Collaborative Reform Initiative

The Collaborative Reform Initiative Process

Experiences of Selected Sites

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COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
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CRJ
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The Internet references cited in this publication were valid as of the date of publication. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the author(s) nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

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Executive Summary

Since the launch of the Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA) in 2011, interest in and support for this approach to improving trust between police agencies and the communities they serve has grown significantly. As of the writing of this report, 16 law enforcement agencies have been launched as CRI-TA sites. Given this increase in participation and investment, the COPS Office and others are interested in understanding how participating jurisdictions experience the Collaborative Reform process.

This study compares and contrasts how the CRI-TA process unfolded across sites in order to shed light on elements that were similar, elements that differed, things that worked well, and areas in need of improvement. The sites reviewed in this report are the Las Vegas (Nevada) Metropolitan Police Department, Spokane (Washington) Police Department, Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) Police Department, Saint Louis County (Missouri) Police Department, Fayetteville (North Carolina) Police Department, Salinas (California) Police Department, and Calexico (California) Police Department. One-on-one and group interviews were conducted across an array of stakeholders, including representatives from three key groups: (1) COPS Office staff (both current and former), (2) technical assistance (TA) providers and their subject matter expert (SME) partners, and (3) police agency personnel. In addition to speaking with key stakeholders, the team from the Crime and Justice Institute (CJI) reviewed available documents that could shed some light on the CRI-TA process. The specific methodology and associated limitations are discussed in the text.

What is working well

Overall, sites typically found that the intense, time-limited assessment process and resultant findings and recommendations served as a catalyst for change and gave participating departments direction. Sites generally felt that the findings in their respective assessment reports were fair and accurate and that the recommendations were reasonable and feasible, although there were some exceptions.

The flexibility of the CRI-TA program and its ability to be tailored for diverse local contexts were also identified as positive elements. Additionally, we heard repeatedly of the legitimizing effect of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)'s involvement. Sites reflected that in many instances they were aware of the work their department needed to do, but having the federal government as the source brought enhanced credibility. Several stakeholders mentioned that the voluntary nature of Collaborative Reform makes a participating police agency appear proactive about reforms and organizational transformation, unlike being forced to make reforms through a consent decree or settlement with the DOJ.

Perceptions of collaboration

There was no consensus on what collaboration means in the context of CRI-TA. We heard varying responses from stakeholders regarding which of the involved entities were actually the collaborators, including the participating police agency, the community, the local city or county government, the COPS Office, and the TA providers. We also heard varying responses on which points during the multiyear process should and should not be collaborative efforts. Furthermore, a number of people also noted that the meaning of collaboration has shifted since the Initiative's formal launch in early 2012. The extent of collaboration between the TA team and the site representatives was generally deemed strong at the earlier sites, but some felt it has been decreasing at the later sites.

Stage 1: Motivation for and process of becoming a CRI-TA site

Some of the included sites were motivated to become involved with CRI-TA by high-profile events and intense police-community discord that reached a point of crisis. For example, the Las Vegas, Spokane, St. Louis County, and Salinas police departments were largely spurred by strong public outcry related to officer-involved shootings and increased scrutiny by the media. The Calexico Police Department was also motivated in part by a high-profile event, related to allegations of corruption within the department. The chiefs of the Philadelphia and Fayetteville police departments appeared to have been primarily motivated by a recognition that their respective departments had areas of concern that would benefit from an external assessment.

There is fairly widespread agreement that standard criteria and a documented process for vetting and selecting CRI-TA sites do not exist. There is no shared understanding about what key factors qualify a site to be approved as a good candidate for Collaborative Reform or what factors would be considered grounds for rejection. What was evident from feedback received during our interviews was the consistent and substantial involvement of COPS Office executive leadership during the site selection process. The COPS Office has begun efforts to clarify and document the site selection process.

We asked numerous COPS Office staff about their perceptions of the goals of Collaborative Reform. We found general consensus around two key goals: organizational transformation and enhancing community trust and engagement. A few secondary goals were also mentioned, including adding to the knowledge base for the field of policing, as well as an added option on the spectrum of federal responses. Beyond the agency leaders, there was an expressed lack of understanding from others in the involved police agencies about how a site's goals and objectives were developed, and frustration with the lack of documentation for this part of the process. The one focus area that was common to all sites included in this study was an examination and strengthening of internal policies and practices. Other common focus areas at the site level were addressing use of force issues and, broadly, supporting better community-police relations.

Stage 2: Initial assessment process

The Technical Assistance (TA) teams that work with the CRI-TA sites are important components of the assessment process. The size and makeup of TA teams varied greatly across sites, with the individuals that comprised these teams representing a variety of skills and experiences. Some teams collaborated well with the police departments and COPS Office representatives, while others had challenges with elements such as communication, acceptance by the police department, or understanding of issues specific to a particular site.

