



PERCEIVED EXCESSIVE USE OF FORCE

Addressing Community Racial Tensions

The Community Relations Service (CRS), an agency of the United States Department of Justice, is the Federal government’s “peacemaker” for community conflicts and tensions stemming from differences of race, color, and national origin. Created by the Civil Rights Act of 1964, CRS is the only Federal agency whose purpose is to assist State and local units of government, private and public organizations, and community groups with preventing and resolving racial and ethnic tensions, conflicts, and civil disorders, and in restoring racial stability and harmony. Since the passage of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act in 2009, CRS’s mandate has also endeavored to aid communities in preventing and responding to alleged violent hate crimes committed on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

When and how to use force is one of the most difficult and controversial decisions a police officer will make in the course of his or her duties. This decision, made in a matter of seconds and often without complete information, can have serious and far-reaching consequences.

Where there are good police-community relations and high confidence within the minority community in the integrity and accountability of the police department, a use of force incident may result in little turmoil. However in communities where there is a lack of confidence between police and minority residents and a perception that complaints about police misconduct will not be addressed fairly, no issues can be more racially explosive or more easily lead to violent disturbances. Under these circumstances, what can communities and police departments do to ease racial tensions, open lines of communication, and rebuild trust?

Our 50 years of experience in working with racial conflict and violence have taught us that community stability and safety can be secured for everyone when police and residents join together in cooperative efforts to build trust and confidence. There are specific steps which can be taken to reduce the prospect of turmoil following a community perceived excessive use of force incident by law enforcement. Over the longer term, there are also policies and practices which can be put into place that will help to improve the underlying conditions of police community relations.

City officials, police executives, and community leaders can take some practical steps to prevent community racial conflict associated with police use of force incidents and to improve police policies and practices. Examples of CRS assistance to local communities can be found in this publication.

Potential Flash Points

Whenever there is an incident of police use of force, especially one involving the death of a person of color or distinctive ethnic origin, a predictable set of flash points follows. Each flash point can potentially lead to conflict, violence, or disorder. However, when police, officials, and community leaders take timely and appropriate preventive action, community peace can be secured and maintained. How communities react to these flash points also will be influenced by other variables, such as the existing climate of police community relations, the nature and circumstances of the use of force incident, media coverage, and rumors.

Flash Point: Initial Incident

There are certain predictable flash points that commonly occur after a police use of force incident. Whenever an incident involves a police shooting or use of force, officers must be aware that their actions are not viewed in a vacuum. There are usually witnesses to an incident. How the incident is perceived will be subject to many interpretations. When distrust between police and the community is present, any police action will be subject to suspicion and scrutiny.

Flash Point: Initial Law Enforcement Response

What the first responding officers to the incident do upon arriving on the scene is crucial to maintaining community peace and preserving the scene for investigators. The department's standard operating procedure for response to police shootings and use of force situations must be immediately implemented. It is best when a high-ranking officer is on the scene and available to listen to community or family concerns and assure them of a full investigation. Officers involved in the shooting should depart from the scene as soon as possible and a thorough, yet expedient, investigation should follow with the knowledge that usually tensions will lower when the police leave the site entirely. Leaving telephone and contact numbers demonstrates concern and may lead to cooperation and open communication.

Flash Point: Media Coverage

Press coverage can affect the level of community tension following a police incident. A straightforward objective statement of non-confidential information by the Department can go a long way in assuring the public that the situation is under control. This statement should contain the circumstances that preceded any police response and the process for and resources allocated to the investigation.

Press announcements should be carefully drafted to avoid derogatory remarks about a suspect, victim, or community. Premature unsubstantiated judgment of police actions by the department can undermine the public's perception of fairness and objectivity. An expression of concern by officials about the loss of life, directly communicated to members of the victim's family and community leader, can help minimize community tensions. A public announcement of the

department's investigative process assures the public that an orderly investigation and objective review of the incident will be conducted. These steps will help head off potentially inflammatory rumors.

