Operation Safe Clubs: Enforcement and Situational Problem-Oriented Policing

Summary

In March of 2000, the City of Miami permitted zoning for five "Entertainment Specialty Districts" in an effort to promote downtown nightlife business development. In 2007, police and code enforcement complaints from the area residents substantially increased, reflected a changing environment that signaled the entertainment district nightclubs would need to adapt and modify business practices. The Miami Police Department instituted Operation Safe Clubs in 2008 as a Problem-Oriented Policing project designed to address a number of serious crime and nuisance issues related to the Miami Entertainment District. Computer crime analysis, beat cop interviews, resident complaints, and meetings with various community stakeholders identified the nightclubs as the primary problem. A task force was created to implement the following: (1) inter-agency coordination and streamlining of inspection protocols; (2) review of city and state ordinances to clarify regulations; (3) regular meetings with community stakeholders to address concerns; (4) site inspections and issuing of citations; and (5) meetings with nightclub staff regarding security training and other operational issues. While Operation Safe Clubs demonstrated significant positive changes across a number of indicators, the most promising outcome was realized in the working relationship that developed between the Neighborhood Resource Officers (NROs) and the venue owners. Namely, the NROs helped the owners understand that they needed to organize to address issues that continued to create problems for the community. As a result, the Miami Entertainment District Association (MEDA) was formed in February, 2010. This voluntary, non-profit organization became a vehicle through which stakeholders could meet, discuss, and analyze the issues, concerns, and problems related to nightlife activity and crime. The most pressing concern for all stakeholders was nightlife crime and its drain on police/rescue services. A number of secondary problems, including sound disturbances, were also identified. In response, MEDA collaborated with the

NROs to create the Enhanced Police Services (EPS) program where members pay into a fund that is used to hire additional police patrols. In addition, MEDA also instituted the Sound Attenuation Program to determine specific strategies to reduce their sound footprint within the community. Operation Safe Clubs resulted in a decrease in crimes related to nightlife economy, marked decrease in resident sound and disturbance complaints, and increased quality of life for residents and patrons alike.

Scanning

In March of 2000, the City of Miami passed Ordinance #11917 to modify city code provisions which "unnecessarily place Downtown Miami at a competitive disadvantage with other entertainment areas within Miami-Dade County and South Florida". The ordinance created incentives for business development in an area historically resistant to growth and to promote economic parity with other well-developed entertainment areas in the region (i.e. Miami Beach). Five "Entertainment Specialty Districts" were established wherein bar closing times were extended and distance requirements from churches and schools as well as proximity restrictions between establishments were relaxed. However, the ordinance restricts the number of venues that can be located within each of these entertainment zones and requires a special permit process that necessitates a detailed plan regarding the following areas of business operation: (1) parking and traffic; (2) crowd control; (3) sanitation; and (4) when adjacent to residential living, a noise attenuation plan. This paper will focus on problem-oriented policing interventions within two of these districts (Park West and Media) which are now collectively referred to as the "Downtown Entertainment District" (Appendix A).

In 2007, interviews conducted by Neighborhood Resource Officers (NROs) with downtown beat officers, residents, businesses and employees demonstrated a growing concern for the crime and nuisance occurring in the Downtown Entertainment District. In addition to normal weekend crowds (approximately 11,000 patrons), the City of Miami also hosts a number of special events which

dramatically increase the number of visitors within the Entertainment District's approximately twosquare mile area. The problems of crime, disturbance, and nuisance (i.e. sanitation and sound) were
further exacerbated by the Park West Entertainment District's 24-hour liquor licensing which prolongs
these issues beyond a typical nightlife timeframe. Additionally, the environment dramatically changed
with the construction and opening of several large multi-story condominiums immediately adjacent to
the Entertainment District. A number of city officials were inundated with resident complaints regarding
noise, trash, vandalism, and property destruction. Police managers reported challenges associated with
effective resource allocation when responding to sudden and unexpected disturbances within the
district.

Analysis

Given the information obtained from scanning, many of the problems reported in the district were directly attributed to nightclubs and bars. The NROs began the process of gathering additional information to clarify the problem and to specifically address identified issues. An analysis of the calls for service to the Miami Police department in 2008 revealed that of the 2178 calls placed, approximately 62% were calls made during the weekend (Appendices B and C). More importantly, the data revealed significant differences in alcohol-related, direct and disturbance arrests when nightclubs were open. Most concerning were the levels of victim-related crimes; although not significant in number, "shots fired" and other life-threatening incidents did much to validate residents' and city officials' fears that the Entertainment District was growing out of control.

A number of meetings between the Miami Police Department, Code Enforcement, Fire

Prevention, Planning, and Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco (DABT) were conducted in early

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¹ For example, the Miami Entertainment District hosts the annual three-day International Ultrafest Music Conference. 2011 conference attendance exceeded 129,000 (Bicentennial Park Management Attendance Records).

2008 to evaluate nightlife crime and disturbance within the Entertainment District. Documentation, observations and past and current citations of nightclubs revealed a high degree of noncompliance with a number of city and state codes. Additionally, surprise inspections and undercover operations showed that many of the venues were poorly managed, under-staffed, frequently over-capacity, lacked adequate seating, demonstrated overall poor crowd management (particularly in and around entrances), and lax enforcement of drinking restrictions with under-age patrons (Appendix D).