Based on our interviews, it appears that TA providers made efforts to understand local context and the complexities of department structures. TA providers and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) described different approaches to becoming familiar with the sites prior to launching their work. However, some site representatives felt that TA providers and SMEs could do a better job of understanding the local context of their respective sites, and that the process sometimes felt too "one-size-fits-all".

Communities were typically first made aware of their jurisdictions' participation in CRI-TA by a press release and press event. Generally, the most meaningful community input was gathered through community listening sessions hosted by the COPS Office. So that the community could provide candid feedback, the police departments were typically not a part of these meetings.

One of the challenges of the assessment phase is to identify best practices on which to base the recommendations. This difficulty is largely due to the limited research and consensus on what is considered a "best practice" in the realm of policing. General sources of best practices on which CRI-TA recommendations were based included law enforcement professional organizations, published research literature, and the CRI-TA team's own expertise.

Across the sites, the number of recommendations issued ranged from 42 in Spokane to 110 in Salinas. When standardized by the number of officers in each of the seven departments, the recommendations ranged from 1.4 per 100 officers in Philadelphia, to 563.3 per 100 officers in Calexico, which has a sworn staff of only 30. Stakeholders interviewed held different perspectives on how feasible the recommendations issued in the assessment report were. Some sites found that the recommendations were helpful in pushing their police departments to engage in reforms, while others were concerned that staffing and resource limitations could prevent them from completing many of the recommendations they were issued. Feedback about the feasibility of the timelines and schedule driven by the COPS Office was mixed.

Stage 3: Implementation and monitoring

The Collaborative Reform process started at different times at the various CRI-TA sites, which are therefore at notably different phases of the process. As of the writing of this report the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department is the only site to have completed the formal oversight of CRI-TA and have a final report published. One notable area of difference was how various departments have approached implementation and monitoring in terms of organization and staffing. Some sites have taken a relatively centralized approach, in which one individual bears a significant share of the responsibility for implementing and tracking progress on the recommendations. Other sites have been more decentralized and spread the responsibility for recommendations across many staff at varying ranks and roles within the department. Based on our observations, sites with a more decentralized (yet coordinated) approach to implementing CRI-TA recommendations are more likely to increase buy-in, which can strengthen their chances for sustaining reforms.

Another issue that emerged from the interviews is confusion over what compliance with the CRI-TA recommendations entails. During the monitoring phase, the extent to which sites make progress on recommendations is monitored by the TA providers and COPS Office. We heard of instances where there was a lack of clarity around what a department must do to be considered compliant with a recommendation.

There is a disconnect between several sites' expectations around what traditional technical assistance would be provided during the monitoring phase and what is actually being provided. Several sites noted their frustration over the amount of learning opportunities and training they were being provided after the publication of the assessment report. It is worth noting, however, that representatives from one site were pleased and satisfied with the traditional technical assistance that they have been provided; this site appears to have been fairly proactive and assertive in making requests for peer-to-peer learning and training.

At the time CRI-TA was launched, each site was under the leadership of an individual who generally, if not wholeheartedly, welcomed the process. That said, various strategies were used to communicate about CRI-TA participation and foster buy-in with personnel. We heard from numerous interviewees that police department personnel as a rule, are resistant to reform, and that fostering commitment and buy-in throughout

the department was crucial for CRI-TA to be successfully implemented and its recommendations sustained.

Conclusion and recommendations

According to our review, the benefits of engaging in CRI-TA include organizing change, securing expert assistance, and undergoing a third-party assessment; however, participation in CRI-TA in and of itself is not sufficient for effective, sustainable change. *How* an organization experiences the process matters, and it is in this area that we believe there is much work to be done. Based on our review and the collective feedback we received from stakeholders, we are hopeful that this new and innovative model can be a viable alternative for the federal government in supporting local police agencies in undertaking and achieving reform.

Most of the key stakeholders with whom we spoke were able to articulate the overall positive aspects of participating in CRI-TA. However, as the initiative continues to grow and expand to additional jurisdictions, in order to strengthen credibility and improve the experiences of the sites and TA teams, we offer recommendations organized around three stages of the process.

Recommendations related to site selection

Recommendation 1

The COPS Office should identify and share the areas of reform that they consider to be appropriate for the CRI-TA process.

Recommendation 2

The COPS Office should be clear and transparent about the criteria for becoming a CRI-TA site.

Recommendation 3

The COPS Office could make improvements in setting expectations for police agencies that are interested in CRI-TA or currently participating in CRI-TA.

Recommendations related to initial assessment

Recommendation 4

Thought and consideration should be given to the size and composition of the technical assistance teams that work with individual sites, and efforts should be made to be responsive to site requests.

