Strategic Solutions

- Focused Actions
- Reduced Violence

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VRN Cumulative Statistics To date, VRN has provided:

Customer Satisfaction Rating*	4.6/5.0
Peer Exchanges	20
Research Partner Connections Supported	8
Resource Documents Cataloged	160+
SME Hours Provided	500+
SSL Hours Provided	2,000+
Technical Assistance/ Resource Requests	181
Training Hours Delivered	16,500+
Training Deliveries	38
Training Participants	1,600+
Webinar Deliveries	9
Webinar Participants	398
Webinar Overall Rating*	3.7/5.0
Web Site Documents Downloaded	2,865
Web Site Page Views	22,006
Weekly News Deliveries	74
Weekly News Overall Rating*	4.3/5.0

*Feedback received as of 10/30/15.

VRN Celebrates a Year of Progress by Expanding to More Cities!

Just one year ago, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) officially launched the Violence Reduction Network (VRN), announcing the inaugural five sites at the VRN Summit in Washington, DC. DOJ's goal of confronting the problem of violence and its root causes with a comprehensive approach continues to be a priority. Through the VRN model, DOJ has altered the way it supports local agencies by enhancing its training and technical assistance (TTA) protocols so it can be a more proactive partner in the development of a city's capacity to reduce violent crime.

VRN supports jurisdictions' existing violent crime strategies. It is not, in and of itself, a violent crime strategy. Designed to enhance a site's current crime reduction goals, VRN builds on efforts already under way, leverages lessons learned, and delivers a broad spectrum of resources via a strategic and comprehensive approach.

This September, VRN welcomed five additional sites to the Network. The expansion of VRN will allow for the transfer of lessons learned from the inaugural five sites to the newly added sites and will broaden the peer-to-peer learning within the Network.

In this edition of the VRN Quarterly Newsletter, we reflect on the first year of progress, focusing on the outcomes and operational impacts the VRN resources delivered. In addition, we look ahead at the expansion of the Network.

The VRN Team

DOJ Expands VRN to Include Five New Sites

After a successful first year, the U.S. Department of Justice emphasized its commitment to the Violence Reduction Network by doubling the number of sites. In September 2015, VRN welcomed the five additional new sites to the Network, including:











Compton, California

Flint, Michigan

Little Rock, Arkansas

Newark, New Jersey

West Memphis, Arkansas

Like the five inaugural sites, these cities are committed to working together locally and in collaboration with DOJ to identify and address violent crime problems and make a positive difference in the safety of their communities. Working with their VRN Strategic Site Liaisons, DOJ Law Enforcement Champions, DOJ Program Office Champions, and VRN Analysts, the new sites are already delving into development of their strategic plans and looking at the training and technical assistance options available to them. We welcome these new sites to VRN and look forward to collaborating with the local leadership to help them achieve their violence reduction goals.



2015 VRN Summit

The second annual VRN Summit was held September 28–30, 2015, in Detroit, Michigan. At the summit, the Honorable Sally Quillian Yates, U.S. Deputy Attorney General, welcomed participants and officially announced the five new sites joining the Network. In addition, the Honorable Karol Mason, Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs; the Honorable Barbara McQuade, United States Attorney, Eastern District of Michigan; and Chief James Craig of the Detroit Police Department provided opening remarks.



The overarching goal of the 2½-day summit was to provide the VRN sites with the tools, resources, and practices to support and improve the violence reduction efforts within their communities by:

- ★ Convening executive leaders and key stakeholders from the sites to engage in focused discussions directly with DOJ.
- ★ Providing **unparalleled access** to national practitioners and researchers.
- ★ Offering **customized expertise** tailored to violence reduction needs.
- **★** Facilitating **peer interaction and networking** opportunities.



"Our job, as justice system professionals, as policymakers, as researchers, is to find out what combination of resources, actions, and investments works best to reduce violence and keep our communities healthy and safe. That's what the **Violence Reduction Network** is all about."

