

REDUCING GUN VIOLENCE: AN  
OVERVIEW OF NEW YORK CITY'S  
STRATEGIES

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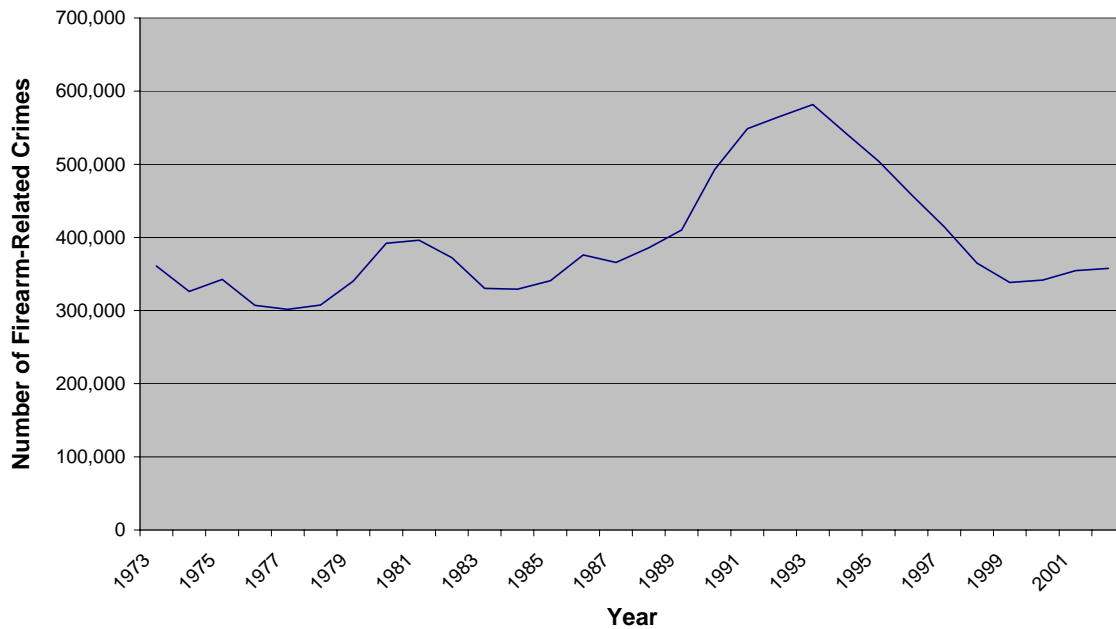


## Introduction

Gun violence and trafficking of small arms are growing problems worldwide. Firearms killed 40,000 Brazilians last year, according to the nongovernmental organization Viva Rio, and 300,000 Brazilians have died as a result of a firearms injury since 1991.<sup>1</sup> In the Philippines more than 6,500 people died in 2002 from firearms violence, and officials estimate that there are more than 400,000 illegal guns in the country. In South Africa, 27 people per 100,000 were murdered with a firearm in 1996—four times the rate of gun-related homicide in the United States that same year.<sup>2</sup>

In the United States, despite a historic drop in crime since 1994, there has been a slight increase in gun crimes nationally in last few years (see Figure 1).<sup>3</sup>

**Figure 1: Murders, Robberies, and Aggravated Assaults Committed with Firearms in the United States**



In 2000, the most recent year for which the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published statistics, 22,663 people died from gunshot wounds, and U.S. hospitals treated more than 55,000 non-fatal firearms injuries, up from 39,400 in 1997.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Denise Bracoccino, "Brazil Seeks to Curb Gun Crime." BBC News World Edition, Thursday, 24 July, 2003, 08:00 GMT.

<sup>2</sup> Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, *Criminal Justice Reform and Strengthening of Legal Institutions: Measures to Regulate Firearms, A Report to the Secretary-General*, New York: United Nations, Economic and Social Council, Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, 28 April 1997–9 May 1997.

<sup>3</sup> Data for Figure 1 comes from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Facts at a Glance*, "Crimes Committed With a Firearm," 12 Dec. 2003, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/glance/tables/guncrimetab.htm>.

In contrast to the recent national trends, gun violence has decreased in New York City, a leader in reducing crime. Between 1999 and 2002, the number of shooting victims in New York City fell seven percent, from 2,030 in 1999 to 1,892 in 2002. This number declined by another three percent in 2003, to 1,837. The New York City Police Department (NYPD) attributes these declines to a range of initiatives it has implemented to combat gun violence. Because gun crimes do not occur in a vacuum, the NYPD embeds specific initiatives within its broader crime-fighting strategies and collaborates with other law-enforcement agencies to supplement and fortify its efforts.

