

# Intelligence-Led Community Policing Community Prosecution and Community Partnerships History



## Introduction

Community policing programming rarely integrates the concepts of intelligence-led policing and community prosecution with the central tenet of community partnerships. The Rockland County District Attorney's Office (RCDAO), through its Intelligence-led Community Policing, Community Prosecution and Community Partnerships (IL3CP) Program, has melded these concepts into an effective and integrated problem solving approach to community safety that involves the entire local criminal justice system. This proposal outlines the IL3CP process and proposes the replication and evaluation of this program in three pilot sites as well as the development of a toolkit to guide communities in successfully replicating the program. IL3CP is a unique approach to community policing that extends community partnerships to include prosecutorial and community service organizations along with law enforcement. Normally successful outcomes of community policing will be greatly enhanced through this more complete model.

The current Rockland County District Attorney started his administration in January 2008 with the belief that statistical analysis of crime alone did not present a clear picture of the true needs of the county. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century we must consider that, in some ways, crime is different and new methods are needed to address new issues. IL3CP represents a paradigm shift that involves every employee of the office including support staff and detectives. The entire staff of the RCDAO is fully indoctrinated in this community prosecution philosophy through ongoing training and supervision. The

initial implementation of IL3CP did not require additional staff or funding. Every attorney and criminal investigator, including the District Attorney, integrated this approach into every aspect of his or her duties. The field is recognizing value in this new philosophy. The Manhattan and Philadelphia District Attorneys are adopting the concept in their jurisdictions.

Rockland County is a suburb across the Hudson River, north of New York City. It is the smallest county geographically in New York State, yet has a population of approximately 300,000 residents. There are 10 town and village police departments, the Sheriff's Police Division, and the DA Detective Bureau. According to the 2008 American Community Survey, the population living in Rockland County is extremely diverse: 22% of the residents are foreign-born; of those, 37% are not US citizens. Thirty-two percent of the populace in Rockland County speaks a language other than English and 45% of these residents speak English "less than well." There are 45 different languages spoken. The county has the distinction of having the largest Hassidic population in the country outside of New York City. Fourteen percent of the population is Hispanic and 11% is African-American. It is anticipated that the 2010 Census will demonstrate that Rockland County has become even more diverse, ethnically and socio-economically, than this 2008 Survey.

Rockland County exhibits many of the characteristics of America's older, inner-ring, so-called "First Suburbs." According to Brookings Institute research, first suburbs developed after their center city, before or during the rapid suburban expansion following World War II, and before the newly developing suburbs of today. First

suburbs are largely affluent and suburban in character, and adjacent to central cities that were identified as standard metropolitan areas by 1950. They have taken on many of the characteristics of urban areas. First suburbs are undergoing rapid racial and ethnic change and are home to a large and growing number of foreign-born residents. An influx of lower-income minority and foreign-born residents means that, like cities, these first suburbs increasingly require more state and federal aid to keep up with a growing need for social services and affordable housing.

In addition to demographic change, the types and numbers of crimes reported have changed. There has been a significant increase in financially-motivated crimes and identity theft, neither of which are currently tracked as index crimes. Crimes that are only discovered after extensive investigations are coming to the surface. Incidents of bank, real estate (mortgage) and government services fraud appear to be on the rise as are organized retail crime. Rockland County was designated as a New York State IMPACT zone in 2004, which identifies it as one of the 17 counties with the highest violent crime outside of New York City.

There has been a significant reduction in crime throughout 2009, following implementation of IL3CP: 44% reduction in forcible rapes; 17% reduction in aggravated assaults; 11% reduction in burglaries; and an 89% reduction in motor vehicle theft. These reductions follow a 32% increase in burglaries from 2007 to 2008 and a 24% increase in the number of identified gang members from 2007 to 2008.

Terrorist organizations are moving into first suburbs with their sights on the proximate urban centers as their targets. The recent Times Square bomb attempt in

New York City exemplifies this current trend. The identified suspect resided and built his weapon in a suburb and brought his terror to the nearby urban center. The ability to thwart further attempts by terrorists will be achieved through greater implementation of the IL3CP concept in first suburbs and urban environments.

The RCDAO has taken the criminal justice research of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to a new level. It has tied together the concepts of community policing, community prosecution, community partnerships and intelligence led policing. The result is an **Intelligence-Led Approach to Community Safety**. This means gaining knowledge and developing actionable intelligence that allows for smarter policing and prosecuting.

Many studies and national commissions have concluded there is an inherent lack of coordination of knowledge and action in the criminal justice system. This was highlighted by the attacks on September 11, 2001. This resulted in an awareness of the need for government to gain knowledge, develop intelligence and act effectively and efficiently to ensure safety. The highly effective model based on the United Kingdom's concept of intelligence-led policing is developing in the United States.

