



# The Problem-Solving Process (SARA) and SPI

Lowell SPI, Palm Beach County SPI, Glendale SPI, and Boston SPI

September 24, 2012

This project was supported by Grant No. 2009-DG-BX-K021 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

# Agenda

- ❖ Key points on SARA
- ❖ Presentations from SPI sites:
  - ❖ Lowell, MA
  - ❖ Palm Beach County, FL
  - ❖ Glendale, AZ
  - ❖ Boston, MA





# Problem Solving in Lowell, Massachusetts

## Smart Policing Initiative

Lowell Police Department & Suffolk University

September 24, 2012

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# Scanning: Problem Identification

## Drug and drug-related property crime

1. Patrol officers and supervisors, criminal investigators, and participants in Compstat were spending a significant amount of time discussing concerns around property crime
2. It was believed that the majority of property crimes were being committed by individuals who had an addiction to drugs.

It was also believed that that the increase in property crimes - including motor vehicle breaks, house breaks and larcenies, were crimes that could be addressed through a multi-pronged approach.

# Analysis: Examining the Problem

## Focus on Place

- ❖ LPD Crime Analysis and Intelligence Unit pulled property-related crime data
  - ❖ *Robbery; Burglary; Stolen Property Offense Shoplifting; Theft from Building; Theft from a Motor Vehicle; Theft from a MV Parts/Accessories; All other Larceny; Drug/Narcotic Violations; Drug Equipment Violations; Prostitution; Assisting Prostitution*
  - ❖ *Collected qualitative data from Sector Captains and Officers*
  - ❖ *Collected photos and characteristic data to create profiles of places that would serve as intervention locations*

## Focus on Offenders

- ❖ Examined the criminal histories of individuals who overdosed
- ❖ Analyzed characteristics of targeted offenders; Collected quantitative, qualitative, anecdotal data on chronic drug users who were also involved in criminal activities

# Response: Addressing the Problem

Placed-based Strategies	Offender-based Strategies	Organizational Strategies
Selected 12 hot spots for SPI intervention; 12 comparison spots	Created criteria for selecting approximately 35 Offenders of interest	Identify systems changes needed to support SPI
Identify nature & characteristics of crime in hot spot locations	Conduct home visits and interview key stakeholders to understand offender behavior	Create or modify policies or practices related to data collection, analysis and dissemination
Identify evidence-based strategies to use in interventions	Identify evidence-based strategies to use in interventions	Improve communication & coordination within LPD relative to SPI concepts and implementation
Explore new and innovative strategies based on evidence or promising practices	Establish and strengthen interagency partnerships for intervention and suppression	Focus on costs and resources utilized in SPI implementation
Conduct process and outcome evaluation	Conduct process and outcome evaluation	

