

**Boise State University**  
**ScholarWorks**

---

Criminal Justice Faculty Publications and  
Presentations

Department of Criminal Justice

---

12-1-2007

# An Evaluation of Operation Street Sweeper - 2006

Andrew Giacomazzi  
*Boise State University*

Jeremy D. Ball  
*Boise State University*

---



## **An Evaluation of Operation Street Sweeper—2006**

Final Report

Sponsored by  
Project Safe Neighborhoods—Idaho District

Report Authors:

Andrew Giacomazzi  
Associate Professor and Chair  
Department of Criminal Justice  
1910 University Drive  
Boise, ID 83725-1955  
[agiacom@boisestate.edu](mailto:agiacom@boisestate.edu)  
208-426-4162

and

Jeremy Ball  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Criminal Justice  
1910 University Drive  
Boise, ID 83725-1955  
[jeremyball@boisestate.edu](mailto:jeremyball@boisestate.edu)  
208-426-3769

December 2007

## **An Evaluation of Operation Street Sweeper—2006**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Operation Street Sweeper (OSS) (2006) was a multi-level, interagency collaboration with multiple purposes. According to OSS documents, Operation Street Sweeper goals included the following: (1) to reduce gang-related criminal and violent activity in Nampa and Caldwell, Idaho through aggressive, proactive, and coordinated street enforcement between the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) and local law enforcement; (2) to deter criminal activity through high profile enforcement activity; (3) to develop and/or increase the number of positive community contacts; (4) to show the community and gang members that law enforcement is serious about reducing gang and violent crime in the area; and (5) to use the media to showcase a law enforcement effort to reduce gang violence and activity (After Action Report, 2006).

Underlying the various goals of OSS (2006) was the thinking that gang crimes and gun violence are regional problems, which are best addressed through proactive, collaborative efforts. As such, numerous law enforcement agencies were involved with the enforcement operation, including personnel from ATF, the Metro Violent Crime Task Force, Nampa Police Department, Caldwell Police Department, Canyon County Sheriff's Office, Ada County Sheriff's Office, Meridian Police Department, U.S. Marshals, U.S. Attorney's Office, and the Canyon County Prosecutor's Office (After Action Report, 2006).

There were several tactics used as the backbone of the enforcement operation. Between June 2, 2006 and June 11, 2006, two 10-hour shifts were

created with 18 personnel per shift. Shift A worked from 2 pm until Midnight. Shift B worked from 6 pm until 4 am. Two-person vehicles conducted street enforcement operations that addressed gang-related criminal activity, targeting gang members, and responding to firearms-related incidents. Other enforcement activities included surveillance, making Terry-stops, initiating traffic stops based on probable cause, making arrests for criminal violations, executing search and arrest warrants, recruiting informants, identifying gang members, and generally increasing law enforcement presence in an effort to deter crime (After Action Report, 2006).

In all, OSS (2006) can be considered an aggressive, law enforcement effort, not unlike other efforts that have taken place across the United States in an effort to reduce gang-related criminal and violent activity (see Appendix). OSS (2006) was implemented based on law enforcement intelligence suggesting that the Treasure Valley has experienced an increase in documented gang members who are affiliated with 35 different gangs (After Action Report, 2006). OSS (2006), through its enforcement operation, sought to send a powerful message to gang members (and the community at large) that violent activity would not be tolerated.

According to the After Action Report (2006), OSS (2006) had resulted in some impressive, short-term (and immediate) outcomes. The following accomplishments are noted in the After Action Report (2006):

- There was an absence firearm-related violence reported in Nampa, Caldwell, or Canyon County during the OSS. Additionally, there were

no aggravated assaults, stabbings, or bank robberies during the enforcement operation.

- During the enforcement operation, police/agents contacted individuals in the community, talked to them about gang violence problems, and visited with young children.
- During the enforcement operation, there were no firearms-related calls for service.
- A total of 219 arrests were made during the enforcement period.
- Firearms, knives, controlled substances, and paraphernalia were seized during the enforcement period.
- 896 field interviews were conducted during the OSS (2006).
- 14 gang members were identified and added to the database.
- 4 confidential informants were recruited during the enforcement period.
- 195 misdemeanor cases were referred to the Canyon county Prosecuting attorney's Office.

### **EVALUATION RESEARCH GOALS**

The current evaluation of OSS (2006) had two primary goals: (1) to determine the process of the enforcement operation, and (2) to determine what impacts, if any, the project had on arrests and calls for service in Nampa and Caldwell, Idaho. The twofold research goals are explicated below.

***Process Evaluation.*** The process evaluation of OSS (2006) sought to attain information from a representative sample of individuals directly involved in the enforcement operations during the project's run in June, 2006. Interview data

were collected in an effort to examine how the project was implemented.

Recommendations to further fine-tune the project in the future are offered based on these data.

***Impact Evaluation.*** The impact evaluation of OSS (2006) sought to attain arrest and calls for service data in Nampa and Caldwell both prior to and after the completion of the enforcement operation. The goal was to determine whether OSS (2006) resulted in a statistically significant decrease in arrests and calls for service after the enforcement period.

On the pages that follow, we present the results of both the process and impact evaluation. We start with the interview results used in the process evaluation, followed by recommendations to key decision-makers of OSS. The report then continues with the presentation of the quantitative data used to assess the effectiveness of OSS (2006).

## **PROCESS EVALUATION**

### **INTERVIEW RESULTS**

A representative sample of nine individuals involved with OSS (2006) was interviewed in the spring and early summer of 2007. The purpose of the interviews was to determine how the project was implemented from the perspective of those heavily involved with its operations. Questions were asked concerning the participants' roles in the project, goals of the project, strategies used, manpower, duration of the project, the role of the media, and participating agencies. In the paragraphs that follow, the results of the interviews are presented.

### ***About Operation Street Sweeper***

Interviewees were asked to comment on the nature of OSS (2006). Combined, interviewees offered the following elements as the essence of OSS (2006)

- OSS (2006) was a multi-agency effort involving federal, state, county, and local law enforcement.
- Considerable preparations were made prior to the enforcement activity. For example, agencies researched and identified gang members and checked their name to determine if any had warrants. A Top 10 gang member list was created.
- The project was implemented from June 2, 2006 to June 11, 2006.
- The main goals of the project were to make contact with gang members, and get guns and drugs off the streets.
- During the enforcement period, a variety of activities were undertaken. For example, a concerted effort was made to arrest gang members on the Top 10 list. Additionally, certain areas in Nampa, Caldwell, and Canyon County were targeted, where contact was made with gang members, some of whom were arrested and taken into custody. Other activities focused on consensual searches to determine if individuals were in possession of firearms and/or illegal narcotics.

In addition to describing OSS (2006), respondents also mentioned some of the unintended, yet beneficial effects of the project. For example, one interviewee stated:

*This was a great operation for networking, to share ideas, and to have a mutual goal to have a target list. Also a PR tool to show some force, to show people they do care and to make more of an impact in the communities.*

### **Were the Goals of the Operation Street Sweeper Clear?**

According to the OSS After Action Report (2006), there were five primary goals of the project:

- Reduce gang-related criminal and violent activity in both the short and long term in targeted areas of the cities of Nampa and Caldwell, Idaho, through an aggressive, proactive, and coordinated street enforcement effort between ATF and local law enforcement;
- Deter criminal activity through high profile enforcement activity and presence;
- Develop and/or increase the number of positive community contacts which will lead to increased community trust and confidence in law enforcement;
- Show the community and gang members through an increase in law enforcement presence that local law enforcement is serious about reducing gang and violent crime in the Treasure Valley;
- Through the use of the media, showcase to the public one of ATF's and local law enforcement's proactive approaches to reduce gang violence/activity.

Given the varied goals of OSS (2006), we were interested in the extent to which these goals were clear to those who participated in the enforcement operations. The majority of the respondents (5) reported that the goals of OSS (2006) were clear.



