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Team Policing Revisited: A Quasi-Experimental Evaluation in Las Vegas, Nevada

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TEAM POLICING REVISITED: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL EVALUATION IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

by

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ABSTRACT

Team Policing Revisited: A Quasi-Experimental Evaluation in Las Vegas, Nevada

by

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In 1967, the President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice recommended team policing, which involves the decentralization of patrol officers and investigators to the same, defined geographical area, as a way to more effectively organize police officers and improve crime control. Despite initial enthusiasm from police officers and administrators, team policing quickly faded from use during the 1970s because its design was incompatible with the centralized model of policing prevalent at that time. However, the implementation of community-oriented policing, which promotes various organizational changes and the use of problem-focused strategies, has changed police departments in recent years and in many ways that complement the use of team policing, thus allowing it a better chance to succeed. In March 2012, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department implemented its own version of team policing, which incorporates community-oriented, problem-oriented, and hot spots policing strategies in an effort to reduce crime and disorder in a local neighborhood. This study evaluates the impact of team policing in that neighborhood, discusses the limitations of the research design and data, and provides suggestions for future research on team policing.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Though the purpose of the police in America – to protect and serve the public – has remained unchanged throughout its history, policing strategies have transformed in various ways. Police reforms have focused on improving the organizational structure and redefining the responsibilities of the police within the communities they serve. Early reforms sought to increase police efficiency and remove potential sources of corruption by creating a rigid and hierarchical centralized command structure and removing neighborhood and political influences. Recent reforms aim to improve policing by promoting physical and command decentralization, increased communication between officers, and community involvement in crime control and prevention.

Originating in the late 1970s, the most recent major police reform has been the implementation of community-oriented policing. Community-oriented policing is a multi-faceted approach which promotes organizational changes that both encourage community participation in crime control and prevention and incorporate problem-solving strategies in routine police work to resolve the underlying causes of crime, disorder, and fear of crime (Scheider, Chapman, & Shapiro, 2009). Community-oriented policing promotes policing strategies that are much different from traditional strategies. Whereas in a traditional centralized command the decision-making authority is reserved for police administrators, community-oriented policing requires that greater decision-making authority be given to officers in order to increase their responsiveness to community concerns (Kelling & Moore, 1988; Scheider et al., 2009). Also, while investigators have traditionally operated out of centralized bureaus and consequently had
little interaction with patrol officers, community-oriented policing encourages the
decentralization of investigators (Meese & Kurz, 1993) to allow them to work alongside
and readily share information with patrol officers so as to more effectively reduce crime
and quality-of-life problems (Kelling & Moore, 1988; Meese & Kurz, 1993).

With its emphasis on community involvement, organizational restructuring, and
problem-solving, community-oriented policing represents a dramatic departure from the
previous, decades-old image of the American police as socially detached “crime-fighters.”

However, the implementation of community-oriented policing was not the first attempt to
improve policing through increased community involvement and organizational reform.

By the early 1970s, it had become apparent that traditional policing strategies were
unable to adequately control rising crime rates or improve deteriorating police-
community relations (Kelling and Moore, 1988); in response, police departments in
several cities across the United States experimented with a revolutionary concept known
as team policing.

Team policing involves the continuous assignment of patrol officers and
investigators to the same, defined geographical area, which allows officers to become
familiar with area residents and problems and to use that knowledge to implement
effective problem-solving strategies (Szyrkowski, 1981; Walker, 1993). Similar to
community-oriented policing, team policing requires decentralized decision-making,
which allow officers assigned to the area the authority to develop and implement crime
reduction strategies; facilitates better information sharing between officers and
investigators; and encourages community participation in crime control and prevention
(Walker, 1993).
Team policing was heralded at its inception for its potential to improve police-community relations and more effectively control crime (Sherman, Milton, & Kelly, 1973). Indeed, several team policing projects did have a positive influence on police-community relations and crime control, as well as officer morale (e.g., Bloch & Bell, 1976; Schwartz & Clarren, 1977). However, despite the initial enthusiasm and apparent successes, team policing quickly faded from use because it lacked support from the centralized police bureaucracy (Walker, 1993).

With its emphasis on physical and command decentralization, team policing failed to become a policing standard because its design was incompatible with the centralized police bureaucracy of the era. Furthermore, team police operated much like a special unit because traditional policing principles continued to guide the rest of the police department (Walker, 1993). In contrast, community-oriented policing has had a dramatic and lasting impact on policing because it is a philosophy that redefines the police role and influences the operations of police departments as a whole. Because community-oriented policing involves entire police departments and promotes many of the same operational changes as team policing does, it creates a supportive atmosphere in which the team policing approach has a better chance to succeed.

Over the last several years, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department has implemented various organizational changes in support of improved community-oriented policing, the most recent of which resulted in the development of its own version of team policing. In March 2012, the Community Crimes Team, which operates in the Convention Center Area Command, began a focused intervention in the Palos Verdes neighborhood in order to resolve the various community problems that have led to
numerous incidents of violent crime, property crime, and disorder in the area in recent years.

The Palos Verdes project was a collaborative effort involving the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, other local agencies and businesses, and neighborhood residents, which incorporated several policing strategies into the team policing approach including community-oriented policing, problem-oriented policing, and hot spots policing. The intervention was designed to improve police-community relations, give the residents a sense of pride in their community, empower them to maintain a good quality of life within the neighborhood, and consequently reduce the amount of crime and disorder in the area.

Though the planning and development stages of several previous team policing projects are well-documented, few studies have assessed the effects of these projects in the areas where they were implemented. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the impact of team policing in the Palos Verdes neighborhood in Las Vegas, Nevada.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Modern American policing has evolved much since it began during the mid-1800s. The history of modern American policing can be divided into three eras: the political era, the reform era, and the community-oriented era. Each of these eras can be distinguished from one another in terms of the organization of the police, the nature of their responsibilities, and their level of involvement with the community.

The earliest era of modern American policing was the political era, which lasted from the 1840s to the 1920s. By this time in their history, police departments had developed into quasi-military organizations with a centralized command; however, due to the technological limitations of the time, police operations were considerably decentralized (Kelling & Moore, 1988). Before the widespread use of automobiles, officers patrolled their assigned beats on foot, which allowed them to become well-acquainted with residents in the area and knowledgeable about their problems and concerns. Because officers did not yet have radios to keep them in constant contact with the centralized command, they had much discretion in handling the problems they encountered on their beats.

