

FALL 2026

Translational Criminology

Promoting knowledge exchange
to shape criminal justice research,
practice, and policy

FEATURING

Gamification as Strategy: Making
Evidence-Based Policing Stick

Bridging the Data Gap: Accessibility, Transparency,
and Utility in Use-of-Force Dashboards

The 2026 Inductees into the
Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame

Beyond Activity: Evidence-Based
Policing Ten Years Later

The 2026 International Summer School
for Policing Scholars

Translating Evidence into Action: Collaborative
Strategic Planning for Community Supervision

An Implementation and Fidelity Force Multiplier:
Leveraging AI to Operationalize and Optimize
Evidence-Based Policing

Hot Off the Press

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CONTACT US
Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy
George Mason University
Research Hall, Rooms 310-318
4400 University Drive, MS 6D12
Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Website: cebcp.org
Email: cebcp@gmu.edu
YouTube: [@cebcpGMU](https://www.youtube.com/@cebcpGMU)

From the Editor in Chief

I've been thinking a great deal lately about what brings me professional joy, especially in the current challenging research environment. I always return to the same truth: most of my fulfillment comes from working alongside others through the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy (CEBCP) and knowing that our work makes a tangible impact. Many of you likely feel similarly about your own organizations. We all need a home base that empowers us to be the best professional versions of ourselves. For those of us here, CEBCP has been the place where we can step outside the traditional academic box. The support we receive from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, George Mason University, and from all of you is an essential part of that equation.

For those outside academia, it may not be obvious how vital a home base like CEBCP is when the mission is not only to produce high-quality research but also to translate and implement it in everyday practice. Research centers often serve as supportive, synergistic hubs for academics and help train emerging scholars, but CEBCP also provides a platform to create and distribute free evidence-translation tools and implementation resources used by thousands worldwide. Since 2008, we have connected diverse research and practitioner communities through symposia, congressional briefings, workshops, summer schools, and webinars—fostering genuine research-practice partnerships and encouraging others to do the same.

Translational Criminology (TC) Magazine—now in its 28th issue and 15th year—is a prime example. TC Magazine remains unique in our field: a longstanding, free, and open-access publication featuring work not only from our center but also from researchers and practitioners across the globe dedicated to advancing science in justice policy. In this issue, you can read about evidence-based crime policy and practice in Canada, the Turks and Caicos, and the U.S. In these and many other ways, the CEBCP energizes me—allowing us to move beyond generating knowledge to actively engaging with practitioners and the community while promoting their work.

Since I last wrote, two CEBCP events have brought me particular joy. The first was celebrating the 2026 inductees into the Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame. After consulting with leadership from evidence-based policing societies around the world, we decided to recognize inductees directly at these societies' meetings, which have grown in strength and number. With special thanks to Jason Potts, Renee Mitchell, and the American Society of Evidence-Based

Policing (ASEBP), our first foray into this new model at the ASEBP conference was a resounding success (read more about the inductees in this issue). In October, we will recognize our Canadian recipient at the Canadian Society of Evidence-Based Policing (CAN-SEBP) meeting in Edmonton, followed by our Australian recipient at the Australian and New Zealand Society of Evidence-Based Policing (ANZSEBP) meeting in Melbourne this April.

The second highlight was the International Summer School for Policing Scholars (ISSPS), held this year in Stirling, Scotland (also highlighted in this issue of the magazine). CEBCP and the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) created this tuition-free summer school for doctoral students pursuing careers in policing research. It brings together students from many universities in the U.S., Scotland, Australia, and New Zealand to share approaches, interests, and motivations for policing scholarship. This past June, 28 doctoral students, a dozen faculty members, and numerous guest speakers participated in the weeklong program. Our next issue of the magazine will showcase the translational research and activities of these scholars.

Let me encourage all of you, if you haven't already, to get involved in CEBCP's joy. One way is to contribute to TC Magazine. While the magazine is curated, we welcome proactive article ideas and submissions that align with our translational mission (see my "From the Editor" letter in the Spring 2026 issue for guidance). Or, participate in our current three-part webinar series exploring the role of artificial intelligence in evidence-based crime policy (see our website for more details). Prospective students, consider pursuing your PhD in our top-ranked home department at Mason (Criminology, Law and Society). And to all: stay tuned for some very big news coming soon (if you aren't on our mailing list, you can sign up here: <https://cebcp.org/join-our-mailing-list/>). And, as always, thank you all for your continued support of the CEBCP and evidence-based crime policy!



Cynthia Lum

Editor-In-Chief, *Translational Criminology Magazine*
& Director, Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy

Gamification as Strategy: Making Evidence-Based Policing Stick

BY HECTOR PEREZ

Hector Perez, PhD, is a Corporate Analyst for the Niagara Regional Police Service in Ontario, Canada.



Hector Perez

Evidence-based policing needs more than a good idea. Most police leaders do not need to be convinced that evidence matters. They know that data, research, and analysis can help improve decisions. The harder question is how to make evidence-based policing part of the daily rhythm of a police service.

Police services operate under constant pressure. Calls for service continue. Emergencies take priority. Staffing levels change. Supervisors manage competing demands. Community expectations evolve. New technologies arrive. Crime patterns shift. In this environment, even strong ideas can fade if they are not supported by a practical system. That is why evidence-based policing should not be treated as a one-time project, pilot, or special initiative (Lum & Koper, 2017). It needs to be part of the broader strategy of the organization. It needs to be connected to leadership, operations, performance measurement, communication, frontline experience, and organizational culture.

And that is how we approached our hot spots strategy in Niagara. The Niagara Regional Police Service serves the Niagara Region in Ontario, Canada, covering approximately 1,853 square kilometers, 12 municipalities, and a population of about 539,180 people (Statistics Canada, n.d.). The region also welcomes more than 14 million visitors each year. For our hot spot deployment initiative, that strategy includes systems, process, people, and culture (Ford, 2007). The systems help identify where harm and demand are concentrated. The process explains what is expected and how activity will be tracked. The people include officers, sergeants, crime analysts, senior leaders, the Police Service Board, and community members. The culture is the belief that policing can learn, test, adapt, and improve.

But how do we activate, motivate, and energize the strategy to create something effective? This is also where friendly competition can help—not competition for its own sake, and certainly not to turn policing into a game. Rather, competition can be used carefully to create focus, energy, recognition, and feedback around a clear public safety purpose to drive change forward in positive ways (Zola et al., 2024).

The Question from the Road

A supervisor with many years of experience recently asked me a fair question about hot spots policing: “How is this different from what

we used to do before, when I would direct patrols based on my gut and my knowledge of certain areas?” It was the right question. Experienced officers and supervisors often have strong local knowledge. They know the places that generate repeat calls. They know where problems tend to happen. They know what community members are worried about. Evidence-based policing should not ignore that experience. In fact, it should respect it and use it.

The difference is that local knowledge is now placed inside a stronger system (Nokana & Takeuchi, 2019). Instead of relying only on memory, intuition, or anecdotal experience, we are using data to identify where high levels of harm, crime, and demands for service are generated. Those locations are then reviewed and interpreted with the support of crime analysts, operational leaders, frontline experience, and community concerns received through non-emergency reporting channels.

That makes the approach data-driven, community-informed, and operationally grounded. The real value is not just the hot spot map. The real value is the process around the map: how hot spots are selected, how officers are deployed, how activity is tracked, how results are reviewed, and how learning is shared back with the organization. Without that process, a hot spot map is just another product. With the process, it becomes part of an evidence-based policing strategy.

Targeting, Testing, and Tracking

Our hot spots initiative follows Sherman’s (2013) “Triple-T” of evidence-based policing: targeting, testing, and tracking. Targeting means identifying the places where police presence is most likely to matter. Our hot spot deployment initiative includes almost 250 active hot spots that are analyzed in near real time. These hot spots are not selected randomly. They are informed by calls for service, crime patterns, demand indicators, analyst review, community concerns, and insights from the road.

Testing means being willing to learn from what happens. The question is not only, “Did officers go to the hot spot?” The better questions are: What happened after they attended? Did calls for service change? Did property crime-related demand change? Did officers observe anything that helps us better understand the problem? Does the hot spot still make sense, or does it need to be adjusted?

Finally, tracking means making the work visible. We track completed proactive patrol doses, partially completed doses, who is participating, where deployments are occurring, and what outcomes are emerging. We also use dashboards to monitor the initiative and support regular review. This helps avoid a common problem in policing: launching a promising initiative and then losing sight of whether it is actually being implemented.

The Triple-T method is simple, but useful for our hot spots

initiative. It connects analysis to deployment, deployment to learning, and learning to better decisions.

Operations Still Come First

Any evidence-based policing initiative must respect operational reality. If frontline officers believe an initiative is disconnected from the reality of patrol, it will not last. Patrol officers cannot ignore emergency calls or priority incidents to complete a planned proactive patrol. Expectations need to be clear, but they also need to be fair and practical.

Our hot spots patrol model applies the Koper Curve principle (Koper, 1995) by using 15-minute “doses” of focused proactive patrol activity in identified hot spots. Officers can view the designated hot spots directly on their mobile data terminals (MDTs) and self-direct to these locations when operationally available. Patrol activity is automatically tracked using GPS data from police vehicles. Completed doses are recorded, and partial doses are captured when officers cannot remain in a hot spot for the full 15 minutes because of calls for service or other operational demands. This information is then compiled and

presented through a tracking dashboard.

This distinction between completed and partial doses is important because it reflects the realities of frontline policing. The purpose of tracking is not to penalize officers when operational pressures interrupt proactive patrol activity, but to understand how the intervention is being implemented in practice. Are officers reaching the intended locations? How long can they remain there? Which platoons are engaging most consistently? Where are the implementation barriers? What support do supervisors need? And what are officers observing while they are in these locations?

Why Friendly Competition Helps

The word “gamification” can make people uncomfortable in a policing context (Mekler et al., 2017). That is understandable. Public safety is serious work. The goal is not to make policing a game. A better way to describe it may be a purposeful performance environment.

