

## GOLDSTEIN AWARD

This submission to the Police Executive Research Forum is to nominate for the Herman Goldstein Award a project by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) Gang Unit wherein "drive-by" shootings were reduced by 48 percent in a period of two years. The reduction was accomplished via a series of initiatives which dealt with enforcement, community education, coordination between the LVMPD and outside agencies, media cooperation, and coordination between units of the LVMPD. This reduction was accomplished despite increases in previous years of as much as 45 percent and a population increase of 12 percent.

## SCAN

The community and the police department observed a disturbing trend in the increasing number of gang-related drive-by shootings occurring within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. In 1993, there were approximately 299 shootings and approximately 433 shootings in 1994. This was an increase of 45 percent. At the end of 1995, there were approximately 527 shootings, which was an additional increase of 22 percent.

During this time, the overall population of Clark County, including the jurisdictional boundaries of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, increased by 12 percent. During this same time period, the police department documented an increase in the number of gangs and gang members. Due to the fact that it is not illegal to belong to a gang, the police department could not legally prevent persons from joining a gang or hinder out-of-state gang members from moving into the Las Vegas area. The department recognized that it must reduce the shocking increase in gang-related violence occurring on the streets of Las Vegas. These senseless and seemingly random acts of violence were affecting the entire community as numerous innocent bystanders were often victimized.

## ANALYZE

Police determined that the majority of these drive-by shootings were gang-related. Although the perpetrators were gang members shooting at other gang members, all too often, the victims were innocent citizens or neighbors who were unfortunately caught in the crossfire.

A plan needed to be developed to reduce the number of "drive-bys" occurring in the

jurisdictional boundaries of LVMPD. In order for a significant change to be made, the resources and manpower of the Gang Unit would need to be augmented. The entire department would need to become involved and the community would also have to take part. By the end of 1995, gang violence, which had reached a high water mark, was a noteworthy topic in community as well as police discussions. Gang violence had broken out in most neighborhoods as well as public schools and shopping malls throughout the community. The community could no longer regard gang-related crime as something that happened only to poor people in "bad neighborhoods". Everyone's son or daughter was a potential victim.

### **RESPOND**

After recording a 76 percent increase in the number of drive-by shootings from 1993 to 1995, police and community officials realized that gangs were a serious threat to the welfare of the citizens and community, and something had to be done to curb the violence. In 1995, Gang Unit officers were given the rank and training of detectives. This allowed them to investigate gang-related cases from start to finish and ensured criminal prosecution of gang members, especially those committing violent acts.

In September of 1995, another squad was created within the Gang Unit. This was a uniformed squad whose priority was to be constantly on the streets of Las Vegas in an enforcement capacity. These officers were assigned to contact and identify as many gang members as possible on a nightly basis. They were also to assist the different area commands with any type of gang-related problem, be a visible deterrent to gang violence, and meet the business owners who had experienced problems with gangs in their establishments.

In 1996, the Gang Unit developed a strategic drive-by initiative which included the following points:

1. Heavy enforcement on weekends (by networking with Crime Analysis personnel, detectives learned that statistics showed this to be the time when the majority of violence was occurring) by investigative as well as enforcement personnel.
2. Numerous "knock-and-talks" were conducted by Gang Unit detectives and parents of gang members were advised of their child's involvement in gang activity.
3. Gang Unit detectives attended patrol briefings to educate other officers as to the level of gang violence occurring in the jurisdictional boundaries of LVMPD, and remind them of trouble spots and situations in their specific beats.
4. SWAT officers were recruited to help with enforcement activities and be a visible deterrence to criminal gang activity.

This initiative resulted in a 29 percent decrease in drive-by shootings from 1995 to 1996. In July of 1997, Project Summer Daze was instituted. Police officials realized that the gang problem is not something that Gang Unit detectives or even other officers were going to be able to solve by themselves. It was recognized as a community problem that affects citizens as well as police, and would require the participation of different units from within the department and the community.

Summer Daze was a three-prong program that emphasized:

- 1) Education of both the police and the public as to the extent of the gang problem in Las Vegas
- 2) Enforcement/intervention
- 3) Covert operations

The first phase of Summer Daze dealt with education. It was determined that it was vital that patrol officers as well as gang officers understood the extent of the gang violence occurring in the city, and that they buy into the idea of being able to curb this violence. Gang detectives compiled lists of the most active gang members in each area command, and provided these lists to the area commands and officers involved. These lists included names of the gang members, addresses, vehicles, and types of activities that these persons were involved in. Officers were asked to document any contact that they had with these individuals.

To foster teamwork and cooperation between patrol and the Gang Unit, ride-alongs were encouraged whenever possible. Patrol officers were encouraged to ride with the gang detectives to increase their knowledge of gangs in the area and to share with the gang officers any new information that they might have with reference to specific gangs in their patrol districts.

The Gang Unit also committed itself to a more active role in the already existing Nevada Gang Investigators Association. This group of law enforcement representatives from throughout the state of Nevada meet regularly. Gang detectives realized that a coordinated effort to share information with other agencies would result in the identification of criminals and the prosecution of cases which would otherwise not be solved. More importantly, Gang detectives became partners with agencies from other parts of the criminal justice system, such as probation/parole and the prison system. The information traded with the Clark County School District police proved especially helpful in locating violent juveniles.