—Deputy Attorney General Sally Q. Yates VRN Summit, September 28, 2015

The 2015 VRN Summit served as an opportunity to reflect on the progress and lessons learned during the first year of VRN. And more important, it was a look at the exciting road ahead. Local and federal stakeholders from all 10 VRN sites met with DOJ law enforcement and program office leaders, as well as national practitioners and researchers, to discuss current violence reduction efforts and strategies for the future. Topic areas of the VRN Summit Site Breakout Sessions included:

- ★ Body-Worn Cameras
- ★ Corrections Partnerships
- ★ Crime Analysis for Chief Executives
- ★ Denver Crime Gun Intelligence Center
- ★ Domestic Violence
- ★ Drug Market Interventions
- **★** GunStat
- ★ Homicide Investigations Management Strategies
- ★ Interdisciplinary Data Sharing
- ★ Police/Prosecution Partnerships

- ★ Prosecution Strategies for Violence Reduction
- ★ Reducing Gang Violence
- ★ Reducing Retaliatory Disputes
- ★ Social Network Analysis
- ★ Solving More Gun Crime Through ATF
- ★ Strategies to Increase Community Engagement
- ★ Using Data to Evaluate Gang Problems

These collaborative working sessions focused on analyzing each city's violence challenges and discussing the variety of existing DOJ resources available to address the issues. In addition, the summit provided time for site delegates to consult with criminal justice colleagues within the Network and strategically identify the type of training and technical assistance that will meet their needs and serve as a foundation for the road ahead.



In July, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Major Crime Scene Preliminary Investigation Train-the-Trainer program was delivered to approximately 50 attendees from the Camden County Police Department, Camden County Prosecutor's Office, Camden County Sheriff's Office, and Wilmington Police Department, among others. This training is designed to improve the level of knowledge, communication, and collaboration involved in responding to and managing major crime scenes. The use of the posttraining plans received high marks from the participants.

Site Highlights

In August, Camden received Social Network Analysis (SNA) training at Yale University with Dr. Andrew Papachristos. This training on SNA provides law enforcement with the tools to research and identify high-risk group members through relationships in their social networks.

Participants from Camden also attended the **Applied Evidence-Based Homicide Reduction** Training, provided by the Virginia Center for Policing Innovation in Atlantic City, New Jersey. The methods taught, such as evidence processing and interviews, will be applied to their current process.

Also this quarter, a two-day domestic violence and sexual assault training was delivered to a targeted audience consisting of prosecutors, advocates, and law enforcement, as well as two other nearby prosecutors' offices. This training was provided by the National District Attorneys Association and supported by the Office on Violence Against Women. In the coming months, the Camden VRN team will be focusing on procedural justice training provided through the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) and witness protection strategies training. In addition, Camden will be the host of the BJA Drug Market Intervention (DMI) Training and Technical Assistance Initiative provided by Michigan State University (MSU), and representatives from Newark, West Memphis, and Wilmington will be attending as well.

In November, Camden will receive grant technical assistance from Ms. Joan Brody. Camden is also exploring options for assistance with community perception surveys, with Dr. Elizabeth Groff of Temple University. Camden is interested in learning how surveys in the community can facilitate better understanding of the impact of policing strategies and overall community perspectives on public safety.

Be sure to check back next quarter for details on Camden's work with Detective John Skaggs of the Los Angeles Police Department and Assistant Head Deputy District Attorney John Colello of the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office during their visit to Camden to discuss homicide investigation strategies and to illustrate their experiences and successes in improving outcomes for homicide investigations.



Attendees from the Camden, Detroit, Oakland/Richmond, and Wilmington VRN sites at the Yale University SNA training.

As year one of VRN concludes, we are pleased to announce the new Chicago VRN Strategic Site Liaison (SSL), Commissioner Paul Evans, Jr., who is retired from the Boston Police Department. Commissioner Evans began working with the Chicago VRN site this quarter to assist in coordinating VRN-related activities and preparing the site for the VRN Summit held in September. While we will certainly miss the expertise and guidance from Chicago's year one VRN SSL, Commissioner Ed Davis, we welcome Commissioner Evans to the Network and look forward to his leadership.