Policing already includes elements of competition, pride, recognition, performance, and team identity. Officers compare experiences.

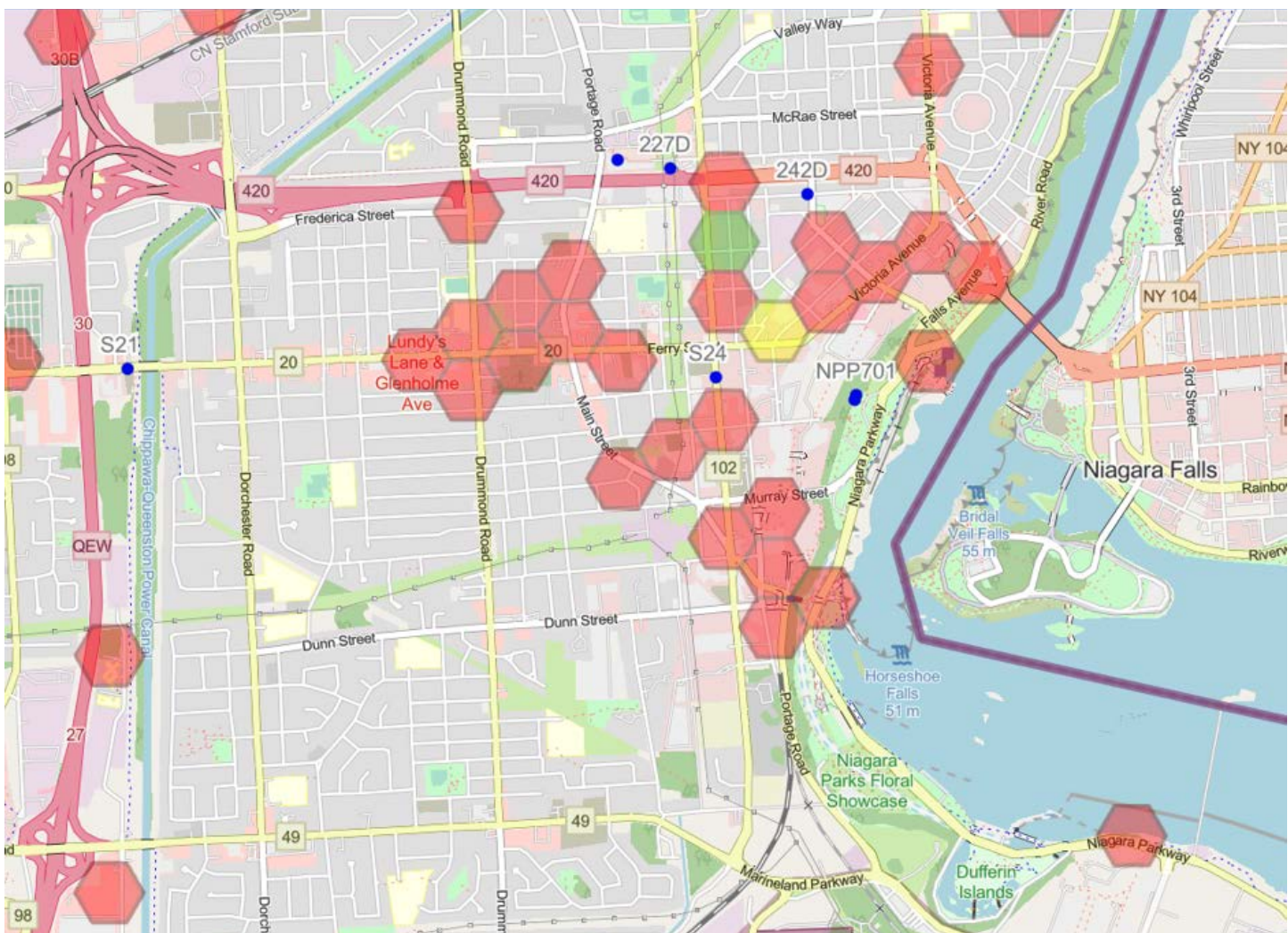


Figure 1 Hotspot Viewer

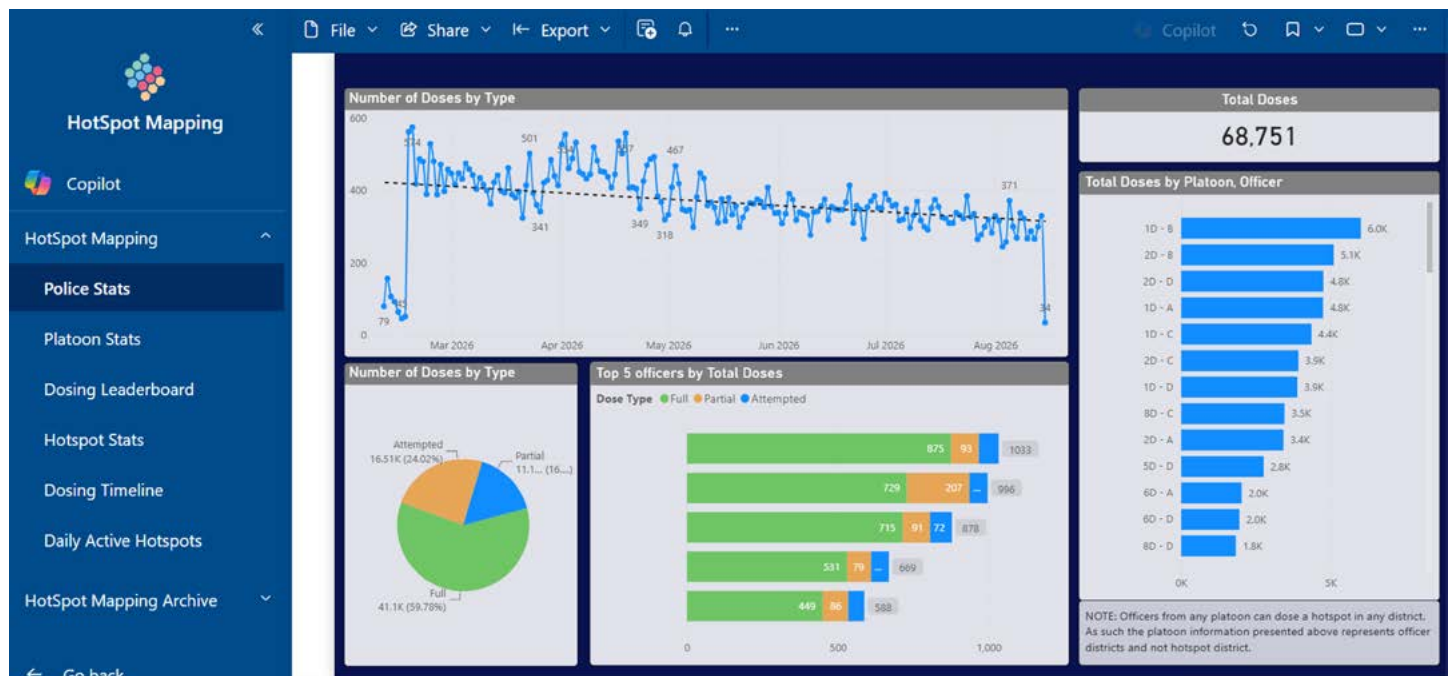


Figure 2 Hotspot Dashboard

Platoons develop reputations. Supervisors shape team culture. Units often take pride in meeting high standards. The question is whether that energy is being connected to the right purpose.

When designed carefully, friendly competition can support evidence-based policing (Alvear et al., 2020). It can make expectations clearer, create feedback loops, and recognize effort. It can also help officers and supervisors see how daily activities connect to broader public safety goals. For example, a leaderboard is not only about who is at the top. It can start useful conversations. Why is one platoon more engaged? What is working for them? What barriers are others facing? Are supervisors communicating the purpose clearly? Are officers seeing value in the work?

Used properly, competition is not about blame. It is about learning. Competence is shaped by environment. If an organization does not create the conditions for learning, feedback, accountability, and recognition, performance will likely be inconsistent. But when the organization sets clear goals, regular feedback, and visible support, it becomes easier for members to engage.

Early Results, Recognition, and Learning

The early results are encouraging. Since the Spring Competition launched in April 2026, officers have completed 45,257 full doses, including 27,000 full doses (i.e., 15 minutes), that is 6,750 hours of proactive policing across the Region. These are early implementation numbers, but they show the initiative moving from concept to practice.

Hot spot policing works. When comparing the matching period over the last four years, we have observed up to 16% reduction in selected property crime-related calls for service and approximately a

35% reduction in break-and-enters. These results are promising, but they should be interpreted carefully. Many factors can affect calls for service and crime trends, and a reduction during the implementation period does not, by itself, prove that the hot spot initiative caused the change.

Still, the results give us a reason to continue testing, tracking, and learning. On August 7, 2026, we hosted an event to recognize the officers who completed the most doses. The celebration reinforced the behaviors that support evidence-based policing: proactive work, disciplined deployment, teamwork, and commitment to community safety. The event also created an opportunity to learn from some of the most engaged officers. What motivated them? How did they manage competing calls for service? What did they observe, or what actions did they take in the hot spots? What would they change? These conversations matter because frontline experience is also an important source of evidence.

Structure and Strategy Make Evidence-Based Policing Last

Evidence-based policing cannot rely only on individual champions. Champions matter, but people move, retire, get promoted, or become pulled into other priorities. If the initiative is not supported by structure, it can disappear. That is why crime analysis, strategic planning, dashboards, communication, technology, and executive leadership are so important.

Crime analysts help identify and verify hot spots. The Office of Corporate Strategy and Innovation helps connect the initiative to the strategic plan, evaluation, reporting, and organizational learning. Supervisors translate the strategy into daily patrol activity. Executive leaders communicate that the work matters. The Police Service Board

helps reinforce the importance of sustainable, evidence-informed policing. Together, these pieces help make the initiative sustainable rather than “once and done.”