*We knew about the goals from the start. A briefing took place.*

*We were sat down and talked to—what they wanted to see, numbers met, people they wanted to pick up and make contacts with.*

*The day before the operation there was a pre-operation briefing that detailed the goals and assignments. There was a very thorough PowerPoint presentation.*

*There was a briefing before the meeting where the goals were laid out.*

*There was a briefing and all the goals were made clear.*

Four others, however, who went on to articulate the goals of OSS (2006) failed to mention the goals of developing and/or increasing the number of positive community contacts as well as showcasing to the public a proactive law enforcement approach to reduce gang violence/activity:

*The goal was to make as many contacts as possible. We weren't targeting grandma and grandpa out on an evening drive, but targeting specific people in places.*

*The goals were to identify and arrest as many bad guys as possible in the time given.*

*The goals were to identify bad guys, take people to jail, and hope to find federal charges.*

While those respondents who articulated the goals of OSS (2006) should not be faulted for leaving some of the goals out (after all, they were interviewed some 9 months after the project took place), their focus on the enforcement goals might help to explain why some respondents are in favor of a more covert operation in the future. [See "Should the Operation Have Started Out More Covertly?" below.]

## ***How Important was the Goal of ‘Positive Police Contacts with Community Members?’***

As mentioned above, one of the goals of OSS (2006) was to:

- Develop and/or increase the number of positive community contacts which will lead to increased community trust and confidence in law enforcement.

Given the general aggressive nature of OSS (2006), we were interested to learn, from the perspective of those involved in the project, how important they felt this goal actually was. As might be expected, there was a split among respondents with regard to this question. Five of the nine respondents reported that developing positive police contacts with the community was important to the success of OSS (2006):

*Positive police contacts are very important. The public sees so many negative items in the news so it's good for them to see good coming out and positive things being done.*

*I think this is very important. We need to get these kids to have a more positive view of the police.*

*I feel that it is important to have the support and backing of the community. They are sick of the violence.*

*I made a lot of contacts that weren't gang members and they were ecstatic about it. People were asking me questions about the project when they saw me in my gang uniform with an ATF agent.*

*When we made a traffic stop with someone not in the gang, we made sure it was a positive contact.*

Four other respondents, however, either did not completely understand the goal, did not know it was a goal, or did not feel the goal was important to the success of OSS (2006):

*I did not know that this was a goal.*

*Any time you have a vehicle stopped and lights going, those in the community get a positive reinforcement that the officers are doing their job.*

*This is not really what we were after. The goal was not to contact people in general, but specific people.*

*I would stress this goal more the next time; I don't think it was stressed enough. The effort was made, but I don't know if this was specifically addressed. The people we wanted to have contact with were not positive role models within the community.*

As can be seen from the above responses, while OSS (2006) attempted to stress goals related both to enforcement AND to proactive, positive community contacts, some of those involved in the operation understood these dual goals better than others. Therefore, it logically can be inferred that in some areas and/or with some shifts, OSS (2006) was implemented primarily as an enforcement effort.

### ***Did Operation Street Sweeper Employ the Right Strategies?***

All nine respondents felt that the right strategies were used to reach the goals of OSS (2006). In addition, several respondents had specific comments about the strategies. The following are representative responses:

*It was very good to pair up with the federal agents.*

*The design was to make a quick impact and put the largest amount of gang members into custody. This wasn't a long-term thing.*

*Because this was a short-term operation, people will be getting back out. But it helped instill in the public that the agencies worked together to try to clean the neighborhood up.*

*The results of the strategies were better than expected, especially the contacts made. But we saw fewer people though as the days went on.*

This last comment suggests that as the enforcement operation's days wore on, there was a marked decrease in the number of contacts made. Some interviewees suggested ways to combat this in the future:

*One of the things we should do the next time is to do it more frequently, but for shorter times. For two weeks afterwards, all crimes seemed to be down because word got out on the street and they kept their heads down. We should do it more frequently but for less amounts of time—keep the bad guys guessing.*

*The only thing I would change if we do it again is to do it for 4-5 days, then take a 4-6 week pause, and do another 4-5 days. The longer the enforcement operation went on, the less contact we had because the gang members decided to stay inside and behave.*

In all, while respondents felt that the enforcement operation's strategies were sound, including the targeting of gang members, conducting surveillance, making Terry stops, increasing law enforcement presence, making arrests, executing warrants (among others), several interviewees suggested an alternate schedule for the enforcement operations could potentially enhance the overall effectiveness of OSS.

### ***How Long Should the Project Have Gone?***

A variety of opinions surfaced in response to the question, "How long should OSS (2006) have gone?" Similar to responses from the previous question, several respondents suggested a shorter enforcement period followed by a break in enforcement, followed by an additional enforcement period at strategic times. Representative responses to this question are reported below:

*Ten full days was a little too long. We should shorten it by half and do another half a couple months later. It's difficult to man 10days straight and splitting it up would have been more successful. We see a rise in crime after August when it's still hot and the kids go back to school.*

*I think it would be better to break it up, do it in 3-4 day blocks, take a few days off, and go back out again. When we do it in a 1-2 week block, they know that and can lay low for a week or month and eventually, it will die down.*

*The period we had was almost too long. Towards the end the gang members were quiet, hiding in houses. Do five days and then at the end of summer do another five days.*

*Do 4-5 days, break for 4-6 weeks, and then 4-5 more days. I would specifically design it to hit right as school lets out—early June—for 4-5 days. Monitor the activity that is going on around, and base the next OSS on that activity.*

As noted above, 5 of the 9 interviewees suggested that breaking up the enforcement strategy into two blocks with a break in between them would, perhaps, lead to greater success in terms of reducing and deterring gang-related criminal and violent activity. Several of these respondents noted the potential benefits of enforcement operations timed once school lets out in the early summer and when it is back in session in the late summer.

Two respondents noted that OSS (2006) was not long enough. One of these respondents suggested that it should have gone longer, but that time constraints and finances play a role that keep the project's duration at 10 days. Another respondent indicated that the project needed to go longer because of start up issues ("kinks"). This respondent reported that they could take out larger numbers of people and put more cases together if it lasted longer.

Finally, two interviewees indicated that the 10 day enforcement period took a personal toll on them:

*By the end of the two weeks, I was exhausted. I was doing about 70-80 hours a week. They would come in a couple hours before to brief and*

*staying 6-8 hours after. The longer the term, the better effect they'll be, but you can't take people away from their primary responsibility to just put them into their city.*

*I was tired and exhausted at the end, but it reduced a lot of shootings and gang involvement.*

Based on responses to the current and previous question, it appears that there is some support among those involved in OSS (2006) to consider an alternate schedule that would break-up the existing enforcement operation into two shorter enforcement operations. This could lead to greater success, while reducing exhaustion that some interviewees reported.

It also should be noted here that most interviewees felt that—at the very least—it was very important to include smaller-scale versions of the project in between the larger scale versions in an effort to provide continuity and strengthen the overall project. Representative comments here included the following:

*The worst they we can do is an operation like this and then walk away. People think we'll just do it in the summer and then they won't see the cops again the rest of the year.*

*I think smaller-scale follow-ups would be great. It shows cooperation between agencies and makes a big impact.*

*We do this already. We go out and do different types of operations in smaller versions. Caldwell and Nampa do other gang stuff in smaller versions when there aren't as many people involved.*

*Smaller-scale versions of the project are greatly important to that bad guys don't think we have gone away. Smaller ones would scare them, keep them in hiding.*

*We will see a lot more success if we do more throughout the year. Shorter operations with the same amount of hours, and you'll see good stats and more on the news about it, which increases a positive perception in the public.*

### **How Essential was the Media for a Successful Project?**

While none of the respondents indicated that the media was absolutely essential for the success of OSS (2006), all respondents indicated that the local media (television and print) contributed to the project's success. Representative comments from interviewees are reported below:

*Good to gather public support for all the agencies and also an impact on the criminal because they see how serious they are in wanting to reduce crime.*

*The media is a great tool if they use it to their advantage. Law enforcement is just learning this. The media always catches the bad stuff, but they are learning to alert the media to their good stuff.*

*I think the media plays a huge role for this project. It puts it out for the people who didn't get word that the cops are out and it lets the general public know that the cops are out there working and do care. It's 50 percent of the operation.*

*The media coverage after was very positive and plays a significant role.*

*It gets the word out that they are looking at the gangs, and they won't tolerate the gang violence.*

*I'm not a big media fan, but it's nice to let the public know they're (law enforcement) are not sitting on their hands, that they're out doing something, being proactive, being motivated, and seeing the results.*

### **Should the Operation Have Started Out More Covertly?**

While other similar law enforcement efforts across the country have relied on covert operations as a key to successfully reducing gang-related criminal and violence activity, OSS (2006) used a different approach by publicizing the 10-day

enforcement operation prior to it commencing and encouraging media coverage throughout the duration of the operation. Therefore, we asked interview respondents to comment on the strategy of making OSS (2006) a non-covert law enforcement operation.

