

# Memorandum



**Date:** February 23, 2017

**To:** Honorable Chairman Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

March 7, 2017  
Agenda Item No. 2B1

**From:** Carlos A. Gimenez  
Mayor

**Subject:** Report on Antiviolence Initiatives – Directive 150455

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The following information is provided in response to Resolution No. R-339-15 adopted by the Board of County Commissioners (Board) directing the administration to prepare reports outlining the progress of the North-End Street Violence Task Force (NSVTF), identifying areas within Miami-Dade County that would benefit from the creation of a task force similar to the NSVTF, and identifying existing Miami-Dade County resources; to create a plan for the initiation of partnerships with other local, federal, and state law enforcement agencies, as well as community and faith-based organizations that can encourage the community in high-crime areas to participate in the social services, crime prevention, and community outreach programs provided by the Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD).

On November 25, 2013, the MDPD's Homicide Bureau (HB) enacted the NSVTF. Since that time, the NSVTF has expanded to incorporate the south-end of the County and to address the increase in violent crimes and shooting incidents in area during 2015. The expansion of the NSVTF to the south was determined to be the most cost effective and efficient manner in which to address these issues.

As a result of this expansion, on August 27, 2015, the NSVTF was renamed the Homicide Street Violence Task Force (HSVTF). Since its inception, the HSVTF has had many successes, as evidenced by the following statistical data:

- 31 of the 40 most violent offenders identified at the inception of the HSVTF have been arrested on charges ranging from murder, attempted murder, narcotics trafficking, firearms possession, and witness tampering;
- To date, the HSVTF has arrested a total of 358 individuals with violent criminal pasts, and recovered 142 handguns and 25 rifles;
- The HSVTF detectives have initiated eleven (11) Title III wire intercepts, 29 pen registers, multiple drug seizures, executed 131 search warrants, and seized 3,655 grams of marijuana, 1,795 kilograms of cocaine, and \$194,188 in U.S. currency;
- The HSVTF detectives were also crucial in the investigation of a criminal gang organization responsible for Internal Revenue Service (IRS) fraud in excess of \$2 million;

- The HSVTF detectives have obtained 19 documented Confidential Informants (CIs) and several other sources, who have provided information that have furthered investigations. It is anticipated that additional CIs and sources will be developed.

The clearance rate for homicides occurring in Miami-Dade County was 40 percent in 2014, 44 percent in 2015, and 47 percent in 2016. The HB investigated a total of 101 homicides within Miami-Dade County in 2016. This figure, compared to 94 homicides investigated during the same period in 2015, reflects a 7 percent decrease. The Board is currently provided with bi-monthly reports outlining the activities and results of the HSVTF.

Recognizing the importance of developing partnerships with other municipal and federal law enforcement agencies, the HSVTF has developed an ongoing investigative partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Miami Police Department. A Memorandum of Understanding has been entered into with the FBI and the City of Miami in order to maximize the impact on violent crimes. Additionally, the FBI has provided considerable resources to the effort, in the form of personnel and financial commitments. In addition, the State Attorney's Office is an integral part of the HSVTF, attending weekly meetings and prosecuting violent offenders.

The HSVTF has also reached out to multiple law enforcement agencies within Miami-Dade County in order to offer assistance in addressing violent crimes and explaining the HSVTF model. Currently, multiple short and long-term operations with local, federal, and state law enforcement agencies are underway that strategically target escalating gun violence. Weekly briefings are held with law enforcement agencies to provide the status of investigations and to gather intelligence.

The HSVTF attends community forums with faith-based organizations to address concerns and open a dialogue with residents. The community's ability to speak openly with detectives is key to a successful investigation and prosecution. To date, HSVTF detectives have attended 72 community forums.

Currently, the HSVTF targets high-crime areas involving violent crimes and shootings in both the northern and the southern parts of the County. Additionally, as other areas are identified in other law enforcement jurisdictions, operations are conducted with the participation of municipal, state, and federal partners. As a result, the entire County is receiving the benefit and services of the HSVTF.

MDPD utilizes social media to communicate directly with the public. By connecting via social media outlets, MDPD can interact with a large and diverse audience. Currently, MDPD utilizes Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, to disseminate information in a timely manner. Those sites serve as a one-stop source for information. MDPD also uses social media to help solve crimes by encouraging citizens to submit tips and information with programs such as Nextdoor, which is a free, private social network for neighborhoods that allows users to connect

with their neighbors in order to assist in crime spotting. In August 2016, MDPD deployed a new mobile collaboration tool, Community on Patrol (COP) Application. COP allows citizens to submit information to the MDPD that may require police attention.

Through the District Major's Community Outreach Program, MDPD's command staff, accompanied by Neighborhood Resource Unit (NRU) officers and staff from associated governmental agencies, Florida Department of Children and Families, and the State Attorney's Office, walk door-to-door, meeting and talking to residents and business owners about their concerns, educating the citizens on police efforts and encouraging participation in community forums. These community outreaches are aimed at strengthening police/community relations, building partnerships, obtaining "buy-in" for a project or community plan, and improving communications and public awareness while identifying problems and potential solutions.

Miami-Dade County and MDPD have multiple programs that encourage the community in high-crime areas to participate in social services, crime prevention, and community outreach. For example, the Community Outreach Section (COS) of the HSVTF is dedicated to building community relationships with local clergy, community stakeholders, and school districts. The COS has demonstrated a unique ability to gather real-time intelligence through its community relationships in order to enhance and further criminal investigations. The COS works hand-in-hand with homicide investigators and victim advocates, which has resulted in investigators working with residents, business owners, and apartment complex managers in areas that have been plagued by violent crime and criminal organizations. The COS will continue to strategically target high-crime areas in order to obtain intelligence.

