



# VIOLENCE REDUCTION NETWORK ANNUAL REPORT

JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2016



Strategic Solutions • Focused Actions • Reduced Violence

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## Message From the VRN Co-Directors

Hello, colleagues. It is our pleasure to share with you the progress and impact of the VRN program during 2016. VRN has a unique approach to address violent crime in some of our nation's most at-risk cities. VRN leverages the expertise of DOJ law enforcement entities (*including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives [ATF], the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration [DEA], and the U.S. Marshals Service [USMS]*) and DOJ programmatic agencies (*including the Office of Justice Programs [OJP], the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services [COPS Office], and the Office on Violence Against Women [OVW]*) to collaborate strategically with law enforcement and prosecutorial leadership in the partner cities. Through this process, DOJ joins forces to support our nation's cities in the fight against violent crime and the effort to engage communities and keep officers safe.

VRN was established in 2014, so it is still a relatively new program. We all understand that it's going to take time to see an immediate drop in violent crime rates. Nevertheless, VRN accepts the challenge and is proactively working on issues that directly impact public safety—such as building analytical capacity, improving investigations, targeting gang and gun violence, enhancing police-community relations, sharing information through peer learning, and enhancing technological capabilities. These are all tools that law enforcement tell us they need to better fight violent crime.

Through training, building relationships, strengthening policies, sharing best practices, and working with community members, DOJ supports the VRN cities' local violent crime strategies. We have seen some promising progress this year. For example, in 2016, Milwaukee reported a 14 percent reduction in violent crime (compared to 2015) in its Center Street Corridor, which is a violent crime hot spot and an identified area of focus for Milwaukee's VRN strategy.

In Arkansas, local and federal prosecutors and the ATF are working collaboratively with the Little Rock Police Department to prosecute violent gun crime cases that will remove violent offenders and gang members from the streets. In fact, in the first few months of 2016, 40 gun cases were transferred to the U.S. Attorney for federal prosecution. And in October 2016, another approximately 26 referrals were accepted for possible indictment by a grand jury. We learned that already in 2017, 41 VRN cases, involving violent offenders, have been accepted by the U.S. Attorney for federal gun and drug crime charges. That's impressive!

As another example of the power of VRN collaboration, the USMS; the Newark, New Jersey, Police Department; the Essex County Prosecutor's Office; the DEA; the FBI; and other law enforcement agencies conducted an operation targeting Newark's most violent offenders—leading to the arrest of 240 fugitives, including 46 documented gang members and sex offenders and the seizures of guns, drugs, and money.

These are just a few examples of the progress and impact VRN is making to fight crime. By collaborating with local police and delivering resources they request, along with sharing information across the Network, we are making our cities better and safer places to live and work.

We hope that you take the time to visit the Violence Reduction Clearinghouse website, which was developed by the VRN team and introduced in September 2016. There, you can build, download, and share a custom toolkit of evidence-based strategies, best practices, training, technical assistance, and publications all sourced from some of the best available criminal justices resources.

We look forward to 2017 with renewed energy, drive, and commitment to support law enforcement and this program in the fight against violent crime.



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## VRN Sites Phases 2 and 3

*This section details highlights of VRN activities and outcomes in the VRN sites for 2016. To view the site highlights organized by topic area, [click here](#).*

### **Compton, California**

Compton joined the VRN program in September 2015 and is scheduled to conclude its engagement in September 2017. Compton VRN partners include the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD)—Compton Station, the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office (LADA), the Compton Unified School Police Department, the City of Compton, the Los Angeles County Probation Department, the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO), Central District of California. Compton's violence reduction focus areas include reducing gang violence, domestic violence, and human trafficking; increasing community collaboration; and promoting locally driven economic growth. To support these focus areas, VRN priorities for Compton include increased federal collaboration; enhanced crime analysis, predictive analysis, and information sharing; increased criminal justice collaboration; targeted gun and gang violence reduction efforts; and improved technological capabilities.

The law enforcement structure of the city of Compton is unique to VRN. The city of Compton contracts law enforcement services through the LASD and is policed by the LASD Compton Station. Compton, a city of 100,000, is one of 42 contract cities to LASD and has 75 deputies assigned to the station. A highlight of VRN assistance in 2016 was the development of a five-year strategic plan, the first comprehensive public safety plan specifically for the city of Compton. VRN Strategic Site Liaison for New Orleans, Nola Joyce, conducted multiple site visits to meet with LASD, the offices of the mayor and city manager, and community organizations to gather information and examine crime-fighting general orders, practices, and protocols utilized in Compton to inform the assessment. The plan concentrates on three primary issues identified by the LASD Compton Station, including community engagement, violence prevention and reduction, and increasing public safety to drive economic growth. The Compton partners will use this strategic plan to drive crime prevention, violence reduction, and public safety strategies moving forward.

There are 50 identified gangs and approximately 3,700 identified gang members in Compton. In April 2016, the FBI completed the first-ever gang threat assessment for the city of Compton, to identify and prioritize the most violent gangs to help law enforcement direct resources on gangs with the most imminent threat to public safety. The LASD Compton Station, the LADA, and other local and federal law enforcement partners are currently using this assessment to identify strategies to address gang violence, promote public safety, and prevent victimization. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) subject-matter experts are conducting a comprehensive gang assessment for Compton. The aim of this project is to provide detailed information on the scope and nature of gangs and gang problems in Compton. This includes the collection of community and school data, an in-depth social network analysis, and interviews with self-identified gang members. Findings will inform the community's capacity to respond to any identified problems. The information collected will be used to make recommendations concerning





the design of a comprehensive response (e.g., prevention, intervention, and suppression) to gangs at the individual and community levels.

As a result of VRN engagement, an Assistant U.S. Attorney became embedded in the LASD Compton Station to coordinate VRN activities among local and federal partners. The USAO plays an instrumental role in multiple youth violence and gang violence prevention programs, such as Cops and Kids, the Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T.) Program, and Project Restoration. In addition, the USAO launched a new summer youth tennis league project, which is a successful collaborative partnership with local public safety partners, with financial support from various scholarship and local associations. Following VRN engagement, the LADA launched Project LEAD with the Compton Unified School District to educate fifth-grade students on the basics of the criminal justice system and the importance of making good decisions.

