

# 2018 REPORT

## Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Antelope Valley Stations' Crime Prevention & Community Engagement Strategies



**INTEGRITY • COURAGE • COMPASSION • PROFESSIONALISM • ACCOUNTABILITY • RESPECT**



**Prepared by  
Lancaster and Palmdale Sheriff's  
Community Relations**

# ANTELOPE VALLEY SHERIFF STATIONS' CRIME PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES 2018

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# **ANTELOPE VALLEY SHERIFF STATIONS' CRIME PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES 2018**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In 2015, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) entered into a settlement agreement with the United States Department of Justice (DOJ). The agreement resulted in the implementation of several hundred reforms, many of which were directed at the Antelope Valley Sheriff Stations, specifically, Lancaster and Palmdale Stations.

Since the signing of the settlement agreement, both Lancaster and Palmdale Stations have devoted numerous resources towards implementation of the agreement items. Additionally, the LASD created the "Compliance Unit" to work directly with the DOJ and the independent monitoring team, who oversees the LASD's efforts towards satisfying the terms of the agreement.

This is the fourth annual report regarding the efforts of both Lancaster and Palmdale Stations. This report only chronicles Section VII, of the settlement agreement, entitled "Community Engagement" (paragraphs 87 through 101). For information of compliance efforts regarding other sections of the settlement agreement, please refer to the monitoring team's semi-annual reports.

In an effort to streamline this year's report, a new appendix section has been added. This appendix will contain the "Community Engagement Events" section as seen in previous reports. This section covers the strategies, benefits, successes, obstacles, and recommendations for each event the stations presented or in which deputies attended.

Both Lancaster and Palmdale Stations will use the final results of the community survey to provide a baseline of public sentiment regarding the LASD's policing efforts throughout the Antelope Valley (AV). Additionally, we have been awaiting the release of a survey compiled by the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission. Our intent is to use these surveys as the foundational structure in our creation of a community policing and engagement strategy.

We have sought public comment and critique over the past four years from our attendance at community events, meetings, and through our Community Advisory Council (CAC) town hall meetings. We have taken these insights and have applied the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) model, and methodologies provided by the Center for Problem Oriented Policing (CPOP) to create a preliminary policing framework.

This framework is guided by Settlement Agreement Paragraphs 87 and 91, which outlines the following five key points:

1. Actively participate in community engagement efforts in the Antelope Valley.
2. Participate in local community meetings.
3. Making itself available for community feedback.
4. Developing the Community Advisory Committees (CAC).
5. Working with the community on the development of diversion programs.

This framework is also guided by the LASD's Core Values and Mission Statement.

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## Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Mission

- *to enforce the law fairly and within constitutional authority;*
- *to be proactive in our approach to crime prevention;*
- *to enhance public trust through accountability;*
- *to maintain a constitutionally sound and rehabilitative approach to incarceration;*
- *to provide a safe and secure court system;*
- *to maintain peace and order;*
- *and to work in partnership with the communities we serve to ensure the highest possible quality of life.*

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## Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Core Values

COURAGE – COMPASSION – PROFESSIONALISM – ACCOUNTABILITY – RESPECT

With integrity, compassion, and courage, we serve our communities – protecting life and property, being diligent and professional in our acts and deeds, holding ourselves and each other accountable for our actions at all times, while respecting the dignity and rights of all.



Earning the Public Trust Every Day!

## SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE EFFORTS TO DATE

Below are the listed settlement agreement items and the Antelope Valley Stations efforts towards compliance. Each item has been broken down by individual compliance efforts.

### **Settlement Agreement Paragraph 87**

“Actively participate in community engagement efforts in the Antelope Valley...”

*Both stations have made community engagement a priority. Each station has a plan in place to ensure all station sworn personnel attend and participate in community meetings and events. At present, sworn personnel are required to attend either one public event and conduct six positive non-enforcement community contacts, or to attend two public events and conduct two positive non-enforcement community contacts. Examples of community engagement efforts will be discussed in detail in the Appendix, under “Community Engagement Events”.*



*New deputies who are assigned to Lancaster and Palmdale Stations are provided training regarding requirements of the settlement agreement. They are taught the principles of constitutional policing, and biased-free policing. It is our goal in establishing these standards to instill the values of community policing into our stations’ cultures for generations to come. We look forward to expanding upon our current community outreach and will continue to build new partnerships with local businesses, community organizations, and community leaders.*

“...Participate in local community meetings...”

*Both stations send representatives to a variety of community meetings throughout the year. Examples of community meetings attended by station personnel will be discussed in detail in the Appendix, under “Community Meetings”.*

“...Making itself available for community feedback...”