This paper is intended as a guide for law enforcement and public safety agencies in the United States and worldwide that are looking for effective strategies to reduce gun violence and gun trafficking. The paper describes some of the strategies that the NYPD, in cooperation with other government agencies, has implemented to reduce gun violence, as described by the NYPD officials who manage them. Although the department has not evaluated these programs through formal social science research, it monitors their effectiveness through its internal management processes.

## Gun Intelligence Initiatives

The NYPD depends on citizens and technology to provide investigators with information that helps them to solve cases more quickly and prevent future gun violence. The department uses several strategies to encourage citizens to share information on illegal guns; it uses this intelligence to plan operations, build cases against gun perpetrators, and to find and recover illegal guns and those who distribute them. The NYPD's use of sophisticated technology to identify crime patterns and link specific guns to crimes, even without having recovered the weapon, complements its use of human intelligence.

### Operation Gun Stop

In January 2001, the department launched Operation Gun Stop, an anonymous tips program that offered a \$500 reward to citizens who provide information leading to the arrest of a person in possession of an illegal firearm. In April 2002, the reward was increased to \$1,000 to increase participation in the program. Managed by the department's detective bureau, Operation Gun Stop allows people with information about any illegal firearms to call a toll-free hotline to make an anonymous tip that the NYPD then investigates.

For an anonymous tip to lead to an arrest, detectives must first investigate it and build a case. This can take considerable time and effort, particularly when the tip is provided by an anonymous source and follow-up information to support a request for a search

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<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, WISQARS, 12 Dec. 2003, <<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars/#nonfatal>>.



warrant is difficult to obtain. Typically, the detectives will run the name through their computer system to determine the suspect's address, prior record, and any known associates. They may then observe the suspect at home or elsewhere to see if they observe any suspicious or illegal activity. They may call the suspect in for questioning.

To guarantee anonymity, Operation Gun Stop is administered through a bank. The person who gave the tip is given a code phrase to use to call back and check to see whether there has been an arrest. (The police cannot call the tipster because his or her phone number is confidential.) If there has been an arrest, the person who gave the tip is told to go to a particular branch of a particular bank and give the teller the code phrase. The teller then pays the person in cash.

The NYPD launches a public awareness campaign every few months and advertises Operation Gun Stop on billboards and on posters in mass transit stations and buses. Each precinct has a large sign advertising Gun Stop and some precincts purchase advertisements in local newspapers. In addition, most precincts have Gun Stop posters on the walls of their arrest processing areas. When people are arrested, the police "debrief" them—they ask them whether they know of other crimes, including anybody who carries or sells guns illegally. During the debriefing, officers inform them of the Gun Stop program.

Some arrestees choose to waive their anonymity and provide officers with information about illegal guns. For example, at community meetings, officers in the 46th precinct in the Bronx hand out the Gun Stop brochure with a business card attached. People may choose to call them directly in addition to calling the anonymous tips line. Having direct contact with the informant often helps police to secure a warrant and increases the chance of arrest.

Furthermore, one precinct intelligence sergeant has observed that after people receive one reward, they are more willing to provide information about other illegal guns or crimes. He recalled the case of someone who was arrested and signed up as a confidential informant. The information he provided led to a search warrant and the recovery of a gun. During that process he learned about Gun Stop. After that, he called in a tip to the Gun Stop hotline, then went to the precinct to give the intelligence sergeant detailed information that the police used to secure a search warrant, recover a gun, and make an arrest. Having received his award, he called again, this time to report someone standing on a street corner carrying a gun. He was able to provide enough detailed information for the police to retrieve the gun and make an arrest immediately, producing another award.

From April 2002 through December 2003, the NYPD received 1,234 tips that led to the recovery of 455 illegal guns and 757 arrests.

*Keys to success.* To be effective, Gun Stop needs to attract people to give tips. The large cash reward contributes significantly to the program's success. However, Operation Gun Stop's cash reward can motivate people only if they know it exists. Therefore, a

widespread and persistent public awareness campaign is crucial to the program's success. In addition to periodically launching a widespread media campaign, the NYPD advertises Gun Stop through many of its routine activities. Police inform the public of Operation Gun Stop at monthly community meetings, when debriefing suspects, and during other interactions with community members. This daily integration of Gun Stop into normal police activities requires few additional resources.