A USMS Warrant Task Force was created as a joint operation among the LASD, the LADA, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Department of State, the California Highway Patrol, and ATF. As of September 2016, this multiagency task force had arrested 95 individuals, seized 60 weapons, conducted 148 parole searches, executed over 10 search warrants, and seized various types of narcotics. The DEA has dedicated two agents to a VRN law enforcement task force to focus on case adoptions leading to federal indictment and to address developing cases with the goal of disrupting narcotics trafficking into Compton. The FBI and the USMS have collectively seized more than 50 weapons in Compton. The LADA designated a Deputy District Attorney to review and file all VRN cases and developed special protocols to ensure timely processing. The majority of cases filed through VRN in 2016 were illegal possession of firearms cases. The designation of one attorney to review all cases has been imperative for consistent filing across VRN cases. In addition, all firearms recovered by the LASD—Compton Station are now submitted through ATF's eTrace system to establish firearm trafficking trends or straw purchase indicators. In 2016, 472 firearms were submitted into the eTrace system from Compton. Of those, 415 were classified as evidence, 35 as found, 14 as safekeeping, and 8 as surrendered.

### **Flint, Michigan**

Flint joined the VRN program in September 2015 and is scheduled to conclude its engagement in September 2017. Flint VRN partners include the Flint Police Department (FPD), the Genesee County Prosecutor's Office, the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, Eastern District of Michigan. Flint's VRN violence reduction focus areas include domestic violence prevention, investigation, prosecution, and services; crime analysis and technology enhancement; and addressing property and evidence collection and storage.

The FPD started posting crime commercials on social media following FBI Digital Imaging Video Response Team (DIVRT) training in 2016. Over the past year, the Michigan State Police and the FPD have utilized the DIVRT tools over 50 times to assist law enforcement in solving crimes within the Flint area. One example of utilizing DIVRT resulted in the capture of a subject within two days after a bank robbery.

As part of VRN efforts, the FPD sought to increase crime analysis capacity to reduce violent crime through the implementation of social network analysis (SNA). In 2016, Michigan State University





(MSU) assigned a full-time doctoral student/former crime analyst to the FPD to focus on SNA and correlations among gang members and nonfatal shootings. To develop skills to fully implement and maintain SNA to drive operations and inform leadership, VRN sponsored an FPD lieutenant and MSU's crime analyst at the Naval Postgraduate School's (NPS) Law Enforcement Outreach and Education Seminar in May 2016. The purpose of this training was to help institutionalize the appropriate use of SNA in a law enforcement context. Participants learned about how SNA can be leveraged as planning and analytic tools to inform decision makers dealing with nefarious networks. In addition, several FPD officers attended additional SNA training at the NPS in December. VRN sites Flint; St. Louis, Missouri, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, were selected as pilot sites to work with SNA subject-matter experts and the NPS to implement an SNA pilot training program.

In September 2016, VRN facilitated a peer exchange to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD), where FPD leadership learned about the CMPD's crime analysis capabilities and how the analysis is used to drive operations.

### **Jackson, Mississippi**

Jackson joined the VRN program in September 2016 and is scheduled to conclude its engagement in September 2018. Jackson VRN partners include the Jackson Police Department (JPD), the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, Southern District of Mississippi. Jackson's violence reduction focus areas include gun- and drug-related crime reduction and prevention, technology and information sharing enhancement, community engagement, and grants.

The JPD recognizes the importance of leveraging crime analysis and data-driven policing in its violent crime fight. At the beginning of VRN engagement, subject-matter experts conducted a violence analysis assessment to better understand the geographic and social structure of violence in the city. The Jackson VRN team will use the analysis findings and recommendations from this assessment to inform its VRN Strategic Plan for future training and technical assistance opportunities over the next two years of VRN engagement.

In late 2016, BJA conducted a thorough assessment of the JPD's technology capabilities. The assessment examined areas such as dispatch software, records management software, the mobile environment, case management, crime analysis, IT support, and other related technologies. The JPD is using the findings and recommendations from this assessment to inform its VRN Strategic Plan and to identify grant opportunities.

### **Little Rock, Arkansas**

Little Rock joined the VRN program in September 2015 and is scheduled to conclude its engagement in September 2017. Little Rock VRN partners include the Little Rock Police Department (LRPD), the Pulaski County Prosecutor's Office, the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, Eastern District of Arkansas. Little Rock's violence reduction focus areas include domestic violence prevention, investigation, and prosecution services; increased information sharing and criminal justice collaboration; enhancement of crime analysis capacity; and establishment of research partnerships with the local university.



In 2016, the LRPD participated in BJA Crime Analysis for Chief Executives Training and an SNA training hosted by the NPS to help institutionalize the use of SNA in law enforcement. As a result of these trainings, the department reorganized its crime analysis unit, which is now utilizing new analytical tools, and established weekly meetings with analysts to shift their focus from data collection to crime analysis. Through its enhanced crime analysis capacity, the LRPD now identifies two priority districts that experience the most violent crime and calls for service. These districts are monitored weekly and reported on at CompStat meetings. The LRPD deploys an additional patrol car in the priority districts to be proactive in deterring violent crime.

The ATF provided National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) assistance and resources to the LRPD in 2016, which led to the LRPD's resuming of four-hour (processing time) NIBIN entries at the State Crime Lab. In early 2016, the ATF helped the LRPD clear a 1,327 firearms tracing backlog, and as of November 2016, the LRPD had over 20 NIBIN hits, leading to numerous leads in active criminal investigations.

During 2016, Little Rock partners participated in a peer exchange to San Diego, California's Family Justice Center to gain insight on the planning process for establishing a center; the components that drive a successful model, including local buy-in and commitment requirements; insight to community readiness; and critical issues determining whether a family justice center model is the right model for the city. As follow-up to this visit, Little Rock participated in another peer exchange to Milwaukee's Sojourner Peace Center in early 2017 to further advance its planning process for the establishment of a Family Justice Center in Little Rock.

The Pulaski County Prosecutor's Office is an active partner in Little Rock VRN efforts. As part of the VRN Strategic Plan, the Prosecutor's Office worked with the LRPD and the USAO to establish an improved case management tracking mechanism for federal gun cases. Since this VRN partnership, there have been 41 federal indictments.

### **Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

Milwaukee joined the VRN program in March 2016 and is scheduled to conclude its engagement in September 2018. Milwaukee VRN partners include the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD), the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office, the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, Eastern District of Wisconsin. Milwaukee's VRN Strategic Plan creates a forum for continuous collaboration among local and federal law enforcement and aims to reduce firearm-related violent crime in an identified hot spot, the Center Street Corridor (CSC). The CSC is a 2.3-square-mile area that drives 10 percent of Milwaukee's violent crime and 11 percent of the MPD's priority calls for service. The mutual goal of the VRN partners is to achieve a 20 percent reduction in violent crime in the CSC by March 2018.