The successes of community-oriented policing have led to the model of community prosecution, which has taken hold in many jurisdictions. Community prosecution is a "grass roots approach to justice involving citizens, law enforcement and other government agencies in problem-solving efforts to address the safety concerns of the local jurisdiction (Nugent 2004)." The prosecutor focuses on more than just case processing. Relationships are developed with residents within the local jurisdiction to identify and problem-solve community concerns.

In most prosecutors' offices, community prosecution is a bureau, unit or program. The RCDAO has developed the new model of IL3CP and institutionalized it in all activities. This is a broader and more effective enhancement of community prosecution than has been established in other settings. This new model connects the criminal justice system seamlessly through communication and partnership

The foundation for IL3CP is built on an established organizational structure within the RCDAO that focuses on integrating Assistant District Attorneys (ADAs) and DA detectives with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies and community residents. Previously, all of the prosecuting attorneys were centrally located at the District Attorney's office. The current administration divided the county into five zones, each staffed with an appropriate number of prosecutors acting under the direction of a Supervisory Assistant District Attorney. At least one prosecutor is dedicated to each police agency within a zone. This allows for a much stronger relationship between the District Attorneys and the police departments. Lines of communication are clear and simple. Police officers have direct 24/7 access to prosecutors familiar with their area and the issues within the community.

ADAs are assigned to specific towns and/or villages and have been "embedded" in the local police agency(s) in addition to working in the main office and the courtroom. ADAs also attend local community meetings, formal or informal, to develop relationships with residents to help identify local concerns. ADAs are responsible for following all cases from their assigned jurisdictions through vertical prosecution.

Working directly with community groups and individuals is a primary responsibility for the ADAs assigned to local jurisdictions. ADAs and detectives attend local meetings that include collaboratives, business associations, civic associations, neighborhood watch groups, co-op/condo boards, school districts, faith-based organizations, and other community groups. Through these formal and informal interactions, relationships are built and the perceived safety of the community is raised. Each ADA spends significantly more time in the community gaining knowledge by attending meetings, speaking with residents, local groups and agencies to identify areas of concern and problem-solving these issues.

It is through this close working relationship with the local police agencies and the community that ADAs gain valuable knowledge. They, in conjunction with criminal investigators; local, state and federal law enforcement; and the community, analyze problems and formulate solutions that will make the community safer. In addition to vigorous prosecutions, solutions to specific issues are often less traditional in nature, e.g., mediation or civil action, as opposed to solely focusing on prosecution.

IL3CP program components and strategies are:

- **Compstat:** A monthly Compstat meeting is held in one of the designated community prosecution areas. Executives and representatives from all police agencies in that area attend as do the district attorney, community prosecutors from that area and the directors of the operations described next. An agenda of pressing issues and topics is prepared with input from all parties prior to these meetings including but not limited to ongoing

investigations, community meetings, and feedback and policy issues. Lines of communication have never been as open as they are currently in the Rockland law enforcement community.

- **The Rockland County Intelligence Center (RCIC):** The DA's Office works closely with the RCIC. This Center is staffed by all local law enforcement agencies and overseen by the Rockland County Police Chiefs Association. The RCIC structure features detectives assigned to "desks." Current desks cover gangs, terrorism, traditional organized crime, factual data analysis, identity crime and jail intelligence.

The RCIC houses a countywide database, Rockland County Police Information Network (RCPIN), which hosts information on all crime, program and intelligence gathered from local law enforcement and corrections. RCIC services include analyses, crime mapping, forensic accounting, cell tower tracking, GPS tracking, link and commodity charting, photo arrays, surveillance, and telephone toll analysis. Through IL3CP, intelligence information may come through traditional sources as well as community residents.

- **CODE 6:** Based on Marvin Wolfgang's theory that six percent of the criminals are responsible for as much as 73% of violent crime in a community, Rockland County has established the Code 6 program. Each police department in the county has been asked to submit up to 20 names of their community's worst or most troublesome offenders. Lists are merged by the



RCIC, analyzed and entered into the RCPIN. The system notifies an officer that a person he/she is having contact with is on the list. Action is then taken by all parties to ensure that all resources are brought to bear as needed. The entire Code 6 project is maintained in accordance with 28 CFR guidelines on the collection and dissemination of Intelligence.

- **Special Victims Center (SVC):** A “Special Victim” is a person who, by personal circumstance or the nature of the crime, has special needs: children; the elderly; victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault; those with developmental and/or mental disabilities; and victims of human trafficking for sex and labor.

