

# Reducing Repeat Domestic Violence in Chula Vista, CA: Chula Vista (CA) Police Department Final Report

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## Executive Summary

In 2015, a group of patrol officers in Chula Vista, CA, was designated as DART (Domestic Abuse Response Team) officers – and given a protocol to follow at each Domestic Violence (DV) call involving Intimate Partners (IP) – both crimes and the more common verbal-only calls with no crime. The protocol was developed following extensive problem analysis supported with funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice - Strategies for Policing Innovation (SPI). In 2013, CVPD applied for and received the SPI grant to not only systematically investigate DV, but to also develop and scientifically test the impact of a solution.

The DV protocol developed was carried out by patrol officers in one sector of the city along with their regular call-handling responsibilities. The DART initiative was a tiered or graded approach. Officers delivered a face-to-face message to subjects in IP-DV calls that were verbal disputes. A different message was delivered to both IP-DV victims and suspects in crimes, while offenders who were arrested received a highly structured warning at the jail from officers. Handouts reinforced the verbal messages. Both IP-DV victims and suspects were to receive a face-to-face follow-up contact by officers after three days, while subjects involved in IP-DV verbal disputes were to receive a follow-up text after 30 days.<sup>1</sup> Chronic IP-DV subjects, offenders and victims – those who persisted in verbal disputes or crimes despite the messaging – received a customized intervention.

Although the DART initiative was initially designed to reduce repeat IP-DV *calls*, the initiative had a significant impact on crime – resulting in a 24% drop in DV crimes after one year while the volume of DV calls remained mostly steady. The study used a quasi-experimental

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<sup>1</sup> In DV calls with no crime, there is no victim or suspect thus the involved parties are referred to as subjects.

design to evaluate the impact on crimes, calls, and repeats, assessing whether dyads or locations – had a subsequent call or crime within 12 months of the initial triggering event.

Baseline measures included DV crimes, calls and arrests from January 2012 - December 2014 for two matched sectors in Chula Vista. Weekly mean counts were tracked for a total of 156 observations, with each week beginning on Monday. An additional 157 weeks were included in the analysis, resulting in a total of 313 observations. All data were obtained from the police department's Records Management System (RMS) and its Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system while the subjects who received the police intervention were tracked in an ad hoc project database. Over 18 months, the final sample of DART subjects consisted of 570 couples or subjects who received messages about DV-verbal disturbances; 382 victims who received messages about DV crime at the triggering event; 247 suspects who received jail/field warnings; 298 attempted follow-up contacts made by police officers with victims and offenders overall; 30 chronic DV-crime couples received a more intensive follow-up contact by police and 30 DV verbal-only couples received a customized problem solving effort.

During a follow-up period of at least 12 months, calls, crimes, arrests, locations and couples were monitored to assess the prevalence, time course and severity of DV contacts with police. While the DART initiative relied on patrol officer time, it was not resource intensive; CFS data indicated that DART officers spent an extra seven to eight minutes on DV CFS. One patrol lieutenant estimated DART officers spent as little as five additional minutes delivering the messages. Given that DV crimes are harmful to the victims, and also consume a large amount of resources, a reduction of DV crimes has greater impact than a reduction in DV calls.

## **Domestic Violence: A Tenacious Problem in Chula Vista, CA**

Despite declines in the prevalence of domestic violence (DV) among intimate partners (IP) in the United States over the last 25 years, the crime remains a pervasive and enduring problem. For police, DV-IP initiates an urgent response – these calls are assigned a high priority and two officers are dispatched by most law enforcement agencies in the country.

Not only is DV a high priority, it is also high volume; in varied jurisdictions, research consistently shows that calls involving IP-DV dominate all calls for police service. DV calls typically rank among the three most common calls for police service. Of course, not every DV call to police is actually a DV crime. Research suggests that the vast majority of DV calls within jurisdictions – about two-thirds – reflect interpersonal verbal disputes between intimates in which no crime has occurred. While few of these verbal-DV calls appear to escalate, police are concerned about the potential of serious harm and thus prioritize response to intervene *before* a criminal act occurs.

Responding to DV-verbal only calls – and the subset of DV crimes arising from such calls – is a dominant part of every patrol officer’s daily workload. This is the case in the Chula Vista (CA) Police Department (CVPD). With a population of 270,471 spread over 52 square miles, Chula Vista is the 14<sup>th</sup> largest municipality in California and the second largest of 17 cities in San Diego County. Located about seven miles from downtown San Diego and an equal distance from the Mexican border, Chula Vista is diverse – nearly two-thirds of residents (59%) are Hispanic.<sup>2</sup> According to the U.S. Census, 31% of the city’s residents were not born in the United States and 58% speak a language other than English at home (see Table 5).

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<sup>2</sup> As shown in Table 4, non-Hispanic whites comprise 19% of the population, and 15% of the population is Asian. Other racial groups comprise less than 7% of the city’s population.



Chula Vista is a growing city – the population increased nearly 11% from 2010 to 2017 – and has a fairly robust economy. Current economic indicators, however, mask the woes experienced over the last decade. Chula Vista – along with the entire San Diego region – faced a significant economic recession from 2008 through 2011. The city’s unemployment rate quickly spiked to more than 13% in 2010 and decreased much more gradually, only dropping to the pre-recession rate of 5% in 2016 (see Figure 3).

Contrary to popular belief, the declining economic conditions in Chula Vista were not mirrored by a rise in crime. While total violent crimes were relatively flat throughout the years of the recession (see Figure 4), the city’s violent crime rate continued the downward trajectory that began in 1991. The violent crime rate in Chula Vista had peaked at 1,102.3 per 100,000 in 1991; the national violent crime rate also peaked that year – but at 713 per 100,000 was substantially lower than the rate in Chula Vista. By 2000, the violent crime rate in Chula Vista had dropped below the national rate and from 2007 to 2012, the city’s violent crime rate continued to plummet, falling by nearly half from 421.1 in 2007 to 232.6 in 2012 (see Figure 5). Annual calls for service to CVPD also dropped during this period, declining 13.8% from 2006-07 to 2014-15 (see Figure 7)<sup>3</sup> – a trend that largely tracked the city’s violent crime rate drop.

While crime rates and overall calls for police service in Chula Vista continued to decline during the recession, DV calls did not follow a similar pattern. DV calls increased 9% from 2003 to 2007, and continued to rise from 2008 to 2014, increasing by 5%. While there was a slight dip in DV calls in 2006 and 2007, the drop was temporary and did not signal a longer-term trend. Overall, the volume of DV calls was constant, with an annual average of just under 3,800 per year from 2000 to 2014 (see Figure 8). Over a 13-year period, DV calls comprised an average of

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<sup>3</sup> The change in CVPD calls reported here varies slightly from other sources which used a different reference period.

more than 5% of all calls annually — DV was consistently the second most common type of call to CVPD.<sup>4</sup> DV crimes consistently comprise about 30% of all DV calls (see Table 8). The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) reported that DV incidents<sup>5</sup> in Chula Vista increased by 14% from 2013 to 2017 (SANDAG, 2018; Criminal Justice Clearinghouse, 2018).

Since Chula Vista had a declining and low violent crime rate – especially compared to neighboring cities in San Diego and peer cities across the state (see Figure 6 and Table 7), CVPD was eager to investigate the persistence of DV calls and DV crimes – and develop a method to reduce both the volume and the harm associated with them. This investigation was particularly critical because CVPD was operating under severe constraints in human resources. With 232 sworn positions in 2017, the department had an extraordinarily low sworn rate of 0.87 officers per 1,000 population – less than half the national average of 2.4 in 2016 (FBI, 2017).

While the sworn rate was low among all law enforcement agencies in San Diego County, CVPD consistently had the lowest sworn rate among municipalities in the region and the number of officers declined steadily after 2007 (see Table 6). The agency was concerned about its ability to stretch scarce resources and provide services to those most in need. Could there be a more effective approach to DV calls and DV crimes using existing police resources? In 2013, CVPD applied for and received a Strategies for Policing Innovation (SPI)<sup>6</sup> grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance to conduct a strategic investigation of DV, as well as develop and test to conduct a strategic investigation of DV, develop and test the impact of a solution.

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<sup>4</sup> False alarm activations were the most common type of call.

<sup>5</sup> “DV incidents” as reported by SANDAG is a combination of primarily DV crimes and non-crime DV calls when one of the involved parties was in fear of imminent bodily injury (reporting for these non-DV crimes with an element of fear is required under California Penal Code 13730).

<sup>6</sup> The BJA program was initially known as Smart Policing Initiative, however, the name was later changed to Strategies for Policing Innovation. The acronym remained the same – SPI.

## **Domestic Violence and Crime Trends in the U.S.**

The story of crime and DV trends in Chula Vista is partly the story of crime and DV trends in the United States. Since the mid-1990s, the overall violent crime rate in the United States has declined sharply, falling 74% from 1994 to 2016 based on the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) (see Table 3).<sup>7</sup> The rate of domestic violence (DV) by intimate partners (IP) – mirroring the overall violent crime rate – also declined during the period, dropping by 78% (see Table 1). Despite the drop in violent crime rates, IP-DV continues to constitute a substantial proportion of violent crime in the nation. While the annual figures vary, IP-DV accounted for 14.6% of all violent crime victimization from 2003-2012 (Truman & Morgan, 2014) (see Figure 2 and Figure 2) and 15.7% of all serious violent crime.<sup>8</sup>

The largest drops of IP-DV occurred in the 1990s. The rate of IP-DV dropped from 9.8 victimizations per 1,000 persons in 1994 to 5.1 in 2000 (Catalano, 2012). Consistent but more modest declines in IP-DV followed, as IP-DV rates dropped to 3.6 by 2010 and further to 2.2 per 1,000 in 2016 (Morgan & Kena, 2017). In contrast, the rate of all violent crimes in the nation dropped from 79.8 per 1,000 in 1993 to 20.8 in 2010 (Catalano, 2012) and to 21.1 per 1,000 in 2016 (Morgan & Kena, 2017). The drop in IP-DV closely mirrored the nation's drop in violent crimes rates (see Figure 1).

While NCVS tracks crimes classified as domestic violence (DV) – including family members and relatives, such as parents or siblings, and IP – crimes involving IP victims are distinguished as a subset. NCVS defines IP-DV crimes as those offenses committed by persons

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<sup>7</sup> The different but analogous violent crime rate tracked in Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data submitted by law enforcement agencies to the FBI, also dropped over the period – by 46% dropping from 713 per 100,000 population to 386 per 100,000. The UCR does not track domestic violence or intimate partner violence.

<sup>8</sup> NCVS distinguishes serious violent crime from simple assaults, with serious offenses comprised of rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault.

identified by the victim as current or former spouses, boyfriends, and girlfriends.

Historically, NCVS has divided IP-DV into two types – serious violence and simple assaults. About one-third of IP DV is considered serious – intimates include current or former spouses, boyfriends, and girlfriends (Catalano, 2012). The *rate* of serious IP-DV has hovered between 1.0 – 1.5 per 1,000 in recent years (Truman & Morgan, 2014) while in 2016, the rate of serious IP-DV had dropped to 1.0 per 1,000 population (Morgan & Kena, 2017).

### **Characteristics of IP-DV Crime Victimization**

At the national level, extensive descriptive information is available about IP-DV victims from historic NCVS data:

- Non-fatal IP-DV victims are predominately but not exclusively female. Based on 10 years of NCVS data, 82% of IPV victims were female (Truman & Morgan, 2014).
- IP-DV violence is more common in boyfriend-girlfriend relationships than in other relationships (Truman & Morgan, 2014). From 1993-2012, the rate of IP-DV committed by boyfriend/girlfriends was 2.1 per 1,000, compared to the rate of 1.5:1,000 committed by ex-spouses and the rate of 0.5:1,000 committed by current spouses.
- The highest rates of IP-DV are consistently among young adults – persons in the age categories of 18-24 and 25-34; victimization rates fall off sharply among older age groups (Truman & Morgan, 2014). Victims from the ages of 12-17 and 50 and older report very low rates of DV (Catalano, 2012).
- There are substantial variations in IP-DV based on race/ethnicity. Truman and Morgan (2014) found that IP-DV victimization rates are highest among black/African-Americans at 4.7 per 1,000 and lowest among Hispanics - 2.8 per 1,000. The rate of IP-DV victimization among whites fell between the two, at 3.9 per 1,000.
- Victimization rates are significantly lower for Asians than for other racial groups – by about 30%. Drawing on NCVS data of violent IP-DV victimization of females from 2002-2006, Harrell (2009) found a rate of 13.3% among Asians compared to 22.2% for other racial/ethnic groups. Harrell (2009) also reported that Asian victims were as likely to report the crime to police as were other racial/ethnic groups.
- Weapon use was involved in about 19% of IP-DV crimes, and nearly half of IP-DV crimes (48.1%) resulted in injuries. About 11% of IP-DV crimes resulted in serious injuries (Truman & Morgan, 2014).

- Victims report their victimization to police in about 80% of IP-DV crimes (Reaves, 2017) and more than three-fourths of victimizations occur at or near the victim's home (Truman & Morgan, 2014).

### **Prevalence and Time Course of Repeat IP-DV Crime**

National estimates of repeat victimization consistently indicate there are higher rates of repeat victimization among IP-DV victims than among victims of other crime types –about 1/3 of IP-DV victims experience repeat victimization compared to 19% for victims of other types of violent crime (Oudekerk & Truman, 2017). From 2005-14, the large majority of IP-DV victims had one and only one victimization – 66.7% of victims were classified as a single victim. As early as 1994, however, Zawitz (1994) reported that 20% of females victimized by IP had been a victim of a series of three or more assaults in the last six months that were so similar that they could not distinguished one from another.

Research shows the prevalence of repeat victimization for IP-DV increases over time. There is a cumulative effect as the small group who are chronically victimized account for a disproportionate share of all IP-DV. Using longitudinal victimization data from 1996-2012, Xie and Lynch (2017) found that 13% of IP-DV victims were revictimized within one month; 15% within two months; 20% within six months; 23% within one year; and 29% within three years.

Most research suggests that repeat victimization for IP-DV occurs fairly quickly, Oudekerk and Truman (2017) did not report time between repeat victimizations by crime type, but found that more than half (56%) of repeat violent crime victims experienced their first two victimizations less than one month apart – a rate much higher than reported by Xie and Lynch (2017). Repeat victimization documented in police reports of DV also suggests a short period between repeat incidents - Lloyd, Farrell, and Pease (1994) found that 35% of DV victims in Merseyside experienced another incident within five weeks.

## **Reporting IP-DV Crime to Police**

While it is widely believed that IP-DV victims are unlikely to report the crime to the police, evidence suggests that IP-DV victims actually have higher rates of reporting to police than do victims of other crimes. While the rate of reporting IP-DV has increased over time, estimates on reporting rates vary. With data from the National Violence against Women Survey (NVAWS), Tjaden and Thoennes (2000) found that only 26.7% of female victims of IP physical assaults reported their victimization to police in 1995-1996. In contrast, NCVS data show that 48% of IP-DV female victims reported the violence to police in 1993 and this rose to 59% by 1998 (Rennison & Welchans, 2000). The NCVS reporting rates have remained fairly consistent even as the prevalence of IP-DV dropped throughout the 2000s. From 2003-12, 48.9% of all violent crime was reported to police but 55.7% of IP-DV was reported to police (Truman & Morgan, 2014).

Despite the perception that DV victims are unlikely to report their victimization to police, Felson, Messner, Hoskin, and Deane (2002) found the reporting rate for DV is higher than for other types of crimes because victims perceive the crimes as more serious, and call for reasons of self-protection. In 2015, 54.1% of IP-DV was reported to police compared to 46.5% of all violent crime (Truman & Morgan, 2016) while in 2016, 42.1% of all violent crime was reported to police compared to 46.9% of IP-DV (Morgan & Kena, 2017).

It is perceived that victims who do not report IP-DV to police fail to do so because of their negative views of police. That view is consistent with the findings of Tjaden and Thoennes (2000) who concluded “the majority of victims who did not report their victimization to the police thought the police would not or could not do anything on their behalf” (p. v). However, Felson et al. (2002) said IP-DV victims who do not call the police are more concerned about

their privacy, fear of reprisal and a desire to protect offenders. Using NCVS data from 1993-1998, Rennison and Welchans (2000) found the primary reason female victims failed to report to police was they viewed the crime as a private matter (35%) or feared reprisal from the offender (19%). As IP-DV dropped sharply over the ensuing decade, the rationale for not reporting remained fairly consistent; using NCVS data for the 10-year period from 2006-2015, Reaves (2017) found IP-DV victims failed to report because the matter was personal (29%), to protect offender (19%), incident was minor (22%), or fear of reprisal from the offender (22%). In contrast to male victims (6%), female victims were much more likely to fear reprisal from offenders (24%).

Friday, Lord, Exum, and Hartman (2006) attributed increased reporting of IP-DV to the increased prevalence of mandatory arrest statutes. Victims are aware of mandatory reporting and most DV is reported by the victims of these crimes. Reaves (2017) found that three-fourths of IP-DV crimes – both serious IP violence and simple assaults – were reported to police by the victim rather than someone else.

### **Prevalence of DV Calls to Police**

All evidence suggests that DV calls are extremely common for police officers but there is wide variation about the relative prevalence of DV among all calls for police. As early as 1977, Antunes and Scott (1981) found that calls reflecting interpersonal conflicts including domestic conflicts and fights represented about 7% of all calls among 21 police agencies in the metropolitan areas of Rochester, NY, Tampa-St. Petersburg, FL, and St. Louis, MO. In High Point, NC, calls referred to as “domestic violence disturbance calls [were] consistently the number one CFS [call for service]” in the city (Sechrist & Weil, 2018). Klein (2009) reported that “domestic-violence-related police calls have been found to constitute the single largest

category of calls received by police, accounting for 15 to more than 50 percent of all calls” (p.

1). While these findings seem unlikely, Sampson (2007) and many other researchers pointed out that domestic disputes are consistently among the most common calls for police service.

- In Minneapolis, MN, (Sherman, Gartin, & Buerger, 1989) found that 8% of calls for police service were classified as domestic disturbances.
- Cohn (1993) reported that the percent of total calls classified as DV in Minneapolis in 1985, 1987, and 1988 were 9.2%, 10.4% and 9.5%, respectively.
- According to Hirschel and Hutchison (1992), 8.9% of all calls to which officers were dispatched in Charlotte from 1987-1989 were initially classified as DV calls – however, only 3.2% of all calls were *actually* DV with intimate partners. Their findings suggest that dispatchers act cautiously and tend to over-classify calls as DV.
- In the UK, DV calls ranged from less than 1% of all calls in London to more than 12% of calls in Humberside (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, 2014) while in 2015, an estimated 4.5% of all calls were for domestic abuse (Her Majesty's Inspectorate Consulate, 2015).

### **Police Responses to Repeat IP-DV**

It is difficult to make accurate estimates about the incidence of IP-DV calls or crimes based on police data since police agencies use different call and crime classifications and coding schemes vary widely. Farrell and Pease (1992) agreed “there can be considerable differences in counts [of DV] due to small changes in and understanding of definitions” (p. 488) but conclude these differences do not matter much when conducting research within a single police organization. Regardless of definitional distinctions, the prevalence of both domestic disputes and DV-crime appear to be consistently high among demands for police service, and there has been increasing recognition that the volume of IP-DV is driven by repeat IP-DV.

Comparing repeat victimization rates for different types of crimes, Weisel (2005) found that the highest rates were associated with DV – about one third of households generate two-thirds of all DV (Lloyd et al., 1994; Hanmer, Griffiths, & Jerwood, 1999).

Despite the prevalence and widespread recognition of repeat DV, there is little prescriptive



guidance to police on effective DV responses to the phenomenon. As early as 1992, Sherman (1992) advised that police focus their efforts on “chronically violent couples” since these limited few are responsible for the majority of DV incidents. Because of their disproportionate contribution to DV, Sherman said it made little sense to focus on all DV incidents but acknowledged it might be difficult to find the right way to intervene with chronic DV couples without violating widely-held notions about the rights to “family privacy” (p. 20). While it might be a challenge to find the right procedures to intervene, Sherman said that **“an effective policy for dealing with chronic couples would have more impact than any other breakthrough [and] deserves the highest priority in policing domestic violence”** (p. 24). [Emphasis added.]

Despite Sherman’s admonition, there appears little prescriptive guidance to police on reducing DV beyond increasing arrests. Farrell and Buckley (1999) point out there have been no crime prevention efforts related to DV and suggest that focusing police resources on “chronic case households” would be the most effective and efficient way to use scarce police resources.

A search for “domestic violence” and “law enforcement” in [www.CrimeSolutions.gov](http://www.CrimeSolutions.gov) returned just two promising police-led initiatives. In one, offenders assigned to a specialized unit in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department were less likely to recidivate than other DV offenders. In the other, participants in a crisis response program in Oklahoma in which police connected female victims of IP violence to a social service provider experienced less violence; they were also more likely to get a restraining order and receive services. The police, however, had little role in this effort other than making an initial referral (Messing, Campbell, Wilson, Brown, & Patchell, 2017). CrimeSolutions.gov identified just one law enforcement initiative related to domestic violence that was not effective; that was an initiative in which police had a follow-up contact with DV victims within one week after a DV incident had occurred (Davis, Weisburd, & Hamilton, 2010).

Of note, both Messing et al. (2017) and Davis et al. (2010) focused only on DV victims while the efforts of Friday et al. (2006) included investigation of offenders and victim assistance. Still, none of these efforts included a prevention focus. While several police-led approaches to reducing DV have focused on DV victims, they have not focused on chronic DV victims or couples (Davis et al., 2010). Sampson (2007) identified a handful of repeat IP-DV initiatives carried out by police – projects in Fremont, CA, and West Yorkshire, England in the 1990s. There was also a more recent effort carried out in High Point, NC. All three efforts employed tiered or graded responses by police, focused specifically upon reducing repeat DV.

In 1996, the Fremont (CA) Police Department (FPD) replicated a British study in which a tiered-approach was developed to reduce repeat victimization for property crimes. In the British scheme, police followed a protocol in which an initial crime generated a modest police response, two incidents generated a more intensive response, and three or more incidents initiated an even more intensive response.<sup>9</sup> Fremont police developed a layered response to DV in which officers were required to make two return visits to addresses where a DV call had occurred, providing education, services, and victim support (Fremont Police Department, 1997). The officers made the first return visit within seven days, and the second within 28 days.

The Fremont project began as a pilot initiative in 1996 with one sixth of their officers and expanded department-wide in 1997; the pilot initiative decreased DV calls to locations with three or more repeat calls by 22 percent, while the expanded initiative resulted in a 66% reduction in DV calls to repeat locations the first quarter of 1997, compared to the first quarter of 1995, and a 53% reduction in calls to repeat locations during the first three quarters of 1997 compared to the

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<sup>9</sup> The Huddersfield project was rated “Effective” by [www.CrimeSolutions.com](http://www.CrimeSolutions.com).

same period in 1996.<sup>10</sup> FPD indicated a need for more intensive attention to chronic DV locations in the city, suggesting that individuals at such locations should be subject to other actions, including legal options to reduce repeat calls.

In 1997, police in the Killingbeck Division of the West Yorkshire (UK) Police Constabulary developed a graded or tiered-model for DV. The West Yorkshire response was based on the idea that an increase in DV incidents should prompt an increased response by police and other agencies to prevent additional incidents. Like Fremont, the West Yorkshire Police adapted the Huddersfield approach to DV (Hanmer et al., 1999). And while West Yorkshire felt the early intervention was the most important in preventing a subsequent incident, contrary to Fremont, they were prepared to increase the type and intensity of the police response when DV continued.<sup>11</sup>

The intervention in West Yorkshire included a range of responses; at the initial DV incident, both parties received an informational letter about the harms of DV. If a subsequent DV incident occurred, police alerted neighbors to the problem and asked them to notify police if they become aware of any further problems. For persistent offenders, police provided victims with pendant alarms so that police could quickly be notified.