The Gang Unit formed an alliance with the Department of Housing and Urban

Development. A representative of that agency did several ride-alongs with the gang detectives. Each agency received some education in the powers and limitations of the other.

Educating the public was also a very important part of this plan. Gang detectives taught twelve separate classes to groups of citizens during this time. These presentations included specifics about the current gang situation and offered advice as to what the citizens could help do to protect themselves and stop the violence. These classes were taught to various church, professional and civic groups. The department currently has a program called "First Tuesday" in which the public is invited to each of the area substations to discuss pertinent police-related topics on the first Tuesday of each month. Gang detectives attended these meetings on September 2, 1997. Approximately 300 persons attended these meetings and had the opportunity to speak directly with the detectives and voice their concerns, as well as receive important information about the gang activity in their specific neighborhoods.

Gang detectives further educated the public by conducting 41 "home visits" to gang members' homes. The purpose of these visits was to speak with the gang member's parents and make them aware of their child's activities. Many of these parents had no idea of their child's involvement in gang behavior. Often during these visits the parents would accompany the officer to the child's room and the detective would point out various items that would indicate that the child was involved in gang activity. Some first-generation American parents were unfamiliar with the culture of American youth and so missed the signs of gang involvement that veteran policemen regard as obvious. The vast majority of these contacts were positive and the parents expressed their appreciation at being

contacted by the police in this manner.

Enforcement and intervention were a very important part of Summer Daze. This aspect of the program had three primary goals and each was accomplished during the life of the program. These three goals were to gather gang-related intelligence, provide a high visibility police presence to deter criminal activity, and assist patrol with any gang-related problems occurring in a specific area.

Current and accurate information on the individual gang members living in the Las Vegas area is what enables gang detectives to solve many criminal cases. During the project, 1386 field interview cards were completed on gang members. This provided detectives with names, monikers, physical information, addresses, vehicles and associates of known gang members. This information proved invaluable as detectives investigated numerous gang-related crimes in which the victims could only give the smallest amount of suspect information. During the operation, 841 hours of overtime were expended and dedicated specifically to enforcement activities. Numerous previously unknown gang members were documented as well as several upstart new groups claiming to be gangs. These new gangs included groups of members from other cities as well as new groups who formed and began claiming turf in particular areas of town.

Gang detectives spent many hours working enforcement on the Las Vegas Strip, which is the common name for Las Vegas Boulevard, and exclusive area consisting of major casinos and resort hotels. This area is often referred to as the "life blood of Las Vegas" and as such it was extremely important that it remain a safe place for tourists to visit. Detectives worked closely with Southeast Area Command bike officers to provide a deterrence to keep gang members from congregating on the Strip and causing any type

of problem. Many gang members from Southern California were contacted and documented, but very few actual problems occurred on the Strip.

Detectives did learn that other groups of out-of-state gang members were congregating in the Fremont Street area and were heavily involved in the sales of illegal drugs. By working closely with the downtown bike units and patrol officers, many of these gang members were documented and arrested on a variety of charges.

Covert investigations conducted during Summer Daze consisted of undercover and confidential informant "buys" of narcotics and weapons from gang members and persons who sell to gang members. It has been the experience of the Gang Unit that when search warrants are served on gang members selling narcotics, weapons are usually present. These search warrants resulted in a large number of weapons and a large amount of cash seized. Although the unit set high goals in this area, each was surpassed. Operation Summer Daze resulted in 231 arrests being made, 96 guns recovered, 23 search warrants executed and \$76,462 in U.S. currency seized. Further details as to the results of Operation Summer Daze will be addressed in the assessment portion of this report.

Operation Winter Haze was a continuation of Operation Summer Daze. Winter Haze had the same types of goals to involve the community as well as other officers on the department and was carried out in much the same fashion as Summer Daze. Winter Haze was a shorter operation that began on December 10, 1997 and went through January 31, 1998. Winter Haze also achieved outstanding cooperation, which resulted in 136 arrests, 625 field interview cards, 13 search warrants, \$10,384 in U.S. currency seized, and 6 classes being taught.

Although the operations had specific beginning and ending dates, the residual effect was

felt long after the operations were technically over. The gang members were kept constantly looking over their shoulders as they did not know when the heavy enforcement would let up. The gang members had no knowledge of the projects and did not know when they began or ended. They did, however, learn that it was unsafe to be on the streets of Las Vegas with illegal drugs or weapons as they stood a very good chance of being stopped and prosecuted for their crimes.

### ASSESSMENT

The initial goal of Operations Summer Daze and Winter Haze was to make Las Vegas a safer city by decreasing the number of gang-related drive-by shootings occurring in the jurisdictional boundaries of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police. Officials recognized before the inception of the program that other units of the department as well as the citizens in the community would have to be involved in order for this goal to be reached. The teamwork and commitment exhibited by Gang Unit detectives throughout these operations made the following outstanding results possible.

Drive-by shootings dropped from 527 in 1995 to 276 in 1997. This was a 48 percent decrease over a two year period. The drive-by shootings fell from 376 in 1996 to 276 in 1997, which was a decrease of 27 percent.