During this quarter, <u>Blue Courage</u> training was provided to officers of the Chicago Police Department (CPD), and additional trainings are scheduled in December. In a strategic partnership with BJA, Blue Courage training is an educational process for law enforcement professionals that focuses on personal development, with the goal of encouraging a guardian mindset and philosophy.

In July, Chief of Crime Control Strategies Robert Tracy, of CPD, spoke during the <u>VRN Webinar: Utilizing</u>
<u>Social Network Analysis to Reduce Violent Crime</u>
to share the strategies and real-time impact of using SNA in Chicago to reduce violence. In addition, VRN site team members conducted a site visit to Chicago in July to learn about Chicago's current violence reduction efforts (e.g., CompStat, technology analytics, focused deterrence, gun violence) and to identify opportunities for VRN assistance.

One of Chicago's VRN priorities is addressing gun violence. In July 2015, CPD began working with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) to initiate eTrace, an Internet-based firearms tracing and analysis tracking process, to gather sourcing information to support police investigations. This ATF assistance resulted from the site visit meeting from the VRN team to Chicago in mid-July. Following the meeting, key administrators from CPD and ATF have had several meetings to set up the IT batch upload connection and to discuss how to improve firearms tracking procedures. ATF Branch Chief of the National Tracing Center, Ed Stely, will meet with CPD IT personnel this fall to examine the best route to migrate CPD firearms data directly to the Tracing Center. In addition, ATF will continue to assist the department in expediting gun traces that are now done manually. Currently, 12 CPD officers are detailed to ATF to work on the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) follow-up, firearms trafficking, and long-term gang conspiracy cases.

Representatives from CPD are looking forward to visiting the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)-led El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) in El Paso, Texas, in the next quarter to learn about the resources and technologies that EPIC has to offer. In addition, VRN is currently scheduling Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Media Training to be delivered next quarter as well.



The VRN Detroit site kicked off the quarter with training on SNA at Yale University with Dr. Andrew Papachristos. SNA is the analysis of social relationships between people. This assists law enforcement in identifying and mapping important crime-involved individuals based upon their social positions and structure.

Through VRN, the FBI offered assistance to Detroit in getting connected with the FBI's Digital Billboard <u>Initiative</u> ("e-Billboards"). The Digital Billboard Initiative began in 2007 and has been helping to catch criminals and improve public safety ever since. The first picture of a fugitive went up on the billboard in the first week of August. Within two months, due to law enforcement efforts, the fugitive was brought into custody.

During the quarter, BJA worked with the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) to enhance the existing Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation **Program** (SSSPP) in the Third Circuit Court of Michigan (covering Wayne County).

In September, the city of Detroit was host to hundreds of federal, state, and local law enforcement professionals for the 2015 VRN Summit, where Deputy Attorney General Sally Q. Yates and Assistant Attorney General Karol V. Mason of the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) announced the expansion of VRN to five additional sites. Numerous representatives from the Detroit VRN partner agencies attended.

Looking ahead to the next quarter, the Detroit team plans to visit the New York City Police Department (NYPD) to explore technologies and will also be joining several other VRN sites for a site visit and peer exchange to the DEA-led EPIC.

Next quarter, we look forward to sharing more about upcoming Blue Courage training.

Detroit continues to move forward with the implementation of Michigan State University (MSU) graduate student analysts in the VRN Detroit partner agencies, as well as its work with domestic violence fatality review.



First suspect posted on FBI Digital Billboard in Detroit in August 2015.

This quarter, the Oakland/Richmond VRN site continued strengthening relationships between the partner agencies through on-site training, technical assistance, and the development of a technology working group and a regional case review process.

As follow-up to the visit to the DEA's EPIC last quarter, on-site training was provided by EPIC in July to over 50 individuals from the VRN partner agencies. The training included an introduction to and training on the EPIC Portal and Law Enforcement Inquiry Alerts (LEIA) system, EPIC IT structure and support, and an unclassified command brief.

FBI Media Training was also provided to the Oakland/ Richmond site this quarter. This training provides executives with specific strategies for thoughtful discussion about police-related incidents that become news stories and strategies to effectively communicate and build positive relationships with the media.