# Assessment: Evaluating the Response

## Place-Based

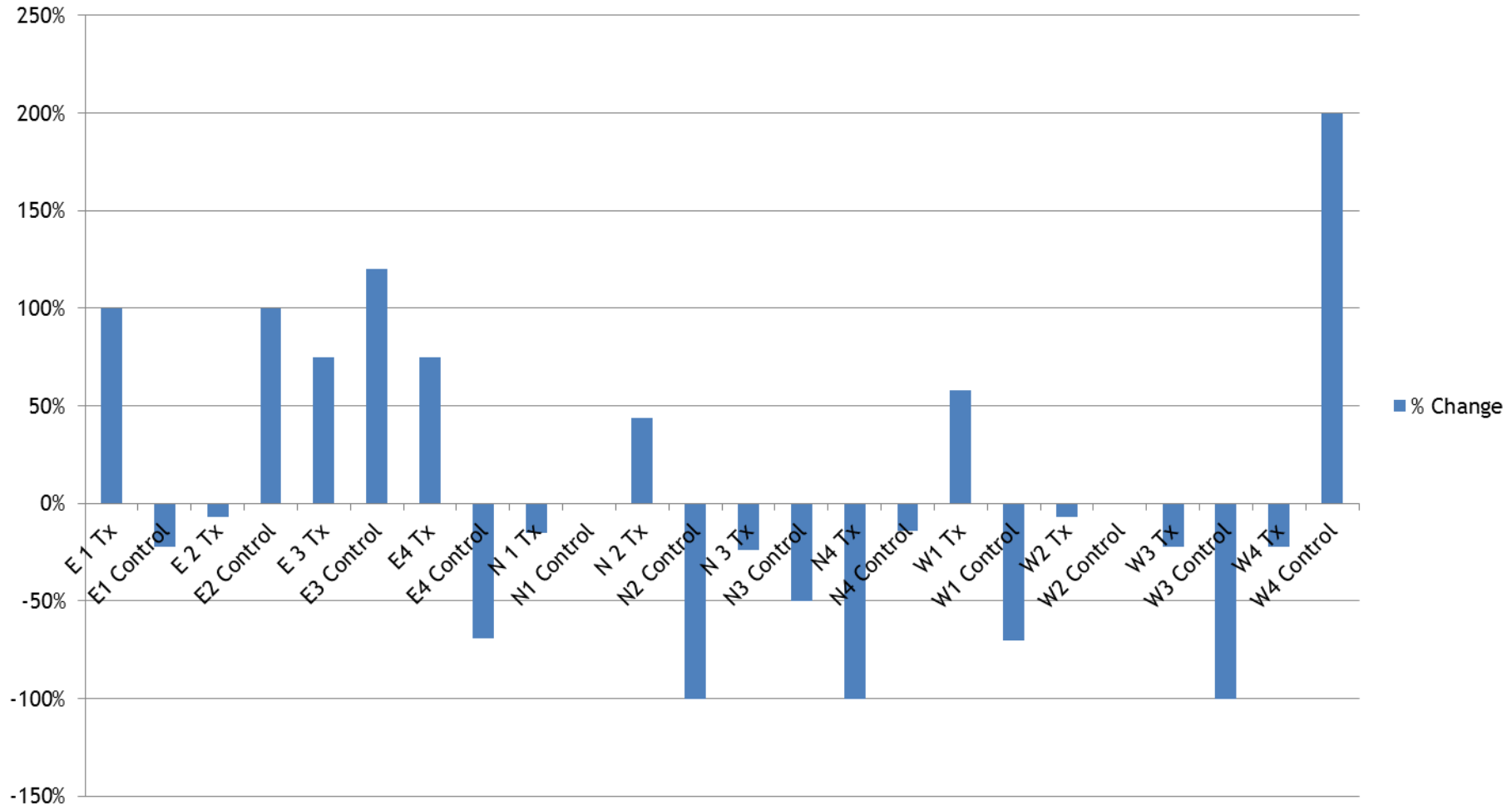
- ❖ Measuring process and outcomes
- ❖ Matched pair design; pre and post outcomes focused on property crimes, including characteristics and photos
- ❖ Process data includes bi-weekly data on interventions, documentation of challenges and opportunities

## Offender-Based

- ❖ Tracking interactions, interventions and criminal activity of offenders

# Comparison of SPI Hot Spots to Controls

(January - June 2012 vs. same time in 2011)





# Lessons learned so far in Lowell SPI

## Placed-based strategies

- ❖ As of August, 7 of 12 SPI hot spots experienced reductions in property crime
- ❖ A total of 15 different types of strategies employed across 12 hot spots
- ❖ Of those, 7 most frequently used, were:
  - Increased/targeted traffic enforcement
  - Increased visibility via foot, bike, patrol
  - Drug enforcement
  - Community/street corner meetings
  - Code investigations
  - Working with private businesses on target hardening
- ❖ Other strategies include: focus on bars; dealing with troublesome tenants, etc.
- ❖ Most frequent partners include:
  - **External:** City services (inspectional, neighborhood services; homeless shelter, public and private housing agencies; community groups)
  - **Internal:** Crime Analysts; Criminal Investigations; Community Response; Family Services

