, some officers feel that there is no longer an emphasis placed on personal responsibility but rather that governments are expected to provide a moral compass to society.

Participants stressed the need for the general populace to understand that crime is often intergenerational. Officers have often observed this phenomenon while working in small and rural communities where they can directly see cycles of substance abuse and violence that span across generations of the same family. Furthermore, organizations like Amachi (the nation's largest mentoring program for children of prisoners) and others concerned with intergenerational incarceration have found that 70 percent of young people whose parents are involved in the criminal justice system are likely to be involved in that same system.

Education about law enforcement

Participants frequently cited that there seems to be a lack of public understanding about how law enforcement functions, the essential duties of law enforcement, and the education and training required to be a sworn officer. Beyond this, they also see many citizens who do not appear to understand the causes or roots of criminal behavior. There has been little effort to educate the general

public on the law, procedure, and causes of crime, and participants feel that this leads to unreasonable or unrealistic expectations about what the police can or should do. That disconnect between expectation and reality ultimately makes the day-to-day efforts to address violence more difficult.

The participants offered ideas for improving public understanding of law enforcement including the following:

- Communities should establish programs that are designed to inform and educate young people about the causes of crime and criminal behavior.
- Through programs such as Police Athletic Leagues (PAL), Explorers, and Boys and Girls Clubs, agencies should create opportunities for young people to understand the education requirements and demands of in-service training in the field of law enforcement.
- Local law enforcement agencies should build collaborations to better inform citizens about what contributes to violent crime and how the criminal justice system works.

Emerging issues

The officers agreed that drugs, gangs, guns, and inconsistencies in the criminal justice system are all contributors to violent behavior. Attention to these issues appears to come in cycles, according to forum participants. Officers believe that in many locations across the country, the majority of violent crime is related to drug sales and gang territories. Officers also said they see failures within the criminal justice system itself preventing a decline in violent crime, stating that they believe jail sentences do not have their intended effect. As Officer Chris Tracy of Tacoma, Washington, said, “Violent criminals who have been in prison for twenty years are now being released and often have plans to ‘take back their turf.’ We are putting original, violent offenders back in the neighborhoods.” Other officers said some sentences in certain cases do not seem strong enough to encourage people to stop committing crimes when they return to the community. There was also a concern by a few that to some offenders, the idea of going to jail is not a deterrent and that this type of offender mindset creates a significant challenge in policing for the reduction of violent crime. These observations of the lack of a deterrent effect should not be surprising as criminal justice research since the 1970s has generally shown that sending individuals to prison is not a very effective way to deter crime (Nagin 2013). Whether individual officers are familiar with this specific research is beside the point; when policy and practice are predicated on theoretical assumptions (like deterrence) that are unsubstantiated by reality, officers are unable to have the impact they want to on the safety of their communities.

Suggestions from the participants on better addressing emerging issues included the following:

- Law enforcement agencies need to build the capacity to forecast and capture trends in crime and social change to better identify emerging issues.
- Law enforcement agencies need to build collaborations with universities, think tanks, and organizations monitoring social trends to better equip rank-and-file officers with information regarding emerging issues.

Effective strategies

Participants were asked to share strategies used by their departments to address violent crime. Their response was nearly unanimous: Increased contact with their communities and building on the foundation of community policing should improve the deployment of evidence-based strategies and play a role in reducing crime. Increased engagement and connections with communities was the most frequently cited strategy or remedy for addressing violent crime.

Lieutenant Tyrone Currie of Memphis, Tennessee, highlighted a neighborhood-based program—Youth Crime Watch—that seeks to engage high-risk youth in the hope of staving off violent crime. The program has been an integral part of addressing the issue in Memphis, both increasing access to information before the commission of a violent crime and building relationships of trust between youth and law enforcement, which may reduce the likelihood of participating youth engaging in violent crime themselves. Students in the program design safety protocols for their school communities and learn how to interact with police, one on one, directly from rank-and-file officers. Youth are given ownership and can take pride in the fact that they are contributing to the safety of their communities. Currie stated, “Until the police and community begin collaborating, we will continue to miss the chance to stop violent crime before it happens. We fear each other because we don’t know each other.”