*Both stations are represented at community events and meetings throughout the year, and personnel are always available for feedback from residents. We are actively seeking community input in regards to the effectiveness of the services we provide to the community. We are also looking to solicit feedback from our residents regarding existing community programs and the need to establish new programs in the future.*

*We are aware that residents need an outlet to express both positive and negative feedback in regards to interactions with our department personnel. Comment forms (complaints/commendations) are available in each patrol car in both English and Spanish versions. Forms are also readily available at the Michael D. Antonovich Courthouse, local area libraries, and at the front counter at both stations. Forms may be downloaded from the internet and submitted either online or in person at both stations. Comments can also be made over the telephone. Both stations are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for community convenience and all residents are able to provide comments or request to speak to a supervisor in person.*

“...Developing the Community Advisory Committees (CAC)...”

*CAC members were selected by the captains at each station. Members meet all of the requirements as set forth in the Settlement Agreement and within the guidelines mandated by the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department. The CAC’s members represent the rich diversity of the communities we serve within the Antelope Valley.*

“...Working with the community on the development of diversion programs...”



*LASD’s compliance unit, DOJ, and the monitoring team agreed to use existing diversion programs within the community as well as those currently being developed by the County of Los Angeles. The stations will continue to work with local community organizations to develop new youth programs aimed at mentoring community defined “at risk” youth. Additionally, we will work with and support existing and newly developed community reintegration programs designed to support persons on probation or parole. We understand these community members will have little to no chance of success without community support, including that of local law enforcement.*

**Settlement Agreement Paragraph 88**

“All sworn personnel at the Antelope Valley Stations shall actively attend community meetings and events.”

*Both stations have actively participated in attending community meetings and events. In 2018, personnel from both stations attended over 200 meetings and events.*

“LASD agrees to develop a plan for such attendance based on the results of annual community satisfaction surveys and feedback from the CAC.”

*Deputies have been attending community events and meetings since the signing of the agreement and each station has been tracking individual attendance. This strategy requires each deputy to attend community meetings or events and requires each deputy to conduct self-initiated, positive, non-enforcement related contacts with residents.*

“The plan shall indicate the number and types of events to be attended on a regular basis and take into account the need to enhance relationships with particular groups within the community, including, but not limited to, youth, and communities of color.”

*In consultation with the monitoring team and DOJ, an agreement was reached that all sworn personnel are required to attend either one public event and conduct six self-initiated, positive, non-enforcement community contacts or to attend two public events and conduct two positive, non-enforcement community contacts or to attend three public events.*

*Examples of a positive, non-enforcement activity may include deputies stopping to talk with community members about the dangers of drugs, traffic safety, and other personal safety tips. The focus of these interactions is beyond a social encounter and is designed to foster a relationship with residents where they feel secure and engaged.*



**Settlement Agreement Paragraph 89**

“LASD agrees to provide structured annual in-service training on community policing and problem-oriented policing methods and skills for all AV deputies, including station supervisors and unit commanders.

This training shall include:

- a. methods and strategies to improve public safety and crime prevention through community engagement;
- b. scenario-based training that promotes the development of new partnerships between the police and community targeting problem solving and prevention;
- c. leadership, ethics, and interpersonal skills;

- d. community engagement techniques, including how to establish formal partnerships and actively engage community organizations, including youth, immigrant, and LGBTQ<sup>1</sup> communities;
- e. problem-oriented policing tactics;
- f. conflict resolution and verbal de-escalation of conflict; cultural awareness and sensitivity training.”

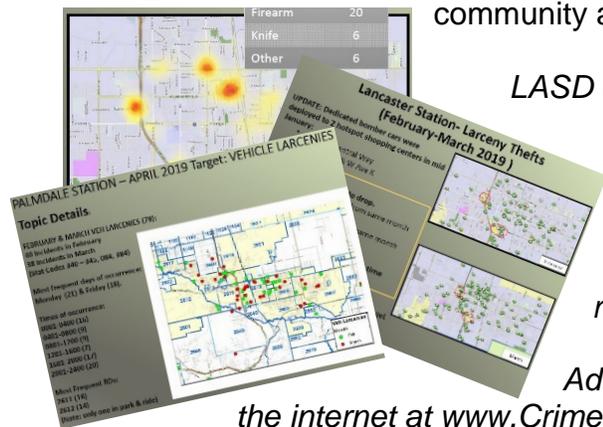
**Settlement Agreement Paragraph 90**

“LASD agrees to ensure that monthly Crime Management Forum meetings with the Assistant Sheriff or his designee and semiannual Risk Management Forum meetings include:

- discussion and analysis of trends in misconduct complaints and community priorities to identify areas of concern, and
- To better develop interventions to address them.”