Flash Point: Protest Rallies and Marches

Protest rallies and marches allow the community to express its frustration and anger about an incident and can be beneficial safety valves to lower tensions. They also serve as opportunities for people to express their grief and anguish. Plans can be developed which provide for community protest and also protect the peace and harmony of the participants and community at large.

Flash Point: Investigations

There should be no rush to judgment, but a full and complete investigation governed by an established protocol. Coordinating appropriate law enforcement agencies at all levels, including investigators and prosecutors, can help assure the fairness of the investigation and gain public confidence in the outcome.

An explanation of the resources allocated to the investigation, as well as the limitations of the law, helps to alleviate a potentially destructive community reaction.

Flash Point: Results of Investigations

The results of a coroner's inquest, grand jury findings, police internal affairs investigation, and prosecutor's findings may increase community tension levels. How the information is explained and made public has a great impact on reducing the potential for community disruption.

CRS also keeps lines of communication open between officials and community leaders, meeting with all parties before and after public reports of official investigations.

CRS assists local communities to develop contingency plans for the safe expression of public sentiments prior to the announcement of investigation reports, especially when the basis for the decisions is disputed.

Flash Point: Youth Response

How youth react to a police use of force incident may be critical to community stability. Specific outreach efforts should be directed to youth in the immediately affected community. The danger of civil unrest can thereby be reduced and steps can be taken in building positive relationships among youth, adults, and police.

Flash Point: Collateral Incidents

Preventive measures should be taken to avoid incidents that might ignite further conflicts during the course of an investigation. During such times, sensitivities and vulnerabilities are heightened.

Flash Point: Trial or Court Decision

When local community tensions are heightened by the announcement of jury verdict or court decisions, CRS services as a troubleshooter, resolving spontaneous conflicts “on the ground,” helping to control rumors with accurate information, and serving as an impartial resource for all parties.

Comprehensive contingency planning can mobilize law enforcement, city officials, civic leaders, the media, and the leadership of the affected communities around the common interest of averting violence. CRS can facilitate briefings for community leaders by legal experts who explain the legal process and potential outcomes, building community trust and confidence in the justice system. When CRS receives advance notice of verdicts, it helps communities prepare for community reaction. Following public announcement of verdicts, CRS can be on-site to serve as a communication link between police and the community.

Police-Community Problem Solving

Through its mediation process, CRS channels community tensions and anger into a constructive discussion of other issues that often surface after a use of excessive force incident. Police may review community concerns regarding its “use of force” policy, workforce diversifications, minority officer recruitment, hiring and selection criteria, training programs on race relations and diversity, promotion of minority officers, and creation of permanent mechanisms for improve police and community dialogue.

While issues regarding the specific incident must be addressed, attention should also be given to broader underlying concerns which often are at the root of community frustration and conflict. Departmental policies on the use of force and the use of deadly force, including firearms policy and use of restraints may be reviewed by a community coalition. A coalition of leaders can be formed to address how to achieve better police community relations. Community input should be solicited during this review, including requests for public comment and discussion. Communities should know the various options that are available at the Federal, State, and local levels to address concerns over police use of force, and allegations of excessive use of force.

Federal Laws

Federal Criminal Enforcement - This law prohibits one or more persons from willfully acting under color of law to deprive or conspire to deprive another person of any right protected by the Constitution or laws of the United States. (18 U.S.C. §§241,242)

Federal Civil Enforcement

Police Misconduct Provision - This law prohibits State or local law enforcement officers from engaging in a pattern or practice of conduct that deprives persons of rights protected by the Constitution or laws of the United States. (42 U.S.C. §14141)

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the 'OJP Program Statute' – Together, these laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, and religion by State and local law enforcement agencies that receive financial assistance from the Department of Justice. (42 U.S.C. §2000d, et seq. And 42 U.S.C. §3789d(c)).