As the project progressed, the volume of DV calls in West Yorkshire actually increased but the proportion of repeat DV calls dropped from 34% to 2% of DV incidents. Fewer subjects, however, were engaged in repeat incidents and the more intensive responses were not needed as often (Hanmer et al., 1999). An important element of the West Yorkshire approach was the focus on both victims and offenders, and the use of a “package” of interventions rather than a single

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<sup>10</sup> A similar initiative was tested in Redlands, CA. Police made a follow-up contact with DV victims after an initial incident. Of note, the Redlands experiment did not tailor the response to the number of prior incidents and focused only on victims. This initiative was reported to have “No Effects” in [www.CrimeSolutions.com](http://www.CrimeSolutions.com) (Davis et al., 2010).

<sup>11</sup> Of note, the West Yorkshire initiative was exclusively focused on male offenders.

strategy. Lloyd et al. (1994) advised that “an offence as complex as domestic violence is unlikely to be prevented by a single measure” and advocated for the use of “preventive packages” that could be tailored or customized to the individual (p. 3).

Although the Fremont and West Yorkshire Police efforts on repeat DV resulted in positive outcomes in the 1990s, there is no evidence that the efforts of these two agencies were sustained. Nor did an extensive search identify any replications of their work. The most similar effort – and one that is much more recent – was carried out in by police in High Point, NC. The High Point Police Department (HPPD) undertook a focused-deterrence effort to hold DV offenders accountable for their crimes. Police leveraged previous crimes to demotivate offenders from committing another. The model used a graded response – ‘call-in’ notifications for the worst DV offenders; police-delivered warnings at jail to arrested DV offenders; and a cautionary warning letter delivered by patrol officers to subjects at their residence subsequent to a DV call. The strategy resulted in 20% reductions each in DV calls for police service and arrests and dropped DV homicides from an annual average of three to one (Sechrist & Weil, 2018). This was particularly noteworthy because DV homicides are notoriously difficult to predict and to prevent.

While police in both Fremont and High Point observed declines in DV calls, some police DV efforts have increased calls – a phenomenon attributed to increased reporting (Hanmer et al., 1999). In fact, since the volume of DV calls can rise or fall, Farrell and Buckley (1999) recommended that repeat calls – as a proportion of all DV calls – be monitored to measure the impact of police initiatives. It seems possible that a police-led DV effort could either increase the volume of calls (Stover, Poole, & Marans, 2009) – especially when victims are satisfied with police service – or the effort might suppress DV calls by discouraging citizens from calling.

## **Comprehensive Problem Analysis of IP-DV in Chula Vista**

While a literature review provided insight into important work on repeat IP-DV by police elsewhere, the SPI grant provided important resources for a more in-depth analysis of DV in Chula Vista. The in-depth analysis was critical to shaping the development of a police-led response that could be tailored to the community and be effective. Three approaches were undertaken to investigate the problem:

- Focus group with CVPD sworn patrol officers
- Survey of CVPD sworn and civilian personnel
- In-depth analysis of secondary data internal to the agency – including calls, crime reports, and supplemental DV reports; and secondary data external to the agency, such as jail intake and release data; and case filing data from the San Diego County District Attorney.

### **Focus Group**

Early in the project, the management team felt it important to gain candid insights from patrol officers into their perceptions about the effectiveness of the department's handling of all types of DV calls and follow-up actions. It was anticipated that a focus group with patrol officers would identify the locus of officer frustrations, and identify opportunities to improve the department's overall response to DV and reduce recidivism. Further, perceptions of officers would be useful in shaping the departmental response – including facilitating buy-in by officers if any patrol responses needed to be altered. Findings from the focus group would also guide development of a survey questionnaire that could be used department-wide – for civilians and sworn personnel – as a baseline on views about DV.

Consistent with these objectives, two focus groups were convened in March 2014. All patrol officers in CVPD were eligible to participate in the focus group. To recruit officers, the

patrol captain of CVPD circulated a memorandum to officers via CVPD's intranet server. Among the volunteers, 10 officers were selected who were generally representative of the department's personnel in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, and years of experience. The group included two females, and officers of varied races and ethnicities.<sup>12</sup>

The focus group discussion was guided by a protocol consisting of questions and probes about the officers' experiences with and views about domestic violence in Chula Vista (see Appendix B). Analysis of the qualitative data employed an open coding process, so that recurrent phrases or statements were identified and grouped into concepts and themes. These themes were reviewed to develop consensus coding to identify patterns in officer attitudes and experiences.

#### **Patrol time on DV calls.**

Officers were asked about the proportion of their call volume that consisted of DV calls. Several officers found this question difficult to answer, commenting that the proportion of calls varied depending upon the officers' shift (day v. night), day of week (weekday v. weekend) and beat. Most officers observed that DV calls were more common in the evening and on weekends. The call volume was also perceived to vary by beat, with fewer calls in beats that had larger commercial properties and more calls occurring in beats with residential populations comprised of lower income citizens.

Despite this difficulty, officers estimated that the amount of time spent on DV calls varied from 30% to 60% of their shift. Some officers expressed skepticism about officers reporting higher percentages; however, the follow-up discussion indicated that these proportions accurately reflected the officers' perceptions of time spent on DV calls. There was no consensus

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<sup>12</sup> Consistent with federal guidelines on Human Subjects Research, participants were informed about the purpose of the focus group, and reminded that their participation was voluntary and their responses were confidential. IRB approval and consent documents are on file with the primary author.

about the distribution of DV calls between verbal only, misdemeanor and felony DV calls. Officers reported only that this, too, varied considerably; however, all recognized that DV verbal-only incidents comprised the largest share of call volume. Although officers discussed that the department is short-staffed, officers said they were not rushed to clear DV calls and get back into service for another call.

**Officer safety.**

CVPD's policy is to deploy two officers to every DV call and officers consistently follow this policy. A responding officer might approach the scene of a DV call before the cover officer arrived, however, this was typically done only to determine the precise location of the call – such as visually locating an individual apartment – and to ascertain through listening and observation – if an incident was still in progress or had escalated since dispatch. Officers reported that training of CVPD officers is of high quality, and there was a routine and consistent emphasis on the importance of officer safety in responding to domestic calls. Officers were aware that such situations are volatile and reported they would never jump into an incident until the cover officer was actually on the scene or, in a worst-case scenario, pulling up onto the scene. This policy would only be violated, officers reported, if the officer determined that an immediate intervention was needed to prevent an injury or harm from occurring.

**Information provided by dispatchers.**

Officers reported that dispatchers tended to classify a very large volume of calls as DV – using this classification whenever any male and female were engaged in any type of disorderly activity. Most officers felt the information provided by dispatchers was the “best they could do” but was sometimes incorrect.

Officers reported that the amount of information provided by dispatchers on DV calls

was minimal -- the name of a reporting party (or their role, such as a neighbor) was usually available, however, some reporting parties specifically asked not to be identified or contacted by police, and officers were respectful of this condition. While officers were routinely provided with an address, many commented that this often lacked details about the location of a DV incident. For example, information often did not include an apartment number but consisted of a verbal description of a location – such as “in the back of the complex.” This meant that officers often had to search out – and sometimes listen carefully – to determine the precise location of an altercation or incident. According to officers, it was not unusual to be unable to locate the address or find anyone at all. Such calls were typically cleared as “unable to locate” (UTL) or “gone on arrival” (GOA).<sup>13</sup>

Officers reported varied experience with dispatchers “flagging” addresses as having been the scene of a previous call. One officer said that officers can request “premise history” but that such information was sometimes incorrect; because of missing apartment units, officers would sometimes get the premise history for an entire complex rather than for an individual unit.

Another officer said that dispatchers “flag” an address if there has been a call there the same day, but officers seemed to pay little attention to this information and there was no consensus if addresses were “flagged” routinely.

### **Departmental protocols.**

Officers were asked if they often had difficulty determining what action to take on a DV call – e.g., determining whether a call needed to be reclassified, if a report should be taken, or if an arrest was required. Officers did not report routinely reclassifying calls for service and did not seem to be aware if dispatchers did this or not based on the officer’s disposition of the call.

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<sup>13</sup> This is a particularly common occurrence when arguments take place outside a residence, such as on the sidewalk, in a parking lot, park, or other public or semi-public location.



Officers reported that they routinely added information about the situation to the call record, including the names of subjects, dates of birth and other information.

Officers were keenly aware of the departmental policy to write an incident report – even if no crime had occurred – when the situation made them concerned about future events which might occur between the disputants. The report – known colloquially as a “13700 report” – is required under California Penal Code 13730 when no DV crime was been committed, but one of the parties was in fear of imminent bodily injury. Few non-crime DV calls fell into this category.

Officers were very clear about the state law and the department’s policy for making DV arrests. Most felony DV assaults under California’s statute involve minor injuries – however, the department’s policy is pro-arrest<sup>14</sup> and officers have little discretion on making arrests when even a quite minor physical injury has occurred – such as a minor scratch or redness. Several officers articulated a desire to have more discretion in altercations that seemed to be extremely minor. At least one officer articulated the reality that officers occasionally use their discretion in such incidents. Only one officer made this statement, however, none of the other officers verbally disagreed and it appeared – based on observations – that other officers had either used their own discretion this way or observed it. Officers, however, were in agreement that a statement by a victim desiring an arrest would always limit officer discretion. They did not express any disagreement with this.

### **DV verbal calls.**

Officers reported that many of the DV calls consisted of verbal disputes where no

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<sup>14</sup> Under a countywide protocol, officers are required to make an arrest when there is probable cause a felony has occurred, unless the circumstances are unusual. An officer should make an arrest when a misdemeanor was committed in his or her presence and may make an arrest when a misdemeanor was committed outside the officer’s presence as soon as probable cause arises. California Penal Code 273.5 defines a felony domestic violence assault as any instance of “corporal injury...whether of a minor or serious nature caused by physical force.”

physical violence had occurred and where it seemed highly unlikely to occur. Officers said the individuals involved in such calls were often known to officers by name because of the frequency with which police responded to altercations involving the same parties. These recurrent calls caused officers some frustration. One officer reported that such repeat calls are frustrating – not because of the call itself, but because it affected the officer’s ability to respond to other calls that may be more important. There was no evidence that officers shirked their duties in responding to the verbal calls.

Officers reported that their role in non-crime “verbal only” DV calls varied but typically involved one officer – the lead responding officer – informally counseling or advising the disputants. Advice typically included educating residents about landlord-tenant laws – such as when “visitors” become “domiciled,” when residents can be evicted, and the procedures necessary to “put someone out” or evict someone. Officers said they tend to draw on their own experience in advising disputants, but were careful not to be seen as taking the side of one subject over the other. Officers described their narrative or verbal monologue as intended to give the disputants some time to quiet down or come up with a plan of action. One officer stated that officers vary in their ability to connect with the subjects – some officers are naturally more empathetic than others, or have better verbal skills.

### **Report quality.**

Because the literature suggests that police officers are often frustrated with report writing, officers were asked if they ever took short cuts in completing reports. One officer clearly stated that short cuts in report writing can put the officer’s credibility in peril if the case progresses to court. This officer said he had learned early in his career that a judge and defense attorney will spot any weaknesses in an officer’s report and hold the officer accountable –

sometimes to the officer's embarrassment. The officer was saying that experience teaches an officer to always be consistent in report writing.

**Incident follow-up contacts.**

Following the occurrence of a DV crime, cases are forwarded to the department's investigative unit – Family Protection Unit (FPU) for follow-up investigation. If an arrest has been made by a patrol officer, FPU reviews the arrest report and forwards the case – if it meets the standards of the San Diego County District Attorney (SDCDA). A deputy district attorney then decides whether to prosecute the suspect. If no arrest has been made, FPU detectives conduct a follow-up investigation. Officers expressed concern that FPU is understaffed and thus detectives would not routinely be available to quickly conduct an investigation. One officer said he had often thought about returning to the scene of a call a day or two later, but never did. He felt it would be useful at least for some calls – for the uniformed officer to follow up with a victim, make sure they felt safe, and even take photographs of bruises that would have been more visible a day or two later if there had been an assault. The return visit might also involve talking to neighbors or others, but this officer said he had not taken such follow-up actions, at least partly, because the department's shift schedule meant that several days might have passed since the initial call.

**Distinguishing victim from suspect.**

Officers were asked if they often had difficulty sorting out what happened at a DV crime – such as distinguishing victim from suspect, and this did not appear to be problematic. When one party had a visible injury, the other party –if present – was typically arrested. With minor exceptions, officers indicated that language and cultural barriers were not problematic in handling DV calls. Officers without fluent Spanish skills indicated that they could communicate

fairly well with victims or subjects, or engage someone on the scene to assist with translation. Officers indicated they did not review or comment on anyone's citizenship or immigration status as it was not relevant to a DV call or crime.

**Arrest attrition.**

Officers were asked what usually happens to their cases in which an arrest is made. While officers were not able to articulate differences between arrests that were prosecuted by the SDCDA from those that were not, they were generally aware that not all DV arrests are prosecuted by the District Attorney. When asked what might improve the likelihood of an arrest being prosecuted, several officers indicated they would generally identify multiple charges, make an effort to find "good witnesses," and take photographs on the scene of injuries or disarray that might be present.

**Effectiveness of current DV responses.**

Officers were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of varying parts of the criminal justice system in responding to DV. These including evaluating the effectiveness of the District Attorney, the 52-week batterer's treatment program mandated for convicted DV offenders, advocacy resources provided by Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT), Child Welfare Services (CWS), probation, and any supportive services for victims. Although there was general discussion, officers appeared to know little about the prosecution of cases. Officers indicated they routinely called DVRT on DV crimes, but there were conflicting views as to whether this was required or was valuable to victims. Officers appeared to have few strong opinions about Child Welfare Services (CWS) – but indicated there was a lack of clarity how best to contact the agency. There were no negative views expressed about probation, or the police department.

## **Survey of Officers and Civilian Personnel**

To learn more about perceptions and opinions of CVPD sworn and civilian personnel on DV in Chula Vista, a survey questionnaire was administered in June 2014.<sup>15</sup> The purpose of the survey was to ascertain the views of CVPD personnel – particularly patrol officers – about domestic violence – including their views of victims, offenders, and the response of the criminal justice system and services.

Findings from the survey were intended to assist CVPD in developing the most effective interventions by tapping the wealth of experience of CVPD personnel, and also to facilitate buy-in with the intervention. The questionnaire also provided a benchmark of attitudes about DV in CVPD, making it possible to use the survey findings as a pre-post comparison, and analyze attitudes both before and after the response strategy was developed and implemented.<sup>16</sup>

The questionnaire was derived in part from the findings of the focus group and also drew from instruments used by Gover, Paul, and Dodge (2011) and Toon, Hart, Welch, Coronado, and Hunting (2006). Toon et al. (2006) surveyed 777 police officers in 31 large law enforcement agencies in Arizona about their attitudes and experiences in handling domestic calls; Gover et al. (2011) surveyed 309 officers in a police agency of 1,500 sworn officers in an unidentified but large law enforcement agency in a Western state.

The CVPD instrument elaborated on several themes that have emerged in the academic literature about police officer attitudes towards domestic violence including views on the prevalence of repeat DV calls and related frustrations; adequacy of officer training and time to

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<sup>15</sup> The survey was not limited to patrol respondents but included sworn officers assigned to investigations and special units throughout the agency as well as command staff. Civilian personnel were also surveyed.

<sup>16</sup> The results of the survey in 2016, and a comparison to the 2014 results, are included in the Impact Evaluation section of this report.

handle DV calls; variations in officer skill in handling DV and quality of DV investigations; officer safety; and efficacy of DV efforts ranging from arrest to victim services, (Johnson, 2004; Buzawa, 2012; Klein, 2009; Horwitz et al., 2011; Nelson, 2012).

The CVPD survey included 34 attitude statements to which respondents indicated their level of agreement using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 representing strong agreement to 5 representing strong disagreement with the statement (see Appendix C). The middle value of 3 represented a neutral view, with the respondent neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statement. The 5-point Likert scale mirrored Toon et al. (2005) but differed from the 6-point scale used by in the similar surveys fielded by Gover et al. (2011), McPhedran et al. (2017) and Ward-Lasher, Messing, and Hart (2017).

In addition to the Likert-scale attitude statements, a number of open-ended survey questions were also included to tap respondent's perceptions about the roles of CVPD partners in handling DV. These eight open-ended questions asked if changes were needed in internal or external programmatic responses to DV. These included victim services (DVRT), child welfare, probation, dispatch, and other elements of the criminal justice system. In this way, respondent views could be used to identify and address issues in developing a coordinated response to DV. Respondents were also asked to document demographic characteristics, including gender, categorical classification of age and years in law enforcement, assignment, rank, and race/ethnicity.

The survey was administered to patrol officers in-person, and to other CVPD personnel on-line. Members of the Project Management team believed that an online survey of patrol officers would not generate a satisfactory response rate and that responding officers might not be truthful. A common view was that officers did not believe online surveys were truly

anonymous; officers felt they could be identified individually based on their responses and might be held accountable for expressing their honest views. Based on this concern, several lieutenants attended roll call briefings to administer the first round of paper-and-pencil surveys to patrol officers and supervisors. At the briefings, the lieutenants distributed the surveys, provided instructions and assured anonymity. Completed questionnaires were deposited by officers in a slotted and secured box. The box was similar to a ballot box and clearly could not be easily opened. Once all the paper-and-pencil surveys were collected, the box was provided to the outside researcher for data entry and analysis. Of note, no effort was made to contact every patrol officer – those on leave, serving on task forces outside the agency or otherwise absent from roll call were excluded.

A total of 52 sworn officers and agents from CVPD's patrol division completed the survey. At that time, approximately 110 sworn officers and agents were assigned to the patrol division thus the response rate was almost 50%. Respondents were fairly reflective of the gender and racial composition of the police department (see Table 20).<sup>17</sup>

The gender of survey respondents was similar to the composition of the department's sworn personnel. Overall, 87.6% of the department's sworn personnel were male while 88.5% of respondents were male.

- While 59.1% of CVPD's overall sworn personnel are white (non-Hispanic), 40.4% of respondents reflected this racial/ethnic group. Overall, Hispanics are 25.3% of the departmental sworn personnel thus they were over-represented among survey respondents, comprising 40.4% of respondents.
- In 2014, the average officer in CVPD was 41.1 years old, and this was fairly consistent with respondents – 57.5% were 40 or older.

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<sup>17</sup> Although the survey was of all sworn officers, the responses provided here are limited to those from patrol officers and agents in the Patrol Division.

Responses provided by officers yielded important insights about domestic violence – both DV-no crime verbal only and DV incidents – occurring in Chula Vista. The findings also provided insight into officer views on the criminal justice system response to DV.

Officers expressed consistent views on several items:

- Officers expressed strong agreement with the statement “It’s frustrating when 415 DV [non-crime] calls are the same people again and again.” – 86.6% of respondents agreed (somewhat or strongly) with this statement.
- Respondents (65.8%) also agreed with a similar statement: “Too many DV calls are repeat calls with the same people.”
- And while officers are frustrated with repeat calls, 70.9% of respondents feel “DV is a real problem in the community.”

These findings were consistent with prior research about officer attitudes on these issues (Johnson, 2004; Gover et al., 2011; Toon et al., 2006; Horwitz et al., 2011).

Nearly 60% of officers indicated they did not have sufficient time to handle DV calls – as they were pressured to clear calls and get back into service. This view is consistent with the volume of DV calls and the low staffing in the department.

While a large majority of officers (86.4%) agreed they have sufficient training to handle DV calls effectively, more than half (56%) of respondents said *other* CVPD officers would benefit from more DV training. Of note, nearly 88% of officers agreed that some officers are better than others at handling DV calls and more than half of officers – 61% – reported often offering relationship advice at the calls. Few officers, however, felt stricter guidelines were needed for officers dealing with DV (20.7%).

A substantial portion of officers were pessimistic about aspects of the current criminal justice response to DV in Chula Vista – particularly arrests.

- Nearly half of all respondents (47.6%) agreed (strongly or somewhat) that arrests seldom help prevent future DV incidents;



- 93% of responding officers said they didn't know the disposition of their arrests; and
- Two-thirds – 67.1% – of all officers agreed (strongly or somewhat) this it bothers them when prosecutors do not prosecute DV arrests.
- And 53.7% of respondents said the District Attorney's office needed to make changes in its response to DV.

In terms of CVPD partners in responding to DV, it was internal responses to DV that officers more often identified as needing changes to improve the response to DV:

- 64% of respondents said changes were needed in dispatch; 53% said changes were needed in patrol; and 39% said changes were needed in investigations.
- In contrast, 90% of officers indicated they had a good understanding of DVRT and only 24.6% said changes were needed by DVRT; similarly, 19.7% of respondents said changes were needed by Child Welfare (CWS).

Overall, officer insights into current DV practices and outcomes provided information for crafting a more effective response to DV.

Since DV calls were the second most common call for service in Chula Vista, it was not surprising that many officers were frustrated that DV-verbal only calls involved the same people again and again, and felt too many DV calls were repeat calls with the same people. Despite their frustrations, a large majority of officers demonstrated empathy that DV is a “real problem.” These were important observations suggesting the critical need to develop more effective ways for CVPD to deal with repeat DV calls and the potential support of officers in accomplishing that objective.

### **Analysis of Secondary Data**

To further develop a programmatic response to repeat IP-DV, CVPD undertook an extensive empirical analysis of secondary data internal to the agency, and also tapped a limited amount of external secondary data – such as jail intake and release data, and cases submitted to the SDCDA.

The internal analysis drew predominantly on 2 ½ years of DV calls and crimes from January 2012-June 2014 – more than 10,000 call for service records with an associated 2,700 crimes; a further sample of CAD records were reviewed in more depth; and a further sample of crime reports, including police supplemental reports on DV, were carefully mined.

The data sources were examined to answer a series of analytical questions; the questions were initially guided by the recommendations from Sampson (2007) but included questions arising from the literature review, officer focus groups and survey findings. The analysis was undertaken to identify key “pinch points” – opportunities for developing an intervention most likely to be effective and learning from the experiences of prior repeat IP-DV efforts.

### **Prevalence of disturbances.**

An analysis of 10,180 calls to police showed that the vast majority of DV calls – 70% – did not result in a crime report. Most of these non-crime calls were for verbal disputes<sup>18</sup> while approximately one-fourth were DV-related crime incidents such as physical assaults. Analysis revealed that DV can be conceptualized as an inverted pyramid, demonstrating the attrition of calls through the criminal justice system (see Figure 9). Only half of all DV crimes actually result in an arrest.<sup>19</sup> About half of all arrests were prosecuted by the District Attorney. Once a case was issued, there was a high probability of conviction – more than 85% of issued cases resulted in conviction, but just 2% of offenders were sentenced to prison; most were released on probation or received short jail sentences. The attrition of DV crime cases to disposition did not paint a promising picture for holding offenders accountable through the criminal justice system.

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<sup>18</sup> As noted earlier, some of these were calls where police were not able to locate either party upon arrival, so they were unable to determine whether a crime was committed or not.

<sup>19</sup> Around half of DV crime offenders are gone on arrival when police arrive. CVPD only has the resources to track down the most serious DV offenders who flee the scene.

The analysis of call data also showed the limitations of this data source. Most call records did not contain the full names of subjects involved in non-crime calls.