The most important lesson is that evidence-based policing becomes stronger when it is built into the strategic plan of the police service (Perez & Gill, 2024). A strategic plan should not be only a public document or a compliance requirement. It should guide priorities, resources, technology, training, evaluation, and accountability. When evidence-based policing is connected to strategy (Lum & Koper, 2017), it becomes easier to explain why the work matters and how it supports the larger mission.

This also shifts the conversation. Instead of asking, “What initiative should we try?” police leaders can ask, “What kind of police service are we trying to become, and what evidence do we need to help us get there?” That question is bigger than hot spots. It applies to workload, staffing, wellness, technology, community trust, crime prevention, and service delivery. The larger goal is to build a police service that learns (Garvin, 1985).

The future of evidence-based policing may depend less on whether police services know about the evidence and more on whether they can create organizational conditions to use it. In the end, the secret sauce is not about any particular intervention. It is the systems, processes, people, and culture around it that make evidence usable in the real world of policing.

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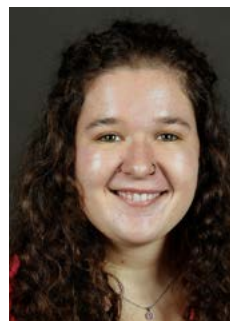
Niagara Regional Police Service officers recognized for their efforts in the 2026 Hotspot Spring Competition.



Bridging the Data Gap: Accessibility, Transparency, and Utility in Use-of-Force Dashboards

BY ALYSSA GOODREAU, DAVID A. MAKIN, DALE WILLITS

Alyssa Goodreau is a doctoral research assistant at Washington State University. David A. Makin is a professor at Washington State University and principal investigator of the Washington State Data Exchange for Public Safety (WADEPS). Dale Willits is a professor at Washington State University and co-investigator for WADEPS.



Alyssa Goodreau



David Makin



Dale Willits

Transparency is a precondition for accountability and the rule of law. Public demand for police reform and increased accountability occurred following the murder of George Floyd, and more recently, from the deaths of Renee Good and Alex Pretti, with the introduction of the Deadly Force Independent Review Act (H.R. 7310). The Independent Review Act and other initiatives put transparency at the forefront to resolve the debate over whether a problem exists. The underlying logic is that if there is a problem, the data will reveal it; more broadly, if people can see what is happening, they can have honest, open conversations about these topics. Although calls for increased transparency on police use of force are not new, how agencies and states respond continues to evolve. Specifically, several states have created dashboards on police use of force to provide incident- and agency-level details in a publicly accessible way. However, mandating data collection on police use of force is not the same as achieving transparency. Data can be published and fulfill a statutory requirement, but without being accessible, comparable, or understandable, it leaves the public no better positioned to evaluate their local agencies.

While states have debated what information to collect, who should collect it, and the financial and logistical aspects of a centralized database or dashboard, we know little about these programs systematically. Thus, when tasked to develop a dashboard in the state of Washington, we began by conducting a comprehensive review of statewide use-of-force dashboards using research-driven studies and national guidelines on police use-of-force data collection. This literature identified 31 indicators related to use of force and data collection practices, with a specific focus on transparency and accountability. Because our focus was more exploratory, the analysis focused on the presence or absence of each of the 31 indicators within use-of-force dashboards, rather than the quality of those indicators.

Importantly, these research-driven factors should not be viewed as all-encompassing or a representation of all community-driven priorities. Instead, these indicators primarily reflect the degree to which the data positions the public to better understand the situational and contextual factors contributing to use of force.

We conducted a content analysis from January 2026 to April 2026 to study statewide police use-of-force dashboards. Searches followed an alphabetical list of all 50 U.S. states, with subsequent Google searches to determine whether each state had a use-of-force dashboard. The results identified 13 states with active statewide use-of-force dashboards, which were then examined for the 31 indicators.¹ Additionally, we grouped the 31 indicators into five main categories, visualized in Figure 1, to highlight key themes and concepts under study and better reflect the findings. These categories include demographics and context, force incident details, transparency and access, accountability and oversight, and financial and legal.

How Accessible, Comparable, and Understandable are State Use-of-Force Dashboards?

Across the 13 state use-of-force dashboards, we found that states had an average of 41% of all research-informed indicators. The most consistently incorporated indicators were basic website functionality features and agency-specific information. For website functionality, this included interactive features (100% of dashboards), downloadable data (92% of dashboards), and a section on use-of-force standards/statutes (85% of dashboards). Although agency information was available, it was often limited to whether an agency had any use-of-force incidents or to an overview of the total number of force incidents. Similarly, certain aspects of a use-of-force incident were more common, including the reason for the police-citizen interaction (92% of dashboards) and demographic information (77% of

¹ See inclusion criteria methodology and the 31 indicators at <https://wadeeps.org/the-data/national-comparison/>

dashboards incorporated officer demographics, and 92% provided subject demographics). However, across the five broader categories examined, demographics and context (particularly officer and subject demographics) were the only groups with the most commonly available indicators. Interestingly, while most states had interactive dashboards and downloadable data, several other necessary components for improved data accessibility were largely absent. For example, other indicators also part of the ‘transparency and access’ group were only partially available in 4 to 9 dashboards, including the use of interactive visualizations (62% of dashboards), multi-year comparisons (46% of dashboards), and temporal analysis beyond a monthly breakdown (39%).

Less common indicators included features that would have provided additional context on an incident and the agency involved, such as administrative outcomes and whether an incident went through administrative review, either internal or external investigation, which were available in only 15% of dashboards. Similarly, additional functionality and accessibility options were less common, including a dedicated Q&A section that allows for public

engagement (available in 38.5% of dashboards). Available indicators often focused on the “who” and “what” of an encounter, such as officer and subject demographics, type of force used, and the reason for the initial police-citizen encounter. Details explaining the “how” and “why” of a circumstance and what led to the encounter, what happened, and the administrative result were not as common. For instance, only 7.7% of dashboards examined agency compliance, independent review, officer training, and the use and availability of body-worn cameras. This gap shows that dashboards are being used to take the first steps toward increased transparency, but they often do not provide evaluation or critical analysis beyond initial incident details.

A Baseline is Set

The public demanded greater transparency around police use of force, and 13 states responded by enacting statewide data-collection programs through dashboards. While these dashboards vary considerably in what they make available to the public, they establish a baseline against which all future versions can, and should, be evaluated. These states deserve credit for addressing the political, technical, and

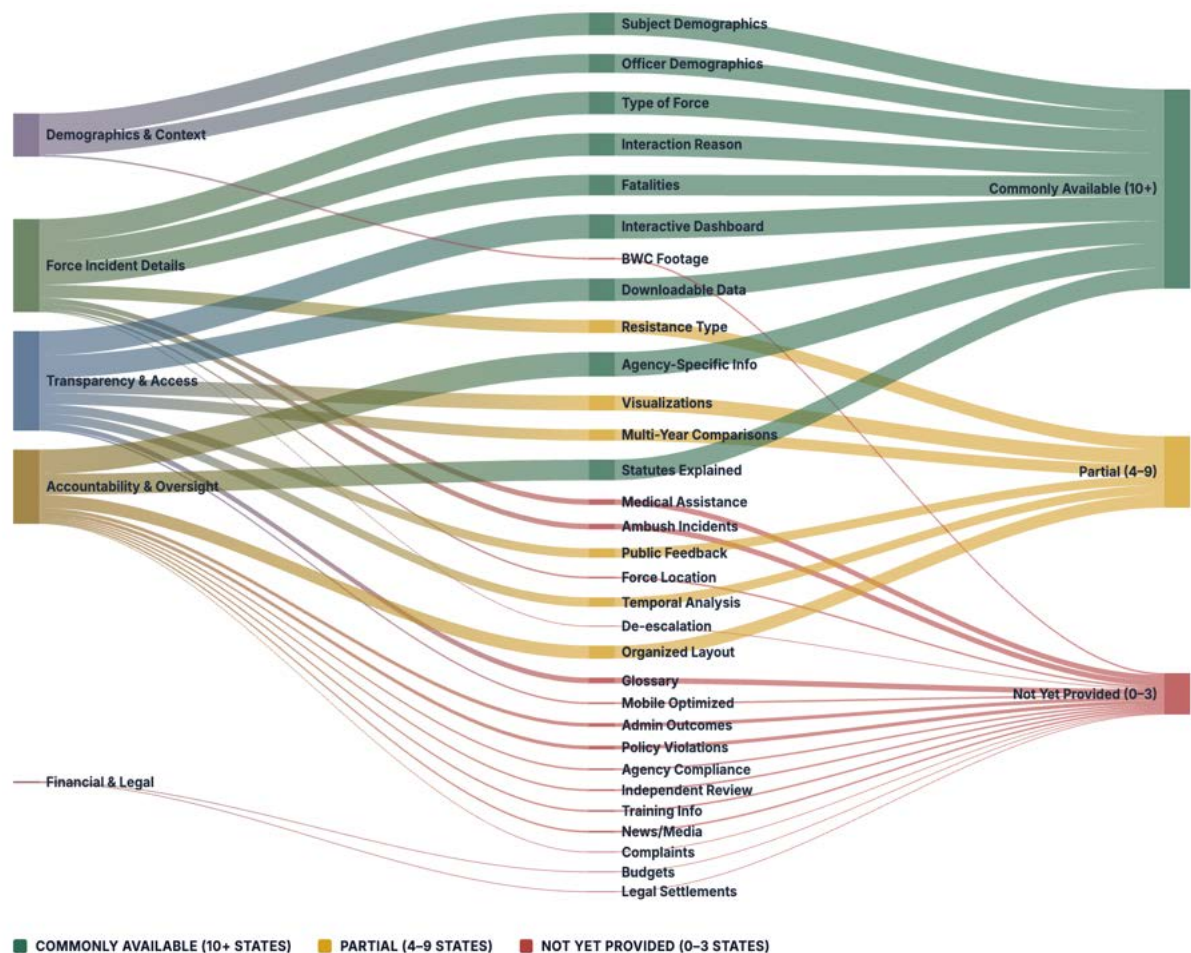


Figure 1. What 13 States Report on Use of Force, and What They Don't

practical challenges of standardizing use-of-force reporting. While clear gaps emerged in this analysis, states with the fewest research-informed indicators should still be viewed as far more transparent in this area than states without a data collection program. Today's platforms offer a foundational snapshot of officer-involved use of force by answering how often police apply reportable force against the public. Most platforms provide data on *who* was involved, *what* transpired, and *when* it occurred, though they largely omit *where*, *why*, and *how* it occurred, making these aspects crucial to address moving forward.