*Crime Management and Risk Management Forum meetings have been attended by station personnel and each item has been integrated into these meetings.*

“LASD agrees to use techniques such as spatial mapping and scientific deployment analysis to enable the Risk Management Forum to better support and measure community and problem-solving policing efforts.”



*LASD utilizes spatial crime mapping and crime trend analysis during Crime Management and Risk Management Forum meetings. These techniques, coupled with community input and the help of city, county, and community resources allow us to create strategies to resolve crime and nuisance issues.*

*Additionally, the public can view crime trends via the internet at [www.CrimeMapping.com](http://www.CrimeMapping.com) or [www.CrimeReports.com](http://www.CrimeReports.com).*

**Settlement Agreement Paragraph 91**

“To continually improve police-community partnerships, LASD will assess and report on the impact of community engagement initiatives. LASD will issue public reports on the Antelope Valley Stations’ community engagement efforts, identifying successes, obstacles, and recommendations for improvement.”

*This and past reports meet the objective of this agreement item.*

<sup>1</sup> LGTBQ is often used to refer to all of the communities of people who identify themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, or Questioning.

### **Settlement Agreement Paragraph 92**

“LASD agrees to seek the assistance of community advocates in widely disseminating to the public, in English and Spanish, the requirements of this Agreement.”

*LASD provided a summary of the settlement agreement in English and Spanish. The summary has been distributed to the public at a variety of community events, such as town hall meetings and neighborhood watch meetings. The summary has been distributed at all CAC town hall meetings as well. The monitoring team approved the summary of the settlement agreement as meeting this requirement. It was issued as a press release and was broadcasted via Nixle<sup>2</sup> and our Facebook pages. Additionally, the summary can be accessed at both Lancaster and Palmdale station’s websites and the compliance unit website.*

### **Settlement Agreement Paragraph 93**

“LASD will continue to support Lancaster and Palmdale’s CAC to advise and provide feedback to the LASD/Antelope Valley Stations.

The panel will leverage the insights and expertise of the community to address policing concerns, including, but not limited to, racial or ethnic profiling and access to law enforcement services, and promote greater transparency and public understanding of the LASD.

The civilian panel shall be authorized to:

- a) Advise the Sheriff and the Station commanders on strategies and training to improve community relations, bias-free policing, and access to the civilian complaint system;
- b) Work with the Sheriff and Station commanders to establish and carry out community public safety priorities;
- c) Provide the community with information on the Agreement and its implementation; and
- d) Receive and convey to LASD public comments and concerns.”

*Successes: Lancaster and Palmdale CACs have each been granted the authority as outlined above. Both CACs have conducted several town hall meetings and “Days of Dialogue” events aimed at creating opportunities for station personnel to engage in meaningful conversation with the community. CAC members have attended numerous community events and are continuously seeking public input regarding the department’s performance in meeting the terms of the settlement agreement.*

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<sup>2</sup> Nixle is a notification system and provides an open communication forum that connect public safety, municipalities, schools, businesses and the communities they serve. The Nixle service allows verified government agencies to send messages to local residents via phone, email, and web.

*Obstacles: Keeping CAC members engaged and attending CAC monthly meetings. Keeping the CAC members within the mission of the settlement agreement.*

**Settlement Agreement Paragraph 94**

“LASD will memorialize the CAC’s into LASD-AV policy within 90 days of the effective date. The policy will establish the number of members and a mechanism to ensure that membership is representative of the diverse communities in the Antelope Valley, including members from each station, faith communities, minority, ethnic, and other community organizations.”

*LASD has memorialized the CACs into Unit Orders at both Lancaster and Palmdale Stations, thereby completing this section of settlement agreement Item #94.*

“LASD shall include student or youth organizations on the CAC’s or create a separate advisory committee made up of youth representatives.”

*LASD has worked with both CACs to include youth representatives, and both stations now have youth members. Both stations have completed the requirements of this section of Settlement Agreement Item #94.*

“LASD will facilitate quarterly public meetings of the CAC to discuss the monitor’s reports and to receive community feedback about LASD’s progress or compliance with the Agreement.”