CRS Mission

In accordance with Title X of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000g, CRS seeks to prevent or resolve community conflicts and tension arising from actions, policies, and practices perceived to be discriminatory on the basis of race, color, and national origin. In addition, under the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009, CRS endeavors to assist communities in preventing and responding to alleged violent hate crimes committed on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. CRS provides services, including consultation, mediation, training, and facilitated dialogues, directly to communities to help them resolve conflicts that tear at the fabric of our increasingly diverse society.

CRS Strategic Goals in Perceived Excessive Use of Force Situations

- To establish bridges between minority groups and law enforcement organizations in order to improve relations and community safety, and to reduce the potential for community conflict.
- To improve the preparedness of communities to respond to civil unrest, including activities by hate groups, through the provision of training, contingency planning, and technical assistance.
- To provide a high caliber of conflict resolution and prevention services to those communities most vulnerable to significant race relations tensions, conflicts, and violence.
- To build enhanced dispute resolution capabilities in local communities, including high schools, colleges and universities, so that local institutions will be able to resolve their own conflicts without external assistance.

- To create opportunities and mechanisms for constructive civic discourse on issues of race and ethnicity. CRS provides assistance to efforts to establish “places and spaces” for candid race relations to discussions.

Services Provided to Communities

When police use of force incidents increase community racial tensions, CRS conducts a thorough assessment to determine appropriate assistance. CRS meets with elected officials and community leaders, analyzing a variety of indicators, including the causes of the tensions, the potential for violence or continued violence, determining the level of communication among the parties and their interest in working together.

Mediation and Facilitated Dialogues – Mediation and facilitated dialogues are two techniques used by CRS to help resolve police-community tensions arising from police use of force incidents. CRS Conciliation Specialists provide an impartial forum between representatives of community groups and local government leaders to hold an orderly discussion of the issues. CRS establishes with the parties mutually agreed-upon ground rules and guidelines for a dialogue.

Consultation – CRS assists local officials and community leaders with developing and implementing policies, practices, and procedures to help residents, organizations, and officials ease tensions and end conflicts.

Training in Response to Racial and Ethnic Conflicts – CRS conducts training sessions and workshops on cross-cultural and diversity issues, and police minority community relations. CRS also trains police on ways to work with minority communities in racially charged situations, and to increase cooperation in areas such as identifying witnesses.

Event Contingency Planning – CRS provides technical assistance in contingency planning to ensure that marches, demonstrations, and similar events occur without exacerbating racial and ethnic tensions, while minimizing the prospect of any confrontations. CRS trains volunteers to carry out services such as providing information sharing, rumor control, demonstration marshals, and communication links with law enforcement agencies.

Examples of CRS’s Work with Communities

East Haven, Connecticut - In January 2013, a federal investigation against the East Haven Police Department concluded in the arrest of four officers. The officers were accused of violating the civil rights of minority communities, including profiling and assaulting members of the Latino American community. In addition to the arrests, the investigation also resulted in a Settlement Agreement between the town of East Haven and the East Haven Police Department, that addressed community perceptions of discrimination and bias on the part of law enforcement. The United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division asked CRS to assist in

implementing several provisions within the Agreement, including providing training for law enforcement officers. In response to the request, CRS conducted a series of all-day Anti-Racial Profiling and Bias-Based Policing trainings for the entire staff of the police department, as well as a series of Cultural Awareness and Competency Programs for officers. CRS services resulted in improved understanding by law enforcement of what constitutes racial profiling and bias-based policing, as well as better understanding and communication between the police department and the communities it serves.

Brooklyn, New York – In March 2013, the fatal shooting of an African American youth by members of the New York Police Department (NYPD) resulted in high tension between the African American and Caribbean American communities and law enforcement, in Brooklyn. During ensuing weeks, tension escalated among various community stakeholders, including local city officials, law enforcement representatives, community members, and local and national civil rights advocacy groups. CRS met with African American clergy, elected officials, and local community leaders to provide conciliation services and assist in reducing tensions throughout the community. In addition, during a tense week of marches, demonstrations, and vigils by local youth, community members, and local and national civil rights organizations, CRS was onsite to provide self-marshaling training to organizers and share best practices for ensuring the accurate and timely dispersal of information to community leaders, law enforcement, and city officials. CRS services helped ease community tension and improved communication between law enforcement and the community.

