

Program Performance Report

Smart Policing Initiative (SPI) Grant Program

July–December 2011



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In times of limited law enforcement resources, identifying strategies that deliver solutions to crime problems in cost-effective ways becomes particularly important. For this reason, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) established the Smart Policing Initiative (SPI) Grant Program. This program provides financial and technical assistance to police departments that strive to identify effective tactics for addressing specific crime problems in data-driven ways. Some key components of SPI include working with a research partner to implement and evaluate the outcomes of their strategies, using various data sources when developing their strategies, seeking public input on crime issues and solutions, and promoting organizational change in using data-driven strategies, and SPI grantees often use offender-based or place-based policing strategies to address specific crime issues in their neighborhoods, such as gang violence, drugs, gun violence, robbery, and burglary.

This report is based on information from 16 Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 and 2010 grantees during the July–September 2011 reporting period and 23 FY 2009, 2010, and 2011 grantees during the October–December 2011 reporting period.¹

Accomplishments

The accomplishments described below are based on narrative replies of Smart Policing grantees. Grantees vary in the stage of implementation of their programs and thus accomplishments vary. The information presented in this section is not representative of all activities conducted with SPI funding. The report highlights some activities of SPI grantees who have reported in the Performance Measurement Tool. The efforts described are just pieces of some of individual agencies' larger, overall SPI effort.

- One grantee reported that firearms-related calls for service dropped 19% and drug-related calls for service dropped 27% in targeted areas.
- One grantee reported an 8-week period without a single homicide in the targeted area, which was a record for that target area for at least the last 25 years.
- One grantee's findings suggest a statistically significant relationship between truancy rates in the city and burglary-related crime. Specifically, the research suggests that truancy precedes burglary by 1 to 3 years.
- Multiple grantees have presented their findings and/or been honored at national conferences, including the Problem-Oriented Policing Conference, the Western Association of Criminal Justice Conference, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) conference, and the Smart Policing Initiative (SPI) National Conference.
- Grantees are communicating the work of their SPI programs across their agencies. Grantees have created bulletins such as Chronic Offender Bulletins or Top 10 or 100 Violent Offender Bulletins that are shared with other members of their respective agencies.
- Grantees have also used various forms of media to educate the community about crime prevention and the efforts of SPI. Examples of these include distributing community newsletters about crime prevention and upcoming community events; developing public service announcements (PSAs) and billboards (at times in languages other than English) about crime prevention and awareness; and creating a Smart Policing Initiative brochure available to community members in the police station's lobby and online. One grantee also has a Community Outreach Liaison who has presented programs at community centers; another grantee has made presentations to over 600 students and parents about prescription drug abuse.

¹ This report is based on self-reported grantee data from the Performance Measurement Tool (PMT).

- Grantees have also formed meaningful partnerships with other agencies, including local and state law enforcement agencies; intelligence operating centers; DrugFree.org; prosecutor offices; the U.S. Attorney General; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); and universities. These partnerships may help spread Smart Policing ideas to other agencies and offer a possible regional approach to SPI for some grantees.
- As a core component of the SPI program, several grantees have started evaluating their SPI efforts. To measure the interventions, one grantee will be using a pre-post design and a quasi-experimental design with comparison areas. Grantees are also conducting process evaluations, which measure the extent to which the strategy was implemented, and/or impact evaluations, which measure the extent to which the strategy worked or reached its goal.

Key Observations

- Thirty-one percent of grantees in the July–September 2011 reporting period established active links to outside data systems, including the Law Enforcement Exchange (LEX) System, the Driver and Vehicle Information Database (DAVID), the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), the Federal Citizen Information Center (FCIC), and various court management systems. Seventeen percent of grantees established such active links during the October–December 2011 reporting period.
- Between the two reporting periods, 40 percent of grantees on average had their research partners provide interim results to police leadership, which included a presentation of a year-long evaluation and monthly data summaries.
- Sixty-nine percent of grantees in July–September 2011 and 65 percent in October–December 2011 had established new ways to communicate the goals and results of their work within the organization. These include a SPI informative brochure available in the police station lobby and on the police department's Web site, informational meetings with command staff, shift-change briefings to explain the goals of the SPI program, and articles about data-driven approaches published in the police department's monthly newsletter.
- Thirty-one percent of grantees in July–September 2011 and 35 percent in October–December 2011 used new data sources in their analyses. These data sources included social and physical disorder surveys, census data, city revenue data, housing data, data from relatives of target offenders, and hospital data.