Officers from several departments said efforts to increase positive community engagement and decrease violent crime include officer participation in programs that promote dialogue and inclusion. According to Sergeant Timothy Guaerke of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a program called “Bridging the Divide” has trained 80 plainclothes officers to lead group discussions with young people in the community. This approach has humanized the officers and allowed them to understand the community on a much deeper level than they would otherwise. Improved community relations are realized by forming personal relationships while out on patrol and empowering community members with the truth that they have something valuable to offer to local law enforcement. Other programs such as restorative justice initiatives build trust and enhance police legitimacy in the community by giving crime victims a voice in the process. Restorative justice programs are inherently about responsibility, accountability, and addressing the needs of victims. According to participants, this kind of ownership creates a responsibility on the part of offenders and communities.

Programs that focus on recidivism and initiatives to prevent reoffending are also critical for addressing and reducing violent crime. Rank-and-file officers in attendance felt that re-entry programs are critical prevention tools that are currently underfunded and unsupported, leading them to feel like they arrest the same people repeatedly. The general opinion around the table seemed to underline the importance of re-entry and recidivism prevention as violence prevention initiatives in communities.

Officers from locations across the nation also cited youth-serving programs as effective strategies for the prevention of violent crime. As Officer Bervin Smith of the Dallas (Texas) Police Department said, “We have to go out and meet people where they are. You cannot go out into the community being afraid of the people you are working with. We need more understanding of the communities we serve,

not the other way around.” Smith went on to talk about (now retired) Chief David Brown of Dallas, Texas, who founded a program called Chief on the Beat. This initiative gets higher-ranking officers out in the community alongside patrol officers and works toward building stronger community relationships based on a foundation of trust between law enforcement and citizens.

Service opportunities within the community are also a proven strategy for building community relationships. Several officers reported involvement in programs that provide school-aged youth with backpacks and school supplies at the start of each school year help to create a bridge between law enforcement and youth. Officer Mark Sorenson of the Rockford (Illinois) Police Department cited a community living program where officers live in homes refurbished by the city within the communities they police.

It is important to note that all of the effective strategies for addressing violent crime that were shared by the officers in attendance focused on the primary objective of encouraging police departments everywhere to be a part of the communities they serve. Officers said the keys to addressing the unique problems facing communities are immersion in the community as members of it and involvement with community members, particularly at-risk populations. Overwhelmingly, participants believed that achieving this goal is a critical component of reducing violent crime.

Participants’ ideas around effective strategies included the following:

- Departments should create working groups to explore innovative strategies to build community relationships and involve the community in the process of preventing violent crime.
- Tribal, state, and local governments should implement evidence-based rehabilitation and re-entry programs to reduce recidivism and improve offender outcomes upon release from prison.

In addition to innovative strategies on the part of local departments, the need for community buy-in is critical for addressing violent crime—especially in the current climate that overshadows community-police relations. It is crucial, now more than ever, for community members and organizations to be a collaborative part of the crime prevention process. Community members can and should play an active role in reducing violent crime. Forum participants repeatedly emphasized the critical need for community policing programs, intentional community engagement, and a willingness by the community to begin building relationships with law enforcement. Participants said community-led programs, such as Community Watch and Block Captain programs, are equally as important as police patrol in helping to minimize violent crime. The officers believe that community members must take an active role in identifying and reporting violent crimes, requiring community members to have a willingness to cooperate and collaborate with law enforcement officers; to be both empowered and willing to be the eyes and ears of law enforcement. In addition, participants suggested that community members can help address violent crime by changing their behaviors regarding social media. They feel that community members inadvertently glorify crime when they record it for social media rather than engaging with law enforcement protocols such as maintaining a safe distance, calling 911, and giving the police access to the scene of the crime.

According to forum participants and their experience in the field, another significant challenge to addressing violent crime is staffing. There is a national shortage of qualified law enforcement officers, and recruitment remains a challenge. Officers felt that community policing or specialized units that focus only on community policing requires an adequate number of officers who are not overworked to participate. This may be especially true for smaller departments around the country. Part of this discussion focused on mainstreaming community policing by recognizing every officer as a community policing officer rather than delegating community policing to specialized units. In addition, participants suggested that officer shortage also leads to a culture of reactive rather than proactive behaviors. Therefore, participants recommend increased budgets for hiring and the review of methods for retaining officers. In addition, participants suggested hiring more bilingual officers to continue bridge-building in diverse communities.

