

# The Arlington Restaurant Initiative

A Nightlife Policing Strategy to  
Improve Safety and Economic Viability



**COPS**  
Community Oriented Policing Services  
U.S. Department of Justice

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# Letter from the Director of the COPS Office

Colleagues:

A vibrant nightlife contributes considerably to a city's economy and sense of community. People come from neighboring areas to eat and drink at desirable restaurants and bars; the popularity of such venues can also drive up residential property values and rents and attract inhabitants who want to live even closer to the action.

At times, where there are people drinking, there is the danger of disorderly behavior, property crimes, and violence. The police can and do respond to increased calls for service during nighttime hours and at times of special events—but in a true community policing approach, local law enforcement can work with restaurant and bar managers and other stakeholders to prevent a significant proportion of alcohol-related conduct in the first place. The Arlington Restaurant Initiative is a program administered by the Arlington (Virginia) County Police Department's (ACPD) Restaurant Liaison Officer to improve standards for establishments that serve alcohol, training of police assigned to units that look after nightlife environments, and resources for restaurant and bar owners and staff members.

On behalf of the COPS Office, I appreciate the ACPD's development of this initiative and encourage other jurisdictions to familiarize themselves with this publication and the program it outlines. The publication not only identifies useful lessons but also provides a detailed discussion of the analysis provided by the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy at George Mason University. We hope this publication will provide insight into another tool for supporting law enforcement and community interactions to promote public safety. More cooperation between law enforcement and commercial stakeholders can only make more of our communities safer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil Keith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "K".

Phil Keith

Director

Office of Community Oriented Policing Services



# Letter from the Chief of the Arlington County Police Department

Dear colleagues,

Arlington County, Virginia, is a vibrant and diverse community with an active nightlife scene. The Clarendon neighborhood, a mixed residential and commercial area, is home to many of the national capital region's most popular restaurants. It is estimated that approximately 4,500–6,500 patrons visit Clarendon every Friday and Saturday night. Since about 2004, as the Clarendon nightlife scene has grown in number of establishments and patron popularity, the Arlington County Police Department has developed new strategies to meet the growing public safety demands and challenges.

The first change in strategies came in 2014 as the department recognized that the number of weekend calls for service to Clarendon was diverting a significant amount of patrol resources to a specific area within the county. To better allocate resources, we established an overtime assignment to provide designated resources to Clarendon on Friday and Saturday evenings. However, the increased staffing did not address the factors causing the incidents of crime, public disorder, and alcohol beverage control violations, which continued to rise.

In recognizing that a community approach was needed to address the underlying issues of alcohol-related harm, the department established a full-time Restaurant Liaison Officer position dedicated to improving the standards of establishments that serve alcohol; developing new standards and training best fitted for policing in a nightlife environment; and fostering positive relationships between businesses, government agencies, and community stakeholders. The position also oversees the Arlington Restaurant Initiative (ARI), a voluntary accreditation program designed to provide restaurant owners and staff with resources to maximize their safety and viability.

I have always believed that our community is safest when we engage our stakeholders to build partnerships vital to public safety. The Arlington Restaurant Initiative serves as a model of this belief by establishing a collaborative method to addressing public safety issues. I hope you'll take the time to review this publication and assess the ways it can be used to best fit and serve your community.

Sincerely,



M. Jay Farr

Chief of Police

Arlington County (Virginia) Police Department





# Preface

Nightlife areas across the country are a challenge for law enforcement, communities, and business owners. Policing models that are not conducive to solving long-term issues are a drain on resources, fatigue officers, reduce trust in a police department, and are not sustainable over time.

In the summer of 2015, the Clarendon neighborhood in Arlington County, Virginia, saw a sharp increase in alcohol-related crimes such as assaults, public intoxication, and assaults on officers. The Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) tried a new approach that shifted focus from enforcement alone to a model of intervention, prevention, and guidance. The ACPD Restaurant Liaison Unit was created to meet the goals of reducing alcohol-related harm, improving safety, and providing training to restaurant staff. As is evidenced in the ACPD model, success starts with a commitment to building relationships and gaining the trust of restaurant owners, managers, and staff.



# Introduction

Clarendon is a neighborhood in Arlington County, Virginia, just three miles outside of Washington, D.C. Clarendon is home to a diverse array of restaurants, luxury homes, and retail establishments. A Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Metro station sits in the heart of Clarendon and provides regional access to this area. Through the 1990s, Clarendon evolved from a small Vietnamese community into the premiere area of office buildings, upscale retail, restaurants, and nightlife that it is today.

There are no traditional bars or taverns in Virginia because of the Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control Authority requirement that establishments serve food during hours of operation, which classifies every establishment as a restaurant. Through the late 1990s and early 2000s, Clarendon had a small number of restaurants that participated in nightlife and live entertainment. These establishments gained popularity in recent years because of an influx of young professionals and college students with disposable income.

The Arlington County Police Department's (ACPD) initial response to the evolution of Clarendon was reactive. From the 1990s to the early 2000s, the response model involved a mass influx of midnight patrol officers at closing time to convey to patrons that fights, public intoxication, and disorder would not be tolerated. As the number of establishments continued to increase, in 2014 the department assigned the Clarendon nightlife detail to the 2nd District Community Policing Team. The nightlife team conducted alcohol violation checks, provided responsible alcohol service training, and staffed the Clarendon detail on Friday and Saturday nights.

Officers assigned to the 2nd District Community Policing Team began working the Clarendon area as part of their regular assignment; they positioned themselves across the street from establishments and behind their cruisers, far away from security and patrons. As a result, the only interactions restaurant staff and patrons had with officers was when they intervened in fights or arrested patrons for being drunk in public or disorderly. This reactive approach fatigued the 2nd District Team officers over time and led to the creation of a supplemental overtime detail for additional support. Captain Andy Penn, who was then the commander of the 2nd District, moved beyond officer perceptions and used data analysis to justify and establish an overtime budget; this intervention was some of the first proactive work under his direction. Collecting information about the restaurants in Clarendon such as occupancy, calls for service, and arrests supported the need for an overtime budget of \$60,000 per fiscal year.

By 2015, the Clarendon neighborhood had increased from four restaurants that participated in nightlife (in the late 1990s and early 2000s) to 15. The introduction of ridesharing in 2013–2014 also contributed to Clarendon’s boom as a nightlife destination. With more affordable transportation, Clarendon began to see an increase in visitors from outlying suburbs throughout the Washington, D.C., metropolitan region. Clarendon also hosted bar crawls held on St. Patrick’s Day, Halloween, and July 4, during which thousands of patrons flooded into the neighborhood. By 2018, the Clarendon neighborhood was hosting more than 500,000 visitors each year on Friday and Saturday nights between 9:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m.

In the summer of 2015, Master Police Officer (MPO) Dimitrios Mastoras, a 21-year patrol veteran of the ACPD, submitted a proposal to change the department’s policing approach to the Clarendon area. He had spent more than 12 years working the midnight patrol shift and concluded that enforcement alone would not change the culture of Clarendon. While researching existing programs to reduce alcohol-related harm, he learned about Best Bar None in the United Kingdom—an accreditation program supported by the Home Office and aimed at promoting responsible management and operation of alcohol licensed premises to reduce alcohol-related harm.

The approach MPO Mastoras proposed shifted the ACPD’s focus from selective enforcement to prevention via relationship building with restaurant owners and the community. Captain Penn—the former 2nd District Commander, by now a deputy chief—supported the new approach and created the full-time position of Restaurant Liaison Officer. The mission of the position is to reduce alcohol-related harm and efficiently use County resources dedicated to the Clarendon neighborhood by empowering restaurant owners and staff with training and guidance.