Though crime control was always a priority, the police had many additional responsibilities during the political era. Officers addressed both social and physical disorder concerns such as public intoxication and vandalism and provided various social services to the community such as obtaining meals and housing for the homeless (Moore & Kelling, 1983), and helping newly-arrived immigrants to find work (Kelling & Moore, 1988). In addition, residents and local political leaders had considerable influence over
police activities and much police work revolved around addressing what they considered to be major concerns. Policing during the political era did have its strengths in that officers provided many useful services to residents beyond mere law enforcement and also became very familiar with all aspects of the communities they patrolled (Kelling & Moore, 1988). However, due to the decentralization and limited supervision in early police departments, officers were also highly inefficient with regard to crime control and easily corrupted by neighborhood influences (Kelling & Moore, 1988).

The next era of modern policing, the reform era, began during the early 1930s in response to the corruption and inefficiency that plagued the police during the political era and also defined the image of police officers until the 1970s. Considering neighborhood influences along with a weak command structure to be the major sources of police corruption and inefficiency, police reformers including August Vollmer and O. W. Wilson led efforts to change policing in various ways (Kelling & Bratton, 1993).

One of the hallmarks of reform era policing was the strengthening of centralized command and control. Political leaders no longer had control over the police; instead, middle managers, such as captains and lieutenants, were responsible for directing police activities. Middle managers also held much of the decision-making authority in the organization while officer discretion became greatly restricted (Kelling, 1994; Kelling & Bratton, 1993; Kelling & Moore, 1988). Also, while officers formerly conducted a wide range of activities within their assigned neighborhoods, reforms separated investigations from patrol activities so specialization, rather than geography, determined officer assignments (Kelling, 1994; Kelling & Bratton, 1993; Kelling & Moore, 1988).
Along with the organizational restructuring, the nature of police work also transformed. Police officers now focused primarily on law enforcement and making arrests while their social service duties became the responsibility of social workers (Moore & Kelling, 1983). Officers utilized new crime control tactics, such as preventive patrol and rapid response to calls for service in their new role as “crime-fighters.” Patrol cars replaced foot patrol because they enabled officers to respond to calls for service more quickly and over a greater geographical area. However, despite this increased efficiency, the use of patrol cars also contributed to the alienation of officers from the communities they patrolled (Kelling & Moore, 1988).

Police reforms also redefined the role of the community in policing. Instead of approaching a patrol officer, residents now called a central dispatcher to notify the police about neighborhood problems. Crime control was considered the sole responsibility of the police and residents were expected to not interfere (Kelling & Moore, 1988). Centralizing officers and redefining their interactions with residents did aid in alleviating corruption, but had the unintended consequence of straining police-community relations.

The current era of modern policing, the community-oriented era, emerged during the late 1970s as a way to “reconnect police to citizens and encourage innovative, proactive, collaborative, and strategic approaches to crime prevention” (Scheider et al., 2009, p. 695). Not only had the use of motorized patrol and organizational reform contributed to strained police-community relations, policing research concluded that conventional policing strategies, such as preventive patrol, rapid response to calls for service, and follow-up investigations did not significantly reduce crime (Braga, Flynn, Kelling, & Cole, 2010). As with previous reforms, community-oriented policing
instituted various organizational changes and again redefined both the nature of police responsibilities and the role of the community in policing.

The effectiveness of community-oriented policing depends, in part, on the police being informed about problems in the community and using that knowledge to develop policies that will resolve those problems; however, the traditional centralized command structure hinders that effectiveness. Because decision-making in a centralized command is the responsibility of police administrators who are in the higher levels of the chain of command and who have little interaction with the communities their policies affect, the police are disadvantaged in their ability to identify and resolve community problems (Angell, 1971; Walker, 1993). In contrast, community-oriented policing supports decentralized decision-making to allow officers who work in the community to have more responsibility in planning and implementing responses to community problems (Scheider et al., 2009).

Community-oriented policing also supports the physical decentralization of investigators as a way to utilize their knowledge and skills more effectively in crime control and prevention. During the reform era, when investigations became highly specialized and separate from patrol activities, investigators operated out of centralized bureaus where case records were located. However, given that advances in information-sharing technology now allow instant access to records across jurisdictions, investigator centralization is no longer necessary (Meese & Kurz, 1993). In addition, though investigators acquire considerable knowledge through their work about crime patterns and their underlying causes, centralized investigations have traditionally focused on making arrests rather than preventing crime. In contrast, physical decentralization
enables investigators to readily share that knowledge with patrol officers and collaborate with them in order to develop better crime control and prevention strategies (Braga et al., 2010).

While crime control was the major emphasis of policing during the reform era, community-oriented policing focuses on addressing the underlying problems that cause crime, disorder, and fear of crime in communities. Community-oriented policing encourages the formation of partnerships between the police and community in order to identify problems and develop problem-solving strategies to control and prevent crime (Scheider et al., 2009). Rather than relying solely on official police responses like arrest to reduce crime, community-oriented policing encourages the use of a variety of alternative interventions when developing these problem-solving strategies (Scheider et al., 2009).

Problem-Oriented Policing

As a consequence of the widespread corruption and inefficiency in policing during the political era, the dominant reform philosophy through the 1960s was that policing could be most dramatically improved through organizational reform (Goldstein, 1979; Kelling & Bratton, 1993). However, Goldstein (1979) argued that continuing to focus solely on police management reform ignores the true purpose of policing, which is to resolve the variety of problems that cause crime, disorder, and fear of crime within communities.

In developing the problem-oriented policing approach, Goldstein emphasized that police should be more methodical in how they address problems. Eck and Spelman (1987) developed the SARA model, which complements Goldstein’s original
recommendation and provides the framework that has been used to develop numerous problem-oriented policing interventions. Following the SARA model, officers scan for problems in an area, analyze the nature of those problems, develop a response, and analyze whether the chosen response has had the desired impact (Eck & Spelman, 1987).

Problem-oriented policing interventions address the underlying problems that cause crime and disorder in communities by removing the opportunities and incentives for those incidents to occur. While many problem-oriented policing evaluations have reported significant decreases in crime and disorder in intervention areas, one major criticism of these studies is that they often neglect to consider the possibility that these problems have been relocated rather than reduced (Eck, 1993). However, because the opportunities for crime and disorder to occur are not evenly distributed and vary in terms of the risks and rewards they present to potential offenders, complete crime displacement rarely occurs. Moreover, when displacement does occur, it is usually not extensive enough to completely negate the beneficial effects of a successful crime control intervention (Eck, 1993; Weisburd et al., 2006).