There were a number of reasons why the problems related to Miami's downtown nightlife had remained largely undetected; specifically, the Entertainment District was mostly vacant, particularly in the evenings during the early years of its growth. Downtown Miami was principally a commercial, business and warehouse district. However, according to the Miami Downtown Development Authority (DDA), as of May 2010 more than 70,000 people live in the area. This represents an increase of 80% since 2000.² As of June 2009, 85% of the 23,628 condo and apartment units built after 2003 were occupied. When the entertainment specialty districts were initially formed, businesses were permitted to operate with little oversight from various city departments, as limited police resources were directed to other nightlife areas in the city. These areas were more developed and had significant residential populations that registered complaints.

Finally, a comprehensive review of various state, county and city regulations identified serious discrepancies and even conflicts between a number of codes related to nightlife venues. Many were outdated and led to confusion regarding regulation of licensed premises. It was also evident that the impacted agencies did not have any established means through which information could be consistently shared and coordination of efforts organized.

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² In addition, more than 120 new businesses have opened since 2008. Independent Residential Closings and Occupancy Study. Miami Downtown Development Authority. May, 2010.

Response

An analysis of the primary problem and related issues revealed that direct enforcement responses for nightlife venues within the District were warranted. The principle goal of the selected interventions was to reduce crime and nuisance and increase safety via coordinated efforts to monitor nightclubs and bars. While the NROs acknowledged that crime and disturbance are integrally associated with nightlife economy, scanning and analysis revealed that factors related to nightclub operation played a much greater role than would be expected.

A task force composed of committee members representing city departments and other agencies was formed to: (1) streamline and clarify governmental regulations; (2) establish inspection protocols for nightclubs and bars; (3) conduct timely and consistent inspections; (4) lobby various city officials to review and modify codes that were found to be problematic; and (5) increase interdepartmental and agency communication regarding these issues. The primary objective of the Safe Clubs Task Force was to ensure that the venues were in code compliance with all life safety issues.

After the task force met and decided on various strategies, club owners, managers, and staff attended a mandatory meeting to review the goals and objectives of the program. Representatives from each venue from the Park West and the Media Entertainment Districts were present. Attendees were provided contact information for task force members, told that surprise inspections would occur (including during hours of operation), and that code violations would be cited. If serious violations were found, clubs would be subject to closure and would remain closed until the violation(s) were corrected. Venues also faced the prospect of suspension or revocation of their licenses for failure to correct repeated or multiple violations. Additionally, venue staff were required to attend a series of mandatory meetings that addressed security and operational "best practices". At these meetings, information and training was provided on properly identifying patrons, crowd control (outside and inside the venue), underage drinking and over-serving protocols, procedures regarding confiscation and disposal of illegal

narcotics, and early detection of aggression and proper restraint and removal techniques.³ Throughout these sessions, task force members continuously reinforced that the objective of the project was code compliance and life safety and that nightclubs and bars that demonstrated a determined commitment to addressing these concerns had nothing to fear - the process would be comprehensive and fair.⁴

Assessment

In general, the inspections revealed a number of minor code violations, which could be corrected with moderate effort and cost to the venue owners. There were, however, a few nightclubs that were found to have serious code violations which resulted in bar closures on the night(s) the violations were discovered. Serious infractions were often fire code violations regarding locked exit doors, blocked egresses, fire safety systems that were not operational, and hazardous overcrowding.

Communication amongst NROs, club owners, and contact persons within the task force proved to be invaluable. Many owners and managers reached out to task force members for advice on how to best correct a multitude of violations and concerns. The NROs played a significant role in the ongoing process of facilitating meetings with various parties to ensure that the best possible solutions were implemented. Two significant findings underscored the success of the project: (1) all nightclubs and bars within the Miami Entertainment District were found to be in 100% compliance with city and state codes; and (2) significant reductions in violent crimes within the district (Appendix E).

While the initial results of Operation Safe Clubs were promising, unresolved issues related to nightlife crime and disturbance remained. In addition to concerns regarding police resource usage,

³ Security meetings included a number of special presentations; for example, Transportation Security Administration (TSA) agents provided training to venue security and door staff regarding search procedures for contraband and weapons.

⁴ Goldstein remarked that "...efforts to improve policing should extend to and focus on the end product of policing – on the effectiveness and *fairness* (Italics added) of the police in dealing with the substantive problems that the public looks to the police to handle." Goldstein, Herman. 1990. *Problem-Oriented Policing*. New York: McGraw Hill.

disturbance and nuisance negatively impacted neighborhood residents. There continued to be calls for increased enforcement; angry residents were convinced that the only solution was to close the entire district and move it elsewhere. Club owners attended meetings and discussed their efforts to address community concerns. Residents and other stakeholders tended to dismiss the gains made in life safety issues and code compliance, often arguing that the nightclub industry was over-utilizing police and emergency services. The sound disturbance was a particularly contentious issue for all parties involved as several club owners had been cited and even arrested for violation of the ordinance. Project Safe Clubs and its NROs had achieved success in code compliance and had dramatically improved the life safety of patrons and club employees, but quality of life issues for the residents had remained difficult to resolve. As Goldstein (1979) points out, "The problem is a problem for police whether or not it is defined as a criminal offense."

Redefining the Problem

"How one defines the problem greatly influences how one will address it." 6

In an analysis of the winners of the Goldstein Award in Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing,⁷ papers discussing nightlife economies tended to directly target nightclubs and bars as the identified problem. Many of the interventions or responses could be characterized as enforcement rather than situational POP strategies.⁸ A review of the literature reflects a similar perspective – target the venues

⁵ Goldstein, Herman. "Improving Policing: A Problem-Oriented Approach". Crime and Delinquency. April 1979 (pp. 236-258).