The “Spirit of Rockland” Special Victims Center is a project developed by the RCDAO with the support of residents, local unions, businesses and non-profit agencies. The SVC is located in a secure building donated by Good Samaritan Hospital and constructed with labor and material donated by the Building Trades Council and local businesses. The Center will house a multidisciplinary team from county departments, advocacy agency and law enforcement to respond to the needs of special victims. It will ensure the full force and strength of the criminal justice system in Rockland County, as well as the community as a whole, by coming together to fight for the justice these special victims deserve and to ensure the swift arrest and thorough prosecution of the criminal element that preys on these citizens.

- **The Special Investigations Unit (SIU):** The SIU brings together prosecutors and police officers. It is staffed by police officers from the DA Criminal Investigator Bureau, Sheriff's Department and federal, state and local enforcement agencies as well as the Rockland County Intelligence Center. The SIU identifies, investigates and prosecutes complex criminal activity.
- **The Rockland County Narcotics Task Force (RCNTF):** The RCNTF is a collaborative effort among local law enforcement. The DA provides the Director and Assistant Director as well as additional investigators. Local law enforcement provides officers to staff the RCNTF. The RCNTF works closely with the RCIC as many targets and operations overlap. The RCNTF has been recognized for its effective use of wiretapping in operations that involve multiple state jurisdictions.
- **The High School Intervention and Diversion Program (HSIDP):** HSIDP works with 16 to 21 year old students charged with non-violent low-level crimes. Once before the local magistrate, the student is court-ordered to meet with a designated school administrator with a parent or guardian. The court mandates that a student follow all requirements of a school administrator and receive regular progress reports from the school. If a student meets all requirements, the charges are adjourned in contemplation of dismissal. The goal of this program is to work with the schools and families of these students to prevent any progression of criminal activity and support the schools with students who may have a history of behavioral problems.

- **Youth Police Initiative (YPI):** YPI is a training course created by the Massachusetts-based North American Family Institute to enhance police officers' and prosecutors' understanding of the beliefs, values, and experiences of local youth, while ensuring that youth develop a genuine regard for the challenges that police officers face on the job. YPI features structured dialogue, team building and role playing scenarios to allow youth, educators, police and prosecutors to tackle the real and hard issues of crime prevention and community policing.
- **Drug Market Intervention (DMI):** The DMI program is a collaborative effort between the RCDAO, Narcotics Task Force, Haverstraw Police Department, Intelligence Center, and residents, clergy, leaders, business owners and local agencies to reduce overt drug trafficking in the Village of Haverstraw. The goal is to completely rid this focused area of overt drug markets entirely through the confrontation of identified low-level nonviolent drug sellers.
- **Underage Drinking Diversion program (UDDP):** The UDDP is based on a New York State statute that allows for prevention education for those charged with underage alcohol-related crimes. The program is provided by a local New York State licensed addiction prevention agency and consists of 2-hour meetings once a week for four weeks, with young adults ranging in ages from 16 to 20.

## 2. Program Goals

The goals of this proposed project are to:

- **Develop New Knowledge** – that advances current concepts of community policing, community prosecution and intelligence-led policing.
- **Increase Awareness** – increase the number of law enforcement agencies that are aware of this innovative and effective approach to community policing.
- **Institutionalize Practice** – introduce a change to the COP business model.
- Outcomes will include access to a paradigm that increases effective law enforcement and prosecution efforts that provides communities with a greater perception of safety and crime reduction, and does so without additional costs, a much-needed opportunity in today’s economic situation.

### **3. Strategy to Achieve Program Outcomes and Goals**

- Our overall strategy is to select three “first suburbs” jurisdictions, one each in the East, the Midwest, and on the West Coast. IACP staff will work with the COPS Office to identify jurisdictions. Once the jurisdictions have been identified and agreed to participate in this project, a date for a mini-summit will be set.
- The mini-summit will be an opportunity for the Rockland County staff to provide IL3CP training and education. This will include organization, ADA responsibilities, “embedding” of ADAs in the local law enforcement agencies, and partnerships with community agencies and organizations. Jurisdictions will work on ways to tailor and implement IL3CP, as each community has specific needs. Following the training session, each jurisdiction will work

with project staff to develop an implementation plan with specific steps, identified personnel and timeframes.

- The implementation of IL3CP plans will follow the mini-summit. IACP and Rockland County staff will provide ongoing support and technical assistance throughout the implementation phase. Level will be determined by the needs of each jurisdiction. Quarterly reports will be provided based on each jurisdictions implementation plan. During and at the end of the implementation phase, IACP will gather crime data, conduct community surveys and other instruments as document implementation processes, obstacles, and lessons learned, and develop a written evaluation, which will be the basis for developing a toolkit. The toolkit will be made available through the COPS Office. Results of the IL3CP implementation project will be presented at a plenary session of the IACP conference in 2012.