An alternative to crime displacement involves the diffusion of crime control benefits. In other words, this diffusion occurs when catchment areas near the intervention area experience decreases in crime and disorder without being directly exposed to the intervention strategies (Eck, 1993; Weisburd et al., 2006). Assuming that the same offenders are responsible for crime and disorder in the intervention and catchment areas, one explanation for the diffusion of crime control benefits suggests that the apprehension and subsequent incapacitation of these offenders causes crime and disorder decreases in both areas (Braga, et al., 1999). However, considering that the
majority of offenders are only incapacitated for short periods, a more likely explanation is that potential offenders are deterred in catchment areas because they incorrectly assume that the geographical boundaries of the police interventions extend much farther than the intervention area (Braga et al, 1999; Weisburd et al, 2006).

Hot Spots Policing

Sherman, Gartin, and Buerger (1989) conducted a study to determine the distribution of calls for police service in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Their study determined that calls for service were not evenly distributed across the city, but instead clustered at certain locations, also referred to as “hot spots.” In Minneapolis, 50.4 percent of all calls for service recorded over a one-year period originated at just 3.3 percent of all the addresses in the city. However, Sherman et al. also found that the majority of the calls for service at these locations were for minor incidents (e.g., traffic accidents and noise complaints). Importantly, this indicates that though police may be dispatched repeatedly to certain addresses, these hot spots are not necessarily more dangerous than other locations where calls for service originate less frequently.

The identification of hot spots is particularly important for the police when using problem-oriented policing strategies because it allows them to focus their resources on the locations where disproportionately high amounts of crime and disorder occur (Taylor, Koper, & Woods, 2011; Weisburd & Eck, 2004). Several studies have examined the effectiveness of problem-oriented policing at reducing crime in hot spots. Comparing the effectiveness of saturation patrol to that of problem-oriented policing in violent hot spots in Jacksonville, Florida, Taylor et al. (2011) found that the use of problem-oriented strategies resulted in a 33 percent decrease in violent street crime incidents in the 90-day
period following the police intervention. In a study of violent crime hot spots in Jersey City, New Jersey, Braga et al. (1999) found that street fight, property crime, and narcotics calls for service, as well as robbery and property crime incidents, all decreased significantly in areas that received problem-oriented interventions. Braga and Bond (2008) studied problem-oriented policing interventions at 17 hot spots in Lowell, Massachusetts that combined various policing strategies such as situational crime prevention, social service referrals, and order maintenance. Braga and Bond found that the use of problem-oriented interventions was associated with a 40 percent decrease in robbery calls for service, a 34 percent decrease in assault calls for service, and a 36 percent decrease in burglary calls for service; they also found that situational crime prevention measures had the most influence on crime reduction.

Team Policing

In 1967, the President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice recommended team policing as an alternative to the traditional model of policing, which involves investigators and patrol officers working in separate locations, having little contact with one another, and following different chains of command. Instead, the President’s Commission suggested that officers be generalists capable of delivering both investigative and patrol services within the same defined area and follow a single chain of command (Winslow, 1969). According to the President’s Commission, team policing would lead to “increased crime solution and the most advantageous use of the time and talents of all policemen” (Winslow, 1969, p. 268). Recognizing that tensions had been increasing between police and communities since the civil rights conflicts of the 1960s,
police administrators also considered team policing a viable way to improve police-community relations (Walker, 1993).

The underlying principle of team policing is that close community interaction is an essential element of successful crime control (Vastola, 1977). Continuous assignment to a defined geographical area keeps officers in regular contact with community residents and aids officers in both identifying problems in the area and collecting information that can lead to improved crime control (Syznkowski, 1981). Additionally, the decentralized decision-making that is an integral part of team policing allows officers assigned to the area the authority to develop and implement individualized solutions to neighborhood problems and thereby makes officers more responsive to community concerns (Walker, 1993).

By the mid-1970s, approximately 60 police departments around the United States had experimented with their own versions of team policing (Schwartz & Clarren, 1977). Much of the existing team policing evaluation literature is limited to descriptions of the planning and development phases of these projects and provides little discussion, if any, regarding the impact of team policing on crime and other problems (e.g., Kerstetter, 1981; Myren, 1972; Sherman, et al., 1973). The few cities whose team policing projects’ impact has been discussed in greater detail include Cincinnati (Ohio), Detroit (Michigan), and Rochester (New York).

Cincinnati, Ohio

The Cincinnati Police Division’s (CPD) Community Sector Team Policing (COMSEC) project lasted from March 1973 until September 1975 and was designed to reduce crime and improve police-community relations. This project represented CPD’s
second attempt at team policing after a 1971 attempt failed due to implementation problems. COMSEC was implemented in a 3.7 square mile area known as District 1. This area had a residential population of 35,000 though with the influx of workers, shoppers, and tourists during the week, the daily population was often closer to 250,000. District 1 was divided into six sectors; a team was assigned to each sector and one lieutenant and three sergeants supervised each team. COMSEC officers were given the authority to plan and coordinate all police activities in their assigned areas and were encouraged to act as generalists, meaning that they would be responsible for both patrol and investigative duties (Schwartz & Clarren, 1977).

Though COMSEC initially operated as it was designed, administrative decisions greatly affected the program after the first 18 months. The teams became less autonomous and decentralized; the centralized command increased its control over police activities in District 1 and specialized investigators, rather than team officers, were assigned to handle most of the investigations in the area. While officers were initially enthusiastic about COMSEC, the police administrators’ lack of commitment to the original model affected the officers’ morale (Schwartz & Clarren, 1977).

Despite the administrative changes that led to the eventual demise of COMSEC, an evaluation of the project did find that the program had been successful in many ways. Survey results indicated that team policing had a positive impact on police-community relations and officer attitudes. Regarding crime in the city, team policing had the greatest impact on burglary; according to UCR data, District 1 had greater decreases in burglaries than the rest of the city during the first 18 months of COMSEC. Further, local businesses also reported in victimization surveys that they experienced fewer burglaries and
robberies during the same 18 months. However, after the operational changes in COMSEC took effect, burglaries in the city increased to just below their pre-COMSEC levels and victimization survey reports of commercial burglaries and robberies matched their pre-COMSEC levels (Schwartz & Clarren, 1977).