⁶ Scott, Michael S. "Problem-Oriented Policing: reflections on the First 20 Years". Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice, October 2000.

⁷ Rojek, Jeff. "A Decade of Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing: Characteristics of the Goldstein Award Winners." Police Quarterly, Vol. 6 No. 4, December 2003 (pp. 492-515).

⁸ Eck, J.E. (1993). Alternative Futures for Policing. In D. Weisburd & C. Uchida (Eds), *Police Innovation and Control of the Police* (pp. 59-79). New York: Springer-Verlag.

via code enforcement, new ordinance restrictions, or other coercive strategies to effect change. As this project evidences, significant progress can be achieved utilizing such strategies. However, the NROs recognized venue owners as important stakeholders who were invested in solving the problems that negatively impacted their businesses. Clarke (1997) noted that problem-oriented projects seek partnerships with "particular groups of individuals whose direct assistance may be needed to deal with the problem in question". As a result, the NROs began to hold meetings with club owners to facilitate the formation of a new organization that would best represent their interests.

In February of 2010, the Miami Entertainment District Association (MEDA) was formed to continue to address problems of nightlife crime, disturbance and nuisance within the district. As a non-profit entity composed of nightclubs, restaurants and parking lot management companies, MEDA's mission was to promote security, safety and improved quality of life within the Miami Entertainment District (Appendix F). MEDA members immediately sought to clarify and design solutions for the two pressing issues facing the community: (1) over-utilization of police resources; and (2) sound disturbance and resident complaints.

Appendix G illustrates the traditional SARA model, including the enforcement interventions that were implemented in the first phase of Operation Safe Clubs. In addition, the graphic expands on this model to include situational POP strategies outside the direct management of the policing agency. Specifically, the formation of MEDA was critical in that it served as an "action arena" (Olstrom, 1994) through which community stakeholders could meet to discuss, analyze and develop innovative strategies regarding complex "root" problems.¹¹ While the NROs continued to play an important role as facilitators and mediators, it was critical that club owners take direct responsibility for generating

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⁹ Jeffs, B.W., Saunders, W.M. (1983) "Minimizing alcohol related offences by enforcement of the existing licensing legislation." British Journal of Addiction, Vol. 78 (pp. 67-77).

¹⁰ Clarke, Ronald. Problem-Oriented Policing and the Potential Contribution of Criminology. The National Institute of Justice, Grant # N5-IJ-CX-0021, February 1997 (p. 23).

¹¹ Ostrom, E., Gardner, R., Walker, J. (1994) Rules, Games, & Common-Pool Resources. The University of Michigan Press.

innovative strategies regarding these problems. It may be that situational problem-oriented policing strategies are best developed through an organization that exists outside the "means" of the police so that innovative "ends" can be proposed, implemented and sustained. 12

MEDA Enhanced Police Services (EPS) Program

The Miami Entertainment District Association (MEDA) began the EPS program in March of 2010. Members of the association recognized that resident complaints regarding the over-utilization of police resources had merit. Addressing these problems was critical given the industry's economic importance. Currently, nightlife businesses within the Entertainment District: (1) generate 30 million dollars annually in gross sales; (2) employ more than 1200 people; (3) pay 3.7 million dollars in rent or mortgage payments; (4) spend in excess of 3 million dollars on improvements and renovation; and (5) purchase 7 million dollars in vendor products. Particularly noteworthy are taxes and special assessments; a one percent (1%) Homeless and Domestic Violence Tax is collected on all food and beverage sales that are licensed by the state of Florida to sell alcoholic beverages for consumption on the premises. 15

The NROs were surprised to find that many of the club owners wanted additional policing directed toward nightlife problems as a means to increase security and safety for employees and patrons. The EPS program provides "zone policing" during weekend hours of nightclub operation

¹² Central to the Goldstein's vision of POP was that police need to place more emphasis on substantive outcomes rather than the usual tendency of improving internal organization of the agency. Goldstein, Herman. "Improving Policing: A Problem-Oriented Approach". Crime and Delinquency. April 1979. (pp. 236-258).

¹³ Improvements and Renovations include ideas related to CPTED – Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.

¹⁴ Miami Entertainment District Association Industry Survey, February 2010.

¹⁵ Source: http://www.miamidade.gov/taxcollector/touristpay.asp

(Thursday-Sunday). ¹⁶ EPS officers are required to actively patrol the community with emphasis on nightlife crime and disturbance. Integral to the success of the program is the use of an assigned cell phone that serves as the primary point of contact when incidents take place. Nightclub managers and security have been trained to call the sergeant in charge immediately when problems arise, substantially streamlining communication and decreasing response time. As Scott (2006) points out, many club operators and staff have a disincentive to call 911 because they do not want official police records to reflect negatively on their liquor licenses. ¹⁷ Club security understand that EPS officers are there to assist and that asking for help early decreases the likelihood that more serious crimes will occur. The EPS program and the Safe Clubs training have continuously reinforced the importance of club security assuming a role of "protector" rather than "enforcer". In addition, many aggravated assaults and shootings occur when a fight breaks out inside a club and the individual(s) removed wait for the other party to exit the venue. Security protocols developed for the EPS program direct club staff to immediately call the EPS officer so they can ensure that the instigators actually leave the Entertainment District before more serious crimes occur.