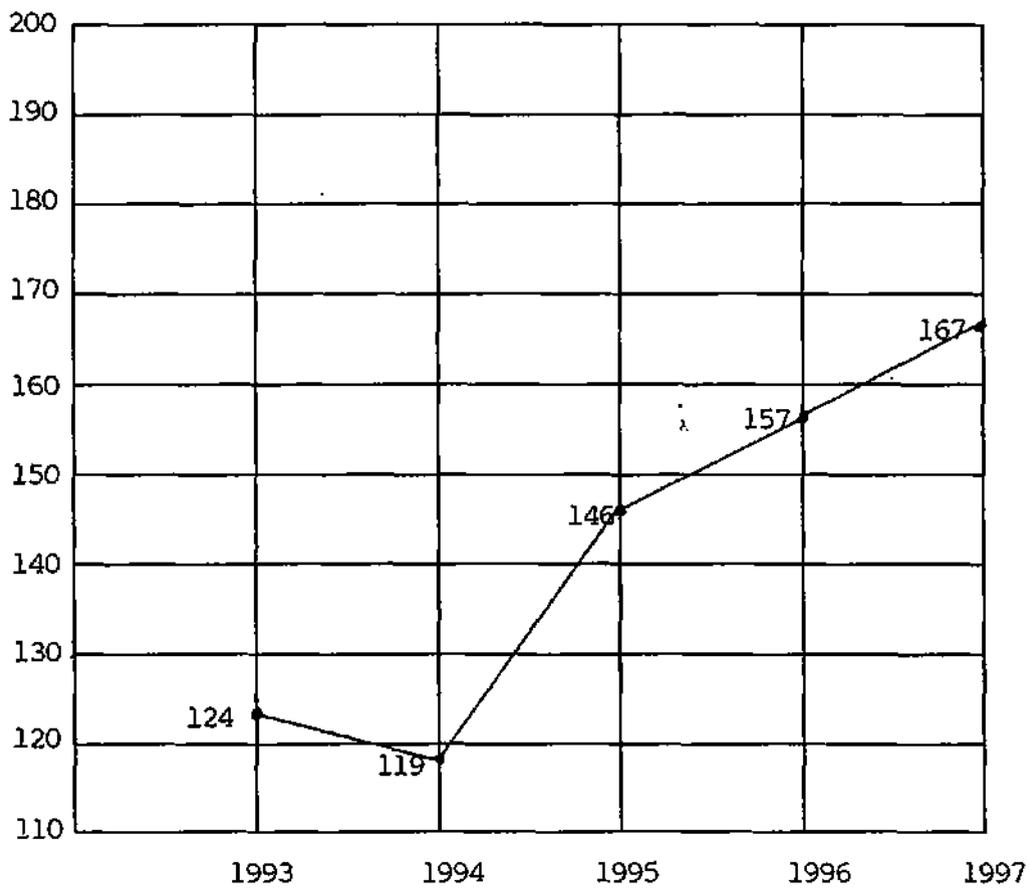
# STATISTICAL DATA DRIVE-BY SHOOTINGS

**JANUARY 1995 through APRIL 1998**

MONTH	1995	1996	1997	1998
JANUARY	47	36	35	15
FEBRUARY	43	49	28	21
MARCH	37	40	31	13
APRIL	50	44	28	15
MAY	39	30	26	
JUNE	44	24	26	
JULY	55	23	18	
AUGUST	50	20	21	
SEPTEMBER	53	38	22	
OCTOBER	49	32	14	
NOVEMBER	19	12	12	
DECEMBER	38	22	15	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>276</b>	