*Detroit, Michigan*

In April 1970, the Detroit Police Department implemented the Beat Commander project in a small, predominately black neighborhood located in the Tenth Precinct, an area that had been experiencing a dramatic increase in crime over the previous four years and accounted for 18 percent of the serious crime in the precinct. Through decentralized decision-making and the focused delivery of police services in a small area, the Beat Commander project was designed to improve police-community relations and reduce crime (Bloch & Ulberg, 1972).

The Beat Commander team began with two supervising sergeants – one who acted as the beat commander and another who acted as the assistant beat commander; eighteen black patrolmen and six white patrolmen; and three investigators, though staffing levels did fluctuate over the course of the project. As beat commanders who were accountable for all police operations in the project area, the sergeants had many more responsibilities than regular sergeants; for example, they were required to use data analysis to manage patrol activities, handle community complaints, supervise officers at work in the project area, and report to the precinct commander about the Beat Commander project (Bloch & Ulberg, 1972).

Patrol activities were also different in the project area. In addition to their regular duties, patrolmen were instructed to make regular contacts with residents. Though patrol
cars were still used during each of the three daily shifts, several officers were assigned to patrol the neighborhood on foot or by scooter during times of increased criminal activity. While the team officers were supposed to remain in the project area during their shifts, central dispatchers often ignored this requirement and assigned Beat Command patrol cars to calls elsewhere in the precinct. The investigators particularly enjoyed being assigned exclusively to the Beat Commander project area because it enabled them “to develop information sources more successfully and to recognize crime patterns more clearly” (Bloch & Ulberg, 1972, p. 59).

The Beat Commander project ended in 1971 and though it appeared to have a positive influence on police-community relations and officer morale, proper evaluation conditions were never established so the impact of the program on crime is unclear. The number of reported crimes in the area increased from 16 to 23 percent of the total reports in the precinct during the intervention period, but it was never determined whether the increase in reports was due to an actual increase in crime or the result of residents’ increased willingness to bring crime problems to the attention of the officers (Bloch & Ulberg, 1972).

*Rochester, New York*

In response to increasing crime rates, the Rochester Police Department began a team policing project known as Coordinated Team Patrol (CTP) in 1971 as a way to improve its crime clearance rates and the quality of its investigations. The department created two teams that were permanently assigned to deliver all police services within separate, defined areas of the city. Each team was comprised of about 30 patrol officers and six investigators who were supervised by two lieutenants. The areas that were
eventually selected for the team policing interventions – patrol areas A and C – were similar to one another in multiple respects; each area covered approximately one-third of the city and had a significant proportion of minority, juvenile, and impoverished residents as compared to the rest of the city (Bloch & Bell, 1976).

An evaluation of the impact of CTP occurred between July and November 1973. In terms of arrests, the evaluation found that the team police were more likely to make an arrest during a burglary, larceny, or robbery investigation than the non-team officers in patrol area B. Similarly, team police cleared more burglary, larceny, and robbery cases than non-team officers did. Both team and non-team officers had a positive opinion of the project, noting that team policing facilitated better communication between patrol officers and investigators, and allowed them address crime problems more effectively (Bloch & Bell, 1976).

While the evaluation did not find that the overall crime rate decreased more in Rochester after the implementation of CTP as compared to other similarly sized cities, it did find a difference in crime rates between the team and non-team areas. Before the CTP project began, both burglary and robbery rates were higher in the team areas than the non-team area, though the non-team area did have a higher larceny rate. Afterward, burglary, robbery, and larceny rates all increased (and remained higher) in the non-team area while those rates all decreased in the team areas (Bloch & Bell, 1976).

The Decline of Team Policing

Despite the successes of team policing projects and the enthusiasm of the officers involved in them, team policing encountered much opposition from within the police departments and quickly disappeared from use. For example, police middle managers,
who often did not want to relinquish their control over police activities, opposed command decentralization and prevented the proper implementation of team policing projects (Kelling & Bratton, 1993; Sherman, 1975). Other officers in the department, who were often not well-informed about the nature of team policing or what it sought to accomplish, were also unsupportive of the projects and resented the team officers’ successes (Walker, 1993). Centralized dispatching technology was also problematic because team officers were frequently dispatched to calls outside of their assigned areas, which limited the time officers could spend resolving neighborhood problems (Walker, 1993).

Team Policing in the Community-Oriented Era

Team policing failed to become an enduring police strategy when it was first implemented because it was incompatible with the rigid, centralized model of policing prevalent at the time. However, through its support of physical and command decentralization, increased community involvement in crime control and prevention, and problem-focused policing strategies, community-oriented policing has changed police departments in many ways that complement the use of team policing.

With the development of new policing strategies in recent decades, police have become more innovative in their use of interventions to address community problems. This study evaluates the impact of a team policing intervention that incorporated the community-oriented, problem-oriented, and hot spots policing strategies in an effort to address crime and disorder problems in the Palos Verdes neighborhood in Las Vegas, Nevada.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The Palos Verdes Project

Formerly located in the Lincoln 1 sector/beat of the Convention Center Area
Command\(^1\), the Palos Verdes neighborhood is a predominately Spanish-speaking
Hispanic/Latino, lower-income area where the majority of residents live in rented
housing. In recent years, as property owners and managers had neglected basic building
maintenance, drug houses had been established, and gang activity had increased, the
quality of life in the neighborhood had diminished and the area had become a hot spot for
violent crime, property crime, and disorder. The neighborhood has also had a history of
severely strained police-community relations, which stems from a 1996 incident in which
two off-duty officers shot and killed a neighborhood resident without justification
(Benjamin, 1997). According to Convention Center Area Command officers, mistrust of
the police caused many incidents in the neighborhood to go unreported in the years since
the shooting and residents often refused to cooperate with investigations. This mistrust
also limited the officers’ ability to improve neighborhood conditions and address the
underlying problems in the area that have led to crime and disorder.

In an effort to finally resolve the ongoing problems in the neighborhood, the
Convention Center Area Command initiated the Palos Verdes team policing project on
March 27, 2012. The goals of the project were to not only reduce crime and disorder
incidents and restore the residents’ confidence in the police, but to instill in the residents
a sense of pride in their community, to encourage them to be responsible for

\(^1\) Due to the reorganization of the Convention Center Area Command in February 2013, the Palos Verdes
neighborhood is now located in the Nora 2 sector/beat of the South Central Area Command.
neighborhood crime control and prevention, and to create an environment where residents have only minimal need for police intervention.