Other suggestions from the participants included the following:

- Local departments should aim to hire officers that reflect the diversity of their communities, e.g., recruiting bilingual officers, supporting “live where you work” programs.
- National guidelines or professional certification standards are needed for law enforcement agencies regarding recruitment and staffing levels, including minimum staffing requirements.

Emerging Issues in Policing and Strategies to Support Law Enforcement Officers

Determining emerging issues

The final topic of the day focused on the future of law enforcement and emerging issues in the field, both locally and nationwide. Overall, officers stated that the identification of and subsequent response to emerging issues is left almost entirely to supervisors and administrators. However, for Officer David Loar and the rank and file of the Kansas City (Missouri) Police Department, individual units have worked together to determine priority issues and establish an information flow to the patrol officers on the street. “Biweekly information sharing/intelligence meetings [are held] where some of these issues are funneled out through the ranks. [Certain topics] do tend to stay at the forefront. The unit in charge of whatever the issue is (e.g., human trafficking) determines that it’s an emergent issue,” he said.

Through the deployment of more data-driven tactics, many departments use crime analysis applications to help map out patterns of criminal activity and determine what might be an emerging issue. Regardless of the effectiveness of this predictive, technology-based method, patrolling officers are still the department’s eyes and ears in the neighborhoods, and ultimately see themselves having responsibility for recognizing emerging issues on the street. Their duties in establishing a flow of information from streets to administration were reflected upon by Officer Kelly Kasser: “As officers, we fall short in terms of passing on information that we are gathering on the streets up the chain [of command]. This is what we need to do to actually identify emerging issues.” This ear-to-the-ground approach, combined with data analytics, has prompted the police department in Columbus, Ohio, to construct the position of Community Liaison Officer (CLO). These CLO units “provid[e] support and assistance to the patrol officers” assigned to the five zones that make up Columbus’s police network (Columbus Division of Police 2018). Along with their interdepartmental assignments, CLOs conduct presentations, attend neighborhood and block watch meetings, and “offer law enforcement services to the assigned precincts by collaborating with the public to reduce incidents affecting quality-of-life issues” (2018). However, Sergeant Ken Schollenberger of York, Pennsylvania, expressed an opinion shared by many in attendance: “Emerging issues are cyclical; we beat them down enough to go back to regular business, [and] then they rear their heads again.”

To better get in front of these trends and cycles, the participants' suggestions included the following:

- Law enforcement agencies should develop intentional formal and informal strategies that are about creating opportunities for communication and collaboration between command staff and the rank and file.
- Law enforcement agencies should enhance crime analysis units to build their capacity to decipher anecdotal and unsubstantiated trends in crime.

Social media and community expectations of the department

Officer Matthew Segal of Richmond, Virginia, aptly stated a hard truth faced by police departments: "Social media has changed what becomes an emerging issue." By pairing Facebook Live, Snapchat, Periscope, and other video streaming and sharing applications with the most advanced phones and cameras, officers perceive that the community has turned to social media as their preferred method of policing the police. Some within the law enforcement community see the posting of videos to social media accounts as an effort to disparage officers, prevent them from effectively performing their duties, and hold officers accountable instead of encouraging them to perform their duties more effectively. Despite the potential issues surrounding the integration of social media into policing, Officer Jason Cullum of Evansville, Indiana, has seen its advantages and uses it to engage the community: "In years past, you needed police resources to engage the community. With social media and the resources communities have now, we also use those platforms as public servants, we deal with addiction issues and broken homes . . . we touch kids' lives." Social media has allowed officers to integrate themselves into people's daily lives and show them the human side of policing.

When there is an increasing number of interactions and a higher level of familiarity between the community and police, it stands to reason that the relationship would shift to reflect a higher degree of mutual trust and respect. Lieutenant Tyrone Currie of Memphis, Tennessee, believes it is his responsibility to meet community expectations. "[The] community expects a friendlier and more engaged police department. [They're] yearning for unity. Law enforcement should take the first step." Taking the first step is not an approach that all police departments are accustomed to, however, and the flow of information is not always as smooth from police departments to communities as it might be in reverse. Officer David Loar of Kansas City, Missouri, raised this point during small table discussions: "[The] community not only expects us to serve and protect but [also] now [to] be extremely transparent—tell everyone what we're doing, when, where, and how." Officer Blake Massaro of Eureka, California, went on: "[The community is] expecting more services on increased taxes, such as providing transportation, mental health services, etc."