Key Performance Measures

The performance measures reported describe activities SPI grantees are conducting in order to achieve their goal of crime reduction. SPI grantees conduct evaluations of their efforts, but this information is not reported with performance measures.

Measure	Data Elements Used to Calculate Measure	Definition	Interpretation
Revision of Strategic Plan	Number of grantees that revised a strategic plan	A strategic plan is the global plan for the SPI grant project. The strategic plan may include the overall goals for the SPI Grant.	Strategic plans may change when research suggests that a new global plan is needed. Strategic plans may change infrequently.
Revision or Implementation of a New Tactical Plan	Number of grantees that revised or implemented a new tactical plan	A tactical plan usually includes the day-to-day activities of the SPI project.	Tactical plans may change more frequently after day-to-day activities are implemented.
Number of Trainings on Evidence-based or Data-Driven Topics	Number of internal or external trainings on evidence-based or data-driven topics or practices attended by individuals in the department of organization	Internal trainings are held in house and conducted by the organization or agency. External trainings are conducted and held outside of the organization or agency.	Trainings share knowledge and understanding of SPI topics with individuals working directly with SPI, as well as organization-wide. Training also promotes sharing of knowledge between individuals working toward the same goal. Trainings for individuals not directly working with SPI may also suggest that SPI theories and practices are being integrated agency- or department-wide.
Policies or Standard Operating Procedures Created or Updated	Number of policies created or updated that address evidence-based or data-driven practices Number of standard operating procedures created or updated that address evidence-based or data-driven practices	A policy provides an overarching philosophy and organizational position concerning a topic. It establishes a general goal to be achieved and principles underlying its achievement. A standard operating procedure (SOP) outlines the specific means or steps a department wants or requires officers to take (or not take) to meet the goal or policy. Procedures are also the underpinning of department training necessary to achieve the goal as stated in the policy.	Creating and updating of policies and standard operating procedures may show that the practices and lessons of the SPI strategy are being integrated throughout a department or agency.
Data Sources	Number of grantees incorporating new data sources	Data sources are the types of data used in analysis.	Use of new data sources may show that a program is looking to innovative data to help with data assessment.

Graphs of Performance Measures

The performance measures reported describe activities SPI grantees are conducting in order to achieve their goal of crime reduction. SPI grantees conduct evaluations of their efforts, but this information is not reported with performance measures.

Figure 1. Number of Grantees that Revised a Strategic Plan

A strategic plan is the global plan for the SPI grant project. The strategic plan may include the overall goals for the SPI Grant.

During the July–September 2011 reporting period, 25 percent of grantees revised a strategic plan. This increased to 39 percent in October–December 2011.

Strategic plans may change when research suggests that a new global plan is needed. Strategic plans may change infrequently.

For example, one grantee changed the scope of their strategic plan to focus on a larger geographic region, since analysis showed that the target problem was not limited to one area. The grantee changed their strategic plan to also include other police departments, which fostered exchange of regional data on the targeted problem.

Another grantee, through data analysis, changed their strategic plan to be more group-based rather than place-based effort. The grantee made this change after discovering that the same individuals or groups were targeting a large region with drug activity. The grantee believed that focusing on key individuals and groups would be more effective than focusing on a location. Data revealed that when a location was targeted, the individuals or groups would just move to another area and continue the drug activity.