Since the inception of VRN, existing relationships between local and federal law enforcement agencies in the Oakland/Richmond area have been strengthened, and many federal agencies now participate in weekly and monthly meetings with the Oakland Police Department (OPD) and Richmond Police Department (RPD). With the increased collaboration, the ATF, through the Richmond Enhanced Enforcement Initiative, embedded three full-time ATF special agents in the RPD; the FBI has assisted the OPD in arresting high-profile criminals; and additional support from the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) Northern California Task Force resulted in the arrests of three homicide suspects in Richmond. In addition, the DEA, the FBI, Homeland Security Investigations, and the USMS began participating in community outreach activities with the RPD. This quarter, these agencies participated in the RPD's Safe City Summer: Crime Prevention Public Safety Fair, where over 4,000 community members were educated on each federal law enforcement agency's role in assisting the RPD. Also, the USMS is preparing to kick off a fugitive operation to support the OPD, and the FBI continues to support the local agencies.

Another priority for Oakland/Richmond is focusing on the "right people at the right time." Thus, to date, agencies have received two training sessions in SNA. The first training, in spring 2015, educated executives about the utility of SNA. The second training, in August, provided analysts with technical skills, including hands-on laboratory learning on how to use R Studio and SafetyNet software for high-level analyses. Analysts appreciated learning new ways to look at and present data, how to better refine networks and identify significant individuals based on centrality, and examples of how Kansas City's No Violence Alliance has operationalized SNA. Analysts noted that following the training, they plan to incorporate these skills to build networks as well as educate others on the concept of SNA. RPD has since initiated a joint SNA effort with the FBI to identify violent offenders and potential victims of retaliatory violence, and OPD plans to enhance its SNA activities related to violence reduction operations (e.g.,

Oakland/Richmond, California

The partner agencies have developed a **technology** working group, which will hold its first meeting in November. BJA Senior Policy Advisor Mike Roosa will attend to discuss the recommendations from the technology review conducted in February 2015. The site is also planning a regional case review process.

Ceasefire, conducting group audits).

The Oakland/Richmond site continues to explore training and resources related to procedural justice and body-worn cameras, among other topics.



DEA Special Agents participate in a Richmond community event on August 22, 2015.

This guarter, the VRN Wilmington site participated in numerous trainings and attended a valuable peer exchange. In July, Wilmington Police Department (WPD) representatives participated in BJA's Major

Crime Scene Preliminary Investigation Trainthe-Trainer program, and in August, Wilmington received Blue Courage and SNA trainings.

Supervisors from Wilmington's Homicide Unit traveled to Richmond, Virginia, to visit the **Richmond Police Department** and shadow Richmond's homicide unit to observe its best practices. Observing how Richmond handles homicide cases and how it builds its analytic capacity provided a comprehensive overview of the culture of the Richmond Police Department and also illustrated

how well Richmond works with the community.

Two analysts from the EPIC in El Paso, Texas, visited WPD and held a one-day intelligence summit. The analysts also met with personnel from the Delaware Information and Analysis Center (DIAC) and discovered that records entered into the DIAC were also entered into EPIC. Wilmington analysts were provided access to the EPIC portal to assist with information sharing, and EPIC developed an afteraction report to share with the VRN team.

In September, police officers, community residents, attorneys from the state prosecutor's office, and city inspectors from the city of Wilmington came together for the National Crime Prevention Council's **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** (CPTED) Training. During the training, attendees were broken up into working groups to develop community action plans and to begin working on

> strategies to improve selected neighborhoods. The training was a huge success, and a lot of positive feedback was provided from community members, police officers, and city inspectors. They all indicated that this was the first time that they had worked together on these community issues.

Wilmington, Delaware

Next guarter, Wilmington will

send five individuals to the crime

analysis training at Temple University, including Wilmington Police Chief Bobby Cummings. This training serves as a way for the department to build a relationship with Temple University and assist with the new Real Time Crime Center (set to go online in early 2016). Wilmington is also scheduling Homicide Management training as a top priority.



CPTED Training Attendees

"The opportunity to bring together community members, along with key personnel from the attorney general's office, public safety, and the various city departments was a major step in building the foundation of a comprehensive approach in crime prevention within our neighborhoods."