Some of the ideas participants had for managing social media realities included the following:

- Departments should create a social media liaison position to establish and maintain a community-oriented social media presence.
- Departments should provide training in the use of technology and the appropriate etiquette to assist officers on social media so that they can participate in community outreach with the necessary tools for successful communication.
- Departments should integrate police blotters into police-sponsored social media feeds to strengthen the foundation of a culture of transparency and open two-way lines of communication between departments and the community as a whole.

The police, NARCAN, and the opioid epidemic

The opioid epidemic was viewed by many at the forum as a long-standing issue—not necessarily “emerging.” Officers proved well versed in the conversation that surrounds the fight against the opioid epidemic and the advances and setbacks that fight has experienced since the 1990s. Overall, the abuse of schedule II controlled substances, specifically opioids, has shown continuous growth as these drugs have become more readily available through forged prescriptions, doctors who employ unlawful prescription policies, theft, and so on. People who use prescription opioids for nonmedical reasons go on to use heroin at a rate that is 19 times higher than users who have no reported previous nonmedical use (Muhuri, Gfroerer, and Davis 2013), and researchers have established a correlation between the nonmedical use of multiple opioids and transitioning to heroin (Grau et al. 2010). Officer Matthew Segal of Richmond, Virginia, shared his empathy for individuals who may find themselves in this situation: “I like to find out what path took them to this destination. A lot of them got injured, maybe got in a car accident, got prescribed Hydrocodone. Then, they found somebody that would sell pills to them. Once they crossed the threshold of not caring that they weren’t purchasing the drugs legally, they moved on to heroin and harder drugs.”

Naloxone, more commonly known by its brand name NARCAN, is an opioid antagonist that was created in 1961 and approved 10 years later by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of opioid abuse by suppressing overdose symptoms, which allows time for further lifesaving techniques to be employed. It was distributed to 15 states and Washington, D.C., in 1996 in the form of take-home kits for non-first responders. Its primary purpose was for in-home usage. As a result, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that more than 26,000 opioid overdoses were reversed by nonmedical personnel between 1996 and 2014 (Cordant Health Solutions 2017). In April 2014, the FDA fast-tracked the approval of an easy-to-use nasal spray form of NARCAN that has become the favored administration method among emergency responders (American Health & Drug Benefits 2016). Although this has resulted in police officers saving thousands of lives, Sergeant Ken Schollenberger of York, Pennsylvania, expressed frustration over the number of users requiring NARCAN: “We’re in Appalachia where this all began. We are NARCANing four to five people a shift, every shift. One couple that we’ve had, I personally NARCANed this girl five times. I can’t even arrest her . . . What’s the end?” With more than 2,000 opioid overdoses being reversed by Pennsylvania law enforcement using NARCAN

(NCHRC 2018), Sergeant Schollenberger is not alone in his experience. As naloxone is deployed to save lives, communities need to come up with better solutions to break the cycle of addiction that led to the overdoses in the first place.

NARCAN

You have seen this in the news. We have a huge opioid issue. It would be a miracle if we didn't have an overdose a day. A handful of our officers carry NARCAN. They're starting to implement our CIT [Crisis Intervention Team] officers all carry NARCAN It's a miracle drug. I've never seen anybody get pulled back from two, three, four [overdoses], and walking and be absolutely fine.

— Officer Kelly Kasser, Columbus, Ohio

We explore having every officer deployed with NARCAN more on the theory that it's for us. If we are exposed to it, and we have minutes to save an officer's life . . . tourniquets are really for us, but if we encounter an incident in the community where we can save a life, and using it seems appropriate, then we have it to deploy. It's really for us, but if it helps the community as well, we can deploy.

— Officer Chris Tracy, Tacoma, Washington

Three or four years ago we had a group of churches that come [sic] together, it's Congregations Acting for Justice and Empowerment. They asked local law enforcement agencies if they would carry NARCAN in their patrol units We ended up trying it as a pilot program when we found some money to pay for some just for a few officers. In that short time frame . . . you won't find an officer who will patrol without it. Now, we're actually applying for a second grant.