Oversight of the Restaurant Liaison Officer position was given to Captain Kamran Afzal, the new commander of the 2nd District Community Policing Unit, who provided the freedom and leadership necessary for the successful development of the position. It was under the support and guidance of Deputy Chief Penn and Captain Afzal that MPO Mastoras created the Arlington Restaurant Initiative (ARI). In the early stages of the initiative, Mastoras established partnerships with Arlington County agencies such as the Fire Department, Office of Public Health, Office of Planning, Zoning Office, and Department of Human Services. Captain Chris Cox of the Arlington County Office of the Fire Marshal and Cheryl Bozarth, the director of Project Peace, immediately recognized the opportunity to collaborate and implement the new approach. Examples of the of the collaboration include Bozarth’s development of the Bar Bystander sexual assault intervention training for restaurant staff and Cox’s provision of guidance and training on occupancy issues and fire safety to restaurants and other establishments.

Further, the ACPD began a collaboration with Dr. Charlotte Gill of the George Mason University Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy. Gill conducted a research analysis of Clarendon nightlife and released her findings in an academic report.<sup>1</sup> The following areas were identified and researched by the students in the honors seminar who contributed to the report:

- Server training in Clarendon
- The effects of guardianship and place management on customer confidence in bars
- The environmental design of Clarendon bars and patrons' perceptions of safety
- The prevalence and persistence of fake identifications in a highly-concentrated entertainment district
- The impact of environmental design on pedestrian safety
- Understanding police characteristics, personalities, and qualities best fitted for policing in a nightlife environment

Dr. Gill and her students presented research results to the ACPD and stakeholders including restaurant owners and residents. The research report included recommendations to the police department and the restaurant owners to reduce alcohol-related harm. The following general recommendations were presented:

- **Recommendation.** The police department needs a proactive problem-solving approach involving the department and restaurants rather than a reactive approach.
- **Recommendation.** Clarendon detail officers may be most effective if they focus on community engagement, fake identification detection, and supporting security staff.
- **Recommendation.** Small and inexpensive changes to the physical environment can reduce problems that promote safety both inside and outside the restaurants.
- **Recommendation.** Social media–based public service announcements may reduce the use of fake identifications.
- **Recommendation.** Restaurants would benefit from mandatory standardized training on safety and compliance for management and staff.

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1. Charlotte Gill et al., *Reducing Alcohol-Related Crime and Disorder in Clarendon* (Arlington, VA: Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy, 2017), [http://cebcp.org/wp-content/gill/arl-report-public\\_28jul17.pdf](http://cebcp.org/wp-content/gill/arl-report-public_28jul17.pdf).

Specific recommendations made to the ACPD include the following:

- **Hiring.** Recruit officers according to identified desired characteristics (approachable, professional, dependable, community-oriented), make detail optional, create a mission statement, and incorporate rewards for officers.
- **Training.** Collaborate with restaurants to develop mandatory training for identifying intoxicated patrons and fake identifications and regularly review best practices from other jurisdictions.
- **Environmental change.** Continue to expand rideshare lanes, continue to assess other external design features that create public safety hazards such as line management to avoid blocking egress, and develop a restaurant safety rating and compliance certification.
- **Relationship building/Communication/Outreach.** Continue restaurant liaison unit/supervisor position, engage in outreach, and develop fake identification prevention efforts.

Specific recommendations made to restaurant management and staff include the following:

- **Hiring.** Focus on the hiring of security staff and partner new employees with active employees for on-the-job training.
- **Training.** Collaborate with the ACPD to develop mandatory standardized training; emphasize staff training on crowd control, sexual assault awareness, and criminal and civil liability; and work with the ACPD to share information across establishments.
- **Environmental change.** Assess furniture, signage, walkways, and lighting inside bars to improve crowd control and ensure security staff is visible and identifiable by patrons.
- **Relationship building/Communication/Outreach.** Increase public communication with officers, create a mission statement, and develop record keeping and information sharing.

While Dr. Gill was conducting the research seminar, the Arlington Restaurant Initiative (ARI) was being developed in conjunction with Best Bar None UK (BBN). Best Bar None is successfully in use in the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. BBN National Coordinator Mick McDonnell shared established standards and best practices in use across the United Kingdom. The goals of BBN are to reduce alcohol-related harm while improving safety and profitability. According to BBN, in Durham, England, between 2008 and 2012, there was a 58 percent drop in violence, and between 2012 and 2014, there was a 14 percent increase in profitability for businesses.<sup>2</sup>

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2. *Join the Revolution for a Safe Night Out* (Farnborough, UK: Best Bar None, n.d.), 2.

The ARI is a voluntary accreditation program for restaurants, implementing employee policies to meet Virginia's Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) laws and effective practices to reduce alcohol-related harm. Restaurants that typically engage in nightlife (between 9:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m.) have a Virginia ABC license and a live entertainment permit, employ security, and have large occupancies and a greater risk for alcohol-related harm than restaurants that do not participate in nightlife. The goal is to make the program available to every restaurant in Arlington County that holds a Virginia ABC license to reduce alcohol-related harm and restaurant liability.

The ACPD has made community engagement one of the four key areas of its strategic management plan. "This plan is built upon input from the stakeholders in the community as well as within the Arlington County Police Department. It is designed to guide the men and women of our agency as we fulfill our responsibilities to the community. We have invested a considerable amount of effort in developing a plan that translates our department's mission and values into goals and objectives that help us continue to effectively allocate our resources."<sup>3</sup>

Establishing relationships and building trust with consistency became the main priority in the beginning days of the program. Time was spent explaining the purpose of the new liaison position, the shift from enforcement only to prevention, and the importance of remaining accessible to restaurant owners for guidance. This approach contrasts with the officers' and restaurant staff's perceptions that their relationship had become adversarial in nature. Restaurant staff members believed calling the police would shed a negative light on the restaurant, and officers thought the staff were responsible for creating the culture of fights, assaults, and disorder related to alcohol.

This publication aims to demonstrate to other law enforcement agencies that relationships can be developed among key stakeholders, and they can work together to provide mutually beneficial solutions. Law enforcement agencies that provide education, training, and guidance can place their jurisdictions in a stronger position to defend enforcement action taken when necessary.

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3. *Strategic Management Plan: Fiscal Year 2017 through Fiscal Year 2021* (Arlington, VA: Arlington County Police Department, n.d.), 3, <https://arlingtonva.s3.dualstack.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2017/01/FY-2017-21-Strategic-Management-Plan.pdf>.





# 1

## Evaluate Need for Nightlife Strategy

### Perception versus reality

Officers' perceptions of a community problem can often be worse than the reality. This distortion coupled with feelings of futility when previous attempts have failed can lead to frustration and feelings of inefficacy. Identifying issues through evidence-based analysis provides reliable data that defines the scope of the problem as well as a foundation for tangible solutions. A combination of officers' operational knowledge and evidence-based data can produce innovative solutions.

Officers who work nightlife areas tend to focus on the most obvious issues: intoxicated patrons and their behaviors. Alcohol-related crimes such as drunkenness in public, assault, aggravated assault, sexual assault, and assaults on officers are typical issues in a nightlife area. Officers often employ what they perceive as the quickest solution, which is often to make mass arrests in an attempt to control behavior and deter intoxicated patrons. Restaurant and bar owners therefore feel targeted by enforcement, which contributes to an adversarial relationship with police, fire, and ABC officers. Owners and staff are often unwilling to call the police when necessary because they fear negative perceptions from public safety officials and the community.

From 2012 through 2015, Arlington County public safety was focused only on enforcement of laws with respect to patrons and restaurant owners. During this time, traditional police responses resulted in increased arrests, assaults on officers, and assault and battery. Officers were fatigued and unwilling to work in these adverse conditions, resulting in officers refusing to sign up for the overtime nightlife detail. They were not given appropriate credit for other interventions that did not result in an arrest because the data collected during this time focused solely on arrests and calls for service. Also of significance, the national climate toward law enforcement began to shift in 2014, and the traditional policing model contributed to these tensions in Clarendon and throughout Arlington County.