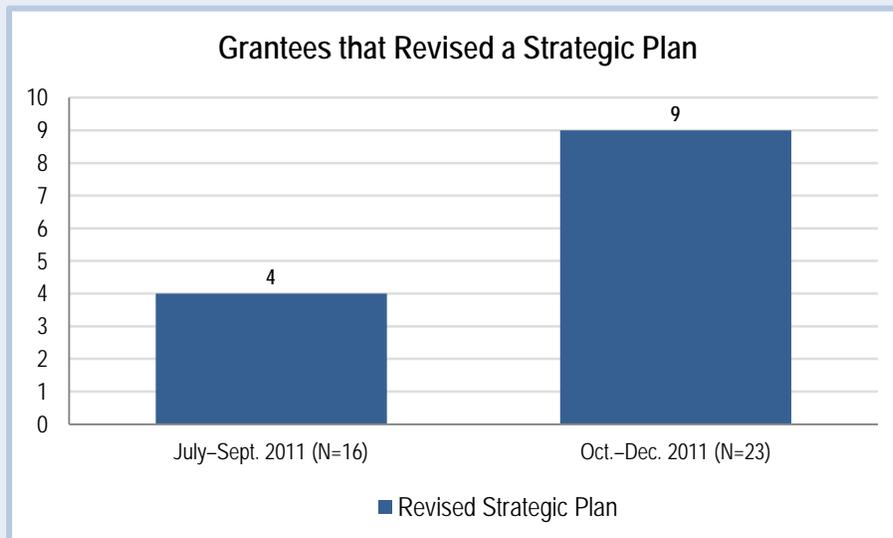
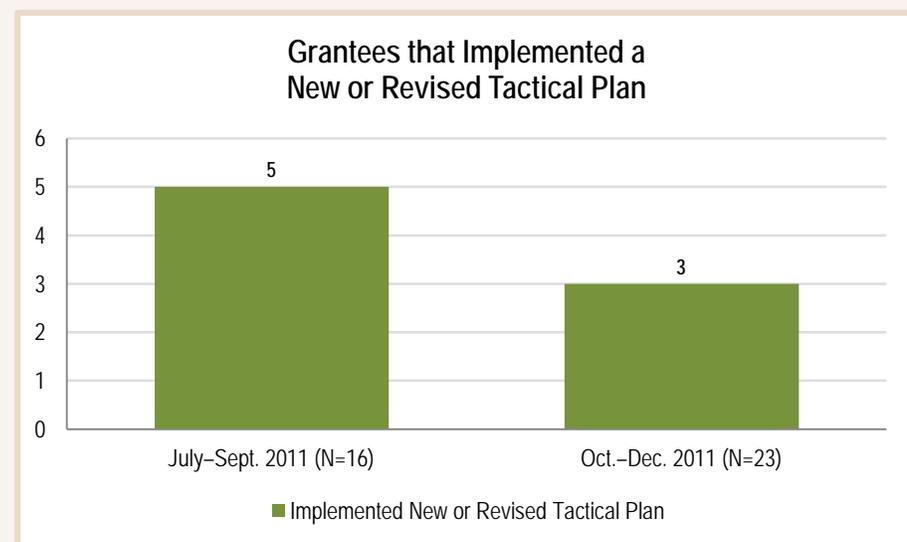


Figure 2. Number of Grantees that Implemented a New or Revised Tactical Plan



A tactical plan usually includes the day-to-day activities of the SPI project. Tactical plans may change more frequently after day-to-day activities are implemented. Tactical plans also may change more frequently than strategic plans.

During this reporting period, 31 percent of grantees implemented a new or revised a tactical plan in July–September 2011. This decreased to 13 percent in October–December 2011.

For example, one grantee implemented a new tactical plan deploying officers on bikes to hot-spot areas that were especially violent during the summer

months. Another grantee described how officers and a crime analyst are developing bulletins that describe the worst chronic offenders in the area, and then sharing this information with patrol officers through the Internet. Another grantee reported that data showed a spike in robberies during the holidays. Through this data analysis, surveillance was conducted on specific holiday dates within high-crime zones.