Regarding the understandability and accessibility of police use-of-force data, the examined dashboards publish raw counts and visualize them, but they rarely provide the tools or resources needed to interpret what those counts actually mean. For example, a dashboard may report that a subject was verbally resistant, the type of force used during an incident was a pit maneuver, or that two officers were present on scene. Although useful, if a dashboard does not also provide a glossary or a plain-language explanation of what these aspects are, or a breakdown using visualizations, the interpretation is inherently limited. Similarly, normalizing the frequency of force either by per capita or per call for service would contribute immensely to understandability. However, this also requires education and an explanation of the limits of what these rates mean, which is an educational role that platforms are also largely not fulfilling. Most platforms would benefit from including frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the data, the data collection process, and efforts to validate reported data. Lastly, the biggest area for growth is accessibility, where most platforms lack multi-language support and mobile optimization.

Recommendations for More Accessible and Transparent Data

One key takeaway from our analysis of existing use-of-force dashboards is that much more is needed to bridge the gap between publishing use-of-force data and making it understandable. The results confirm that states publish use-of-force data, but the data does not enable the public to evaluate local agencies through increased transparency. This is not to say states have failed in the data they provide, but genuine transparency extends beyond collection and publication. Instead, the public needs to access the data, understand what it represents, and evaluate whether the system worked as intended in a given incident.

One step toward more transparent and accessible data is intentional design and data-collection choices that most platforms have not yet made. To that end, we offer a series of recommendations that move beyond making data accessible to increasing public understandability and officer and agency accountability.

- **Meaningful Comparisons.** For these platforms to enable data discovery, they must provide a mechanism to compare agencies with comparable workloads, staffing, and community characteristics. Current platforms generally provide rank-ordering based on counts, which better reflects the state leaderboard for reportable force than a system that invites fair comparisons.

- **Accessible Designs.** Incorporating a way to support mobile devices, multiple languages, public feedback, and understandable visualizations. These practices ensure the public can understand the data, ask questions when needed, and access it through multiple formats to reach the largest audience.
- **Data Quality and Audit Practices.** Few of the 13 platforms report how they validate agency-submitted data, whether they conduct audits, or how they resolve errors. The public is left to take the data at face value or rely on investigative work by other parties to determine its trustworthiness. If the public does not trust the data, it will not be used for legitimate purposes.
- **Rates of Force.** While there is a wealth of arguments for moving beyond per capita rates of use of force, state platforms should use at least one meaningful denominator. Whether calls for service or arrests, the public should have a frame of reference given the volume and nature of police activity and not assume that all communities are equal in their interactions with the police.
- **Administrative Outcomes.** Reporting whether incidents were reviewed, who reviewed them, whether policy violations were found, and whether complaints or legal actions followed should be the norm, not the outlier. These represent the most direct mechanism for the public to assess whether accountability mechanisms are functioning. Doing so can improve community trust by highlighting the importance of accountability and, if an incident went beyond policy, explaining why it occurred and how it is being addressed to prevent recurrence.
- **Educate and Train.** Anyone who has trained or taught knows that defining is not explaining. There is a missed educational opportunity that would produce tremendous value to these platforms. Plain language explanations should exceed what is collected to provide explanations for what is not collected and why. Anticipate the questions that will be asked, and develop accessible resources (i.e., FAQs, guides, or interactive tutorials) that empower users to interpret the data accurately.

Use-of-Force Dashboards Moving Forward

Overall, our analysis shows that several states are taking the first step in publishing police use-of-force data. The next step is to move beyond publishing data to providing meaningful information through an interactive, visually engaging format that makes it publicly understandable and accessible, and that provides incident information from start to finish, including administrative outcomes. Achieving this will require researchers and practitioners to work together to translate these data into actionable information.

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The 2026 Inductees into the Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame

The Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame recognizes innovative law enforcement practitioners who have been central to implementing a high-quality research program in their agencies and are relentless champions of institutionalizing evidence-based practices in their daily work. Induction into the Hall of Fame is the highest international recognition of its kind. Since the Hall's inception in 2009, 72 individuals have been inducted into the Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame.

Since the Hall's inception, the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy (CEBCP) has anchored this celebration at our symposia. As the evidence-based policing movement has grown into a powerful global phenomenon, we felt it was time for the Hall of Fame to

evolve with it. Following conversations with leadership across evidence-based policing societies worldwide, the CEBCP is launching a new tradition. From this year onward, we are taking the Hall of Fame on the road—partnering with major evidence-based policing societies to celebrate these monumental achievements directly before the global peer networks they inspire. This year, Simon Baldwin, Scott Booth, Ryan Perlongo, Kelly Robbins, and Julie Wartell were inducted at the American Society of Evidence-Based Policing (ASEBP) conference in Washington, DC. Darren Green will be inducted at the Australian and New Zealand Society of Evidence-Based Policing (ANZSEBP) conference in Australia. Congratulations to these outstanding champions of evidence-based policing!



SIMON BALDWIN

Simon Baldwin is the manager of the Operational Research Unit for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), where he has served since 2017. He currently leads the RCMP's national applied research program supporting operational policy, training, and equipment decisions and provides strategic advice to RCMP leadership on

evidence informed decision making. Dr. Baldwin was nominated by Rich "RJ" Johnston of the Barrie Police Service, who himself is also a Member of the Hall of Fame.

Dr. Baldwin is recognized for two decades of effort implementing, translating, and institutionalizing evidence-based practices within the RCMP and across the broader Canadian policing community. His research and applied work have directly informed national use-of-force guidance, body-worn camera policy, training curricula, crisis intervention and de-escalation, officer decision making under stress, and the prevention of arrest-related deaths. This work has had lasting implications for accountability, transparency, and public trust. For these efforts, he was recognized with Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee Medal and King Charles III's Coronation Medal.

In his nomination, Rich Johnston notes that one of the most significant examples of Dr. Baldwin's impact is his

leadership in an evidence-based review of the RCMP's annual firearms qualification. By systematically leveraging empirical research on human learning, stress exposure, and performance under pressure, Dr. Baldwin directly shaped revisions to the national qualification standard. Dr. Baldwin's work also extends beyond the RCMP. He is currently the Co-Chair of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police Research Advisory Committee and interim Co-Chair of the Use of Force, Intervention, and De-escalation Committee. Within these committees, he has expanded the national implementation of evidence-based policing by actively promoting the integration of scientific evidence into executive decision-making, training standards, and national policing frameworks.



SCOTT BOOTH

Scott Booth is Chief of the Roanoke, Virginia Police Department. He began his career with the Richmond (VA) Police Department in 1996, serving in multiple positions for more than 20 years and retiring as a Major. He was appointed Chief of the Danville, Virginia, Police Department in 2018, before

joining Roanoke as its Chief in 2023. Chief Booth was nominated by Prof. Roberto Santos of Radford University, who is also a Member of the Hall of Fame.

Chief Booth is recognized for his work implementing evidence-based policing in Danville and Roanoke, resulting in significant reductions in crime. Facing historically high levels of violent crime and strained police-community relations in Danville, he led a comprehensive organizational shift toward evidence-based policing from 2019 to 2023, using the Stratified Policing Model developed by Santos and Santos. Booth infused problem-solving, place-based, person-focused, and community-based strategies into the department's everyday practices and culture. The outcomes in Danville were substantial and sustained over time; clearance rates more than doubled, and the city experienced a 45% decline in violence.

In his nomination of Booth, Prof. Santos emphasizes that, as important as these declines were, the measurable

improvements Booth fostered in organizational culture, leadership, accountability, transparency, and police legitimacy, and community trust were equally important. Danville's transformation illustrates how structured organizational change, evidence-based strategies, and community engagement can work together to achieve lasting public safety improvements in proactive crime reduction, accountability, and partnerships.

Booth has carried this commitment to evidence-based policing to Roanoke, where gun violence has already shown substantial reductions during his tenure. Santos notes that Booth's "leadership has improved public safety, strengthened community relationships, and advanced the profession in ways that are measurable, replicable, and lasting."

The 2026 Inductees into the Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame with colleagues at the American Society of Evidence-Based Policing Conference at American University, Washington DC.





DARREN GREEN

Darren Green is a Senior Sergeant in the Queensland Police Service (QPS), where he has served for 15 years. He has been recognized with several accolades for his work in evidence-based policing, including the Queensland Police Exemplary Conduct Medal for his evidence-based policing work with the

QPS and the Distinguished Police Scientist Award from the Australia and New Zealand Society of Evidence-Based Policing. Dr. Green holds a PhD in Criminology and was named an Honorary Fellow of the Academy of Experimental Criminology in 2025.

As his nominators write, Dr. Green is the principal architect of a remarkable portfolio of research and institutionalization of evidence-based practices within the Queensland Police Service. For example, he designed and implemented the Precision Random Breath Test program, aligning testing with traffic crash locations using a randomized crossover design, creating significant reductions in injury traffic crashes. To prevent domestic violence, he designed a randomized controlled trial framework to intervene with potential victims and offenders earlier, which resulted in reductions of subsequent domestic and family violence. With colleagues, he co-developed an award-winning, successful strategy to increase engagement between offenders and police, aimed at reducing recidivism. In partnership with the Queensland Corrective Services, he also co-developed a strategy to reduce violent offender recidivism among high-risk parolees and helped to test whether the program reduced re-offending (which it did).