By allowing data to guide the allocation of resources, a jurisdiction can strategically and efficiently solve problems rather than attempt to manage them with enforcement alone. Although collected data vary by jurisdiction, the issues that contribute to alcohol-related harm remain the same: Public drunkenness, assault and battery, and crimes of disorder are universally problematic in areas with active nightlife establishments. The ACPD prioritized the collection of data and how they would be used to deploy resources.

Many data collection points can help paint the picture of the issues present in a jurisdiction.

These can be broken down into the following:

## **POLICE DATA**

### *All contacts*

- Positive citizen contacts with officers
- Drunk in public intervention (removing intoxicated patrons from restaurants and lines)
- Supporting security and restaurant staff (intervening with intoxicated patrons and fake ID verifications)
- ID verification
- Calls for service
- Calls for service from the originating restaurant
- Arrests from the originating restaurant
- “Last drink” data (arrestees and detainees)

## **ARRESTS BY TYPE**

### *Violent crime*

- Rape
- Sexual assault
- Aggravated assault and battery/malicious wounding
- Assault and battery on law enforcement
- Assault and battery
- Disorderly conduct

### *Quality-of-life crimes*

- Drunk in public
- Underage possession of alcohol
- Urinating in public

- Possession of a fake ID
- Destruction of property
- Noise complaints
- Trash/Litter
- Pedestrian violations

### *Traffic*

- Driving under the influence
- Reckless driving
- Hit and run
- Traffic violations

## **FIRE DATA**

### *All contacts*

- Emergency medical services calls
- Fire marshal inspections for occupancy and public safety issues
- Over-occupancy and fire code violations
- Required time needed to reinspect violations
- Hours spent out of service (which take away from other services)
- “Last drink” data (arrestees and detainees)
- List of establishments visited

### *Perception of safety*

- Jurisdiction (officers, code enforcement, fire marshals)
- Community
- Bar and restaurant staff
- Patrons

Collected through annual “Conversation with a Cop” surveys and feedback from restaurant patrons and staff

Traditional policing dictated how the ACPD responded to perceived issues, and they realized that they needed to collect more information the work they were doing. Focusing on enforcement alone to prevent and deter assaults, disorderly conduct, and other alcohol-related crime was not sustainable in the long term. By only collecting necessary data such as calls for service, reports, and arrests, the research team could not draw conclusions pointing to one specific problem. Dr. Gill pointed out that there are many more contacts, engagement, and interventions that take place on every shift that do not result in one of the previously mentioned categories (arrest, call for service, report). Data collection requires a system that captures and categorizes the pertinent information.


The ACPD Restaurant Liaison Officer/Unit created a new nightlife detail log sheet to be completed by all officers. The log sheet is available on a fillable PDF, or the officers can write them by hand and submit it at the end of their shifts (see figure 1 on page 10). The log sheets are then used to record data, examine trends, and identify specific restaurant activity that is contributing to alcohol-related harm, especially arrests.

Specifically, a new category labeled “Contacts” captures attempts at intervention or other interactions that did not result in a call for service or an arrest. Officers and fire marshals who work the Clarendon detail frequently have interactions with restaurant staff and patrons that prevent or deter crime but do not rise to the level of enforcement. Examples of contacts include the following:

- Interacting with patrons in the line of the restaurants to determine their intoxication level
- Helping intoxicated patrons secure transportation (ride-share or taxi)
- Preventing fights and disorderly conduct before the incident escalates
- Maintaining safety by moving ride-share, taxis, and intoxicated patrons out of the roadway
- Positive community engagement such as taking photos, shaking hands, and having friendly conversations
- Assisting security staff in fake identification verification
- Assisting security staff in removing patrons who are disorderly or intoxicated
- Checking occupancy and egress

The number of contacts reveals a narrative that cannot be told from arrests alone. For example, restaurants with a high number of police contacts can indicate a willingness by restaurant staff to allow police intervention before issues escalate. The data also indicate levels of activity that the ACPD uses to determine the deployment of officers.

**Figure 1. Arlington County Police Department nightlife detail log sheet**

	<b>ACPD Nightlife Detail Log Sheet</b>		DIP Pedestrians:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Clarendon	<input type="checkbox"/> Ballston	Uber/taxi obstructions:	
Date: _____				
Detail Supervisor: _____				
Detail Officer: _____				
USE INCIDENT TYPE: DIP-SOW, DIP-CAB, PARK, URINATING, ASSAULT, DISPUTE, FIGHT, ETC.				
TIME: _____				
ADDRESS: _____				
INCIDENT TYPE: _____		ARREST (Y/N): _____		
CASE NUMBER: _____		ESTABLISHMENT: _____		
SUSPECT SEX/AGE: _____		VICTIM SEX/AGE: _____		
DESCRIBE INCIDENT: _____				
TIME: _____				
ADDRESS: _____				
INCIDENT TYPE: _____		ARREST (Y/N): _____		
CASE NUMBER: _____		ESTABLISHMENT: _____		
SUSPECT SEX/AGE: _____		VICTIM SEX/AGE: _____		
DESCRIBE INCIDENT: _____				
TIME: _____				
ADDRESS: _____				
INCIDENT TYPE: _____		ARREST (Y/N): _____		
CASE NUMBER: _____		ESTABLISHMENT: _____		
SUSPECT SEX/AGE: _____		VICTIM SEX/AGE: _____		
DESCRIBE INCIDENT: _____				
TIME: _____				
ADDRESS: _____				
INCIDENT TYPE: _____		ARREST (Y/N): _____		
CASE NUMBER: _____		ESTABLISHMENT: _____		
SUSPECT SEX/AGE: _____		VICTIM SEX/AGE: _____		
DESCRIBE INCIDENT: _____				
TIME: _____				
ADDRESS: _____				
INCIDENT TYPE: _____		ARREST (Y/N): _____		
CASE NUMBER: _____		ESTABLISHMENT: _____		
SUSPECT SEX/AGE: _____		VICTIM SEX/AGE: _____		
DESCRIBE INCIDENT: _____				
TOTAL CONTACTS:	ARRESTS:	REPORTS:	BANNING NOTICES:	FORs:

**Table 1. Summary of Clarendon alcohol-related arrests 2012–2017**

Year	Contacts	Urinating in public	Drunk in public/ Disorderly	Assault and battery	Assault and battery by mob	Assault and battery/ Resisting law enforcement officer	Malicious wounding	Felony drugs	Misdemeanor drugs	Total arrests
2012	820	12	54	1	2	0	1	6	1	77
2013	859	5	54	8	1	0	3	2	1	74
2014	882	12	70	8	0	4	0	1	1	96
2015	968	8	106	11	0	8	4	0	3	140
2016	8922	8	99	16	0	1	2	1	1	128
2017	15898	2	84	5	0	0	3	0	3	97

Source: Arlington Police Department

In table 1, the data show the results of increased efforts to intervene, support, and build relationships with Clarendon nightlife establishments. Contacts and calls for service increased while violent alcohol-related arrests decreased.

## Managing expectations

Having clearly defined goals of improving safety and reducing violent crime should be the police department's priority. An increase in prevention and contacts may increase the number of quality-of-life crimes because officers are involved and engaged. Collection and analysis of these data allow an agency to focus efforts on quality life of crime. The data can show which restaurants may be contributing to these issues and enable the officers to increase the focus of their efforts and training. A higher level of accountability can also be applied if the officers can show that their efforts to reduce alcohol-related harm have not resulted in compliance. Enforcement through tickets, suspensions, and fines to achieve compliance should be reserved for restaurant owners who do not act in good faith.