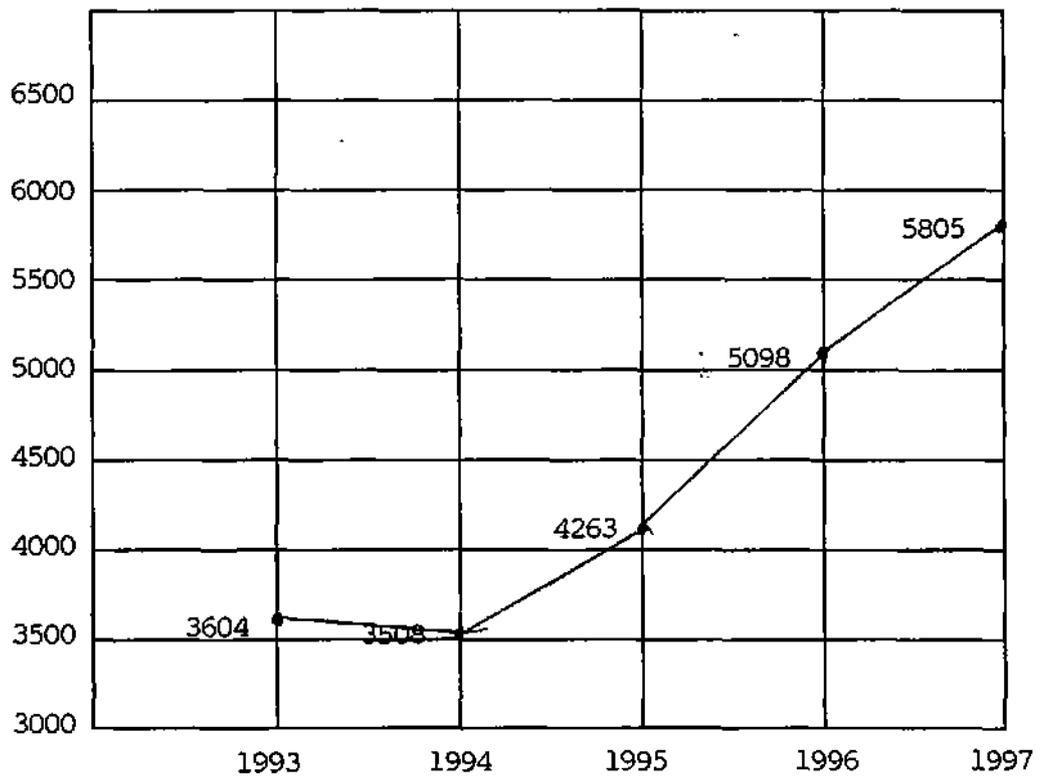
# STATISTICAL DATA TOTAL GANGS

JANUARY 1993 through DECEMBER 1997



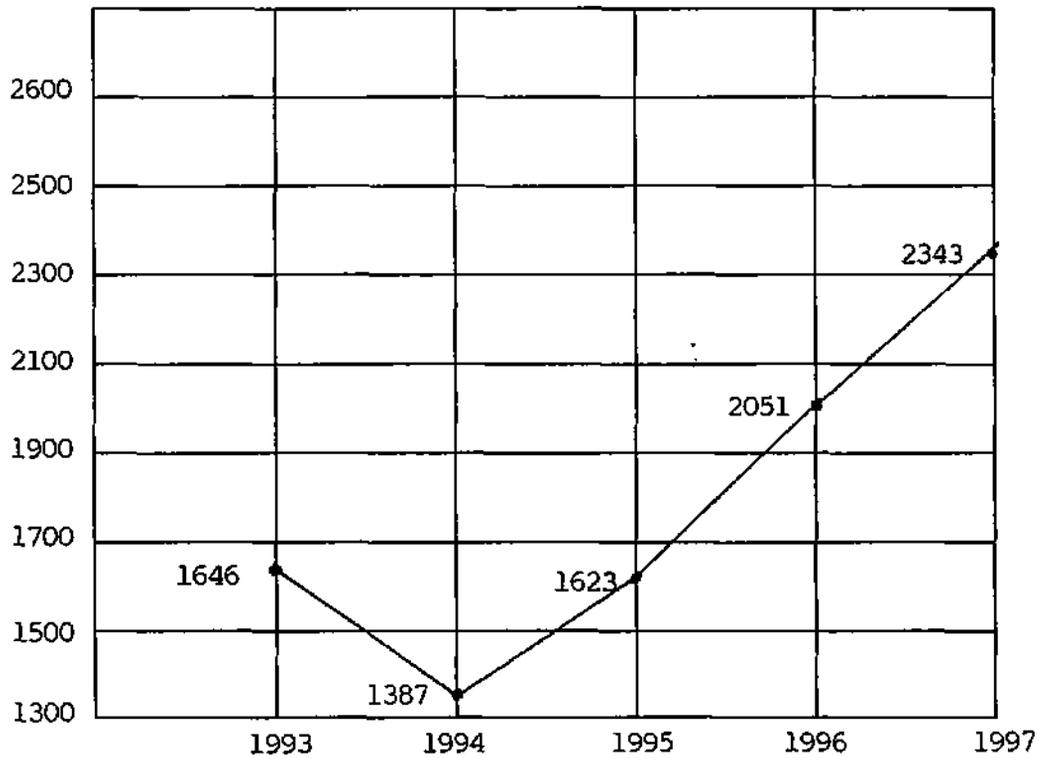
# STATISTICAL DATA GANG MEMBERS

JANUARY 1993 through DECEMBER 1997



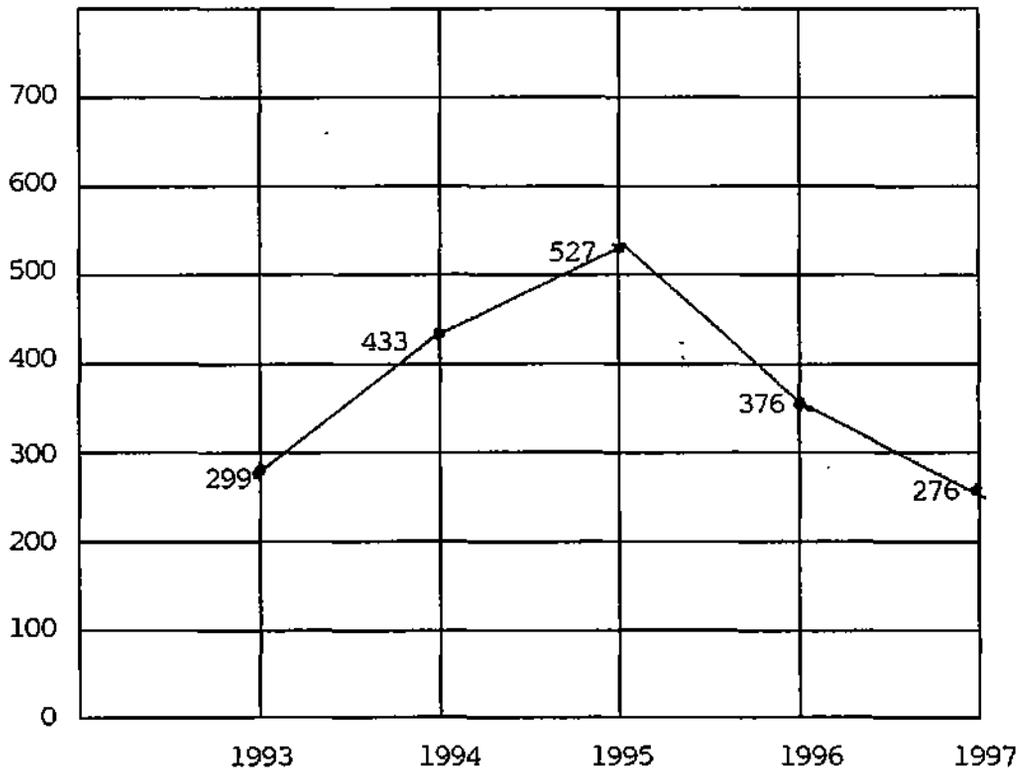
# STATISTICAL DATA GANG ASSOCIATES

JANUARY 1993 through DECEMBER 1997