As part of Milwaukee's VRN Strategic Plan, the partners developed a new VRN CompStat model that provides a collaborative and proactive environment among local, state, and federal partners and promotes constant communication and accountability through analysis and reporting of violent crime metrics. The interagency CompStat meeting is conducted every six weeks and is attended by executives from all partner agencies. This strategic and collaborative process has already proved effective in less than a year of implementation. In 2016, homicides in the CSC were reduced



7 percent, robberies were down 17 percent, and overall violent crime in this hot spot decreased 14 percent compared to 2015. The Milwaukee VRN strategy and CompStat process now serve as a model for other VRN sites.

In July 2016, MPD representatives participated in a peer exchange to the Denver Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC) to learn about techniques and forensic-led policing strategies for addressing gun crime. In 2016, Milwaukee was awarded a U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) grant to develop a CGIC. As follow-up to the peer exchange, the MPD is adopting several practices and takeaways from Denver into its current strategies, including modifying the frequency of executive summaries of successful cases, improving reporting requirements to the ATF's N-Force (a case management system), adding a NIBIN technician to analyze investigative leads to prevent backlog, and further examining the crime gun timeline from the time of purchase to the time of the crime.

### **Nashville, Tennessee**

Nashville joined the VRN program in September 2016 and is scheduled to conclude its engagement in September 2018. Nashville VRN partners include the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (MNPd), the District Attorney General of Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, Middle District of Tennessee. Nashville's violence reduction focus areas include improvement of homicide investigations, enhancement of domestic violence victim services, and technology enhancements.

In order to strategically focus VRN efforts in Nashville, VRN subject-matter experts began conducting various assessments in 2016 to examine Nashville's current processes and capabilities regarding homicide investigations, domestic violence victim services, and technology. The results of these assessments will be used to create a VRN Nashville Strategic Plan for future training and technical assistance resources during the two-year engagement period.

### **New Orleans, Louisiana**

New Orleans joined the VRN program in March 2016 and is scheduled to conclude its engagement in September 2018. New Orleans VRN partners include the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD), the Orleans Parish District Attorney's Office, the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, Eastern District of Louisiana. New Orleans's violence reduction focus areas include increasing crime analysis capacity, addressing poverty and group and youth violence, lack of adequate housing opportunities, and violence associated with narcotics abuse and trafficking in a specific geographic location.

With support from VRN, the NOPD developed an investigative approach to improve follow-up capacity with armed robberies. The NOPD established weekly meetings to share information and collaborate with partners, including the FBI, ATF, and USMS, to discuss current cases, leads, and investigative strategies. As a result of this effort, armed robberies were reduced 12 percent in 2016 over 2015.

The NOPD recognized the importance of expanding its crime analysis capabilities at the onset of its VRN engagement. In 2016, VRN provided training and technical assistance resources to the NOPD on crime analysis, including peer-to-peer learning, on-site subject-matter expertise,



training, and information on best practices for hiring and utilizing crime analysts. This focus on crime analysis prompted the NOPD, in part, to launch its new COMSTAT model—Management Analytics for eXcellence (MAX) in September 2016. MAX furthers the traditional CompStat accountability model by including data and measures on use of force, discipline, vehicle pursuits, community policing, consent decree mandates, and other priorities of command staff.

### **Newark, New Jersey**

Newark joined the VRN program in September 2015 and is scheduled to conclude its engagement in September 2017. Newark partners include the Newark Police Department (NPD), the Essex County Prosecutor's Office, the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, District of New Jersey. Newark's violence reduction focus areas include gun, gang, and drug violence; police-community relations and community trust; technology enhancement, police training; and specific violent crimes, such as homicides and nonfatal shootings, aggravated assaults, and domestic violence.

The Bureau of Justice Assistance conducted an assessment of the NPD's technology capabilities in December 2015. In 2016, the NPD addressed and applied all of the recommendations from the assessment—including improved field computers, modifications to the prisoner management systems, upgraded radio consoles, an enhanced detective case management system, and an integrated gunshot detection system with closed-circuit televisions—collectively, to improve crime-fighting capacity.

In May 2016, the USMS, in coordination with the NPD and various law enforcement agencies, conducted an operation targeting Newark's most violent offenders. The operation resulted in the seizure of guns, drugs, and money and the arrest of 240 violent fugitives, including 46 documented gang members and sex offenders.

### **St. Louis, Missouri**

St. Louis joined the VRN program in March 2016 and is scheduled to conclude its engagement in September 2018. St. Louis VRN partners include the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department (SLMPD), the St. Louis Circuit Attorney's Office, the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, Eastern District of Missouri. St. Louis's violence reduction focus areas include strategic enforcement of violent gun offenders, improving police-community partnerships, enhancing intelligence capacity, and improving domestic violence response collaboration.

St. Louis participated in a VRN peer exchange to the Denver CGIC with the Milwaukee VRN team. Following the visit, St. Louis ATF established a working group to prioritize ballistic information in the city. The working group focuses on strategies to increase staffing, training, and support for the St. Louis Crime Lab, which performs ballistics analysis for the city of St. Louis. Following additional training and the hiring of a new firearms examiner, the ballistics analysis processing time has been reduced to within 48 hours of recovery. Previously, it took several weeks/months to process analyses.

In addition, St. Louis VRN participated in a peer exchange to the DEA's El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) in May 2016 to enhance crime and intelligence analysis capacities. Following the



visit, the SLMPD conducted an orientation on the lessons learned from the peer exchange regarding capabilities of EPIC for all command staff and integrated EPIC search capabilities into its Real Time Crime Center (RTCC). During VRN engagement, the SLMPD also initiated efforts to expand the capacities of its RTCC and is seeking training and technical assistance to improve crime analysis capacities, including social network analysis and crime mapping.

During VRN engagement, the SLMPD recognized the need for a culture change to build safer neighborhoods and better relationships among police and the communities they serve. To support this effort, in July 2016, the SLMPD participated in a peer exchange with the Boston, Massachusetts, Police Department to observe its CompStat practices, community engagement initiatives, and how it incorporates community policing into CompStat. As follow-up to the Boston peer exchange, the SLMPD implemented several new programs to better engage with the community and help citizens to see police beyond the uniform and the badge. These programs include the “Gentleman’s Club,” through which SLMPD officers serve as mentors to juvenile men in a detention facility, and the “Man Up Club,” which was created as an extension to the Gentleman’s Club, through which officers and the young men from the detention facility meet with high school students to encourage positive alternatives to crime and talk about their experiences and lessons learned. The SLMPD visits the detention center and the high school weekly to continue mentoring the young adults and building positive relationships. In addition, the SLMPD recognized a need to increase outreach and support to women and started a group of female officers called Ladies Encouraging Others (LEO), who serve as mentors to women in a local facility, and established a homeless outreach program called Blue Bags with Swag Program, where the female SLMPD officers collect new/slightly used handbags filled with personal items and toiletries for homeless women. These are just a few examples of the SLMPD’s new community engagement activities and lessons learned from Boston to be creative and think “outside of the box” to build positive relationships among police and the communities they serve.