Community Crimes Team

The Community Crimes Team was the unit responsible for developing and implementing the various activities associated with the team policing intervention in the Palos Verdes neighborhood. Between April and December 2012, the team was comprised of seven officers, one crime prevention specialist, and one investigator and was supervised by one sergeant and one lieutenant. One officer acted as the lead officer while another officer, who spoke Spanish, was primarily responsible for community outreach efforts and facilitating communication between the team and non-English-speaking residents. The other officers had administrative, law enforcement, intelligence, and logistics specialties, though the officers shared responsibility for coordinating all the team activities in the neighborhood. Figure 1 shows the organization of the Community Crimes Team.

Figure 1. Community Crimes Team
During the initial months of the intervention, the team met weekly to discuss the status of the various problems in the Palos Verdes neighborhood and to plan police and community activities designed to address those problems. The team also participated in regular community meetings, which encouraged communication between the residents and officers about problems in the neighborhood and the progress of the intervention.

**Intervention**

Proactive policing strategies such as saturation patrol and investigations were used primarily when the team policing intervention first began as a way to remove the most problematic individuals (i.e., known gang members and drug offenders) from the area. The majority of this work was completed during the team’s first few weeks in the neighborhood so the remainder of the intervention became largely a community effort with minimal need for law enforcement activities. Several intervention activities were aimed at improving the quality of life in the neighborhood. Between April and August 2012, the Community Crimes Team organized four Combined Multi-Agency Response Team (CMART) inspections. These inspections involved several agencies including the Clark County Health District, Clark County Code Enforcement, the Fire Prevention Division, NV Energy, Public Works, and social service agencies and were conducted in order to get property owners and managers to make necessary improvements to their buildings and to improve the quality of the residents’ living conditions. In addition, the team also organized trash and graffiti cleanup events in April and July 2012 in which they encouraged all the residents to participate and become more involved in caring for their neighborhood.
Other intervention activities focused on community outreach. In addition to regularly patrolling the neighborhood and making contacts with residents, the Community Crimes Team organized several community events. In May 2012, approximately 200 people attended the Palos Verdes Pride event, which was organized in partnership with other agencies and local businesses that donated various items and services, and was held in order to bring the residents together and promote community cohesion. Other major community events included National Night Out in August 2012, which focused on promoting neighborhood crime prevention, and “Trunk or Treat” in October 2012, at which officers handed out candy and provided the neighborhood children with various other Halloween-themed activities. In addition to organizing these events, the Community Crimes Team also partnered with social service and faith-based organizations to provide services aimed at improving the well-being of the residents.

Figure 2. Timeline of Major Intervention Activities in the Palos Verdes Neighborhood

Figure 2 shows an approximate timeline of the major activities that occurred between April and December 2012. Through these various activities and community partnerships, the team policing intervention was designed to help the residents build the strong sense of community that had long been nonexistent in the area and in so doing, enable them to more effectively regulate their neighborhood in an effort to reduce crime and disorder.
Hypotheses

The results from the evaluations of the team policing projects in Cincinnati (Ohio), Detroit (Michigan), and Rochester (New York) suggest not only that team policing may have a greater impact on crime than traditional policing does, but also that team policing may have a greater impact on certain types of crime. Therefore, this study will evaluate the following eight hypotheses:

H₁: Team policing will have an impact on violent calls for service in the Palos Verdes neighborhood as compared to the immediate pre-intervention period.

H₂: Team policing will have an impact on property calls for service in the Palos Verdes neighborhood as compared to the immediate pre-intervention period.

H₃: Team policing will have an impact on disorder calls for service in the Palos Verdes neighborhood as compared to the immediate pre-intervention period.

H₄: Team policing will have an impact on total calls for service in the Palos Verdes neighborhood as compared to the immediate pre-intervention period.

H₅: Team policing will have an impact on violent calls for service in the Palos Verdes neighborhood as compared to the same period in 2011.

H₆: Team policing will have an impact on property calls for service in the Palos Verdes neighborhood as compared to the same period in 2011.

H₇: Team policing will have an impact on disorder calls for service in the Palos Verdes neighborhood as compared to the same period in 2011.

H₈: Team policing will have an impact on total calls for service in the Palos Verdes neighborhood as compared to the same period in 2011.

Data

This study uses calls for service data to evaluate the impact of team policing in the Palos Verdes neighborhood. The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department provided calls for service data from April 2011 through December 2012 and classified them into three offense categories – violent, property, and disorder calls for service,
which each include specific offenses. Appendix A provides a listing of the various offenses considered in the analyses by category along with their corresponding Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department dispatch codes. In all, calls for 21 violent offenses, five property offenses, and 21 disorder offenses were considered in the analyses.

Previous studies have used calls for service as a measure of crime and disorder (e.g., Klinger & Bridges, 1997; Sherman, et al., 1989; Warner & Pierce, 1993) though these studies do note that calls for service data do have some limitations that can affect their accuracy as such a measure. First, residents may report incidents inaccurately to the police dispatcher. For example, when a resident reports a robbery, the responding officer may either determine that a crime did not occur or reclassify the robbery as a different offense (e.g., a burglary). Second, one incident may be reported multiple times and thus be counted as separate incidents. Third, calls for service data do not include those incidents that residents do not report to the police or, alternately, those incidents that residents report to a patrol officer rather than to a police dispatcher.

Considering that one of the goals of the team policing intervention is to restore the residents’ confidence in the police so that they will notify the police when crime and disorder incidents occur, calls for service data are still appropriate for use in this study. However, due to their limitations and because calls for service primarily indicate how often residents contact the police for assistance (Warner & Pierce, 1993), it is with caution that these data are used to describe changes in the amount of crime and disorder in the Palos Verdes neighborhood after the implementation of the team policing intervention.
Research Design

Because random assignment was not feasible, this study utilizes a quasi-experimental, non-equivalent control groups design. To determine the impact of team policing, the analyses involve comparing the number of calls for service before and after the implementation of team policing in the Palos Verdes neighborhood as well as comparing the number of calls for service in three control areas during the same periods. The analyses also compare the calls for service data in a catchment area adjacent to the Palos Verdes neighborhood to assess whether the team policing intervention has displaced crime or, alternately, whether a diffusion of crime control benefits from the team policing intervention has occurred nearby.