San Juan, Puerto Rico – In fiscal year 2013, CRS was contacted by Dominican community leaders in San Juan, Puerto Rico, who alleged that Dominican community members were frequently racially profiled and discriminated against by the San Juan Municipal Police Department (SJMPD). The community leaders further claimed that individuals of Dominican descent frequently experienced stigmatization, stereotyping, prejudice and exclusion by other San Juan communities, due to their African origins. They asked that CRS assist their community in improving its relations with law enforcement and ensuring the safety and security of its members. After communicating with the parties, CRS facilitated a Racial Profiling training for Dominican community members, representatives of the Dominican Consulate, and 35 law enforcement officers in the SJMPD, including high ranking officials and the newly-assigned Community Affairs officers. During the training session, the parties agreed to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), aimed at increasing communication, cooperation, and collaboration between the Dominican community and the SJMPD. The MOU helped establish a strong working relationship between the parties, and they continue to work together to address issues and concerns.

Laurel, Maryland – In August 2012, an officer with the Laurel Police Department was filmed striking a restrained, African American male. The incident resulted in tension among community leaders, who viewed the beating as an excessive use of force. CRS met with members of the African American community, representatives from the Prince George County's

Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), city officials, and law enforcement to discuss not only the incident, but also long-standing community perceptions of poor police-community relations. In January 2013, CRS facilitated a mediation between city law enforcement officials and the NAACP, which resulted in a mediation agreement. The agreement contained numerous policy changes that were to be enacted, a strategy for improved communication and collaboration between the NAACP and law enforcement, and suggested trainings for both parties. CRS services resulted in decreased community tension, renewed trust in law enforcement, and continued collaboration among community stakeholders to resolve future conflicts.

Saginaw, Michigan – In July 2012, a 49-year-old African American male died after being shot 40 times by local police officers. The incident led to several months of escalating tension between various community stakeholders, including local city officials, law enforcement representatives, African American community members, inter-faith leaders, and heads of national and local civil rights advocacy organizations. During the fall and winter of 2012, CRS convened a series of conciliation meetings among all the parties, which resulted in formal mediation session between members of the African American community and the Saginaw Police Department. In April 2013, the mediation sessions culminated in a mediated agreement, which formalized the creation, scope and structure of a Citizen’s Police Advisory Committee, as part of a long-term strategy to build community capacity and strengthen police-community relationships. The Citizens’ Police Advisory Committee is comprised of community and law enforcement leaders committed to working proactively to address perceptions of police bias and excessive use of force, and will provide training for both law enforcement officers and community members. CRS services led to decreased community conflict and tensions, renewed trust between law enforcement and the African American community and a mechanism for continued collaboration among community stakeholders to resolve future conflicts and tension.

Arlington, Texas – In February 2012, the Chief of the Arlington Police Department requested CRS assistance in addressing heightened tension between law enforcement and minority communities. The tension was reportedly caused by perceived poor police-community relations and allegations of excessive use of force by officers against members of the African American community. In response to the request, during fiscal years 2012 and 2013, CRS conducted four Train-the-Trainer programs for law enforcement, addressing how to hold race relations dialogues in communities. The Arlington Police Department then partnered with a ministerial alliance representing various faiths, and, together, the parties conducted 12 dialogues throughout the city. The purpose of the discussion was to identify and gather information related to community concerns. Using the information garnered through the dialogues, the parties then created an action plan to address the identified issues. In addition, CRS provided mediation services that resulted in a signed proclamation between the Chief of Police and concerned clergy, addressing the development of the newly established community partnership.