In December 2016, through VRN and the OVW, the SLMPD received training and guidance on developing a Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board. The primary purpose of domestic violence fatality review is to analyze deaths and near fatalities in which intimate partner domestic violence has played a role, with the ultimate intent of preventing such deaths and near fatalities. The review process is aimed at creating a climate in which institutions and individuals will commit themselves to an enhanced response to domestic violence that is informed by the experiences of victims and survivors. This training provided the unique opportunity for government and private partners to meet in person to discuss potential strategies for addressing domestic violence fatalities. Following this assistance, St. Louis is working with state legislators to draft a law to allow the creation of a Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board.

### **West Memphis, Arkansas**

West Memphis joined the VRN program in September 2015 and is scheduled to conclude its engagement in September 2017. West Memphis VRN partners include the West Memphis Police Department (WMPD), the Arkansas Second Judicial District’s Prosecutor’s Office–Crittenden County Office, the Arkansas State Attorney General’s Office, the Arkansas Community Corrections–West Memphis Area Office, the Arkansas State Crime Lab, the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, the U.S. Federal Probation, and the USAO, Eastern District of Arkansas.





West Memphis's violence reduction focus areas center on chronic hot spot locations, chronic offenders, and neighborhood restoration; enhancement of crime analysis capacity; improvement of technological capabilities; and increased local and federal collaboration.

In 2016, the West Memphis VRN team developed a new violence reduction program titled Operation "Data Enhanced Targeted Enforcement and Restoration," or Operation "DETER," which is a collaboration between the WMPD and VRN. Through use of a variety of analytic tools, problem-solving techniques, evidence-based strategies, and evaluation, the DETER program seeks to identify and focus on chronic hot spot locations and chronic offenders. This program incorporates strategies and lessons learned from the Los Angeles Strategic Extraction and Restoration Program (Operation LASER) out of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and its research partner, Justice & Security Strategies, Inc. Through this program, WMPD officers proactively patrol the pilot area and changed patrol schedules from 10-hour shifts to 12-hour shifts to increase staffing during times of day with more incidents of violent crime, shots fired, calls for service, etc. The DETER program will be fully implemented in 2017.

Prior to VRN engagement, the WMPD did not have a crime analysis capacity or any designated crime analysts. Following the VRN 2015 summit, the WMPD quickly reassigned a detective to a newly created law enforcement analyst position within its Criminal Investigation Division, to assist investigators and patrol officers in connecting crimes and offenders. Following training and technical assistance from BJA's National Training and Technical Assistance Center (NTTAC), the WMPD interfaced several data sources (e.g., reported crime, calls for service, field contact database) with its new crime analysis software. The WMPD now produces weekly tactical briefs to inform both officers and external stakeholders (e.g., probation, Mayor's Office) of various crime series, wanted individuals, and other pertinent crime information. This enhanced crime analysis capacity feeds into deployment strategies for the WMPD's new Operation DETER model.

In July 2016, as part of a West Memphis VRN operation, eight violent offenders were arrested and federally indicted for being felons in possession of firearms. Previous convictions associated with the eight defendants include first-degree murder, second-degree battery, robbery, residential burglary, sale of a controlled substance, delivery of cocaine, possession of cocaine with intent to deliver, possession of a controlled substance, felon in possession of a firearm, aggravated assault, and hindering apprehension. Of the eight defendants, two were leaders of a known gang in West Memphis, the Gangster Disciples. The investigation and prosecution of these cases is a coordinated effort of the ATF, DEA, FBI, WMPD, USAO, and other local law enforcement partners. This joint effort resulted in the seizure of one assault rifle, one rifle, seven handguns, and multiple-extended ammunition magazines and eight less violent gun and gang offenders on the streets.

Because of VRN, the WMPD now works more collaboratively with state and federal law enforcement partners for violent crime investigations and prosecutions. In 2016, the ATF provided training and technical assistance on eTrace procedures and policy, which enabled the WMPD to clear a backlog of over 800 gun cases. The ATF's Little Rock Field Office also provided training to WMPD detectives on filing federal court firearms cases, resulting in the successful arrest and indictment of eight habitual offenders with firearms and drug offenses. The USMS deputized four



WMPD detectives to assist in locating and extraditing West Memphis violent offenders who flee the state to avoid arrest and prosecution. For example, in July 2016, a collaboration between the USMS, the WMPD, and the Eastern Arkansas Fugitive Task Force led to the arrest of a suspect who had fled West Memphis into Missouri and was responsible for the homicide of a 16-year-old. The suspect was extradited back to West Memphis for prosecution. “This is a great example of how a coordinated effort by local and federal partners can lead to a speedy apprehension in a case like this. The USMS has the ability to reach a network of its offices all over the United States and makes an apprehension of this type possible for local agencies,” said WMPD Captain Baker. FBI Little Rock assigned a VRN Violent Crime Coordinator for West Memphis and continues to lead the local Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force. The DEA Little Rock division is working with WMPD narcotics detectives to address illegal drug trafficking.

In efforts to increase community engagement within the city of West Memphis, the WMPD launched both a Facebook page and a Twitter account following VRN engagement to share information related to community events, recent crimes, and other tips and activities as appropriate. The WMPD started posting crime commercials to its Facebook page following FBI DIVRT training, resulting in the identification of suspects, which has led to case clearances. Today, in a city with a population of 25,000, the WMPD Facebook page has over 5,000 followers, and the WMPD advised that it has experienced a high solve rate in cases that are posted on social media platforms.



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## Sustainable Strategies: Phase 1 Sites

*VRN's Phase 1 sites formally concluded engagement with the VRN program in September 2016. Throughout their two years in the program, the sites participated in customized training, technical assistance, and peer learning opportunities to complement their local violence reduction efforts. In collaboration with their VRN Strategic Site Liaisons, the sites developed a VRN Sustainability plan to identify enhanced violence reduction strategies and tactics that would endure after the conclusion of the VRN program. Law enforcement executives from each site presented their lessons learned and sustainability plans at the VRN Summit in September 2016. This section provides a summary of Phase 1 sites' sustainable strategies following the VRN engagement.*

### **Camden, New Jersey**

Throughout VRN engagement, Camden's local and federal partners were actively engaged in violence reduction efforts. The Camden VRN partners included the Camden County Police Department (CCPD), the Camden County Prosecutor's Office (CCPO), the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, District of New Jersey. Camden's participation in VRN produced an increased collaboration and coordination of crime-fighting efforts among its local and federal law enforcement and prosecutorial partners.

