

**Submission Requirement - Item 1**  
**Abstract**

The Phoenix Police Department attacked a long existing problem location that was related to a night club/bar that had an after-hours, from 1:00 a.m. to 4:00 a.m. The bar attracts 700 -1,000 people during peak nights and was the core attraction for related increased calls for service, accidents, D.U.I. 's, acts of violence, curfew violations, and gang related crimes.

Using the S.A.R.A. Model of problem solving, the problem (5 plus years) was addressed with an eight week action plan and monitoring component. The results have been significant and have improved the quality of life in the affected area.

Below is an abstract overview using the S.A.R.A. Model:

**Scanning:**

- examination of the problem/s and related core attraction issues
- long term neighborhood and cultural issues
- nature of crimes being committed.

**Analysis:**

- statistical data gathered
- information obtained from officers, neighborhood residents, and businesses examined
- demographical information gathered
- core issues confirmed.

**Response:**

- eight week action plan implemented
- monitoring component developed
- multi-bureau participation
- partnerships formed; Zoning Department, Streets Department, Block Watch Group/s
- prosecution liaison established.

**Assessment:**

- statistical review conduct
- neighborhood residents and groups contacted
- monitoring component established
- prosecution follow-up.



July 21,1997

**Submission Requirement - Item 2**  
**Description**

In the summer of 1995, Sergeant Don Steinmetz of the Phoenix Police Department was assigned to the Central City Precinct, mid-night shift, and he was given the responsibility of a squad that patrolled the area where the El Capri Bar and Dance Hall was located. The location is within the downtown section of Phoenix.

He immediately recognized that there were several serious problems associated with the bar and the negative impact it had on the resources of the Phoenix Police Department, the businesses in the immediate area, and the surrounding residential community that dramatically affected the quality of life for the entire business and residential area.

In the winter of 1996, with the assistance of his Problem Oriented Policing Centered Lieutenant, they decided to solve the long term problem utilizing the problem solving model of S.A.R.A.

Below and on the following pages will be a complete description of the problem (scanning), the analysis of the problem, the response to the problem and the assessment;

**Scanning:**

The El Capri Bar and Dance Hall, located within the Central Phoenix area, is a long established business with a statewide reputation for being one of the largest dance halls in Arizona that exclusively caters to the Spanish speaking community. The patrons at the El Capri are from all areas of the state. Many are from Mexico and have illegally entered the United States.

There are low income apartment projects surrounding the bar, along with businesses that operate during normal daylight operation hours. The neighborhood directly to the north of the bar is known as "Bumbalow Heights," and it is a low income to poverty level income residential area infested with drug houses, youth gangs, and prostitution.

The El Capri Bar and Dance Hall (formerly known as Harry's Capri), has been a law enforcement problem for over "20" years. The current owners bought the bar in 1981 and ever since that time, officers consistently have dealt with numerous calls or on view activity dealing with violent and non-violent crimes at the bar and the surrounding neighborhood. Assaults, shootings, juvenile gang problems, liquor violations, D.U.I., and burglary are just a few of the problems that occurred in and around the bar's premises.

Citizens and businesses within the vicinity of the bar had voiced their concerns throughout the years about the steady increase of crime, noise, litter, graffiti, and the tremendous amount of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, etc. in their neighborhoods.

The Police Department, not yet involved in the problem oriented policing concept during those early years, dealt with the issues at the bar by traditional reactive policing methods such as occasionally having extra patrol cars work the area or have the State Liquor Inspector check for violations within the bar. All of these attempts had no long term effect on the problems in the area, they only dealt with the symptoms and not the cause.

During the period when Sergeant Steinmetz began his assignment, he found that the calls for service and the activity in and around the El Capri Bar was causing a drain on his overall resources of manpower, which in turn affected service to the rest of the squad area and precinct. The weekend nights were identified as being the most active for the El Capri Bar. Patrons or people who just wanted to hang around the bar would crowd the streets in the surrounding neighborhoods. Many would park their cars on the streets, often blocking traffic ways and driveways to homes, and began to drink alcohol and play music until the early morning hours.

