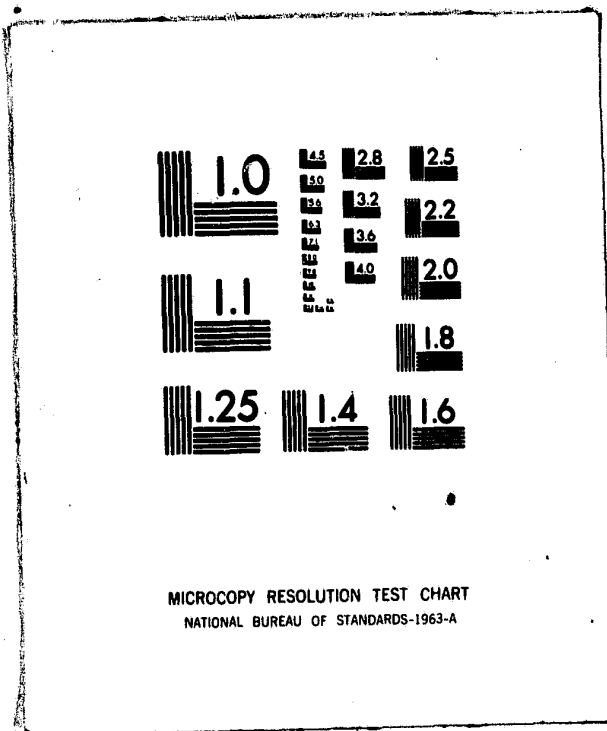


National Criminal Justice Reference Service



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X LARGO POLICE DEPARTMENT  
CRIME PREVENTION UNIT

LEAA GRANT 76-A1-13-AE02

NCJRS  
SEP 5 1979  
ACQUISITIONS

EVALUATION REPORT

63984

X Prepared by the  
Pinellas County Metro  
Planning Unit

## I. Introduction:

This task was undertaken to fulfill the second of two evaluations required by the Pinellas MPU during FY/78 (per SPA guidelines).

The primary use of the information collected and analyzed in this document such as crime statistics, internal efficiency and external relations, will be to determine the impact of the project and future funding considerations.

The major goals of this evaluation were:

1. To determine if the measurable objectives had been met (quantifiably and qualitatively).
2. To determine if there were any significant intervening variables during the grant period that may have had an affect (positive or negative) on the project outcomes.
3. To determine if the feedback mechanism for client assessment of the level and quality of service had been accomplished.

## II. Methodology:

The major objectives of the evaluation and how they were measured are presented below. The method of analyzation of data used by the evaluator is indicated after each objective.

Objective #1: To determine if the measurable objectives had been met.

### Measurement:

1. Project records were examined and the number of residential/commercial security programs conducted, the attendance of same, and the number of residential/commercial surveys conducted were verified.
2. Stolen and recovered property data were collected from the Florida UCR reports. Burglary rates (pre and post project implementation) were identified using the appropriate Florida UCR and monthly departmental reports.
3. Other project records including citizen evaluation returns were also examined.

### Analysis:

1. Project records regarding data were kept meticulously. Data had been collected monthly, quarterly, semi-annually and annually. The records were well organized and easy to track.

2. All documentation indicated that the measurable objectives were met and, in some cases, exceeded (see final report).

Objective #2: To determine if there were any significant intervening variables during the grant period that may have had an affect (positive or negative) on the project outcomes.

Measurement:

1. Historical data was examined to find out if any of the following may have had an influence on the project outcomes:
  - a. Any "Help Stop Crime" programs conducted during the project period.
  - b. Street lighting or other crime prevention improvements made in the city.
  - c. Departmental changes, i.e., increases or decreases in patrol personnel, shift changes, beat changes, reclassification of offenses, changes in the City's population, etc.

Analysis:

1. The only "Help Stop Crime" type of program on-going during the project period was "Operation I.D." The amount of property recovered and returned to the owner attributed to the program could not be established. Records are kept for the dollar amounts of property recovered, not the method of recovery or how the owner was identified.
2. There were no crime prevention improvements made by the City, such as improved street lighting, etc., during the grant period.
3. Several departmental, policy, and classification changes may have had a negative influence on the project outcomes:
  - a. Population figures and the number of residential dwellings increased during the project period by approximately 12% and 6% respectively.
  - b. The number of commercial establishments remained relatively stable; however, the commercial burglary classification includes: sheds, utility trailers, etc. (approximately 40% of the commercial B&Es).
  - c. The State Attorney's Office prosecution of residential burglaries was expanded to include "curtilage" violations.