Responses from interviewees largely were mixed, with some respondents suggesting that the non-covert operation was the best way to go:

*The operation is good to publicize immediately. They were having problems and it let the public know that they were addressing the issue (shootings). Sometimes a covert operation is good, but not for this.*

*It was good that the people were informed beforehand. It was good that the public knows why all of a sudden there are more officers on the street.*

Five others, however, felt that a covert operation in the future is the best way to achieve the goals of OSS.

*The public should have been told after the operation. Some knew about it and left town. Next time it should be more of a surprise.*

*Any time we have an operation, I strongly oppose involving the media until the operation is done; it makes it tactically more difficult.*

*Personally, I would rather wait until after to inform the public. I don't know what kind of impact it would have had, but I think it would give more surprise to go out without giving the bad guys a heads up.*

*Do not tell people beforehand to give people the heads up.*

Finally, two others were unaware that the media was involved throughout the enforcement period.

*I was not aware that the project started by letting the media know beforehand.*

*I'm not completely sure, but I do not think they did any press notification until afterwards.*



It should be noted here that three of the five main goals of OSS (2006) relied heavily on the media's involvement for their success. These goals (as stated above) included the following:

- Develop and/or increase the number of positive community contacts, which will lead to increased community trust and confidence in law enforcement.
- Show the community and gang members through an increase in law enforcement presence that local law enforcement is serious about reducing gang and violent crime in the Treasure Valley.
- Through the use of the media, showcase to the public, on of ATFs and local law enforcements proactive approaches to reducing gang violence/activity. (OSS After Action Report)

As such (and as suggested from the interview responses above), the answer to the question, "Should Operation Street Sweeper be more covert than it was" is difficult to answer. Those respondents who felt that the enforcement operation should have been more covert likely felt that the primary goals of the operation centered around reducing gang-related criminal and violent activity, as well as deterring criminal activity through high profile enforcement and presence.

However, a less covert operation was necessary to achieve the three other goals as stated above, likely leading some respondents to view the non-covert operation more favorably. As such, further discussion concerning the issue of non-covert nature of OSS in relations to its goals certainly is warranted.

### ***Was There Adequate Manpower Locally?***

In an effort to achieve the goals of OSS (2006), adequate manpower was needed. According to OSS (2006) documents, the enforcement operation encompassed two 10 hour shifts over a ten-day period, using 18 personnel per shift. Enforcement personnel were paired in police vehicles during peak hours of criminal activity and conducted street enforcement operations addressing gang related criminal activity (Operation Street Sweeper documents).

Given the importance of adequate manpower to the overall success of OSS (2006), we asked respondents the following question: “Was there adequate manpower locally?” All but one respondent reported that manpower was, at the very least, adequate. Representative comments are noted below:

*Yes, at both the local and federal level. The federal level showed a lot of support and had a lot of people in Idaho helping the operation.*

*There were enough people to achieve the goals. There were 9 units out, which is 9 guys making criminal contacts.*

*For the operation, we had plenty of local officers. The feds came in from out of town, so they didn't know the location, but were teamed up with the local guys.*

*Maybe on shorter sweeps a few more guys would be good, but on the long one, after 6 days or so, they were bumping into each other.*

*Yes, there was adequate manpower locally. Same with the federal agencies.*

One respondent lamented the fact that there were, perhaps, too few individuals involved with the enforcement strategy for OSS (2006):

*People had to come in on days off to make up for some lack of manpower. We had close to enough, but a couple more men would have helped.*

In all, the great majority of interviewees suggested that manpower was adequate for achieving the stated goals of OSS (2006). Others insinuated that it would have been even better have more individuals involved in enforcement operations. However, any increase in personnel must be balanced with the relative gain in net positive effects of the operation. As such, from the perspective of those who were interviewed, an adequate balance appears to have been struck with the number of individuals involved in OSS (2006).

### ***How Important Were Participating Agencies?***

By all accounts, OSS (2006) relied heavily on inter-agency collaboration to achieve its goals. But how important were local, county, state and federal agencies to the operation? We asked this question to the interviewees, and a clear consensus resulted. Representative comments are delineated below:

*You cannot do this kind of operation without this cooperation because of manpower and jurisdictional roles that each agency has.*

*The federal officers cannot do traffic stops or things like that, but the big impact is having federal credentials out there. People ask why and it puts more fear in the bad guys. They also had good organizational skills.*

*In my many years of law enforcement work, this was the best cooperation among agencies I have ever seen.*

*Every agency played an important role. They all participated and without every agency used it would not have been a success.*

The comments above suggest that interviewees felt that participating agencies were important to the project, that they worked well together and complemented one another, and that the right number of agencies was involved in the project.

### ***Summary Comments Regarding Operation Street Sweeper (2006)***

In all, interview respondents were quite impressed with OSS (2006). All felt that the main goals of the project were achieved and perceived that the project has made an impact on the communities in question. All were willing to participate in another project like this in the future. In addition, several interviewees mentioned their appreciation of the federal lead on the project and the additional funding that came from the federal side.

Finally, two respondents had some practical considerations that might ultimately benefit OSS in the future. First, one respondent suggested that the project needs more vehicles for the enforcement effort in the future. Second, another respondent suggested that those involved in the project should have an OSS uniform. As this respondent put it, “The bad guys do not think that we have enforcement power when we have a Caldwell shirt trying to do enforcement in Nampa.”

### **PROCESS EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the analysis of interview data above, the following recommendations are offered for OSS decision-makers as they plan for future operations.

- Given that several interview respondents noted only OSS (2006) goals relating to the reduction of gang-related criminal and violence activity, OSS decision-makers should better articulate goals relating to positive community contacts and “showcasing” efforts to the public for all involved in the project. This may help those involved with enforcement operations better understand the role the media plays in this effort.

- OSS decision-makers should consider an alternate enforcement strategy schedule where the 10 day operation is broken-up into two enforcement periods, with a break in between the periods. Several interviewees suggested potential benefits to doing so, especially if timed in such a manner as to coincide with school summer vacation. As such, additional consideration is warranted.
- Decision-makers also should continue to consider factors that might make OSS less taxing on individuals involved in enforcement operations.
- Operations Street Sweeper decision-makers should continue efforts to assist non-federal agencies with smaller-scale, less costly versions of the targeted enforcement effort, which can be implemented periodically in between the larger operations.
- Discussions should commence concerning the goals of OSS in relation to its non-covert enforcement strategy. Questions to consider include the following: Is there a mechanism to involve the media that does not undermine the goals of reducing and deterring gang-related criminal and violent activity? Is there a means by which OSS can simultaneously showcase to the public a proactive, multi-agency approach to reduce gang violence and activity AND maximize its effort to reduce gang violence and activity? Further discussion is warranted.
- Given that some of those involved in the operation understood the dual goals of enforcement AND proactive, positive community contacts better than others, we suggest that OSS decision-makers as well as others involved in its implementation engage in discussions concerning how best to balance an aggressive law enforcement operation with positive community contacts.
- Decision-makers should continue to consult with others involved in the enforcement operation to determine if the benefits of OSS uniforms and the use of additional vehicles during the enforcement period outweigh the costs.