## Offender-based strategies

- ❖ Need for clear criteria; home visits and treatment provider



# Problem-Solving in Palm Beach County, Florida

## Smart Policing Initiative

Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office & Lynn University

September 24, 2012

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# Overview: Palm Beach County SPI Site

- ❖ Law Enforcement Agency: Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office
- ❖ Research Partner: Dr. Debra Ainbinder, Associate Professor, Lynn University, Department of Psychology
- ❖ Target Problem: Robberies of Immigrants
- ❖ Problem Description: The Palm Beach County SPI addresses robberies within a predominately Guatemalan Migrant Community in the City of Lake Worth. Perpetrators often target this population due to their risky behaviors and unwillingness to report crimes and cooperate with law enforcement for fear of being deported.

# Scanning: Problem Identification

- ❖ The City of Lake Worth, a population of approximately 35,000 residents began experiencing a steady increase in robberies from 223 in 2002 to 287 in 2008, a 28 percent increase.
- ❖ On October 1, 2008, the City merged its police department with PBSO due to fiscal and crime concerns.
- ❖ PBSO's District 14 Community Policing Team began canvassing the immigrant community and noted various high risk behaviors that contribute to the problem.

# Analysis: Examining the Problem

- ❖ PBSO's Crime Analysis Unit showed that of the 287 robberies reported in 2008, 87 occurred within a concentrated area with a large immigrant population.
- ❖ The Robbery Crime logs revealed that the majority of the victims were Hispanic males in the 30-40 year age range.
- ❖ PBSO's Violent Crimes Task Force analysis also showed an increase in gang-related violence in the City and indicated the suspects were coming from other areas of the County to prey on the immigrant population living inside Lake Worth.

# Response: Addressing the Problem

- ❖ We embarked on a problem-oriented policing (POP) approach involving community partnerships, outreach activities, proactive investigations, and strategic tactical operations to *holistically* address the problem.
- ❖ Three primary strategies response:
  1. Hiring a Civilian *Community Outreach Liaison* to serve as a community advocate and intermediary between law enforcement and the community.
  2. Re-assigning a *dedicated robbery detective* to proactively investigate all robberies within the targeted area.
  3. Initiating *outreach community events* to build trust and culturally appropriate interventions to prevent crime.

# Our Community Outreach Liaison



# Response: Addressing the Problem

- ❖ The strategy was fully implemented in May of 2010 and has not changed since its implementation. The Strategic plan is reviewed every six months by the SPI Team to evaluate and revise strategies, tactics, and activities.
- ❖ The SPI Team also meets every month to discuss crime data, research findings, and a sustainment plan.
- ❖ The SPI Team consists of a major, captain, two lieutenants, two sergeants, robbery detective, community Liaison, research partner, crime analysis manager and Grants manager.