Recommendation 5

There should be authentic and repeated engagement with all of the key internal and external constituency groups, including police unions, community stakeholders and the media, during and after the initial assessment.

Recommendation 6

The full set of recommendations coming out of the assessment report should be ranked or prioritized to assist with implementation.

Recommendation 7

The assessment report should recognize positive changes that are underway in a department, and the CRI-TA process should acknowledge and allow for incremental change while the process is underway.

Recommendations related to implementation and monitoring

Recommendation 8

The COPS Office could provide guidance on how police departments should house, staff, and implement CRI-TA to enhance the pace and rate of buy-in to departmental reform.

Recommendation 9

The COPS Office should pay careful attention to how CRI-TA is staffed internally, especially in light of the increasing number of sites.

Recommendation 10

The COPS Office should foster and create more opportunities for cross-site learning.

Introduction

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) launched a new and in many ways innovative initiative in 2011: the Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA). According to the COPS Office website, CRI-TA is "a long-term, holistic strategy to improve trust between police agencies and the communities they serve by providing a means to organizational transformation."[1] Law enforcement agencies facing significant issues that may impact public trust undergo a comprehensive assessment, are provided with recommendations on how to address those issues, and receive technical assistance to implement such recommendations. While participation in CRI-TA is voluntary (as distinct from changes necessitated by court order), agencies that are selected to participate in CRI-TA are expected to make a meaningful commitment to change and embrace reform.[2]

Since the launch of CRI-TA, interest in and support for this approach has grown significantly. As of the writing of this report, 16 law enforcement agencies have been launched as Collaborative Reform sites. Given this increase in participation and investment, the COPS Office and others are interested in understanding how the Collaborative Reform process is being experienced by participating jurisdictions. The COPS Office has granted the Crime and Justice Institute an award to examine that process.[3] This study compares and contrasts how the CRI-TA process unfolded across sites in order to shed light on elements that were similar, elements that differed, things that worked well, and areas in need of improvement. We set out to look closely and critically at how elements of the CRI-TA process were perceived by three discrete groups: (1) COPS Office personnel, (2) the technical assistance providers and subject matter experts who work with the sites, and (3) personnel from police departments that are engaging in Collaborative Reform. In addition to these perceptions, we also assessed observable differences in sites' CRI-TA goals, timelines, and recommendations. Beyond conducting a multi-site review of the Collaborative Reform process, we hope this study provides the COPS Office an opportunity to hear how their partners in Collaborative Reform, both technical assistance providers and the sites, perceive them.

Seven sites are included in this effort:

- Las Vegas (Nevada) Metropolitan Police Department
- Spokane (Washington) Police Department
- Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) Police Department
- St. Louis County (Missouri) Police Department
- Fayetteville (North Carolina) Police Department
- Salinas (California) Police Department
- Calexico (California) Police Department[4]

While we drew upon information from previously published CRI-TA reports, the tasks and activities associated with this assessment were done independently of the previous work by the COPS Office and the technical assistance providers.

1. "Technical Assistance," accessed December 29, 2016, http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/technicalassistance.

2. For more on the Collaborative Reform Initiative, see "Collaborative Reform for Technical Assistance" (Washington, DC: COPS Office, 2016), http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/technical_assistance.pdf.

3. The Crime and Justice Institute conducted a related but distinct assessment of the Collaborative Reform Initiative that examines the impacts of CRI-TA at the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department two years after formal participation ended. That report is forthcoming from the COPS Office.

4. Calexico has been included in this list, but participation levels at the site were notably less than the others. We did not have an opportunity to speak with any Calexico PD staff (unlike the rest of the listed sites) or conduct a site visit. We did, however, review documents and media coverage related to Calexico's CRI-TA involvement and interview members of the technical assistance team and COPS Office staff that are working with Calexico.

Background on Collaborative Reform Initiative

The Collaborative Reform Initiative was launched under COPS Office Director Bernard Melekian. Director Melekian, as a Department of Justice leader and a former police chief, was aware of few if any opportunities for federal assistance to police agencies and their leaders who were interested in reform. Consent decrees, agreements in lieu of litigation between municipalities and the US DOJ Civil Rights Division (CRT), were growing in number. Experiences of past consent decree sites demonstrate that this type of intervention can be expensive, onerous, lengthy, and contentious. Director Melekian also knew that many law enforcement executives were aware of issues in their departments but were in need of focused review, structure, and technical assistance to make meaningful and sustainable change. According to several stakeholders we interviewed, an increasing number of chiefs and sheriffs were expressing an interest in an alternative approach to a pattern or practice review by the DOJ's CRT.[5] Director Melekian and other DOJ officials conceived of a new option—an opportunity for a police executive to enter into a voluntary agreement with the DOJ to work on reform measures. According to Director Melekian, officials from the CRT were supportive of trying this approach with the understanding that CRT would be involved in the process prior to the decision of whether a jurisdiction would move forward under a voluntary process.