Figure 3. Palos Verdes Neighborhood and Catchment Area

The Palos Verdes neighborhood and the catchment area, which were formerly located in the Lincoln 1 sector/beat of the Convention Center Area Command, are shown...
in Figure 3. Similar to the Palos Verdes neighborhood, the catchment area is a small, rented housing area that, according to Convention Center Area Command officers, has also been the location of numerous crime and disorder incidents in recent years. Due to these characteristics and its proximity to the Palos Verdes neighborhood, it may provide similar opportunities for crime and disorder to occur that could potentially be exploited by offenders displaced by the team policing intervention.

The three control areas were chosen in consultation with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and are similar to the Palos Verdes neighborhood in terms of their size, demographics, and numbers of calls for service in 2011. Appendices B, C, and D provide further geographical information about the five comparison areas; specifically, Appendix B shows the geographical boundaries of each control area, Appendix C includes a map of the city of Las Vegas, Nevada which shows the locations of all five comparison areas relative to one another, and Appendix D includes a map of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Area Command jurisdictions which shows the location of the sector/beat associated with each comparison area.

Table 1

*Calls for Service in the Comparison Areas, April 1, 2011-December 31, 2011*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Violent</th>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Disorder</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palos Verdes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catchment Area</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Area 1</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Area 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Area 3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prior to the team policing intervention, these five areas had comparable numbers of calls for service. Table 1 shows the numbers of calls for service by offense category in each comparison area between April 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011. Similar to the Palos Verdes neighborhood, the control areas are lower-income areas with high percentages of Hispanic/Latino residents and rented housing as compared to the city of Las Vegas. Table 2 provides specific demographic data for the Palos Verdes neighborhood and catchment area, the three control areas, and the city of Las Vegas.

This study focuses on the first nine complete months of the intervention (April 2012 to December 2012). To assess the immediate impact of team policing in the neighborhood, calls for service during this nine-month intervention period were compared to calls for service during the nine-month period immediately before the intervention (July 2011 to March 2012). To control for seasonal effect, calls for service during the intervention period were also compared to calls for service during the same nine-month period in the previous year (April 2011 to December 2011).
Table 2

Demographics of the Comparison Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Palos Verdes / Catchment</th>
<th>Control 1</th>
<th>Control 2</th>
<th>Control 3</th>
<th>Las Vegas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>50.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age in years (%)^a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-19</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-34</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 and over</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race, non-Hispanic/Latino (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino (%)</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean income ($)</td>
<td>35,466</td>
<td>52,153</td>
<td>39,936</td>
<td>26,865</td>
<td>70,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty (%)</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rented housing (%)</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency ≤ 5 years (%)</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2011d)
^a Percentages may not add up to 100.0 due to rounding.
CHAPTER 4

ANALYSES AND RESULTS

The first part of the analyses involved a visual examination of the calls for service trends in each area and the second part involved the use of t-tests to determine whether the differences in mean calls for service per week in the Palos Verdes neighborhood, the three control areas, and the catchment area were statistically significant. An independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean calls for service per week during the nine-month intervention period (April 2012 to December 2012) with the nine-month period immediately prior to the intervention (July 2011 to March 2012). A paired samples t-test was used to compare the mean calls for service per week during the intervention period with the same nine-month period in the previous year (April 2011 to December 2012). The paired samples t-test was selected over the independent samples t-test in that case because the analysis involves comparing the mean calls for service per week in the same period, but under two different conditions.

To calculate the mean calls for service per week during the three time periods, the data were first divided into weeks and the numbers of violent, property, disorder, and total calls for service were recorded for each week. Then, the numbers of calls for service were divided by the total number of weeks in each period. Because the data were divided so that each week began on Sunday and ended on Saturday, one week in each time period contained less than seven days; therefore, the data from those weeks were excluded from the statistical analyses. As a result, each period in the statistical analyses contained 39 weeks of data.
Figures 8-17 in Appendix E show the trends in total calls for service across the five comparison areas. Specifically, Figures 8-12 show the calls for service trends across the pre-intervention and intervention periods and Figures 13-17 show quarterly comparisons of the calls for service trends during the intervention period with the same months in 2011. Comparing the intervention period to the prior nine-month period, Figure 8 indicates that the pattern of calls for service changed in the Palos Verdes neighborhood, with notable spikes occurring during the first ten weeks of the intervention. Figure 9 indicates that the pattern of calls for service in the catchment area generally remained consistent. Figures 10 and 11 similarly indicate relatively little change in the pattern of calls for service in Control Areas 1 and 2, respectively. In contrast, Figure 12 shows a noticeable decrease in weekly calls for service in Control Area 3, particularly after the tenth week of the intervention period. Comparing the intervention period to the same period in 2011, Figure 13 shows a similar pattern of calls for service in the Palos Verdes neighborhood during the first 10 weeks, which may indicate that the notable calls for service spikes were the result of a seasonal influence on calls for service rather than the police intervention. Figures 14, 15, and 16 all show relatively few pattern differences in the catchment area and Control Areas 1 and 2, respectively. However, Figure 17 again shows considerable decreases in weekly calls for service in Control Area 3, particularly during the second, third, and fourth quarters.

The results of the t-tests lend support to visual trends observed in the comparison areas. The results of the independent samples t-tests comparing the nine-month period immediately prior to the intervention with the nine-month intervention period are shown
in Table 3 and the results of the paired samples t-tests comparing the nine-month intervention period with the same nine-month period in 2011 are shown in Table 4.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Changes in Calls for Service, Pre-Intervention: Intervention</th>
<th>July 2011-March 2012</th>
<th>April-December 2012</th>
<th>N Change (%)</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palos Verdes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>(.41)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>(.43)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disorder</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>(1.41)</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>(1.52)</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catchment Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>(.50)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>(.34)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disorder</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>(1.91)</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>(1.98)</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Area 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>(1.06)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>(.52)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disorder</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>(1.76)</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>(2.28)</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Area 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>(.39)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>(.55)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disorder</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>(1.23)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>(1.29)</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Area 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>(.66)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>(.50)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disorder</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>(2.25)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>(2.74)</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01
As shown in Table 3, the mean calls for service per week increased in the Palos Verdes neighborhood during the intervention period in all calls for service categories as compared to the prior nine-month period, though only the mean violent and mean total calls for service increased significantly. However, the catchment area adjacent to the Palos Verdes neighborhood did not experience a significant change in any of the calls for service.
service categories. Control Area 1 only experienced a significant increase in mean disorder calls for service per week while Control Area 2 only experienced a significant increase in mean property calls for service per week. Finally, Control Area 3 experienced a decrease in all calls for service categories with significant decreases in mean property, mean disorder, and mean total calls for service per week.