"With these street gatherings came fights, shootings, liquor violations, juvenile crime, and gang members loitering. Cruising the neighborhoods with the music playing loudly from their cars was also a problem and it caused many traffic problems and related accidents.

Youth gangs (18th Street, 21st Street, 32nd Street, and WBP to name a few) also roam the area in large numbers. The gangs would commit assaults and robberies on the patrons, and they would burglarize or steal cars. When confronted by police officers, gang members would often run into the bar and blend into the crowd to avoid arrest.

The El Capri Bar had what it called a "juvenile" or non-adult side that was separated from the side of the bar that served liquor and beer. The juvenile side of the bar would allow adults to move from one side of the bar to the other, therefore, exposing the juveniles to the issues involved with adults and alcohol consumption.

Those juveniles that were in the bar would often leave to go drink alcohol on the streets, after which they would return to the bar. The same juveniles would remain in the bar and or area well beyond the hours of curfew and into the early hours of the morning.

The El Capri Bar had after hours that extended to 4:00 a.m. The bar would often remain completely full until closing. At closing, the patrons would go into the neighborhoods and begin drinking and playing loud music. Many patrons of the bar would return to their cars only to find that they had been burglarized and/or damaged, or to find that their car had been stolen.

Based on Sergeant Steinmetz' observations and that of one of his officers, Dorteia Valenzuela, along with observations of other precinct officers and citizens contacted in the area, the El Capri Bar was found to be the core issue of the problems found in the neighborhood. Having now established that the El Capri Bar was the core of the problems, he focused his analysis and response, listing the bar as the main target of the program.

**Analysis:**

The El Capri Bar was purchased and opened by its current owners in 1981. The Phoenix Police Department immediately established that there were problems associated with the bar. There was an attempt to take the bar before the Zoning Commission and deny the bar a Use Permit in 1981, but for unknown reasons, the attempt failed and was not pursued any further by the Police Department. The bar has basically been run since 1981 without interference or any close scrutiny from the Police Department. The Police Department has been reactive to the issues associated with the bar and not proactive.

The problem involving the El Capri Bar had not been addressed since 1981. Other than the routine enforcement by beat officers in the area, the problems have only increased in size, severity and frequency. Although it was common knowledge by the officers in the area that there was a problem, many felt nothing could be done because the bar and problem had been in existence for so long.

The citizens in the area and most of the patrons of the bar spoke only Spanish, therefore, communication on even the simplest terms was difficult for the average beat officer.

The area also has some Anglo, Asian, and Black residents, but they are in the minority compared to His large Hispanic population in the immediate area. An unofficial estimate would be: Hispanic - 80%, Anglo - 5%, Black - 10%, Other - 5%.

The average income level of the citizens was from low income to poverty level. In addition to the language barriers, many of the victims of the various crimes did not contact the Police Department to report the crime because of fears of being arrested themselves for being in the United States illegally or for fears developed here or in their country, where the Police Department is not trusted.

The problems associated with the El Capri Bar were readily obvious to the officers in the area. The traffic, crowds, noise, gunfire, drinking, etc. started early in the evening and continued until the early morning hours the following day. Calls for Police Department service were steady and caused a drain on available resources in the squad area and the precinct. The supervisors in the area would need to assign at least 3 to 4 officers to the area in and around the El Capri Bar each Friday, Saturday, and Sunday Nights just to keep situations from getting out of control. These officers were more of a visual deterrent and had little to no overall affect on the criminal activity.

During the winter of 1996, Sergeant Steinmetz and Officer Valenzuela began to watch and analyzed the problems in and around the El Capri Bar so as to establish which locations and types of crimes, and the types of individuals were involved. It was also during this period that the owner of the El Capri Bar was contacted and many of the issues of the bar and surrounding area were discussed. The owner knew of the problems, but felt the problems were not related to his business, therefore, he was not willing to become involved in any problem solving program.

The first stage of the analysis consisted of visual observations of the El Capri Bar and the surrounding area, so as to establish which locations and problems had the highest priority.

Sergeant Steinmetz began to assign officers to the area to gather information as to the extent of the problem. Their mission was not only to gather information, but to begin a no tolerance stance on criminal behavior.

The information gathered on arrests, citations, and reports helped establish the extent of the problem and was used in the overall analysis to develop a response.