As a result of VRN engagement, the ATF provided a NIBIN machine to the CCPD. The NIBIN program is an interstate automated ballistics imaging network that processes firearms evidence and can provide actionable investigative leads in a timely manner. Prior to participating in VRN, the CCPD did not have direct access to its own NIBIN machine. The NIBIN program, expedites the processing time of shell casings and gun recoveries from months to hours. This process led to 544 NIBIN entries resulting in 226 leads (as of August 2016). The FBI provided DIVRT training to Camden during VRN engagement, teaching the CCPD the skills needed to extract video evidence and produce crime commercials to be used on traditional and social media. Following DIVRT training, the CCPD used DIVRT technologies in 362 instances during VRN engagement, resulting in 108 arrests and assistance in solving a homicide. Following VRN engagement, the CCPD will continue utilization of federal law enforcement resources, including the ATF's NIBIN, the FBI DIVRT activities, and the FBI Cellebrite machine cellular forensic analysis.

VRN subject-matter experts conducted an extensive assessment of the CCPD and CCPO homicide investigation and prosecution practices and strategies. This assessment provided numerous recommendations on how Camden County could modify its investigatory practices in an effort to produce successful prosecutions for homicide cases. Camden County implemented a number of these recommendations and revised policies and practices to improve investigations. Camden County police and prosecutors plan to utilize new and improved homicide investigation, case management, and prosecution policies, procedures, and practices, including a new homicide unit, to solely investigate homicides and will promote enhanced information sharing among investigators and prosecutors.

VRN provided training and technical assistance to the CCPD regarding how social network analysis can be used to understand gun violence. As a result, CCPD analysts have fully



implemented social network analysis techniques and can now extract, clean, structure, visualize, and produce relational data products that better inform the CCPD's operational deployments. The CCPD will continue to integrate social network analysis skills to assist with its strategies to reduce violent crime.

Throughout its VRN engagement, the CCPD participated in various officer safety and wellness trainings, including BJA's VALOR training, Blue Courage training, and fair and impartial policing training. Camden plans to develop sustainable strategies to improve officer safety and wellness through incorporation of fair and impartial policing strategies and ethical protector program strategies into in-service police training.

During VRN participation, Camden partners sought to increase prosecutions of domestic violence offenders. The CCPD will continue to improve domestic violence response and prevention efforts, including implementation of a focused-deterrence model to address domestic violence.

### **Chicago, Illinois**

The Chicago VRN partners included the Chicago Police Department (CPD), the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, Northern District of Illinois. The local and federal partners worked collaboratively throughout the VRN engagement period to address high levels of violence in the city of Chicago.

In February 2016, representatives from the CPD attended the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Crimefighters Conference, where they learned best practices and strategies related to CompStat and performance management, data-driven policing, crime-fighting strategies, community engagement, and homicide investigations and prosecutions. As follow-up, the CPD conducted another peer exchange trip to LAPD to further explore its CompStat practices, building trust, risk management, community satisfaction, and accountability. As a result of this peer exchange, Chicago revised its CompStat processes to be more collaborative and conversational by bringing in teams from each district. The USAO then organized its office to reflect the violent crime sections of the CPD and regularly participates in the CPD's CompStat meetings.

The CPD also visited LAPD in May 2016 to explore LAPD's problem-based learning systems—designed to improve problem-solving skills, reinforce teamwork, and enhance job-specific knowledge—and participated in training on developing and writing law enforcement training programs. As a result of the relationships established through these peer learning opportunities, LAPD offered mutual aid to the CPD to share best practices and policing strategies targeting the 7th and 11th policing districts.

In 2016, the USAO, Northern District of Illinois, led a reinvigorated coordinated approach to address Chicago's dramatic increase in gun violence. The USAO increased its intake of gun cases and worked collaboratively with state prosecutors, the CPD, and federal law enforcement agencies on criminal enforcement, prosecution, and prevention of violent crimes. The USAO and the CPD routinely met in 2016 with community members to hold youth outreach forums, community trust roundtables, reentry forums, and gang reduction meetings to build relationships with the community, understand their perspectives, and work together to reduce violence.



VRN conducted an assessment in late 2016 to review the CPD's gun crime intelligence and ballistics evidence processing practices. Throughout VRN engagement, Chicago implemented several strategies and initiatives with the support of VRN, including the establishment of a Violent Crime Task Force to focus federal law enforcement agencies' resources on Chicago's most violent neighborhoods, the assignment of 18 CPD officers to work with the ATF on processing gun cases, and routine utilization of the ATF's NIBIN to produce investigative leads in gun crimes. Chicago will continue to improve gun crime intelligence practices and procedures through continued relationships with federal partners and gun crime intelligence subject-matter experts.

### **Detroit, Michigan**

Throughout the VRN engagement period and beyond, the Detroit Police Department (DPD) and Wayne County Prosecutor's Office (WCPO) collaborated with DOJ partners, including the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, Eastern District of Michigan. For example, the ATF provided ballistic processing support through NIBIN and focused on gun arrests and recoveries. The DEA conducted search warrants, drug seizures, and arrests. The FBI provided intelligence and analytical support, a digital billboards program, search warrants, and gang/gun arrests. The USMS focused on fugitive/high-value target arrests and gun recoveries. The USAO tracked case outcomes for federal charges. The partnerships in existence prior to VRN and enhanced through the program will continue to grow among local, state, and federal agencies through continued participation in VRN calls and collaboration on violence reduction efforts.

To build analytical capacity within the Detroit VRN partner agencies, in 2015, BJA and Michigan State University (MSU) established an embedded crime analyst placement program through which graduate students are placed as analysts in the DPD, the Detroit Public Schools, the WCPO, and the Michigan Department of Corrections. The VRN analysts bring cutting-edge analytic techniques, such as social network analysis and risk terrain modeling (a method that uses crime mapping techniques to explore the relationship between crime and the spatial features that influence it), to complement local crime-fighting efforts. In 2016, seven VRN analysts were deployed in the partner agencies. The VRN analysts develop intelligence briefings typically focused on defendants or suspects (and their associates) that are believed to be involved in violent crime. The analysts develop products and conduct various analyses on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis to support the agencies' violence reduction efforts. The intelligence briefings and analyses developed by the VRN analysts are routinely used to drive focused enforcement efforts and have resulted in arrests, parole/probation compliance checks, and increased community-based outreach. In 2016, the DPD partnered with local gas stations to install real-time cameras, connecting these local businesses directly with the police and city in an initiative called "Project Green Light Detroit." As part of VRN support through the MSU analyst program, risk terrain modeling is now being utilized to support Project Green Light. Following VRN engagement, Detroit partners agreed to continue to enhance crime analysis capacity through the continuation of the program. One VRN analyst was hired by the DPD as a crime analyst. In late 2016, the local partners participated in a crime analysis summit, resulting in further integration of crime analysis strategies across violence reduction initiatives (such as Ceasefire and Project Safe Neighborhoods).