Figure 3. Number of Trainings on Evidence-based or Data-Driven Topics

Trainings share knowledge and understanding of SPI topics with individuals directly working with SPI, as well as organization-wide. Training also promotes sharing of knowledge between individuals working toward the same goal. For example, an agency may provide an agency-wide training with an expert in the specific SPI strategy being implemented.

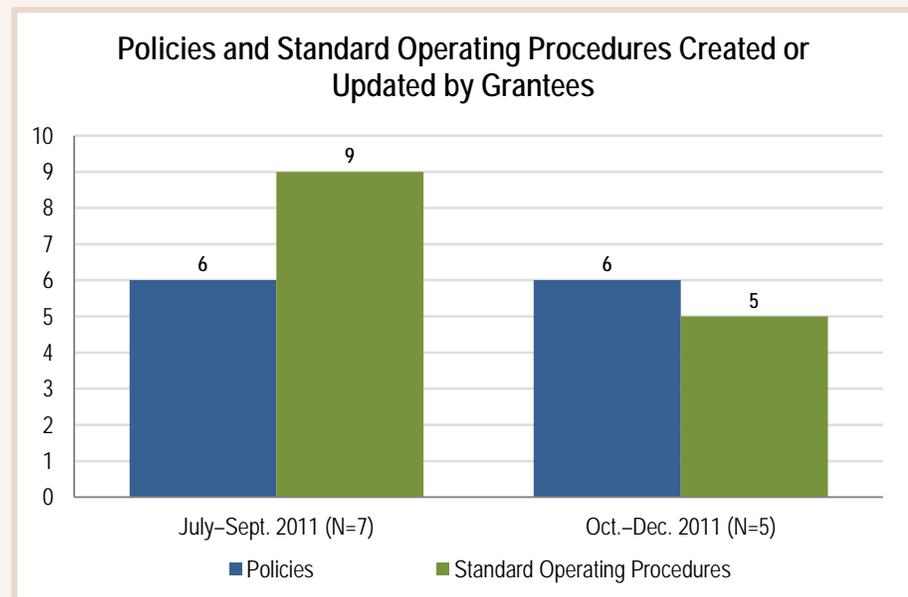
During July–September 2011, 9 grantees reported having 29 internal and/or external trainings. During October–December 2011, 12 grantees reported having 34 trainings.

Examples of trainings included one grantee hiring a national expert on racial profiling, who led a training called “Fair and Impartial Policing: A Science-based Perspective.” The training also reached multiple levels within and outside the agency, with command staff, deputies, detectives, and community leaders and members attending.

Other examples of grantee trainings include programs on HUMINT, or intelligence gathered by interpersonal contact, which increased the quality of intelligence gathering by law enforcement. Multiple grantees also trained crime analysts on SPI-related software, such as for mapping and analysis.



Figure 4. Number of Policies and Standard Operating Procedures Created or Updated by Grantees



A policy provides an overarching philosophy and organizational position concerning a topic. It establishes a general goal to be achieved and principles underlying its achievement.

A standard operating procedure (SOP) outlines the specific means or steps a department wants or requires officers to take (or not take) to meet the goal or policy. Procedures are also the underpinning of department training necessary to achieve the goal as stated in the policy.

Between the two reporting periods, 12 policies and 14 standard operating procedures were created or updated. Nine unique grantees also updated or created policies or standard operating procedures.

One grantee reported that a main focus is on organizational policies and procedures, and SPI efforts have reached many levels in their organization. For example, frontline and mid-level managers are included in the SPI process and are helping to facilitate the use of evidence-based practices and to plan future trainings on the topic.

Figure 5. Number of Grantees that Added New Data Sources

Data sources are the types of data used in analysis. Use of new data sources may show that a program is looking to incorporate innovative data to help with data assessment.

In July–September 2011, 5 grantees added new data sources to their data analysis, increasing to 8 grantees in October–December 2011.

Between July–September and October–December 2011, 9 unique grantees have added new data sources, including social and physical disorder surveys, census data, city revenue data, housing data, data from interviews with relatives of target offenders about offenders’ habits such as drug and alcohol use, information received from victim interviews, survey data from law enforcement about gangs, and hospital data.