- d. The department changed to permanent shift assignment from September 1976 through August, 1977. In examining the 1977 Yearly Burglary Study prepared by the crime prevention unit staff (included in the quarterly progress report dated 3/31/78), it was noted that the number of all types of burglaries was somewhat higher during the permanent shift cycle. The department has since returned to rotating shifts.

Objective #3: To determine if the feedback mechanism for client assessment of the level and quality of service had been accomplished.

Measurement:

1. Examination of the evaluation questionnaire developed to fulfill this objective was checked for adequacy and completeness. The rate of returned questionnaires and responses were also assessed.
2. Programmatic changes were examined to see if shifts in target populations were made to coincide with the identifiable needs and/or responses of the citizenry.

Analysis:

1. Five separate questionnaires were developed (one for each type of presentation). One general question was asked and then there were several open-ended statements relating to the topic, which solicited comments.
2. The rate of return on the questionnaires (2,094) was approximately 40% of the total.
3. Throughout the grant period, programmatic changes in target populations were noted in the quarterly progress reports. The changes were basically a response to citizen suggestions and requests. Recent statistical analysis of the target crimes (mainly burglaries and robberies) by the crime prevention unit staff has shown that the age group from 18-35 in the community is the most victimized. Programs are now being aimed at these groups.
4. After approximately 9 months certain areas of the city were revisited and crime prevention programs and surveys were re-presented. This was due to the "halo" effect wearing off.

III. Background:

In the early part of 1975, the police department began a crime prevention effort. Two sworn officers attended the 4-week C.P. course at NCPI in Louisville, Kentucky.

Initial efforts were aimed at trying to determine where crime-prone areas were. Statistical analysis, pin maps, overlays, etc., were used; however, no pattern or "trouble areas" could be identified.

Based on the latest crime reports, the Unit staff began a series of residential/commercial security surveys. Staff recognized the need for a comprehensive citizen education/awareness program and with the City's approval, applied for this grant.

After the project was underway, one officer was transferred back to the uniform division and as of this date has not yet been replaced.

Project staff again tried statistical analysis to identify target hardening areas in the City. This effort caused "displacement" of the targeted crimes but no significant reduction.

The citizen education approach was initiated and proved to be successful. Massive media campaigns to inform the citizens of the resources available fostered an overwhelming response and created a backlog of requests.

It was decided that the Operation I.D. approach would be handled in a "walk-in" fashion and engravers would be provided (with instructions) to interested citizens. If requested, project staff would perform this service.

In order to obtain a feeling from the citizenry, individual questionnaires were developed for each type of program presented by Unit staff. They were designed to be filled out at the end of the presentation and collected at that time. This would hopefully insure a high response rate and provide a source of information to improve present programs and/or shift the emphasis as the respondents indicated.

Due to good planning and utilization of resources, the grant was extended to 23 months. The total project award was for \$37,915. Approximately \$300 was returned, mainly from unspent accumulated interest.

#### IV. Findings:

1. The first seven objectives listed in the grant were either met or surpassed.
2. Measurable objective #8 - Decrease stolen property by 5% as compared to the 12 months preceding the grant period - was not achieved. Two possible conclusions are evident. First, the method of determining the amount of stolen property was the dollar amount as

stated by the victim rather than the actual number of items. Second, inflation was not considered in figuring the decrease in actual dollar amounts.

3. The possible negative effect of several intervening variables has previously been mentioned. Ideally, a zero burglary rate would be outstanding; however, a realistic burglary rate should be considered. No amount of crime prevention techniques, education, improvements, will in reality produce a zero rate. Once a "point of diminishing returns" is reached, efforts should be moved to other areas of need.
4. The 1977 Florida UCR indicated an overall decrease in residential/commercial burglaries of 4.4%. The City of Largo experienced a decrease of 9.3% in this category. It would not be fair to compare several cities of similar population with Largo for the same time periods unless it is known if those cities did or did not have crime prevention programs.
5. The spin-offs, by-products listed in the final report, and acceptance of the program by fellow officers and the Citizens of Largo are indicative of the success of the program. The staff on the project have been picked up entirely by the City and the Unit will continue to provide these needed services to the residents of Largo.

Recommendations:

1. A procedure be devised to provide the police department with a means of identifying:
  - a. Method of recovery of stolen property.
  - b. How the owner of the property was located (serial number, Operation I.D. number, etc.).
2. Crime prevention unit staff should attempt to identify inadequate areas which would require city improvements such as street lighting, etc., where community development block grants could be utilized.
3. Continue to provide special emphasis programs to senior citizens, working parents, etc., as needs are identified.



**END**