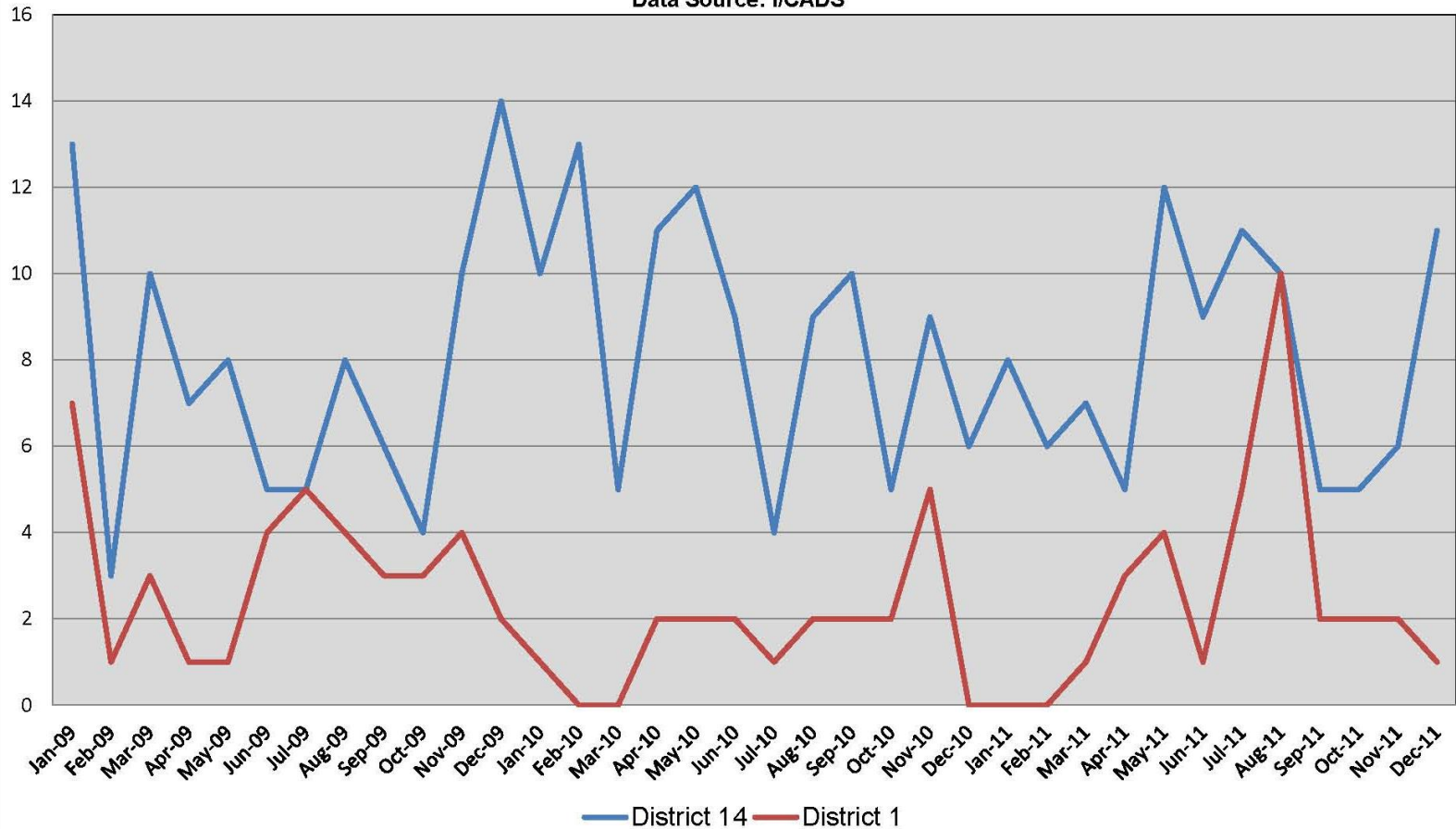
# Assessment: Evaluating the Response

- ❖ Our strategy involves a *quasi-experimental design* consisting of an experimental group (District 14) and a comparison group (District 1). The two primary outcome measures are: 1) Reduction in Robberies, and 2) Improved Attitudes Towards Police.
- ❖ Our Crime Analysis Unit analyzes the robbery data which matches our grant criteria; and our Research Partner collects and analyzes the community and individual survey data.
- ❖ Overall, the research findings reveal:
  - ❖ *Improved Views Toward Law Enforcement; and Greater Levels of Comfort with Regard to Speaking to Police and Reporting Crimes (i.e. greater level of trust).*
  - ❖ *Robbery data showed an initial increase in robbery reporting during the early intervention period (April-Sept 2010). However, during the mid-intervention period (October-December 2011), robberies dropped from an average of 9.3 per month to 7.3 per month. In the first 6 months of 2012, robberies in the intervention area maintained an average of 7.5 robberies per month.*

## 18

This is a detailed street map of the Lake Oswego area. The map shows a grid of streets, with major roads highlighted in red. Key landmarks and areas are labeled, including Lake Oswego, Lake Oswego High School, Lake Oswego Community Center, and Lake Oswego Park. The map also shows various residential streets and commercial areas. The map is color-coded with red lines for major roads and blue lines for water bodies.

**Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office**  
**SMART Policing Initiative**  
**Robbery to a Person**  
**District 14 and District 1**  
 January 2009 through December 2011  
 Data Source: I/CADS



OCT - 2009 GRANT AWARDED

APR - 2010 COMMUNITY LIAISON HIRED

# Challenges and Lessons Learned

- ❖ The primary challenges we face is overcoming setbacks when ICE conducts immigration sweeps or when “illegal” immigration legislation becomes a hot topic of discussion.
- ❖ We overcome these obstacles by continually educating residents through “Town Hall” Forums and positive “bridge building” events, such as our successful soccer tournaments.
- ❖ One lesson learned is that better communication with Federal Immigration authorities is necessary to prepare for upcoming immigration operations.
- ❖ The Research Partnership has been instrumental in providing a level of legitimacy and transparency with community stakeholders since we document all our findings, and providing a layer of accountability to Police Managers and Supervisors.



# Problem Solving in Glendale, Arizona

## Smart Policing Initiative

Michael D. White, PhD - Arizona State University

Lt. Mark Carpenter, Glendale Police Department

September 24, 2012

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# Glendale SPI Overview

## Goal

Address prolific offenders and organized retail theft in the target area through the use of problem-oriented policing and the SARA model.

## Objectives

- ❖ POP training provided by research partner, Arizona State University (ASU)
- ❖ Officers scan and analyze problems (people and places)
- ❖ Officers develop and implement responses
- ❖ Officers and ASU assess the impact of each of the implemented responses

# Glendale SPI: Scanning

- ❖ **Advanced training in Problem-Oriented Policing and SARA model**
  - Model curriculum from the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing
  - Smart Policing Initiative Webinars
- ❖ **Officer groups engage in Scanning**
  - Analysis of calls for service, probationer information, arrest data
  - CPTED assessments
  - Officer expertise
  - Group dialogue in training
- ❖ **Four problems identified:**
  - Apt complex (Foothills Division)
  - Large shopping mall (Foothills Division)
  - Outlet mall under construction (Gateway Division)
  - Prolific offenders in a small target area (Gateway Division)



# Glendale SPI: Analysis

## Foothills Division

- ❖ Shopping Mall
  - Security summit(s); review current crime reporting practices
- ❖ Apartment Complex
  - Calls for service; probationer review; disorder surveys; resident survey

## Gateway Division

- ❖ Outlet Mall Under Construction (Tanger outlet)
  - Analysis of “new mall” impact in Phoenix area, OH, FL
  - Meet with Tanger leadership: Site plan/CPTED review; Prep for sharing information (memo of understanding)
- ❖ Prolific Offenders
  - Establish definition; identify offenders



# Glendale SPI: Planned Responses

## Shopping Mall

- ❖ Open communication lines; standardized reporting - heat map; targeted suppression/surveillance

## Apartment Complex

- ❖ Reduce disorder; respond to resident concerns (survey); targeted crime control (unit-specific, person-based)

## Outlet Mall Under Construction

- ❖ Store-specific response plans; information sharing on theft

## Prolific Offenders

- ❖ Advanced Social Network Analysis (centrality); targeted crime control responses; call-ins; development of CIs

# Glendale SPI: Planned Assessment

## Shopping Mall

- ❖ Reduced calls for service; information sharing; heat map and adjusted security/PD responses

## Apartment Complex

- ❖ Reduced crime and disorder; improved perceptions of police

## Outlet Mall Under Construction

- ❖ Calls for service; information sharing

## Prolific Offenders

- ❖ Social Network created; Previously unknown connections identified; targeted crime and prevention responses