### **Crime types and outcomes.**

While the vast majority of DV calls were verbal disturbances in which no crime had occurred, crimes documented as DV crimes were quite varied, with batteries, restraining order violations, vandalism and a host of other crimes. While some DV crimes are charged using DV-specific penal codes, CVPD tracks all crimes that are flagged as being DV-related. This distinction shows the wide variety of crimes associated with DV, voiding the myth that DV is comprised only of assault.<sup>20</sup> In many jurisdictions, the volume of misdemeanor DV far outstrips the volume of felony DV; however, in Chula Vista, 57% of DV-crimes were misdemeanors and 43% were felonies.<sup>21</sup>

Of note, some households that had DV CFS also had been the site of other types of problem behavior. Analysis showed that for every one DV call, households had an additional two non-DV calls at the same address, although many of the non-DV calls were somewhat similar in nature. The most common similar calls were non-IP family disturbances; general person disturbances; requests to check the welfare of specific persons; and noise complaints. This suggests that households with DV calls may actually have even higher rates of repeats than can be readily identified.

In half of DV crimes, offenders were not on the scene of the crime. Offenders had either fled the scene (or committed the offense at a distance, such as TRO violations by phone or text)

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<sup>20</sup> NCVS tracks only IP-DV victimizations involving assaults, rape and robbery.

<sup>21</sup> Drawing from NCVS, Klein (2009) notes that there are four times more simple assaults than aggravated assaults for DV. While the ratio of felony to misdemeanor charges for DV assault varies between states because of differences in laws, the state of California has the largest proportion of DV assaults classified as felonies; 41% of DV assaults were classified that way in contrast to 13.7% of DV assaults in North Carolina and 5.5% in Massachusetts (Klein, 2009).

and were not arrested. Among offenders who were arrested, the median time in custody was 1.5 days for misdemeanors and 3.7 days for felony crimes. Overall, 42% of offenders were released pre-trial, and 80% of those offenders were released within 24 hours.

### **Geographic concentration and repeat DV.**

Preliminary analysis of DV in Chula Vista showed that DV was concentrated geographically on the west side of the city – an area with a large Hispanic population and multi-family residences (see Figure 11). An analysis of crime data also revealed that not all DV victims and suspects actually lived in Chula Vista – 83% of victims lived in the city as did 64% of suspects.

The actual locations of DV were sometimes difficult to pin down. In the preliminary analysis, addresses were used as the unit of analysis. This approach makes an assumption that an address is a proxy for a couple, even though it is a person who is victimized by DV and not an address. As noted earlier, some DV incidents occur at non-residential locations – and a fair number of victims do not live in the city. For these reasons, address is probably not an accurate proxy for DV but other efforts to reduce repeat DV have also focused on addresses, including the efforts in Fremont, CA, West Yorkshire and Merseyside, England (Fremont Police Department, 1997; Hanmer et al., 1999; Lloyd et al., 1994). Further consideration must be given to the reality that the same people have conflicts in different locations – one or both may move to a different residence — and thus create issues with data validity reliant on physical addresses. The homeless population in Chula Vista is a particularly cogent issue when evaluating address as a proxy for victimization. Homeless persons are substantially overrepresented among DV couples – in about 20% of DV calls in one area of Chula Vista, at least one person was homeless.

Importantly, the preliminary analysis showed that many DV calls did not occur at residential addresses. Almost 40% of all DV calls occurred at addresses that could not be

considered residential – 15% occurred on a public street or sidewalk; 11% occurred in locations such as motels, parks, bars or transit centers; and 8% occurred in parking lots and another 4% occurred in apartment complexes in which no specific unit was identified.

### **Repeat calls.**

Initial analysis of repeat calls was limited to residential addresses to establish a benchmark. This analysis revealed too that a relatively small number of addresses accounted for a disproportionate amount of DV calls for service. The preliminary analysis of 2 ½ years of DV calls to unique residential addresses in Chula Vista found that 24% of calls occurred at repeat addresses, and repeat addresses accounted for 46% of all DV calls at residential addresses.

Further analysis of unique residential addresses found 19% of all DV calls occurred at 6% of addresses. This was because the likelihood of a repeat call at an address increased once an address had a second call. Among addresses that had a second DV incident, 41% had a third. Among addresses with a third, 51% had a fourth (see Table 9). This phenomenon of increasing risk is well-established in the repeat victimization literature and provides an opportunity for effective intervention.

### **Demographic characteristics and presence of children.**

Although much research on IP-DV is focused on female victims, DV crime victims in Chula Vista are not limited to females. Based on crime reports, 24% of suspects were female and 76% male; about 4% of DV crimes involved same sex couples. The finding about gender is noteworthy because the male-to-female ratio of DV crimes in Chula Vista is fairly similar to the national finding that 82% of DV victims were female (Truman & Morgan, 2014). In terms of age, 69% of DV victims in Chula Vista were under the age of 40 – and this is consistent with the NCVS findings.

The racial composition of DV in Chula Vista somewhat mirrors the demographic composition of the city. About 60% of DV victims and suspects were Hispanic, and that was similar to the percent of the population in the city that was Hispanic (see Table 10). About 19% of DV victims and 18% of DV suspects were white, and this too, was fairly consistent with the city's population which was 20% white. In contrast, African Americans were substantially over-represented as victims and offenders and Asians were underrepresented. The African-American share of victims was double the city's 5% composition; the DV suspects were three times their share of the city's population. The racial disparities in DV among Asians was also marked – Asian victims were 6% of all DV victims and Asian suspects were 5% of all DV suspects. These proportions were in contrast to the city's Asian population of 14%.

The racial disparities in DV in Chula Vista do not vary much from disparities in DV at the national level. Similar racial disparities are documented in the research literature about DV victimization rates (Harrell, 2009; Catalano, 2012), thus, there is no reason to suspect the racial disparities in Chula Vista are related to underreporting.

Analysis of a sample of case reports provided further insight into DV crimes, revealing that children were often present at DV incidents. In the sample, children were present in 33% of DV crimes and just over half of the involved parties (56%) had children. Half of the couples appeared to live together. Child Welfare Services (CWS) personnel, one of the CVPD's primary project partners, explained that loud arguments (not just physical assaults) between adult intimate partners caused real damage to children in the vicinity. Further, CWS shared research with the CVPD indicating that the youngest children are the most vulnerable to fear/trauma caused by intense arguments because their brains are still in critical stages of development.

### **Time course and triggers.**

Previous research has shown that repeat victimization occurs very quickly and the preliminary analysis of DV calls at unique residential addresses revealed that approximately 14% of repeat DV calls occurred within three days. The initial police response – including arrest in some cases – may have caused the pause between initial and repeat DV. Prior research has shown that the cycle of violence for DV couples often involves a honeymoon or makeup period in which the suspect is apologetic and remorseful (Sampson, 2007). In Chula Vista, an experienced detective observed that DV suspects who fled the scene of a DV crime had often returned home by the third day after the incident. The detective, Agent Osvaldo Cruz, explained that he had often made a follow-up contact when he was particularly concerned about a specific victim. Cruz described the typical time course of reconciliation.

DV suspects would typically “lay low” for the first day after a DV incident. By the second day, Cruz found suspects were typically remorseful and trying to make up with the victim. Within three days, the suspect was back home, settled into an easy chair with a remote control and a can of beer. This story and sequence appeared to align with the cycle of violence honeymoon period, and Cruz described DV suspects as unhappily surprised to see a police officer at their door at this 3-day point as no one had called the police. Cruz found the visit to be impactful – suspects were unnerved by on-going police interest in the violence, the victims and themselves. Cruz explained that victims seemed to appreciate police checking on their safety – and holding offenders accountable for their behavior. From an investigative perspective, the return visit occasionally yielded evidence in the case. Bruises were fully visible within 72 hours after an assault, and this provided the officer with probable cause for charging the suspect with a felony crime.

The analysis of crime reports also revealed common triggers for DV crimes. In 24% of cases, jealousy or infidelity was the trigger; in 15% of cases, an issue relating to children appeared to be the triggering factor; and in 14% of cases, alcohol or drinking behavior appeared to trigger the contact with police. Overall, about 30% of suspects were under the influence of alcohol. In most cases, either the victim made the call to police or another household member (41%).

### **Take-aways from Problem Analysis**

The project management team convened a meeting of internal and external stakeholders to review and interpret findings arising from the problem analysis. Since the idea was to use analytical findings to guide development of the response, it was important to identify key “pinch points” and roles. Some of the key take-aways included:

- Both the focus groups with officers and the analysis of call data pointed to important problems with using only address data for future problem analyses program evaluations. This suggested the need to capture the names and dates of birth of all people involved in non- crime DV calls, as well as the development of a project-specific database to track the delivery of any interventions related to a DV calls at unique residential addresses.
- Based on the focus groups, survey and problem analysis, it was learned that there was high crime attrition – and the criminal justice system does not routinely hold offenders accountable – either through arrest or prosecution. This suggested a strategy should not be developed that relied heavily on the criminal justice system.
- There appeared to be a “window of opportunity” to prevent repeat calls by responding around the three-day mark. This related to evolution of bruising, jail release times, and the optimal time for follow-up contact. Developing an intervention during this window seemed a good plan.
- Many officers give “relationship advice” to couples about preventing domestic disturbances but most officers believe some officers are better at handling these conversations. This suggests that training or scripts might be helpful to officers in handling calls.
- Officers are unable to locate disputants or suspects in a large number of DV calls and DV crimes. Many DV calls do not occur in residences, a fair number of victims and



suspects do not live in Chula Vista, and other subjects are homeless. While these facts limit the ability of police to make contact with persons involved in DV, it should help focus resources on residential addresses with chronic DV and perhaps more serious DV crimes. The NCVS data showed that most DV crimes (80%) occur at or near the victim's home address.

- The literature review revealed strong recommendations for police to focus on chronic victims and reduce repeat victimization. The preliminary analysis showed that some addresses generated an excessive number of calls – this finding, coupled with the others, emphasized the need to focus on repeat residential addresses.
- Analysis showed that in the majority of DV crimes, at least one person in a couple had at least one child; children were commonly present when DV crimes occurred, and issues relating to children triggered some DV crimes. CWS helped develop messaging on this topic.

## **Community Outreach and Collaboration**

Consistent with its commitment to carry out an innovative approach using problem-solving and collaboration – a core approach of Strategies for Policing Innovation<sup>22</sup> — CVPD decided early to identify and elaborate clear roles for partners – both within the organization and outside.

### **Internal Partners**

Patrol officers who respond to calls from citizens provide a core response to DV-verbal only calls and DV-crime calls. In Chula Vista, specialized assistance to support patrol officers is located in the department’s investigations division. Consistent with the vast majority of police departments in the nation serving a population of a similar size to Chula Vista, CVPD has a specialized domestic violence unit.<sup>23</sup> Detectives in CVPD’s Family Protection Unit (FPU) conduct follow-up investigations of DV crimes and prepare cases for review by the San Diego County District Attorney’s Office. Patrol officers, however, have primary responsibility for responding to DV calls and crimes. A key principal in developing an initiative to respond to repeat IP-DV was to straddle the chasm between CVPD’s patrol and investigative divisions.

Throughout the life of the project, a project management team – including personnel from both divisions – made decisions about project implementation. The management team included sworn personnel from across the span of control; the team was guided by a captain<sup>24</sup> – initially the patrol division captain, and later – for the majority of the project period – the investigations

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<sup>22</sup> See <http://www.strategiesforpolicinginnovation.com/about>

<sup>23</sup> According to Reaves (2017), 90% of police departments in the U.S. serving a population of 250,000 or more had a specialized DV unit with full-time personnel in 2013; however, 11% of all police departments in the nation have such a unit. Among agencies serving a population of 50,000-250, 000, only 41% had full-time personnel in a specialized DV unit, and only 8% of the smallest departments had a unit.

<sup>24</sup> In CVPD, captains report directly to the chief of police.

division captain. Other members of the project team included at least one representative from all ranks – a patrol and investigations lieutenant; the sergeant of the Family Protection Unit; and several investigative agents (detectives) from FPU. The team was further complemented by a project coordinator – a sworn officer who competed for the assignment to work on the project. The officer was assigned to the patrol division but housed in the FPU for the life of the project. In addition to the sworn personnel on the project management team, the initiative was managed by the department’s senior public safety analyst; two additional analysts were also key members of the team. Finally, the research partner was a member of the project Management Team.

An additional internal partner that played an important role in the project was the dispatch unit. The CVPD operates its own 24-hour dispatch center; the center is housed in the police department and its personnel play a key role in connecting DV subjects, victims, and witnesses with the responding officers. While no dispatchers sat on the project management team, the supervisor was kept abreast of the project and routinely contacted for insights and advice.

### **External Partners**

To carry out the repeat IP-DV initiative, CVPD formalized partnerships with four key external organizations:

- Domestic Violence Response Time (DVRT), the DV victim advocacy arm of South Bay Community Services (SBCS)
- Child Welfare Services
- San Diego County Probation Department
- San Diego County District Attorney

CVPD already had longstanding partnerships with these organizations – but the role of these partners in addressing DV was expanded and formalized during the project.

For more than 15 years, CVPD had contracted with DVRT- to provide on-scene services for DV crime victims around the clock. Per department policy (Appendix A), patrol officers could request that victim advocates who staff the DVRT be dispatched to provide services to a DV crime victim in Chula Vista.

Across the United States, Reaves (2017) reported that personnel in specialized DV units in police departments typically interact with service providers to prevent further violence to victims.<sup>25</sup> Chula Vista has a unique resource because DVRT advocates who provide crisis intervention services to victims and their children and help develop plans for their immediate and long-term safety, are actually housed in the CVPD building. Patrol officers routinely call advocates to the scene of DV crimes to assist victims face-to-face during the aftermath of incidents.

CWS is the county human resources agency that provides emergency services in cases such as those involving child abuse. In Chula Vista, police officers or DVRT members notify CWS when a DV crime occurred in the presence of a child.

Probation officers work across the county of San Diego and have close interactions with CVPD personnel. Prior research has found that probation personnel provide leverage to gain compliance with offenders who are on community supervision, as violating probation conditions results in swift consequences for offenders.

As the lead law enforcement agency in the county, the San Diego County District Attorney's Office plays an important role in the adjudication of all DV crimes. While CVPD

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<sup>25</sup> Reaves did not report the prevalence of such programs.

personnel work routinely with the South Bay Branch of the SDCDA, this initiative provided an opportunity to further enhance the relationship.

### **Roles of External Partners**

The role of the external partners varied during the life of the project. All partners participated in an initial meeting and were briefed on the nature of the grant and funding from BJA. Although the specifics of the initiative to be undertaken were not fully developed initially, the partners were all keenly interested in the idea of holding offenders accountable and reducing repeat IP-DV. All agreed this was an important objective. In subsequent meetings, the roles of the partners coalesced.

DVRT had an important role throughout the life of the project. In the test sector, patrol officers requested the dispatch of DVRT advocates for all DV crime victims, rather than in just some cases. DVRT also took on a key ongoing role in the project by agreeing to collect information from victims to evaluate the police response during the course of the project. The CVPD asked DART advocates if they would be willing to pose several short questions to victims as part of their standard follow-up protocol. The project management team believed that survey questions asked by victim advocates would provide a more valid indicator of victim views than would information collected by officers. DVRT advocates were excited about the idea of surveying victims and recommended adding additional questions to the survey. Two key questions were simple and straight-forward:

- Overall, how satisfied were you with the way police handled the incident?
- How likely are you to call Chula Vista police in the future if there is another incident?

Because DVRT agreed to conduct the brief survey citywide, the results would provide a measure of the project impact – from the perspective of victims.

CWS played a critical role in developing child-related messaging that became a core part of the initiative. Because CWS had shared research about the negative impact of even intense verbal IP arguments on children, a message to this effect was incorporated into handouts developed by the CVPD. Officers also incorporated this language into a verbal warning to subjects, explaining that children of all ages are scared when they hear adults yelling at each other. The handout also included a link to a powerful video that CWS had provided to the project management team: “First Impressions: Exposure to Violence and a Child’s Developing Brain.” In addition to this assistance, CWS also dedicated one specific social worker to the project who was available to assist the program coordinator with follow-up contacts with families in the test sector.

Probation officers made follow-up visits to offenders on probation who were involved in DV calls or crimes in the test sector. (Probation provided department analysts with a nightly download of data used to identify people involved in DV incidents in the test sector who were on probation.) These follow-up contacts were an additional tool to hold offenders accountable.

A final partner in the IP-DV initiative was the San Diego County District Attorney’s Office. Although a guiding principal of the project was to minimize the use of legal sanctions to stop repeated DV, the idea was to prioritize for prosecution offenders who did not respond to more modest warnings. Problem analysis had revealed that the SDCDA was able to file charges in just under half of the DV-related arrests submitted for prosecution by CVPD personnel. This finding made it clear that a strong universal emphasis on adjudication would likely not be particularly effective, however, the District Attorney agreed to prioritize a small number of DV suspects who needed strong legal sanctions. The District Attorney also helped inform judges about the importance of these priority offenders.

## **Strategies Used to Address Repeat IP-DV**

To address repeat IP-DV, the CVPD developed a strategic response model based on prior research and a comprehensive analysis of the problem in Chula Vista. A team of patrol officers implemented the bulk of the response model. This officer team was called the Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART). The nomenclature of “domestic abuse” was intended to reflect the broad nature of DV, including non-crime domestic disturbances and the constellation of DV- related criminal incidents such as vandalism, theft, burglary, and others arising from the IP relationship. The overall goal of the project was to reduce DV calls *and* DV crimes by focusing on reducing repeat DV victims, offenders, non-crime subjects<sup>26</sup> and recurrent addresses.

### **Guiding Principles**

Several guiding principles were used to develop the strategy and implementation plan.

#### **Minimal reliance on legal interventions.**

Since problem analysis indicated that DV crime suspects were relatively unlikely to be arrested and prosecuted, a guiding principal was to employ interventions that did not rely in large part on any of these traditional legal consequences. In fact, the idea was to achieve this reduction by changing social norms and behavior, using legal interventions only when repeated, customized, and increasingly intensive police contacts were not effective.

#### **Graded response.**

CVPD was committed to following evidence-based practices and focusing on chronic offenders as recommended by Sherman (1992), Farrell and Buckley (1999) and Sampson (2007), using a tiered or graded response, and customizing to Chula Vista effective police

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<sup>26</sup> The term “subjects” is used throughout this report to denote both of the people involved in non-crime DV calls.

efforts undertaken in Fremont, CA, West Yorkshire, England, and High Point, NC (Fremont Police Department, 1997; Hanmer, et al., 1999; Sechrist & Weil, 2018).

**Focus on offenders *and* victims.**

Further principles employed in development of the strategy was a focus on *both* DV victim and DV offender in crimes. Prior approaches tend to focus on one or the other. For example, police in Redlands, CA, made follow-up contacts with victims but failed to reduce repeat victimization (Davis, Weisburd, & Hamilton, 2010).

**Incorporate non-crime DV subjects into response.**

While more than 70% of DV calls in Chula Vista did not result in a crime report, it is widely perceived by police that verbal disturbances precede and – if not addressed – escalate to DV crimes. While Bland & Ariel (2015) find little support for the escalation of harm phenomenon, there is evidence that the frequency of repeat incidents increases once two DV incidents involving the same couple have occurred.

**Use existing resources and involve a broad group of officers.**

CVPD gave consideration to using a designated DV-car staffed by six officers to respond only to DV calls in the test sector. While this seemed appealing on one level, it was not practical; because of the high volume of DV calls, if the project was ever expanded citywide, 25% of patrol officers would need to be assigned solely to special DV cars to cover all DV calls throughout the city. It was clear that such a unit could not be sustained as the department continued to struggle with deficits in sworn officers following the economic recession of the previous decade. Subsequently, the prevailing view was that any initiative undertaken should be one that could be carried out by patrol officers – supplemented by detectives – as part of their routine duties. Further, findings from the focus groups and surveys revealed that a majority of



officers were frustrated with the repeat nature of DV and wanted to hold offenders accountable.

**Employ scientific research design to test impact.**

CVPD was committed to testing the effectiveness of the DART initiative using a rigorous scientific research design. It was not practical to conduct a randomized control trial, so a quasi- experimental design was developed in which the initiative could be tested in two matched areas of the city.

**Collaborate with partners.**

The approach developed by CVPD personnel was in collaboration with key community partners – DVRT, CWS, Probation and the District Attorney’s Office. Although the initiative was predominantly reliant on the responses of police, partners played a critical role in developing impactful messages and collecting data.

**Monitor implementation.**

It was known that many experimental police efforts fail because of uneven or incomplete implementation, or failure to sustain efforts over time. The project management team as a whole monitored the implementation of the project. In addition to broad oversight of the project management team, the sworn project coordinator assigned to the FPU provided day-to-day oversight of the implementation of the patrol response; she effectively coordinated police efforts that crossed the patrol and investigative divisions.

Buzawa and Buzawa (2013) attributed the failure of the criminal justice system to prevent repeat DV to “the lack of consolidated systems [so that] abusers are treated as first offenders” (p.141). Since specialized databases were necessary to track repeat DV in Merseyside (Lloyd et al., 1994; Fremont Police Department, 1997; West Yorkshire (Hanmer et al., 1999); and High Point (Sechrist & Weil, 2018), a similar approach was taken in Chula Vista – partly to

document the delivery of the intervention but also to collect characteristics of the victims, offenders or DV subjects.

### **Key Elements of the DART Tiered Initiative**

The DART protocol delivered by responding officers consisted of a series of tiered responses, based on the type and recurrent nature of the DV incident(s).

- At an initial non-crime DV call, officers delivered a verbal message to the subjects and provided them with a professionally designed educational flyer (see Figure 16).
- The cell phone numbers of subjects involved in DV-verbal only calls were collected so they could receive a follow-up text after 28 days (see Figure 17).
- The first time a suspect was arrested for a DV crime after the start of the project, an officer delivered a stern 11-point warning to the offender (see Figure 18) at the jail; the victim was given a copy of the warning.
- DVRT advocates were dispatched to the scene when DV crimes had occurred. As a new part of the standard DVRT follow-up protocol, the advocates conducted brief surveys with victims regarding their satisfaction with the police response.
- Officers made an unannounced visit to suspects and victims approximately three days after the triggering event. If a face-to-face contact could not be made, such as when no one was home, officers left a “we stopped by card” on the door of the residence with the officer’s contact information (see Figure 19).
- Chronic couples with three or more generally lower-level incidents and DV offenders who ignored the warning and committed repeat DV offenses were the focus of customized problem-solving efforts.

When the DART initiative was launched, the decision was made to give offenders a “clean slate” – the DART tiered approach was thus a cumulative approach designed to clearly communicate to suspects the consequences of their actions and hold them accountable. Elements of the graded response were modeled after similar efforts but were customized to Chula Vista based on the problem analysis findings. Some examples include the following:

In the survey, more than 65% of officers indicated they often gave relationship advice to subjects involved in verbal disputes. Since many officers were quite young, the consistent verbal

message – and professionally-designed educational brochure – provided structure to that interaction.

A key point in the message officers provided to non-crime subjects was that police take these calls seriously – while everyone has arguments, most people do not have arguments so loud that the police are called for help. Specific statements such as the harmfulness of verbal disputes to children seemed particularly cogent for many subjects.

The return visit to suspects and victims approximately three days after the DV crime was timed based on the median number of days that arrestees spend in jail, the amount of time necessary for bruises to fully develop,<sup>27</sup> and expectations that a suspect – initially absent when police arrived to investigate a crime – will have returned to the residence. If bruises have developed, an officer may be able to collect evidence, such as photographs, and make a felony arrest (for what may have previously been a misdemeanor battery without a visible injury). Problem analysis showed that more than 85% of repeat DV in Chula Vista occurred after the three-day mark.

While DART replicated some key elements of other repeat-DV efforts by police, several unique and distinctive programmatic elements were developed and tested.