During the analysis several areas in the neighborhood were identified as being a part of the overall problem.

- A. The Horse Shoe: A residential area directly south and behind the El Capri Bar where the streets were shaped in a "U." This was a favorite place for cruising and street parties. Assaults, shootings, drinking in public, etc. were nightly occurrences on the weekends. Several shootings occurred while police officers were present in the immediate area showing the violators' obvious contempt and non-intimidation for law enforcement. The cruisers and parties would be in such great numbers that the neighborhood would be crowded with people and cars. Most often, all traffic would come to a stand still for several hours at a time.
- B. The Dirt Lot: The owner of the El Capri Bar owned a large dirt lot across the street from the bar where he allowed patrons of the bar to park their cars. The lot was unpaved and unlit. The lot would at times contain 100 to 200 cars at a time on a busy night.

The constant dust from the lot would generate a tremendous cloud across the main roadway, making visibility for drivers poor. Numerous accidents were related to the poor visibility. The dust would also affect a restaurant that was across from the lot. Often the patrons from the restaurant would have to leave the outside seating and go inside to avoid the dust clouds.

Other businesses, such as a car lot nearby, would find their cars covered with the dust from the dirt lot. In addition to the dust problem was the criminal activity on the lot. Patrons would often find their cars burglarized or damaged when they returned from the bar. Many cars were stolen. The local "21st" Street Gang Members were constantly found in the lot and it was established that they conducted most of the thefts because the number of cars made the lot an easy target due to the non-existence of any security.

The suspects also knew the victims would rarely contact the Police Department to report the crime. Additionally, drinking alcohol, fights, assaults, shootings, and juvenile crimes were a constant problem on the lot

- C. The Maaco Painting Parking Lot: This business is directly across from the El Capri Bar. The business was closed at night, but the owner would lease out his parking lot to a hot dog vendor, who was also allowed to charge patrons of the El Capri Bar to park on the lot.

The parking lot became the main hang out location for the "21st" Street Youth Gang. They would drink alcohol, remain out beyond the curfew hours, and go out into the various areas where the patrons of the El Capri Bar parked their cars and commit thefts, burglaries, and criminal damage.

They also were involved in several of the assaults, shootings, fights, etc. that occurred in the surrounding area. The hot dog vendor was found to be not only uncooperative, but believed to conspire with the gang members in some of the activity on the property.

D. Twenty First Place Street Parking: Across from the El Capri Bar was a street popular for the patrons of the bar to park along because the El Capri Bar lot would usually become completely full early in the evening. The patrons would often find their cars stolen and burglarized when they returned. Many of the patrons would not report the thefts, but observations by officers on many occasions found 10 to 20 cars burglarized or damaged on any given weekend.

E. Van Buren Street Traffic: The roadway in front of the El Capri Bar would be grid locked with traffic, both pedestrian and vehicular. The pedestrians would run across the street causing accidents and near accidents. The cars would line up on the roadway waiting to get into the El Capri Lot. The line of cars would extend to upwards of half a mile in both directions.

Drunk driving was a big problem from the El Capri Bar. Many accidents and arrests were attributed to a patron having been drinking in the bar.

F. The El Capri Bar and Dance Hall: The bar was split in two sections, one for juvenile or those under the drinking age of 21, and the other section for 21 years old and older where alcohol was served. On any given weekend, the juvenile side would be packed with people of all ages. The adult side would always be less busy.

There was a live band in the bar and special bands from Mexico or California would come in to do special concerts, which increased the crowds from the normal size. The bar remained open until 4:00 a.m., although serving of alcohol would cease at 1:00 a.m.

The juveniles, those under 18, were allowed to remain in the bar until closing which was in direct violation of the City Ordinance regarding the Curfew Laws. The parking lot of the bar would be found to be scattered with beer bottles and cans each weekend. Many patrons were arrested for drinking alcohol in the **lot**

The bar does have a private security force of approximately 5 people. They would generally hang out by the front of the business and talk to patrons. They only made efforts to stop the drinking, loitering or other non acceptable behavior on their property when one of the patrol officers drove onto the lot.