Dr. Green's nominators emphasize that he not only tests new programs and approaches but also "has been a transformative leader in building institutional capacity" for evidence-based policing. This includes designing and delivering courses in problem-solving and hot spots policing and establishing the Implementation and Innovation Mentor (I AIM) program, providing formal guidance to personnel of all ranks—from Constable to Assistant Commissioner—to foster a sustainable culture of inquiry.



RYAN PERLONGO

Ryan Perlongo is Chief of Evidence-Based Training and Innovation for the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), where he has served since 2022. Before his current role at DCJS, he served as assistant chief of police services at the State University of New York. He is nominated by

Raymond Neves of the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, William Forrester of Walden University, and James Asmann, Director of Public Safety at CUNY York College.

Mr. Perlongo is recognized for his efforts to implement evidence-based policing infrastructure within the New York State DCJS and across the agencies it serves. He is responsible for developing and delivering DCJS's growing evidence-based policing content on violence reduction, organizational change, and implementation and has developed a holistic approach to institutionalizing evidence-based policing through training and organizational assessments. To achieve this, he has secured leadership buy-in through executive meetings on implementation progress, workshops on evidence-based decision-making, and orientation sessions to set expectations and accountability at the leadership level. He has developed core competencies through a diverse, evidence-based training portfolio tailored to each agency's specific needs. He has institutionalized evidence-based policing strategies by creating an Implementation Assessment Tool that gives agencies a structured, ongoing way to assess, adjust, and improve performance against evidence-based implementation standards.

In total, these efforts have supported two of New York State's largest public safety initiatives: the Gun-Involved Violence Elimination (GIVE) program and the Statewide Targeted Reductions in Intimate Partner Violence (STRIVE) program. GIVE jurisdictions have seen a 64 percent statewide reduction in violence, the lowest decline since 2021, and more than 1,200 public safety professionals have been trained in evidence-based, trauma-informed approaches for the STRIVE program.



KELLY ROBBINS

Kelly Robbins is a decorated Captain and Commanding Officer of the 1st District for the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Police Department, where she has served in various capacities since 2007. Robbins is a National Institute of Justice LEADS (Law Enforcement Advancing Data and Science)

Scholar and serves on the International Association of Chiefs of Police Research Advisory Committee. Commander Robbins was nominated by Prof. Eric Dlugolenski of Central Connecticut State University.

Cpt. Robbins has been central to implementing several rigorous, documented scientific research projects within the Philadelphia Police Department and beyond. In his nomination, Prof. Dlugolenski writes that during their first collaboration on a systematic social observation project to assess procedurally just policing, Robbins was the “linchpin” of the project, coordinating researchers and aligning internal and external stakeholders, while ensuring scientific standards were maintained and the work remained operationally relevant. He praised Robbins’ continued efforts in evidence-based policing, stressing that “few practitioners possess both the institutional credibility and the methodological sophistication to make such partnerships succeed; Captain Robbins consistently demonstrates both....[She] does not merely participate in research; she institutionalizes it.”

Cpt. Robbins is currently a co-principal investigator on an ongoing study of procedural justice and body-worn cameras, as well as the project coordinator for a complex, multi-agency randomized controlled trial evaluating drones as first responders. She is also leading innovative projects that measure community sentiment and test Koper Curve-based deployment strategies to reduce auto theft. Dlugolenski praises Robbins as “relentless in opening institutional doors, granting researchers access, encouraging experimentation, and taking principled risks. She is a law enforcement leader, a central architect of rigorous scientific research in her agency, and a tireless champion of translating evidence into practice.”



JULIE WARTELL

Julie Wartell has spent over 30 years working with local, state, and federal criminal justice agencies and communities on crime analysis, research, and prevention strategies addressing a wide range of crime problems. This work has included serving as a field researcher at the Police Executive Research Forum

(PERF), as an analyst for the San Diego Police Department and later the San Diego County District Attorney’s Office, and providing extensive research, training, technical assistance, and subject-matter expertise to various components of the Department of Justice and with the Institute for Law and Justice. She is nominated by Prof. Emeritus John Eck of the University of Cincinnati.

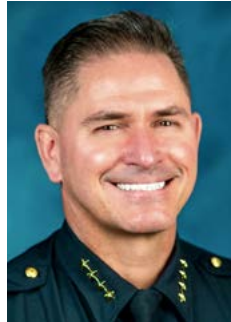
Wartell is foundational to the institutionalization of crime analysis and problem-solving in American policing. In his nomination, John Eck praises Wartell, noting that he “can think of no practitioner who is a more relentless champion of evidence-based policing practices, stretching back to the 1990s, before anyone uttered the phrase ‘evidence-based policing.’” Her extensive history as a civilian member of and advisor to several law enforcement and justice agencies has directly contributed to the development of crime analysis in the United States for over three decades. Wartell has also been central to implementing rigorous scientific research throughout her career, most notably an early randomized experiment to reduce crime by improving place management in San Diego.

Wartell served as a Visiting Fellow at the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) during a formative period when the NIJ was advancing the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), crime analysis, and practitioner-researcher partnerships. She has co-authored several Problem-Oriented Guides and serves as a judge for the Herman Goldstein Award. She has provided training and technical assistance to hundreds of police departments worldwide on problem-oriented policing and crime research, helping agencies move from rudimentary number crunching to rigorous scientific analysis.

Beyond Activity: Evidence-Based Policing Ten Years Later

BY JASON POTTS

Jason Potts is Chief of the Las Vegas Department of Public Safety and is the president and a co-founding member of the American Society of Evidence-Based Policing. Chief Potts was inducted into the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy's Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame in 2019.



Jason Potts

Ten years is long enough to take stock, but not long enough to declare victory. At the 10th annual conference of the American Society of Evidence-Based Policing (ASEBP), Chief Tarrick McGuire used the power of the number ten to remind us that milestones matter only if they move us forward. Ten fingers. Ten toes. It is one of the first ways humans learn to count, build, and make sense of the world. But for policing, ten years should not symbolize completion. It should symbolize recommitment to learning, targeting, testing, and tracking what works, and to moving the profession forward with humility and purpose.

For those of us who have been part of this work from the beginning, the anniversary felt less like a victory lap and more like a checkpoint. Evidence-based policing began with a simple yet disruptive belief: policing could improve if we had the courage to test what works instead of defending what was familiar. That idea mattered in 2015 and 2016, when public unrest, mistrust, and questions of legitimacy were reshaping the national conversation around policing. It still matters now.

Where the Movement Began

What became ASEBP started in 2015 with Renee Mitchell and a group of like-minded officers, many of them first-line supervisors, who believed tradition alone could not be the standard. The first conference was held in 2016 at Arizona State University. Many of us had been shaped by places and programs that challenged conventional thinking, including the University of Cambridge's Police Executive Programme, UC Irvine, the National Institute of Justice's Law Enforcement Advancing Data Science (LEADS) Scholars program, and now the Center for Police Research and Policy at Ohio State University. From the beginning, the movement was driven by people who cared deeply about policing and believed it could get better.

At the time, evidence-based policing was often dismissed as academic, abstract, or disconnected from the realities of the street. Some

officers and leaders questioned whether researchers could fully understand the speed, complexity, discretion, and danger of police work. Others worried it discounted experience, instinct, and craft. Those concerns were understandable then, and they still deserve to be taken seriously. Evidence-based policing was never meant to replace experience. It was meant to strengthen it.

Experience and craft knowledge matter. They always will. But experience without reflection can become tradition, and tradition without testing can become dogma. Evidence-based decision-making asks a profession built on judgment to become more disciplined about how it learns. It asks us to pair experience with research, contextual data, comparison groups, community feedback, and humility.

That may be the first major lesson from the last decade: evidence-based decision-making is not really about data. It is about humility. It is not the belief that data has all the answers. It is the recognition that we may not. At its core, it means replacing assumption with inquiry, testing what we believe, measuring what we do, resisting confirmation bias, and being willing to change when the facts tell us we should.

Medicine figured this out long ago. When we visit a doctor, we expect treatment informed by science, research, best practices, professional experience, and the specific condition in front of the physician. We would not want medicine guided only by habit or tradition if better evidence were available. Policing should expect no less of itself. Our prescriptions come in the form of strategy, deployment, training, supervision, policy, accountability, wellness, and leadership. The dosage matters. The timing matters. The outcome matters.

From Activity to Impact

One of the most important shifts over the past decade has been moving from activity to impact. Policing has never lacked effort. Officers answer calls, make arrests, write reports, conduct stops, respond to disorder, investigate violence, and carry the weight of people's worst days. But effort alone is not the same as impact.

For too long, policing measured what was easiest to count: arrests, citations, stops, calls handled, reports written, response times, and clearance rates. Those measures describe workload and demand, but they do not always tell us whether people are safer. Organizations tend to chase what they count. If we only measure activity, activity becomes the goal. If we measure harm reduction, repeat victimization, repeat offending, trust, legitimacy, employee wellness, problem solving, and long-term outcomes, the culture begins to move. What we count signals what we value. What we reward shapes what people chase. What we inspect, expect, and hold people accountable for

eventually becomes the culture.

More enforcement does not automatically mean fewer victims. More data does not automatically mean better decisions. More technology does not automatically mean more legitimacy. The better question is not, “How much did we do?” The better question is, “Did fewer people suffer harm?” That is the measure that matters: fewer victims, fewer people harmed, fewer officers injured, fewer unnecessary uses of force, fewer people cycling through systems that cannot solve their underlying problems, and fewer communities feeling over-policed but not protected.

The lessons from problem-oriented policing, hot spots policing, focused deterrence, precision policing, and harm-focused strategies all point in the same direction. Safety is not created by doing more of everything everywhere. It is created by understanding where harm is concentrated, what is driving it, who is repeatedly victimized, who is repeatedly offending, and which interventions are most likely to change those conditions. Precision problem-oriented policing moves us away from fishing with a net and toward fishing with a spear: hot people, hot places, hot times, real problems, real analysis, and real solutions. It also reminds us that police cannot solve every problem alone. City departments, service providers, community partners, and researchers all have a role to play.