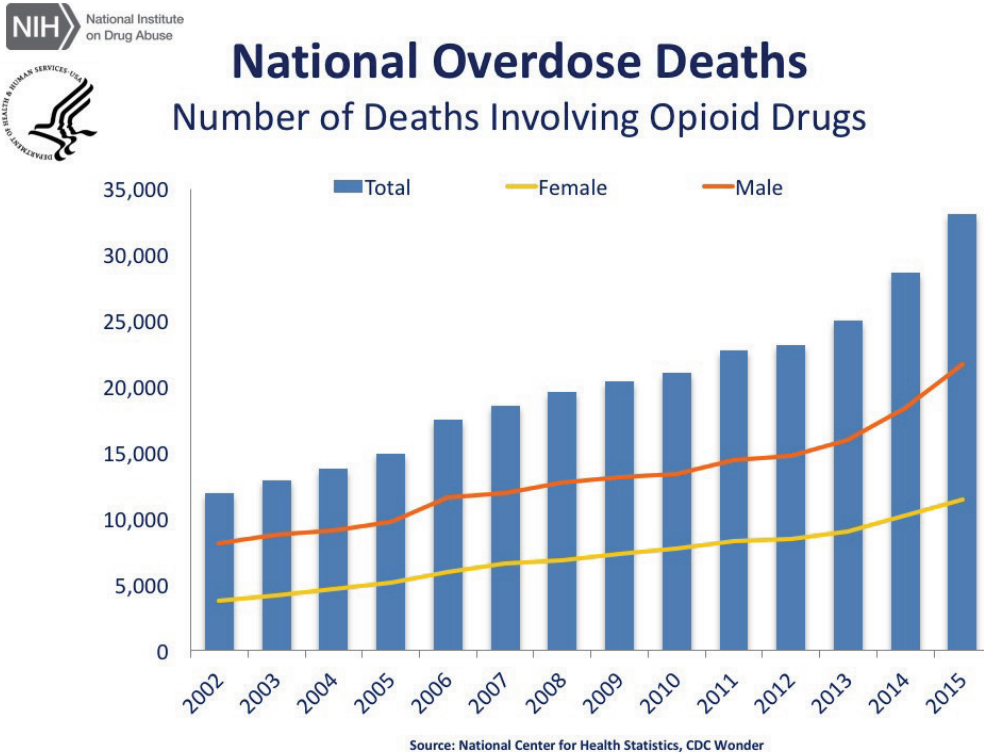
— Sergeant Jason Cullum, Evansville, Indiana

We're currently budgeted to have NARCAN in our police department Medical studies dictate that you have to keep NARCAN in a cooled, temperature-controlled environment. And in the trunk of a police car in New Mexico, at 105 degrees, it is not that. So, we're concerned about the liability of administering it when it's not properly kept.

— Detective Shaun Willoughby, Albuquerque, New Mexico

In 2015, the National Institute on Drug Abuse recorded more than 30,000 overdose deaths from opioid-based drugs alone. (See figure 1 on page 20.)

Figure 1. Number of deaths involving opioid drugs in the United States, 2002–2015



This figure shows the total number of U.S. overdose deaths involving opioid drugs from 2002 to 2015. Included in this number are opioid analgesics along with heroin and illicit synthetic opioids. The line graph overlaid on the chart shows the number of deaths of women and men. From 2002 to 2015 there was a 2.8-fold increase in the total number of opioid deaths.

Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse (2017)

The advent of NARCAN as a method of reviving a person following an opioid-related overdose has altered law enforcement protocols when responding to opioid- or overdose-related call. In many cases, these protocol changes have come as a result of police partnering with community groups to develop and evolve policy.

While there was some dissension in the ranks, most of the officers present embraced NARCAN and the use of NARCAN within their department as good policy. It not only revives a user who has overdosed but it also allows officers to be more active and responsive on a drug-related call. However, this issue has become further complicated by budget restraints, protocols for storing NARCAN, liability issues, and training protocols.

Copple closed out the conversation with the observation that discussion and debates of this type are what bring to light emerging issues within departments. He took a moment to note that the discourse surrounding the opioid epidemic, the concerns raised in regards to NARCAN, and the lack of a clear path moving forward only serve to underscore this as an emerging issue of the utmost importance.