> -Mr. Doug Iardella, Wilmington Public Safety Liaison **CPTED Training**

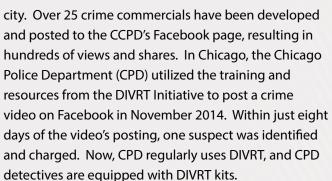


Federal Law Enforcement Resources Spotlight

FBI Digital Imaging Video Response Team (DIVRT) Initiative

As an integral part of the FBI's 10-point VRN violence reduction strategy, the DIVRT Initiative has demonstrated success not only across the country but in multiple VRN sites. The DIVRT Initiative provides free training to local law enforcement to develop the skills needed to perform rapid recovery and extraction of video evidence to produce "crime commercials" for use in traditional and social media platforms. Through the DIVRT Initiative, these commercials aid law enforcement in solving crimes and improving relationships between the police and impacted communities. The FBI also provides specialized DIVRT kits to aid in this process.

DIVRT training has been delivered to all five of the VRN Phase 1 sites, and many have already benefited from the technologies and skills developed through this initiative.
Last quarter, we highlighted the
Camden County Police Department's
(CCPD) success in using DIVRT for
all-crime video commercials in the



As VRN expands the Network to 10 sites, the FBI will conduct DIVRT training in Philadelphia next quarter for the new sites.

DEA Office of Financial Operations



In the last edition of the VRN Quarterly Newsletter, the DEArun EPIC was featured as a resource available to the VRN sites. Another DEA effort we would like to highlight is the Office of Financial Operations

(FO). DEA's mission is to disrupt and dismantle Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs). Part of the strategy of every major investigation is to target the financial infrastructure of the DTOs and seize the drug-related proceeds. The FO provides financial investigative support, guidance, training, and tools for domestic and foreign field offices. The FO has subject-matter experts (SMEs) to engage with criminal investigators, intelligence analysts, and diversion investigators to help identify money-laundering methodologies, techniques, and patterns, in order to develop countermeasures to seize and forfeit drug proceeds and assets and

arrest drug traffickers and money launderers. For VRN sites that may be experiencing the movement of drug proceeds through money remitters (e.g., Western Union, Money Gram), the DEA FO has experts who are capable of using the financial infrastructure of DTOs operating in the VRN cities. The FO also provides financial investigative tools for the field to conduct proactive undercover money-laundering operations. The FO engages with the private sector financial and banking industries to identify current money-laundering trends. For more information about the DEA FO, please contact your DOJ Law Enforcement Champion.



Resource Spotlight—BJA NTTAC

BJA National Training and Technical Assistance Center (NTTAC)

To achieve safer communities nationwide, the BJA NTTAC connects criminal justice professionals to the resources they need to improve outcomes at the state, local, or tribal level. The BJA NTTAC works to improve the criminal justice system by providing rapid, expert, coordinated, and data-driven training and technical assistance (TTA)



to support practitioners in reducing crime, recidivism, and unnecessary confinement. The vision of the BJA NTTAC is to:

- ★ Provide guidance to grantees and nongrantee criminal justice professionals to replicate model programs and approaches.
- ★ Increase knowledge and use of best practices, emerging technologies, and proven strategies.
- ★ Assist agencies and jurisdictions in identifying and addressing operational and programmatic needs.

The BJA NTTAC can provide free TTA to address your community's justice-related challenges through a wide variety of services across many justice areas to address the unique needs of your community.

Service Areas

- ★ Assistance in Implementing Evidence-Based Programs
- **★** Curriculum Development
- ★ Data Analysis
- ★ On-Site and Distance Learning Training
- ★ Peer-to-Peer Visits
- ★ Research and Information Requests
- ★ Strategic Planning Assistance

Assistance can include providing on-site and distance learning training opportunities and/or on-site and off-site technical assistance from subject-matter experts. Each VRN site has access to a wide variety of TTA services through the NTTAC based on the greatest needs of the site. Funding is available for two to three TTA engagements per year per VRN site. The BJA NTTAC has supported TTA topics such as crime analysis technical assistance, specialized law enforcement training programs, and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design training. Visit https://www.bjatraining.org/media/tta-spotlight to learn more about the coordinated TTA approach for Wilmington in a recent BJA NTTAC TTA Spotlight article.