Ten years later, many early adopters of evidence-based policing are now chiefs, sheriffs, commissioners, executives, researchers, analysts, and educators helping shape the profession. That matters. Evidence-based policing did not simply become a methodology. For many of us, it became a leadership pathway. It gave police professionals permission to ask harder questions without being seen as anti-police. It gave researchers a deeper appreciation for operational realities. And it helped create a shared language between practitioners and academics who too often had been speaking past one another.

But change is harder than the research often suggests. Policing is filled with people who care deeply and work hard under difficult circumstances, yet organizational change still creates resistance. There is an old truth that officers can dislike the way things are and still resist change at the same time. That resistance does not mean leaders should stop. It means they have to build credibility, create guiding coalitions, communicate clearly, build feedback loops, measure outcomes, explain the why, and keep moving. Evidence without leadership changes very little. Leadership without evidence eventually loses legitimacy. The work requires both.

Evidence as a Leadership Pathway

Another lesson from the last decade is that evidence-based decision-making must extend beyond crime reduction. Crime, violence, and victimization matter deeply, but they are not the only challenges facing policing. Recruitment and retention, officer safety, response to resistance, wellness, training, accountability, supervision, technology, and culture are evidence questions too.

Recruitment and retention ask whether talented people still see

policing as a profession worth dedicating their lives to, and whether current employees see a future in their organization. Response to resistance, de-escalation, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, and less-lethal tools are really about confidence, competence, control, and reducing injuries. Co-responder models ask whether the right people are responding to the right problems at the right time. AI-driven policing, drones as first responders, smart CCTV, real-time information centers, DNA databases, and analytics raise equally important questions about guardrails, ethics, transparency, accountability, and trust.

One lesson I did not fully appreciate ten years ago is that wellness is part of the mission. Mission first. People always. That cannot be a slogan. It has to be an operating principle. Officers, dispatchers, detention staff, analysts, animal protection officers, professional staff, and leaders are carrying more than ever: staffing shortages, scrutiny, fatigue, trauma, complexity, higher expectations, and constant exposure to human crisis. One of the greatest risks in this profession is not only physical. The work can slowly corrode the soul.

If organizations expect empathy, judgment, courage, professionalism, and restraint from their people, those same values must be modeled internally by leadership. Wellness cannot be a poster in a hallway or a box checked during training. It has to show up in policy, supervision, staffing, equipment, accountability, and culture. Taking care of people is not separate from reducing harm. Healthier people make better decisions, and better decisions create better outcomes.

The next decade will also test whether policing can use technology wisely. Can tools such as DNA databases, smart CCTV, and drones as first responders help us improve clearance rates, preserve the capacity to hold people accountable, improve evidence collection, and enhance situational awareness and safety?

These are not separate conversations. They are connected. Evidence-based decision-making helps agencies focus limited resources where they are most likely to matter, while forcing us to ask whether our strategies are producing the outcomes we claim to value.

Mission First. People Always.

The larger point is clear: the future is not about doing more. It is about using evidence, technology, and accountability more wisely to prevent harm and improve outcomes. But we should not be naive. AI, drones, analytics platforms, automated license plate readers, smart cameras, and real-time information systems can improve safety, speed, and accountability. They can also damage trust if deployed without clear purpose, guardrails, transparency, evaluation, and community understanding. The question is not simply whether policing can use these tools. The question is whether agencies can use them lawfully, wisely, transparently, and effectively.

That brings us to the profession's most unresolved challenge. It is not generating more ideas. Policing has no shortage of pilot projects, task forces, technologies, conferences, reform plans, or promising practices. The harder work is implementation: building feedback loops, sustaining what works, abandoning what does not, and

creating cultures willing to learn, adapt, and improve. It is easier to fail conventionally than unconventionally, but learning organizations cannot be built on fear of failure. Some ideas will fail. That is part of the process if we are willing to learn, adjust, and fail fast in pursuit of better results.

The real work is embedding research, science, data, experience, and craft knowledge into the systems that shape daily decisions. Evidence cannot live only in a grant report, an academic journal, a conference presentation, or a chief's memo. It has to influence briefing rooms, deployment plans, training, promotions, after-action reviews, procurement, policy, supervision, and accountability. Otherwise, evidence remains something the organization talks about, not something it becomes.

Ten years later, evidence-based policing is no longer a side conversation. It is becoming part of how agencies recruit, train, promote,

deploy, supervise, support, and lead. Not everywhere. Not perfectly. But more than before. That progress matters. Wayne Gretzky famously said he skated to where the puck was going, not where it had been. That remains our charge. Policing cannot simply defend where it has been. It must anticipate where it is going.

Communities count. Victims count. Employees count. Leadership counts. Evidence-based policing is not anti-craft. It is pro-learning. It is not about replacing experience or chasing data for the sake of it. It is about strengthening judgment, improving accountability, reducing harm, and building systems and subsystems that sustain it. Ten years later, the lesson is clear: fewer victims, more trust, stronger wellness, and better outcomes. If we do this right, the next ten years may matter even more than the first.

Jerry Ratcliffe (University of Pennsylvania) addresses the 2026 American Society of Evidence-Based Policing conference at American University in Washington, DC.



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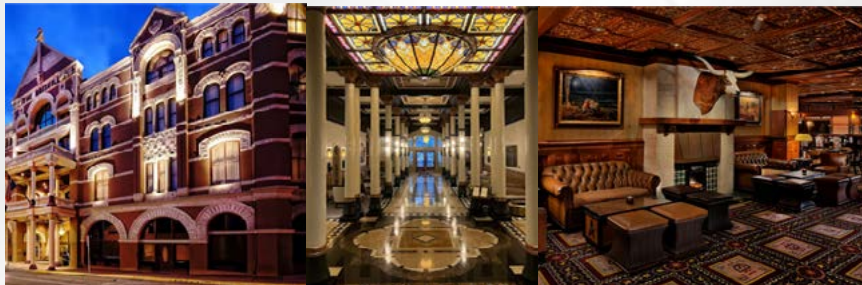
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The 2026 International Summer School for Policing Scholars

ISSPS students and faculty at the Airthrey Castle at the University of Stirling, Scotland



This June, in beautiful Stirling, Scotland, marked the fourth gathering of the International Summer School for Policing Scholars (ISSPS). The ISSPS is a unique global partnership founded in 2016 through a collaboration between George Mason University's Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy (CEBCP) and the Scottish Institute of Policing Research (SIPR), with colleagues from Arizona State University. For one week, twenty-eight doctoral students and thirteen leading faculty from across Scotland, the U.S., Australia, and Europe gathered to exchange ideas, challenge paradigms, and forge new international networks. Designed to challenge and inspire the next generation of policing scholars, the ISSPS pushes students and



faculty beyond local boundaries, immersing them in diverse theories, field methods, and international perspectives. This year's ISSPS was graciously hosted by SIPR and the University of Stirling.

To date, the ISSPS alumni network has grown to almost 100 students and dozens of faculty across four summer schools: St. Andrews, Scotland (2016), Fairfax, Virginia (2018), Brisbane, Australia (2024), and Stirling, Scotland (2026)—with the next gathering set to return to the United States. While each ISSPS is unique, every summer school blends learning, experiential field visits, reflection, and valuable networking. For example, this year's ISSPS included topics such as:

- ◆ Exploring emerging challenges and opportunities for policing scholarship in the U.K. and Scotland, Australia, the U.S., and Africa.
- ◆ Examining community, dialogic, organizational, and place-based theories, alongside researcher positionality in the field.
- ◆ Seeing research methods in practice, including survey design, systematic social observations, interviews, ethnography, experimental and quasi-experimental evaluation, systematic reviews, and administrative data analysis.
- ◆ Investigating how researchers collaborate and partner with police agencies, highlighted by a trip to Police Scotland's Headquarters and main training facility at Tulliallan, where students worked through a real-world ethical dilemma.
- ◆ Navigating career readiness, publishing strategies, alternative academic pathways, and presenting research to ethics boards (IRB).



ISSPS students are welcomed by SIPR Director Prof. Andrew Wooff



CEBCP Director Cynthia Lum delivers the Nick Fyfe Lecture at the SIPR Annual Conference, concluding the summer school

To cap off the week, ISSPS often integrates into a larger professional conference. This year, Friday's programming merged with SIPR's annual Scottish International Policing Conference, with the theme of Police Academic Partnerships. The conference served as an ideal capstone, allowing students to network with prominent scholars, policing professionals, and policymakers from the UK and abroad, and to see firsthand how academic findings translate into real-world policing policy and practice.

While each summer school takes on the unique flavor of its host nation, the core mission of ISSPS never changes: to elevate the standard of policing scholarship, bridge the gap between research and practice, and inspire the next generation of scholars to shape the future of the field. A sincere thank you to our hosts at the University of Stirling and at Tulliallan, and to all the faculty, students, and guest lecturers whose contributions made ISSPS 2026 such a resounding success!



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ISSPS students and faculty visit Police Scotland headquarters at Tulliallan Castle.



*ISSPS students and
faculty visit the
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Congratulations to the ISSPS Class of 2026!

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Kamau Wairuri, *Edinburgh Napier University*
Andrew Wooff, *Edinburgh Napier University*

Translating Evidence into Action: Collaborative Strategic Planning for Community Supervision

BY DEBORAH KOETZLE, STEPHANIE SPIEGEL, AND JEFF MELLOW

Deborah Koetzle is Professor of Criminal Justice and the Director of The Corrections Lab at John Jay College. Stephanie Spiegel is Senior Research Associate at The Corrections Lab at John Jay College. Jeff Mellow is Professor of Criminal Justice and the Deputy Director of The Corrections Lab at John Jay College.