*LASD has been actively working with the CACs to present quarterly town hall meetings at venues throughout Lancaster and Palmdale Station’s service areas. The CACs are also working with LASD to promote and participate in community engagement events throughout the Antelope Valley over the course of the year, to provide opportunities for the community to voice their comments and/or concerns about the Antelope Valley Stations’ policing efforts.*



*Successes: Both forums have allowed for community members to express concerns regarding crime in their neighborhoods, their interactions with department members, and overall community issues. Deputies are immediately able to interact with these community members and have meaningful dialogue.*

*Community members have expressed these dialogues develop better relationships with the sheriff's department and community members.*

*Obstacles: Some of the obstacles at town hall meetings have been the following: One or more community members tend to monopolize a large amount of time given for their grievance or concern. The town hall meetings are not as intimate. If community members do not feel included, they leave and do not express their concerns. If they have a negative experience, they will not attend future events.*

**Settlement Agreement Paragraph 95**

"The CAC's reports and recommendations will be posted on LASD-AV's website."

*Each CAC has submitted two annual reports to the monitoring team. The most recent report from September 2018, is posted on each respective station's website. The CAC has completed the requirements of Settlement Agreement Paragraph 95.*

*Additional information about the CAC reports can be found in the discussion of Settlement Agreement Paragraph 96.*

"LASD will consider and respond to the civilian panel recommendations in a timely manner."

*In 2018, the stations have worked in partnership with our CACs to build trust and open the lines of communication within our communities. The LASD provides training to the CACs regarding policies and procedures. They are taught the protocols following critical incidents, such as; deputy involved shooting, pursuits, use of force, etc. Due to this training, the CACs are often able to provide information to the community based on their training and experience with the sheriff's department following a critical incident, which assists in alleviating the fear these incidents create. In turn, the LASD has learned immensely from the CAC's input regarding how our actions affect the public. We accept the feedback from our CAC's and use this information to improve our service.*

*A great example on how we work closely with our CACs is the response Lancaster Station made in relation to the Starbucks racial insensitivity incident that occurred in Philadelphia in the spring of 2018. The station had scheduled a "Coffee with a Deputy" event at a local Starbucks two months prior to this incident. Although this incident didn't happen locally, several of our CAC members were concerned it would be insensitive to hold the community event the same week this sensitive incident occurred. We discussed their concerns, contacted Starbucks, and made the decision to postpone this event. Since then, Starbucks has conducted sensitivity training for its employees.*

*These types of incidents and our responsiveness to our CACs concerns demonstrate the partnership and level of trust we have built.*

*LASD has been working with the CACs and has responded promptly to all requests for information. Specific requests regarding local incidents or the need for focused patrols in a given area are investigated and handled immediately. The CACs are able to bring forward any and all concerns from the public to their respective station captains, and all issues of concern are discussed at monthly meetings. CAC recommendations to each station are also evaluated for possible future implementation.*

**Settlement Agreement Paragraph 96**

“The County will provide the CAC with reasonable administrative support, including meeting space. In addition, the Monitor may provide advice and technical assistance to the CAC.”

*Both Antelope Valley Sheriff Stations have provided administrative support and the use of their station conference rooms for CAC meetings. Additionally, both CACs have met with members of the monitoring team to receive clarification and interpretation of the settlement agreement. The most recent monitoring team and CAC joint meeting was held in October 2018. At this meeting, the monitoring team provided feedback to each CAC on their most recent town hall meetings from September 2018, and distributed a guide to writing successful reports. Both CACs have been provided with technical assistance from the monitoring team to ensure that they fulfill their responsibilities to the community.*

**Settlement Agreement Paragraph 97**

“The CAC will not have access to any non-public information regarding an individual deputy or allegation of misconduct or disciplinary action.”

*LASD agrees to continually meet the goals of this objective.*

**Settlement Agreement Paragraph 98**

“LASD agrees to assist the Monitor in conducting a reliable, comprehensive, and representative annual survey of members of the Antelope Valley community regarding their experiences with and perceptions of LASD and of public safety.”

*LASD, the compliance unit, and the monitoring team have been working with outside entities to achieve this objective.*

**Settlement Agreement Paragraph 99**

“To conduct the annual community survey, the monitor shall retain an individual or entity that shall:

- a. Develop a baseline of measures on public satisfaction with policing, attitudes among police personnel, and the quality of police-citizen encounters;
- b. Design, conduct, and analyze baseline and subsequent annual surveys of a representative sample of Antelope Valley residents, law enforcement personnel, Section 8 voucher holders, and detained arrestees;

- c. Review and consider prior law enforcement surveys in the Antelope Valley and other cities (including recent community policing surveys in Palmdale and Lancaster), as well as current or recent concerns in the Antelope Valley, in designing the survey;
- d. Engage in informal conversation with Antelope Valley residents, LASD deputies and command staff, and DOJ representatives, and observe community meetings;
- e. Ensure that the resident and arrestee surveys are designed to capture a representative sample of Antelope Valley residents including members of each demographic category;
- f. Conduct the survey in English and Spanish, as necessary, to ensure representation of the entire Antelope Valley community;
- g. Formally discuss the survey methodology with LASD supervisors and DOJ, and consider these opinions in development of the initial survey and improvements to subsequent surveys.”