Since beginning the EPS program, MEDA members have spent in excess of \$130,000.00 (Appendix H), representing more than 93% of the organizations' expenditures with an average cost of \$2200 per week. It should be noted that the service is continuously evaluated, modified and tailored to meet the changing needs of the district. The NET Commander attends MEDA meetings where patrol numbers, zone specifics and reoccurring and new problems are addressed. For example, the annual Ultrafest Music Conference demands a serious commitment of police resources. In 2011, the conference reported a record attendance of 129,728 people. Approximately \$7100 per year was

¹⁶ It should be noted that the NROs involved in the MEDA project cannot work within the Enhanced Police Services program; in addition, EPS fees include City of Miami Surcharges to cover Workers' Compensation, Police Insurance Trust, and Administrative fees.

¹⁷ Scott, Michael., Dedel, Kelly. The Problem of Assaults in and around Bars. 2nd Edition. Officer of Community-oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice, August 2006.

invested in EPS service during Ultrafest for 2010 and 2011. Appendix I shows that while there is no significant decrease in crime incidences during the Ultrafest Music Conference, it is critical to note that attendance at Ultrafest, the American Airlines Arena, and the Arsht Performing Arts Center increased by 100% since 2009 (Attachment J). In other words, incidences of crime remained relatively the same despite significant increases in event attendance during Ultrafest week. This may be attributed to increased police presence via the EPS program.

Finally, Appendix K provides statistical comparisons for reported incidences from 2007 through 2010 during weekend hours of nightclub operation. A cursory analysis of reported incidences reveals modest declines between 2009 and 2010 in a number of crimes typically associated with nightlife economies (i.e. DUI, alcohol-related incidents or arrests, vandalism and assault and battery). Direct arrests and disturbance arrests increased, which may be attributed to preventative, early response policing.

MEDA Sound Attenuation Program

The Miami Entertainment District is a vibrant and diverse metropolitan area that has witnessed impressive business and residential growth within the past decade. Most of the residents in the district recognize that city life is significantly noisier than residential living – a trade-off against the conveniences of living in the center of a community in motion. However, there is no other issue more indicative of the region's transformation than that of sound disturbance. As Goldstein (1979) points out, "In fact, noise is probably among the most common problems brought by the public to the police". 18

As previously discussed, there are a number of challenges regarding the sound ordinance and its application. On two separate occasions, venue owners were arrested for ordinance violations. In one

¹⁸ Goldstein, Herman. "Improving Policing: A Problem-Oriented Approach". Crime and Delinquency. April 1979, (pp. 236-258).

case the matter was *nolle prossed* as there was not enough information for the State's attorney to consider proceeding further in the case. The second case was dismissed; the judge determined that the nightclub was located in an entertainment district and that it was simply carrying out its regular business of playing music for its patrons. These two instances highlight the difficulty many local municipalities have regarding the enforcement of sound ordinances that are based on ambiguous and subjective language (i.e. "plainly audible"). In both these cases, valuable taxpayer money and court time was wasted, businesses lost revenue and were subject to attorney fees and valuable police resources were misdirected as the intervention (i.e. arrests) did not solve the problem.

In April of 2010, MEDA proposed that a study be conducted to determine the exact nature of the sound disturbance within the district. The program consisted of two components: (1) a self-study conducted by the nightclub owners to determine specific mitigation plans for each club; and (2) a two-month general investigation of sound complaints to assess the disturbance as perceived by area residents. The resident complaint study would be conducted by the City of Miami Code Enforcement Department. Code enforcement officers would respond to each complaint and would be required to complete a standardized report and nightly log. MEDA agreed to pay for all project staffing and any other associated expenses.

The self-study was conducted in April of 2010 and a sound engineer was hired to evaluate sound mitigation plans and the physical structure of each participating venue. In addition, sound assessments were completed during operational hours without any changes to the club's usual music levels. The study revealed that while a number of nightclubs were in general compliance with the ordinance, particular structural elements of many of the properties contributed to sound disturbance. Appendix L, for example, details the findings for one venue which revealed that an alley-way entrance significantly increased sound propagation because the alley served as an amplifier. The "offending" club agreed to post security at the exit and to use it only in emergencies.

General results of the self-study showed that most sound disturbances could be ameliorated by eliminating or drastically decreasing patio music, changing entrance and exit door usage and improving sound absorption within the clubs. Finally, owners acknowledged that roof-top, open-air dance patios would need to be eliminated. One nightclub in particular took the drastic and costly step of enclosing its roof-top patio; another made no structural changes and has been forced to operate its roof-top patio without music. It should also be noted that MEDA members attended resident meetings during which one particular club owner asked residents to call his cell phone regarding any sound disturbance problems. He was contacted on a few occasions and went directly to the "offending" venue. As a result, the problem was immediately resolved.

As a result of the changes made, resident sound complaints dramatically decreased. The improvement was so significant that the City of Miami Code Enforcement Department deemed the general investigation unnecessary. Because of the efforts made to self-police, code enforcement and the club owners have developed a solid, working relationship. Since the sound mitigation self-study, MEDA has been contacted regarding a variety of issues and continues to work collaboratively with code enforcement to resolve these problems.

Operation Safe Clubs has transformed the community and provided a process through which nightclub owners, law enforcement and other community stakeholders can work to resolve problems typically directed toward policing agencies. Through the formation of MEDA, root problems have been analyzed and innovative, situational POP strategies have been implemented. This would not have been possible without the early enforcement responses instituted by Operation Safe Clubs; club owners needed to get "their houses in order" before more innovative solutions could be considered. Today, the benefits of this project reach far beyond what anyone anticipated. Most surprising is that venue

owners have developed close working relationships and respect for one another's businesses.¹⁹ There are discussions of group business projects that would never have been possible without Operation Safe Clubs. The project is affecting the bottom line of the businesses involved – it is actually creating an opportunity to increase revenue.