### **IMPACT EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

Operation Street Sweeper 2006 (OSS, hereafter) was operational for an 11-day period in June of 2006. To address the effectiveness of OSS in Nampa and Caldwell, ID, calls for service and arrest data were collected in Nampa and Caldwell, ID. The design of this research was a pre-test/post-test comparison

group design. More specifically, data were collected during three months prior to OSS – that is, March, April, and May – and during three months after OSS – that is, July, August, and September – in 2006. These data were compared to the same months in 2005. In 2006, the spring months (i.e., March, April, and May) are identified as “pre-OSS” and the summer months (July, August, and September) are identified as “post-OSS.” In 2005, the spring months are identified as “Time 1” and the summer months are identified as “Time 2.” These different labels are used because OSS was a 2006 operation. See Figure 1 for an illustration of the data collection design.

<b>Figure 1. Illustration of Data Collection Period</b>							
	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>	<b>September</b>
<b>2005</b>	O	O	O		O	O	O
<b>2006</b>	O	O	O	X	O	O	O

where “X” refers to Operation Street Sweeper 2006  
 where “O” refers to data observations

There are two dependent variables to be addressed: arrests and calls for service. Arrests are identified as arrests officially made by criminal transaction. Therefore, if a person is arrested for 3 separate criminal transactions, then the data would show 3 arrests. There are more calls for service than there are arrests. Each dependent variable is controlled for crime type (violent, property, drug, alcohol, disorder, gun, and other) and Month. Violent is defined as any

criminal transaction that is personal in nature including, but not limited to, homicide, rape, assault/battery, injury to child, and domestic abuse. Disorder is defined as any criminal transaction that leads to disorder in the community including, but not limited to, vandalism and curfew. Means are calculated during the months before OSS and after OSS.

The data are analyzed in two distinct ways. First, means of the dependent variables are compared between pre-OSS and post-OSS for 2006 and between Time 1 and Time 2 for 2005. This type of analysis can address any differences in the dependent variable from before OSS to after OSS. Second, the differential effects of the pre-OSS and post-OSS time periods are compared to similar time periods in 2005 when OSS was not operative. Since means of the two dependent variables are compared between two different independent time periods (i.e., pre-OSS and post-OSS in 2006 and Time 1 and Time 2 in 2005), then a t-test can be run. A negative, statistically significant t-test would indicate that the mean of arrests (or, calls for service) decreased after OSS compared to before OSS. Contrarily, a positive, statistically significant t-test would indicate that the means of arrests (or, calls for service) increased after OSS compared to before OSS.

## **FINDINGS**

### ***Calls for Service***

#### Caldwell

In Caldwell, a total of 15,241 calls for service were made in 2005; 16,156 were made in 2006. Approximately 62% (or, 9,421) of the 2005 calls for service

in Caldwell were crime-related, and approximately 60% (or, 9,762) of the 2006 calls for service in Caldwell were crime-related. The majority of crime-related calls in 2005 were referenced for disorder crimes (35% or 3,321), other crimes (28% or 2,591), and property crimes (23% or 2,131). See Figure 2 for the graphical representation of calls for service for 2005. Similarly, the majority of crime-related calls in 2006 were referenced for disorder crimes (33% or 3,232), other crimes (30% or 2,905), and property crimes (20% or 1,935). See Figure 3 for the graphical representation of calls for service for 2006.

Figure 2. 2005 Trends for Calls for Service (Caldwell)

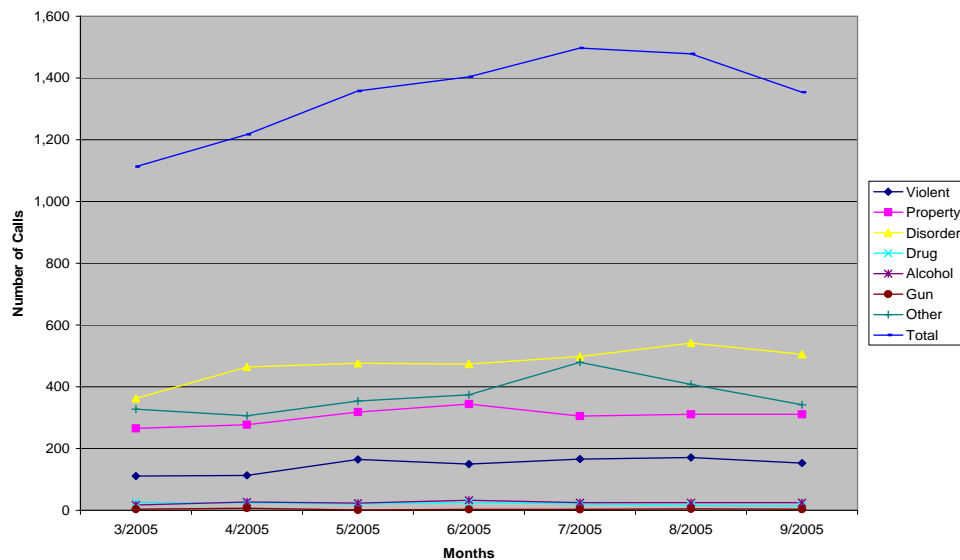
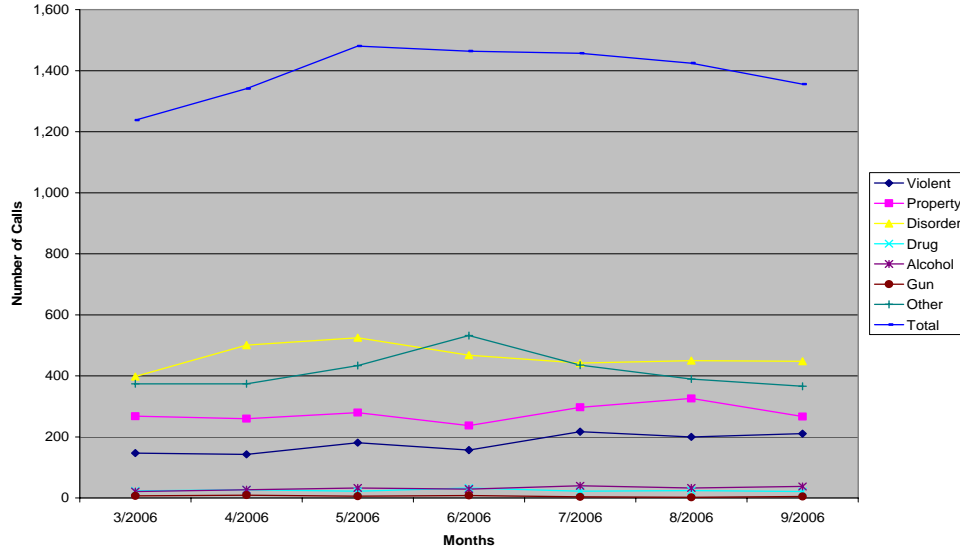




Figure 3. 2006 Trends for Calls for Service (Caldwell)



In 2005, there is a slightly increasing trend for calls in the summer months. Approximately 39% (or, 3,688) of the calls were made during Time 1 (i.e., March, April, and May) in 2005, whereas 46% (or, 4,329) of the calls were made during Time 2 (i.e., July, August, and September). The same trend did *not* occur in 2006. Approximately 42% (or, 4,060) of the calls were made during the pre-OSS period in 2006, and 43% (or, 4,238) were made during the pre-OSS period in 2006.