*LASD, the compliance unit, and the monitoring team worked with outside entities to achieve this objective. We are awaiting the results and analysis of the survey which was conducted in 2018.*

**Settlement Agreement Paragraph 100**

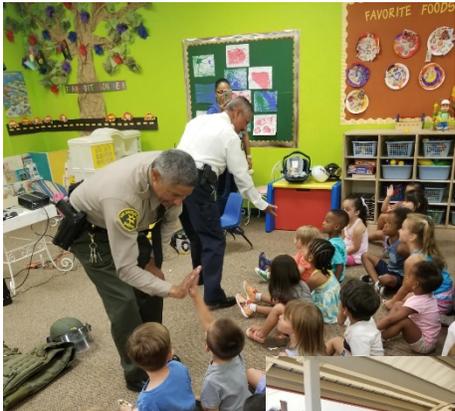
“LASD agrees to cooperate with the design and conduct of the survey by, for example, helping to organize focus groups of deputies and obtaining and providing previous survey instruments and data.”

*LASD has met with the monitoring team and has completed the requirements for the first survey and LASD intends to comply every year.*

**Settlement Agreement Paragraph 101**

“The report of the baseline survey and subsequent annual surveys shall be publicly distributed and posted on the LASD-AV website.”

*LASD will post the results of the survey and all subsequent annual surveys*



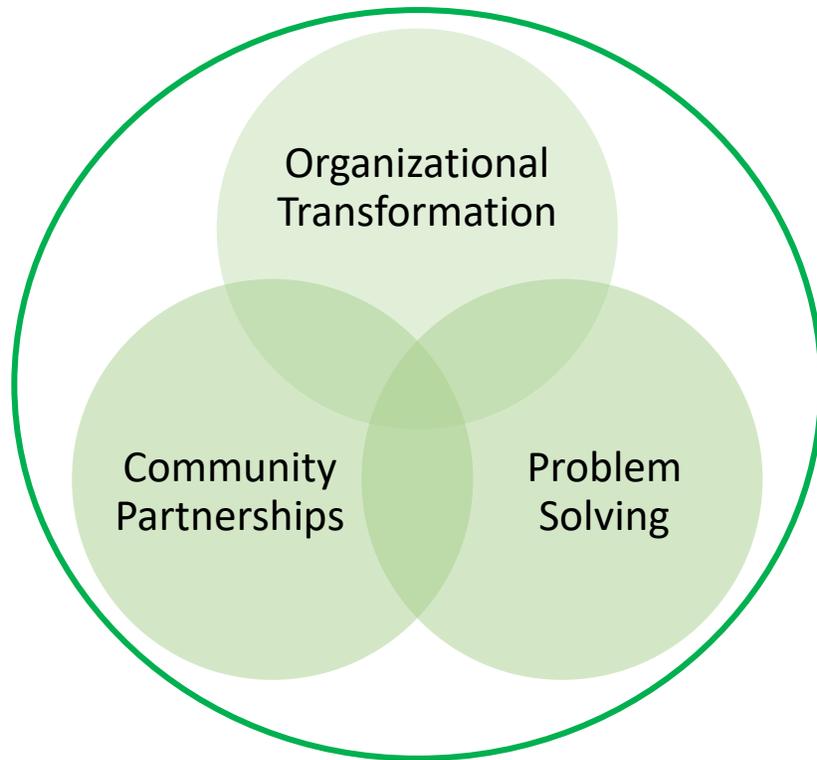
## **COMMUNITY POLICING STRATEGIES**

*Community Policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.*

*-U.S. DOJ, Community Oriented Policing Services*

Both Antelope Valley Stations have continued to work together in a valley-wide effort to reach out to community stakeholders and form alliances for the betterment of our communities. To this end, we have adopted the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) methodologies. These include three key components:

- Organizational Transformation
  - This requires both Antelope Valley Stations to modify its policing philosophy from the top down in order to ensure support for community partnerships and proactive problem solving
- Community Partnerships
  - This involves the collaboration between both Antelope Valley Stations and all community stakeholders
- Problem Solving
  - This involves the proactive and systematic process of examining identified problems to develop effective responses



In order to meet these goals and objectives, we started with organizational transformation. In 2017, we began holding classes to discuss with our personnel the problems, concerns, and issues raised by the public and the DOJ regarding past law enforcement efforts. The terms of the settlement agreement were explained, as well as the LASD's expectations for compliance, and the ultimate benefit to both our personnel and our community. These classes have continued as new personnel are assigned to the Antelope Valley Stations. Every sworn member of these stations are mandated to attend this training.