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¹⁹ When reviewing results of a 1994 POP project (Electric Avenue, Calgary, Alberta, Canada), analysis revealed that "businesses merely blamed each other and the police for not controlling the violence and property damage." In contrast, Operation Safe Clubs and its NROs now recognize that genuine collaboration and trust are essential for success and long-term sustainability of these initiatives.

Key Project Team Members

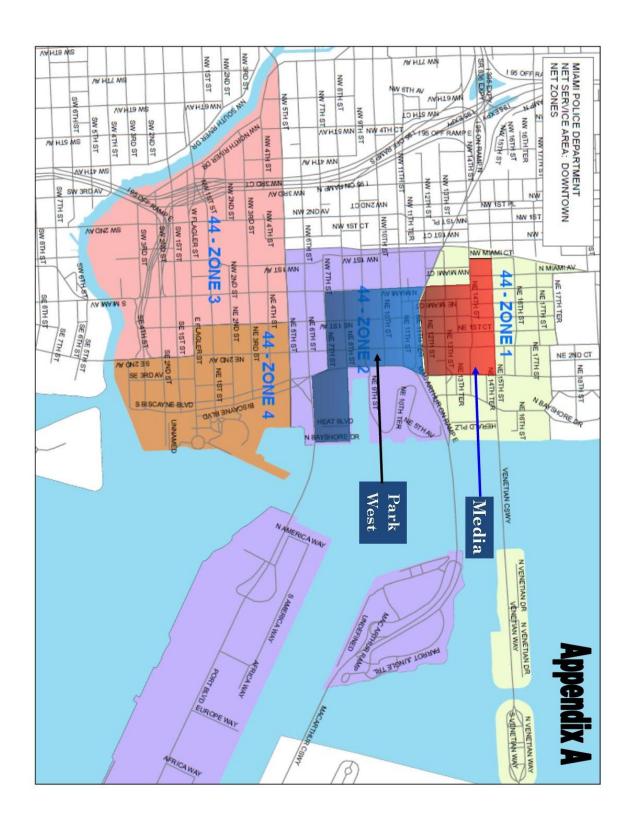
Officer Wanda Mendez Miami Police Department

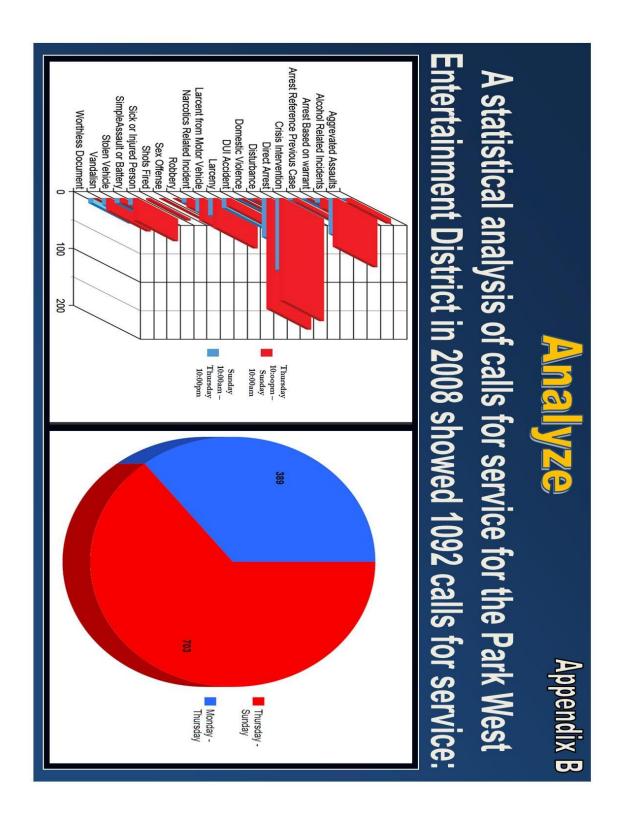
Michael Slyder Vice President Miami Entertainment District Association