- The consistent in-person, verbal educational message delivered during every non-crime DV call response had not been tried by other police departments.
- The text follow-up contact to non-crime DV subjects was employed because of the relative youth of these individuals. Since the target population was predominantly under 40 – a more technology-savvy age group – a civilian police employee attempted to send both parties a follow-up text with a short survey to check-in, make sure the subjects were okay, and provide a reminder that the police were indeed taking a new approach and following up on the earlier call for service.
- The follow-up attempt card was also a novel approach. The card – and the other

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<sup>27</sup> Nelson (2012) reported that bruises fully develop within three days, and officers must return and take new photographs of the victim at this time to provide evidence for successful prosecution.

printed materials – were professional and eye-catching and conveyed clear and simple messages. Even when officers were unable to make face-to-face contact, the “we stopped by” cards provided a clear notification that police were being true to their word and following up.

- The stern verbal warning and messaging to suspects that they could expect future unannounced visits from police was an attention-grabber. Most citizens -- even law-abiding citizens – do not want to receive a great deal of attention from police.
- Prior police efforts on repeat DV have included letters delivered to subjects. CVPD felt that a more engaging method of communication would enhance the impact of the message.

The intervention delivered to chronic DV subjects and offenders was a custom-tailored effort carried out by the project coordinator. The ability to customize a response to chronic offenders is a novel approach. These individuals may have unique circumstances that contributed to their behavior and could be used to interrupt it. For example, the project coordinator once worked with a severely disabled suspect who was confined to a wheelchair, but physically abused his wife. To remind the suspect that police would continue to check on her safety, his wife taped a Chula Vista project flier to the bathroom wall with a note that the officer would continue to come by until the violence stopped. It did.

### **Launching the initiative.**

Several key decisions were made about how to launch the DART initiative to maximize the ability to test and measure its impact. The project was undertaken using a quasi-experimental design, with matched experimental and comparison areas based on population, demographic composition, DV calls and crimes. The experimental area – Sector 1 – consisted of four contiguous beats – 11, 12, 13 and 14. The comparison or control sector – Sector 2 – was located south of Sector 1 and comprised of four contiguous beats – 21, 22, 23 and 24 (see figures 10 and 12).

The two police sectors were chosen, in part, for practical reasons related to CVPD

deployment practices. CVPD patrol officers are assigned by sector and beat, and efforts are made to ensure beat integrity. However, officers typically provide back-up and assist fellow officers on other calls. This is particularly true for DV calls which, by policy, necessitate the deployment of two officers. Given the low staffing of sworn officers, the assisting officer must frequently cross beat boundaries.

In terms of practicality, the two western sectors chosen for the experiment are mostly separated from the city's two eastern sectors by a major freeway (I-805). The two western sectors are mostly bounded on by another major freeway (I-5); the two western sectors are also bisected by L Street – a major thoroughfare that stretches from I-5 to I-805. The clear division between the two sectors was intended to reduce the likelihood of contamination, since DART officers were regularly rotated by their supervisors throughout the city, to all four sectors. When DART officers handled DV calls or DV crimes in Sector 1, they followed the DART response protocol for DV calls and crimes; when they were assigned or dispatched to any of the other three sectors, they provided the standard, traditional response to DV. It is likely that some contamination occurred – DART officers might have incorporated the DART approach elsewhere in the city –but the intention was to minimize this.

#### **Timing of DART launch.**

The DART initiative was initially scheduled to launch in January 2015, however, an unanticipated event occurred – the CVPD acquired and began phasing in body-worn cameras (BWCs) to all patrol officers in January and February 2015. In Phoenix, Morrow, Katz, and Choate (2016) found that BWCs caused major shifts in police handling of IP-DV, including an increase in reports and arrests. To avoid contamination of the DART project, the launch was delayed until August 2015 when a pilot deployment began. The full project was launched in

September 2015<sup>28</sup> and continued in the patrol division through December 2016. At that time, the department command staff decided to pause the project temporarily to determine how best to proceed.

**Project personnel and training.**

In late February of 2015, the patrol captain sent an email to all patrol officers seeking volunteers to test a new approach to DV in Sector 1 after the mid-summer shift change.<sup>29</sup> Approximately 30 sworn officers – about 30% of all officers assigned to patrol – volunteered. The timing of the selection was key because DART officers needed to be trained before they began delivering the messages. The patrol captain asked officers to make a commitment to remain with the project for a year. In April and May of 2015, DART officers received additional training in handling DV incidents from a regional training provider. In June, project management team members conducted 4-hour trainings on the nature of repeat DV, the rationale for the DV project, and the steps for implementing the enhanced field protocol for DART officers, including how to complete required data collection forms. A second wave of about 30 additional patrol officers volunteered to join the DART team in January 2016 and received similar additional training. Additional DART officers were recruited to provide more flexibility in geographic assignments (only DART-trained officers were able to work Sector 1).

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<sup>28</sup> As it turned out, the adoption of BWC did have a significant effect on DV crimes – an artifact of officer reporting of incidents. The increase in reports, however, regressed to the mean after approximately 4 months.

<sup>29</sup> Patrol staff choose new shift assignments every six months in order of seniority within their rank.

## **Data and Intelligence**

The SPI initiative afforded CVPD an opportunity to develop and expand the use of data and intelligence throughout the course of the project.

### **DART Database**

An analyst developed a project-specific Access database to support the DART program. This database contained all additional information collected by DART officers when responding to DV calls, including non-crime subjects' full names, dates of birth, cell phone numbers, home addresses, and other information that had not been collected prior to the project. The DART database was linked to CAD and the RMS, to enable queries that hit on all three datasets. For example, one query identified suspects who had received formal 11-point warnings, but had subsequently re-offended. The program coordinator used this report to initiate customized problem-solving plans for repeat offenders.

Two analysts created a master name index table in the DART database and hand-cleaned DV suspect name data to ensure repeat DV crime offenders were not missed due to data entry errors or name spelling variations. (Later in the project, analysts utilized an automated Access-based name cleaning program.) A nightly download of probation data was integrated into the DART database and linked to names from DART data collection forms. This data was used to identify offenders on probation who were involved in DV calls or crimes in Sector 1 for follow up by probation officers. Within the DART database, using one-time downloads, an analyst created a prototype of a master name report that linked suspect data from CAD, RMS, jail, probation, and the district attorney.

### **Intelligence**

The program coordinator reviewed every DV crime report from the preceding day for the

experimental sector, assessed reports and provided brief instructions or background to DART officers regarding the nature of the follow up needed.

Extensive non-crime DV call histories, the length and dates of prior jail stays, and copies of all prior DV crime reports were compiled as background for the DA's office to assist with prosecution of chronic offenders. To prepare for customized problem-solving meetings with chronic suspects, victims and subjects, the program coordinator read all prior DV crime reports involving the couple, all prior non-crime call for service narratives, and developed additional intelligence regarding previous involvement of Child Welfare Services.



## **Analysis and Evaluation**

Analysis and evaluation of the DART initiative was carried out under the direction of the research partner. The researcher participated as a member of the project management team, regularly attending meetings in-person or via telephone conferencing. The partner worked routinely with the DART project manager to address any issues that might affect the research design.

The experimental and comparison sectors were very closely matched. Both had between 50,000 and 69,000 people and were about 70% Hispanic. The two sectors had almost identical trends in the annual number of DV calls (see Table 11 and Figure 13) and DV crimes (see figures 14 and 15) during the 15-year period before the problem-solving effort was launched.

Across three phases of implementation (September 2015-February 2017), officers administered 570 in-person Level 1 messages to people involved in non-crime DV calls; 382 victims received messages about DV crime at the triggering event; 247 suspects received jail/field warnings; and officers made 298 attempts at in-person 3-day follow ups in Sector 1. The program coordinator worked on more than 60 customized problem-solving plans with victims, suspects, and subjects involved in repeat crimes or chronic verbal abuse situations.

### **Impact Measures**

A multi-method approach was used to evaluate impact of the DART initiative. The key measures included:

- Changes in DV crimes
- Changes in DV calls
- Changes in DV arrests

- Changes in proportion of repeat DV
- Changes in severity of DV calls and crimes
- Cost-benefit based on officer time on calls
- Views of DV subjects
- Victim satisfaction
- Officer views

The initial objective of DART was to reduce repeat DV calls and crimes; however, it is plausible that police initiatives may boost or reduce a number of measures. There may be changes in the volume of DV calls, crimes and even the number of crime reports. Some research has found that DV calls increase while crime severity declines. Morrow, Katz, and Choate (2016) found that the deployment of Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) in Phoenix increased crime reports, arrests, and prosecution of DV crimes.

### **Change in DV Crime**

Following a 1-year implementation period, DV crime dropped 23.5% in the experimental sector (Sector 1) and increased 3.4% in the matched comparison sector (Sector 2) from a baseline of 156 weeks. DV crimes initially increased in Sector 1 but showed a clear drop after the project was fully implemented. The impact of the project on DV crime did not occur abruptly, but was a gradual impact with a cumulative effect. As shown in tables 12 and 13 and in Figure 20:

- Mean weekly DV crimes in Sector 1 declined 23.5% after full DART implementation (T1 compared to T5;  $p=.005$ ). During the baseline, the mean weekly average of DV crimes was 8.20 in Sector 1; during T5, the mean weekly average of DV crimes was 6.27.
- Mean weekly DV crimes in Sector 1 increased 36% after the DART project was paused in early 2017 (T5 compared to T6;  $p=.008$ ); during T5 the mean weekly average of DV crimes was 6.27; during T6 the mean weekly average DV crimes was 8.50.

## **Change in Calls for Service**

As with IP-DV crime, DV calls were tracked on a weekly basis. Because of prior research, the project team recognized that IP-DV calls might either increase or decline as a result of the DART initiative. Overall, DV calls dropped in some prior research but increased in others.

DV calls initially increased in Sector 1 – mirroring the initial ascent of DV crimes – but showed a clear drop one year after the project was fully implemented (see Table 14). The largest increase in mean weekly DV calls in Sector 1 was from T1 to T4 as the project was being implemented. Calls increased from a weekly mean of 30.2 to 34.8 – a 16% increase. Following the one-year implementation period, calls dropped 3% in Sector 1 and increased 10% in the matched comparison sector; the 3% reduction in calls in Sector 1 was not statistically significant, but the 10% increase in calls in Sector 1 was statistically significant ( $p=.041$ ). As shown in tables 14 and 15 and Figure 22:

- After the project had been in place for one year – at T5 – DV calls dropped 3% from 30.2 to 29.2 in Sector 1 (ns) (T1 compared to T5). During the same period, calls increased by 10.3% in Sector 2 ( $p=.041$ ).
- Mean weekly DV calls in Sector 1 dropped 16.1% from T4 to T5, after full DART implementation ( $p=.002$ ) while calls increased 13.3% in Sector 2 during the same period ( $p=.026$ ).
- Mean weekly DV calls in Sector 1 again dropped after the DART project was suspended. The drop of 1.4% was not significant (T5 compared to T6). Calls also declined in Sector 2 during this period, falling by 5.9%.

## **Change in DV Arrests**

During the course of the project, it was hypothesized that DV crime in Sector 2 had dropped not because of the warnings to DV offenders but because of an increased number of arrests. To test this, arrests were compiled for both sectors and a weekly mean number of arrests calculated for each project period (see Table 16). Analysis showed that the number of arrests did

increase significantly in Sector 1 over Sector 2, and this increase was observed in the first six months of the project – mean arrests in Sector 1 increased 48.6% from T1 to T3. Arrests also increased in Sector 2 but not as significantly. In Sector 2, arrests increased from a weekly average of 3.19 to 3.69 – a 15.7% increase. Most of the increase in arrests occurred from T1 to T2. T2 was the period when CVPD had adopted Body-Worn Cameras. DV crimes had also increased in both Sector 1 and Sector 2 from T1 to T2 – by 11.8% and 14.9%, respectively (see Table 12). Yet DV calls did not increase from T1 to T2 (see Table 14). The increase in DV crimes appears to be an artifact of BWC and the increase in arrests mirrors the increase in DV crimes. DV arrests changed little from T2 to T3 in either sector.

### **Change in Proportion of Repeat DV**

Based on their work in Merseyside, Farrell and Buckley (1999) advised that changes – especially reductions – in the proportion of calls to police that are repeat DV are a more important measure of police performance than the actual number of DV calls.

The proportion of DV calls in Chula Vista that were repeat calls based on unique addresses was initially 45.2% in Sector 1 and 41.8% in Sector 1. The percentage of repeat calls was higher during this time period because the baseline consisted of a longer period of time – 156 weeks. A better comparison is the distinction between different project phases over the 313 weeks. T3 served as a baseline phase for repeat calls – all addresses were given a clean slate at the beginning of DART. In this 26-week project period, the percentage of addresses that were repeat calls was virtually identical in Sector 1 and 2 – 8.5% and 8.7% of DV calls, respectively, were repeat calls at unique residential addresses (see Table 17). The percentage of repeat calls increased in Sector 1 from T3 to T4 while the remaining consistent in Sector 2. Repeat calls then declined in Sector 1 from T4 to T5. The changes in repeat calls mirrored changes in DV crimes.

## **Change in Crime Severity**

While the volume of DV crimes dropped in Sector 1 during the DART project, it seemed plausible that the severity of calls and crimes would decline. Based on a ranked order of calls and crimes, there was no change in call or crime severity in either sector during the period. This is likely because the prominence of DV calls – the least severe– remained consistent over time. After a police-led intervention, Stover et al. (2009) found that DV victims were more likely to call police than a comparison group, and called more quickly, but the repeat call was typically not a crime victimization. The research by Bland and Ariel (2015) found DV escalation is a myth – the frequency of DV calls increases among repeat couples but crime severity does not escalate.

## **Cost-Benefit of Police Time on DV Calls**

A major concern of police during the DART project was the idea that officers would spend much more time on DV calls administering the protocol. To evaluate changes in officer time, a baseline period of 18 months (78 weeks) was constructed, to permit comparison with a comparable period that spanned the length of the DART experiment. Dispatch records maintained by CVPD document the time in seconds that officers spend responding to calls since officers indicate the time they arrive on a call and clear the call. This is not a perfect measure of officer time, as only the initial officer's time is documented and two officers respond, but it does provide a rough indicator of the costs associated with DART.

During the baseline period, officers in Sector 1 spent a mean of 4,167.6 seconds on 2,373 DV calls – these reflect all calls classified as DV. Compared to the test period, officers spent slightly more time – a mean of 4,282.5 seconds on 2,546 calls – an increase of 2.8%. In Sector 2, the time spent by officers on scene also increased slightly – rising 2.0% from 4,088.22 seconds to 4170.25.

While officers in Sector 1 spent slightly more time on DV calls than did officers in Sector 2, these differences were present during the baseline period and during the implementation period. There was not a significant difference in the difference in officer time on scene in either sector (see Table 18). The evidence that officer time on calls was not increased with the DART initiative although DV crimes were reduced provided a cost-benefit metric to the department. This is further supported by the reduction of the standard deviation for time on calls in Sector 1. The standard deviation dropped substantially in Sector 1, falling from 7286.3 to 5,604.9 while increasing in Sector 2 from 6,000.5 to 6,494.8. The differing trends likely reflect the drop in more time-consuming DV crimes in Sector 1 particularly those involving arrests. The changes in time on calls is preliminary and merits further analysis.

### **Views of DV Subjects**

The intervention included texting subjects involved in non-crime IP-DV calls in Sector 1. Although the text contact itself was part of the intervention, within the text, subjects were directed to an online survey link that posed three questions about the police response, and this provided an informal measure of police performance.

- 88% of subjects said things had gotten better since the incident
- 81% said police had helped the problem
- 8% of subjects said they would not call police again for help.

The text was only sent to persons with a mobile phone, and it is not possible to determine how many text-messages were actually received. Although there was a low response rate, the responses appear to provide some evidence that DART had not suppressed subjects from calling the police for assistance.

## **Victim Satisfaction**

Because the text survey was limited to Sector 1 – and since the responses solicited by the police department may not have been candid – an independent survey was conducted with all DV crime victims in the city. The survey consisted of several questions administered not by police but by DVRT advocates. The survey was not restricted to Sector 1 but was conducted citywide providing a comparison between experimental and comparison areas.

The survey questions were “add-ons” to the follow-up victim contacts made by DVRT advocates after DV crimes occurred, but a limited number of surveys were completed by DVRT. Because DVRT advocates were affiliated with SBCS, it was not possible to routinely supervise and track the administration of the surveys. In the survey, victims were asked:

Overall, how satisfied were you with the way police handled the incident?

- 97% of victims in Sector 1 reported being satisfied with the police response.
- 81% of victims in Sector 2 were satisfied with the police response.

How likely are you to call the Chula Vista police in the future if there is another incident?

- Just like the respondents to the text survey, only about 8% of the crime victims said they were not likely to call police for help in the future

While the variation in satisfaction between the two sectors could not be tested for significant differences, the similarity to the results of the text survey provides some assurance that the DART initiative did not reduce victim satisfaction in Sector 1.

## **Officer Views**

The baseline survey of CVPD personnel conducted in March 2014 was repeated in December 2016 as the experiment wound down. The follow-up survey was only administered to patrol officers. Much like the survey in 2014, the 2016 survey was administered to officers at roll

call. The DART project coordinator and other project management team members attended roll calls to distribute and collect the anonymous surveys.

The survey in 2014 was comprised of 34 questions; an additional six questions were included in 2016 to measure officer perceptions of Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) that were adopted in early 2015 and their views on the effectiveness of the DART DV initiative (see Appendix D). The additional statements were:

- Body-worn cameras make it easier to collect evidence on DV cases.
- Body-worn camera video makes it easier to prosecute DV offenders.
- Body-worn camera video helps officers complete DV reports or prepare DV cases.
- The DART officer DV initiative has been effective in reducing repeat DV.
- The DART officer DV initiative should be expanded in patrol.
- I have a good understanding of the DART DV initiative.

The 2016 survey did not match officers from the earlier time period, however, comparisons were made between the two waves to detect any significant differences in gender, age, race or years of experience (see Table 20). In 2016, 78 officers responded to the survey – approximately 71% of the department’s patrol officers and agents. This was higher than the response rate of 46% in 2014. The majority of respondents at both points in time were patrol officers –76.9% in 2014 and 87.2% in 2016 – while the remainder were agents.

- The gender of respondents was similar at both times to the composition of the department’s sworn personnel. Overall, 87.6% of the department’s sworn personnel are male. In 2014, 88.5% of respondents were male compared to 87.2% in 2016. This was not a significant difference.
- The race/ethnicity of respondents differed from 2014 to 2016, and also varied from the racial composition of CVPD’s sworn personnel. While 59.1% of CVPD’s overall sworn personnel are white (non-Hispanic), only 40.4% of respondents in 2014 and 30.7% in 2016 reported this racial/ethnic group.



- Overall, Hispanics are 25.3% of the department's sworn personnel yet comprised 40.4% and 30.7% of respondents in 2014 and 2016, respectively. Thus, while Hispanic officers were over-represented in the survey compared to the composition of the department, there was not a significant difference in the ethnic composition of respondents from pre- to post-survey.
- The average officer in CVPD is 41.1 years old, and this is fairly consistent with respondents in 2014 as 57.5% were 40 or older. In 2016, only 40% of respondents were in this age category. The differences were reflected in younger officers; in 2016, nearly one-third of respondents reported being under 30 years of age, compared to 13.5% in 2014. Based on a chi-square test, this difference was significant ( $X^2=6.527$ ,  $p=.038$ ).
- A similar pattern occurred among respondents related to their tenure in law enforcement. In 2014, nearly two-thirds of respondents reported having more than 10 years of experience in law enforcement; in contrast, only 42.5% of respondents reported this much experience in 2016. Based on a chi-square test, this difference was significant ( $X^2=14.094$ ,  $p=.001$ ).

Overall, survey respondents in both 2014 and 2016 were similar to the department's sworn personnel in rank, gender, and race, however, respondents in 2016 were significantly younger and had fewer years of experience.

At both time points, the survey identified a common view of police officers – domestic violence calls (DV crimes and verbal only) are frustrating for officers. Among all questions in the survey, officers expressed the strongest agreement with the statement “It's frustrating when 415 [non-crime] DV calls are the same people again and again.”

- In 2014, 86.6% of officers agreed with this statement and a similar proportion – 79.2% agreed in late 2016. The difference between 2014 and 2016 responses was not significant.
- In 2014, a majority of officers (65.4%) agreed with the statement: “Too many DV calls are repeat calls with the same people.” In 2016, 71.9% of respondents agreed with the statement. The difference between 2014 and 2016 responses was not significant.
- Despite their frustrations, officers did not feel the problem was unimportant. In 2014, 68.0% of respondents agreed “DV is a real problem in the community.” In late 2016, 79.5% of respondents agreed. The differences were not significantly different.

Other attitudes also remained consistent between the two waves of the survey:

- Officers were equally likely at both times to feel they had sufficient training; and officers were equally likely to feel other CVPD officers would benefit from more training.

A comparison of officer attitudes in 2016 revealed no significant differences between groups. Significant differences, however, were identified between the attitudes of officers who participated in the DART experiment compared with those who did not (see Table 22). On numerous attitudinal measures, officers who identified as DART officers had significantly different views than other officers:

- DART officers were significantly more likely to agree that DV is a real problem in Chula Vista (92.1% v. 67.5%,  $\chi^2 = 8.408$ ,  $p=.038$ ). Despite this recognition of the problem, DART officers were more likely than other officers to be frustrated by the repeat domestic disturbance calls (86.3% v. 72.5%,  $\chi^2 = 10.72$ ,  $p=.03$ ).
- DART officers were significantly more likely to agree that some officers are better at handling DV calls than other officers – 92.1% of DART officers felt this way compared to 70.0% of non-DART officers ( $\chi^2 = 10.325$ ,  $p=.035$ )
- DART officers were also nearly twice as likely to feel that CVPD officers would benefit from more DV training – 81.5% of DART officers agreed with that view, compared to 45.0% of non-DART officers.

In general, DART officers appeared more aware of the complexity of DV and were knowledgeable about resources and interventions. An important caveat, however, is that DART respondents differed in important ways from other officers (see Table 21).<sup>30</sup>

- DART officers included more female officers than non-DART officers. In the non-DART group, 2.5% of respondents were female compared to 23.7% of DART respondents. The difference was statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 7.824$ ,  $p=.006$ ).
- Hispanic officers were more prevalent among DART officers responding than in the non-DART group; 40.5% of DART respondents indicated they were Hispanic compared to 21.1% of the non-DART group ( $\chi^2 = 7.824$ ,  $p=.006$ ).
- And while 40% of DART respondents had less than five years of tenure in CVPD and

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<sup>30</sup> This does not suggest that the demographic composition of officers serving in DART officers also differed; the differences reported only reflect officers who responded to the survey.

26% were under the age of 30, these differences were not statistically significant.

A major interest in conducting the survey 18 months after the pilot was undertaken was to examine whether officers believed DART had been an effective approach to DV. To that end, three key questions provide indicators:

- Overall, 94.8% of DART officers agreed they have a good understanding of the DART DV initiative.
- 78.9% of DART officers agreed that DART had been effective in reducing repeat DV.
- 65.8% agreed that DART should be expanded in patrol.

While not all DART officers supported the expansion, this suggests that the DART officers did not represent an over-eager group of officers, but was more reflective of overall staffing. Indeed, one respondent noted that they had become weary with the additional paperwork that was required with DART, and another recommended streamlining the paperwork. One DART officer wanted to know how well the initiative was working and looked forward to seeing statistical analysis of impact and automation of the initiative.

## **Integration and Sustainability**

In October 2018, CVPD began implementation of a citywide protocol for responding to DV-verbal only, non-crime calls and DV crimes. This effort extended the DART project tested with SPI funding in only one geographic area of the city. The new protocol is simply called CVPD's Domestic Violence Protocol and is not considered a special study or temporary experiment but the department's current approach to DV calls and crimes. The approach encompasses the police response to both DV calls and DV crimes.