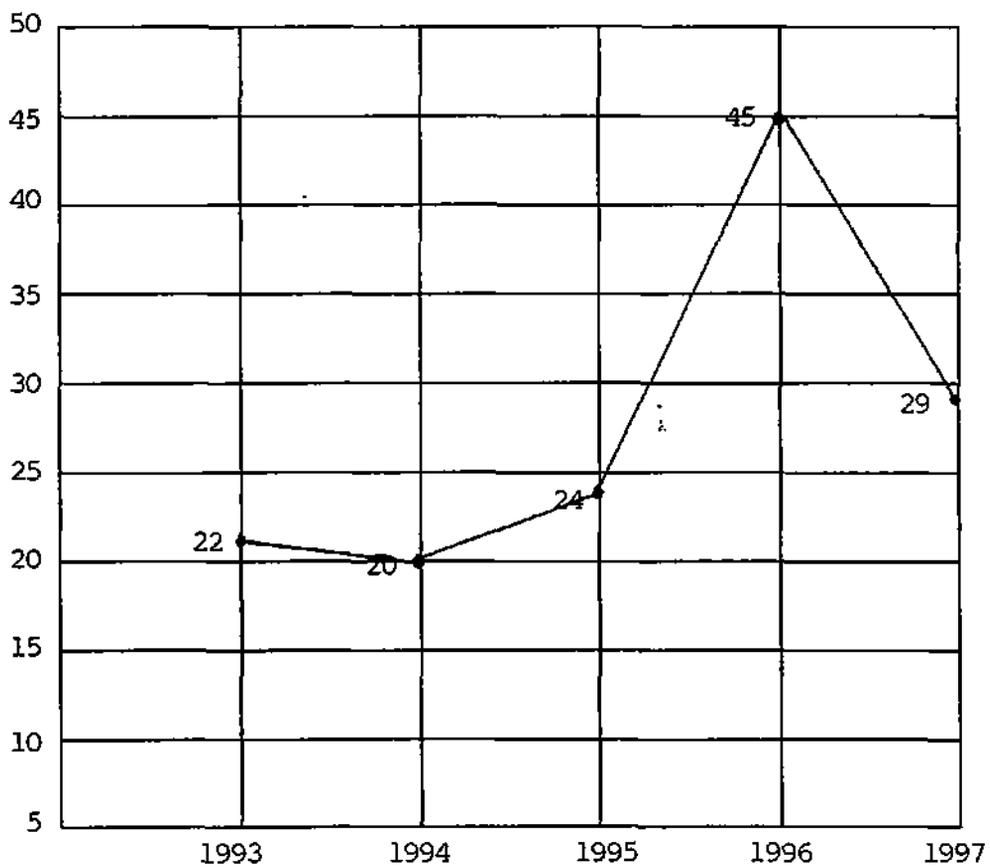
# STATISTICAL DATA DRIVE-BY SHOOTINGS

JANUARY 1993 through DECEMBER 1997



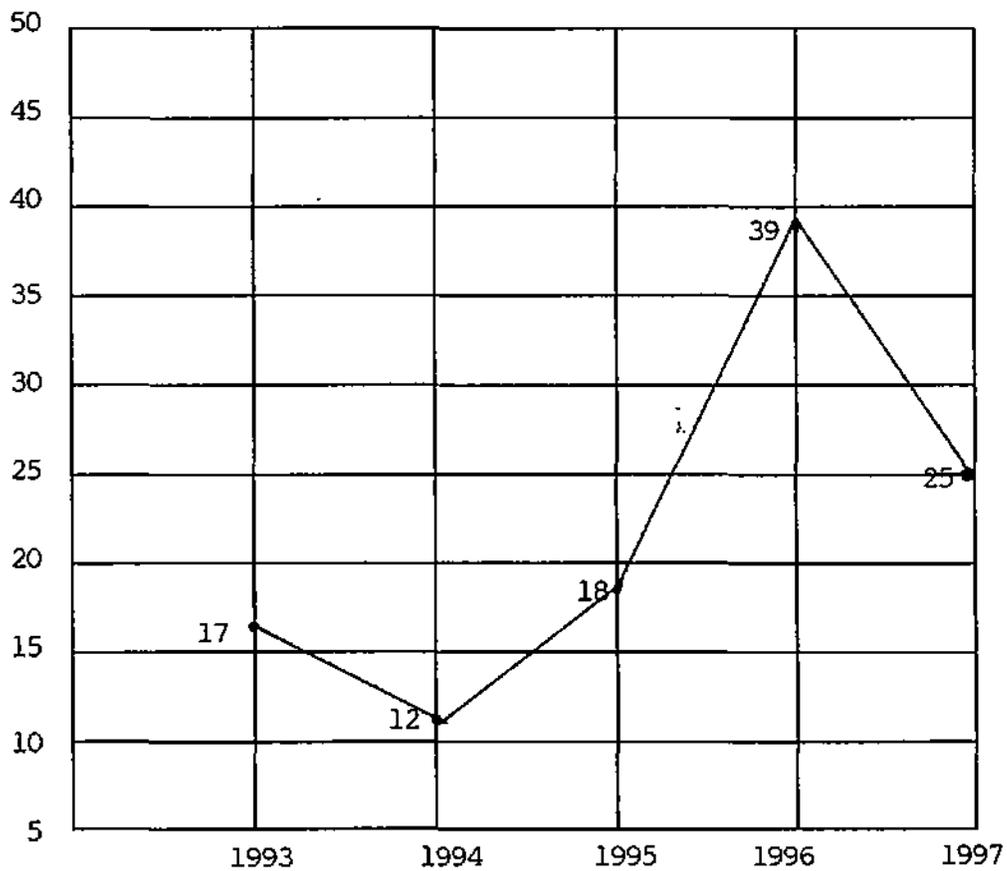
# STATISTICAL DATA DEAD GANG MEMBERS

JANUARY 1993 through DECEMBER 1997



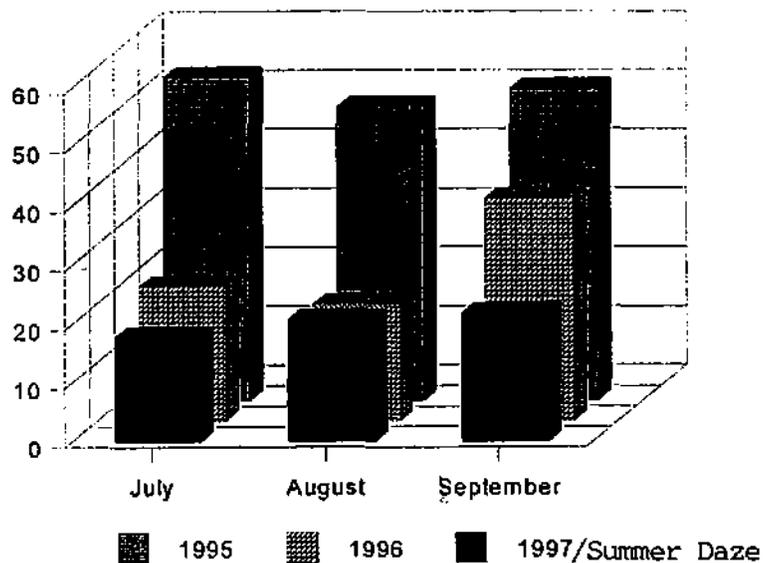