A primary focus of the Detroit VRN engagement was to implement strategies to decrease domestic violence homicides. BJA and the Office on Violence Against Women provided technical assistance to Detroit to fully implement a Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board—which includes the DPD, the WCPO, the USAO—Eastern District of Michigan, the Michigan Department of Corrections, community groups, and Wayne State University—to collaboratively review domestic violence-related deaths. The Review Board’s central focus is preventing domestic violence, preserving the safety of battered women, and holding accountable both the perpetrators of domestic violence and the multiple agencies and organizations that come into contact with the parties. The partner organizations plan to implement new strategies related to understanding domestic violence and domestic violence fatalities through the continuation of the Wayne County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team.

VRN provided Blue Courage training to the DPD in July 2016. As part of the effort to improve and sustain officer safety and wellness, the DPD plans to expand Blue Courage training delivery by offering the training to recruit officers during the training academy and incorporating the lessons into officer in-service training.

### **Oakland/Richmond, California**

The unique Oakland/Richmond VRN site promoted increased cross-jurisdictional collaboration and communication among local and federal law enforcement and prosecutors representing Oakland and Richmond. The local partners in the Oakland/Richmond VRN site included the Oakland Police Department (OPD), the Richmond Police Department (RPD), the Alameda County Sheriff’s Office (ACSO), the Contra Costa County Sheriff’s Office (CCSO), the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office, the Contra Costa County District Attorney’s Office, the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, Northern District of California. During VRN engagement, the ATF embedded three full-time special agents in the RPD to assist with commercial armed robberies, shootings, and homicides. The DEA supports both jurisdictions in drug crime investigations and, during VRN engagement, hosted representatives at the El Paso Intelligence Center to share crime and intelligence analysis capabilities. The FBI embedded agents within the OPD to assist with homicide investigations. The USMS increased involvement in Richmond’s Ceasefire efforts, focusing on police response, gangs, and community engagement.

Following formal engagement in VRN, the partner agencies will continue these collaborative efforts through continued interagency communication and coordination among the local, regional, and federal partners and through continuation of the Regional Case Review process. The USAO will take lead on coordinating the Regional Case Review meetings following VRN engagement.

Oakland/Richmond VRN partners established a VRN Technology Working Group following a technology assessment and other resources to allow for multijurisdictional information sharing among law enforcement agencies. Led by the ACSO, the local partners plan to improve technology functions post-VRN engagement, including establishing dual sharing capabilities between records information and regional information exchange systems, improve electronic booking technology, and improve additional information systems in the partner agencies based on needs and resources.



In 2016, the OPD, the RPD, and the ACSO participated in VRN peer exchanges to explore CompStat at the Boston, Massachusetts, Police Department and Kansas City, Missouri, Police Department. These peer exchanges provided an opportunity for the departments to learn about CompStat and information sharing and analysis strategies from other departments, for potential adoption into their local police accountability strategies. As follow-up to the visit, the OPD plans to adopt practices from Boston related to using crime analysis to inform future deployments and sharing daily brief reports to officers. The RPD modified its CompStat process to include changing the title of the meeting to “Crime Accountability Meeting,” revising the agenda and format of the meeting, and expanding participation to additional police units, such as the youth services, property crime, traffic, and gang units. These modifications more closely align with the purpose of these meetings—to reduce crime—as accountability is crucial in law enforcement’s role in reducing violent crime.

Prior to VRN, both the OPD and the RPD struggled with clearing (solving) homicides. However, in 2016, both police departments experienced double-digit increases in homicide clearance rates. Richmond’s clearance rate increased from 38 percent to 66 percent from January to August 2015 to 2016. Oakland’s clearance rate increased from 57 percent to 74 percent, from January to July 2015, as compared to the same period in 2016. Both agencies attribute this success to VRN’s emphasis on enhanced collaboration among local and federal law enforcement agencies (including the embedding of an FBI homicide unit at the OPD), along with increased community collaboration and the use of cameras.

Another area of focus for sustainability, specifically for the Richmond area, is to improve information sharing capabilities among partner agencies, with the goal of improving arrest processing times in Contra Costa County. To do so, Contra Costa County (covering RPD) will enhance its county-wide electronic booking processes, which will allow the RPD to employ a quicker process for arrests and booking.

In the first few months of engagement, VRN sponsored a Police Legitimacy and Procedural Justice summit for law enforcement executives across the Bay Area, including Oakland and Richmond VRN partner agencies. This event prompted the creation of the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office’s (ACDA) Fair and Equitable Policing and Prosecution (FEPP) working group. The ACDA has committed to continue the FEPP working group to improve procedural justice internally within the county and in prosecution strategies.

### **Wilmington, Delaware**

Participation in the VRN program increased collaboration and coordination among the local and federal partners in Wilmington, including the Wilmington Police Department (WPD), the Delaware Prosecutor’s Office, the Wilmington Mayor’s Office, the ATF, the DEA, the FBI, the USMS, and the USAO, District of Delaware. A primary focus for Wilmington stakeholders during the VRN engagement was reducing gun violence. At the beginning of VRN engagement, subject-matter experts provided technical assistance on GunStat to the WPD. GunStat is an effort to track gun cases as they process through the criminal justice system, while identifying trends, strengths, and weaknesses of the process. As a result, Wilmington adopted a modified GunStat process, in which all gun offenders are prioritized for prosecution and tracked through the criminal justice





system. In the first eight months of 2016, GunStat led to the arrest of 146 gun offenders, resulting in a 23 percent increase in the number of felony arrests involving a firearm by the WPD (for the period of January 1 to August 15, 2016, as compared to the same period in 2015). Wilmington experienced an 11 percent reduction in gun-related homicides in 2016 compared to 2015. To sustain the VRN efforts, the USAO developed a GunStat prosecution team to target gun offenders for strategic prosecution. The WPD's ballistics officer now attends weekly intelligence sharing meetings. Local and federal partners will continue collaboration in the prosecution and investigation of gun crimes through the GunStat program and continuation of monthly GunStat meetings.