These classes established the baseline from which we have built upon to change behaviors and perception of the public. We have worked to break down the "us versus them" mentality which had previously existed, and instead have promoted a "partnership" mentality. Each of our deputies try to extend this partnership in every contact made. This has allowed our personnel to take ownership of our problems and work collaboratively with the public to resolve policing, quality of life, and social issues affecting our community.

With the organizational transformation taking place, we were able to reach out to our partners throughout the community. Over the years we have established numerous relationships, partnerships, and alliances with groups and organizations who serve the residents of the Antelope Valley. We recognize their efforts and the important role they serve in satisfying the needs of our local area residents. We are working with these organizations and are actively referring those in need of additional support.

As a law enforcement agency, we recognize our role as being primarily reactive in nature; a person calls the station to report a crime or incident and we respond to that call. This is usually done after the crime or incident has occurred. Although we may not be able to change this model, we recognize our community partnerships can have a significant impact on whether or not we receive additional calls to the same location.

We are in the process of developing strategies to effectively educate our personnel on the many resources available throughout the Antelope Valley. Our end goal is to act as a conduit for sharing the many opportunities for help, assistance, and guidance that is available to our residents.

Since 2014, both stations have been working with the community to gauge their concerns and perceptions of law enforcement, and specifically our efforts. These meetings and dialogue sessions allowed our personnel to see how their actions were viewed by the public.

In 2018, through these various meetings, events, and dialogue sessions, we employed the “Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment” (SARA) problem solving model to identify and address crime issues and concerns (See Table 1). We understood that our past practices left a portion of our community disenfranchised. Additionally, members of the community expressed a loss of trust in our ability to be fair, impartial, and truthful in our policing efforts. We are working with our CACs, and through our participation in community events and meetings, to continually address these issues.

**Table 1 - Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment Problem Solving Model**

The SARA Process	Evaluation Questions
<p><b>SCANNING</b> Identifying and prioritizing problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the problem?</li> <li>▪ How should the problem be measured?</li> <li>▪ What would have to decline for success to be seen?</li> </ul>
<p><b>ANALYSIS</b> Researching what is known about the problem</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How “much” of a problem is there?</li> <li>▪ Who is involved and how?</li> <li>▪ Where is the problem and why?</li> </ul>
<p><b>RESPONSE</b> Developing solutions to bring about lasting reductions in the number and extent and/or problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What should be done about the problem?</li> <li>▪ Who should do it and how?</li> <li>▪ Is it being done?</li> <li>▪ How will accountability be determined?</li> </ul>
<p><b>ASSESSMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluating the success of the responses</li> <li>▪ Using the crime triangle to focus on immediate conditions (Victim/Offender/Location)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Did the response occur as planned?</li> <li>▪ Is there less of a problem?</li> <li>▪ Did the problem change?</li> <li>▪ What should be done next?</li> </ul>

Lancaster and Palmdale Stations have experienced a few challenges over recent years. Both stations are extremely busy and leading over all other LASD patrol stations in the number of calls for service received. This has led to a very high employee turnover rate. In the past, personnel would commit to 5-10 years if not longer to a patrol station. They would often train, work, and promote within the station. Currently, many of our personnel stay less than three years.

This is challenging for a number of reasons. Our deputies are relatively inexperienced in patrol compared to deputies who have worked the communities in the past. Without this experience, they lack the familiarity with the community that one gains after working in an area for a significant amount of time.

To overcome this challenge, both stations worked diligently in 2017 and 2018, to establish relationships with communities of color, as well as communities who often see themselves as unseen, such as the LGBTQ, mentally ill, and homeless communities. From large scale events such as "Justice Sunday", to smaller events at community organizations, and churches, station personnel have made it a priority to attend as many events as possible within our communities.

Our ultimate goal is to find lasting solutions to the problems in our community. In 2018, we started the process of developing formalized training to our station personnel with the "Community Problem Oriented Policing" (CPOP) model, as a means of getting to the root of our community problems and working with all of our community stakeholders to develop solutions. The CPOP model focuses on addressing causal factors and instituting preventative efforts, as opposed to a reactionary response. For more information regarding CPOP, please view their website at: [www.popcenter.org](http://www.popcenter.org).