### **Integrated Ballistics Imaging System**

Housed in the New York City Forensics Laboratory, the Integrated Ballistics Imaging System (IBIS) allows the NYPD to compare marks made on bullets and cartridge casings from different crimes to determine whether they were fired by the same gun. When a bullet is fired from a handgun or rifle, microscopic variations within the gun barrel leave markings, referred to as breachmarks, on the bullet; every gun leaves a different mark. Using the IBIS system, the NYPD takes a digital picture of the markings on every bullet casing recovered from a crime scene and every bullet that is recovered in sufficient condition to be examined. At the end of 2003 there were more than 96,000 bullet and casing images in the database. The number of matches IBIS generates has increased every year from 163 in 2001 to 310 in 2003.

When the police recover a bullet, part of a bullet, or a cartridge casing at a crime scene, the breachmarks are compared with the markings on other bullets and casings in the database. The computer identifies likely matches on the basis of the percentage of like markings. If the database finds a probable match, the two bullets are compared by a ballistics expert. If the police recover a gun, experts test-fire it to get a bullet that can be examined and entered into the database. Depending on the priority of the case, it takes four days to two weeks for the laboratory to take an image of the bullet or casing and run it through the database for likely matches. This gives investigators the capacity to link one gun to several crimes very quickly, even without recovering the gun.

Once the ballistics expert has concluded that a bullet or casing was fired from the same gun as another one in the database, he notifies the precinct, appropriate detective squad, and managers at police headquarters. If the match is to a crime for which the perpetrator has been caught, the police can investigate whether the same perpetrator committed the new crime and, if so, bring new charges against him. If not, the police can try to get information from him about who might have taken possession of the gun. When analysis reveals that the bullet came from the same gun used in another unsolved crime, the detectives investigating the two crimes will share information that can help them identify the perpetrator. For example, there may be connections between the victims or both crimes may involve a particular gang. In one case in the fall of 2003, an undercover officer bought a gun from a member of a local gang. When the gun was run through the IBIS system, he learned that the gun had been used in four shootings within the last four months. This information led the detective to focus more intensively on this gang

member to solve the shootings. Without quick access to this information, the detective might have focused his attention elsewhere, allowing a violent criminal to remain on the street.

*Keys to success.* IBIS's success as an investigative tool depends on the quick relay of information from the lab back to investigators in the field. Shootings with the same gun often occur within weeks of each other, so the faster the gun can be identified, the faster the crime can be solved and other shootings can be prevented. And because perpetrators often sell their guns when they are "hot"—after they have been used illegally—linking crimes before a perpetrator gets rid of his weapon increases the likelihood of catching the perpetrator in possession of the gun.

IBIS's impact on investigations depends on the accuracy of the information in the database. Because people collect and enter the information, IBIS's success relies heavily on the training and expertise of those screening the bullets or casings and entering the data. Each screener and data entry staff member receives two weeks of training on how to test-fire guns, take proper images, and enter images and other information into the database. This training helps prevent errors in the system. Likewise, the database can only identify probable matches. Two ballistics experts perform the final screenings comparing the bullets to determine if they were fired from the same gun. To draw accurate conclusions, these experts must be highly trained.

### **Firearms Investigation Unit**

The Firearms Investigation Unit (FIU) seeks to reduce the flow of guns onto the streets of New York City by identifying and pursuing gun traffickers. Through undercover gun buys and other investigative strategies, the FIU recovered 484 guns in 2002. Many of the FIU's efforts take place in neighborhoods identified as having the highest numbers of violent crimes, which the department calls Impact Zones. (Impact Zones are part of the department's Operation Impact, which is discussed below.)

FIU officers recruit people suspected or known to be associated with illegal firearms to be confidential informants. Those people introduce the officers, who work undercover, to people who have illegal firearms and might be willing to sell them. The undercover officers build the trust of the potential gun dealers and then try to buy guns from them. Generally, the FIU officers will pay \$300-500 per gun and pay confidential informants \$300 for useful information. If officers successfully buy a gun, not only have they removed an illegal firearm from the streets, but they then can arrest the person who sold the gun or guns and prosecute them for gun possession and sale. Officers also pursue individuals known to carry a gun but who are not necessarily known to deal in illegal firearms because these people can help the unit identify gun traffickers.