### **DV-verbal only non-crime calls.**

All persons involved in non-crime DV disturbance calls will receive an educational flier that explains the police take these incidents seriously, and provides advice from police on de-escalating arguments, as well as information on the negative impact even loud yelling by adults can have on children. Distribution of the flier assists CVPD patrol officers in providing a consistent message to all persons involved in non-crime DV disturbances. Officers use a verbal script to reinforce the main points of the flier.

### **DV crimes.**

All suspects and victims in DV crimes will receive a card that explains the CVPD is focusing on DV suspects in partnership with the District Attorney's office and Probation Department; suspects will be closely monitored; and any repeat DV incidents will be a priority. All suspects and victims will also receive follow-up texts. The texts will automatically be sent out through a software program that will be integrated into the current CAD system. On the scene, suspects will be read an 8-point warning and warning cards will be left with the victims. If arrested, DV suspects will receive the 8-point admonishment at jail and be asked to sign it. Based on a point system, DV suspects will be categorized into three levels: high likelihood of

reoffending; likely to reoffend; or unlikely to re-offend. The Family Protection Unit (FPU) supervisor will review a list of offenders at the two higher levels on a weekly basis and assign approximately 10 follow-up contacts per month at either an offender's home or place of employment. FPU detectives will conduct follow-up contacts on suspects who were not arrested, and patrol officers will conduct follow-up contacts with suspects who were arrested. Victims will be evaluated for additional assistance by a special multi-disciplinary team.

Additional organization changes have developed as a result of the SPI project. FPU, the DV investigations unit, is now responsible for coordinating a consistent department-wide response to DV incidents. Prior to the SPI project, there was no centralized position or unit that bridged the efforts by the patrol and investigative divisions to respond to DV incidents and focus on offenders and victims at high risk of being involved in repeat DV crimes.

CVPD is in the process of developing a customized, automated risk assessment tool that will be used to help identify the DV suspects who are most likely to reoffend. This tool may change the way the organization responds to DV suspects. Prior to the SPI project, DV suspects did not receive differential responses according to evidence-based factors regarding the suspects' criminal histories and other predictive factors.

CVPD hopes to sustain a number of outcomes from the SPI project, including a reduced number of DV crimes. There are additional outcomes that CVPD hopes to achieve, including a reduced number of DV verbal-only non-crime calls; and reduced response time in aggregate due to less time spent handling DV crimes. These outcomes can be sustained through training and monitoring.

- All patrol personnel received roll call training on the new DV protocol from representatives of the Family Protection Unit.
- A written policy on CVPD's domestic violence protocol is being developed.

- CVPD is contracting with a software company for service that will enable CVPD to send automated text messages to follow up with DV suspects and victims.
- Dashboards and reports are being developed to track key performance measures.

During the course of the SPI project, CVPD has learned several important lessons that may have implications for other departments undertaking a similar initiative.

**Departments need DV specific call codes.**

Law enforcement agencies need intimate partner-specific call codes –codes appended by “IP” or “DV” – to help accurately count these types of incidents. Such call codes enable police to distinguish this important subset of calls from other family-related incidents, such as disturbances between siblings or cousins. Capturing DV- related calls for service will also help agencies identify crimes that are DV-related, but not usually recorded as such – for example, DV-related vandalism, trespassing, burglary, theft, and robbery incidents, among others.

**Person-specific call records can help identify repeat people.**

Many law enforcement agencies mandate written reports for all DV calls, including those that are verbal disputes with no evidence of a crime. If an agency does not require these reports for DV-verbal only calls, the agency’s CAD system should be used to capture unique identifiers for subjects, including name and date of birth. Capturing person-specific information will assist agencies in accurately identifying people who are involved in repeat IP-DV calls that do not occur at a unique residential address. This is an important task and requires some effort. The cleaner the name data in call or crime records, the more accurately repeat people will be identified. CVPD utilized a free automated Access-based name cleaning program developed to identify repeat people.<sup>31</sup> However, if automated name cleaning is not possible, raw data can and

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<sup>31</sup> The software was developed by Michael Zidar, a former crime analyst with Paducah (KY) Police Department. According to Zidar, most types of raw data can be put through a similar cleaning process. For additional information

should be used to identify repeat people.

If name-based data is not available, land use data and good residential unit number record-keeping can help identify repeat DV addresses. If an agency is able to use GIS to link land use data to calls for service addresses, the agency may be able to identify repeat non-crime DV calls to “unique” residential addresses – i.e., detached single family homes, apartments with unique unit numbers, and in some cases, condominiums with unique addresses for each unit (or unique unit numbers).

**Developing automated risk assessment tools is key.**

Automated risk assessment tools can help police departments identify people at highest risk of committing repeat offenses, so that agencies can focus limited resources on these individuals. Existing police crime and arrest data in RMS can be used to sort offenders into different risk-of-repeat categories, such as high, medium, and low.

Empirical assessment tools are coming into more widespread use to tally counts of prior DV crimes, prior drug and alcohol crimes, prior violent crimes in addition to DV, prior weapons offenses, etc. to forecast the likelihood of an offender committing future (repeat) DV crimes. With programming, prior RMS data for any offender can be extracted, tallied and scored, based on either a customized, automated risk assessment tool developed from the police department’s own data, or on existing, more general, validated instruments.

**Dashboards can help agencies track repeat unique residential addresses.**

To help identify people repeatedly involved in domestic violence incidents, either as suspects, victims, or subjects in DV-verbal only calls, agencies should develop standard reports and dashboards that are available to department personnel for this purpose. Dashboards and

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about this program, contact Zidar at [mikezidar@gmail.com](mailto:mikezidar@gmail.com).

reports should:

- List all unique residential addresses with either two or more DV CFS during the past 30 days or three or more CFS during the past 90 days, for immediate follow up. In Chula Vista, in December 2017, there were approximately 16 unique residential addresses with 2 or more DV CFS that month, spread over 10 beats. One address had 10 DV CFS in just that one month; one had 8; one had 4; and the rest had 2.
- List unique residential addresses with four or more DV calls for service during the previous 12 months, in descending order, from most to least, broken out by beat or some other reasonably-sized geographic area. For example, in Chula Vista, in 2017, there were approximately 70 unique residential addresses with four or more CFS spread over 10 total beats. Some beats had only a handful of addresses with four or more DV CFS over the full year; one beat had 15 addresses. This type of dashboard should keep a tally of the number of unique residential addresses with 4 or more CFS for prior years to track changes over time. After a program has been in place for some time, this list would only need to identify any addresses with four or more DV CFS not on the 30- or 90-day lists.
- Track follow ups at problem addresses. If an agency is implementing specific follow-up procedures with subjects, suspects and victims at specific addresses, dashboard and reports should indicate whether and when the follow-ups were conducted, and by whom, to avoid duplication of efforts and identify addresses that still need assistance.
- Track the unique residential addresses with repeat CFS *after* follow ups have been conducted. These addresses may benefit from customized problem solving or more intensified efforts.
- Facilitate micro-experiments. Different micro experiments can be tested. For example, follow-up texts can be sent to all victims and offenders involved DV crimes in one geographic area for 3 months to see what percent of victims and offenders are subsequently involved in repeat DV crimes during the next 3 months. Another example would be to conduct unannounced, in person 3-day follow-ups with all victims and offenders involved in DV crimes in a comparable area during the same 3-month period to see what percent of victims and offenders are subsequently involved in repeat DV crimes during the next three months. If texts alone are not as effective as in-person follow ups, it might be worth following up in person only with offenders deemed mostly likely to repeat according to an automated risk assessment tool. Dashboards and reports that track small experiments can enable a department to constantly innovate and identify the most effective, and least resource-intensive interventions.



## Summary and Conclusions

While the DART project had a modest effect on the volume of DV-verbal non-crime calls in Chula Vista, it was successful in reducing DV crime. The more important reduction in DV crime suggests a reduction in the harm associated with calls. After all, it is better to call police for a verbal fight than a physical fight. The stability of DV calls levels also provides evidence that the initiative did not suppress DV calls. That interpretation is also supported by evidence from the two additional sources – text responses from IP-DV call subjects and surveys of IP-DV victims.

These proxy sources confirm that interpretation suggested by DV calls. Some observers questioned if the drop in DV crimes could be attributed to changes in reporting practices of Hispanic victims due to a focus on illegal immigration in 2017; it seemed reasonable that reporting of DV by Hispanic victims might have been suppressed due to fears of deportation. The quasi-experimental research design provides solid evidence that reporting of DV by Hispanic victims was not suppressed. In fact, the proportion of Hispanics victims in DV crimes has remained constant over time (see Table 19).

Given the low sworn staffing in Chula Vista – about 0.87 officers per 1,000 citizens – there were many initial concerns about the additional costs of carrying out the DART effort and some resistance to taking on anything new.

As early as 1992, Sherman (1992) said police could and *should* try different strategies to reduce repeat incidents among chronically violent couples, and suggested this approach would result in a net savings of police resources. “The potential relief of calls from chronic couple[s] should justify the investment of an officer’s time in this important venture” (p. 258).

Among the methods suggested by Sherman, patrol officers could “sternly ‘read the riot

act” (p. 258) to chronic couples. Police could also collaborate with prosecutors to crack down on persistent offenders. Further, officers responding to domestic disturbances with no evidence of a crime could formally warn an offender – “putting him on notice that he must refrain from violating the law” and this information could be provided “to the victim as an empowering device” (p. 263).

In their landmark study in Minneapolis on DV crime<sup>32</sup>, Sherman and Berk (1982) tested the impact of arrest relative to two other approaches – advising or separating combatants. But the authors explained that the concept of “advice” was rather loosely defined – and consisted of “some form of advice which could include mediation” (p. 269). Sherman and Berk (1982) acknowledged that some officers may have been less skilled in “mediation techniques” (p. 269) and conclude that “good mediation, given consistently, [might have] fare[d] better than arrest.”

While CVPD did not undertake the random assignment research design favored by Sherman, the criminologist pointed out that any large police department *could* assign at least one part-time officer “to identify chronic couples, meet with them, and attempt to find workable solutions” to reduce DV (p. 258). CVPD has done just that – developing a consistent script for “advising” disputants, systematically warning offenders and including victims in the loop to increase accountability, and customizing approaches for the few chronic DV couples.

Nearly 25 years later, the DART initiative in Chula Vista mirrors Sherman’s cogent advice and a rigorous research design and multi-method impact analysis provides scientifically-rigorous evidence that DV – often considered an intractable crime – can be reduced while using few police resources.

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<sup>32</sup> The experiment in Minneapolis included only misdemeanor assaults when both parties were present when the police arrived. Among the 205 suspects in the experiment, only 2% were identified as wives or girlfriends.

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## Tables and Figures

Table 1: Change in Violent Crime and Intimate Partner Crime Rates, U.S., 1994 v. 2016

<b>Victimization Rate</b> <sup>33</sup>	<b>1994</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>Change</b>
Domestic Violence - Intimate Partner	9.8	2.2	-77.6%
Total Violent Crime	79.8	21.1	-73.6%

Table 2: Violent Crime and Intimate Partner Violent Crimes Rates, U.S., Selected Years

<b>Year</b>	<b>IP-DV</b>	<b>Total Violent Crime</b>	<b>Percent IP-DV</b>
1994	9.8	79.8	12.3%
2000	5.1	35.0	14.6%
2005	3.8	31.3	12.1%
2010	3.6	20.8	17.3%
2012	3.2	26.1	12.3%
2016	2.2	21.1	10.4%
2003-2012			14.6%

<sup>33</sup> Victimization rates are reported per 1,000 persons age 12 or older.

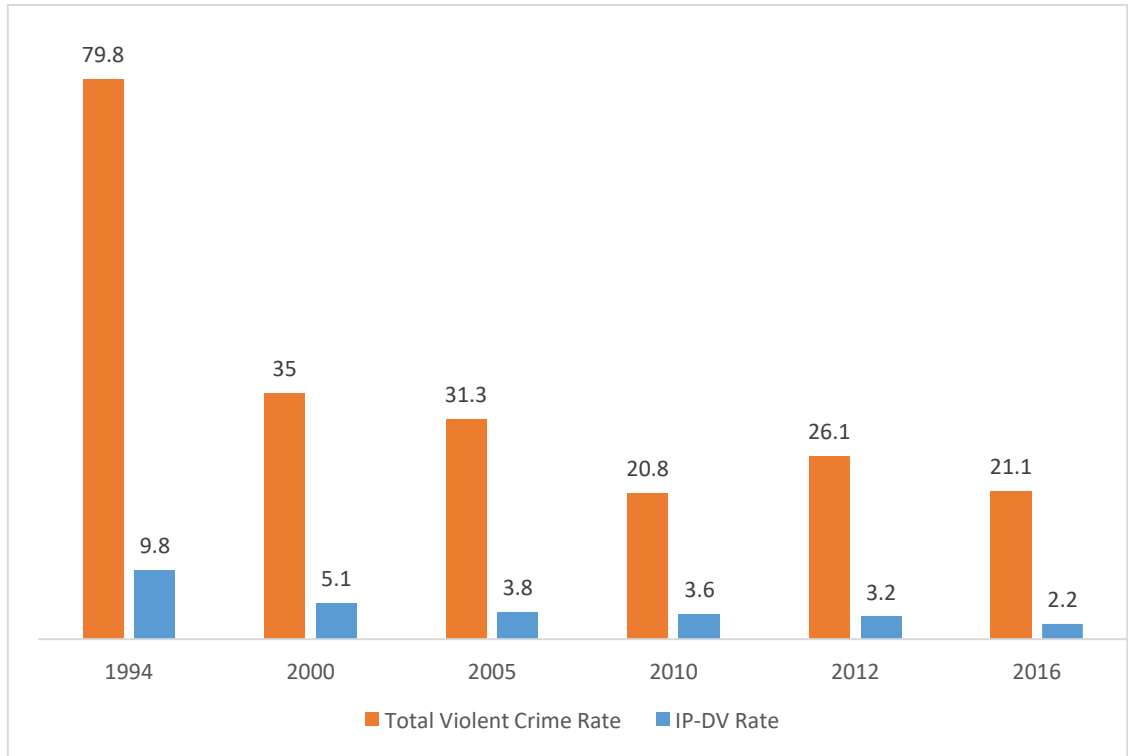


Figure 1: Intimate partner DV rate and all violent crime rates, U.S., selected years

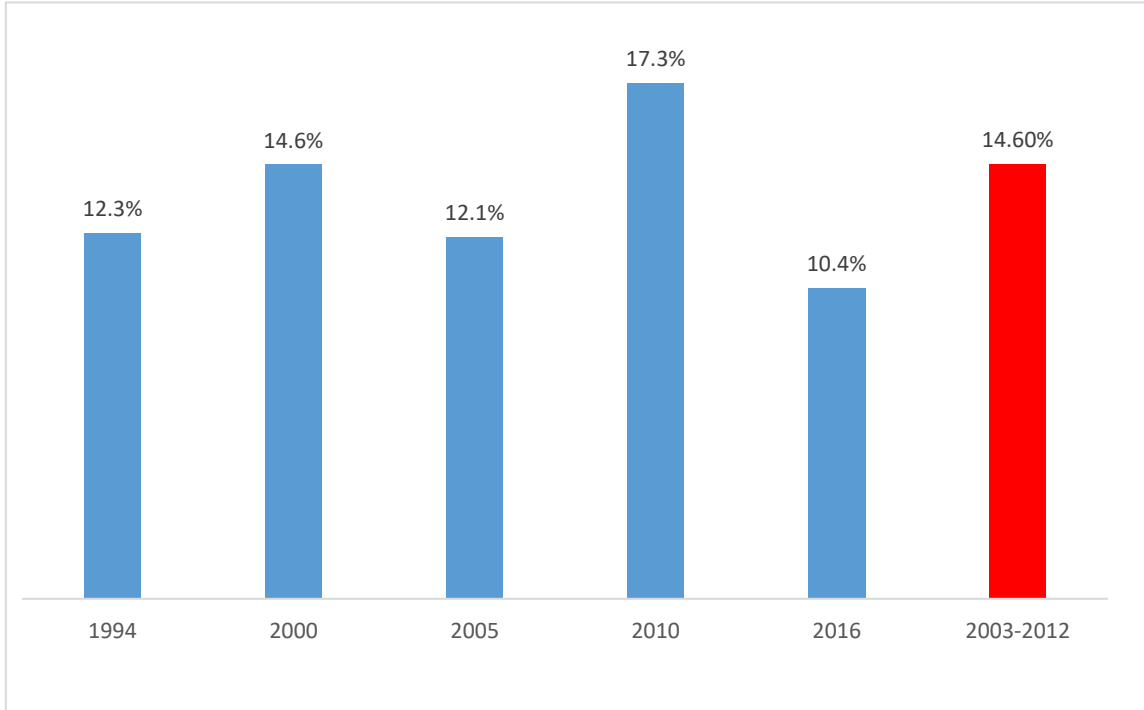


Figure 2: Intimate partner violence as percent of all violent crime, U.S., selected years

Table 3: U.S. Violent Crime Rate per 100,000, UCR, 1994-2017

<b>Year</b>	<b>Violent Crime Rate per 100,000</b>
1994	713.6
1995	684.5
1996	636.6
1997	611.0
1998	567.6
1999	523.0
2000	506.5
2001	504.5
2002	494.4
2003	475.8
2004	463.2
2005	469.0
2006	479.3
2007	471.8
2008	458.6
2009	431.9
2010	404.5
2011	387.1
2012	387.8
2013	369.1
2014	361.6
2015	373.7
2016	386.3
2017	382.9



Table 4: Chula Vista Demographic Composition, Population 270,471<sup>34</sup>

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Hispanic	58.6%
Non-Hispanic white	18.7%
Asian	15.2%
Black/African-American	4.7%
Other/includes two or more races	2.8%
	100.00%

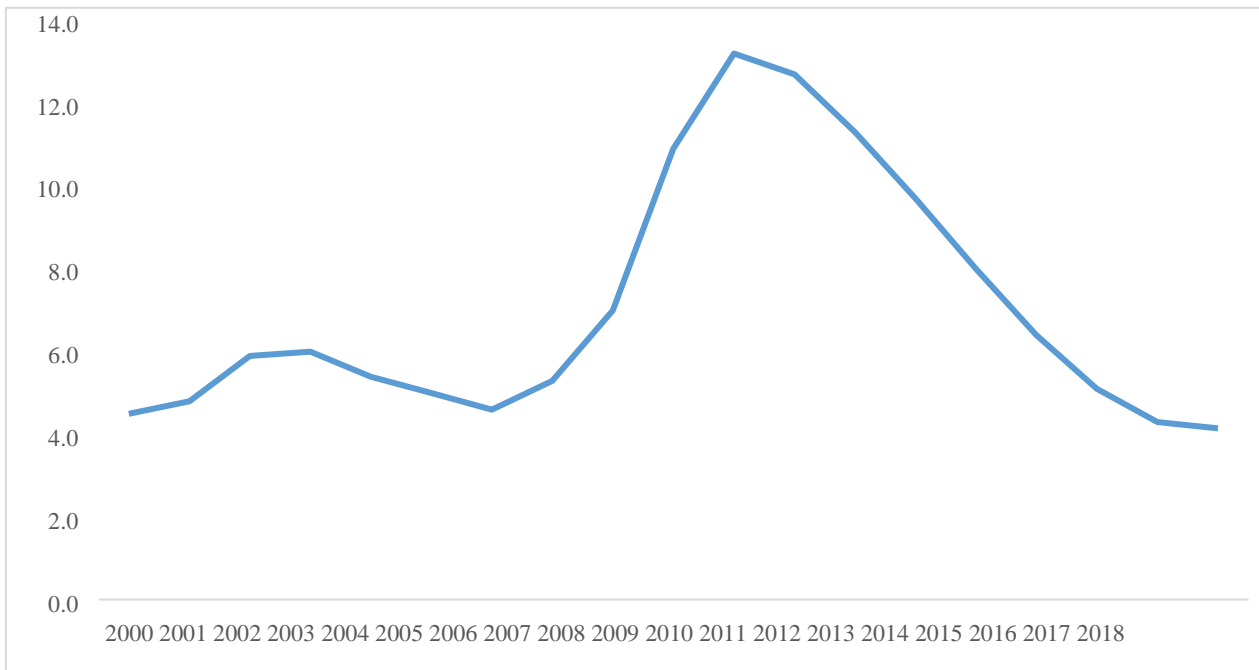
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<sup>34</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, Quick Facts, estimates (July, 2017)

Table 5: Chula Vista Demographic, Housing and Economic Indicators, 2017<sup>35</sup>

	Chula Vista	San Diego	California	U.S.
Foreign-born	31.0%	26.5%	27.0%	13.2%
Language other than English at home	58.3%	40.8%	44.0%	21.1%
Population increase, 2010-2017	10.9%	9.0%	6.1%	5.5%
Owner-occupied housing unit rate	58.1%	46.5%	54.1%	63.6%
Live in same house as one year ago	89%	82.6%	85.7%	85.2%
Persons per household	3.32	2.73	2.95	2.64
Percent persons under 18	26.1%	20.7%	22.9%	22.9%
High school graduates, citizens 18 years or older	80.8%	87.5%	82.1%	87.0%
Persons in poverty	12.2%	15.0%	13.3%	12.3%

Figure 3: Chula Vista Unemployment Rate, 2000-2018<sup>36</sup>



<sup>35</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Quick Facts, estimates (July, 2017)

<sup>36</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics

Table 6: CVPD Sworn Officers, 2000-2017

Year	Sworn Officers
2000	207
2001	210
2002	226
2003	221
2004	215
2005	221
2006	241
2007	255
2008	245
2009	232
2010	230
2011	219
2012	201
2013	202
2014	212
2015	217
2016	225
2017	232 <sup>37</sup>

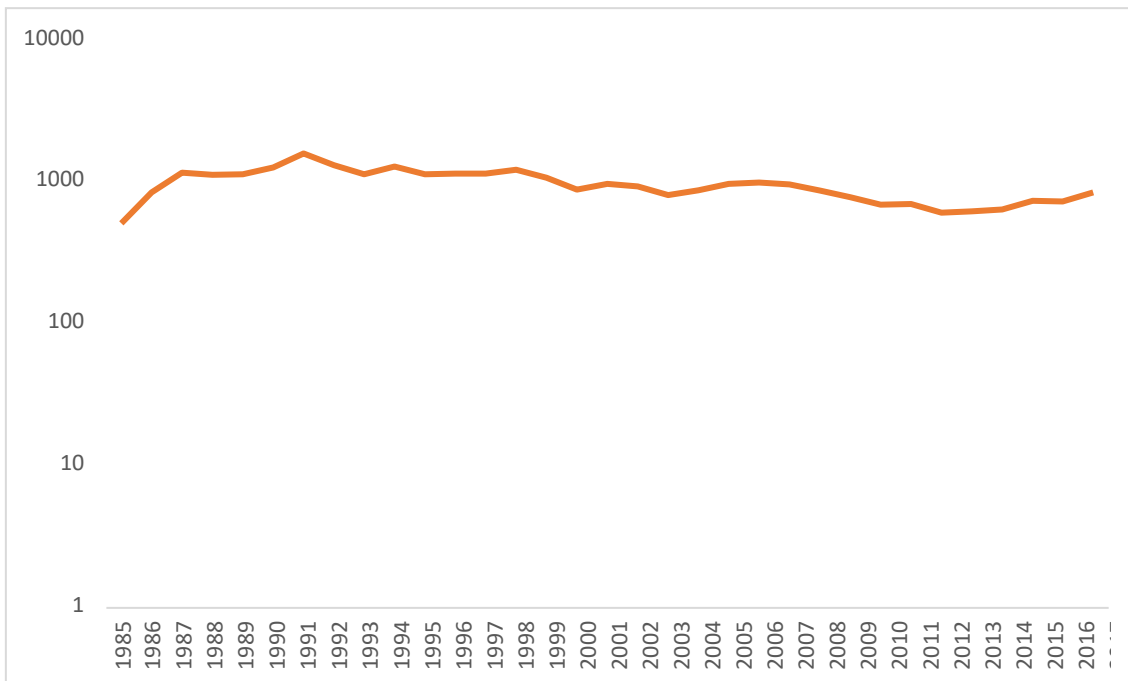


Figure 4: Chula Vista Violent Crime, 1985-2017<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> 2000-2016 figures are from Crime in the United States; 2018, CVPD website