Our overall analysis of the issues involved in the El Capri showed the problem to not only be extensive in area and size, but because of the length of time the activity has been going on in the area, there was a tremendous amount of apathy by the citizens and police officers as to if a solution could be developed and or be effective.

Once the visual observations were completed, Officer Valenzuela and Sergeant Steinmetz began the crime analysis research of the area for the times, location, type of crime and people effected. Research into the various business licenses, liquor licenses and use permits were made for the El Capri Bar and the Maaco

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**S.A.R.A. Model Utilization**

Painting Business. Other business owners were contacted about the impact of the activity from the El Capri Bar.

Citizens, though not actively polled or surveyed because of manpower restrictions (and language restrictions), were contacted when the opportunity was available. Their concerns were also used to help analyze the problem. The neighborhood community action group was contacted and their input as to the problems, were taken into account, but active participation by these citizens was limited because of some of the fears they had about retribution from the youth gangs and drug dealers.

Response:

Based on the analysis of the problem with the El Capri Bar and the surrounding area, it was determined that to address the core problem, the El Capri Bar had to eliminate or drastically slow down the activity in the surrounding neighborhood. The decision was made to design and implement an eight week action plan against the bar and related area. This was accomplished with intensive high visibility patrol tactics involving various bureaus and units within the Police Department.

They established the goals and action plan for the problem, which allowed them to estimate the resources needed to accomplish those goals. Their objective was to slow down or completely eliminate the criminal activity and traffic problem discovered in the analysis.

Of the issues discovered in our analysis of the problem, they decided to address the following problems and areas;

- A. The dirt lot as described in our analysis, needed to be either properly paved and lighted with security or closed down completely, not allowing any parking or loitering at all.
- B. Slow down or eliminate the cruising and parties in the Horse Shoe area.
- C. Eliminate the loitering of the "21st" Street Gang on the Maaco parking lot.
- D. Attempt to re-direct the traffic on Van Buren Street so the traffic will not bind up and establish the even and constant flow of both directions of traffic on the main roadway.
- E. Eliminate the parking on 21st Place, which would eliminate the victimization of the bar patrons', cars.

The last and probably most difficult goal, because of the resistance by the owner; was to bring the El Capri Bar into full compliance with the various City Codes, State Laws, and Zoning Regulations. Additionally, they needed to address the El Capri Bar juvenile issues, after hours, public alcohol consumption, and traffic problems at the business.

After establishing goals, they now knew that for the program to be successful, several different details and specialty units within the department would be involved. We contacted the following details, from within and outside the Police Department, and got commitments from them for assistance in the program:

1. The Drug Enforcement Unit
2. The Vice Enforcement Unit
3. The South Resource Motor Unit
4. The Quick Response Team
5. The Gang Enforcement Unit
6. The Precinct N.P.O. and C.A.O. Officers
7. The Youth Alcohol Unit
8. The City Zoning Department
9. Community Action Groups, Citizens, and Business Owners.

Sergeant Steinmetz' squad, because of their familiarity with the problems, were used as the core group of officers involved in the program. The officers in the precinct were advised of the program and asked for whatever assistance they could offer when they were not dealing with the other issues within the precinct. Officer Valenzuela was the contact officer for all of the units involved and was also the keeper of all statistical data generated in the program.

The program developed had two phases, each being 4 weeks in length. After each 4 week phase, an assessment would be conducted to address those issues that were unaffected and needing additional work or those issues that had been eliminated, and therefore, we could redirect resources to different areas. We also were prepared to extend the program 4 weeks at a time after the initial 8 weeks.

The 4 week phase included various units and details. Each week the type of unit was changed, as well as the type of enforcement. This would hopefully keep the violators guessing, and therefore, not allow them to predict the pending actions. An example of the enforcement action in week one involved the following units and locations.

1. Two plainclothes officers would conduct surveillance on the dirt lot, the El Capri Bar and lot, and on 21st Place. Their purpose was to watch for any and all criminal activity in these areas\*Once a crime was discovered, they would direct a two person, uniformed hit car in to make the arrest.
2. Motor Units would conduct intensive traffic and D.U.I, enforcement on the main roadway in front of the bar and also in the surrounding areas.
3. The Gang Enforcement Unit would circulate the area to identify and arrest known gang members.
4. The Quick Response Team would supplement Sergeant Steinmetz' squad in providing high visibility intensive patrol. A zero tolerance stance was also taken regarding all traffic and criminal offenses.