### Nampa

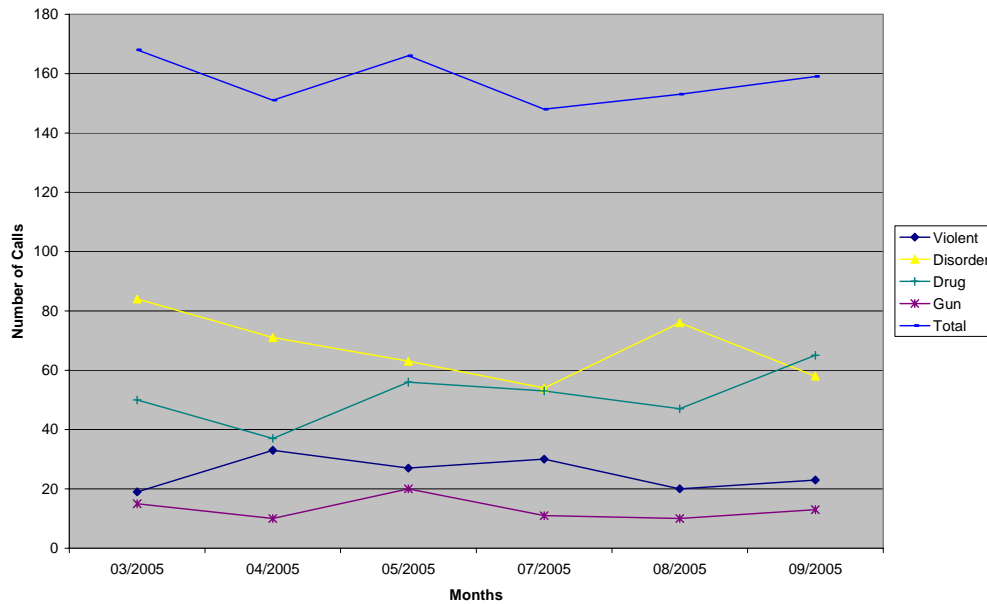
In Nampa, a total of 945 crime-related calls for service were made in 2005; 520 were made in 2006.<sup>1</sup> The majority of crime-related calls in 2005 were referenced for disorder crimes (43% or 406) and drug crimes (33% or 308). See Figure 4 for the graphical representation of calls for service for 2005. In 2006, the data reveal different results. The majority of crime-related calls in 2006 were

<sup>1</sup> Some data were not available (i.e., property, alcohol, and other crimes).

referenced for disorder crimes (68% or 354), whereas drug crimes only accounted for 4% (or, 21) of the calls in 2006. See Figure 5 for the graphical representation of calls for service for 2006.

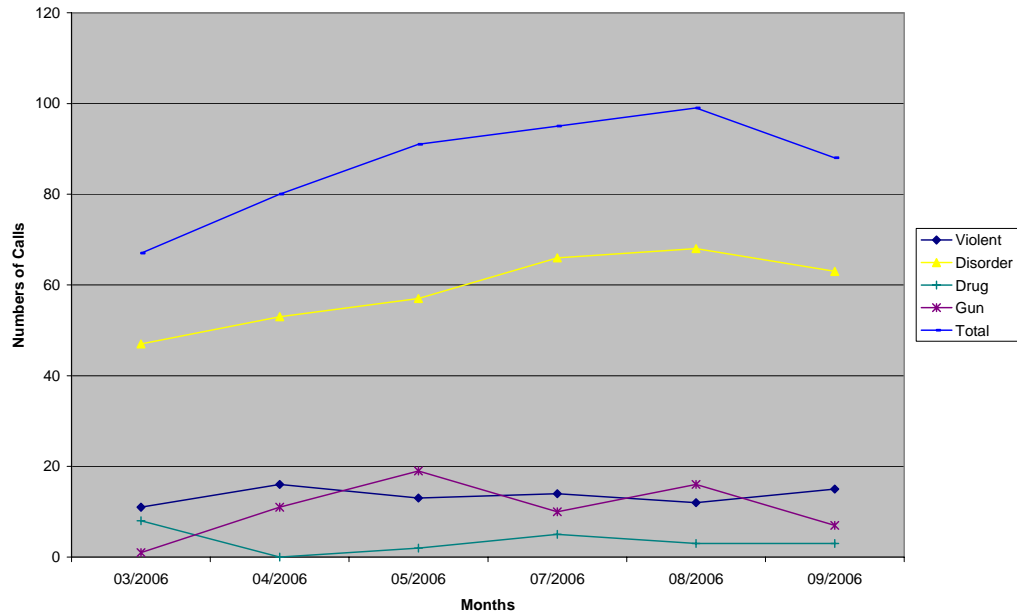
The trends for calls for service in Nampa are not as clear.<sup>2</sup> In 2005, approximately 51% (or, 485) of the calls were made during Time 1, and 49% (or, 460) of the calls were made during Time 2. The same trend did *not* occur in 2006. Approximately 46% (or, 238) of the calls were made during the pre-OSS period in 2006, whereas 54% (or, 282) were made during the pre-OSS period in 2006.

Figure 4. 2005 Trends for Calls for Service (Nampa)



<sup>2</sup> This finding is likely to be a result of missing data.

Figure 5. 2006 Trends for Calls for Service (Nampa)



## Arrests

### Caldwell

The majority of arrests in 2005 in Caldwell were referenced for other crimes (50% or 401), drug crimes (15% or 120), and alcohol crimes (12% or 97). See Figure 6 for the graphical representation of arrests for 2005. Similarly, the majority of arrests in 2006 were referenced for other crimes (47% or 293), drug crimes (13% or 83), and alcohol crimes (13% or 81). See Figure 7 for the graphical representation of arrests for 2006.

In 2005, there is a slightly increasing trend for arrests in the summer months. Approximately 39% (or, 316) of the arrests were made during Time 1, whereas 44% (or, 355) of the arrests were made during Time 2. In 2006, the trend of arrests was very different. Approximately 53% (or, 328) of the calls were

made during the pre-OSS period in 2006, and 37% (or, 228) were made during the pre-OSS period in 2006.

Figure 6. 2005 Trends for Arrests (Caldwell)

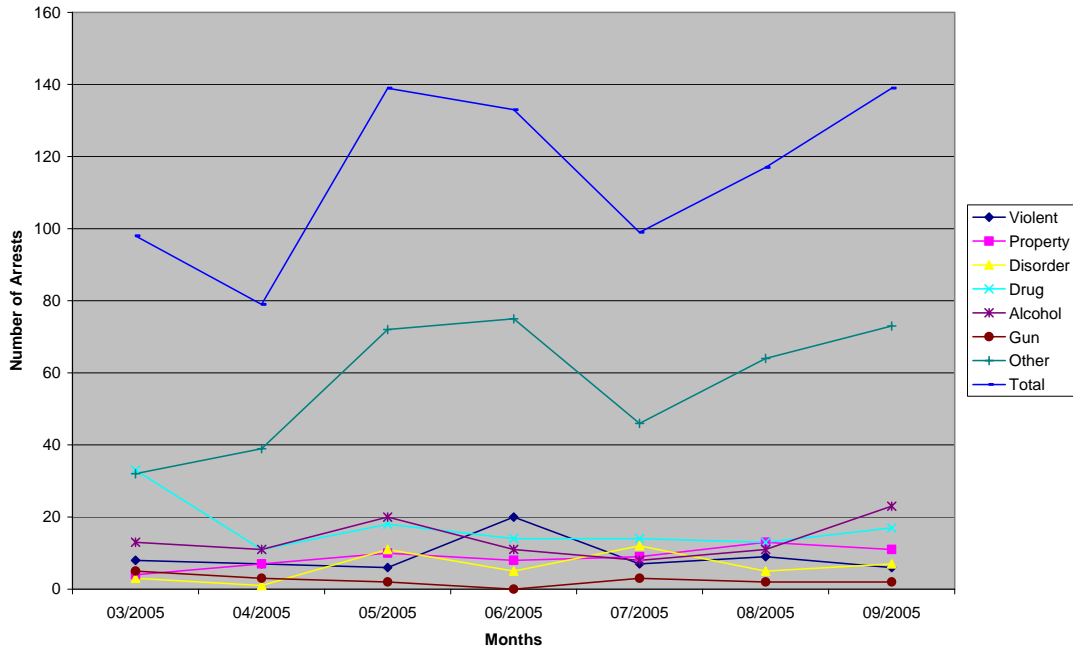
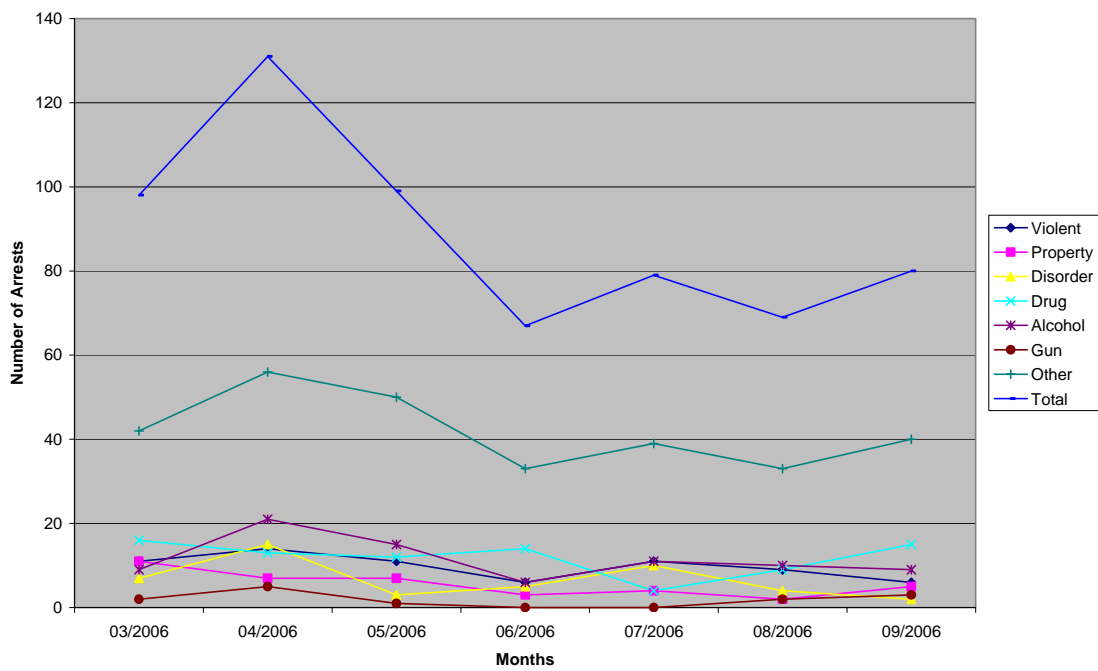