Jonesboro, Arkansas – In August 2012, the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) requested CRS’s assistance in addressing heightened tension between law enforcement and the African American community, after an African American man allegedly committed suicide while in police custody. According to reports, the individual was arrested, placed in the back of a police vehicle, and then fatally shot himself in the head. African American community members expressed outrage and suspicion over the man’s death. CRS facilitated a community dialogue forum and several meetings between the NAACP, religious leaders, local and federal law enforcement, and community members. The parties subsequently agreed to create a community coalition, consisting of the United States Attorney’s Office, local judges, school officials, ministers, community leaders, the NAACP and city officials, to addressing the community tension in a collaborative manner. The coalition drafted a proclamation, signed in February 2013, in which the parties agreed to work together to overcome perceptions of inequitable treatment against minorities in the future.

Waterloo, Iowa – In November 2012, a Waterloo, Iowa, police officer responded to a call reporting gunfire at a night club and observed an African American male pointing a gun at a crowd. The man reportedly ignored the officer’s demands to surrender the firearm, and was subsequently shot and killed by law enforcement. Prior to the shooting, several complaints had been filed by African American community members against the police department, alleging misconduct on the part of law enforcement. Many community members believed that these complaints had never been satisfactorily addressed. Due to the perceived history of in action by law enforcement, community leaders feared that police would not conduct a fair investigation into the shooting, and that the town’s elected and civic leaders would not address their concerns about racial profiling and bias-based policing. In February 2013, CRS facilitated the development of a Collaborative Action Plan between the City of Waterloo, the Waterloo Human Rights Commission, and leaders from the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The plan addressed the perceived disparate treatment and excessive use of force complaints, and provided for the parties to continue to work together to address perceptions of bias-based policing.

Lincoln, Nebraska – In May 2013, tension rose in the Latino communities of Lincoln and Omaha, after a Latino male died while in police custody. The man was found dead in a Lancaster County Jail cell after being arrested two days earlier on suspicion of public intoxication. Latino community leaders requested more information on the circumstances surrounding the individual’s death, but allegedly received no response from law enforcement. They then held a press conference, not only alleging a cover-up by the Lincoln Police Department and Lancaster County Corrections Department, but also demanding their inquiries be addressed. CRS was contacted by a Hispanic advocacy organization to assist in facilitating a dialogue between community members and law enforcement officials. During the dialogue, law enforcement clarified its policies, procedures, and protocols related to the death of a person in

custody, and dispelled reported rumors concerning why the Department had refused to provide the requested information. CRS services helped decrease community tension and repaired trust between the Latino community and police. In addition, the parties agreed to collaborate on initiatives to prevent and respond to future community conflicts.

Coralville, Iowa – In July 2013, Coralville law enforcement responded to a disturbance at a local business and allegedly encountered a Hispanic male acting violently and destroying property. The Coralville Police reported that the individual was sweating profusely, his eyes were dilated, he was speaking incoherently, and he appeared to be having seizures during the officers' interactions with him. In an effort to subdue the individual, law enforcement tasered the man twice. Shortly thereafter, the individual stopped breathing. The officers were able to revive him through CPR, but, after being transported to an area hospital, the man passed away. Representatives from two Iowa chapters of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) requested CRS's assistance in voicing their communities' concerns that excessive use of force had been used by the police. CRS was able to facilitate a discussion between the community leaders and the Chief of Police, which ultimately led to a mediated agreement. The mediated agreement provided for ongoing community dialogues and a collaborative partnership between the civil rights organization and the county's prosecuting attorney's office.

Riverton, Wyoming – In March 2013, a Wind River Indian Reservation youth was allegedly assaulted by a non-tribal individual in Riverton, Wyoming. The youth sustained severe head injuries during the altercation, that resulted in hospitalization. Following the incident, tribal officials expressed concern, and voiced their beliefs that the assault was race-based and, therefore, a hate crime. Tensions further escalated when law enforcement declined to charge the non-tribal individual reportedly involved in the incident. The tribal community perceived this decision to be the result of bias-based policing and nepotism between the person accused of assaulting the youth and the police department. At the request of Wind River Indian Reservation leaders, CRS worked with tribal members to identify their concerns and the underlying issues. The Agency then convened a meeting with law enforcement and the Native American community to discuss the case and police-community relations. As a result of the meetings, law enforcement agreed to review the charges against the non-tribal individual and interview other possible witnesses to the altercation. Both parties also agreed to hold a broader dialogue, including the wider Riverton community, and to facilitate cross-cultural exchanges. In addition, the leaders of the Wind River Indian Reservation assigned Tribal Liaisons to work with Riverton Police Department in strengthening Native American and Law Enforcement Relations.