At the launch of VRN engagement in 2014, WPD's homicide clearance rate was approximately 10 percent. VRN provided a coordinated series of training and technical assistance to improve this clearance rate. This assistance included a Homicide Investigations Operational Performance Assessment conducted by the Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR), with recommendations to improve investigative capacity. The WPD also attended a peer exchange to the Richmond, Virginia, Police Department to learn best practices and shadow detectives for a week and participated in IIR's Homicide Management training. Through the combination of the training and technical assistance provided, the homicide clearance rate in Wilmington has steadily risen and was approximately 65 percent in December 2016. Following formal engagement with the VRN program, Wilmington partners will continue to improve homicide investigation practices and procedures through their newly established processes, such as utilizing MatchPoint to process ballistics evidence in a timely manner to generate leads, utilizing gunshot residue kits, and instituting monthly training sessions and quarterly meetings for forensic officers.

Local partners sought to enhance their crime and intelligence analysis capabilities and better leverage data to address violent crime. As a result of intensive VRN technical assistance (e.g., crime analysis training, five-year analysis of violent crime, social network analysis training, intelligence assistance from the DEA's El Paso Intelligence Center, FBI expertise to identify crime trends and gaps in intelligence sharing, the development of effective crime-reduction strategies, and the creation of geospatial mapping), the Wilmington Police Department stood up its own Real Time Crime Center (RTCC) in May 2016. Through the RTCC, the WPD maps calls for service and crime in real time and overlapped its patrol vehicle location system to track operational deployments. Following VRN engagement, the WPD will enhance and continue building analytic capacity via its RTCC to drive operational deployments, identify high-violence areas, and fight crime using strategic data analysis.

The WPD will develop strategies to improve officer safety and wellness through various training sessions. In 2015 and 2016, BJA provided Blue Courage training to the WPD, and the WPD incorporated elements of the training into regular roll call briefings. In May 2016, WPD patrol sergeants and training staff participated in Characteristics of Armed Gunmen training. WPD staff are in the process of developing short roll call training sessions to be shared with all of patrol modeled on lessons learned from this training. WPD training staff are also creating an in-depth session on this topic for in-service training throughout the year.





## 2016 in Review

### **January: Podcast on Casualty Care and Rescue Tactics**

Being prepared with the necessary skills and knowledge to provide immediate life-saving aid to oneself as well as to an injured individual has never been more critical for law enforcement. VRN hosted Chief David Flory (retired) in this podcast discussion on casualty care and rescue tactics, otherwise known as self-aid/buddy-aid. [Listen to the podcast](#)

### **February: Webinar on Exploring Active Shooter Response and Training**

This webinar provides law enforcement officials with an overview of the research and analysis of active shooting incidents from the last several years and to share information regarding training strategies and best practices for law enforcement response to an active shooter. It also provides information regarding current DOJ training and resources available through the FBI and the BJA VALOR Initiative and the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) Program. [View the webinar](#)

### **March: Spring Summit**

DOJ announced the expansion of VRN to Phase 3, welcoming three new cities: Milwaukee, Wisconsin; New Orleans, Louisiana; and St. Louis, Missouri. During the summit, the new VRN cities received customized expert crime-fighting training on topics of their choosing.

### **March: Podcast on DOJ Community Relations Service (CRS)**

CRS is DOJ's "Peacemaker" for community conflicts and tensions arising from differences of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and disability. During this discussion, the speakers provide an overview of the CRS department and describe how CRS works with local communities to resolve conflict and tension. [Listen to the podcast](#)

### **April: Webinar on Recruiting a Diverse Police Department Through Digital Outreach**

The Webinar highlighted the importance of a diverse police force for building trust in the community and described how Chicago developed a 12-week digital outreach campaign to bolster minority recruitment. The speakers also shared lessons learned that will improve efforts in the future. [View the webinar](#)

### **May: Sustainability Workshop**

VRN leadership hosted the Phase 1 (2014) site leaders and team members for a workshop to discuss concrete changes that have taken place locally as a result of VRN and to begin to develop sustainability plans to continue crime-fighting progress achieved during the two-year VRN engagement.

### **June: Webinar on License Plate Reader Best Practices**

This webinar provided law enforcement officials with an overview of the value of license plate readers (LPRs), including how to establish a program, the development of policies for LPR use, LPR successes, and the development of implementation plans. [View the webinar](#)



### **July: Podcast on ATF's NIBIN and eTrace**

This podcast provided an overview of the ATF's National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) and the Electronic Tracing System (eTrace) network and the services they provide to law enforcement. [Listen to the podcast](#)

### **September: Fall Summit and Clearinghouse Launch**

On September 26, DOJ announced the expansion of VRN to Jackson, Mississippi, and Nashville, Tennessee, to complete the Phase 3 cohort. VRN Phase 1 sites concluded formal engagement in the program and became the first class of "alumni" sites. The Chiefs shared their lessons learned with the Phase 2 and Phase 3 sites. During the summit, attended by over 300 participants, the VRN sites attended customized training that was focused on their individual needs. In addition, the entire Network heard from national experts on the topics of forensic-led policing, comprehensive strategies to reduce violence in hot spots, a bridge between law enforcement and community cultures, and meetLEO—a tool designed for building trust between law enforcement and communities. At the summit, DOJ officially launched the Violence Reduction Clearinghouse Website, an interactive resource library available to all law enforcement jurisdictions across the country. Through the Clearinghouse, users can explore training, technical assistance, publications, model programs and practices, and success stories—to ultimately build a customized toolkit that meets individual violence reduction needs. [Access the Clearinghouse](#)

### **October: Webinar on Insight Policing**

This webinar provided law enforcement officials with an overview of the Insight Policing training program available from George Mason University that teaches officers to apply insight policing skills to identify, understand, and defuse escalating conflict behavior and increase cooperation and trust among community members. In addition, the webinar provided an opportunity for local law enforcement agencies to share lessons learned and experiences with implementing Insight Policing strategies. [View the webinar](#)

### **November: Resource Delivery Plans**

Following the VRN Fall Summit, VRN Phase 2 and Phase 3 site representatives worked with VRN Strategic Site Liaisons and VRN Analysts to develop strategic resource delivery plans for VRN activities to be delivered in the coming months. Site leaders discussed violence reduction efforts planned for 2017 during a VRN webinar in November.