Figure 7. 2006 Trends for Arrests (Caldwell)



## Nampa

The majority of arrests in 2005 in Nampa were referenced for drug crimes (57% or 401) and violent crimes (22% or 112). See Figure 8 for the graphical representation of arrests for 2005. The majority of arrests in 2006 were referenced for disorder crimes (47% or 73) and gun crimes (25% or 39). See Figure 9 for the graphical representation of arrests for 2006.

In 2005, there is a slightly increasing trend for arrests in the summer months. Approximately 44% (or, 218) of the arrests were made during Time 1 in 2005, whereas 56% (or, 281) of the arrests were made during Time 2. In 2006, the trend of arrests was different. Approximately 48% (or, 74) of the calls were made during the pre-OSS period in 2006, and 52% (or, 80) were made during the post-OSS period in 2006.

Figure 8. 2005 Trends for Arrests (Nampa)

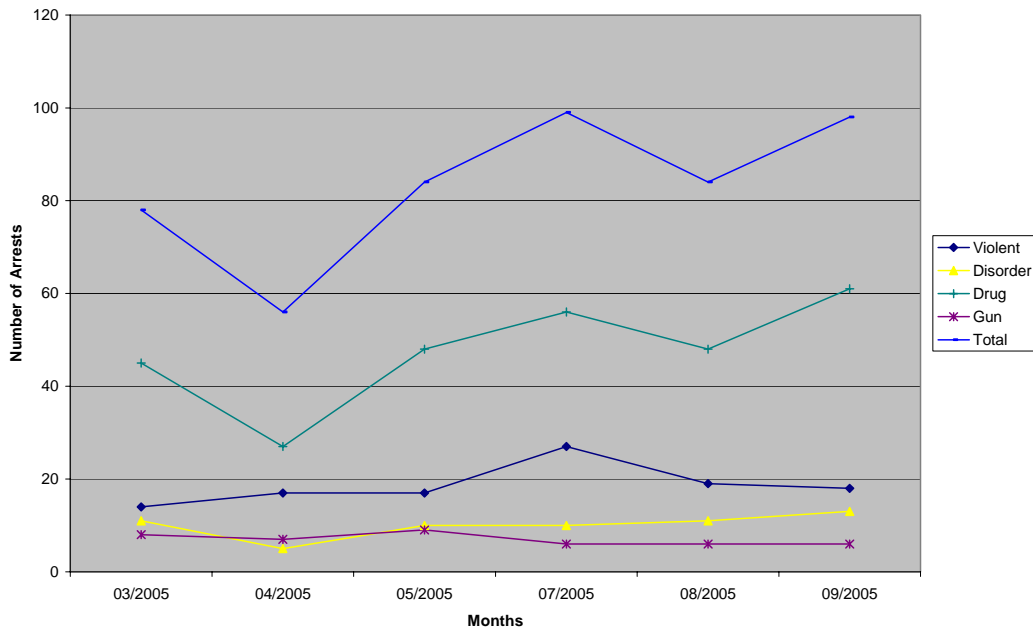
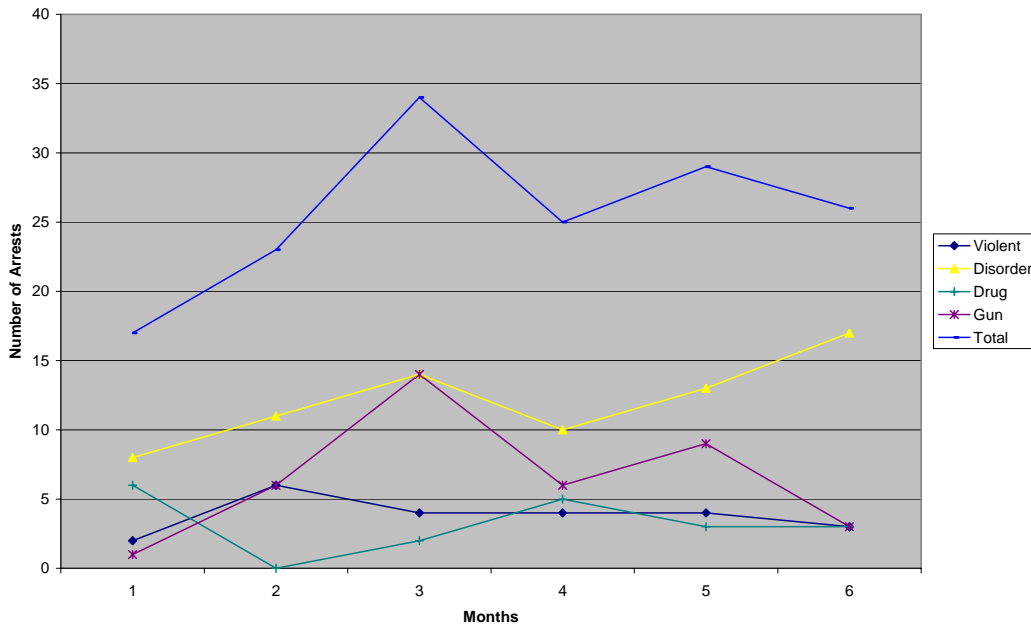


Figure 9. 2006 Trends for Arrests (Nampa)



***Pre-OSS to Post-OSS Comparison<sup>3</sup>***

To better understand the effect of Operation Street Sweeper, it is important to compare means of calls for service and arrest before and after June of 2006. Data were collected for 2005 for the same period to allow for some control over the months of the collection period.

Calls for Service

*Caldwell*

The findings in Table 1 indicate that there was no statistically significant change in the total number of calls before and after OSS in 2006. Compared to the previous year (i.e., 2005), this is a marked improvement. In 2005, there was an increase in the total number of calls from Time 1 to Time 2. Additionally, there

<sup>3</sup> As a caveat, the results should not be compared between Caldwell and Nampa since the data collection tools are different and, therefore, might capture differences that may not be city-centered. These comparisons should not be made for both calls for service and arrests.

was a statistically significant decrease in the average number of calls for service for gun crimes during the post-OSS period in 2006 compared to the pre-OSS period. The number of calls for gun crimes decreased from over 7 calls per month before OSS to less than 4 per month after OSS.