# Challenges and Lessons Learned

## Progress to Date

- ❖ Analysis almost complete; response plans developed

## Challenges

- ❖ Internal challenges: landfill dig; interim chief; promotions and supervisor rotation

## Lessons Learned

- ❖ Analysis is important - one project dropped (not the problem officers thought it was)
- ❖ Think strategically

## Role of the Research Partner

- ❖ Provide insights on POP training, facilitate the POP process, brainstorm ideas, and keep things moving forward



# Problem Solving in Boston, Massachusetts

## Smart Policing Initiative - Homicides

Boston Police Department & Dr. Anthony Braga

September 24, 2012

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# Problem

- ❖ Boston Police Department is below the national average in clearance rates - which currently stands at 60%.
- ❖ Between 2007 and 2011, the BPD Homicide Unit cleared 44.3% (139 of 314 cases) of homicide cases investigated during this time period.

Year	Total homicides	Cleared	Open	Percent Cleared
2007	66	32	34	48.5%
2008	63	22	41	34.9%
2009	49	28	21	57.1%
2010	74	32	42	43.2%
2011	62	25	37	40.3%

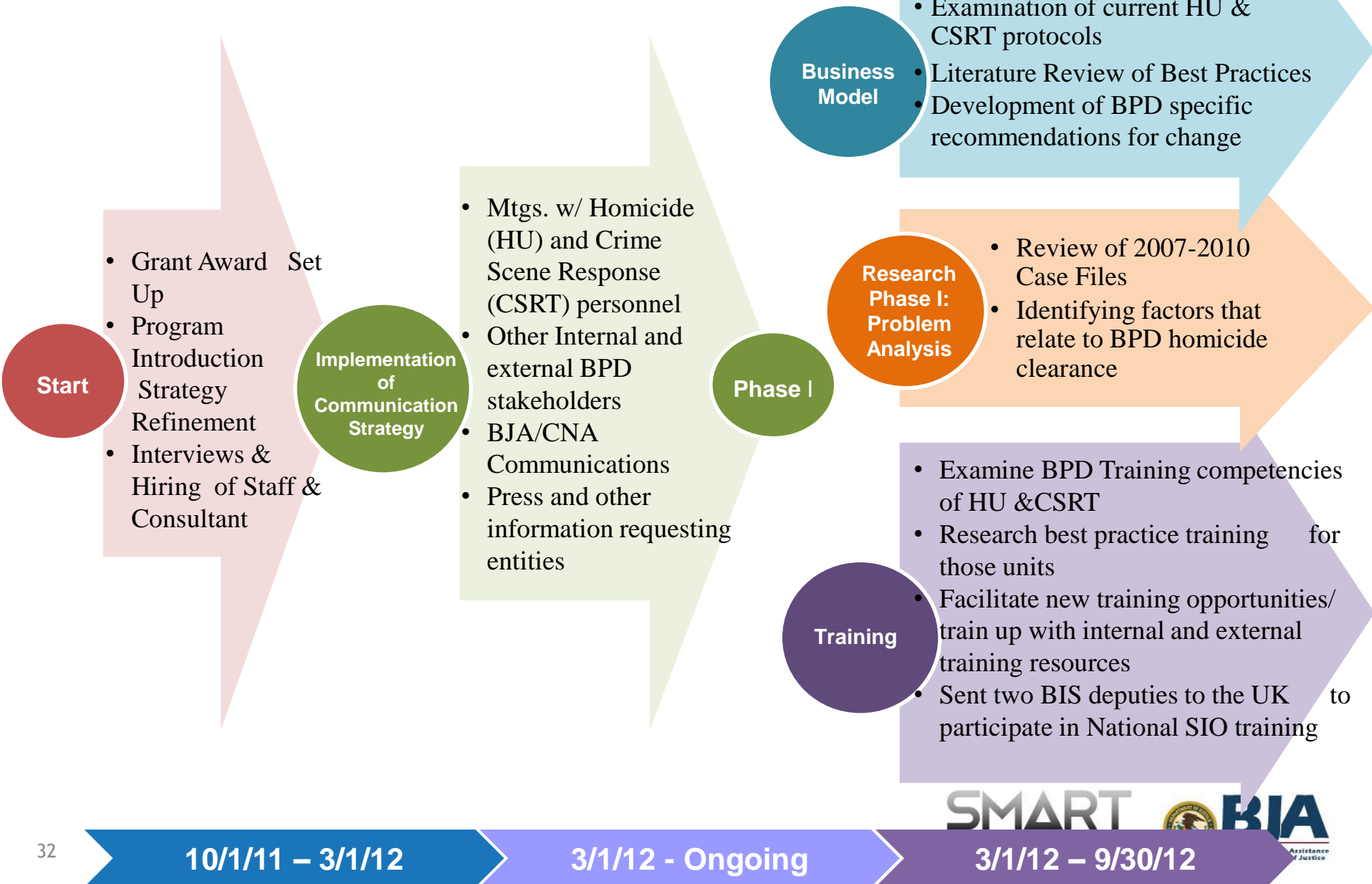
# Scanning

- ❖ Boston utilized both research and analytical resources to define our clearance challenges and their factors.
- ❖ Dr. Anthony Braga reviewed the existing scientific literature on the investigative factors associated with the clearance of homicide cases.
- ❖ The BIS and ORD then compared those successful factors with the existing practices of the BPD
- ❖ At the request of Boston Police Commissioner Edward Davis, BPD also conducted preliminary research into best practices in homicide investigations in the US and UK
- ❖ Based on this scanning the BPD concluded that a more standard and uniform process from scene response through investigation, to clearance was necessary to improve homicide clearance rates in Boston.

# Analysis

- ❖ Dr. Anthony Braga is in the process of completing a retrospective study to examine the factors associated with BPD clearances, and open homicide investigations, on 314 Boston cases between 2007 and 2011.