As shown in Table 4, the mean calls for service in the Palos Verdes neighborhood increased in all categories during the intervention period as compared to the same period in 2011 and again, both the mean violent and mean total calls for service increased significantly. As with the pre-intervention comparison, the catchment area adjacent to the Palos Verdes neighborhood did not experience significant changes in any of the calls for service categories. Neither Control Area 1 nor Control Area 2 had any significant changes in the mean calls for service per week as compared to the same period in 2011. Similar to the pre-intervention comparison, Control Area 3 experienced decreases in all calls for service categories with significant decreases in mean property, mean disorder, and mean total calls for service per week.

Despite significant increases in mean disorder and mean property calls per week during the intervention period in Control Areas 1 and 2, respectively, there were no significant differences in either of these areas in any of the calls for service categories as compared to the same period in 2011. Therefore, a seasonal effect could be responsible for the significant differences in mean calls for service between the pre-intervention and intervention periods in those areas. In other words, it is possible that the numbers of disorder and property calls for service are typically lower in Control Areas 1 and 2, respectively, from July to March as compared with April to December.
Though Figure 13 suggests that a seasonal effect may be responsible for some of the observed calls for service spikes in the Palos Verdes neighborhood, considering that both the mean violent and mean total calls for service increased significantly during the intervention period as compared to both the pre-intervention period and the same period in 2011, it is less likely that a seasonal effect is responsible for these increases. Therefore, it is plausible that the team policing intervention was responsible for the observed differences in calls for service per week in the Palos Verdes neighborhood. In support of this, Figure 4 shows the number of calls for service per week along with the timeline of major events during the intervention period in the Palos Verdes neighborhood.

*Figure 4. Total Calls for Service and Activities Timeline in the Palos Verdes Neighborhood*

Though it cannot be determined for certain with the current data whether the intervention activities influenced the calls for service trend, Figure 4 does show that
several calls for service spikes occurred during or around the weeks of major team activities. For example, notable spikes occurred just after the start of the team policing intervention as well as during and just after the weeks of the Palos Verdes Community Pride event and the second CMART (week 7).

The results of the t-tests indicate that the team policing intervention was associated with significant increases in mean violent and mean total calls for service in the Palos Verdes neighborhood during the intervention period as compared to both the pre-intervention period and the same period in 2011. Therefore, the results lend support to hypotheses 1, 4, 5, and 8. Because the team policing intervention was not associated with significant changes in mean disorder and property calls for service, the results do not support hypotheses 2, 3, 6, and 7.

Table 5

Changes in Violent Calls for Service in the Palos Verdes Neighborhood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Offense</th>
<th>Previous Year</th>
<th>Pre-Intervention</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>407G</td>
<td>Robbery (gang-related)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>413</td>
<td>Person with a gun</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>413A</td>
<td>Person with a knife</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>415</td>
<td>Assault/battery</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>415B</td>
<td>Assault/battery with other deadly weapon</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>415D</td>
<td>Assault/battery (domestic violence)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>434</td>
<td>Illegal shooting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The t-test results also suggest that the team policing intervention had a greater impact on violent calls for service than on property and disorder calls for service. As shown in Table 5, calls for service for assault and battery offenses (i.e., 415, 415B, and 415D) increased the most during the intervention period as compared to both the pre-intervention period and the same period in 2011. However, given the overall low numbers of violent calls for service, it cannot be determined for certain whether the team policing intervention had an influence on the reporting of these assault and battery incidents.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

As the results of the analyses suggest, calls for service increased in the Palos Verdes neighborhood as a result of the team policing intervention. However, these results do not necessarily indicate that crime and disorder incidents have also increased in the Palos Verdes neighborhood. Because incidents were often not reported to the police in the past, the calls for service data, therefore, may not provide a representative count of the incidents that occurred prior to the intervention so a more definitive assessment of the crime rate is not currently possible. Instead, given that calls for service can be described as a measure of the residents’ reporting behavior (Warner & Pierce, 1993), these increases may indicate that the residents have become more willing to report incidents to the police since the intervention began. Further, the police lieutenant involved in the Palos Verdes project stated that the increase in calls for service is both a successful outcome of the intervention and an indication that “good police work” was being done in the neighborhood (R. DuVall, personal communication, March 15, 2013).

Though the results of the analyses provide some insight into the impact of team policing in the Palos Verdes neighborhood, the police lieutenant felt that the intervention has had a much broader impact than what the calls for service data can measure. For example, he indicated that officers now feel welcome in the neighborhood and, in his opinion, the trash and graffiti cleanup events, the CMART inspections, and the Palos Verdes Pride event had the most effect on both bringing the residents together as a community and changing their attitudes toward the police (R. DuVall, personal communication, March 15, 2013).
In addition to evaluating the impact of team policing in the Palos Verdes neighborhood, this study also considered the possibility that the intervention could displace crime to nearby areas. Though calls for service increased in the Palos Verdes neighborhood, the catchment area did not experience any significant changes in calls for service as a result of the team policing intervention. While this suggests that a diffusion of crime control benefits did not occur during the intervention period, it also suggests that crime displacement did not occur either.

Among the other comparison areas, only Control Area 3 experienced significant changes in calls for service that could not be attributed to either seasonal fluctuations in numbers of calls for service or the presence of a police intervention. However, according to an Area Command Information Officer in the Downtown Area Command, the calls for service decreases in Control Area 3 may have been the result of changes in management strategies at the properties where incidents of crime and disorder frequently occurred (G. Jackson, personal communication, March 22, 2013).