Participant suggestions for addressing the opioid epidemic included the following:

- Departments should improve lines of communication from the rank and file to leadership to provide precise information about the opioid problem as seen on the streets. This information will help leadership move toward appropriate tactics and solutions.
- The opioid epidemic affects people nationwide and requires law enforcement agencies to implement regular briefings and training specifically to discuss the opiate issue and the strategies for addressing it.
- Law enforcement agencies working in collaboration with local unions and professional associations should become more active in the development of policy related to the opioid crisis.
- Departments should implement community strategies that encourage and empower community members to be active eyes and ears on the opioid issue, working in collaboration with local law enforcement.
- Departments should provide access and safe handling procedures for NARCAN, and the use of NARCAN should become standard training in all police academies and law enforcement continuing education programs.

Human trafficking as an emerging issue

With an estimated 45.8 million people in some form of modern slavery, 20.9 million international victims of trafficking, and close to 58,000 living in captivity in the United States, human trafficking is an issue on a global scale that affects law enforcement at all levels (Global Slavery Index 2018). At that scale, human trafficking is not necessarily an emerging issue for many officers in attendance at the forum but rather a long-standing problem that has resurfaced and returned to the forefront of the public's collective consciousness. Human trafficking, from a law enforcement perspective, has always been an issue with no concrete solution in sight.

One of the most significant challenges is the labor intensiveness of investigating, identifying, arresting, and prosecuting the perpetrators of human trafficking. In specific unfortunate instances, the issue has become overgrown and complicated. Some departments have found themselves facing the challenge without adequate resources. As this is a multijurisdictional issue, officers find themselves needing to pursue criminals across state and international borders.

Human trafficking

It's not necessarily emerging. It's been in Texas for a very, very long time. I can point to, a few weeks ago, San Antonio. There was an 18-wheeler . . . that made national news. They treated it like it was a rare occasion, [it] happens every day. We get those same trailers as far north as Fort Worth . . . It's not just the immigrants wanting to come over. It's smuggling, sex trade, people that have been kidnapped, people from poor communities. It's been going on for a very long time. I think law enforcement is just now wanting to treat it.

— Sergeant Richard Van Houten, Dallas, Texas

As one of four southern border states, we see a huge impact with this. It's a huge issue and it's multifaceted. It's illegal immigration, it's drugs, cartel drug trade, it's human trafficking, sex trafficking—a lot of issues rolled up into it. A few years ago, Phoenix was the drop house capital of the nation . . . It is extremely manpower intensive . . . In Phoenix, we have had issues with local politics creeping into policy and they gutted a good, well-written immigration enforcement policy.

— Officer Kenneth Crane, Phoenix, Arizona

I headed up an investigation as an Intel (intelligence officer) and we ran it from the Florida border all the way up to the South Carolina border, where it was the same chain and they just kept moving the girls in and out. The biggest problem we faced was the language barrier and the fear that the people involved [in the process] have for their families. There is a constant threat that [their families] are going to be killed. There isn't anything that allows us to bring them out and put them in a safe house. So, unfortunately, it seem[ed that] we can't do anything to offer them protection if we do get them out.

— Officer Kenneth Allen, Atlanta, Georgia

Feeling handcuffed by their protocols and regulations, overwhelmed by a seemingly neverending stream of trafficking victims, and losing resources to other hot-button, emerging issues, rank-and-file officers engaged in human trafficking cases often find themselves frustrated and unwilling to fully dedicate their time to this critical issue. The depth and scope of trafficking's effects, specifically the wide net of victimization it casts, have brought this topic to the forefront of the public consciousness and fueled the ongoing development of anti-trafficking policy on a global scale.

Improving support for law enforcement

Repairing and enhancing law enforcement's outward relationships with the community was a prevalent theme of discussion at the forum. However, relationships within the system also need to be examined. The exchange of different perspectives on officers' relationships with the upper levels of their departments was an important topic for most in attendance. First, as a result of limited interactions, many of the rank-and-file officers do not feel supported by their leadership. Officers shared concerns that leaders who are responsible for making policy and procedural decisions are not best suited to make

such decisions because of their limited exposure to the current street-level environment. Policies viewed as outdated or ambiguous often leave officers unsure of proper procedure and turning to culturally antiquated practices or continuing outdated techniques of policing. Furthermore, participants felt that leadership often becomes too entrenched in politics, impacting the quality of decisions made and thereby affecting ground-level policing. Last, officers reported concerns regarding inadequate resources resulting from the disconnection with leadership around appropriate staff needs. Whether because of enacting faulty policy, playing politics, or simply mismanaging their officers, participants viewed law enforcement administrators as susceptible to the same pitfalls as management in civilian professions. (The comments in the sidebar titled “Administrative support” reflect some of the frustrations officers expressed and may or may not be experienced by others within their departments.)