We believe the survey results will provide useful critique of our performance and provide insight about the general perceptions of law enforcement. Our goal is to collaborate with our CACs and community leaders to address the findings brought forth in the survey. We seek to utilize the CPOP methods of microscopic analysis and the SARA problem solving model as a means of developing action plans which will improve community safety and enhance community engagement.

One example of utilizing this process involved a noticeable increase of burglaries and other crimes along Lancaster Boulevard (BLVD). It was determined through the collaborative efforts of store owners and the directed patrol deputies, that the problem was not the criminal activity itself, but several causal factors which made Lancaster Boulevard susceptible to the crimes; inadequate lighting at some businesses, lack of surveillance cameras, transients, and other nuisance activities, which had been allowed to continue over time. These were some of the issues which needed to be addressed.

Working with the city of Lancaster and, local businesses, and community groups, station personnel worked at addressing these issues. The city of Lancaster created an ambassador program which enhanced efforts by station personnel and addressed many of the nuisance and transient issues. Business owners and managers met with station personnel on a regular basis and were provided information on how to enhance

security. The addition of security cameras allowed station personnel to identify at least one of the suspects in the burglaries.

At the end of 2018, the city of Lancaster evaluated the effectiveness of these efforts including the ambassador program in reducing overall crime on the BLVD. The ambassadors had a positive impact on the homeless community, which were often the cause of nuisance problems reported by business owners and community members. Ambassadors were able to build a rapport with homeless community members and establish trust with them through their daily interactions. When issues arose on the Boulevard involving these community members, ambassadors were able to handle many of the problems without the need for station involvement. This freed deputy personnel to handle priority calls for service.

## **ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES**

### **Baseline Survey Study**

Over the past four years, both Antelope Valley Stations have made tremendous efforts to create inroads to the many communities we serve. We have changed our policing efforts and have been employing de-escalation techniques whenever possible. Although a survey will be helpful in determining current views, it cannot reflect any improvements from the onset of the Settlement Agreement, as it was originally intended.

We have also been awaiting the results of the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations' survey regarding public perception of law enforcement. We hope to use the survey and the results of the commission's report to help direct our engagement efforts.

### **Tracking**

The LASD created a tracking system to record community engagement events and to document each deputy's participation at an event. The LASD also created a community event survey form, which is made available for the public to complete and comment on the LASD's participation at an event. Many attendees state verbally how much they enjoyed the event and appreciate what the Sheriff's Department and both stations are doing throughout the community.

Respondents favored public meetings, such as the Town Hall, because of the interaction that takes place with in-person dialogue. They also suggested that the LASD attend local civic meetings and participate in more public events. One person suggested that the LASD put beat cops back on walking neighborhood patrols to foster more interaction, especially in higher crime areas.

### **Attendance at Community Town Hall and Dialogues**

Both stations believe they have made great strides in their efforts to engage their communities. In spite of these efforts, attendance at town hall meetings or specific events where the community is invited to express their concerns about the Antelope Valley Sheriff Stations has been not as well attended as we would hope. Both stations

have published these events via conventional newspaper articles, fliers, posters, station internet websites, and social media. Additionally, we have tried handing out fliers in front of shopping centers, have gone door-to-door, and have enlisted our local schools to send emails and fliers home with students. These are the same avenues used to advertise station open houses, safety fairs, and the Trunk or Treat and Car Show events that have been attended by several hundred to several thousand people.

We are working with our CACs to rectify this issue. One suggestion has been to have an advanced calendar of town hall meeting dates, times, and locations. This can then be distributed at all of the events and meetings that station personnel attend. We will support any suggestions our CACs provide.

#### Department Participation

The Sheriff Department's primary job function is to provide policing services throughout the County of Los Angeles. As part of providing these services, the LASD believes community engagement is essential in providing safer communities. Lancaster and Palmdale Stations service an area of approximately 1,170 square miles, serving nearly half a million residents. Despite the vast area and number of residents, coupled with staffing shortages, both stations were able to send all of their sworn personnel to at least one community event during the 2018 calendar year.

Both Lancaster and Palmdale Stations have created tracking systems to collect information on individual deputy community engagement efforts.

### **FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

#### Hispanic Outreach

In response to concerns from the Hispanic community that both stations lacked effective Hispanic Outreach programs, both the Lancaster and Palmdale Stations have worked diligently to increase outreach efforts within the Hispanic community. Both stations added bilingual personnel to their community relations/public information staff. In addition to hosting neighborhood watch groups, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and women's self-defense classes spoken primarily in Spanish, we have partnered with local churches and business groups such as the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce which host various social events.