#### **COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICING SQUAD**

The Community-Oriented Policing Squad (COPS), employs specially trained officers who conduct community-oriented policing to serve the varied communities within the County. These officers' responsibilities include proactive patrolling of their assigned neighborhoods either by vehicle, bicycle, or foot patrol; responding to calls for service including traffic enforcement, crowd control, and surveillance details; attending community meetings and interacting with local residents to gather information regarding community concerns and issues; and referring perceived issues within these neighborhoods to the appropriate governmental or private agencies.

COPS works to increase community cooperation with law enforcement, address community concerns more efficiently, and create visible police presence to deter crime and resolve quality of life issues that affect the community. Specialized enforcement techniques such as truancy sweeps and school zone radar enforcement details also help keep our youths safe.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE SQUAD**

The MDPD's Community Service Squads (CSS) have been created in certain police districts to address community issues such as: traffic enforcement, high visibility patrols in specific areas of concern, and crowd control. CSS officers conduct police officer familiarization and crime prevention presentations for citizen groups and schools, serve as co-advisors for the District's Police Explorer Post, and support programs such as Students Together Against Negative Decisions (STAND), Stranger Danger, and Anti-bullying.

CSS officers partner with residents, business owners, and school personnel to develop effective methods of crime prevention. Crime Watch programs create a forum for citizens and law enforcement to exchange information for the betterment of the community. Quality of life issues such as litter, abandoned vehicles, building condition, structural damage, and pollution are addressed with the assistance of the Regulatory and Economic Resources Department.

### **DRUG ABUSE RESISTANCE EDUCATION (DARE)**

DARE is a ten-week curriculum taught by police officers to 5<sup>th</sup> grade students for the purpose of teaching positive alternatives to substance abuse and gang violence. DARE seeks to build student's self-esteem, interpersonal skills, positive choices, and bullying. Currently, the MDPD DARE program is taught to over 10,000 students per year in 67 Miami-Dade County Public Schools. DARE officers also discuss topics like internet safety, stranger danger, and bullying prevention. DARE officers also participate in Career Days at schools and Parent/Teacher Association meetings, upon request. As of Monday, January 30, 2017, the MDPD DARE program added five additional officers. This will allow MDPD DARE to expand to cover over 120 schools a year.

### **GUN BOUNTY PROGRAM**

The Bounty Program is a partnership between local law enforcement and Miami-Dade Crime Stoppers. It is aimed at deterring the illegal possession and use of guns in the County. Any person who reports a subject who is illegally possessing or illegally using a firearm is eligible for a \$1,000 reward when the subject is arrested and a gun is seized. Marketing materials are disseminated throughout the County to increase community awareness. From June 1, 2007, through December 31, 2016, a total of 902 guns were seized from the streets and 583 arrests were made. A total of \$583,000 has been awarded since the program's inception. Other items recovered as a result of the Gun Bounty Program include: narcotics valued at \$6,987,991; U.S. currency amounting to \$416,492, 130 stolen firearms nine (9) stolen vehicles valued at \$142,000; nine (9) bullet-resistant vests; one (1) live hand grenade; one (1) pipe bomb; five (5) police badges; one (1) taser, and one (1) radar gun.

### **JOIN A TEAM, NOT GANG**

The Join a Team, Not a Gang program is a year-round gang prevention program that primarily targets elementary school children ages 7 to 13. Two (2) officers conduct gang presentations,

and provide reliable and up-to-date information on gang activities and the dangers of joining a gang. The program encourages children to join a team as an alternative to negative behavior. Police officers provide coaching and transportation for the children who participate. The "Most Improved Student" component of the program allows at-risk students to attend special practices to meet positive role models such as the coaches and athletes from the University of Miami and Florida International University sport teams.

### **POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE**

The Miami-Dade Police Athletic League (PAL) has two (2) afterschool programs in partnership with the Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department at Martin Luther King Park and South Dade Park. There is one afterschool program with one (1) PAL officer at each center who manages a basketball league throughout the school year and cheerleading that runs in the fall.

### **OTHER PROGRAMS**

In addition to the programs mentioned above, below are some other programs and partnerships that MDPD has with other local, federal, and state law enforcement agencies and faith-based organizations to encourage the community in high-crime areas to participate in social services, crime prevention, and community outreach programs:

- Citizen Advisory Committees
- Regional Community Collaboration Against Violence
- U.S. Attorney's Office Violence Reduction
- North Miami Police Department
- Miami Police Department
- Urban Partnership Drug-Free Community Coalition
- Urban League of Greater Miami
- Miami Children's Initiative
- Citizens' Crime Watch of Miami-Dade County
- 79th Street Coalition for Change
- Family Safety Net
- North Shore Medical Center
- 93<sup>rd</sup> Street Community Baptist Church
- New Jerusalem Church of God
- Northside District's Coffee with a Cop
- Celebrating Safe Communities
- MDC's Nuisance Abatement Program
- Miami-Dade Police Citizen's Police Academy
- Call-out of faith-based organizations during community crisis events
- Forums on anti-bullying in partnership with local schools and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection through the Police Explorer Program
- Summer camps for local youth that provide hot lunches and tutoring

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- 5000 Role Model monthly meetings with the Perrine Optimist Youth Group
- Home visits with at-risk youth and promote parental involvement of these youth in different programs offered by MDPD and social organizations

Per Ordinance 14-65, this memorandum will be placed on the next available Board of County Commissioners meeting agenda.

Should you require additional information, please contact Juan J. Perez, Director, Miami-Dade Police Department at (305) 471-3272.

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