Salt Lake City, Utah - In August 2013, CRS was contacted by leaders of the Pacific Islander community in Salt Lake City, regarding concerns of racial-profiling of its youth by law enforcement. Community leaders were particularly concerned about the arrest and prosecution of several youths under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), a federal law providing for harsher penalties for violations of certain criminal and civil laws committed as part of an ongoing unlawful organization. Community members believed the

youths were charged under RICO due to their race. They requested CRS's assistance in communicating their concerns to law enforcement and the Salt Lake City Metropolitan Gang Task Force. CRS facilitated a dialogue with various local police departments, the Metropolitan Gang Task Force, and Pacific Islander community leaders. Community leadership relayed concerns regarding law enforcement's use of force on juveniles, barriers to reporting racial profiling, and community fears and perceptions regarding contact with law enforcement. The parties agreed to work together toward strengthening law enforcement and Pacific Islander relations, by providing community education about what to do during police stops, holding police role call training on Pacific Islander Community and Culture, and extending an open invitation to impacted family members to meet privately with police administrators regarding their individual concerns. Following the dialogue, Pacific Islander leaders formed the Social Justice Coalition, a formal organization that has conducted outreach to local law enforcement officials, provided community information sessions on RICO prosecutions, met with the United States Attorney for the District of Utah, developed a law enforcement training program on Pacific Islanders, and implemented community-building efforts to support youth and their families and deter young people from committing crimes.

Kern County, California – In the spring of 2013, tension rose among members of the Latino community, after a Latino male died while in police custody. The incident received significant media attention, particularly after it was alleged by some witnesses that law enforcement had attempted to retrieve cell phones containing video taken of the incident. In addition, minority community members alleged a long history of tense race relations, dating back to the 1900s, when there was a strong Ku Klux Klan presence. Compounding the problem was the fact that the Kern County Human Relations Commission (HRC) had mostly new members, and had very limited experiences in addressing the community's concerns. During the summer of 2013, CRS facilitated meetings with the HRC to provide technical assistance in addressing community concerns and police-community relations. The Agency also met with the Kern County Sheriff's Office, and convened a dialogue between the HRC and the Sheriff's Office. In the August meeting of the HRC, a motion was passed, mandating the creation of an ad hoc committee, whose purpose was to create a framework aimed at education law enforcement on cultural norms and traditions, as well as create a process through which community members could voice their concerns with law enforcement. CRs reached out to interested parties throughout Kern County and the surrounding areas and encouraged them to join the committee and work towards improving race relations.

Staten Island, New York – In July 2014, CRS was notified of an incident in which an African American man died while being arrested by local law enforcement. The events surrounding the man's death were filmed by observers and released to the media, resulting in local protests and demonstrations stemming from community perception that police used excessive force and that the actions of the officers were disproportionate to the offense alleged to have been committed. CRS conducted outreach to affected African American and Hispanic community leaders and

clergy by providing a federal presence and onsite mediation at a local vigil. CRS also provided consultation and self-marshal services to the organizers of a subsequent march and rally protesting the perceived excessive use of force and calling on the United States Department of Justice to investigate. In addition, CRS provided train-the-trainer sessions on conducting productive racial dialogues to African American community leaders, which gave them the capacity to engage in substantive discussions on improving race relations and police services in minority communities.