Deborah Koetzle



Stephanie Spiegel



Jeff Mellow

Strategic planning is a foundational management practice that involves systematically assessing an organization, defining its desired future, and mapping a realistic path for achieving it. Well-developed strategic plans are associated with improved organizational performance (George et al., 2019). In the criminal justice field, a dynamic and regularly updated strategic plan can help agencies translate policy priorities into measurable safety and rehabilitative outcomes (Flaherty-Zonis, 2007). By documenting priorities, responsibilities, timelines, and resource needs, plans can also support coordination among stakeholders, including judges, prosecutors, corrections officials, and victim services, and ultimately help agencies manage scope and allocate resources strategically.

Recognizing the value of these efforts, in the early 2000s, the U.S. government began funding the development of strategic planning toolkits and training to improve the administration of the criminal justice system, including correctional systems. For example, in 2007, the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) published *Building Culture Strategically: A Team Approach for Corrections* to help correctional facilities strategically move toward a more positive culture (Flaherty-Zonis, 2007). Many correctional agencies have since adopted strategic planning to improve operations and outcomes aligned with research-based practices. Examples include the Alabama Department of Corrections (2019), Federal Bureau of Prisons (2026), Alameda County (CA) Probation Department (2018), and the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia (CSOSA, 2022). A review of these plans reveals several key themes. First, the planning process intentionally aligns goals to the agency's mission and vision. Second, the process emphasizes engaging stakeholders in both the process and outcomes. Third, key areas for improvement include staffing, inter-agency communication and collaboration, infrastructure, and organizational

culture. Finally, plans include continuous quality improvement strategies to improve practices.

Despite its importance, strategic planning can be difficult to undertake because agencies often lack the capacity to complete the necessary steps. However, collaborating with researchers can help to facilitate the process. For example, research partners can review existing data and practices, analyze local trends, engage local stakeholders, and lead the development of evidence-based goals and objectives. Although strategic planning is itself an evidence-based practice, it does not necessarily result in the identification or adoption of other evidence-based practices. In the absence of specialized knowledge about what works, a strategic planning process could just as easily lead an agency to select and implement practices not supported by evidence.

The following case study describes one example of a collaborative development and formulation of a five-year evidence-based strategic plan for the Department of Rehabilitation and Community Supervision (DRCS) of the Turks and Caicos Islands with a research team, highlighting lessons learned.

The Department of Rehabilitation and Community Supervision in Turks and Caicos

Community supervision in the Turks and Caicos Islands is relatively new. The first official probation officer was hired in 2015 within the Probation and Rehabilitation Unit (Mellow et al., 2025). After several organizational changes, the unit became the Department of Rehabilitation and Community Supervision (DRCS) in 2024. That same year, DRCS opened two offices, adopted a management information system, and received training on several evidence-based practices (EBP). DRCS supervises youth and adults on probation and parole and is responsible for core community supervision functions,

including pre-sentence investigations, risk/need assessments, case planning, treatment referrals, and supervision.

Building on its commitment to EBP, DRCS partnered with The Corrections Lab at John Jay College to develop a five-year strategic plan aligned with its mission and vision, aimed at advancing department practices. The project team has extensive experience in correctional research and technical assistance related to EBPs, both in the US and internationally.

Collaborative Strategic Planning

Drawing on existing resources, we used a collaborative approach to strategic planning that centered the voices of local stakeholders while ensuring that the plan would align with EBPs. Our approach consisted of a multi-stage process including (1) information gathering, (2) stakeholder interviews, (3) Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, (4) consensus-building, and (5) plan formulation. Central to the process were ongoing communication and collaboration with DRCS administrators, along with engagement from a local workgroup representing the criminal justice and behavioral health systems and the broader community.

Information Gathering. The project team reviewed existing materials, including DRCS' mission and vision statement,

organizational charts, budgets, staffing, policies and procedures, training protocols, and a variety of tools, including client assessments, case management templates, and staff evaluations. We conducted a search of online news coverage and national legislation. We aggregated and analyzed data on client and staff characteristics. Based on our review of the data and materials, we developed a stakeholder interview guide.

Stakeholder Interviews. Stakeholder interviews (n=38) were conducted with DRCS staff, people on probation and parole, criminal justice partners, government officials, behavioral health representatives, and local community members. Interviews focused on the criminal justice and behavioral health systems, DRCS practice, perceptions of DRCS, and collaboration and communication across agencies. Interviews were semi-structured, lasted 45-60 minutes, and were audio-recorded and transcribed. Each transcript was reviewed by two members of the project team to identify themes. These themes were used to identify five key focus areas for strategic growth: staffing, programming, partnerships, infrastructure and data, and outreach.

SWOT Analysis. A nine-member workgroup participated in a two-day workshop for a SWOT analysis. The workgroup included internal and external stakeholders, including a former DRCS client.

Members of The Corrections Lab research team and representatives from the Turks and Caicos Islands Department of Rehabilitation and Community Supervision during a strategic planning session



The workshop was organized to build rapport and trust among members, review EBP, analyze each focus area, and identify future partners. Smaller subgroups conducted a SWOT analysis for each focus area. Following the initial analysis, groups identified the top strengths and weaknesses, along with the most significant opportunity and threat. This was repeated for each focus area, except for partnerships. For this area, small groups identified priority needs (e.g., employment) and identified potential community partners to address these needs.

The project team reviewed the findings from the workshop to develop long-term goals, intermediate objectives, and short-term strategies. The team considered these findings in relation to the local organizational and political context, along with established research on effective correctional practices. While not every identified priority was an EBP, the research informed the identification of correctional practices associated with recidivism reduction and the organizational conditions needed to implement them.

Consensus-Building. Proposed goals were introduced in a second workshop with a discussion of how they were informed by the SWOT analysis, stakeholder input, and research on effective correctional practices. Participants then engaged in a structured consensus-building process to assess whether the proposed goals, objectives, and strategies were comprehensive, relevant, and realistic. We paid particular attention to establishing priority goals, identifying potential barriers, and revising strategies as needed. We also discussed timeframes for completing each strategy, considering the timelines identified across strategies to ensure a realistic distribution of activities. This process helped to ensure that the final plan reflected both EBP and the priorities of DRCS and its partners.

Formulating the Strategic Plan. Using feedback from the consensus-building workshop, the project team finalized the plan's goals, objectives, strategies, and timelines. This included creating a tracking sheet and developing key performance indicators for each focus area to help DRCS monitor their progress. The final strategic plan reflects the following priorities:

■ **Staffing.** This area emphasized building staff capacity and creating organizational supports needed to deliver effective supervision and services. Priorities included (1) strengthening staff communication and supervision, expanding training on correctional EBPs, and improving reporting systems to support data-informed decision-making, (2) improving supervision by increasing adherence to established contact standards and monitoring requirements, and (3) cultivating a supportive and healthy work environment by establishing mechanisms for staff feedback and recognition and prioritizing staff safety and wellness. These priorities are intended to improve the consistency, quality, and sustainability of correctional practices across DRCS.

■ **Programming.** This area was more directly aligned with principles of effective correctional intervention (Bonta & Andrews, 2023). Priorities focused on (1) strengthening the consistent use of validated screening and assessment tools, improving case planning, and improving case management practices, and (2) increasing staff use of Core Correctional Practices (Dowden & Andrews, 2004). The plan emphasized the use of behavioral strategies, including reinforcement, to encourage positive change. Collectively, these strategies are intended to improve the quality and consistency of interventions used by DRCS. Partnerships. Effective community supervision agencies have collaborative relationships with local partners to provide services and support. For DRCS, priorities centered on formalizing and strengthening relationships with organizations that can support its supervision and reintegration goals. Specific priorities included (1) executing formal memoranda of understanding and service agreements with local agencies, (2) improving referral and service-coordination strategies, and (3) strengthening partnerships with national organizations that assist in reintegration activities for people returning home from prison. Formalizing these relationships is intended to improve coordination and increase access to resources and services for people under supervision.

■ **Infrastructure and Data.** This area emphasized strengthening DRCS infrastructure to support effective correctional practice. Priorities included (1) developing a comprehensive process for monitoring fidelity, (2) establishing data-sharing protocols with local criminal justice partners to support coordinated decision-making, and (3) expanding physical infrastructure through the development of a halfway house and a residential facility for individuals under community supervision. The fidelity-monitoring and data-sharing priorities are intended to help DRCS assess implementation quality, identify areas for improvement, and engage in data-driven decision-making. The halfway house and residential facility expand their capacity to provide structured support to those in need of more intensive EBP services.

■ **Outreach.** This area recognizes that community understanding, support, and access to local opportunities can influence the reintegration process. Priorities included (1) engaging in public relations and educational activities to increase knowledge of DRCS and probation and parole, and (2) strengthening relationships with local non-governmental organizations (e.g., faith-based organizations, colleges, businesses). Together, these priorities are intended to strengthen the broader community context in which supervision and reintegration occur, increase the public understanding of community supervision, and create additional educational, service, and employment opportunities for people under supervision.

Eighteen months after the strategic plan was collaboratively developed, DRCS has successfully accomplished many of its first- and second-year goals, including the hiring and training of additional staff, implementing electronic monitoring, establishing formal partnerships with local agencies, and building community support through various outreach efforts, including the launch of a website. In addition, DRCS is currently planning to open a Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility for youth in fall 2026, which will serve youth in need of more intensive supervision, a level of care that currently requires sending them to other countries in the region. Collectively, these accomplishments, along with others, have positioned DRCS to be a leader among probation and parole agencies in the Caribbean.

Collaborative strategic planning offers correctional and criminal justice agencies a practical way to turn a broad commitment to evidence-based practice into clear priorities, responsibilities, timelines, and measures of progress. The DRCS experience illustrates the value of combining research expertise with the knowledge of staff, system and community partners, and people directly affected by supervision. This collaborative process helped identify not only which correctional practices were supported by research, but also the staffing, partnerships, data systems, and infrastructure needed to implement them. For agencies seeking to strengthen evidence-based practice, the central lesson is that the process matters: strategic plans are more likely to be relevant, realistic, and actionable when those responsible for carrying them out help shape both the priorities and the path forward.