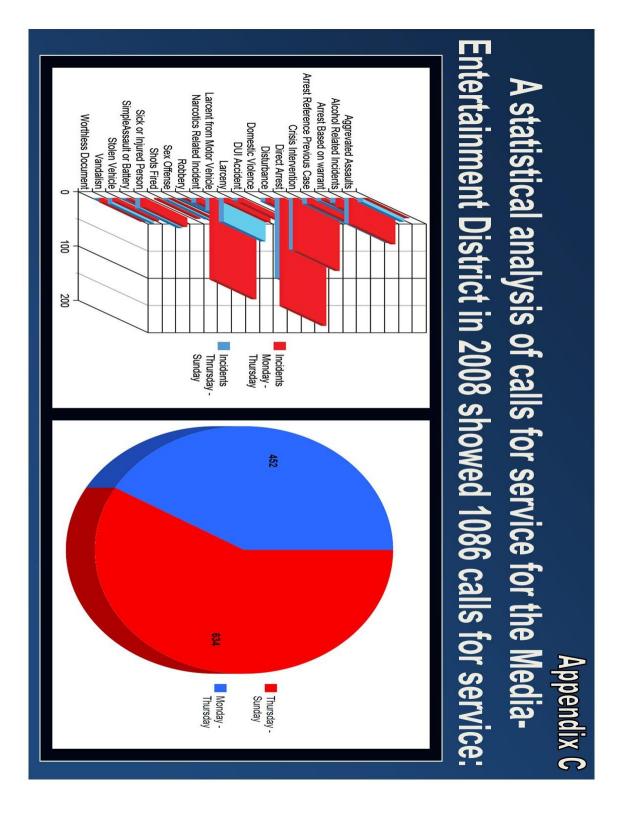
Project Contact Person

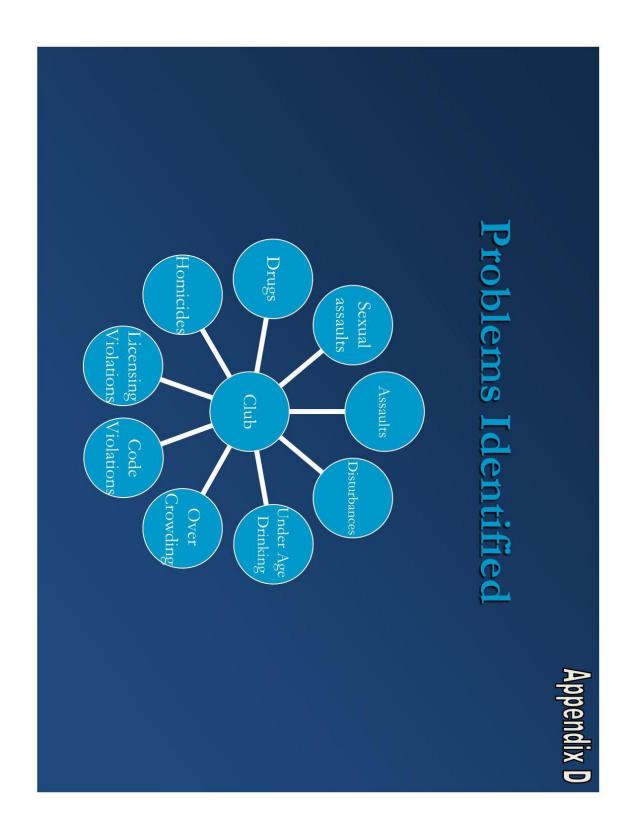
Officer Wanda Mendez **Downtown Resource Officer** City of Miami Police Department 400 NW 2nd Avenue Miami, Florida 33128 Phone: (786) 285-9407