Administrative support

Funding is the key. We can't do everything without money. Or minimize the role of law enforcement so that they can do their jobs sufficiently.

— Lieutenant Paul Williams, Bloomington, Illinois

It's difficult to keep track of proper procedure. Keep communication open from top to bottom; this will foster respect.

— Officer Kelly Kasser, Columbus, Ohio

Stop changing procedural protocols so frequently. [It gets] difficult to keep track of what's right and wrong.

— Sergeant Ken Schollenberger, York, Pennsylvania

Other ideas from the participants for improving support included the following:

- The community, law enforcement administrators and supervisors, as well as the rank and file themselves, need to develop strategies that reinforce peer-to-peer support.
- Law enforcement leaders need to maintain and encourage open lines of communication among their peers and subordinates.
- Law enforcement agencies should engage in their fiduciary duties and provide the public with an online budgetary debriefing so that taxpayers can better understand how funding is spent.

Conclusion

Bringing rank-and-file officers to the table and establishing a culture of conversation bred dialogue between officers representing a broad swath of departments, which resulted in thoughtful, creative ideas and solutions to the challenges the profession currently faces. Officer Ken Crane of Phoenix, Arizona, stated, “I have faith in the profession, and it is rewarding to know that we have the ability to help new officers.” Overwhelmingly, participants felt that while the profession is experiencing major growing pains and must undergo systemic changes, there is excitement about the potential for the future of policing.

Officers agreed that establishing trust and building relationships between communities and police must be at the forefront of the community policing mission across the nation. It is critical that local, state, and federal leadership engage with rank-and-file officers on a regular basis to thoroughly understand the current policing climate and the needs of street-level policing. Leadership engagement at the local level, both within departments and within communities, has the power to increase officer morale while building trust and legitimacy in communities.

Even when addressing complex emerging issues such as the opioid epidemic and human trafficking, community engagement has proven key. From the opinions shared at the forum, rank-and-file officers are ready and willing to put forth the required efforts to rebuild positive relationships with the communities they serve. With support from local, state, and federal leadership, these officers are excited to implement innovative community policing strategies. Moreover, they are excited to be a part of pushing the profession to new heights for the betterment of both officers on the street and communities.

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Appendix. Participant Roster

Officer Kenneth Allen

Atlanta, Georgia, Union President

Detective Jeremy Arnold

Scott County (Indiana) Sheriff's Office

Sergeant Gaston Balli

McAllen (Texas) Police Department

Trooper Candice Bershears

Kansas Highway Patrol

Sergeant Wallace Billie

Navajo Nation Police Department, Arizona

Officer George Carranza

Reno (Nevada) Police Department

Corporal Michael Coleman

Wilmington (Delaware) Police Department

Officer Ken Crane

Phoenix (Arizona) Law Enforcement Association

Officer Timothy Crawford

Chicago (Illinois) Police Department

Sergeant Jason Cullum

Evansville (Indiana) Police Department

Lieutenant Tyrone Currie

Memphis (Tennessee) Police Department

Officer Lindsey Fuquay

Owyhee County (Idaho) Sheriff's Office

Officer Bryen Glass

Baltimore County (Maryland) Police Department

Sergeant Andrew Grove

Kent (Washington) Police Department

Sergeant Timothy Guaerke

Milwaukee (Wisconsin) Police Department

Corporal Nathaniel Harris

Gulf Shores (Alabama) Police Department

Officer Richard Kayes

Colorado Springs (Colorado) Police Department

Officer Kelly Kasser

Columbus (Ohio) Police Department

Deputy Jason Krizan

Morton County (North Dakota) Sheriff's Department

Officer David Loar

Kansas City (Missouri) Police Department

Corporal Errol Lobin

Prince George's County (Maryland) Police Department

Sergeant Matthew Mahl

Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department & President, FOP Lodge 1