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study has several limitations that restrict the interpretations that can be made regarding the impact of team policing in the Palos Verdes neighborhood. First, as is the case with many police interventions, the team policing project was developed specifically to address the needs of the Palos Verdes neighborhood so random assignment was not possible. As such, the control areas are non-equivalent to the Palos Verdes neighborhood and it is possible that the differences between these areas, other than the exposure to the team policing intervention, were responsible for the differences observed in the analyses.
Second, this study evaluated the immediate impact of team policing using calls for service data. Previous studies have cautioned against this type of comparison because resident reporting bias has the greatest effect on calls for service data during the intervention period (Braga et al., 1999; Taylor et al., 2011; Weisburd & Green, 1995). In other words, being aware of a police intervention may cause residents to be more sensitive to incidents of crime and disorder and more likely to report these incidents to the police. As a consequence, the impact measured during the intervention period may be greater than the long-term impact of the intervention (Weisburd & Green, 1995). Therefore, future studies should evaluate the effects of an intervention over a longer period when using calls for service data in order to more adequately assess the impact of team policing.

Third, because calls for service data are limited in their ability to measure rates of crime and disorder, future studies should also include in their analyses alternate data sources such as incident reports, arrest reports, and clearance rates. Including data sources such as these would allow for more definitive conclusions about the effectiveness of team policing as a crime control strategy.

Finally, as the comments from the police lieutenant suggest, evaluating team policing solely through quantitative data analyses provides only partial insight into its impact. Future studies should incorporate more qualitative data analyses in the form of surveys and interviews in order to evaluate the impact of team policing on the perceptions and attitudes of the residents and officers involved in the team policing intervention.
Implications for the Future of Team Policing

Team policing failed to become a policing standard during the 1970s because it was often considered a short-term special project rather than a lasting policing strategy. In order to succeed, team policing requires ongoing support from the rest of police department. Unlike many previous team policing efforts, the Community Crimes Team had much support from the captain of the Convention Center Area Command and the lieutenant in charge of the Palos Verdes project. However, due to the reorganization of the Convention Center Area Command in February 2013, the Palos Verdes neighborhood is no longer under its jurisdiction and several of the Community Crimes Team officers have received new assignments. Because the team policing intervention has had a demonstrated impact on the Palos Verdes neighborhood, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department may want to consider sustaining the project for a longer period.
## Calls for Service by Offense Category

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Offense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>Robbery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>407G</td>
<td>Robbery (gang-related)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>407Z</td>
<td>Robbery (attempted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>413</td>
<td>Person with a gun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>413A</td>
<td>Person with a knife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>413B</td>
<td>Person with other deadly weapon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>413G</td>
<td>Person with a gun (gang-related)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>415</td>
<td>Assault and battery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>415A</td>
<td>Assault and battery with a gun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>415B</td>
<td>Assault and battery with other deadly weapon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>415C</td>
<td>Assault and battery (negative injury)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>415D</td>
<td>Assault and battery (domestic violence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>415G</td>
<td>Assault and battery (gang-related)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>415Z</td>
<td>Assault and battery (attempted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>420</td>
<td>Homicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>420G</td>
<td>Homicide (gang-related)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>420Z</td>
<td>Homicide (attempted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>426</td>
<td>Sexual assault</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>426Z</td>
<td>Sexual assault (attempted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>434</td>
<td>Illegal shooting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>434G</td>
<td>Illegal shooting (gang-related)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>Burglary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>406V</td>
<td>Auto burglary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>406Z</td>
<td>Burglary (attempted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>411</td>
<td>Stolen motor vehicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>411Z</td>
<td>Stolen motor vehicle (attempted)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disorder</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>Prowler</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>408</td>
<td>Drunk</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>410</td>
<td>Reckless driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>416</td>
<td>Fight</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>416A</td>
<td>Juvenile disturbance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>416B</td>
<td>Other disturbance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>416F</td>
<td>Fireworks call</td>
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*(table continues)*
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<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
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<th>Offense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>416G</td>
<td>Fight (gang-related)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>416S</td>
<td>Fight (school-related)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>416V</td>
<td>Fight (vice-related)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>425</td>
<td>Suspicious situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>425A</td>
<td>Suspicious person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>425B</td>
<td>Suspicious vehicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>425G</td>
<td>Suspicious person (gang-related)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>425H</td>
<td>Anthrax threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>440</td>
<td>Wanted suspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>441</td>
<td>Malicious destruction of property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>441G</td>
<td>Malicious destruction of property (gang-related)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>441V</td>
<td>Malicious destruction of property (vice-related)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>441Z</td>
<td>Malicious destruction of property (attempted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>446</td>
<td>Narcotics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES OF THE CONTROL AREAS

The first control area is located in the Victor 5 sector/beat of the Northwest Area Command and is shown in Figure 5.

*Figure 5. Control Area 1*

The second control area is located in the William 1 sector/beat of the Bolden Area Command and is shown in Figure 6.
The third control area is located in the Baker 4 sector/beat of the Downtown Area Command and is shown in Figure 7.
APPENDIX C

COMPARISON AREA LOCATIONS

Palos Verdes Neighborhood
Catchment Area
Control Area 1
Control Area 2
Control Area 3
APPENDIX D

LVMPD JURISDICTIONAL MAP

Palos Verdes / Catchment Area

Control Area 1

Control Area 2

Control Area 3

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Figure 8. Total Calls for Service in the Palos Verdes Neighborhood: July 1, 2011-December 31, 2012

Figure 9. Total Calls for Service in the Catchment Area: July 1, 2011-December 31, 2012
Figure 10. Total Calls for Service in Control Area 1: July 1, 2011-December 31, 2012

Figure 11. Total Calls for Service in Control Area 2: July 1, 2011-December 31, 2012
Figure 12. Total Calls for Service in Control Area 3: July 1, 2011-December 31, 2012

Intervention start: 3/27/2012
Figure 13. Total Calls for Service in the Palos Verdes Neighborhood, Previous Year: Intervention

First Quarter

Second Quarter

Third Quarter

Fourth Quarter
Figure 14. Total Calls for Service in the Catchment Area, Previous Year: Intervention

First Quarter

Second Quarter

Third Quarter

Fourth Quarter
Figure 15. Total Calls for Service in Control Area 1, Previous Year: Intervention

First Quarter

Second Quarter

Third Quarter

Fourth Quarter
Figure 16. Total Calls for Service in Control Area 2, Previous Year: Intervention

First Quarter

Second Quarter

Third Quarter

Fourth Quarter
Figure 17. Total Calls for Service in Control Area 3, Previous Year: Intervention

First Quarter

Second Quarter

Third Quarter

Fourth Quarter
REFERENCES


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