The FIU works closely with precincts and other specialized units. If a particular area is experiencing high levels of gun violence, representatives from the FIU call the precinct

commander to volunteer their expertise. Likewise, precinct commanders may call the FIU to request its assistance. These partnerships have led to the recovery of many guns. In the Kingsborough Houses, a public housing complex in Brooklyn, there was a series of shootings in the fall of 2002 that drew the FIU's attention. With the cooperation of the precinct commander, the FIU sent undercover officers into the area; these officers developed five confidential informants who introduced them to the perpetrators of the gun violence. This operation led to the arrest of 36 people and the recovery of 65 guns in January 2003.

*Keys to success.* The FIU's commanding officer says the unit has been successful largely because of the commissioner's commitment to the unit's success and the expertise of its officers. In the fall of 2002, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly decided to more than double the size of the FIU and allowed the commanding officer to choose his new officers from among the most qualified in the city. The unit grew from 25 staff in October 2002 to 65 staff just six months later. The staff includes 37 detectives and 18 undercover officers. The commanding officer said that during this hiring process, it was important to him to select a racially and ethnically diverse group of undercover officers and uniformed detectives in order to penetrate illegal gun operations throughout New York City.

Because the unit does not respond to complaints of crimes but rather identifies areas where there are gun problems and develops evidence to arrest those responsible, officers need to be self-starters who can build a case on their own. Officers also need to have strong interpersonal skills so they can develop confidential informants. Detectives with extensive narcotics experience often are good candidates for this work. Finally, because they have to be willing to put their lives on the line, officers must be aware of the risks—in March 2003, two of the unit's detectives were tragically killed in the line of duty—and be committed to the unit's mission.

## Collaboration Between the NYPD and Other Agencies

Another way the NYPD works to prevent gun violence is to collaborate with other agencies that can supplement its own efforts and resources. These collaborations include the Joint Firearms Task Force with the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF); a Gun Court with the Mayor's Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator, the state court system, and local prosecutors; and Triggerlock with federal prosecutors.

## **Joint Firearms Task Force**

The Joint Firearms Task Force is a partnership between the NYPD and the ATF to reduce interstate gun trafficking into New York City by identifying out-of-state gun purchases destined for New York and apprehending the people responsible before the guns hit the city's streets. Teams from the ATF work with police officers to trace all illegal guns recovered in New York City. Using a gun's serial number, agents trace each gun to its original place of purchase. If the gun was purchased out of state, ATF agents use sales records to track the original purchaser. ATF agents interview the original purchaser to find out what he or she did with the gun. The agents then interview the next owner, as reported by the first one, and so on. They continue to do this until they have traced the gun to its recovery.

Officers have found that traffickers frequently pay people (referred to as "straw purchasers") a small fee to purchase large numbers of guns in states with lax gun laws. Then the traffickers drive the guns to cities with more restrictive gun laws and sell them to people on the street. Once ATF agents have traced a gun's pathway, they prosecute the trafficker in federal court, using the straw purchasers as witnesses. In 2000, the states that were the largest sources of illegal guns in New York City were Florida, Virginia, Georgia, and Pennsylvania.

In one case, dubbed the "Iron Pipeline Case," the Task Force traced several guns purchased by the Firearms Investigation Unit in undercover operations to gun dealers in Georgia and South Carolina. Through investigations in those states, the Task Force identified eight "straw purchasers," most of whom were young women. They learned that a New York-based trafficker had paid the women to buy guns, which the trafficker then drove to New York City and sold. Eventually, this NYPD-ATF collaboration allowed law enforcement to build a solid case against this man, arrest him, and prosecute him in federal court.

*Keys to success.* A key to the task force's success is the division of responsibilities between the Task Force and other NYPD units. Officers and detectives in the FIU and in the police precincts focus on seizing guns from the streets of New York, while the Task Force uses its expertise conducting investigations of and building cases for violation of federal laws. The NYPD officers assigned to the Joint Firearms Task Force are cross-designated as federal agents, allowing them to cross state borders and enforce federal laws. They serve as the link between the NYPD officers in New York and the federal agents and prosecutors enforcing federal laws against interstate gun trafficking.