# STATISTICAL DATA GANG HOMICIDES

JANUARY 1993 through DECEMBER 1997



# OPERATION SUMMER DAZE DRIVE-BY SHOOTINGS

**OPERATIONAL PERIOD  
JULY 1997 through SEPTEMBER 1997**



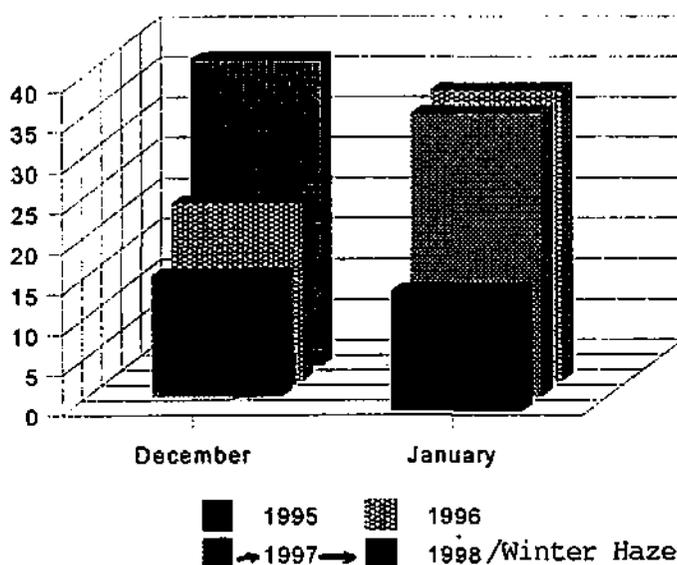
Drive-by shootings during the month of July decreased from 55 in 1995 to 18 in 1997, a decrease of 67 percent.