Elmira, New York – In January 2014, CRS was contacted by the local branch of a national civil rights organization regarding perceived tension between African American youth and law enforcement. The organization had reportedly received complaints of racial profiling and disparate application of laws by area police against young African American men, and it asked for CRS assistance in improving police-community relations. In response to the request, CRS met with the local law enforcement to coordinate a “Know Your Rights Forum” that would allow community members to ask questions from a panel of convened subject matter experts on best practices in police policy and response, along with representatives from available victim support services. In March 2014, CRS facilitated the panel, which included representatives from civil rights organizations, area law enforcement agencies, and the District Attorney’s Office, as well as local elected officials. Each panelist discussed his or her organization’s responsibility and answered questions from the audience of both police officer and community members. As a result of the forum, the Mayor created a taskforce to improve the relationship between area law enforcement and the community members they serve.

Farrell, Pennsylvania – In July 2013, CRS was notified of rising police-community tension in response to perceived biased policing practices directed toward minority community members. In particular, some community members accused law enforcement of engaging in racial profiling and excessive use of force, and they lodged multiple complaints with the local mayor’s office. The local human relations commission requested that CRS conduct a cultural professionalism training for its members and for the greater community to facilitate a dialogue on race relations. Approximately 60 residents attended, including city officials, law enforcement, and commission members. During the dialogue, the stakeholders created a proclamation, formally agreeing to work together to reduce community tension and improve police-community relations. The following day, CRS conducted a Responding to Allegations of Racial Profiling training that was attended by participants from the previous program, as well as representatives from a national civil rights organization.

Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan – In November 2013, CRS learned from local media reports of community tension due to the alleged racial intimidation and harassment of several African American men by local law enforcement. According to local media resources, police officers reportedly videotaped African American males while forcing them to perform dances, sing, and act like chimpanzees. One of the videos reportedly included an individual who was believed to be cognitively disabled. In response to the incidents, the Chief of Police ordered an internal

investigation, which resulted in the suspension of five individuals. Two well-known national civil rights organizations conducted a peaceful demonstration in front of the police department and raised the profile of the incident throughout the region. In response to the community tension, CRS offered its services to the Chief of Police, the City Manager, the Mayor, City Council Members, community representatives, and the Michigan Department of Civil Rights' Community Response Team. After several mediation sessions, CRS assisted the parties in creating an action plan for resolving racial tension. The action plan was later documented within a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was signed by the stakeholders on February 12, 2014. In addition, the City Manager and Mayor drafted and witnessed a City Proclamation, promising to work collaboratively to improve community awareness and cultural understanding of all ethnic groups, races, cultures, and religions, and promote tolerance and acceptance. Finally, CRS assisted the parties in creating a working group comprised of business, faith, and civic leaders to provide community support and liaise with law enforcement. As Grosse Pointe Park continued to move forward under the Proclamation and MOU.

Pine Bluff, Arkansas – In September 2013, CRS was alerted to heightened community tension related to the fatal shooting of a 107-year-old hearing impaired, African American man in his home by law enforcement. The incident resulted in multiple protests and demonstrations, and a national civil rights organization requested CRS services in calming the tension and repairing police-community relations. In response to the request, CRS facilitated dialogues between city officials, the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Arkansas, a national civil rights organization, a faith-based alliance, and officials from nearby universities and colleges. In addition, CRS provided mediation services to the stakeholders, which resulted in the creation of a proclamation and community pact. The proclamation and pact provided for the establishment of the Pine Bluff Community Action Board, which was formed to address community issues and to demonstrate a good faith effort to reconcile current and future conflicts.

Albuquerque, New Mexico – Between 2010 and 2014, the Albuquerque Police Department was involved in 37 shootings with community members, 23 of which were fatal. Many community members viewed the large number of shootings as indicative of perceived bias-based policing practices, a pattern of excessive use of force, and a general absence of integrity within the police department. In March 2014, protestors many of whom were students enrolled at a local university, engaged in 12 hours of demonstrations near the campus and outside of the local police headquarters. City officials deployed riot police as they reportedly felt commercial property was at risk of vandalism, and tear gas and other crowd dispersal measures were used against the demonstrators. Many community members felt the use of riot police was yet another example of poor relations between law enforcement and community members. In April, CRS attended a City Council meeting where community members expressed their concerns about law enforcement and their interactions with minorities. After the meeting, CRS met with the Mayor and police chief to discuss best practices for reducing tension between law enforcement and communities and formulate recommendations for improving the city's community engagement

process. Through the dialogue, the stakeholders agreed to have CRS provide trainings for police officers and other city personnel. On April 24, 2014, CRS conducted four concurrent Law Enforcement Mediation Skills (LEMS) trainings and a Site Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (Site SPIRIT) for community leaders, city employees, and law enforcement.