## **Gun Court**

Despite a one-year mandatory minimum sentence for gun possession, people convicted of gun possession in New York City in the past often did not receive jail sentences. To address this issue, the Mayor's Office worked with the Office of the Court

Administration, the Brooklyn District Attorney, and the NYPD to create a specialized Gun Court for people charged with gun possession. One judge and three prosecutors are dedicated to the court, allowing them to become experts in gun possession cases. The goal is to process gun cases more quickly and have more gun offenders serve the minimum sentence, thereby deterring future gun crimes.

The Mayor's Office and the NYPD used data to identify the five police precincts in Brooklyn with the highest violent crime rates and gun arrests; the cases of people charged with gun possession in these five precincts are tried in the Gun Court. Officers within these precincts attend a three-day training about illegal gun possession. The training focuses on recognizing illegal gun possession, safely apprehending people with illegal guns, and testifying against these suspects in court. Roughly 200 cases were referred to the Gun Court from April through October 2003. During its first six months, the proportion of defendants sentenced to jail without probation increased from 14 to 44 percent and probation-only sentences were virtually eliminated. In September 2003, two additional precincts were included in the pilot, and in 2004 the court will expand to cover almost half of the city's 76 precincts.<sup>5</sup>

*Keys to success.* Government officials involved in planning and monitoring the Gun Court believe that training to help officers identify people who illegally possess guns and testify against them is a key component of the program. Of equal importance is the expertise in legal and non-legal issues in gun cases that the judge and prosecutors develop through their work in the court.

### **Triggerlock**

Triggerlock is a collaborative effort between federal prosecutors and the NYPD to prosecute people charged with illegal gun possession in the federal court system, which assigns stiffer sentences.

Federal gun prosecution practices differ slightly from district to district. However, any person in possession of an illegal firearm who has already been convicted of a felony generally can be prosecuted by the federal government rather than by the state. When an NYPD officer books a person arrested for illegal gun possession, he looks up the suspect's record. If he has been convicted of a felony, the officer recommends the perpetrator for Triggerlock. Facing federal prosecution and longer sentences, suspects are far more likely to cooperate and provide the police with information about gun dealers and other crimes. By prosecuting lesser gun offenses federally, detectives and prosecutors are able to obtain information about other offenses, such as gun trafficking, and prosecute them.

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<sup>5</sup> Herbert Lowe and Glenn Thrush, "Gun Court to Expand Into Queens, Bronx," *New York Newsday*, December 17, 2003.

In 2002, 205 New York City gun cases were prosecuted in federal court through Triggerlock, 130 in the Southern District of New York and 75 in the Eastern District of New York, which has more stringent criteria than the Southern District for which cases it will take. In 2003, Triggerlock handled 158 cases, 131 in the Southern District and 27 in the Eastern District.

*Keys to success.* The stringency of federal sentencing guidelines for firearms crimes is critical to the Triggerlock program's success. Fear of lengthy sentences drives arrestees to cooperate with law enforcement in hopes of getting a lighter sentence. In addition, cooperation between local law enforcement officers and federal prosecutors is crucial, because they must work together to build cases that will stand up in federal court.

## NYPD's Data-Driven Approach to Crime Reduction

The NYPD's CompStat process began in the early 1990s as a part of a new philosophy to use data for management and planning. Local precinct commanders and their supervisors analyze data—presented on maps that show where crimes are occurring—and use it to determine appropriate responses to emerging crime problems. They must then defend their strategies at weekly CompStat meetings at police headquarters. This process helps the NYPD identify where in the city crime, including gun crimes, is a problem, target appropriate resources to those areas, and hold local precinct commanders accountable for results.

Operation Impact, another data-driven strategy to reduce crime, is a natural outgrowth of this philosophy. And although it is not a “gun-focused” strategy, it has contributed to reducing gun crimes in targeted areas and has led to the recovery of a number of illegal guns.

### **Operation Impact**

Operation Impact saturates high-crime areas with recent police academy graduates and other law enforcement resources. The department uses data to identify the high-crime neighborhoods, which it calls Impact Zones. Once an Impact Zone is established, police managers analyze every crime that occurs in the zone to hold the officers assigned to the area accountable and to determine whether they should deploy officers differently to prevent future crimes. Borough commanders, precinct commanders, “Impact” officers, and all others involved in the initiative conduct a weekly review of crime in the zone. If any crimes occur on officers' assigned posts, they must explain where they were, how the crime occurred, and what can be done to prevent similar crimes in the future. If necessary, officers and managers will alter a strategy or redeploy resources to meet a need identified during these reviews.