In the second week of the 4 week program, they would change the enforcement units to confuse the would be violators and criminals. For example, a liquor inspection would be conducted at the bar or juvenile curfew would be the main focus that week.

While the enforcement program was being conducted at night, Neighborhood Patrol Officers (NPO), and Community Action Officers (CAO) began to contact citizens groups in the area to obtain support and information.

Based on the theory of criminal prevention through environmental design, we were able to force the El Capri owner to secure the outer perimeter of the dirt lot.

They contacted the City Street Engineering Department and described the problem. They responded quickly and placed permanent no parking signs in the Horse Shoe area and on 21st Place. The signs indicated 10:00 p.m. to 5 a.m. as the times parking was not allowed. Also, a temporary no left turn sign was placed on one exit from the neighborhood of the Horse Shoe Street, which forced cruisers to go out of the area of the El Capri Bar and made it very inconvenient for them to cruise the bar.

Officer Valenzuela and Sergeant Steinmetz conducted an extensive background check on the El Capri Bar and found some very significant problems with its use permits. The bar basically had been in operation for over 15 years without the proper Use Permits and was in clear violation of several Criminal and Zoning Codes.

During one of the several inspections done at the El Capri Bar, Sergeant Steinmetz and Officer Valenzuela observed the owner, after 1:00 a.m., narrating a strip tease on the stage with two young females. The officers contacted the two females and found them to be only "15" years old. During one such inspection the entire bar was closed down and the owner cited for not having the proper Use Permits. Because of the number of people in the bar and surrounding area, it took over 75 officers to conduct that inspection and closure.

The owner of the bar, being the owner of the dirt lot, was also cited several times for violating Zoning Ordinances regarding the parking and activity on the lot. Many arrests were made for drinking alcohol in public on the bar property and those reports were also sent to the State Liquor Board for review and action.

The owner and hot dog vendor were contacted and advised of the problems with the Maaco parking lot. Both were uncooperative at first. We indicated to the owner we could use existing City Ordinances which allow the Police Department to bill property owners for services used to break up large gatherings on private property. Faced with the prospect of having to pay several hundred dollars each week to the Police Department, the owner and vendor began to take measures to eliminate the problem on their property.

We also closed the hot dog vendor down for several days until he had the proper licensing and permits to operate his business.

The program ran eight weeks, from February to April 1997. An assessment was conducted to gauge the effectiveness of the program.

**Assessment:**

After eight weeks of the program, they found a drastic decrease in overall activity in the area. They discovered that all of their goals had been addressed and most of the problems eliminated or slowed down tremendously.

Utilizing the problem oriented policing concept, we virtually eliminated a problem in a community that had plagued the citizens in the area for "20" years. A monitoring component was included by the assignment of a specific Community Action Officer to work with the 52 J Squad, the community, and businesses to address problems as they restart up again.

Many of the results^were observable as the program progressed. Examples are:

- A. The dirt lot enforcement resulted in numerous arrests ranging from aggravated assault with a gun, to burglary from vehicle, and curfew. After several Zoning Citations, the owner had a six foot barb wire topped fence installed around the lot. The lot is now completely free of any problems and has been since the middle of April 1997. The owner is also seeking the proper permit, etc. so he can pave and light the lot.
- B. The Horse Shoe Neighborhood was barricaded and posted for parking. Since mid March 1997, cruising and parties in the area have been non existent. The need for patrols in the area have decreased. The citizens living in the area have taken it upon themselves to place the street barricades on the street each weekend and have often voiced their pleasure that the parties and cruising have ceased.
- C. The Maaco parking lot no longer a gathering place for the 21st Street Gang. The hot dog vendor now acts as a security guard on the lot and actively works on eliminating loitering on the property.
- D. The traffic on the main roadway is less congested due to the fact it is now inconvenient to cruise the area. Additionally, the parking lot attendants at the El Capri Bar are actively waving people on when the lot at the bar is full.
- E. The 21st Place parking issue was not completely resolved. Patrons still park in the area even though no parking codes are being enforced. The number of burglaries and thefts have decreased since mid March. We believe the reason for the decrease is that the gang members have been removed from the area.
- F. The El Capri Bar owner was cited and charged for various Criminal and Zoning Violations. Since the conclusion of the 10 week program, he has hired off duty police officers to help with the control of the patrons at his bar. With officers at the bar, calls for service have practically ceased. The owner was found to be guilty of not having the proper permits and for the Zoning Violations regarding his dirt lot. He had to pay a fine and now has a conviction that can be used in future violations. A Zoning Hearing as to the status of the use permits of the bar is pending, but all indications are the business will be brought into compliance with City Ordinances and there will be an elimination of the juveniles on the property and the after hours will be eliminated.