Sergeant Blake Massaro

Humboldt County (California) Sheriff's Department

Officer Francisco Montes

Sycuan Tribal Police Department, California

Officer Michael Netherton

Meridian (Idaho) Police Department

Sergeant David Orr

Norwalk (Connecticut) Police Department

Officer Sean Payne

Tucson (Arizona) Police Department

Sergeant Harold Richardson

Bozeman (Montana) Police Department

Timothy Richardson

Senior Legislative Liaison, Fraternal Order of Police

Sergeant Ken Schollenberger

York (Pennsylvania) Police Department

Officer Matthew Segal

Richmond (Virginia) Police Department

Officer Phillip Smith

Evansville (Indiana) Police Department

Officer Bervin Smith

Dallas (Texas) Police Department

Officer Mark Sorenson

Rockford (Illinois) Police Department

Officer Chris Tracy

Tacoma (Washington) Police Department

Sergeant Rick Van Houten

Fort Worth (Texas) Police Department

Sergeant Edward Vazquez

Miami-Dade County (Florida) Police Department

Lieutenant Paul Williams

Bloomington, Illinois, Union President

Detective Shaun Willoughby

Albuquerque, New Mexico, Police Union President

About SAI

Strategic Applications International (SAI) provides training, technical assistance, and organizational development strategies for domestic and international nongovernmental organizations; nonprofits; and local, state, national, and international governmental organizations responding to crime, violence, and substance abuse. SAI provides facilitation and mediation services and brokers partnerships between public and private sectors to address critical issues facing communities.

In partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice and the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, SAI has facilitated 22 governors' summits on methamphetamine and, in collaboration with state and local agencies, developed comprehensive prevention and treatment strategies with measurable outcomes. Most recently, with funding from the COPS Office, SAI worked with 40 tribal law enforcement agencies seeking to address drug abuse in tribal nations.

SAI is a global firm with projects to address police corruption, criminal justice reform, counterterrorism, and deradicalization in East Africa; prevent and treat HIV and AIDS in South Africa and Swaziland; and tackle gender-based violence in Kenya, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Rwanda. Globally, SAI addresses development issues around community policing, substance abuse, gender empowerment, climate and the environment, and women and youth employment.

About the COPS Office

The **Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)** is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Community policing begins with a commitment to building trust and mutual respect between police and communities. It supports public safety by encouraging all stakeholders to work together to address our nation's crime challenges. When police and communities collaborate, they more effectively address underlying issues, change negative behavioral patterns, and allocate resources.

Rather than simply responding to crime, community policing focuses on preventing it through strategic problem-solving approaches based on collaboration. The COPS Office awards grants to hire community policing officers and support the development and testing of innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders, as well as all levels of law enforcement.

Since 1994, the COPS Office has invested more than \$14 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing. Other achievements include the following:

- To date, the COPS Office has funded the hiring of approximately 130,000 additional officers by more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies in both small and large jurisdictions.
- Nearly 700,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office-funded training organizations.
- To date, the COPS Office has distributed more than eight million topic-specific publications, training curricula, white papers, and resource CDs and flash drives.
- The COPS Office also sponsors conferences, round tables, and other forums focused on issues critical to law enforcement.

COPS Office information resources, covering a wide range of community policing topics such as school and campus safety, violent crime, and officer safety and wellness, can be downloaded via the COPS Office's home page, www.cops.usdoj.gov. This website is also the grant application portal, providing access to online application forms.

In August 2017, 40 rank-and-file officers met for a round table to discuss their roles in implementing their agencies' community policing policies and operations. The officers came from departments across the country and explored a wide range of issues from the viewpoint of those who work on the ground. The meeting provided insights and recommendations for ways in which officers, law enforcement leaders, and communities can work together to reduce crime—in particular illegal immigration, drug trafficking, and violent crime. They also discussed the need to support officer morale, safety, and wellness and explored emerging issues such as the growing opioid epidemic, providing forthright assessments of the current state of policing.



COPS

Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
145 N Street NE
Washington, DC 20530

To obtain details about COPS Office programs, call
the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770.

Visit the COPS Office online at
www.cops.usdoj.gov.



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