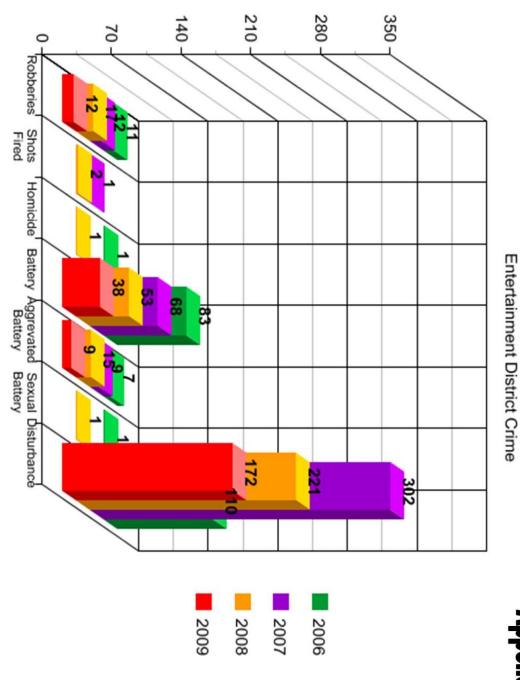
Email: Wanda.Mendez@miami-police.org



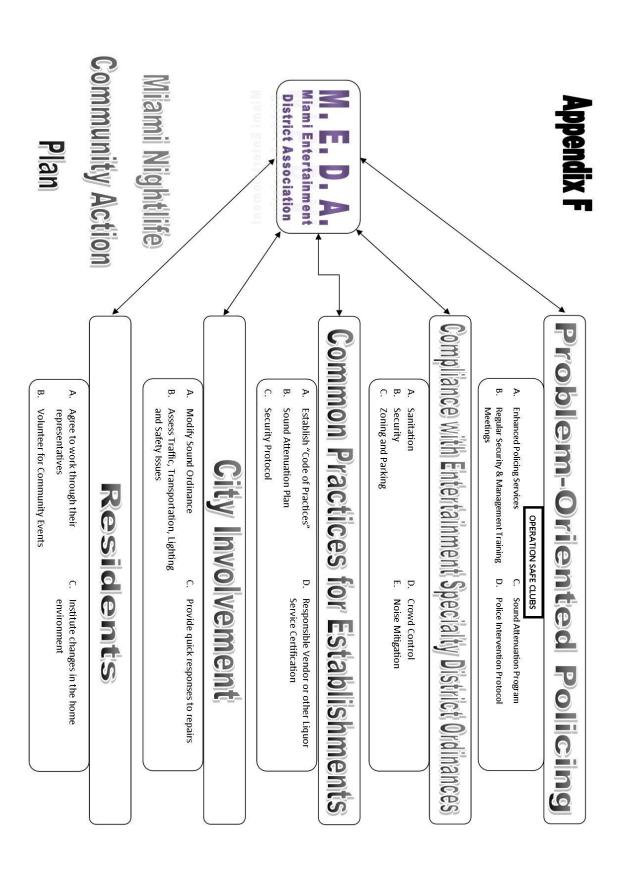




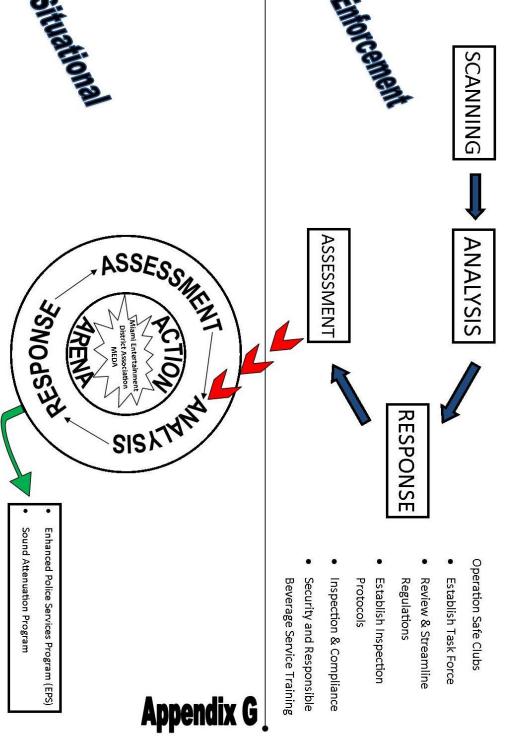




Appendix E



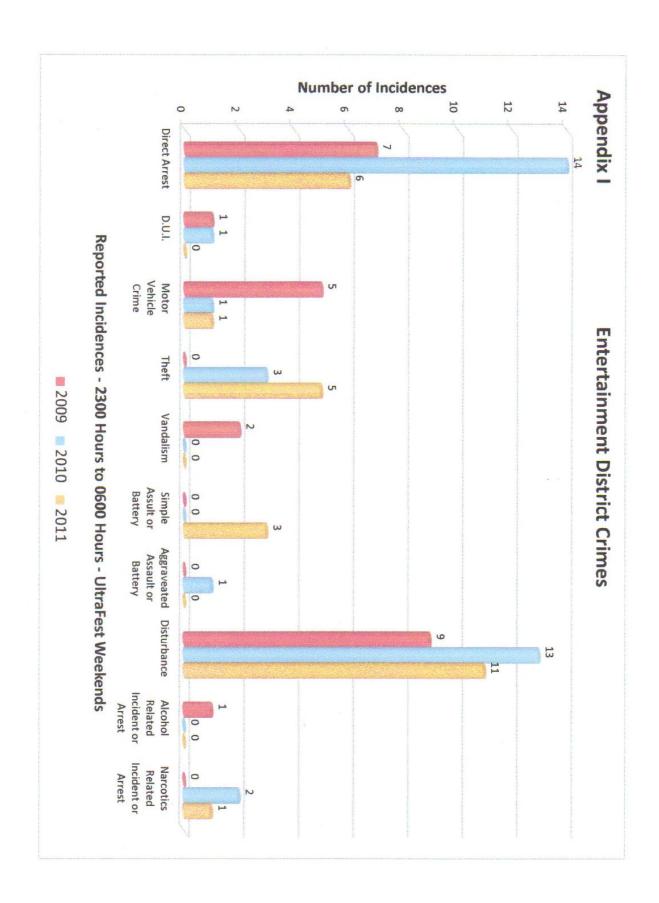
Problem-Oriented Policing: Operation Safe Clubs