- ❖ This analysis involved the collection and coding of homicide motives, victim-offender relationships, weapons used, and victim / offender characteristics (gender, age, race, prior criminal history) for all 314 homicide cases.
- ❖ To date the coding for investigative actions have been completed in 52% (163) of the 314 homicide cases
- ❖ With this, Dr. Braga has completed a preliminary analysis on the factors associated with clearances in the available data.
- ❖ Findings show clearance rates are particularly low for homicide investigations involving young minority males killed in gang- and drug-related homicides in disadvantaged Boston neighborhoods.

# Response: Program Strategy





# High Leverage Response Efforts

- ❖ Integrated the Preliminary Problem Analysis Findings (gang related homicides in hot spot neighborhoods) into our recommendations discussions and subsequent report
- ❖ Development of Homicide Advisory Group: Multidisciplinary Group of Line-Level Practitioners
- ❖ Utilization of Research Literature re: Homicide Clearances
- ❖ Review and Incorporation of Best Practice Research (i.e. interviews, review of manuals and protocols, other articles)
- ❖ Guidance from United Kingdom Expert Consultation
- ❖ Attendance at Senior Investigating Officer Training in Coventry, London, United Kingdom by 2 BPD Deputy Superintendents

# Assessment to Date

1. Creation of Response Plan
  - ❖ Internal Homicide Advisory Group
  - ❖ Preliminary Recommendations Relative to Scene Response
  - ❖ Training Plan
  - ❖ UK Consultant and Other Training Opportunities
2. Implementation Date of October 1, 2012
3. Process and Impact Evaluation to be completed
  - ❖ *Process evaluation* will document the key elements of the intervention and determine whether the intervention was implemented as planned.
  - ❖ *Impact evaluation* will use a quasi-experimental design to determine whether homicide clearance rates in Boston were positively impacted by change efforts, and compare Boston clearance trends to clearance trends in other cities.

# Questions?

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