<sup>38</sup> FBI, Crime in the United States, 1985-2016

Figure 5: Chula Vista Violent Crime Rate, Violent Crimes per 100,000 1985-2017<sup>39</sup>

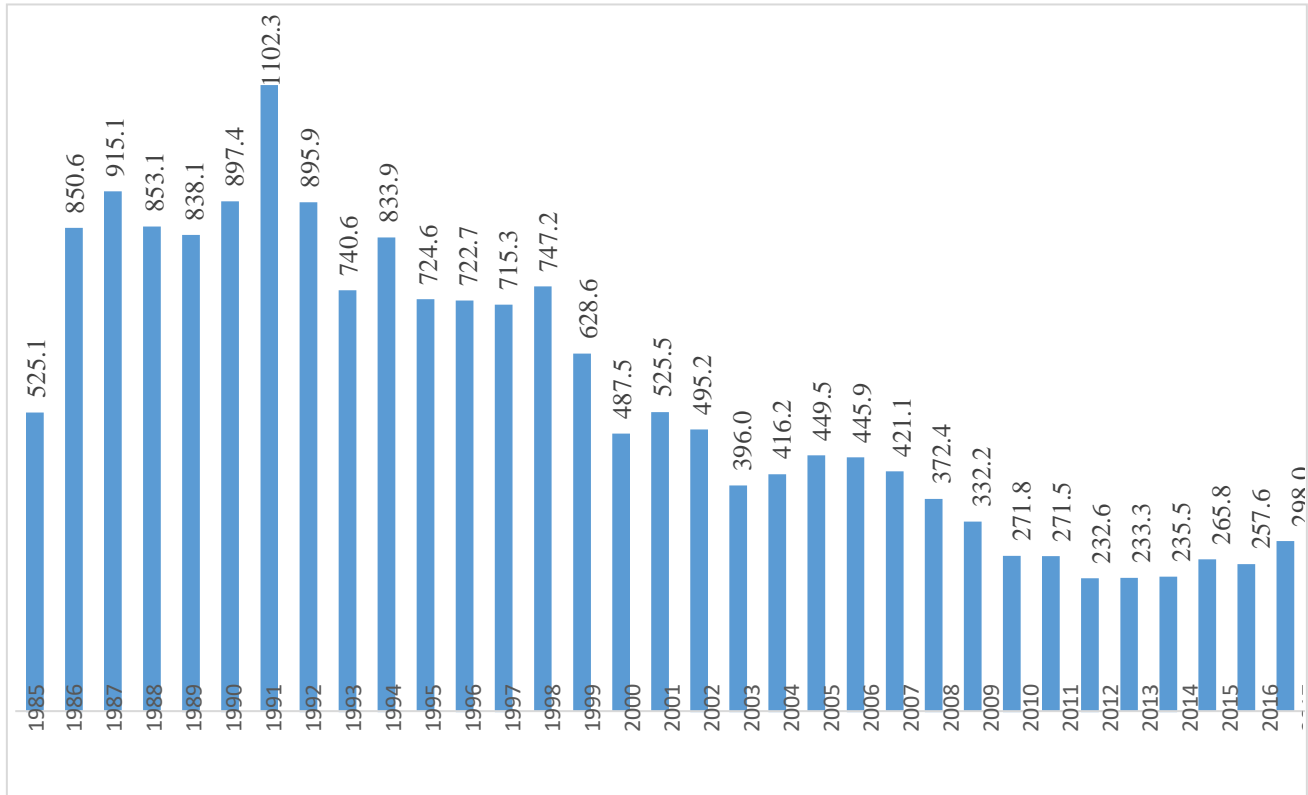


Table 7: Chula Vista Violent Crime Rate, 2016 v. similarly-sized California cities

City	Population	Violent crimes	VC Rate 2016
Chula Vista	270,175	696	257.6
Irvine	266,663	152	57.0
Fremont	235,881	420	178.1
Santa Clarita	219,611	331	150.7
San Bernardino	217,303	2,878	1324.4
Modesto	212,880	2,104	988.4
Fontana	209,531	870	415.2
Oxnard	209,048	948	453.5
Moreno Valley	206,224	863	418.5
Huntington Beach	204,071	362	177.4
Glendale	202,903	227	111.9

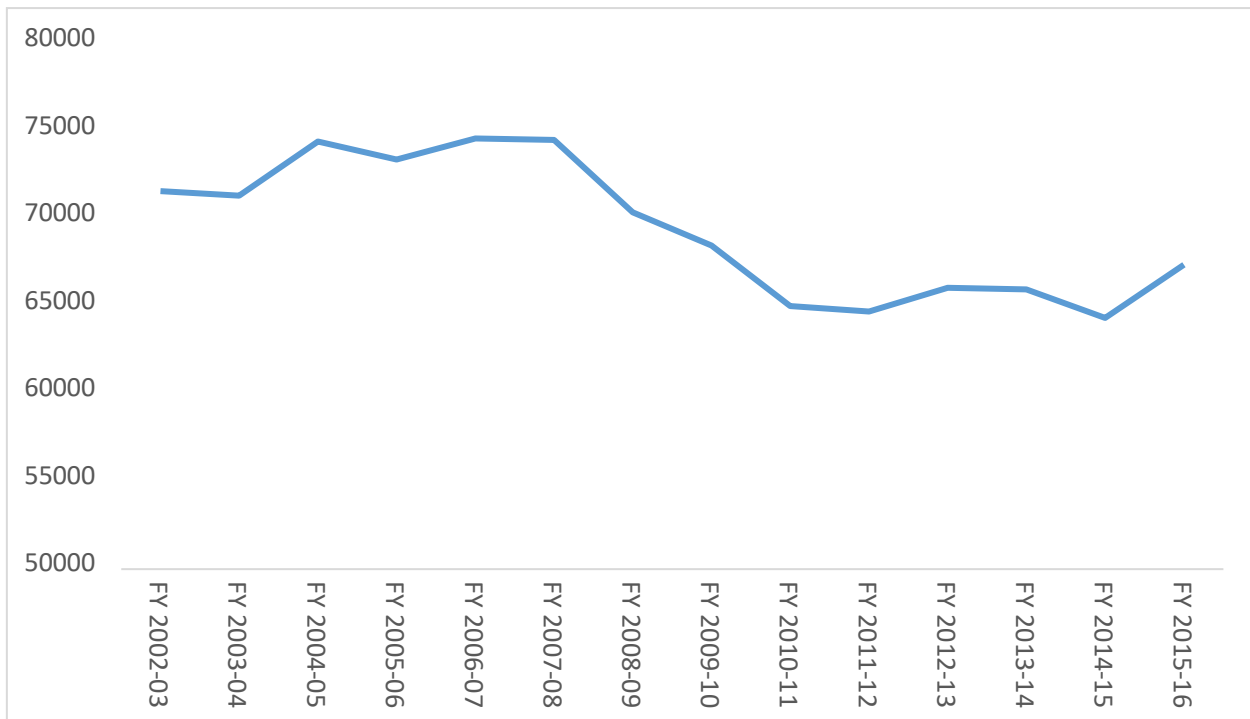
<sup>39</sup> FBI, Crime in the United States, 1985-2016  
<sup>37</sup> 2000-2016 figures are from Crime in the United States; 2018, CVPD website

<sup>38</sup> FBI, Crime in the United States, 1985-2016

Figure 6: Chula Vista Violent Crime Rate v. other cities in San Diego County, 2017<sup>40</sup>



Figure 7: CVPD Calls-for-Service (CFS) by Fiscal Year, 2003-2016<sup>41</sup>



<sup>40</sup> Figure from SANDAG, 2018

<sup>41</sup> City of Chula Vista, Growth Management Oversight Commission (2018)

Figure 8: CVPD DV CFS, 2000-2014

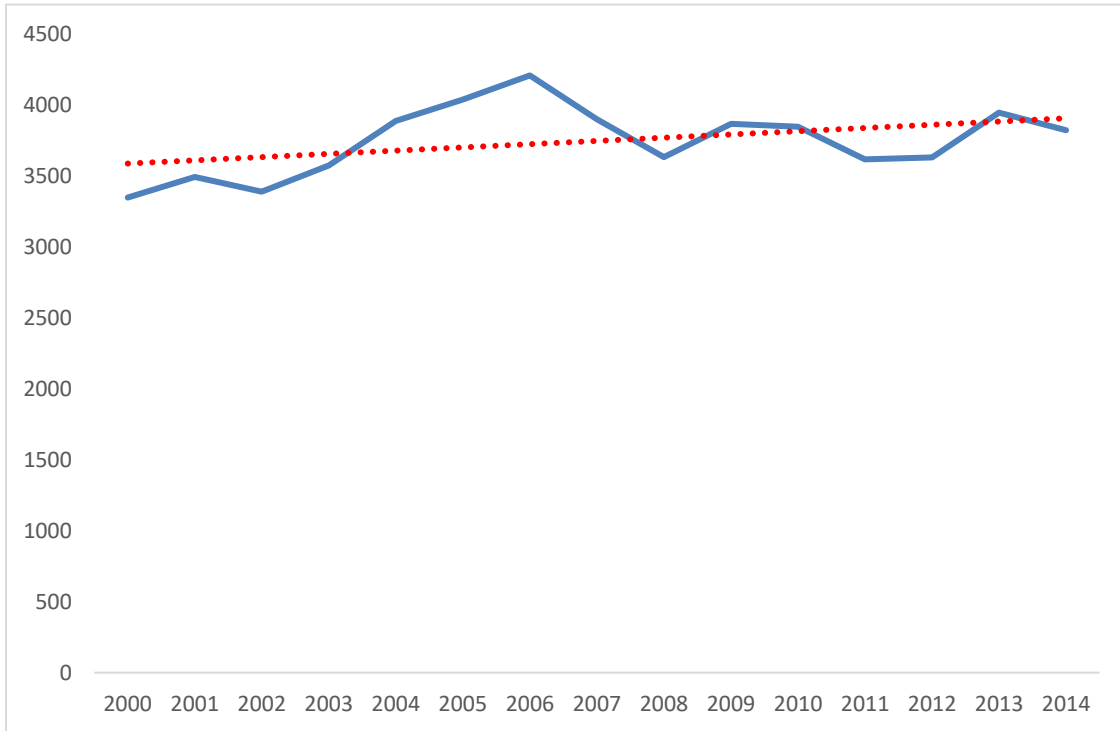


Table 8: DV Calls to DV Crimes Ratio, 2012-2014

	<b>DV Calls</b>	<b>DV Crimes</b>	<b>Percent</b>
2012	3,967	1,033	26.0%
2013	4,150	1,074	25.9%
2014	3,929	997	25.4%
2012-2014	12,046	3,104	25.8%

Figure 9: Chula Vista DV Calls – Case flow from call to crime adjudication

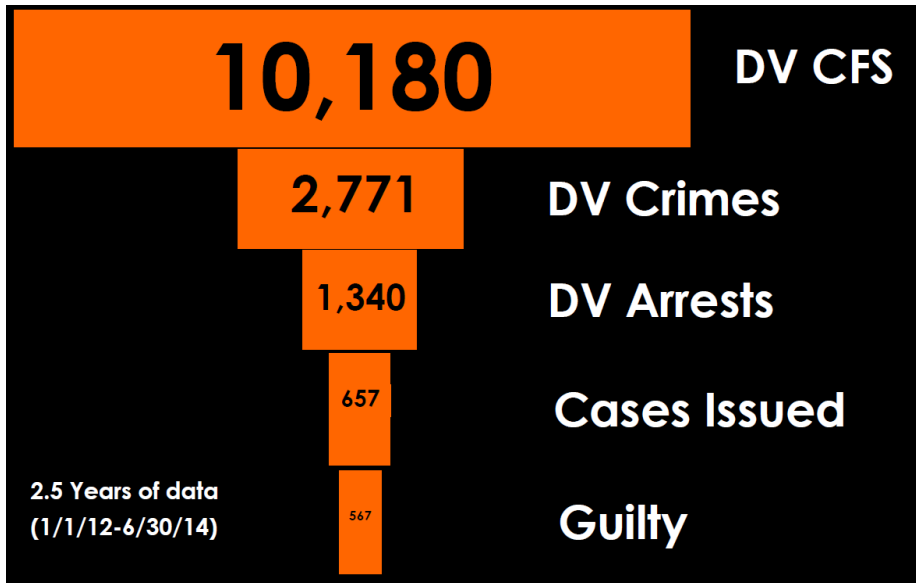
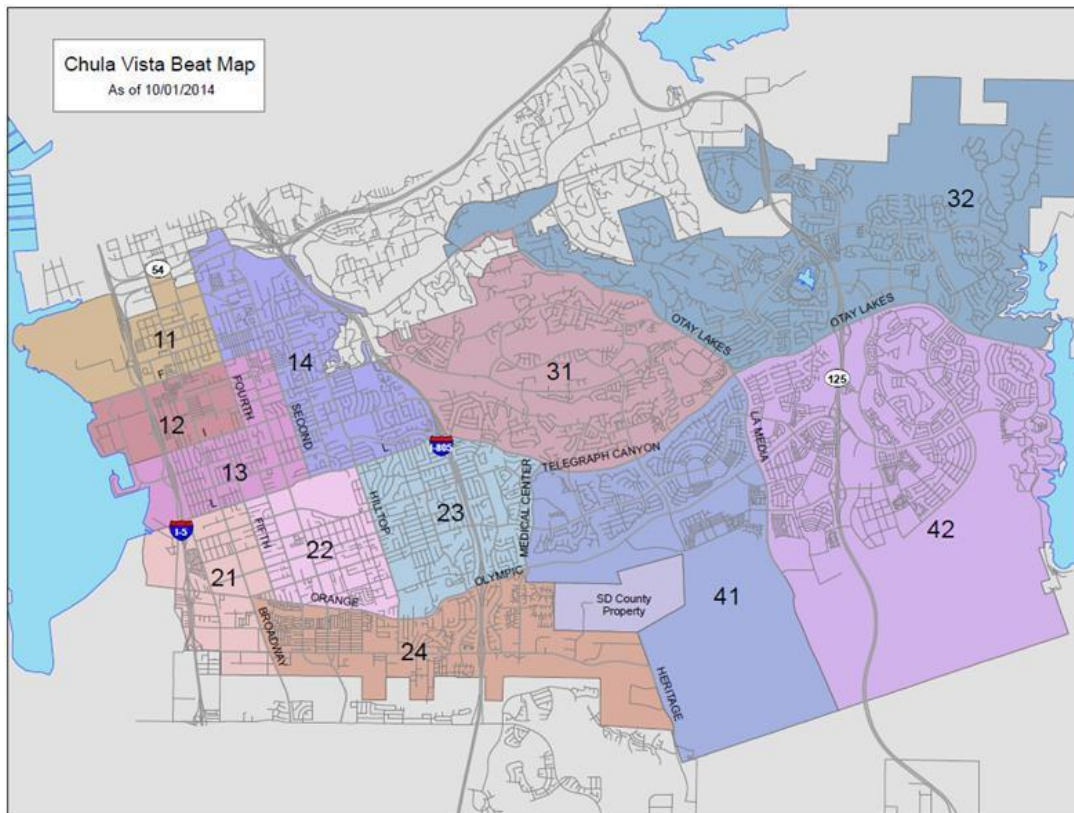


Figure 10: CVPD Beats, 2014



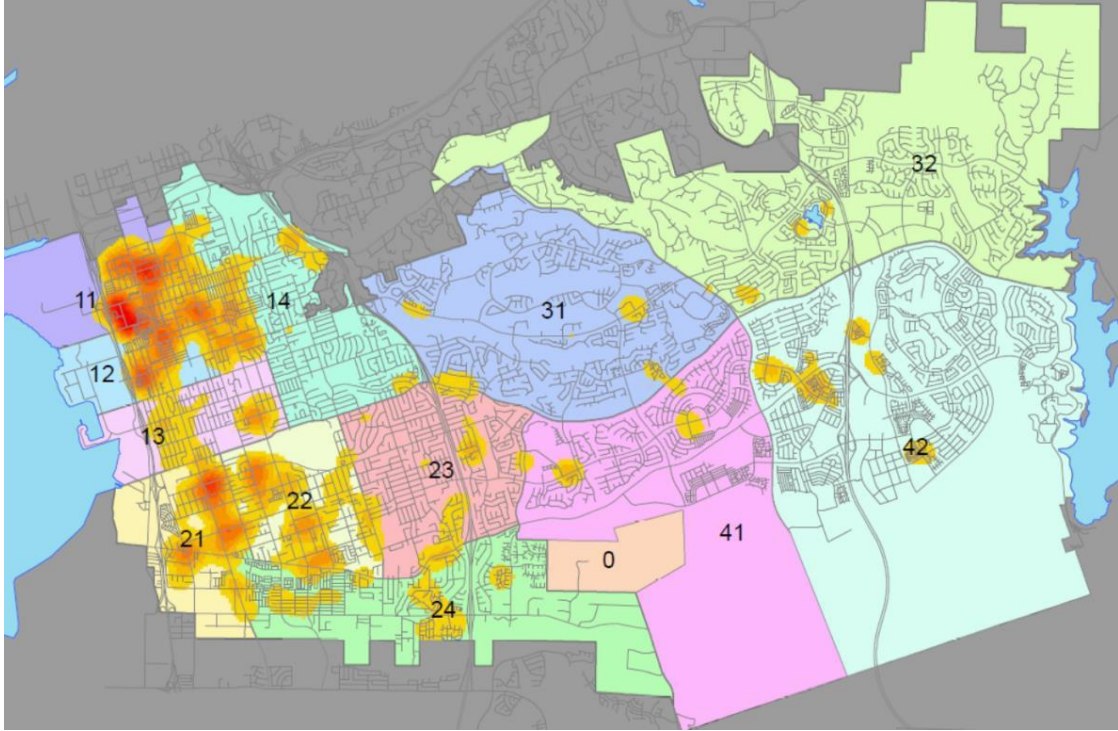


Figure 11: Geographic distribution of domestic violence in Chula Vista

Table 9: Unique residential addresses, repeat percent by number of prior DV calls

DV calls to address	% that repeat
1	26%
2	41%
3	51%
4	58%
5	50%
6	62%



Table 10: Demographic composition of DV crimes (2017)

	City demographic composition	Victims	Suspects
Hispanic	59%	62%	62%
White	19%	20%	20%
Asian	15%	4%	4%
African-American	5%	11%	16%
Other	3%	3%	3%

Figure 12: Sector 1 - Experimental sector (red outline) and Sector 2 Comparison (black outline)

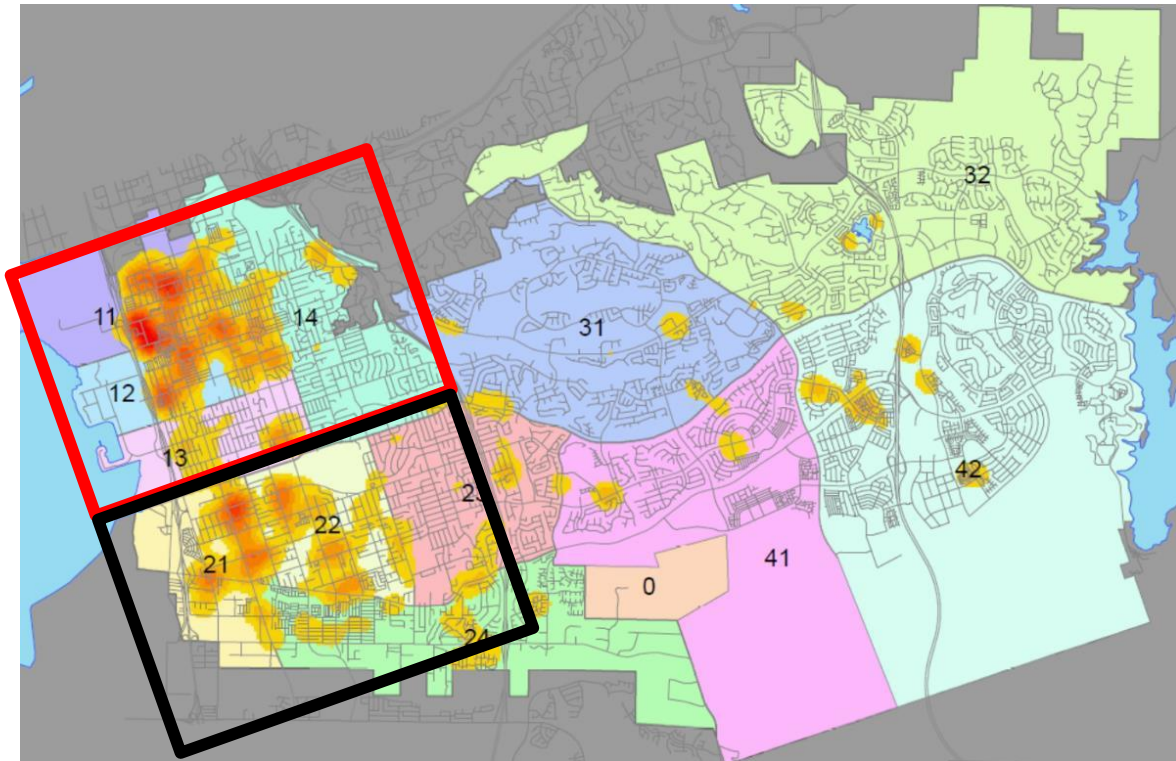


Table 11: Annual DV calls by sector, 2000-2014

Year	Sector 1 DV CFS	Sector 2 DV CFS
2000	1,497	1,468
2001	1,451	1,553
2002	1,498	1,550
2003	1,578	1,603
2004	1,687	1,678
2005	1,757	1,756
2006	1,631	1,703
2007	1,468	1,523
2008	1,526	1,386
2009	1,523	1,579
2010	1,411	1,535
2011	1,508	1,485
2012	1,576	1,460
2013	1,574	1,606
2014	1,539	1,402
Average	1,548.27	1,552.47