This cultural shift by Arlington County was adopted using a multiagency approach and by doing far more than is required by law. By providing restaurant owners training and guidance, Arlington County is in a better position to demonstrate that its agencies have done everything reasonable to achieve voluntary compliance and that they use enforcement as a last option.

The ACPD saw an increase for each year (2016–2017) in contacts and calls for service while violent alcohol-related harm fell. With an increased level of officer intervention and engagement, there is an expected rise in alcohol-related quality-of-life crime such as public intoxication arrests. The level of responsibility has increased among restaurant owners as demonstrated by their willingness to adopt employee policies, accept training from the ACPD, and allow the ACPD to intervene before incidents escalate in their restaurants. With more restaurants participating and allowing officer intervention, the next goal will be to reduce high levels of intoxication and over service of alcohol.

In 2019, officers assigned to Clarendon began staffing a new nightlife area in Ballston Quarter, a neighborhood in Arlington County. The strategies the ACPD is using are meant to change attitudes and achieve voluntary compliance for long periods of time with a long-term commitment from all stakeholders.

## 2

# Conduct Operational Analysis and Evaluate Resources

A jurisdiction can identify issues through gathered data, conducting an operational analysis to determine how to distribute resources. After a full review, the jurisdiction can determine the most appropriate intervention ranging from a dedicated unit to a shared responsibility strategy with oversight.

## Number of officers

An operational analysis, including determining the number of available officers and civilian staff and a full inventory of existing skills (knowledge of ABC laws, instructor certification, code enforcement, etc.) is essential before considering a specific strategy. Many officers have training and skills, which may help identify the desired skill base. A department should conduct a full operational analysis using all resources, including the patrol section, support units (including community policing teams), detectives, school resource officers, and special operations officers. Further, civilian staff such as crime analysis, warrants, courts, administrative, and records can contribute to the collection of data and tracking of hours spent training officer and staff.

The ACPD uses training to develop Arlington Restaurant Initiative (ARI) assessors. Officers and fire marshals are given training in Virginia ABC law, occupancy determination, basic public health codes, and code enforcement all related to restaurants. The role and function of the ARI assessor is covered in chapter 6 of this publication.

## Budget for nightlife

Committing to additional resources can be challenging for municipal agencies with tight budgets. Developing a cost model is an essential piece of securing new funding or reallocating existing funds to support a new strategy.

Tracking each agency's hourly time commitment to an area or problem is an effective way to calculate costs. Each agency with vested interests should conduct an audit to determine how and where they are allocating their resources.

## **POLICE AND COURTS**

- Overtime hours per officer or per shift
- Overtime hours for court
- Hours per arrest or out of service
- Hours out of service due to injury
- Data collection
- Hours per year for training

## **FIRE**

- Hours per call for service
- EMS calls
- Violations
- Hours per inspection or per year
- Hours per re-inspection

## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

- Hours per violation
- Hours per inspection or per year
- Hours per re-inspection

## **ZONING AND PLANNING**

- Hours spent per restaurant to prepare permits
- Hours per violation
- Hours per inspection or per year
- Hours per re-inspection



The ACPD has begun using data collected to create and implement strategies like these to support requests for increased dedicated budget and staffing. As part of the budget request, the Restaurant Liaison Unit can now provide data previously not collected to support requests. The budget presented by Arlington County has increased from \$60,000 in 2012 to \$212,000 in 2017.

## Resources

Further considerations for budgeting include accounting for specialized training, such as responsible alcohol service, for a full unit or individual officers dedicated to nightlife management. It is essential to consider the time required to train restaurant staff and security on policies and security measures. Allocate money for maintaining training and certifications for officers who train restaurant staff and other officers. The ACPD found that maintaining certifications as trainers for responsible alcohol service requires a commitment to additional funding to training outside of the police department. This also applies to nightlife industry seminars and conventions that can improve knowledge of best practices and trends. In February 2018 the Restaurant Liaison Officer attended the Responsible Hospitality Institute Sociable City Leadership Summit to learn new methods used by other city nightlife coordinators and police agencies.



# 3

## Identify Stakeholders

### What is a stakeholder?

A stakeholder is a “person, group, or organization that has interest or concern in an organization” and its objectives. “Stakeholders can affect or be affected by the organization’s actions, objectives, and policies.”<sup>4</sup>

### Primary stakeholders

Determining stakeholders and establishing their level of investment and their intervention roles are necessary before implementing a strategy. When developing a nightlife plan, the primary stakeholders are the jurisdiction, the restaurants and bars, and the community. Further, to prioritize their needs, each stakeholder needs to be categorized into individual agencies, specific restaurants and bars, and community groups that are most affected by nightlife activity.

#### **MUNICIPALITY OR JURISDICTION**

- Police department
- Fire department
- Alcohol control authority
- Public health department
- Planning and zoning department
- Department of Social Services
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Parks and Recreation
- Mayor or city manager’s office
- Council or board

#### **RESTAURANTS AND BARS**

- Managers
- Security
- Bartenders and serving staff
- Owners
- Support staff

#### **COMMUNITY**

- Residents
- Civic associations
- Neighboring business

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4. “Stakeholder,” BusinessDictionary.com, accessed May 8, 2019, <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/stakeholder.html>.

Before implementing a strategy, all three primary stakeholders need to show support and commitment for real change. It became clear that for real change to occur in Arlington County, the ACPD Restaurant Liaison Officer would need to spend the most amount of time with the stakeholders who would be most influential in changing the culture of Clarendon—simultaneously working to build relationships with restaurant owners, County agency personnel, and community leaders.

Initial talks began with what was needed to improve safety in Clarendon, the ACPD Restaurant Liaison Officer speaking with restaurant owners and community leaders regarding what they believed would be necessary to improve safety and quality of life.

Restaurant owners and staff said that responsible alcohol service training, public safety expectations, and fair application of enforcement would help reduce alcohol-related crime.

At civic association meetings, community leaders and residents voiced the desire for owners to take more responsibility for the behavior of their patrons after they leave the restaurants. Intoxicated patrons wandering into the surrounding neighborhoods were engaged in fighting, trespassing onto homeowners' property, littering, and noise violations.

Arlington County agencies and Virginia ABC agreed there was no communication between the enforcement agencies about issues faced in Clarendon during nightlife hours. In addition, the ACPD, Fire Marshal's office, Public Health office, and Code Enforcement Office developed standards that restaurants should meet to improve safety. These standards were the foundation of the development of the ARI. The ACPD also created the ARI Weekly Restaurant Report, a formal mechanism of information sharing for the County agencies and Virginia ABC. The report includes all significant calls for service, contacts, and arrests occurring at any restaurant with a Virginia ABC license. The ACPD expects that providing these agencies with up to date information will allow them to provide assistance in bringing restaurants into compliance.

## Secondary stakeholders

Secondary stakeholders include business groups, associations, and improvement districts. They further economic prosperity by advocating, promoting, and highlighting individual businesses and industries. Some of these include the following:

- Business Improvement District (BID)
- Business Revitalization Zone (BRZ)
- Community Improvement District (CID)
- Chamber of Commerce
- Municipal or local economic development office

These quasigovernmental organizations can generate welcoming areas that draw visitors into the area, make “ambassadors” available to assist visitors, advocate for businesses, and experiment with innovative practices. They support and educate businesses about the benefits of being a primary stakeholder. In addition, Arlington County BIDs and its economic development office promote ARI to improve safety and increase profitability.



# 4

## Establish a Multiagency Task Force and Form a Unified Strategy

Establishing mutually beneficial relationships within the jurisdiction is another crucial part of successful nightlife management. Developing a successful, unified strategy with support, input, and cooperation from multiple government agencies is ideal. The ACPD quickly realized that restoring order and making inroads would allow for more collaboration from restaurant owners and staff in maintaining safety.