To identify Impact Zones, local precinct commanders and borough commanders nominated “hot spots” within their precincts that they thought would benefit from additional targeted resources. Using street-level crime data presented on maps, NYPD crime analysts produced reports on each area and suggested ways of refining the targeted areas. After discussions among local commanders and headquarters analysts, the Police Commissioner selected 24 neighborhoods with the highest rates of crime, including shootings, in which to focus resources to reduce crime.

In January 2003, the NYPD deployed roughly two-thirds of its police academy graduates—about 1,500 new police officers—to Impact Zones. The program has been so successful that the NYPD has continued it, moving officers in many of the initial Impact Zones to permanent positions in precincts and deploying police academy graduates to other identified high-crime areas.

Police use four main strategies in Impact Zones. One is increasing police presence on foot patrols at times when most crimes occur. For example, in apartment buildings where many crimes occur, officers will conduct “vertical patrols”—going from the top to the bottom of the building, patrolling each floor. The police presence alone likely deters many crimes. In addition, patrol officers regularly issue citations and summonses for quality-of-life crimes such as loitering and drinking alcohol in public. Police also stop and question and, if appropriate, search people suspected of committing crimes in the area. According to police officials, strict enforcement against low-level crimes and frequent interactions with those suspected of committing crimes deter people from committing more serious offenses, because potential offenders feel they are more likely to get caught. A sergeant in one high-crime precinct in the Bronx said that residents have told him that they stopped carrying guns because they knew they might be searched. A third strategy is to identify individuals who are wanted for crimes in the Impact Zone or who live in the Impact Zone and are wanted for crimes committed elsewhere and work with parole and probation agencies and other NYPD units to apprehend them. Finally, the department brings in specialized units, like the FIU, to focus on particular crime problems in the Zone.

Impact Zones require significant numbers of patrol and specialized officers. Although deploying large numbers of officers in small, high crime areas requires a significant commitment of resources, using newly graduated officers who have yet to be assigned permanent precincts makes it cost-effective. Precinct commanders also have found that reducing crime that requires significant police attention in a precinct “hot-spot” can actually free up officers to attend to other parts of the precinct. For example, in the 109th precinct in Queens, the significant drop in burglaries in the Impact Zone on Main Street in Flushing allowed non-Impact officers, who had frequently been called to Main Street, to dedicate their full attention to other neighborhoods in the precinct. There is always a concern that deploying resources to high crime areas will simply cause criminals to commit their crimes in other neighborhoods. The NYPD’s data analysis thus far indicates



that this “displacement” has not been a significant problem, but the department continues to monitor the situation.

NYPD officials say that in addition to reducing crime, Operation Impact is an excellent way to train rookie officers. Working in Impact Zones gives them on-the-job training before they are assigned to a precinct as a regular patrol officer. It is their first opportunity to put what they learned in the police academy into practice and they are particularly vigilant on the street and diligent about following up on even minor offenses.

*Keys to success.* According to several managers we interviewed, Operation Impact’s success relies on localized control and community involvement. Although officials in police headquarters work with borough and precinct personnel to identify Impact Zones and determine how many officers to deploy, local commanders define the specific tactics to use within the zones and decide how and when to deploy Impact officers. Thus, decision making is in the hands of the precinct and borough commanders who are most familiar with the areas where they need to reduce violence. In New York’s 75th precinct, for example, the commanding officer and borough commander focused their resources on three small areas known to be plagued by street-level drug dealing, which is often associated with carrying guns. It applied strict enforcement policies in these areas, pursuing even the most minor law violations such as loitering and public drinking.

According to one precinct commander who has significantly reduced crime in his precinct, involving the community and gaining residents’ cooperation is critical to Impact’s success. If the police do not communicate with the community about the initiative and the increased enforcement of low-level crime, they risk alienating residents and losing them as potential sources of information about crimes. For example, poor relations could develop if police begin issuing summonses for drinking beer on the sidewalk without first notifying the community that this is an activity that they will be cracking down on. In the 75th precinct, the precinct commander held community meetings with residents, block associations, and local business leaders to inform them of the zero-tolerance policy and solicit their input. According to the precinct commander, community members were overwhelmingly supportive of the effort and even offered suggestions to the police about how to proceed with the initiative.