	<u>Caldwell</u>				<u>Nampa</u>			
	2005		2006		2005		2006	
	Time 1	Time 2	Pre-OSS	Post-OSS	Time 1	Time 2	Pre-OSS	Post-OSS
Total	<b><i>1,229.3</i></b>	<b><i>1,443.0</i></b>	1,353.3	1,412.7	161.7	153.3	79.3	94.0
Violent	129.7	163.3	<b><i>157.0</i></b>	<b><i>209.3</i></b>	26.3	24.3	13.3	13.7
Property	286.7	309.0	269.3	296.7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Disorder	434.0	515.0	474.7	446.7	72.7	62.7	<b><i>52.3</i></b>	<b><i>65.7</i></b>
Drug	<b><i>23.3</i></b>	<b><i>17.0</i></b>	24.0	22.3	47.7	55.0	3.3	3.7
Alcohol	22.3	25.0	<b><i>27.0</i></b>	<b><i>37.0</i></b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gun	4.0	4.0	<b><i>7.3</i></b>	<b><i>3.7</i></b>	15.0	11.3	10.3	11.0
Other	329.3	409.7	394.0	397.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Bold** identifies significant difference of means (decrease)  
**Bold Italics** identifies significant difference of means (increase)

One surprising result in Caldwell, though, is that there was an increase in the mean number of calls for violent crimes from the pre-OSS period to the post-OSS period in 2006. The average number of calls for violent crimes increased

from 157 per month before OSS in 2006 to over 209 per month after OSS. The data indicated that there was a statistically significant increase in the average number of calls for violent crimes in Caldwell in Time 2 for 2005.

### *Nampa*

The only statistically significant result for Nampa's Calls for Service is with the post-OSS period in 2006 for disorder crimes. The average disorder calls for service before the OSS period in 2006 was 52.3 but increased to 65.7 after OSS in 2006. The average number of calls for service overall did not change from during the pre-OSS period to the post-OSS period either in 2005 and 2006. It should be noted, though, that data was not provided for property, alcohol, and other crimes

### Arrests

#### *Caldwell*

The findings in Table 2 indicate that there was statistically significant change in the average number of arrests overall before and after OSS in 2006. The average number of arrests after OSS in 2006 was 76 which are over 30 less than before OSS. Compared to the previous year (i.e., 2005), this is a marked improvement. In 2005, there was no statistical difference in the average number of arrests during Time 2 compared to the average number of arrests in Time 2. Additionally, there was a statistically significant decrease in the average number of arrests for property crimes during the post-OSS period in 2006 compared to the pre-OSS period in 2006. The average number of arrests for property crimes decreased by approximately 4 ½ arrests from before OSS to after OSS. There



were no statistically significant differences in means during Time 1 compared to Time 2 in 2005.

**Table 2. Comparison of Means for Arrests**

	<u>Caldwell</u>				<u>Nampa</u>			
	2005		2006		2005		2006	
	Time 1	Time 2	Pre-OSS	Post-OSS	Time 1	Time 2	Pre-OSS	Post-OSS
Total	105.3	118.3	<b>109.3</b>	<b>76.0</b>	<b>72.7</b>	<b>93.7</b>	24.7	26.7
Violent	7.0	7.3	12.0	8.7	16.0	21.3	4.0	3.7
Property	7.0	11.0	<b>8.3</b>	<b>3.7</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Disorder	5.0	8.0	8.3	5.3	8.7	11.3	11.0	13.3
Drug	20.7	14.7	13.7	9.3	40.0	55.0	2.7	3.7
Alcohol	14.7	14.0	15.0	10.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gun	3.3	2.3	2.7	1.7	<b>8.0</b>	<b>6.0</b>	7.0	6.0
Other	47.7	61.0	<b>49.3</b>	<b>37.3</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Bold** identifies significant difference of means (decrease)

**Bold Italics** identifies significant difference of means (increase)

### *Nampa*

There are no statistically significant differences in the average number of arrests before and after OSS in 2006. The lack of statistical significance is noticeable for Nampa in Table 2 above for Total crime as well as individual categories of crime.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### *Descriptive Findings*

- Calls for Service Data
  - There were 9,241 crime-related calls for service in Caldwell in 2005; there were 9,762 crime-related calls for service in Caldwell in 2006.
  - There were 945 crime-related calls for service in Nampa<sup>4</sup> in 2005; there were 520 crime-related calls for service in Nampa in 2006.
  - In 2005 for Caldwell, 35% of all crime-related calls were referenced as disorder crimes, 28% were referenced as other crimes, and 23% were referenced as property crimes; in 2006 for Caldwell, 33% of all crime-related calls were referenced as disorder, 30% were referenced as other crimes, and 20% were referenced as property crimes.
  - In 2005 for Nampa, 43% of all crime-related calls were referenced as disorder crimes, and 33% of all crime-related calls were referenced as drug crimes; in 2006 for Nampa, 68% of all crime-related calls were referenced as disorder crimes, and 4% of all crime-related calls were referenced as drug crimes.

---

<sup>4</sup> All data are not included for Nampa (i.e., property, alcohol, and other crimes are not included). Additionally, data did not include June 2005 and June 2006 for Nampa. Therefore, numbers cannot be compared between Caldwell and Nampa.

- The trends for percentage of representation stayed fairly consistent. Approximately one-third (or, 39%) of all crime-related calls in 2005 in Caldwell occurred during Time 1 and 46% of calls in 2005 in Caldwell occurred during Time 2. In 2006 in Caldwell, 42% of all calls occurred during the pre-OSS period and 43% during the post-OSS period.
- In 2005 in Nampa, 51% of all calls occurred during Time 1 and 49% during Time 2; in 2006 in Nampa, 46% of all calls occurred during the pre-OSS period and 54% during the post-OSS period.

➤ Arrest Data

- There were 804 arrests in Caldwell in 2005; there were 623 arrests in Caldwell in 2006.
- There were 499 arrests in Nampa in 2005; there were 154 arrests in Nampa in 2006.
- In 2005 for Caldwell, 50% of arrests were referenced as other crimes, 15% were referenced as drug crimes, and 12% were referenced as alcohol crimes; in 2006 for Caldwell, 47% of arrests were referenced as other, 13% were referenced as drug crimes, and 13% were referenced as alcohol crimes.

- In 2005 for Nampa, 57% of arrests were referenced as drug crimes and 22% were referenced as violent crimes; in 2006 for Nampa, 47% of arrests were referenced as disorder and 25% were referenced as drug crimes and 20% were referenced as property crimes.
- The trends for the percentage of representation of arrests changed from 2005 to 2006 for Caldwell. Thirty-nine percent of arrests in 2005 in Caldwell occurred during Time 1 and 44% of arrests in 2005 in Caldwell occurred during Time 2. A different trend was found for 2006 in Caldwell. In 2006 in Caldwell, 53% of arrests occurred during the pre-OSS period and 37% during the post-OSS period.
- The trends for the percentage of representation of arrests stayed consistent from 2005 to 2006 in Nampa. In 2005 in Nampa, 44% of arrests occurred during Time 1 and 56% during Time 2; in 2006 in Nampa, 48% of arrests occurred during the pre-OSS period and 52% during the post-OSS period.

***Comparison of Means Finding***

- Calls for Service Data (statistically significant effects only)
  - In Caldwell during 2005, the overall average calls increased from 1,229.3 per month during Time 1 to 1,443.0 per month during Time 2. In 2006, calls for violent crimes increased from 157.0 to 209.3

per month<sup>5</sup>; calls for alcohol crimes increased from 27 per month to 37 per month; calls for gun crimes decreased from 7.3 per month to 3.7 per month

- There were no statistically significant findings for the comparison of means of calls between Time 1 and Time 2 period for 2005 in Nampa. In 2006 for Nampa, the average number of calls per month for disorder crimes increased from 52.3 per month during the pre-OSS period to 65.7 per month during the post-OSS period.

➤ Arrests Data (statistically significant effects only)

- There were no statistically significant findings for the comparison of means of arrests between Time 1 and Time 2 for 2005 in Caldwell. However, the average number of overall arrests in 2006 decreased from 109.3 per month to 79 per month; the average arrests for property crimes decreased from 8.3 per month to 3.7 per month; and the average arrests for other crimes decreased from 49.3 per month to 37.3 per month.
- In 2005, the average number of overall arrests in Nampa increased from 72.7 per month to 93.7 per month and the average number of gun arrests in Nampa decreased from 8 per month to 6 per month. In 2006, there were no statistical increases or decreases of arrests per month from pre-OSS period to post-OSS period.