Prioritizing the efforts of a unified strategy and identifying standards is an important step.

### 1. Safety

Involve police, fire, ABC, and public health. Maintaining public safety and order are paramount and should be given priority.

### 2. Relationships

Ongoing collaboration between individuals and agencies is necessary for effective change. Begin with collaborations on smaller projects and increase the scale of improvements as relationships develop over time.

### 3. Establish agency liaisons

Engaging knowledgeable staff members who understand their agency's role and support the broader mission of change is an essential aspect of maintaining interagency relationships.

### 4. Training

Cross-training officers and fire marshals in ABC law, maintaining occupancy levels, detecting fake IDs, and managing nightlife are vital to keeping order and ensuring the proper application of the law. Well-trained officers and fire marshals can apply the law in a manner that is consistent with the unified strategy. Providing expectations and accountability for officers is an essential aspect of maintaining continuity and commitment.

### 5. Directives and policies

Establishing guidelines and policies for policing nightlife areas includes teaching proper enforcement. When restaurant owners and managers receive a consistent message from the jurisdiction, including clear expectations and enforcement standards, they are more likely to accept accountability.

## Policing

Results of the operational analysis determine the level of commitment and the number of resources a department plans to invest. Varying staffing models are possible based on budget and available resources. The following are a few examples of models that address alcohol-related harm with a unified strategy:

- **Full-time unit**

Multiple officers trained in nightlife management strategies make this model the most effective. In this specialized unit, the officers establish relationships with primary stakeholders, provide training, and act as full-time problem solvers. Engaging with elected officials, other government agencies, and community groups can help the full-time unit to create holistic solutions.

- **Full-time unit with overtime**

If the operational analysis does not allow for a full time dedicated team, one full-time employee can coordinate efforts and provide nightlife training to other officers who work the nightlife detail.

- **Overtime**

Relying on overtime work in the form of a nightlife detail is the least useful model because it addresses the symptoms of the problem rather than creating long-lasting change. This model requires officers who regularly work the nightlife detail to undergo basic nightlife training and establish relationships with stakeholders on a smaller scale.

The ACPD uses the full-time unit with overtime model to manage the nightlife detail of officers. The Restaurant Liaison Officer is responsible for the deployment and operation of the detail. Attracting officers for a full-time or combination unit requires department administrations to provide incentives, training, and opportunities. Candidates for a full-time unit position must possess proven qualities such as independence, leadership, strong work ethic, flexibility, and problem-solving skills. An attractive incentive is training for career development, which would make officers more desirable for other unit positions. Training includes the following:

- Alcohol regulations
- Responsible alcohol service
- Fake identification training
- Active shooter response
- Security training
- Public safety expectations
- Code enforcement (noise and zoning)
- Fire codes and occupancy
- Crowd management



Additional incentives that can be provided to attract officers for a full-time position include the following:

- **Pay, title or rank, pin**

Rewards for expertise and skill can be another effective incentive. Classification of additional pay, rank classification, or presentation of a pin may make the position more desirable within the organization and evoke pride within the unit.

- **Other incentives**

Full-time unit officers could be offered other incentives such as priority for assignment change at the end of their tenure on the unit, priority for vehicles over time, or special assignments within the department.

The ACPD allocated the rank of Master Police Officer (MPO) to the Restaurant Liaison Officer, which is a corporal rank with additional responsibilities including supervision, training, and analysis. The appointment of MPO also includes an increase in the hourly rate of pay.

## **Training for patrol officers**

After becoming qualified nightlife trainers, officers with the nightlife unit provide cross training and skill-based training (such as responsible alcohol service) to all other patrol officers, fire marshals, and jurisdiction employees who are participating in the unified strategy. Along with agency liaisons, officers from the nightlife unit engage in creating restaurant standards to reduce alcohol-related harm including police expectations, fire code and occupancy, noise ordinance, zoning codes, and active shooter training.

This model has served well in Arlington County by increasing the knowledge base of more than 150 officers who work the nightlife detail as part of their shift or as an overtime shift. The officers are now aware of noise and alcohol violations that they did not recognize before the training, which allows them to intervene.

## **Officer characteristics**

Policing nightlife establishments is a uniquely challenging area of public safety. Identifying officers who have the necessary qualities and characteristics to be an active agent of change in a nightlife area is also difficult. In the George Mason University Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy analysis of Clarendon nightlife, Dr. Gill and her students identified several topics and recommendations to reduce alcohol-related harm in the Clarendon area including officer

characteristics and attributes conducive to thriving nightlife policing. As evidenced by the GMU report, officers and patrons share many of the same opinions about which characteristics officers need to police effectively in a nightlife area.

### **PATRONS**

- Approachable
- Community-oriented
- Accountable
- Responsible
- Dependable
- Logic or reasoning skills
- Ethics honesty integrity
- Professional
- Emotional stability
- Accepts criticism constructively
- Intelligent
- Patient

### **OFFICERS**

- Approachable
- Community-oriented
- Accountable
- Responsible
- Dependable
- Logic or reasoning skills
- Ethics honesty integrity
- Professional
- Written communication skills
- Interpersonal or oral communication skills
- Patient
- Self-restraint, self-control, or tolerance
- Problem solver applies best current practices

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Source: Charlotte Gill et al., *Reducing Alcohol-Related Crime and Disorder in Clarendon* (Fairfax, VA: George Mason University, 2017), 16, [http://cebcp.org/wp-content/gill/arl-report-public\\_28jul17.pdf](http://cebcp.org/wp-content/gill/arl-report-public_28jul17.pdf).

As part of officer training, the ACPD provides this list of characteristics to the officers who work the nightlife detail. If applied, these attributes can help the officers in policing this environment because both the patrons and officers agree they are the most desirable characteristics.

## Determining restaurant and bar risk potential

Prioritizing training for restaurant staff is essential to use resources prudently. Determining the potential risk of alcohol-related harm should dictate training and strategies that a restaurant receives. Risk factors include the following:

### HIGH RISK

- High ratio of alcohol to food sales, especially on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights
- Live entertainment
- Patron age 21–30 years old
- Participates in “nightlife” hours (9:00 p.m.–3:00 a.m.)
- Employs security staff
- Allows for maximum occupancy
- Stays open until ABC cutoff time for service

### MEDIUM RISK

- Equal food to alcohol sales during the week
- Has live entertainment permit but uses it intermittently
- Open during “nightlife” hours (9:00 p.m.–3:00 a.m.) but does participate regularly
- Patron age 28–35 years old
- Employs one or two security staff on Friday and Saturday
- Allows for maximum occupancy but does not regularly achieve it
- Stays open until ABC cutoff time for service

### LOW RISK

- Food sales greatly outnumber alcohol sales
- Does not have a live entertainment permit
- Maintains alcohol license for lunch and dinner
- Patron age 35+ years old
- Closes earlier as “nightlife” begins

Other risk factors can appear in data collected in the initial evaluation of a nightlife strategy. This information will allow the jurisdiction to dedicate resources more productively. Using arrest and call for service data as well as EMS transports sharpen the view of which restaurants need the most help. In Arlington County, data on EMS transports and notices of violation (NOV) were also considered in the distribution of resources.

## Benefits

Restaurants and bars participating in nightlife safety training can expect an overall reduction in alcohol-related harm due to increased knowledge of liability and the law. If restaurant owners and managers support improved practices they can expect to experience:<sup>5</sup>

### INCREASED

- Compliance with law
- Violations of law
- Customer experience
- Safe environment for staff and patrons
- Relationship with community

### REDUCED

- Liability
- Employee turnover
- Violations of law

From 2015 to 2017 Arlington County saw a reduction of alcohol-related harm in the Clarendon neighborhood once training was established and implemented with the restaurant staff and security. Feedback from security and managers voiced their desire for training and expectations from public safety agencies.