## Resources for Further Information

### **Gun Violence Reduction Strategies-General**

For more information on NYPD strategies, contact John Gerrish, Commanding Officer, Office of Management Analysis and Planning, New York City Police Department, (646) 610-5390.

Haley, Benjamin. *Emerging Strategies: Gun Violence Prevention*. Ed. Carolynne Jarvis. Lansing, MI: Michigan Partnership to Prevent Gun Violence, 2003. Available online at: <http://www.mppgv.org>

This report describes promising national, state, and local strategies to reduce gun violence in the United States. The paper is structured around three broad types of strategies: regulating guns as consumer products, firearms owner responsibility and accountability, and law enforcement. The law enforcement section includes descriptions of direct patrols, ballistic fingerprinting, crime gun tracing initiatives, and policing of dealers.

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. *Criminal Justice Reform and Strengthening of Legal Institutions: Measures to Regulate Firearms. A Report to the Secretary-General*. New York: United Nations, Economic and Social Council, Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, 28 April 1997–9 May 1997. Available online at: <http://www.uncjin.org/Statistics/firearms/index.htm#Documentation>

This report summarizes the progress of several United Nations initiatives on gun violence. In addition, it presents the findings of the International Study of Firearms Regulations, an initiative of the World Bank that surveyed 46 states about firearms regulation and use. The survey findings are organized around the following topics: general firearm regulation, ownership and regulation of firearms, firearm possession and use, legal manufacture and trade of firearms, firearm smuggling and other illegal dealings, statistics on the misuse of firearms, and recent state policy initiatives. The report offers policy suggestions and next steps for the United Nations as well as individual states.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). *Promising Strategies to Reduce Gun Violence*. NCJ 173950. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, OJJDP, 1999. Available online at: [http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/gun\\_violence/173950.pdf](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/gun_violence/173950.pdf)

This report is designed as a toolkit to help local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, policymakers, advocates, and researchers design and

implement effective strategies to prevent gun violence. The report profiles 60 initiatives from different U.S. jurisdictions in the areas of comprehensive gun violence reduction strategies, strategies to interrupt sources of illegal guns, strategies to deter illegal gun possession and carrying, strategies to respond to illegal gun use, and education initiatives and alternative prevention strategies. The report also describes public and private technical assistance, research, and education programs.

#### Pacific Center for Violence Prevention Firearms Literature Database

<http://trauma.andornot.com/firearms.htm>

This database contains bibliographic references to articles, books, dissertations, conference papers and proceedings, reports, and studies from research on gun violence and prevention. It is updated monthly and contains more than 900 references divided into two categories: firearm violence literature and youth firearm violence literature.

#### Center for Gun Policy and Research

<http://www.jhsph.edu/gunpolicy/index.html>

The Center for Gun Policy and Research is an academic research institute housed in the School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University that examines gun violence and gun policies from a public health perspective. This web site contains research papers and publications, policy papers, and information and findings from the National Gun Policy Survey conducted by the Center and the National Opinion Research Center. The website also contains links to other resources and information about the center's initiatives and programs.

#### Collaboration Among Government Agencies

Russell-Einhorn, Malcolm L. *Fighting Urban Crime: The Evolution of Federal-Local Collaboration*. NCJ 197040. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, December 2003.

Available online at: <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/197040.pdf>.

This paper examines how partnerships between local law enforcement agencies and federal law enforcement agencies can be used to effectively fight violent crime. Specifically this paper discusses federal, state, and local collaborations to prevent illegal gun trafficking in the United States and examines federal prosecution as a means of addressing drugs, weapons, and gangs. It also considers incentives and disincentives for collaboration.

## Gun Interdiction Strategies

Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). *Reducing Illegal Firearms Trafficking: Promising Practices and Lessons Learned*. NCJ 180752. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, BJA, 2000.

Available online at: <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/bja/180752.pdf>

This report focuses on collaborations between law enforcement agencies to reduce illegal firearms trafficking. It looks at effective policies, funding streams, staffing structures and assignments, training, and startup goals to support collaborations to reduce firearms trafficking. The report describes specific initiatives from eight U.S. jurisdictions, including New York City, that aim to reduce firearms trafficking through licensing, task forces, and other programs. This report also provides a list of additional resources and contact information.