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An Implementation and Fidelity Force Multiplier: Leveraging AI to Operationalize and Optimize Evidence-Based Policing

BY JAMES H. BURCH, II

James Burch is President of the National Policing Institute.



James Burch

An argument introduced many years ago continues to hold true to our efforts to promote the use of evidence-based policing are not inhibited by an absence of research evidence. Instead, it is the challenges associated with implementation and fidelity to evidence-based models that likely form the most significant barriers (Sherman, 1998). Evidence shows that hot spots policing, problem-oriented policing (POP), and focused deterrence among other approaches can be effective in addressing crime and violence (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). Yet, when these interventions leave the controlled conditions of a randomized trial and meet the operational and cultural realities and resource constraints of law enforcement operations, their effect is not always consistent or positive. Often cited in research as highlighted later in this article are missing, weak, or ineffective programmatic components, such as insufficient problem analysis, problem focus and dosage, and failure to communicate, share information, or collaborate.

Closing this gap is where artificial intelligence deserves a closer look. The debate about artificial intelligence (AI) in policing has centered on its most contested uses, such as predictive threat scoring and autonomous surveillance. A more practical question is whether generative AI and agentic capabilities, not elaborate or expensive systems, can be used to act as force multipliers for implementation quality. Generative AI is most often used to create new content such as text, images, video, audio, and software code: think basic ChatGPT, Claude, or Gemini use cases. Agentic AI can take on more complex tasks with some autonomy, including planning, making decisions, and carrying out multi-step workflows, often in conjunction with connected applications and data (Downie et al., n.d.). Specialized AI skills and agentic workflows could automate much of the administrative work required to monitor and execute these strategies. That shift would move agencies from hoping a strategy is effectively designed, applied, and implemented as necessary to employing AI-enabled analysis and repeated processes to measure and adjust implementation as it happens.

This article describes ideas for using AI tools to support implementation. But these are ideas, not proven results, and ultimately they must be subjected to evaluative processes themselves. The sections below describe selected implementation challenges drawn from systematic reviews and other research, and how AI may be able to mitigate the challenges. The focus here is not on purchasing a “black box” solution from a third-party vendor, but instead on using low-cost and locally calibrated tools to improve implementation of evidence-based practices.

Hot Spots Policing: Precision Definition and Real-Time Analytics

The evidence is consistent: crime concentrates in micro-places, and hot spots policing, when implemented properly, is effective in addressing crime in hot spots without displacing the problem into surrounding areas (Turchan & Braga, 2024). Sustaining the strategy, though, can be challenging.

First, defining an actionable hot spot takes analytical modeling that accounts for shifts in time, place, and crime type. In many agencies, compiling this data is slow and cyclical. Agencies without automated analysis and mapping (a large segment of the profession) face a freshness challenge. By the time analysis and maps are produced, vetted, and deployed, conditions in the micro-place may have begun to change or have already changed, and field supervisors and officers end up working from data that may be increasingly less accurate with each passing day. Second, a central mechanism behind hot spots policing, the Koper Curve, depends on brief, unpredictable officer stays of 11 to 15 minutes to produce residual deterrence (Koper, 1995). Tracking whether officers spend the right dosage of time in the right places requires continuous auditing of computer-aided dispatch (CAD) data.

AI tools and agents could change this by automating much of the analytical loop. Rather than waiting on retrospective reports, an agent with access to an agency’s CAD and Records Management System (RMS) data could process data continuously and flag local anomalies as they emerge. The agents could use the data to define the micro-place more precisely by combining incident data, environmental risk factors, and time patterns, giving field commanders current guidance. To monitor presence in the hot spot (dosage) with precision, additional data with geolocation properties (such as body-worn camera data) can be used to understand exactly where in the hot spot the officer is present and the frequency and location of documented

and undocumented contacts. This becomes an affordable and achievable solution that does not require overburdened crime analysis units to sustain manually and does not require a multi-million-dollar investment in proprietary solutions.

In addition to improving the approach and its implementation directly, the same or connected agents could develop reporting that provides a real-time implementation monitoring service that eliminates the triangulation of data sources and manual verifications to assess dosage and implementation fidelity.

Problem-Oriented Policing: Reducing Complexity and Sustaining SARA

POP asks agencies to move past the reactive standard model and address the conditions that produce recurring problems (Goldstein, 1979). The SARA model (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment, see Eck and Spelman, 1987) is consistently associated with POP and plays a key role in the approach, but SARA's analysis and assessment steps have been found to be the most challenging, so much so that outside technical expertise may be necessary for some agencies (Sidebottom & Tilley, 2011).

In addressing a persistent crime problem using POP, agencies often lack the staffing and analytic capacity to analyze the physical, social, and systemic drivers behind it. Under pressure to act and to manage limited resources, the process may be cut short, and the response may default to traditional enforcement or similar approaches.

AI skills and generative agents could reduce the operational load of POP at each phase. In the scanning and analysis phases, large language models (LLMs) and retrieval-augmented systems could synthesize large volumes of narrative reports, community complaints, and environmental surveys, surfacing common threads, such as problem property owners, a lighting problem, or a recurring commercial pattern, that can be missed when data and incident volume are high. The potential here is not just for depth of analysis but breadth of analysis, i.e., identifying the true problem when it may not always be immediately apparent.

In the response phase, agents could serve as informed brainstorming partners. Drawing on repositories of evidence-based practices, an agent could generate tailored response options based on what has been used elsewhere or derive more creative options that are not bound by traditional thinking and approaches. Agents could also help maintain the assessment loop. By monitoring incident narratives, community feedback, and non-traditional data such as code enforcement violations or non-emergency call data, an agent could signal whether a response is working or whether the problem is adapting.

If these ideas lessen the effort required to run SARA well and allow it to be continuous, they could help sustain higher-fidelity problem-solving and POP overall.

Focused Deterrence: Group Intelligence and Multi-Agency Coordination

Focused deterrence approaches depend on close coordination across local police, prosecutors, probation and parole, social service providers, and community organizations. To do this, two-way or multi-way information sharing and communication are critical (Braga et al., 2024).

That coordination is difficult to maintain. Beyond issues of trust and the hurdle of working differently, organizations are developing or receiving information about group and group member activities, and more. Collecting and sharing this information can be labor-intensive and often relies in part on knowledge held informally across units and agencies. When an incident occurs, the window to intervene, interrupt retaliation, and deliver a coordinated message is short. If information remains in a system, or is not collected or shared, we lose the ability to communicate important details and possibly the fidelity of the approach.

Agentic AI could speed up group information collection, sharing, and coordination across the intervention team. Within policy, privacy rules, and data-access controls, an agent could analyze unstructured data from briefings, field interview cards, team meetings, and agency records to keep network maps and information current and partners informed. After a serious incident, the agent could, conceivably, map likely retaliation pathways from known group alignments, helping anticipate rather than react. Even on a more basic level, agentic AI could simply aggregate and communicate non-sensitive information and activities more routinely across groups to maintain focus and cohesion.

Agents could also automate the cross-agency notifications the model relies on. When a flagged individual contacts the justice system or takes a positive step away from violence, the agent could alert the assigned probation officer, the outreach coordinator, and the responsible police unit at the same time. Faster, more uniform notification could help deliver the dual-track message, an off-ramp through social services paired with a credible enforcement response, more consistently. Whether that consistency improves outcomes is, again, an empirical question worth testing.

A Note of Caution: Data Protection and the Human(s) in the Loop

These applications carry risks that the field should address before adoption. The first is data protection and privacy. Agencies handle sensitive, protected information, including victim identities, juvenile records, and unverified intelligence. Sensitive data should not be entered into open, public commercial AI tools. Doing so can expose the data and violate statutory evidence protections.



The second is overreliance. No matter how capable an agent becomes, it cannot substitute for human judgment and ethics. Automation bias, or overreliance on automation, occurs when we give undue weight to recommendations generated by AI, even in situations where the information provided by those systems is incorrect or where human judgment would be more accurate (Ruscheimer & Hondrich, 2024). These tools match patterns; they do not reason independently.

For both reasons, a human-in-the-loop protocol should apply at every phase of deployment. Staff should be trained to treat AI-generated assessments as drafts for review, not as final direction. Human review remains a safeguard before any recommendation reaches action, though research has suggested that human in the loop alone is fallible and insufficient, and a layered or institutional protocol may offer greater protection against automation bias (Ruscheimer & Hondrich, 2024).

Further, data protection and human(s) in the loop are important components of an approach to using AI but should not be considered the only components or considerations needed to ensure that AI is used effectively or appropriately. It is critical for us to recognize the importance of preparing organizations and the people within them for optimal and ethical use. Justice organizations (or governments) can do this through the development and application of an AI adoption strategy that informs organizational and operational changes needed, such as new policies or policy revisions, workforce training, development and testing capabilities, consistent engagement of stakeholders and communities, and more. The National Policing Institute (NPI) recently released a report on the need for such a strategy within policing following a convening of law enforcement leaders and staff. The report, titled *The AI Adoption Strategy Gap in Policing: An Unmet Need with Real-World Consequences*, also provides recommendations for leaders and is available from NPI by visiting <https://pages.policinginstitute.org/ai-adoption-strategy-gap>.

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence will not replace the human core of the justice system. It cannot replicate the ethical discretion of a street supervisor, the investigative intuition of a detective, or the community trust built by an empathetic officer. Used carefully, though, it can help to address a problem that has held translational criminology back: the friction between what the evidence recommends and what agencies can execute.

Whether specific AI tools deliver on that promise is a question to be answered with evidence, not assumed. NPI's role, as an independent and nonpartisan institute, is to help the field test these tools and identify which ones improve implementation fidelity and public safety outcomes.

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Author Note

Author affiliation: James Burch is President of the National Policing Institute (NPI), a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to advancing policing through science and innovation. The ideas discussed here draw on NPI's work with agencies to best implement and optimize evidence-based approaches and NPI's work on AI adoption.

Hot Off the Press

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Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy

George Mason University
4400 University Drive, MS 6D12
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
<https://cebcp.org/>