## Training for restaurant and bar staff and security

Providing a schedule of training to restaurant staff and security is recommended to address specific incidents and to account for employee turnover. Trained officers and fire marshals train staff on topics including fake identification detection, knowledge of ABC codes, responsible alcohol service, public safety expectations, criminal and civil liability, de-escalation techniques, bar bystander sexual assault intervention training, and CPR.

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5. *Planning, Managing, and Policing Hospitality Zones: A Practical Guide* (Santa Cruz, CA: Responsible Hospitality Institute, 2006), 41, <https://servingalcohol.com/files/PracticalGuide.pdf>.

Training provides staff an opportunity to ask specific questions and to better understand the law and policies of their employing restaurant or bar. Training also allows the police another opportunity to increase public awareness and to create and maintain relationships with staff.

If public safety officials maintain trust with establishment security staff, security personnel are more likely to call the police for intervention and help in de-escalating difficult situations. When conducting training with security staff, topics should include criminal and civil liability, uniforms and professional appearance (to be easily identifiable), maintaining safe occupancy levels, line management that does not block egress, in-house incident reporting, crowd management, securing the scene, and public safety expectations when police intervene.

## Restaurant and bar operational analysis

Basic Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) evaluations can determine risk within an establishment and inform specific recommendations. Topics to present to and discuss with owners include the guardianship model; ventilation and temperature; lighting; bathroom line maintenance or attendants; allowing space to move; and reduction of glass bottles or mugs, which can be used as weapons. Improving patrons' access to service and restrooms within the restaurant reduces the likelihood of conflict. Many of these recommendations are covered in the ARI standards such as removing glassware promptly and patron line maintenance.

## Collaboration

Numerous innovative methods exist to initiate partnerships with mutually beneficial outcomes. For example, the nonprofit [(501(c)(3)] Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), founded in 1982, is an award-winning public-private partnership working to prevent drunk driving and underage drinking in the Washington metropolitan area. Through public education, innovative health education programs, and advocacy, WRAP is credited with keeping the metro Washington area's alcohol-related traffic deaths consistently lower than the national average. But it may best be known to area residents via the organization's popular free safe ride service for would-be drunk drivers, SoberRide®.

The ACPD and Lyft Mid-Atlantic partnered with WRAP to create the SoberRide® vehicle. The vehicle, a BMW 330ci rather than an ordinary police cruiser, serves as a rolling billboard to remind people not to drink and drive. The ACPD donated the vehicle—a seized asset—and Lyft provided the emergency lighting and a full vinyl wrap of the car. Last, WRAP provides the messaging of the SoberRide®. The SoberRide® vehicle is a useful tool to generate interest and distribute information during nightlife hours, outreach, and special events. During such events, ARI-trained officers speak to the community about the importance of reducing alcohol-related harm.



# 5

## Establish Relationships with Stakeholders

### Community policing versus mutually beneficial relationships

Policing in nightlife and entertainment areas is a challenge that has no perfect remedy. Applying several strategies may be necessary to find the most appropriate solution. Understanding the nature of nightlife-specific problems requires open-mindedness and a willingness to branch out from traditional enforcement policing models. Enforcement alone breeds an atmosphere of distrust between establishments and police and creates an adversarial relationship.

Since the COPS Office was established in 1994, community-oriented policing (COP) and problem-oriented policing (POP) have been core approaches to successful problem solving across the country.

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

#### **Community partnerships**

Collaborative partnerships between the law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve to develop solutions to problems and increase trust in police.

#### **Organizational transformation**

The alignment of organizational management, structure, personnel, and information systems to support community partnerships and proactive problem-solving.

#### **Problem solving**

Engaging in a proactive and systematic examination of identified problems to develop and evaluate effective responses.

#### **Crime triangle**

Visualizing links among the victim, offender, and location (the crime triangle) and those factors that impact on them, rather than focusing primarily on addressing the root causes of a problem, the police focus on the factors that are within their reach, such as limiting criminal opportunities and access to victims, increasing guardianship, and associating risk with unwanted behavior.

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Source: COPS Office, *Community Policing Defined* (Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014), 1, 12, <https://ric-zai-inc.com/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P157>.

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The focus in community policing is establishing partnerships with individuals and organizations. “Community policing, recognizing that police rarely can solve public safety problems alone, encourages interactive partnerships with relevant stakeholders.”<sup>6</sup> Long-term success using community policing is challenging for many jurisdictions because of budget and staffing constraints. These partnerships can be effective, but community policing in its current application may not be enough to overcome issues or gain cooperation from stakeholders. The ACPD found that establishing an individual trustful relationship with multiple stakeholders increases the likelihood of long-term benefits.

In Arlington County, the goal is to reduce harm by prioritizing the reduction of alcohol-related violence through multiple cultivated individual relationships with key stakeholders. The elements of a mutually beneficial relationship need to include trust, validation, fairness, and consistency. Identifying additional specific needs for an individual stakeholder was also necessary for the partnership to be effective.

In 2016, the ACPD Restaurant Liaison Officer position was created. Weekly introductions with restaurant ownership began to build rapport and consistency. Establishing trust with restaurant owners and staff for several months was necessary before they were willing to consider changing their approach to nightlife management and safety seriously. Availability to owners and staff for guidance and questions was another essential component to creating trust and rapport and demonstrates the department’s commitment to building successful relationships.

Understanding the individualized needs and goals of each stakeholder is a crucial part of the relationship. Knowledge and validation of the stakeholder’s needs and expectations are necessary to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship and enact long-term change. The following is a categorization of stakeholders and the essential work and time needed to establish a mutually beneficial relationship.

## Restaurant and bar owners

Most restaurant owners act in good faith and want to obey the law. However, unclear employee policies or lack of staff training contributes to problems with nightlife management. Overall, owners want consistent interactions with public safety, clear expectations, and fair application of the law. Recognizing owners for effective policies and decisions and using positive reinforcement can help maintain a successful and mutually beneficial relationship.

For example, in 2016, a restaurant in the Clarendon neighborhood was the subject of an eight-month undercover drug investigation resulting in the arrest of two suspects for felony distribution of drugs. Through the investigation, undercover officers discovered employees who worked as

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6. *Community Policing Defined* (Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014), 4, <https://ric-zai-inc.com/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P157>.



bouncers for the restaurant were assisting the principal suspects. Once the investigation concluded, the ACPD Restaurant Liaison Officer, Arlington County Fire Department (ACFD) Fire Marshal, and a Virginia ABC agent held a meeting with the owner and managers to discuss the observations during the investigation.

The owner's initial reaction was to become defensive and deflect blame for the activity occurring at his restaurant. However, the managers were open and willing to hear about the activity and have employees identified who were jeopardizing their business. Because Arlington County was willing to help this restaurant by providing consistent guidance and training, the restaurant began to change the culture to one of compliance and partnership. This restaurant was also the first to earn accreditation in the Arlington Restaurant Initiative by writing employee policies that ensure safety.

## **Restaurant and bar managers**

Managers are the key to achieving successful change; they are the workhorses of the industry and have the most influence over day-to-day operations. It is vital for managers to perceive public safety as a high priority so that they support their staff, hold their staff accountable, and act as a role model for change. The ACPD Restaurant Liaison Officer depends heavily on relationships with restaurant managers to adjust employee behavior to increase safety. Increases in overserving are addressed in the weekly meetings, as well as suggestions to stop the practice.