The Center to Prevent Handgun Violence Law Enforcement Relations Department. *On the Front Line: Making Gun Interdiction Work, A Comprehensive Law-Enforcement Approach to Getting Guns Off the Streets*. Washington, DC: Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, 1998. For a copy of this document call: (202) 289-5774.

This report presents the findings of a survey of 48 urban police departments in the United States in which researchers looked for common elements of gun violence prevention strategies that had proven effective or promising. The report stresses the need for local jurisdictions to develop an approach to reducing gun violence that matches the particular needs of the community. However, it stresses collaboration, training, education, and information technology as critical elements to any successful gun violence prevention program. In addition to outlining these critical components, the report provides case studies from eight sites the researchers visited, including New York City.

International Association of Chiefs of Police. *Crime Gun Interdiction Strategies for the 21st Century*. Alexandria, VA: International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2002.

Available online at:

<http://www.theiacp.org/documents/pdfs/Publications/Crimeguninterdictionstrategies%20%2EPDF>

This report identifies three core elements of an effective crime gun interdiction strategy for local law enforcement—information technology, partnerships, and effective policies—and presents 52 specific recommendations to help local jurisdictions strengthen their efforts in these three core areas. These suggestions are drawn from information gathered in a survey and conference of a diverse

group of gun violence stakeholders, including law enforcement representatives, academics, advocacy groups, firearms manufacturers, and policy makers that asked them to identify obstacles and potential solutions to crime gun interdiction.

### **Ballistics Imaging**

Webster, Daniel W. *Comprehensive Ballistic Fingerprinting of New Guns: A Tool for Solving and Preventing Violent Crime*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research, 2002.

Available online at: [http://www.jhsph.edu/gunpolicy/ballistic\\_fingerprinting.pdf](http://www.jhsph.edu/gunpolicy/ballistic_fingerprinting.pdf)

This paper provides an overview of ballistics imaging and a concise description of how ballistics imaging, or “fingerprinting,” works in practice. It also offers a cursory analysis of the pros and cons of imaging systems as a tool to prevent gun violence. The paper provides a brief description of ballistic imaging laws enacted in New York and Maryland in 2000.

National Integrated Ballistics Information Network

<http://www.nibin.gov>

The National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) website provides information about the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearm’s NIBIN program, through which it deploys ballistics imaging technology and resources to state and local law enforcement agencies. The website offers a program overview, maps of the NIBIN regions, and definitions of key terms. It also lists the number of ballistics matches found in the system by week for 2002 and 2003 and provides a number of success stories.

### **Crime Mapping**

Harries, Keith. *Mapping Crime: Principle and Practice*. NCJ 178919. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Crime Mapping Research Center, December, 1999. Available online at: <http://www.ncjrs.org/html/nij/mapping/pdf.html>

This beginners’ guide to crime mapping introduces the science of crime mapping to law enforcement officers and crime analysts. It provides a broad overview of crime mapping to help law enforcement agents determine the most effective ways to apply crime mapping to broad crime fighting strategies and particular crime problems. The guide relies heavily on examples and provides a list of additional resources for those who want further information, including web addresses to online mapping systems that readers can access and use.

Henry, Vincent E. and William Bratton. *The COMPSTAT Paradigm: Management Accountability in Policing, Business, and the Public Sector*. New York: Looseleaf Law Publications, April 2002.

This book offers a thorough description of the development of COMPSTAT and how it works in practice. It provides a detailed account of the technology and daily mechanics of the COMPSTAT system as well as a comprehensive overview of the managerial structure and culture that defines the COMPSTAT process.

NYPD's COMPSTAT Web Site

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/chfdept/compstat-process.html>.

The NYPD's COMPSTAT website provides a detailed overview of the COMPSTAT process, including how crime mapping works in New York City, what happens at weekly COMPSTAT meetings, and how accountability is critical to the NYPD's crime reduction efforts. This website also describes some of the capabilities of the NYPD's "command and control center."

National Institute of Justice's Mapping and Analysis for Public Safety Program

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/maps/>

The National Institute of Justice's Mapping and Analysis for Public Safety web site provides information on crime mapping, grant funding, annual conferences, and training centers. It also houses numerous publications on crime mapping and provides links to the web sites of several jurisdictions that allow users to see and use geographic information systems online.