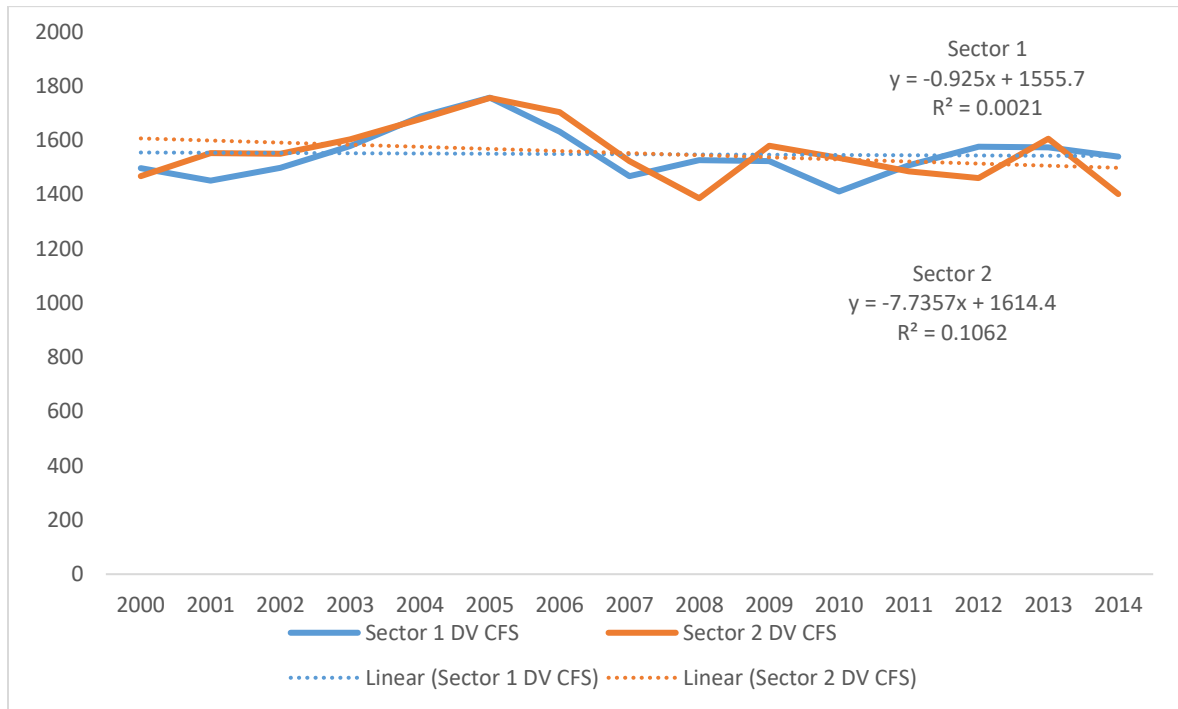


Figure 13: Annual DV calls by sector, 2000-2014

Figure 14: Annual DV crimes by sector, 2000-2014<sup>42</sup>

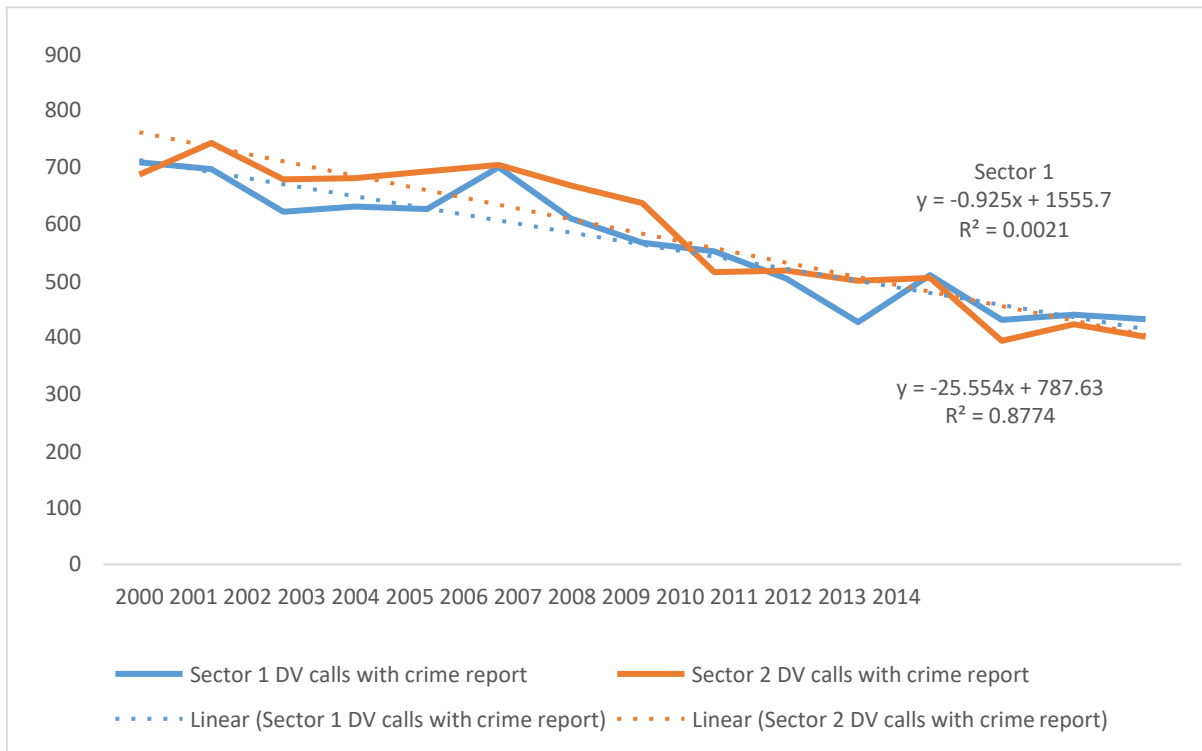
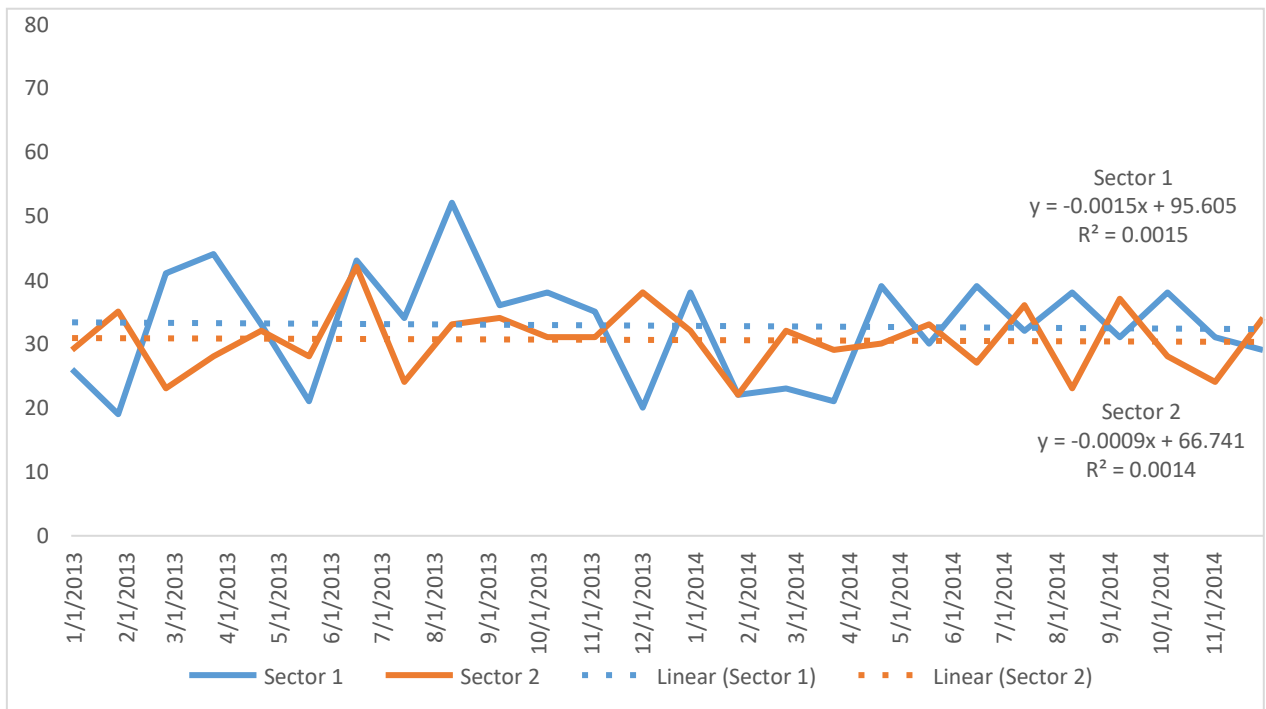


Figure 15: DV crimes by sector, Monthly, 1/1/13 - 12/31/14



<sup>42</sup> Figure includes crime and case reports.

Figure 16: DART Handout at non-crime DV calls

# Domestic Disturbances & Loud Arguments

The police were called because of a domestic disturbance. Everyone has disagreements, but not ones so intense that the police are called for help. What happened today is not okay.

The Chula Vista Police Department is taking new actions when responding to domestic violence. We will be checking in with you both in the future to make sure everyone is okay. If you ever need immediate help, CALL 911. The safety and well-being of everyone involved is our priority.

***Police take this seriously.  
So should you.***



## Advice from Police:

***Take a Time Out:*** If you are upset, step away from the situation and take as much time as you need. Leave the room or home and allow your partner to do the same. Don't continue a heated conversation!

***Avoid Alcohol and Drugs:*** Avoid arguments when either of you have been drinking or are under the influence of drugs. Things can quickly get out of hand!

### Impact of Domestic Abuse on Children

Just hearing adults yelling is very scary for children of all ages. Babies and young children are affected the most. The fear caused by these arguments is bad for the development of their brains.

For more information, please watch "First Impressions: Exposure to Violence and a Child's Developing Brain."



**English:**  
[www.youtube.com/  
watch?v=brVOYtNMmKk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=brVOYtNMmKk)



**Español:**  
[www.youtube.com/  
watch?v=IC23ysdsh4E#t=82](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IC23ysdsh4E#t=82)

Police Department  
315 Fourth Avenue  
Chula Vista, CA 91910  
[www.chulavistapd.org](http://www.chulavistapd.org)



Need immediate help?  
**Call 911**


Figure 17: Text message to non-crime DV call subjects

**From: Chula Vista Police  
Subj: Recent Domestic  
Disturbance**

**Hi Nanci. We wanted to check in and make sure you are okay. Please let us know how things are going by clicking here: [www.followup.com](http://www.followup.com). (To speak with an officer call 691-5151. If you are in danger, call 911 immediately.) Para español mande un texto con "S".**

Figure 18: Warning handout administered to DV offenders

# WARNING to Domestic Violence Offenders



1. This is your official notice that we are taking a new approach to domestic violence offenders.
2. The Chula Vista Police Department, District Attorney's Office, and Probation Department have created a special task force to reduce domestic violence. Your specific case will be handled by the Task Force.
3. The Task Force's mission is to prevent future domestic violence incidents by focusing completely on offenders like you.
4. Domestic violence is wrong and will not be tolerated.
5. Domestic violence is a crime against the family and community. Children and other family members suffer greatly from actions like yours.
6. If you do not stop abusing your partner, you will receive a great deal of attention from the Domestic Violence Task Force. The only way you can avoid this attention is to stop abusing your partner from today forward. This means no more physical attacks of any kind, including pushing/shoving, and no more verbal abuse/domestic disputes.
7. Any future incident involving you will be a priority for us. If you flee the scene of an incident, we will make every effort to track you down. There are 30 police officers on the Task Force, and we will all be working together to focus on offenders who continue to commit acts of domestic violence.
8. We will examine your record to see if you have committed other crimes in the past. We will see what else you can be prosecuted for. If possible, we will reinvestigate old cases that were dismissed.
9. You are now subject to future unannounced police visits.
10. This new approach is being driven by the POLICE, not the victim.
11. You have been admonished and warned.

---

## ARRESTEE / SUSPECT

Sign to acknowledge warning: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

---

### WARNING SUSPECT ADVISEMENT [POLICE OFFICER ONLY]


On \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_, I spoke with \_\_\_\_\_ in this case about our Offender Focused Domestic Violence Initiative. I advised the suspect that I was there to only talk about the initiative, not the suspect's case. The suspect was given a copy of this warning.

The officer should explain to the suspect this is not a Miranda rights admonishment.

Officer ID#: \_\_\_\_\_ Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Police Department  
315 Fourth Avenue  
Chula Vista, CA 91910  
www.chulavistapd.org



Need immediate help?  
Call 911

Figure 19: Stop-by card left by officers on DV follow-up



**We stopped by...**  
*Pasamos a verlo...*

**We stopped by  
to check on your safety.**

*Chula Vista Police Officers \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_ were here to check on  
you at \_\_\_\_\_ AM / PM on \_\_\_\_\_.*

The Chula Vista Police Department will continue to check on you to make sure you are okay. If you wish to talk to us about a non-emergency, we've included our business cards.

***If you need immediate assistance, call 911.***

**Pasamos a  
ver que se encuentre bien.**

*Oficiales de Policía de Chula Vista  
\_\_\_\_\_ y \_\_\_\_\_  
pasamos a verlo a \_\_\_\_\_ AM / PM el  
\_\_\_\_\_.*

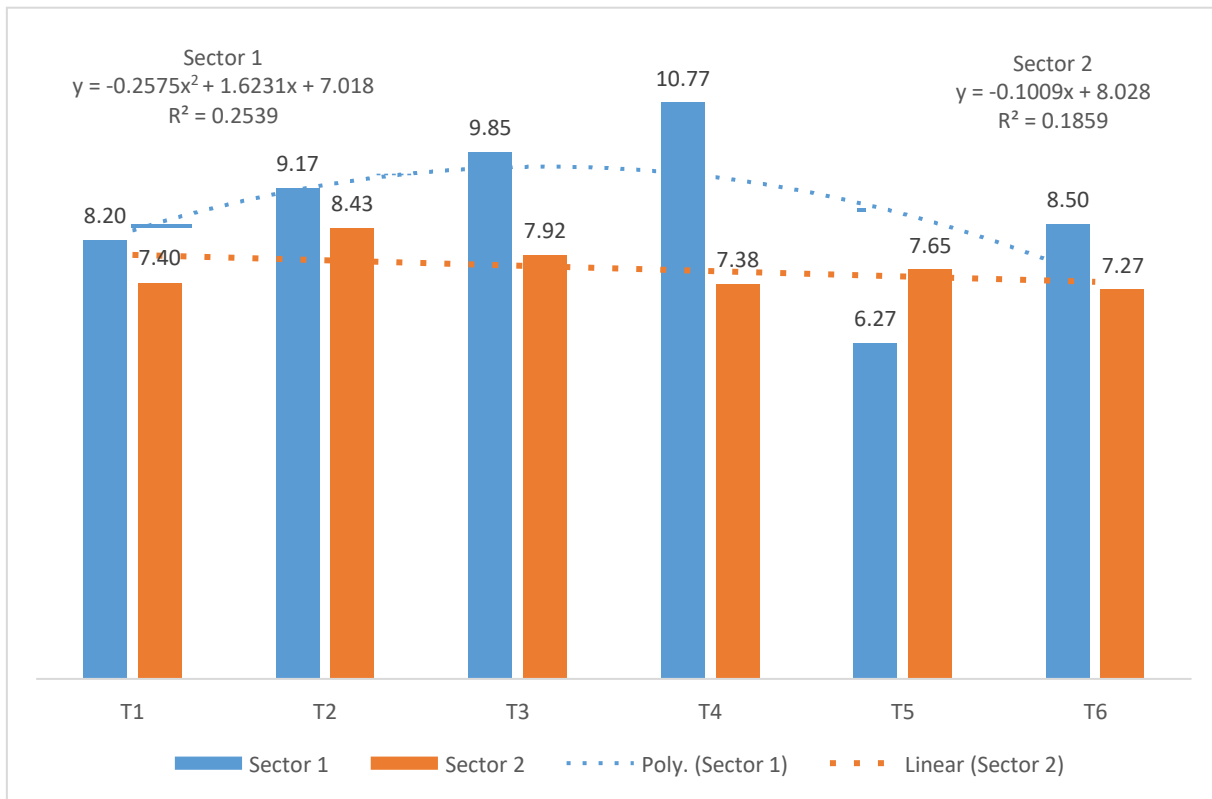
El Departamento de Policía seguirá visitándolo para asegurarnos que se encuentre bien. Si usted desea hablar con nosotros sobre un asunto que no sea de emergencia, le hemos dejado nuestra tarjeta de presentación.

***Si necesita ayuda inmediata, llame al 911.***

Table 12: Mean DV Crimes per Week by Project Phase, Sector 1 v. Sector 2

Time Line	Weeks	Sector 1	Sector 2
T1 Pre-project baseline (1/2/12 - 12/28/14) Weeks 1-156	156	8.20	7.40
T2 BWC, Training and Pilot (12/29/14-8/30/15) Weeks 157-191	35	9.17	8.43
T3 Phased-in Implementation – A (8/31/15 – 2/28/16) Weeks 192-217	26	9.85	7.92
T4 Phased-in Implementation – B (2/29/16 – 8/28/16) Weeks 218-243	26	10.77	7.38
T5 Project in place for full year (8/29/16- 2/26/17) Weeks 244-269 <sup>43</sup>	26	6.27	7.65
T6 Project suspended (2/27/17 – 12/31/17) Weeks 270-313	44	8.5	7.27
Total Weeks	313		

Figure 20: Mean weekly DV crimes by project period, Sector 1 v. Sector 2



<sup>43</sup> This time period includes two months after the project was suspended in patrol 12/31/16; the investigative component did not have a hard stop date but was comprised of one officer's activities, which extended into mid-March.



Table 13: Change in mean weekly DV crimes by Project Period

Period	Sector 1 Mean DV Crimes/Week	Sector 2 Mean DV Crimes/Week
Change from T1 to T4	<b>+31.3%</b> t=-3.844, p=.000	<b>+0%</b> ns
Change from T1 to T5	<b>-23.54%</b> t=2.858, p=.005	<b>+3.38%</b> ns
Change from T5 to T6	<b>+35.57%</b> t=-2.763, p=.008	<b>+4.97%</b> ns
Change from T1 to T6	<b>3.66%</b> ns	<b>-1.76%</b> ns

Independent samples t-test and significance values (ns = no significant difference)

Figure 21: Mean weekly DV crimes, Sector 1 v. Sector 2, T1, T5 and T6

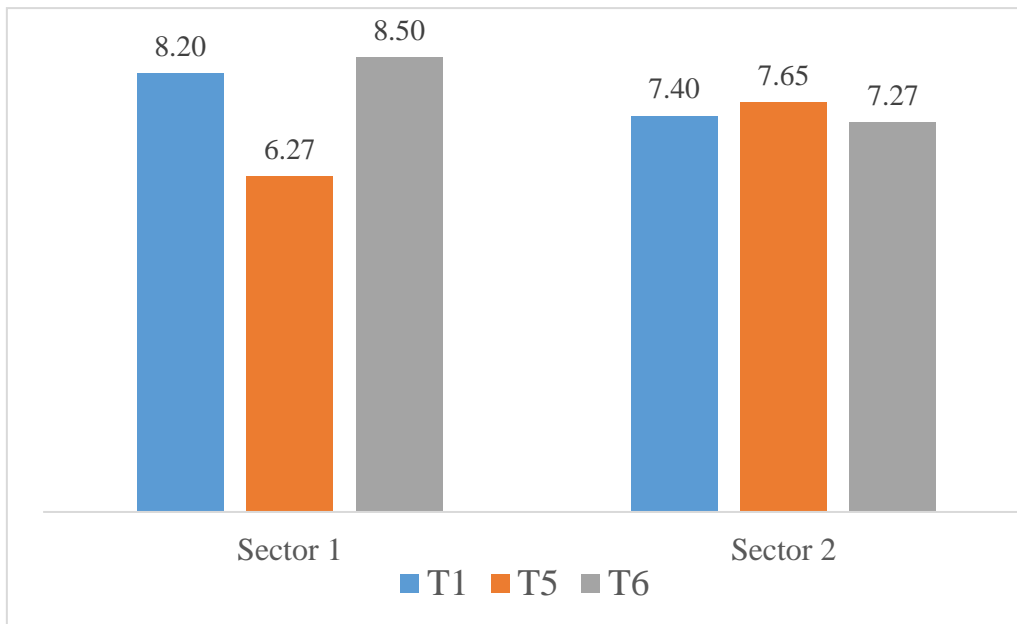
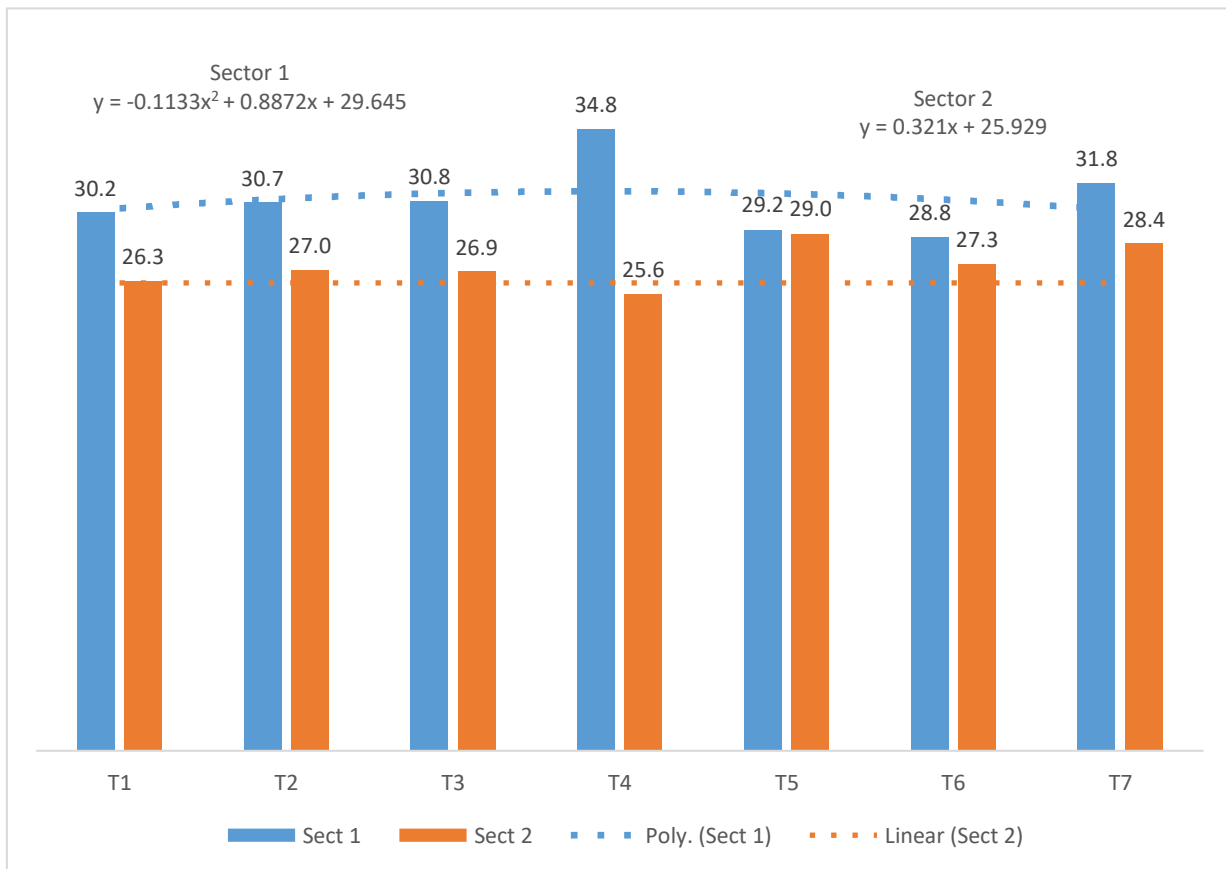


Table 14: Mean DV Calls per Week by Project Phase, Sector 1 v. Sector 2

Time Line	Weeks	Sector 1	Sector 2
T1 Pre-project baseline (1/2/12 - 12/28/14) Weeks 1-156	156	30.2	26.3
T2 BWC, Training and Pilot (12/29/14-8/30/15) Weeks 157-191	35	30.7	27.0
T3 Phased-in Implementation – A (8/31/15 – 2/28/16) Weeks 192-217	26	30.8	26.9
T4 Phased-in Implementation – B (2/29/16 – 8/28/16) Weeks 218-243	26	34.8	25.6
T5 Project in place for full year (8/29/16- 2/26/17) Weeks 244-269 <sup>44</sup>	26	29.2	29.0
T6 Project suspended (2/27/17 – 8/27/17) Weeks 270-295	26	28.8	27.3
T7 Post project period (8/28/17-12/31/17) Weeks 296-313	18	31.8	28.4
Total Weeks	313	31.65	27.46

Figure 22: DV Calls per Week by Project Phase, Sector 1 v. Sector 2



<sup>44</sup> This time period includes two months after the project was suspended in patrol 12/31/16; the investigative component did not have a hard stop date but was comprised of one officer’s activities, which extended into mid-March.