Drive-by shootings during the month of August decrease from 50 in 1995 to 21 in 1997, a decrease of 58 percent.

Drive-by shootings during the month of September decreased from 53 in 1995 to 22 in 1997, a decrease of 58 percent.

# OPERATION WINTER HAZE DRIVE-BY SHOOTINGS

## OPERATIONAL PERIOD DECEMBER 1997 through JANUARY 1998



Drive-by shootings during the month of December decreased from 38 in 1995 to 15 in 1997, a 61 percent decrease.

Drive-by shootings during the month of January decreased from 36 in 1996 to 15 in 1998, a 68 percent decrease.

# GANG STATISTICS

JANUARY 1993 through DECEMBER 1997

CATEGORY	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
GANGS	124	119	146	157	167
MEMBERS	3604	3508	4263	5098	5805
ASSOCIATES	1646	1387	1623	2051	2343
DRIVE-BYS	299	433	527	376	276
DEAD	22	20	24	45	29
HOMICIDE	17	12	18	39	25
SUICIDE	4	7	6	3	4
DEATH/OTHER	1	1	0	4	0

SUMMER DAZE 1997

STATISTICS

**SUMMERDAZE/ HUD**  
**TOTAL STATISTICS**

<b>FIELD INTERVIEW CARDS</b>	<b>1163</b>
<b>TOTAL ARRESTS</b>	<b>231</b>
<b>TOTAL CHARGES</b>	<b>405</b>
<b>GUNS RECOVERED</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>SEARCH WARRANTS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>MONEY SEIZED</b>	<b>\$76,462</b>
<b>NARCOTICS SEIZED</b>	
<b>COCAINE</b>	<b>12.99 OZ</b>
<b>MARIJUANA</b>	<b>15.82 OZ</b>
<b>METH</b>	<b>8.5 OZ</b>
<b>CLASSES TAUGHT</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>NEW GANGS</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>NEW GANG TURFS</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>HOME VISITS</b>	<b>41</b>

# ARREST STATISTICS

## JULY- CHARGES

<u>SUMMERDAZE FELONY</u>	<u>SUMMERDAZE MISD</u>	<u>HUD FELONY</u>	<u>HUD MISD.</u>
<u>78</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>TOTAL FELONY CHARGES FOR JULY---</u>		<u>95</u>	
<u>TOTAL MISD CHARGES FOR JULY--</u>		<u>92</u>	
<u>GRAND TOTAL FOR JULY</u>		<u>187 CHARGES</u>	

## AUGUST-CHARGES

<u>SUMMERDAZE FELONY</u>	<u>SUMMERDAZE MISD</u>	<u>HUD FELONY</u>	<u>HUD MISD</u>
<u>47</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>54</u>
<u>TOTAL FELONY CHARGES FOR AUGUST--</u>		<u>63</u>	
<u>TOTAL MISD . CHARGES FOR AUGUST--</u>		<u>81</u>	
<u>GRAND TOTAL FOR AUGUST</u>		<u>144 CHARGES</u>	

## SEPTEMBER CHARGES

<u>SUMMERDAZE FELONY</u>	<u>SUMMERDAZE MISD.</u>	<u>HUD FELONY</u>	<u>HUD MISD.</u>
<u>28</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>TOTAL FELONY CHARGES FOR SEPTEMBER-</u>		<u>49</u>	
<u>TOTAL MISD . CHARGES FOR SEPTEMBER</u>		<u>25</u>	
<u>GRAND TOTAL FOR SEPTEMBER</u>		<u>74 CHARGES</u>	

## ACTUAL BODIES ARRESTED

<u>JULY- FELONY- 53</u>	<u>AUGUST- FELONY 54</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER -FELONY- 37</u>
<u>MISD 38</u>	<u>MISD--34</u>	<u>MISD-15</u>