Officer Valenzuela did an analysis of the data gathered during the program and indicated a reduction in most measurable areas tracked by the Police Department occurred. (The statistical report is available upon request.)

The only displacement issue that surfaced during the program involved the "21st" Street Gang. They relocated two blocks north of the dirt lot area to an apartment complex. A grant program that was already in place for that neighborhood allowed us to bring in more officers, many on overtime paid by the grant, and we began to intensively work the area.

The affected apartment complex owner was also contacted by our N.P.O. Unit and his cooperation was obtained. Although the 21st Street Gang has been in the area for decades, this side program caused them to slow their activity and since May there has been a noticeable decrease in the gang's activity.

Being that most of the units involved in the El Capri Program were on duty, the overall costs were not estimated. There was only a marginal expenditure of overtime used by supporting units such as the Gang Units that would be held over when they had disposition of major crime scenes related to gang violence. No overtime was used during the program by the program responsible squad (52J).

Unless the El Capri Bar closes, the issue of the problems resurfacing are there. Since the conclusion of the program in mid April 1997, we have had no resurfacing of the problems. The patrol officers in the area, although still patrolling in the area and still visible, are able to leave to serve other areas of the precinct and not worry that when they return to the El Capri neighborhood the problems have resurfaced to the level once faced 4 months ago.

**Conclusion:**

The El Capri Bar and Dance Hall Program was an excellent example of problem oriented policing at its best. For "20" years the neighborhood had been plagued with crime, gangs, youth crime, traffic problems, crowds, graffiti, etc., and based on a solid plan and broad based cooperation from other officers, citizens, businesses, and other city departments, the citizens in the community can now enjoy a better quality of life. With monitoring and continual trust building by police officers in the community, it is believed the problems will not reach the level they had been for the last two decades.

The quality of life has been improved for the area surrounding the bar. The Police Department has made a commitment to the neighborhood to monitor and react quickly to any resurfacing related issues.



**1997 Herman Goldstein Award Submission  
Phoenix Police Department  
S.A.R.A. Model Utilization**

**Submission Requirement - Item 3  
Agency and Officer Information**

Below are the answers to the listed format questions in a narrative response;

The project was developed within the Central City Precinct, Shift 3, of the Phoenix Police Department. The project implementation was by the Shift 3 Lieutenant and the 52J Squad.

The officer/s, sergeant and lieutenant had all received training prior to the project's development and were familiar with the utilization of using the S.A.R.A. Model of problem solving.

There were no additional incentives given to the employees involved other than the personal satisfaction of resolving a long standing problem.

The employees involved used no resources or manuals to guide their efforts other than the knowledge and experience from their P.O.P. centered lieutenant. .. ^ • .. • •

The utilization of the S.A.R.A. Model for problem solving was used exclusively with a mid-program (4 weeks) re-examination of the obtainment of the program goals and objectives. Several adjustments of enforcement tactics were made during the eight week action plan.

Concerning the general resource commitments to the project, we only used on duty departmental personnel, other than a slight use of overtime for initial set-up and post-project meetings. Approximately 40 hours of overtime was used during the entire eight week program.

The project contact person is:

Lieutenant Jeffeory G. Hynes  
Sergeant Donald Steinmetz  
Officer Dorthea Valenzuela

Phoenix Police Department  
620 W. Washington  
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Telephone - (602) 534-0794  
(602)495-5005  
FAX - (602) 534-0766.