Table 15: Change in mean DV calls per week by Project Period

<b>Period</b>	<b>Sector 1 Mean DV Calls/Week</b>	<b>Sector 2 Mean DV Calls/Week</b>
Change from T1 to T4	<b>+15.2%</b> t=-3227, p=.001	<b>-2.7%</b> ns
Change from T1 to T5	<b>-3.3%</b> ns	<b>+10.3%</b> t=2.069, p=.041
Change from T4 to T5	<b>-16.1%</b> t=3.221, p=.002	<b>+13.3%</b> t=-2.287, p=.026
Change from T5 to T6	<b>-1.4%</b> ns	<b>-5.9%</b> ns
Change from T1 to T7	<b>+5.3%</b> ns	<b>+7.9%</b>

Independent samples t-test and significance values (ns = no significant difference)

Table 16: Mean DV Arrests per Week by Project Phase, Sector 1 v. Sector 2

<b>Time Line</b>	<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Sector 1</b>	<b>Sector 2</b>
T1 Pre-project baseline (1/2/12 - 12/28/14) Weeks 1-156	156	4.01	3.19
T2 BWC, Training and Pilot (12/29/14-8/30/15) Weeks 157-191	35	5.20	3.66
T3 Phased-in Implementation – A (8/31/15 – 2/28/16) Weeks 192-217	26	5.96	3.69
T4 Phased-in Implementation – B (2/29/16 – 8/28/16) Weeks 218-243	26	5.42	3.46
T5 Project in place for full year (8/29/16- 2/26/17) Weeks 244-269 <sup>45</sup>	26	3.35	3.31
T6 Project suspended (2/27/17 – 8/27/17) Weeks 270-295	26	3.88	3.54
T7 Post project period (8/28/17-12/31/17) Weeks 296-313	18	4.00	3.28
Total Weeks	313	4.35	3.35

<sup>45</sup> This time period includes two months after the project was suspended in patrol 12/31/16; the investigative component did not have a hard stop date but was comprised of one officer's activities, which extended into mid-March.

Table 17: Percent Repeat DV Calls per Week by Project Phase, Sector 1 v. Sector 2

Time Line	Weeks	Sector 1	Sector 2
T1 Pre-project baseline (1/2/12 - 12/28/14) Weeks 1-156	156	45.2%	41.8%
T2 BWC, Training and Pilot (12/29/14-8/30/15) Weeks 157-191	35	11.6%	12.6%
T3 Phased-in Implementation – A (8/31/15 – 2/28/16) Weeks 192-217	26	8.5%	8.7%
T4 Phased-in Implementation – B (2/29/16 – 8/28/16) Weeks 218-243	26	11.6%	9.5%
T5 Project in place for full year (8/29/16- 2/26/17) Weeks 244-269	26	8.9%	10.9%
T6 Project suspended (2/27/17 – 8/27/17) Weeks 270-295	26	8.3%	9.0%
T7 Post project period (8/28/17-12/31/17) Weeks 296-313	18	6.1%	7.6%
Total Weeks	313		

Table 18: Time on scene Sector 1 v. 2 – Baseline v. Test Period (78 weeks)

Sector 1 Group Statistics

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SecondsOnScene	1 Baseline Weeks 88-165	2373	4167.65	7286.314	149.575
	2 Test period Weeks 192-169	2546	4282.48	5604.952	111.082

t=-.622, p=.534

Sector 2 Group Statistics

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SecondsOnScene	1 Baseline Weeks 88-165	1977	4088.22	6000.525	134.954
	2 Test period Weeks 192-169	2158	4170.25	6494.825	139.811

t=-.421, p=.674

Table 19: Percent Hispanic DV Victims, CVPD 2012-2017

	DV Incidents (Jan-June)	Incidents with Hispanic victims	% DV incidents with Hispanic victims
2012	535	331	61.9%
2013	550	346	62.9%
2014	554	360	65.0%
2015	616	399	64.8%
2016	598	361	60.4%
2017	574	364	63.4%
2012-2017	3,427	2,161	63.1%

Table 20: Departmental Characteristics and Respondents, May 2014 v. December 2016

	All sworn	T1- May 2014 N=52	T2 – December 2016 N=78	$\chi^2$ (p)
Rank - officer		40 (76.9%)	68 (87.2%)	ns
Gender – Male	87.6%	46 (88.5%)	68 (87.2%)	ns
Race-Hispanic	25.3%	21 (40.4%)	23 (30.7%)	
Race – other	15.6%	10 (19.2%)	16 (21.3%)	ns
Non-Hispanic white	59.1%	21 (40.4%)	36 (48.0%)	
Age – 20-29	Average age= 41.1	7 (13.5%)	25 (32.1%)	6.527 p=.038
Age – 30-39		15 (28.8%)	22 (28.2%)	
Age – 40+		30 (57.7%)	31 (39.7%)	
Years Tenure - 5 or less	N/A	7 (57.7%)	35 (44.9%)	14.093 p=.001
Years tenure - 6-10		11 (21.2%)	10 (12.8%)	
Years tenure – 11+		34 (65.4%)	33 (42.5%)	

Table 21: Demographic characteristics DART v. non-DART respondents, December 2016

	Not DART 40	DART 38	$\chi^2$ (p)
Gender – Male	39 (97.5%)	29 (76.3%)	7.824 (.006)
Race - Hispanic	8 (21.1%)	15 (40.5%)	9.813 (.007)
Non-Hispanic white	25 (65.8%)	11 (29.7%)	
Other	5 (13.2%)	11 (29.7%)	
Rank - officer	34 (85.0%)	34 (89.5%)	ns
Age – 20-29	15 (37.5%)	10 (26.3%)	ns
Age – 30-39	10 (25.0%)	12 (31.6%)	
Age – 40+	15 (37.5%)	16 (42.1%)	
Years tenure - 5 or less	20 (50.0%)	15 (39.5%)	ns
Years tenure - 6-10	3 (7.5%)	7 (18.4%)	
Years tenure – 11+	17 (42.5%)	16 (42.1%)	

Table 22: Selected Questions, Officer Survey, DART v. Other Officers, December 2016

Percent strongly agree/agree	<b>Non-DART Officers N=40</b>	<b>DART Officers N=38</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math> /p</b>
DV is a real problem in this community.	67.5%	92.1%	8.408/p=.038
It's frustrating when 415DV calls are the same people again and again.	72.5%	86.3%	10.72/p=.03
I often end up offering relationship advice at DV calls.	55.0%	76.3%	9.927/p=.042
It is not unusual for women to be just as aggressive as men in DV.	60.0%	92.1%	12.038/p=.017
Our officers would benefit from more DV training.	45.0%	81.5%	14.244/p=.007
The worst DV usually stems from an abuser's need to control the victim.	46.1%	81.6%	11.028/.026
Some officers are better at handling DV calls than others.	70.0%	92.1%	10.325/p=.035
DV victims frequently play down the amount of fear or violence	55.0%	92.1%	16.747/p=.002
Identifying the dominant aggressor in a DV crime is sometimes difficult.	52.5%	79.0%	9.65/p=.047
I have a good understanding of what DVRT does.	40.0%	81.6%	17.043/p=.001
Mandatory treatment for batterers is effective in preventing more DV.	30.0%	52.6%	10.452/p=.033

## Appendices



## **Appendix A: Chula Vista Police Department DVRT Policy**

From Chula Vista Police Department Policy Manual (2017)

### **320.6.1 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSE TEAM**

The Department maintains a partnership with South Bay Community Services (SBCS) to provide follow-up services to violence victims and families in domestic violence situations, and immediate services when a victim needs emergency shelter. The Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT) may be activated for any occurrence of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking where there is an immediate need for the victim to be placed in a shelter. These cases often involve circumstances where the victim is at risk of ongoing abuse which appears likely to result in serious injury or death to the victim or children living in the home.

Officers should notify DVRT as soon as possible. DVRT may be notified by contacting the on-call representative, or through the Communications Center. Officers should be prepared to provide DVRT with the victim's name, telephone number, current location, and language. Officers should also know the suspect's location and, if applicable, the name of any other community responders (such as a member of the Citizen Adversity Support Team).

In any situation where a suspected offender is present at the scene but is not arrested, or has fled the scene and whose whereabouts are unknown, the officer should remain at the location as long as the DVRT advocate is responding or is present. In the event another call for service requires the officer to leave the location, the officer should immediately notify DVRT that they are being called elsewhere.

## Appendix B: Focus Group Protocol/Questionnaire

### OFFICER VIEWS ON DV AND DISPATCH

1. In general, how much of your call volume would you estimate consists of DV calls (including 415DV calls) compared to other calls? (e.g., estimated percent on your shift, or 1 out of 20) Prompt...
  - a. How many 415 DV calls (verbal only)? Most, many, half or fewer?
  - b. How many misdemeanor DV calls – simple assault, vandalism, other?
  - c. How many serious TRO violations (i.e. someone was potentially in danger as a result of the violation)?
  - d. How many felony DV calls – felony assault?
2. When you get a DV call, what is your first reaction? Prompts....
  - a. Do you think the incident will be serious or minor?
  - b. Are you worried about your safety?
  - c. That it could take you out of service for a long time?
  - d. Here we go again?
  - e. Other...
3. When you get a DV call, what type of information do you get from the dispatcher?
  - a. Thorough and complete
  - b. Accurate or inaccurate
  - c. Other...
4. What information do you usually get?
  - a. Caller – by their role – neighbor, child, victim or suspect?
  - b. What about names?
  - c. Does the dispatcher provide names of both parties accurately? One, both, neither?
  - d. Do you record the names of parties – Only in reports? What about calls? Would it be helpful?
5. Is the initial call classification correct, or does it sometimes need to be changed?
  - a. Do you receive information about the call history? How? Explain?
  - b. For the couple or the address, or both?
  - c. Is there other information you wish dispatch could provide to you before you respond to a DV call? If so, what?
6. When you respond to a DV call, how difficult is it to sort out what happened?
  - a. How often are both parties present when you respond?
  - b. Is it ever difficult to distinguish the victim from the suspect?
  - c. What factors make it difficult?

7. For DV calls, how clear is it to you exactly what you should do?
  - a. No report needed?
  - b. Modify the call record – add any detail?
  - c. Write a 13700 report or crime report?
  - d. Make an arrest?
  - e. Other investigation – Take photos, talk to neighbors, find witnesses, etc.
  
8. Do you ever get frustrated with DV calls? Why?
  - a. Is it something about the victims?
  - b. Is it something about the offender?
  - c. Is it something about the neighbors or others?
  - d. Is it the police department's requirements?
  - e. Language barriers?
  - f. Immigration status?
  - g. Why? Can you explain or provide an example?
  
9. Think about your last DV call with a crime report and with a clear victim and suspect.
  - a. Would the victim say you say you were...? Sympathetic, Rushed, Helpful/Unhelpful, Professional or Something else?
  
10. What about your last verbal-only DV call (415 DV)? Would the subjects say you say you were...? Would the victim say you say you were...? Sympathetic, Rushed, Helpful/Unhelpful, Professional or Something else?
  
11. Let's talk about how much time officers spend on different types of DV calls. Think about your last verbal-only DV call (415DV)... (provide a few moments)
  - a. About how long were you on the call?
  - b. Did you feel you spent too much time on the call?
  - c. Did you feel you spent too little time on the call?
  - d. Did another officer respond to the call?
  - e. Was he/she there part of the time?
  - f. All of the time? Other?
  - g. How many officers were needed to safely and effectively handle that call?
  - h. Were there important factors in the call? How did these affect your response? Children present? Weapon present? History of incidents? Other?
  - i. Did you know anything about the couple or address before you went to the call?
  - j. Did you think police would be back at the address again? Why?
  - k. Did you think the verbal violence might escalate in the future? Why?
  - l. Did you feel that what YOU did in handling the call would have an impact on future DV calls with this couple? Why or why not?
  
12. Let's talk about how much time officers spend on different types of DV calls. Think about your last call DV call with a crime report ... (provide a few moments)
  - a. About how long were you on the call?
  - b. Did you feel you spent too much time on the call?
  - c. Did you feel you spent too little time on the call?

- d. Did another officer respond to the call?
  - e. Was he/she there part of the time?
  - f. All of the time? Other?
  - g. How many officers were needed to safely and effectively handle that call?
  - h. Were there important factors in the call? How did these affect your response?  
Children present? Weapon present? History of incidents? Other?
  - i. Did you know anything about the couple or address before you went to the call?
  - j. Did you think police would be back at the address again? Why?
  - k. Did you think the verbal violence might escalate in the future? Why?
  - l. Did you feel that what YOU did in handling the call would have an impact on future DV calls with this couple? Why or why not?
13. Let's talk a bit more about how much time - in general – officers spend on DV calls.
- a. Do you feel that they're too time consuming?
  - b. Do you ever feel you've spent too much time on a DV call? When, which ones and why?
  - c. Do you ever feel you've spent too little time on a DV call? When, which ones and why?
  - d. In general, what do you think about the amount of time other officers spend on DV calls? Too much? Too little? Why?

#### **DEPARTMENTAL AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE TO DV**

14. What do you think about the department's current response to DV calls?
- a. Are they given too little attention or too much attention?
  - b. Is the follow-up investigation sufficient?
  - c. Is the initial investigation sufficient?
15. When you make a DV arrest, what usually happens to the case? Think about your last arrest.
- a. Supervisor asks for more information
  - b. DV investigators ask for more information
  - c. Cases sent to DA
  - d. Cases not sent to DA
  - e. DA Issues/Rejects
  - f. Nothing
  - g. Have no idea
  - h. Are you kept informed on the progress of your arrest?
16. Is there anything you do – or could do – to improve the likelihood of an arrest being prosecuted? Prompts: Add more charges, locate third party, non-involved witnesses, take pictures of scene, take videos of statements, take pictures of injuries at 72 hours, other?
- a. Which DV arrests are the MOST likely to be rejected by the DA? Why?
17. In your opinion, how helpful or effective overall is....in preventing more DV? Do they ever make the problem worse in any way?
- a. The DA?
  - b. The 52-week batterer's treatment program?

- c. DVRT?
- d. Child Welfare Services (CWS)?
- e. Probation?
- f. The police department?

18. If you could change anything about how \_\_\_\_\_ handles DV, to make it more efficient, helpful, or effective to prevent more DV, what would you change? And how?

- a. The DA?
- b. The batterer's program?
- c. DVRT?
- d. Child Welfare Services (CWS)?
- e. Probation?
- f. The police department?
- g. Other?

**Appendix C: Survey Questionnaire and Responses, March 2014 (N=52 Officers and Agents – Patrol Division)**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. It is not unusual for women to be just as aggressive as men in DV.	43.9%	45.1%	2.4%	6.1%	2.4%
2. Dispatchers usually probe for all the information I need for DV calls.	2.4%	32.9%	12.2%	31.7%	20.7%
3. I feel I have sufficient training to handle DV calls effectively.	58.0%	28.4%	6.2%	7.4%	0.0%
4. DV is a real problem in this community.	36.7%	34.2%	24.1%	3.8%	1.3%
5. The worst DV usually stems from an abuser’s need to control the victim.	28.0%	41.5%	22.0%	6.1%	2.4%
6. Even when no report is required, I usually document information such as names and DOBs on 415DV calls or ask a dispatcher to do so.	17.3%	33.3%	18.5%	14.8%	16.0%
7. I am often concerned about my safety on DV calls.	45.1%	30.5%	17.1%	6.1%	1.2%
8. Some officers are better at handling DV calls than others.	48.8%	39.0%	9.8%	1.2%	1.2%
9. It’s frustrating when 415DV calls are the same people again and again.	56.1%	30.5%	11.0%	2.3%	0.0%
10. Identifying the dominant aggressor in a DV crime is sometimes difficult.	8.5%	58.5%	17.1%	13.4%	2.4%
11. Most 13700 reports are a waste of time.	22.0%	26.8%	18.3%	18.3%	14.6%
12. Most DV victims are initially receptive to intervention by police.	1.2%	39.0%	23.2%	34.1%	2.4%
13. I can take as much time as I need to handle a DV call –I’m not pressured to get back in service.	9.9%	12.3%	18.5%	33.3%	25.9%
14. It bothers me when prosecutors drop my DV arrests.	24.4%	42.7%	23.2%	6.1%	3.7%
15. Detectives need to do a better job following up on DV cases.	0.0%	9.9%	63.0%	13.6%	13.6%
16. I need more freedom in deciding how to handle DV crimes.	12.2%	32.9%	31.7%	14.6%	8.5%
17. I have a good understanding of what DVRT does.	36.6%	53.7%	4.9%	4.9%	0.0%
18. Mandatory treatment for batterers is effective in preventing more DV.	3.7%	15.9%	42.7%	26.8%	11.0%
19. Most 415DV calls are just typical couples arguing and not serious.	12.2%	48.8%	19.5%	15.9%	3.7%
20. Of all call types, DV calls pose the greatest risk for officer safety.	23.2%	53.7%	14.6%	7.3%	1.2%
21. A mandatory arrest policy is the best approach to DV crimes.	9.8%	28.0%	29.3%	25.6%	7.3%
22. Our officers would benefit from more DV training.	23.2%	32.9%	25.6%	12.2%	6.1%
23. Protective orders are effective in preventing more DV.	2.4%	28.0%	28.0%	28.0%	13.4%
24. Some officers need stricter guidelines in how to deal with DV cases.	2.4%	18.3%	39.0%	30.5%	9.8%

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
25. Too many DV calls are repeat calls with the same people.	25.6%	40.2%	28.0%	6.1%	0.0%
26. DV victims frequently play down the amount of fear or violence in their relationship.	23.2%	57.3%	15.9%	3.7%	0.0%
27. Arresting someone at a DV call seldom helps prevent future DV incidents.	9.8%	37.8%	22.0%	24.4%	6.1%
28. As soon as they leave the relationship, most DV victims are safer.	6.1%	32.9%	30.5%	19.5%	11.0%
29. Sometimes it's hard to know who to arrest in a DV crime.	7.3%	46.3%	18.3%	25.6%	2.4%
30. I often end up offering relationship advice at DV calls.	30.5%	30.5%	18.3%	13.4%	7.3%
31. Victims frequently initiate the violation of a protective order such as by texting a suspect or inviting a suspect over.	26.8%	47.6%	24.4%	1.2%	0.0%
32. Unless I'm subpoenaed, I don't know the disposition of my DV arrests.	65.4%	27.2%	6.2%	1.2%	0.0%
33. When I advise victims to get protective orders, they usually do.	0.0%	6.1%	37.8%	36.5%	19.5%
34. Language barriers can cause problems in sorting out DV cases.	20.7%	43.9%	18.3%	9.8%	7.3%

**Changes are needed in the following agencies or units that respond to DV:**

35. DVRT	24.6%
36. Child Welfare	19.7%
37. Patrol	52.9%
38. Probation	33.9%
39. Investigations	39.0%
40. Dispatch	64.3%
41. District Attorney	53.7%
42. Other	29.6%

**Appendix D: Survey Questionnaire and Responses, December 2016 (N=78 Officers and Agents in Patrol Division)**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. It is not unusual for women to be just as aggressive as men in DV.	44.9%	30.8%	12.8%	6.4%	5.1%
2. Dispatchers usually probe for all the information I need for DV calls.	3.8%	33.2%	16.7%	32.1%	14.1%
3. I feel I have sufficient training to handle DV calls effectively.	55.1%	34.6%	2.6%	2.6%	5.1%
4. DV is a real problem in this community.	43.5%	35.9%	17.9%	0.0%	2.6%
5. The worst DV usually stems from an abuser's need to control the victim.	33.3%	29.9%	27.3%	7.8%	1.3%
6. Even when no report is required, I usually document information such as names and DOBs on 415DV calls or ask a dispatcher to do so.			Not asked at T2		
7. I am often concerned about my safety on DV calls.					
8. Some officers are better at handling DV calls than others.	50.0%	30.8%	12.8%	2.6%	3.8%
9. It's frustrating when 415DV calls are the same people again and again.	60.3%	19.2%	16.7%	1.3%	2.6%
10. Identifying the dominant aggressor in a DV crime is sometimes difficult.	12.8%	52.6%	21.8%	11.5%	1.3%
11. Most 13700 reports are a waste of time.	17.9%	21.8%	37.2%	20.5%	2.6%
12. Most DV victims are initially receptive to intervention by police.	1.3%	32.1%	30.8%	32.1%	3.8%
13. I can take as much time as I need to handle a DV call –I'm not pressured to get back in service.	16.7%	25.6%	25.6%	16.7%	15.4%
14. It bothers me when prosecutors drop my DV arrests.	26.9%	29.5%	38.5%	2.6%	2.6%
15. Detectives need to do a better job following up on DV cases.	1.3%	7.7%	64.1%	21.8%	5.1%
16. I need more freedom in deciding how to handle DV crimes.	9.0%	17.9%	48.7%	17.9%	6.4%
17. I have a good understanding of what DVRT does.	14.1%	46.2%	12.8%	20.5%	6.4%
18. Mandatory treatment for batterers is effective in preventing more DV.	12.8%	28.2%	35.9%	14.1%	9.0%
19. Most 415DV calls are just typical couples arguing and not serious.	10.3%	39.7%	28.2%	19.2%	2.6%
20. Of all call types, DV calls pose the greatest risk for officer safety.	29.5%	50.0%	16.7%	3.8%	0.0%
21. A mandatory arrest policy is the best approach to DV crimes.	7.7%	29.5%	34.6%	19.2%	9.0%
22. Our officers would benefit from more DV training.	17.9%	44.9%	25.6%	5.1%	6.4%
23. Protective orders are effective in preventing more DV.	2.6%	28.6%	37.7%	24.7%	6.5%
24. Some officers need stricter guidelines in how to deal with DV cases.	2.6%	19.2%	50.0%	20.5%	7.7%



	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
25. Too many DV calls are repeat calls with the same people.	17.9%	53.8%	23.1%	5.1%	0.0%
26. DV victims frequently play down the amount of fear or violence in their relationship.	23.1%	50.0%	20.5%	5.1%	1.3%
27. Arresting someone at a DV call seldom helps prevent future DV incidents.	3.8%	23.1%	26.9%	39.7%	6.4%
28. As soon as they leave the relationship, most DV victims are safer.	9.0%	39.7%	34.6%	12.8%	3.8%
29. Sometimes it's hard to know who to arrest in a DV crime.	7.7%	34.6%	33.3%	17.9%	6.4%
30. I often end up offering relationship advice at DV calls.	19.2%	46.2%	23.1%	9.0%	2.6%
31. Victims frequently initiate the violation of a protective order such as by texting a suspect or inviting a suspect over.	15.4%	55.1%	24.4%	3.8%	1.3%
32. Unless I'm subpoenaed, I don't know the disposition of my DV arrests.	53.8%	37.2%	6.4%	2.6%	0.0%
33. When I advise victims to get protective orders, they usually do.	0.0%	6.4%	38.5%	44.9%	10.3%
34. Language barriers can cause problems in sorting out DV cases.	16.9%	41.6%	28.6%	10.4%	2.6%
35. Body-worn camera video makes it easier to prosecute DV offenders.	27.3%	35.1%	29.9%	6.5%	3.1%
36. Body worn cameras make it easier to collect evidence on DV cases.	37.2%	39.7%	17.9%	2.6%	2.6%
37. Body worn camera video helps officers DV reports/prepare cases	28.2%	33.3%	29.5%	5.1%	3.8%
38. The DART DV initiative should be expanded in patrol.	17.9%	23.1%	38.5%	5.1%	15.4%
39. The DART DV initiative has been effective in reducing DV.	12.8%	33.3%	38.5%	11.5%	3.8%
40. I have a good understanding of the DART DV initiative.	38.5%	21.8%	20.5%	12.8%	6.4%

**Changes are needed in the following agencies or units that respond to DV:**

41. DART	21.9%
42. DVRT	16.7%
43. Child Welfare	26.2%
44. Patrol	15.6%
45. Probation	18.0%
46. Investigations	9.5%
47. Dispatch	48.5%
48. District Attorney	43.1%
49. Other	8.8%