For more information on the BJA NTTAC, visit our Web site at https://www.bjatraining.org. If you are interested in pursuing TTA through the BJA NTTAC, please work with your VRN Strategic Site Liaison to connect with the BJA NTTAC.

Resource Spotlight—OJP Diagnostic Center

Using Data for Comprehensive and Sustainable Violent Crime Reduction in Gary, Indiana

By: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center



You read about the Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center in the last edition of the VRN Newsletter. Learn more about our approach to attacking violent crime and how we have helped Gary, Indiana:

Gary, Indiana, exemplifies how data-driven TTA enhances performance and accountability. Beginning in January 2013, the city of Gary and the Gary Police Department (GPD) requested support from the Diagnostic Center to design a holistic approach to improve public safety and reduce violent crime. Involved in multiple federal initiatives—including two White House initiatives, Strong Cities, Strong Communities and My Brother's Keeper—Gary specifically requested our assistance in developing a comprehensive crime control strategy.

To help the city in this endeavor, we partnered with a broad range of law enforcement, academic, and government organizations to identify challenges and response models. Our Diagnostic Specialists teamed with law enforcement subject-matter experts in homicide prevention, investigations, and task force operations to develop a diagnostic methodology. The Diagnostic Specialists implementing that methodology conducted interviews, gathered qualitative information, and analyzed quantitative data to identify trends and patterns in violent crime.

Based on the Diagnostic Analysis, the Diagnostic Center developed a series of recommendations to address Gary's community safety needs. As a result of our recommendations, Gary is building a comprehensive community safety and violent crime reduction strategy. Working with the Diagnostic Center has also enabled Gary to access a host of

resources available across DOJ, which—coupled with the support the community is receiving from other federal initiatives—has allowed the city to develop a more coordinated approach to its overarching community safety strategy. Based on our guidance and the coordinated support provided by a host of federal partners, including the BJA NTTAC, Gary is also implementing multiple TTA initiatives to improve public safety and reduce violent crime within the community, including crime analysis TTA, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, communications technical assistance, and the National Network for Safe Communities' Ceasefire University.

The Diagnostic Center helped Gary to understand that engaging its entire community of stakeholders is critical to addressing violent crime in a comprehensive manner. By thinking strategically and working with community stakeholders to tackle violent crime in a targeted way, the GPD is now working with this expanded team in addressing crime holistically. Data enabled the diagnosis; the community is driving the results.

For more information regarding the Diagnostic Analysis and TTA initiatives in Gary, please see the Gary Engagement Summary, available at: https://ojpdiagnosticcenter.org/sites/default/files/spotlight/download/Gary%20Engagement%20 Summary.PDF.









VRN Web Site

The VRN Web site provides:

- ★ An extensive Resource Library of violence reduction-related materials.
- ★ Items of Interest, including research briefs, previous editions of the VRN Weekly News, the VRN Quarterly Newsletter, and more.
- ★ Secure access to VRN site technical assistance and resource delivery tracking, site team calendars, contact information, and more.

VRN Webinars

In addition to training, technical assistance, peer exchanges, and other DOJ resources, VRN strives to provide alternative networking and training mediums through online Webinars, as an interactive way for executives from the VRN sites to highlight local efforts and complement the speaker presentations. In the first year, VRN delivered nine Webinars to the Network on the following topics:

- **★** Top Offender Lists
- ★ Valor Executive Briefing
- ★ Innovative Strategies to Address Youth Violence
- ★ Community Engagement in High-Violence Neighborhoods
- ★ Strategies to Address Witness Intimidation
- **★** VRN Virtual Forum
- ★ Strategies to Improve Homicide Investigations and Increase Clearance Rates
- ★ Utilizing Social Network Analysis to Reduce Violent Crime
- ★ The New Era in Community Policing

To access these and

To access these and other resources, visit VRNetwork.org



To access all of the VRN Webinars, visit the VRN Web site at https://vrnetwork.org/Home/ItemsOfInterest/

VRNWebinars

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