## **Restaurant and bar security and serving staff**

Security staff members have an essential role in keeping venues safe and need consistent support to ensure that they are meeting public safety expectations. Maintaining a good rapport with security staff is especially crucial because they are the most aware of the law violations that occur in the restaurant. Further, developing a specific relationship with the head of security is essential to formulate the most effective ways of intervening without compromising information gathering about violations of the law occurring at the restaurant. Restaurant staff members have a lesser role, but they are required to complete provided training to learn how to reduce alcohol-related harm and other safety measures. Because of the high turnover in these positions, tracking and conducting regular training sessions is necessary. The ACPD Restaurant Liaison Officer continually monitors and cultivates these relationships because they are essential to patron and officer safety. When ACPD nightlife officers enter restaurants, security staff members know to protect the officers while they are inside handling disturbances, trespassers, and disorderly conduct.

## **Business owners (supporting venues)**

Establishing relationships with business owners who do not participate in nightlife can also be fruitful. These relationships are generally easier to maintain and require less time and investment but can be highly useful to the mission of nightlife safety. Examples are restaurants that do not serve alcohol or convenience stores serving patrons after nightlife has concluded. In Clarendon, several late-night pizza restaurants are open to cater to the nightlife patrons. These owners also support safe management of the area by providing information about activity of surrounding restaurants that do participate in nightlife.

## **Community and civic associations**

Support from civic associations and the community is also a critical part of managing nightlife. Attending to public inquiries and providing education is vital to keeping the community involved and enacting long-term change. These groups provide information regarding the quality of life of the residents around nightlife and areas that public safety needs to focus.

# 6

## The Arlington Restaurant Initiative

### ARI standards

The Arlington Restaurant Initiative (ARI) and Best Bar None provide the base for restaurant employee policies. Agencies including the ACPD, ACFD, ABC, and public health and zoning commissions are all needed to develop standards that focus on the most critical elements of safety. The ARI standards were adapted using Best Bar None UK standards as a guide. Adapting these standards required a thorough review of applicable Virginia ABC laws, Arlington County code, and Virginia fire code. The standards needed to be tailored to the corresponding Best Bar None standards to meet Arlington County's specific needs.

Relationships were established with Arlington County Office of the Fire Marshal, Virginia ABC Authority, Arlington County Department of Public Health, and Arlington County Zoning Office to support the initiative and provide a list of specific standards to reduce alcohol-related harm and increase public safety for establishments. Each agency liaison met with three Arlington County restaurant owners to create and evaluate these standards for use in Arlington. Without first establishing trust and relationships with these owners, it was less likely they would have assisted Arlington County in establishing the standards. One restaurant owner exemplified this by being very resistant to the ACPD Restaurant Liaison Officer position—openly hostile in the first year. However, given time and with consistency and trust, this owner became heavily involved by providing helpful insight in creating the standards.

Virginia ABC Authority does not require training or policies to obtain and operate an ABC license. While they do provide voluntary training, many owners do not take advantage of the training because it is not required. Further, it is unreasonable to demand that ABC handle every issue that comes up during nightlife management. By empowering restaurant owners and staff with standards, guidance, and training, the ACPD manages these areas with expectations for safety from restaurant owners and staff.

Throughout the ARI standards, ABC laws are included, such as not allowing intoxicated patrons to remain on the premises or to be served alcohol. In addition, the ACPD Restaurant Liaison Officer found most restaurant staff and managers do not know which forms of identification are acceptable according to ABC law to determine if a patron is age 21 or older. Having a solid understanding of acceptable identifications and detecting fraudulent identifications can reduce risk by not allowing entry to begin with.

This collaboration resulted in the *Arlington Restaurant Initiative (ARI) Accreditation Standards & Guide for Writing Policy*. Ultimately 20 safety standards are included in the employee policy. The guide is broken down into three sections as they are in the Best Bar None model.

## Written policies

Employee policies are to be written into existing employee handbooks or as a standalone employee guide. The guide provides standards and law, as well as a sample employee policy, which meets the ARI standard. Considerations for writing each policy are also given to help the owner better understand why the standard exists.

## Operational checklists

Certain documents need to be present on the premises for review to meet compliance with the law or for ARI accreditation including incident reports, training documentation (including responsible alcohol service and first aid/CPR), a list of banned patrons, and weekly occupancy counts.

## Physical verification

A checklist of all required items and documentation including ABC license, first aid kit, safety equipment, ABC list of managers, and list of repairs and maintenance to the property.

In addition to the routine inspections, compliance with a supplemental list of fire, public health, and zoning codes is a requirement of ARI.

Once completed, the Arlington County Attorney's Office vetted the ARI standards to ensure that Arlington County was accurately advising restaurants to comply or institute policies that are within state and county law and inside of acceptable practices.

By making the program voluntary, restaurants and bars bear the responsibility for operating safely, and jurisdictional agencies can show regulatory and elected officials their level of commitment to nightlife safety.

Mandatory participation requires more work, time, and expense for officers, fire marshals, and inspectors to ensure restaurants are participating and meeting standards. When violations occur, agencies can demonstrate a concerted effort to bring businesses into compliance before applying enforcement and can maintain a positive rapport with nightlife establishments. Further, if a restaurant has repeated violations but has chosen *not* to participate in ARI, they cannot reasonably argue that enforcement is not justified.

## ARI pilot

Ten restaurant owners across Arlington County received the standards of the ARI pilot program. After implementing the program, these restaurants were asked to provide feedback to the Restaurant Liaison Unit regarding the following:

- Ease of use in understanding the guide and standards
- Time needed to write policies
- Difficulties encountered when writing policies
- The challenge for owners to implement into existing employee policies

During the ARI pilot program, the ACPD Restaurant Liaison Unit continually followed up with owners and managers to ensure they were completing each step of the accreditation process appropriately. Eight out of the initial 10 restaurants agreed to participate in the voluntary accreditation program.

After completing and implementing policies, the Restaurant Liaison Unit received the following feedback:

- On average, one hour was needed for managers and owners to write the policies to meet the ARI standards.
- While many restaurants were practicing the ARI standards, they did not have employee policies or training to hold employees accountable.
- Two restaurant owners asked why participation in ARI is not mandatory for all restaurants that serve alcohol.
- After receiving ARI training, all owners recognized that their employees did not have most of the knowledge required to reduce liability for the restaurant provided in the ARI training.

## ARI assessor

Arlington County uses officers and fire marshals to implement and provide training to the restaurant owners and staff. An ARI assessor is a police officer or fire marshal who has undergone training in the ARI standards and policies. ARI assessors have training in public safety expectations, criminal law, ABC laws, noise ordinance, fake identification detection, public health codes related to ARI, and zoning codes. They provide training to restaurant staff, review restaurant policies, and provide guidance.

Finally, the ARI assessors determine ARI accreditation in the program. They are expected to maintain their contact and relationships with the restaurant owners and staff after the restaurant has achieved ARI accreditation. When the restaurant's yearly accreditation evaluation is due, the assigned ARI Assessor will be responsible for additional training and re-accreditation.

## **ARI accreditation**

The ARI accreditation is valid for one year of approval by an ARI assessor. Each year the restaurant resubmits policies to their assigned ARI assessor, and the ARI assessor conducts further training and a restaurant walkthrough. If a restaurant adds security staff, for example, then the owner now needs to write policies to meet the ARI standards for security staff. Writing employee policies that meet the ARI standards are a vital part of the accreditation. The employee policies allow owners to demonstrate that they are willing to participate and conduct the work necessary to achieve accreditation.

## **ARI revocation**

Although a revocation policy is necessary in extreme cases of neglect or endangerment, the goal of the ARI program is assistance with compliance. Specific indicators precipitate a review by the ARI coordinator and other county agencies. The indicators chosen were crimes or violations that endanger public health and safety. Examples of the indicators are assault and battery resulting in injury, assault by mob, assault on law enforcement, failure to maintain egress, intoxication requiring medical transport, and major public health violations.