## Network Collaboration

*VRN's unique strategy capitalizes on the strengths of each DOJ partner agency to address a city's identified needs with a coordinated response. VRN dedicates a site-specific team to support the partner agencies in navigating DOJ law enforcement and programmatic resources.*

### DOJ Partner Agencies

DOJ law enforcement partners (including the ATF, the FBI, the DEA, and the USMS) and programmatic agencies (including the Executive Office for United States Attorneys [EOUSA], OJP, OVW, and the COPS Office) offer the VRN sites expedited access to the full inventory of evidence-based violence reduction resources available from DOJ. Below are highlights of key resources offered by the VRN DOJ partner agencies.

#### ATF

- NIBIN
- Firearms tracing
- Gun intelligence and prevention training

#### COPS Office

- Customized training related to community policing and engagement
- Community Policing Defined Training

#### DEA

- EPIC
- Gang Targeting, Enforcement and Coordination Center (TECC)
- Office of Investigative Technology: Emerging Technologies Training
- 360 Strategy

#### EOUSA

- Oversight, tracking, and prosecution of federal crimes

#### FBI

- Violent Crime Coordinator (VCC)
- DIVRT Initiative
- Cellular Analysis Survey Team (CAST)/Cell Site Simulator Assets
- HUMINT Development and Field Intelligence Groups (FIGs)
- Office of Public Affairs and Digital Billboards





**OJP**

- Through BJA, OJJDP, and the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), OJP provides customized training and technical assistance (TTA) to the VRN sites upon request related to crime analysis, youth violence prevention, officer safety, gang violence prevention and intervention, technology assessments, victim services, witness intimidation, homicide investigations, and more.

**OVW**

- Customized training and technical assistance related to building capacity of criminal justice and victim service organizations to effectively and efficiently respond to violence against women, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence.
- Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative

**USMS**

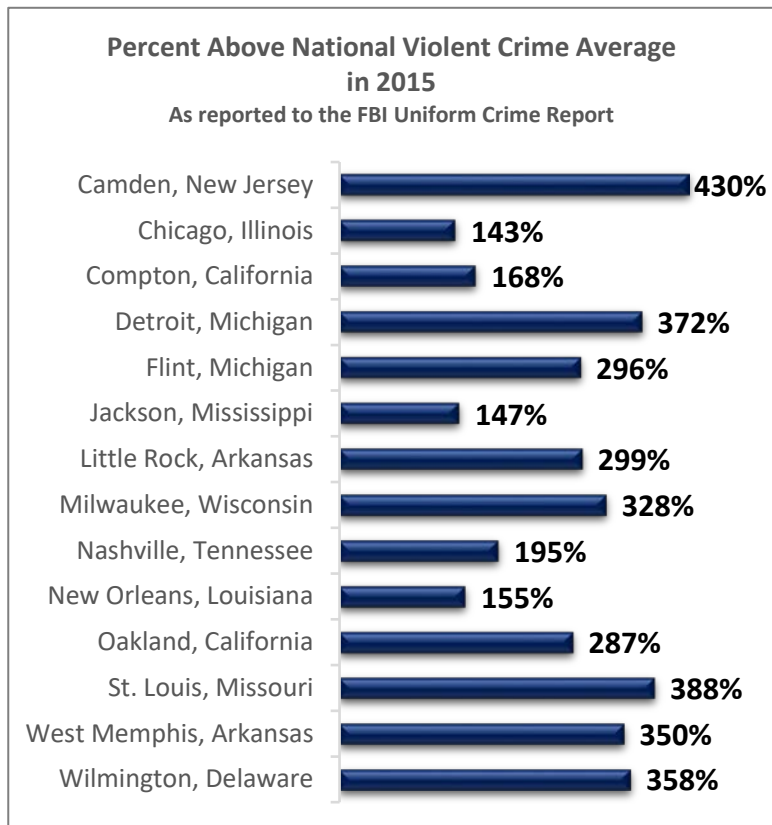
- Fugitive Task Forces
- Tactical training
- Warrant Analysis and Response (W.A.R.)

**DOJ Champions**

VRN assigns each site a DOJ Law Enforcement Champion and a DOJ Program Champion, who serve as the points of contact for the site to effectively navigate access to federal law enforcement and programmatic resources and tools. Champions are assigned from ATF, DEA, FBI, USMS, BJA, OJJDP, OVC, COPS Office, and OVW.

**Strategic Site Liaison (SSL)**

Each site is assigned a law enforcement professional to guide coordination of DOJ resources. The SSL assists the site to develop its unique VRN resource delivery plan. These individuals are highly regarded former police executives who have experienced many of the same issues facing the current VRN chief executives.





## VRN Infrastructure

### **Assessments**

As part of the VRN site launch process, VRN offers to conduct several comprehensive assessments of various areas within the police department and/or local partners related to technology, homicide investigations, crime analysis, victim services (OVC), and overall violence issues in the city. Through these assessments, subject-matter experts provide insights and recommendations for enhancements, future training and technical assistance, and focus areas to inform the site's VRN Strategic Plan.

### **Clearinghouse**

VRN has a website where every law enforcement agency can find, build, download, and share a custom toolkit of violence reduction evidence-based strategies, best practices, training, technical assistance, publications, and more—[www.vrnetwork.org/clearinghouse](http://www.vrnetwork.org/clearinghouse).

### **Grant Strategy**

VRN sites receive focused technical assistance to further develop grant strategies and improve upon existing grant development efforts.

### **Peer Exchanges**

VRN coordinates and facilitates delivery of peer learning opportunities to share various violence reduction best practices, ideas, and strategies across the country. Through 2016, 73 peer exchanges were completed.

### **Quarterly Newsletters and Weekly News**

VRN publishes quarterly newsletters featuring activities, site highlights, and feature articles every quarter. In addition, every Friday, VRN distributes the *Weekly Site News*, a collection of news articles from the VRN sites along with upcoming opportunities, publications, and other resources.

### **Summit**

VRN hosts an annual summit to convene participating VRN site leadership and DOJ officials to share best practices and meet with esteemed subject-matter experts on various violence reduction issues.

### **Training**

VRN provides training to partner sites on various topics, such as homicide investigations, officer safety, prosecution strategies, and crime analysis. Through 2016, 128 trainings were delivered to over 3,240 participants, representing nearly 40,000 hours among the VRN sites.

### **Technical Assistance**

VRN delivers strategic technical assistance based on the needs of sites, such as training related to gang violence, ballistics processing, homicide investigations, technology, community surveys, victim services, and domestic violence. Through 2016, 1,850+ hours of assistance has been delivered to the VRN sites.

### **Website**

VRN maintains its website, <https://www.vrnetwork.org/>, as a public information hub and has a private-access side for sharing information and tracking activities occurring in the VRN sites.



**This report is a text-only version of the interactive online 2016 Violence Reduction Network Annual Report. For more information and graphical representation of content, please visit the online report.**

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