Hearne, Texas – In May 2014, a 93-year-old African American woman was fatally shot in her home by law enforcement. Community members expressed outrage over the incident and further alleged that local police engaged in habitual racial profiling and excessive use of force against minorities. In response to the community tension, CRS facilitate dialogues between city officials and representatives from two national civil rights organizations. The dialogues resulted in a resolution to apply a standard of equitable practices and fair treatment when recruiting qualified minority applicants for law enforcement positions. In addition, city officials agreed to allow residents to serve on the city's law enforcement hiring committee.

Jasper, Texas – In May 2014, CRS was alerted to increased tension between the local African American community and law enforcement following the alleged beating of a minority woman while in police custody. Leaders in the African American community were outraged by the reported incident and further alleged a history of excessive use of force against minorities. The following month, CRS facilitated a community dialogue to address race relations between the police and the greater Jasper community. As a result of the community dialogue, a Mayor's Police Advisory Board was established, consisting of ten members. CRS assisted the stakeholders with developing the mission and goals of the Board, facilitating an initial meeting between Board members, law enforcement, and city officials. The Board will assist police personnel in improving the department's relationship with minority communities and will ensure the needs of the community are met.

Sonoma County, California – In October 2013, a Sheriff's Deputy fatally shot a Latino youth, resulting in increased community tension and poor police-community relations. The youth was carrying a pellet gun, which the Deputy allegedly mistook for an assault rifle. Following the incident, Sonoma County Supervisors created a County Law Enforcement Taskforce to study and recommend a model for law enforcement oversight and identify best practices for community policing. CRS services were requested to help the Taskforce gain an understanding of Community Policing theories and best practices and establish an action plan for obtaining the working group's goals. In response to the request, CRS provided an explanation of Community Policing, as well as examples of prior instances in which Community Policing models were adopted. CRS also answered Taskforce members' questions on how to bring Community Policing in their area and provided resources on dialogue processes, contingency planning for demonstrations, and how to respond to concerns of law enforcement's use of force. In addition, CRS provided Self-Marshal and Goodwill Ambassador training for community leaders, Sonoma County residents, and Taskforce members in preparation for anticipated demonstrations and protests related to the District Attorney's investigation of the incident.

CRS Customer Service Standards

CRS's goal is to provide effective conflict prevention and resolution services. Toward that end, CRS will meet the following standards when working with communities:

- CRS will clearly explain the process that CRS uses to address racial and ethnic conflicts and to prevent and respond to violent hate crimes allegedly committed based on the party's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.
- CRS will provide opportunities for all parties involved to contribute and work toward a resolution to the current conflict based on race, color, or national origin. If a community member is a participant in a CRS training session or conference, he or she will receive timely and useful information and materials that will assist him or her in preventing or minimizing racial-, ethnic-, or national origin-based tensions, as well as prevent and respond to violent crimes allegedly committed based on the party's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. Also, within three weeks of learning of a community's needs, CRS will work with community members to identify additional materials and resources to address those needs.

Relevant CRS Publications

Community Relations Service Fact Sheet

Police Use of Deadly Force: A Conciliation Handbook for Citizens and the Police

Principles of Good Policing: Avoiding Violence Between Police and Citizens

Avoiding Racial Conflict: A Guide for Municipalities

Police and Urban Youth Relations: An Antidote to Racial Violence

Planning for Safe Marches and Demonstrations

So...You're a Demonstration Marshal

Managing Major Public Events: A Planning Guide for Municipal Officials, Law Enforcement, Community Leaders, Organizers, and Promoters

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