A review and recommendation revocation of accreditation requires the review by the Arlington County Manager's Office for a ruling. Revocation by the Arlington County Manager lasts for one year and the owner of the restaurant is given 10 days to appeal the decision and request a hearing. After a suspension of one year, the owner may apply again for the ARI program.

## **ARI promotion**

In the Best Bar None UK model, alcohol distillers and distributors provide promotion and fund an awards banquet. The ACPD Restaurant Liaison Unit took a different approach by partnering with the Arlington County Office of Economic Development and Arlington Chamber of Commerce to promote the restaurants' successful participation in the ARI program including promotion through social media platforms, news stories, and an awards ceremony to recognize ARI restaurants.

## **ARI benefits**

Restaurants that participate in the ARI program demonstrate to the community a willingness to address alcohol-related crime and have a positive effect on the nighttime economy. An increase in safety also reduces liability for the establishments. Patrons value safety when they visit night-life areas and are willing to spend their time and money when restaurants show they value safety.

The ACPD Restaurant Liaison Unit learned through outreach events such as “Conversation with a Cop” that safety is a priority for patrons. Officers bar-hop during happy hour to interview patrons about their perception of safety in Clarendon, asking patrons about their experiences with the police, restaurant security, and serving staff. The primary concern from the patrons is a feeling of safety while they are out in Clarendon. They want to know they are being protected from assaults and can engage with security and police when they need to.

## **ARI moving forward**

With more than 300 restaurants holding a ABC licenses, there is an opportunity to increase the participation in the voluntary program. The goal for Arlington County is to have as many restaurants participate as possible and to add new restaurants each year. Through awareness campaigns, Arlington County can increase the visibility of restaurants that hold the ARI accreditation for residents and visitors. The ARI-accredited restaurant sticker on the door of a participating restaurant means the owner and staff prioritize customer safety. Arlington County has a goal of making the ARI door sticker one of value to the restaurant and the patron. As of May 1, 2019, 30 restaurants have achieved ARI accreditation.





# 7

## Build Upon Relationships to Broaden Effectiveness

Establishing an accreditation program and a unified strategy to reduce alcohol-related harm are essential tasks that take time to develop and implement. However, with consistency and support from jurisdiction leaders, these goals can be accomplished with the commitment of just one person, as demonstrated by the ACPD.

A multiagency task force engaging in effective interagency communication can address other issues that affect nightlife.

### Jurisdiction

Reviewing the noise ordinance to ensure that it is not overly restrictive in a designated nightlife or entertainment area is recommended as well as amending the noise standard to a level that is consistent with “ambient nightlife sound.”

### Planning and zoning

Coordinate the jurisdiction sanitation and lighting departments to address issues that may be present in nightlife areas. Review laws on vending and food trucks in the areas of nightlife, expanding options for patrons reduce the competition for resources that often occurs at the end of the night when establishments close. Planning and zoning can work with restaurants to safely establish rooftop areas, cafes and patios, awnings, and outdoor heating.

### Transportation

Jurisdictions are encouraged to eliminate choke points of traffic congestion and the related risk to intoxicated patrons by addressing transportation needs. Rideshare companies like Uber and Lyft have substantially replaced the taxi industry. Creating loading zones in nightlife areas to make drop-offs and pick-ups safer is universally beneficial.

Partnerships with local universities can be established to provide shuttles to students from nightlife areas to ensure that they arrive and depart safely.



## Conclusion

Executive leaders considering this approach should understand that this is not a quick solution to reducing alcohol-related arrests. Providing training for restaurant staff can help reduce violent crimes associated with alcohol such as shootings, stabbings, aggravated assaults, assaults on law enforcement, and sexual assault for restaurant staff. Reducing violent crime that patrons associate with a nightlife area requires a shift from enforcement to one of prevention and guidance. This cultural change from enforcement alone to building consistent relationships is not done quickly and requires a long-term commitment from agency leaders. Restaurants and the jurisdiction benefit if patrons feel safe in their nightlife areas.

With a long-term commitment, jurisdictions can add strategies to address quality-of-life crimes. Establishing trust with the primary stakeholders allow jurisdictions to implement an accreditation program and develop a unified strategy to manage alcohol-related harm in nightlife areas. This approach builds mutually beneficial relationships between the jurisdiction agencies, community, and businesses. A commitment by all stakeholders can have a positive outcome for all: businesses want increased economic viability, the jurisdiction aims to reduce resources spent on alcohol-related harm, and the residents deserve a livable community.

Last, policing in the 21st century requires new and innovative ways to reach the communities they serve. A mutually beneficial relationship demands respect from both parties. For the relationship to prosper, investment and trust are required for success to be possible. This approach involves commitment and transparency beyond the efforts of previous community-oriented policing efforts focused solely on partnerships. The return on investment is to reduce the draw on resources for enforcement to a cultural shift of relationship-based policing.

## About the Author

**Dimitrios (Jim) Mastoras** is a Master Police Officer with the Arlington County Police Department. He is a 22-year veteran of the department and has held many assignments throughout his career. He created the Arlington Restaurant Initiative (ARI) adaptation of the Best Bar None model. In addition to providing training to prevent alcohol-related harm, he established a partnership with Arlington's Project Peace to develop Bar Bystander sexual assault intervention training for restaurant staff. The Arlington County Police Department was recognized by the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce, in the Public Sector of the Year 2018 category, for the establishment and implementation of the Arlington Restaurant Initiative. His work for Arlington County has been recognized by the Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) for saving lives and preventing injuries caused by drunk driving and underage drinking in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area.

## About Best Bar None

Best Bar None is an accreditation scheme with national awards supported by the UK Home Office and the drinks industry, which is aimed primarily at promoting responsible management and operation of alcohol licensed premises. It was piloted in Manchester, England, in 2003 and found to improve standards in the evening and nighttime Economy, with premises now competing to participate. It has since been adopted by 75 towns and cities across the UK and is now being taken up internationally.

The program is now active in Scotland, Canada, and the United States with the introduction of the Arlington Restaurant Initiative.

Find more information at <http://bbnuk.com>.

## About the COPS Office

The **Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)** is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Community policing begins with a commitment to building trust and mutual respect between police and communities. It supports public safety by encouraging all stakeholders to work together to address our nation's crime challenges. When police and communities collaborate, they more effectively address underlying issues, change negative behavioral patterns, and allocate resources.

Rather than simply responding to crime, community policing focuses on preventing it through strategic problem-solving approaches based on collaboration. The COPS Office awards grants to hire community policing officers and support the development and testing of innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders, as well as all levels of law enforcement.

Since 1994, the COPS Office has invested more than \$14 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing. Other achievements include the following:

- To date, the COPS Office has funded the hiring of approximately 130,000 additional officers by more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies in both small and large jurisdictions.
- Nearly 700,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office–funded training organizations.
- To date, the COPS Office has distributed more than eight million topic-specific publications, training curricula, white papers, and resource CDs and flash drives.
- The COPS Office also sponsors conferences, round tables, and other forums focused on issues critical to law enforcement.

COPS Office information resources, covering a wide range of community policing topics such as school and campus safety, violent crime, and officer safety and wellness, can be downloaded via the COPS Office's home page, [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov). This website is also the grant application portal, providing access to online application forms.



The Arlington County (Virginia) Police Department (ACPD) has instituted the Arlington Restaurant Initiative, a voluntary accreditation system based on Best Bar None—a program designed to establish and promote relationships between restaurants and bars, local authorities, and the community by promoting responsible alcohol management—that originated in Manchester, UK, in 2003. This publication describes the ACPD's work to change its policing approach in the popular Clarendon nightlife area from a focus on enforcement to a focus on prevention. It also discusses a research analysis of the program conducted by the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy at George Mason University.



**COPS**

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Visit the COPS Office online at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).