DR JULY-

405

TOTAL BODIES ARRESTS FOR JULY-SEPTEMBER

231

## GUN RECOVERY STATISTICS

### JULY

GUNS SUMMERDAZE-- 19

GUNS HUD-- 4

JULY TOTAL - 23

### AUGUST

GUNS SUMMERDAZE- 45

GUNS HUD--8

AUGUST TOTAL - 53

### SEPTEMBER

GUNS SUMMERDAZE-- 12

GUNS HUD--8

SEPTEMBER TOTALS---20

GRAND TOTAL GUNS SEIZED

**\*\*96\*\***

# SEARCH WARRANTS

## JULY

SUMMERDAZE---3

HUD---0

## AUGUST

SUMMERDAZE---8

HUD-2

## SEPTEMBER

SUMMERDAZE--4

HUD--6

**TOTAL SUMMERDAZE SEARCH WARRANTS**

**15**

**TOTAL HUD SEARCH WARRANTS**

**8**

**GRAND TOTAL**

**23**

# NARCOTICS SEIZED

## JULY

SUMMERDAZE--- 3.4 OZ. COCAINE  
7.85 OZ. MARIJUANA  
2.05 OZ. METH

HUD-- .08 OZ. COCAINE

## AUGUST

SUMMERDAZE 1.14 OZ. COCAINE  
4.96 OZ. MARIJUANA  
2.84 OZ. METH  
.08 OZ. HEROINE

HUD 5.26 OZ. COCAINE  
1.36 OZ. MARIJUANA  
1.34 OZ. METH

## SEPTEMBER

SUMMERDAZE 2.7 OZ. COCAINE  
1.15 OZ. MARIJUANA  
2.23 OZ. METH

HUD .41 OZ. COCAINE  
.5 OZ. MARIJUANA  
.04 OZ. METH

TOTAL NARCOTICS SEIZURE

SUMMERDAZE

COCAINE--- 7.24 OZ

MARIJUANA- 13.96 OZ

METH- 7.12 OZ

HUD-

COCAINE- 5.75 OZ

MARIJUANA- 1.86 OZ

METH- 1.38 OZ

TOTAL SEIZURES

COCAINE--- 12.99 OZ

MARIJUANA- 15.82 OZ

METH- 8.5 OZ

## **MONEY SEIZED**

### **JULY**

**SUMMERDAZE      \$3512**

**HUD--              \$112**

### **AUGUST**

**SUMMERDAZE      \$67,023**

**HUD-                \$830**

### **SEPTEMBER**

**SUMMERDAZE      \$1048**

**HUD-                \$3937**

### **TOTAL MONEY SEIZED**

**SUMMERDAZE      \$71,583**

**HUD                  \$4,879**

**GRAND TOTAL \$76,462**

# MISCELLANEOUS STATS

## GANG RELATED CLASSES TAUGHT----

JULY--        3

AUGUST-- 3                    TOTAL--12

SEPTEMBER- 6

## NEW GANGS IDENTIFIED

JULY-        4

AUGUST- 6                    TOTAL--13

SEPTEMBER- 3

## NEW GANG TURFS

JULY--        4

AUGUST- 4                    TOTAL 11

SEPTEMBER-- 3

## HOME VISITS

### JULY

SUMMERDAZE 6

HUD- 9

### AUGUST

SUMMERDAZE 5

HUD- 6

### SEPTEMBER

SUMMERDAZE 8

HUD- 7

### TOTALS

SUMMERDAZE 19

HUD- 22

**GRAND TOTAL 41**

# WINTER HALL TOTALS

DATE: 1-31-98

TOTAL ARRESTS		<u>136</u>
FELONY CHARGES		<u>155</u>
MISDEMEANOR CHARGES		<u>55</u>
CITATIONS		<u>26</u>
F.I.'S		<u>625</u>
SEARCH WARRANTS		<u>13</u>
CASH SEIZED		<u>10,384<sup>00</sup></u>
GUNS SEIZED		<u>55</u>
COCAINE SEIZED:		
OUNCES:	}	<u>11.02</u>
ROCKS:		
MARIJUANA		<u>1 LB 602</u>
MISCELLANEOUS NARCOTICS		<u>16.6 g</u>
MISCELLANEOUS NARCOTICS		
REQUESTS FOR GIS SERVICES		<u>88</u>
DETECTIVES		
SEAC		
NEAC		
NWAC		
SWAC		
DRIVE-BY SHOOTINGS		<u>30</u>
HOMICIDES (GANG RELATED)		<u>1</u>
CLASSES INSTRUCTED		<u>6</u>
# IN ATTENDANCE		<u>104</u>
Home visits	<u>—</u>	<u>15</u>
Briefings	<u>—</u>	<u>5</u>
Ride Alongs	<u>—</u>	<u>15</u>

12/16 - 1.30

# HUD TOTALS

DATE:     — 1/31/98    

TOTAL ARRESTS	<u>48</u>
FELONY CHARGES	<u>38</u>
MISDEMEANOR CHARGES	<u>10</u>
CITATIONS	<u>6</u>
F.I.'S	<u>69</u>
SEARCH WARRANTS	<u>7</u>
CASH SEIZED	<u>958<sup>00</sup></u>
GUNS SEIZED	<u>7</u>
COCAINE SEIZED:	<u>5.6g</u>
OUNCES:	<u>1.02</u>
ROCKS:	<u>4.5g</u>
MARIJUANA	<u>37.4g</u>
MISCELLANEOUS NARCOTICS	<u>0.6g</u>
MISCELLANEOUS NARCOTICS	<u>          </u>
REQUESTS FOR GIS SERVICES	<u>10</u>
DETECTIVES	<u>          </u>
SEAC	<u>          </u>
NEAC	<u>          </u>
NWAC	<u>          </u>
SWAC	<u>          </u>
DRIVE-BY SHOOTINGS	<u>4</u>
HOMICIDES (GANG RELATED)	<u>          </u>
CLASSES INSTRUCTED	<u>          </u>
# IN ATTENDANCE	<u>          </u>