Community Relations staff from both stations are still developing a Community Academy which will be presented solely in Spanish. Additionally, both stations have been working toward increasing communication and social media efforts in Spanish. Messages are currently being transmitted via Nixle and Facebook in Spanish.

Both stations do regular public service announcements and interviews in English and Spanish with our local Spanish radio stations.

#### Diversiónary Programs

Both the city of Lancaster and the city of Palmdale recognize the importance of reducing the number of incarcerated youths by offering diversion programs. Our involvement with the Vital Intervention and Directional Alternatives (VIDA) Program, Youth Activities League (YAL), Teen Court, and Explorer programs work towards redirecting and mentoring youth to positive activities and life choices.

Our work with the Probation Department and the Teen Court program help to provide an alternative to incarceration. Our partnerships with other organizations like YouthBuild, Lost Angels, Making Appropriate Choices (MAC) Program, and Salvation Army, work towards helping youth complete high school education, thus creating new opportunities and positive life choices.

No new diversionary programs have been implemented to date. Both stations have been in conversation with several organizations to create new programs. Any implementation will probably be delayed through 2020, due to agency approvals and the seeking of possible grant funding.

In the interim, the Los Angeles County Probation Department is working on the development and implementation of several diversionary programs. We anticipate these programs will benefit our area.

#### *Trailer Mounted Shooting Simulator and Snow Cone Trailer*

The Antelope Valley Stations have been working on a number of innovative ideas designed to bridge law enforcement with the community by employing interactive and educational exercises.

One of the concepts has been to obtain a trailer mounted shooting simulator. A shooting simulator projects a scenario on a movie screen. A trained deputy sheriff acts as a monitor and oversees the scenario. The monitor can change the outcome of the scenario based upon the participant's interaction with the characters on the screen. Different options for controlling the on-screen characters can be used by the participants, including verbal commands, de-escalation techniques, less lethal and lethal force options. The purpose of mounting the shooting simulator in a trailer, is to take it to high schools, colleges, and public events throughout the Antelope Valley. We would like to take the shooting simulator trailer directly into the community.

The other concept is a snow cone trailer. In an attempt to reach out to those who may not feel welcome, we partnered with the Salvation Army, who has a certified food truck, to offer free snow cones to the public. We set up the stand at a local middle school and served over 300 snow cones in less than an hour.

In order to expand upon this concept, we would like to obtain a certified food trailer to serve shaved ice or snow cones to the public. In the winter, we would offer free hot chocolate. The goal is to take the trailer into the community where we can meet and interact with the public in an inviting atmosphere, thus engaging the public in conversation.

We have been reaching out to community groups and our respective booster organizations to help fund and support this endeavor.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is committed to excellence in the services we provide to our communities. We have embraced the concepts of community policing and are working with our communities through community engagement and problem oriented policing models to create safe communities where every resident is empowered, respected, and a true community partner. We are committed to seeking ways to expand upon outreach to residents of the Antelope Valley. We see ourselves as true partners with the public in crime prevention and the maintenance of a high quality of life for the communities we serve.

We fully understand that building trust and legitimacy with communities, that historically have dealt with past injustices and discrimination, will take a considerable effort of both time and resources. Finally, we have initiated a determined focus on maintaining accountability and transparency as part of our efforts to build community trust, especially with our communities of color.

The LASD has undergone a substantial shift in its organizational culture in the last few years. We are dedicated to abiding by the principles of constitutional and bias-free policing. At both Antelope Valley Stations, we provide the public with information on how to access crime data, crime mapping, official policy decisions, and yearly reports of our stations, the monitoring team, and our CACs. We feel the more transparent we are in providing information, the more likely we will be able to establish a degree of honesty and trust with the communities in which we partner. Our efforts, in this regard, will be ongoing as we are committed to succeeding in making all of our residents feel safe, secure, empowered, and part of the process of community policing.

A significant part of the success of community oriented policing is creating positive non-law enforcement activities. To this end, our community engagement activities promote the idea of involving all segments of our community in a dynamic partnership with law enforcement.

As we look to the future, our residents and our CACs will continue to be vital resources for our stations. We will continue to build upon the partnerships we already have in place, and seek to build new ones to further reach out and engage with our population. Our community oriented policing model is an ongoing, dynamic philosophy that we believe will best serve the needs of our communities. Through direct engagement with our communities and ongoing training of our personnel, we hope to encourage the public to see themselves as active, empowered participants in the policing of their neighborhoods.