---

<sup>5</sup> Although not statistically significant, there were increases in the mean number of calls from Time 1 to Time 2 in 2005.

## CONCLUSION

Continuous process improvement is integral to any successful program. As such, our research methodology of OSS (2006) built in a formative component to the research, allowing key-stakeholders—in this case, nine individuals involved in the 2006 enforcement effort—to comment on the value of OSS in general, and to offer their informed opinions regarding fine-tuning the project. As mentioned above, interview respondents were quite impressed with OSS (2006). All felt that the main goals of the project were achieved, and perceived that the project has made an impact on the communities in question. All were willing to participate in another project like this in the future. In addition, several interviewees mentioned their appreciation of the federal lead on the project and the additional funding that came from the federal side. Additionally, interview respondents provided thoughtful commentary regarding possible improvements to OSS in the future. These comments included suggestions for an alternate enforcement strategy schedule, smaller scale enforcement operations throughout the year, and goal clarification, among others.

The impact evaluation provided some evidence of short-term benefits of OSS on calls for service and arrests, especially in Caldwell, Idaho. Here, we found that in the three months after OSS (2006) as compared to the three months prior, there were statistically significant decreases in calls for services for gun crimes, that the number of overall arrests had decreased, that property crime arrests had decreased, and that “other crime” arrests had decreased. There was, however, an increase in calls for service for violent crimes overall. In

Nampa, however, overall arrests in the post-OSS period had remained unchanged, while calls for service for disorder increased.

We caution OSS and Project Safe Neighborhoods decision-makers to heed the advice of former Minneapolis Police Chief Anthony Bouza, who maintains, “Beware of simple solutions to complex problems.” The lesson here is twofold: first, do not have unrealistic expectations regarding the ability of a short-term interdiction program to provide long-term solutions to the inter-related problems of gang violence and gun crimes; second, the problem of gang crime and gun violence is complex. Efforts to reduce the occurrences of gang crime and gun violence must be comprehensive in nature, consisting not only of aggressive interdiction efforts such as OSS, but also prevention and intervention programs for those either at-risk of joining a gang and/or prone to using gun violence, or for those who are in violent gangs looking for a way out.

As such, we suggest that Project Safe Neighborhoods—Idaho District partner with Idaho Criminal Justice Commission efforts to discover what works, what doesn’t work, and what’s promising when it comes to gang prevention and intervention programs. With this knowledge base in hand, along with adequate funding and support, the combination of prevention and intervention programs along with OSS efforts will offer the best hope at providing long term solutions to a complex problem.

## APPENDIX

### Related Literature on Efforts to Decrease Gun Crimes

#### **Kansas City Gun Experiment**

Police patrols were increased in areas that were deemed “hot spots” in patrol beat 144 of the Central Patrol District. These spots were identified by computer analysis of all gun crimes in the target area, which was an 80-block area that had a homicide rate 20 times higher than the national average. Officers assigned to the target area focused solely on gun detection and did not respond to calls for service. Four officers, working six hours of overtime each night, seven days a week, for 176 days handled the extra patrol. They found guns during frisks and searches following arrests for other charges. All frisks and searches were done legally. Data was then collected in the target area and another area with similar violent crime rates.

The increased patrol led to police seizing 65% more guns from July through December 1992 as compared to the first six months of the year. In the comparison groups, gun seizures decreased slightly in the second half of 1992. In addition, gun crimes decreased significantly (49%) in the second half of the year in the target area. In the comparison area, gun crimes increased slightly. Finally, the most productive means of finding illegal guns were traffic stops, and drive-by shootings dropped, after directed patrol stopped, gun crimes increased gradually.

#### **Boston’s Operation Cease Fire**

Operation Ceasefire, implemented in late spring 1996, focused on two main elements: a direct attack by law enforcement on illegal firearms traffickers supplying youth with guns, and creating a strong deterrent effect for gang violence. The analyses within Boston suggest that the large reduction in youth homicide and gun violence was associated with Operation Ceasefire. In addition, Boston’s significant reduction of youth homicide associated with Ceasefire is distinct when compared to youth homicide trends in 39 other U.S. cities. Finally, the researchers suggest that studying anti-trafficking efforts is impossible, but suggest that the reduction in gun violence was in the extent of gun use, not ownership. The authors infer, then, that the main impact was a deterrent effect on the demand side rather than a supply-side effect.

#### **Buffalo’s Weed and Seed Initiative**

There are two assumptions that are at the heart of Buffalo’s Weed and Seed program, which was established in 1997. The first is that residents must directly participate in recommending solutions to reduce and prevent crime and to redevelop their neighborhood. The second is that the police department will work with the community development department, along with other community-based organizations, in the targeted areas to implement the program. It targeted the



core of the inner city in hopes of decreasing violent crime and gun-related crime. The “Weed” component involved collaboration at the federal, state, and local levels. At the core was the Gun Abatement Program, which was implemented to reduce the availability of guns on the streets by targeting both drug and weapon dealers and high-crime locations. A gun hotline was developed for citizens to call and report gun locations or offenders. In addition, they created a Flex Unit that was deployed in high crime areas and were ordered to follow a zero tolerance policy. Finally, they involved the community for feedback and to help provide input and support for specific strategies.

The results were promising. Part I crimes within the target area decreased 31% since 1996, homicides have decreased 38%, rapes decreased 14%, and aggravated assaults decreased 36%. Only one shooting death occurred within the first 12 months of operation. The only negative reported was that the gun hotline did not receive as many calls as expected.

### **Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy**

Chicago tried to curb their gun problem in 1993 with the implementation of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS). CAPS employed beat integrity, where officers focused on only their patrol areas. This allowed the officers to get to know their beats and the people in the community. In addition, officers met monthly with residents to identify the most urgent problems in the neighborhood and brainstorm about strategies to fix these problems. Chicago’s Gang Congregation Ordinance also coincided with CAPS. This ordinance prohibited gang members from loitering in public places. Police were allowed to disperse two or more persons loitering if they reasonably believed that one was a gang member. If they did not promptly leave the officers could make an arrest.

A study of CAPS examined 15 of the 279 districts that implemented the program. The study discovered uneven results: four beats were doing well, five experienced some success in the employment of CAPS, two were having difficulties, and another four had done nothing at all. Even with these uneven results, however, citizens showed favorable reaction towards CAPS. The ordinance led to 40,000 arrests, but it did not reduce crime. In fact, murder rose 2.9% in the districts with the highest arrest rates. Murder did decline, however, by 54.5% in the three districts with the lowest arrest rates (Fagan, p. 139). The Gang Congregation Ordinance ceased in 1995 because the U.S. Supreme Court found it unconstitutional.

### **PSN in Lowell, MA**

The U.S. Department of Justice sponsored the initiative Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) in an attempt to reduce gun crime by networking existing local programs that target gun crime. In addition, they provide these programs with additional tools that are necessary to be successful. A major element of PSN is to strategically analyze data to get a better grasp of the gun problem and to formulate prevention strategies to combat these problems. Lowell, MA is one of

eleven targeted areas selected for PSN attention. They comprised a working group of police officers, prosecutors, probation officers, assistant U.S. attorneys and ATF agents to identify the problems. They concluded that criminally active gang members in disputes with rival gang members were at the core of the gun violence problem. To combat this problem, Lowell implemented a “pulling levers” approach, targeting gangs and letting them know criminal activity will no longer be tolerated and backing these sentiments by “pulling every lever” legally allowed. They targeted the gangs only when they committed a crime, but followed a zero tolerance policy if they were arrested.

While this study is fairly new, the researchers did present preliminary findings. This project was implemented in October of 2002 and the authors compared the rates nine months before and after its beginning. They found a 24% reduction in gun assaults and a 50% reduction in homicide, Braga, McDevitt, and Pierce, p. 41). Before this, gun assaults were stable and homicides were increasing.