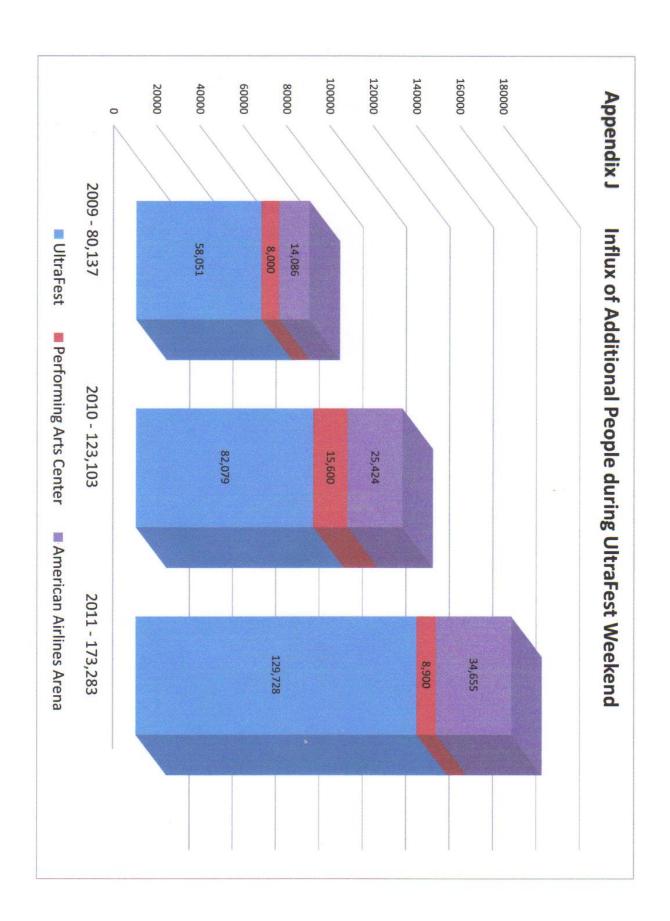


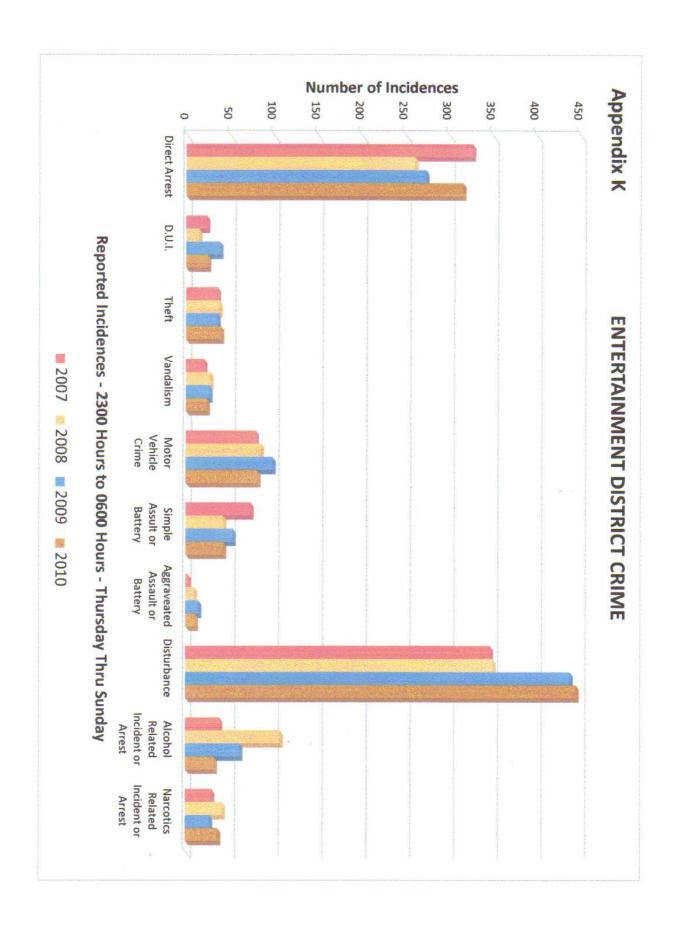
Miami Entertainment District Association Profit & Loss From Date of Inception to May 25, 2011

Appendix H

Ordinary I	ncome/Expense				
Incor					
	Fundraiser			\$	5,481.45
	Program Income				
	Membership Dues	\$	2,802.00		
	Program Service Fees		132,503.00		
	Program Income - Other	\$	600.00		
	Total Program Income			\$ 1	135,905.00
Total	Income			_	141,386.45
					,
Expe	nse				
Expe	Bank Service Charges			\$	343.94
	Business Expenses			7	313.51
	Business Registration Fees	\$	88.75		
	Business Expenses - Other	\$	70.00		
	Total Business Expenses	7	70.00	\$	158.75
	Total business Expenses			7	130.73
	Charitable Contributions			\$	1,900.00
	Contract Services			7	2,500.00
	Accounting Fees	\$	350.00		
	Legal Fees	\$	892.33		
	Outside Contract Services		131,904.50		
	Total Contract Services		132,304.30	\$ 1	133,146.83
	Total contract services			7 .	233,210.03
	Fundraiser Event Costs			\$	950.00
	Operations				
	Postage, Mailing Service	\$	63.92		
	Supplies	\$	355.08		
	Telephone, Telecommunication	\$	610.75		
	Total Operations			\$	1,029.75
	Political Contributions			\$	500.00
	Travel and Meetings				
	Conference, Convention, Mee	15	191.21		
	Total Travel and Meetings	_		\$	191.21
	0				
Total	Expense			\$ 1	138,220.48
Net Ordina	ary Income			\$	3,165.97
Net Income				\$	3,165.97







Appendix L

Miami Entertainment District Association (MEDA)

<u>Sound Attenuation Plan</u>

Date: Saturday, April 10th, 2010

Time: 9:00pm – 9:30pm Place: 90 Degrees Nightclub

90 NE 11th Street Miami, FL 33132 (786) 425-3545

Sound Study Measurement completed by:

Alan Rodriguez -

Dimensional Production Services

Michael Slyder -

Vice President - MEDA

Chair of the Research Committee

Equipment:

 American Recorder Technologies – Model #SPL8810 (certified for sound measurements)

2. Spectrum Analyzer (Gold Line) - Model #ASA10B

Measurements:

Measurements were taken 25 feet from the front entrance of the nightclub on 11th street. The distance from the property line of the establishment measured 25 feet. Two measurements were taken (5 minute intervals): (1) without the nightclub sound (to establish an ambient noise reading); and (2) with the nightclub sound (doors to the facility were open to replicate building use during business hours.

Note: given the time within which the readings were taken, it should be noted that there was little if any traffic or assemblage of people on 11th street.

Nightclub Sound Reading		
72		

Note:

The ambient sound reading is significantly higher than expected as the reading was taken across the street from the nightclub; the Miami Water Plant's sound increased the ambient noise reading, although the sound engineer used his body as a shield between the meter and the plant during the nightclub sound measurement.

Conclusions:

Given the sound measurements and the establishment's efforts to employ structural and material changes to mitigate the sound projection to 11th Street, there is no need to make any further changes to the front entrance.

Recommendations:

In discussions with the ownership and management of the establishment, they recognize that the principle issue regarding sound disturbance involves the use of a door located in the back of the facility. Ownership has committed to limiting the use of this door as an emergency exit only. As per City of Miami Fire Code, the door is secured with a push-bar to allow immediate exiting in the event of an emergency. Ownership will post security at this door to ensure that its use will be restricted.

Alan Rodriguez

Dimensional Production Services

Lillian Martinez

Owner 90 Degrees Nightclub Michael Slyder

Chair of the Research Committee Miami Entertainment District Assn.