Director Melekian approached then Sheriff Gillespie of Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) in 2011. He was well aware of issues in that jurisdiction, with officer-involved shootings increasing in number and residents calling for oversight. Their discussions kicked off the new, voluntary, collaborative effort with the DOJ. After a few rounds of conversations and meetings, the reform effort in LVMPD was launched in early 2012 as the first CRI-TA site.

Since then, CRI-TA has expanded significantly, with 15 additional departments launched as of the writing of this report (see table 1). Spokane and Philadelphia were added as sites in 2013, and St. Louis County and Baltimore were launched in 2014, for a total of five new CRI-TA sites over the course of three years. CRI-TA has experienced notable growth under the leadership of current COPS Office Director Ronald L. Davis. Eleven CRI-TA sites have been added over the last two years alone.

Table 1. Launch timeline of CRI-TA sites*

Site	Month and Year
Las Vegas Metropolitan PD	January 2012
Spokane PD	February 2013
Philadelphia PD	May 2013
St. Louis County PD	September 2014
Baltimore PD	October 2014
Fayetteville PD	January 2015
Salinas PD	March 2015
Calexico PD	April 2015
Milwaukee PD	December 2015
San Francisco PD	February 2016
Chester PD	May 2016
North Charleston PD	May 2016
Commerce City PD	August 2016
Memphis PD	October 2016
Fort Pierce PD	November 2016
Saint Anthony PD	December 2016

Source: COPS Office.

* Note: Under the leadership of Commissioner Anthony Batts, the Baltimore Police Department joined CRI-TA in 2014. Hilliard Heintze was engaged in the assessment phase, having completed a few on-site visits and a community listening session, when riots erupted after the death of Freddie Gray. Mr. Gray suffered significant and fatal injuries in the course of arrest by, and/or transportation while in the custody of, the Baltimore Police. In the aftermath of community upheaval, the DOJ began a pattern or practice investigation and the CRI-TA process was halted. For this reason, Baltimore is not included as one of the sites for this study.

According to conversations with several current and former COPS Office staff who were involved in the initial phases, Collaborative Reform was envisioned as a template for reform and an

5. The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, 42 U.S.C. § 14141, allows the DOJ to review the practices of law enforcement agencies that may be violating people's federal rights.

alternative to a consent decree. It was deemed critically important that the first site be committed to reform and fully invested in the process; after a careful, if informal, vetting process the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department was deemed a good candidate. Many current and former COPS Office staff recounted the struggles and challenges they confronted as this new model was initially developed and launched—these included dealing with resistance within the COPS Office, as this type of engagement with law enforcement agencies was considered "out of their lane"; garnering political and financial support at the federal level; obtaining sufficient community support at the local level; developing a technical assistance team with the right balance of skills and experience; and ensuring participating agencies felt like they had a voice in this collaborative process. Many of these early challenges have endured as the initiative has expanded and are detailed throughout this report.

> ***"The Collaborative Reform Initiative could be a template for an agency to measure its connections with the community and a template for reform."***
>
> — Bernard Melekian, former COPS Office Director

> ***"The COPS Office was looking for an alternative for those agencies that wanted to be proactive and aggressive in making significant reforms."***
>
> — Joshua Ederheimer, former Acting COPS Office Director

The COPS Office staff have been integrally involved in the Collaborative Reform Initiative process in all of the sites, especially during the initial launch and the assessment phase. While the level and type of day-to-day involvement have varied across individual COPS Office staff, sustained commitment and attention have been a common experience.

The COPS Office has relied heavily on four organizations to lead the assessment efforts, including data analysis and site visits; conduct much of the report writing; and provide ongoing support, guidance, and assistance. These four technical assistance providers are CNA, the Police Foundation, the Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR), and Hillard Heintze. Each of these organizations has a cooperative agreement with the COPS Office to provide technical assistance to sites.[6]

Organization of this report

We first present our methodology for this evaluative effort, including the limitations of our approach. We then present a summary of what appears to be working well with the Collaborative Reform Initiative as well as comment on the nature of collaboration. The remainder of the report is organized around three major stages of the CRI-TA process: becoming a CRI-TA site, the assessment phase, and the implementation and monitoring phase. The conclusion of this report identifies themes that emerged when looking across sites and presents recommendations for strengthening the CRI-TA process in the future. It is our intent that the experiences of the sites included in this study can provide useful learning to the COPS Office, current CRI-TA sites, and other law enforcement agencies that may be considering reform or engaging with the COPS Office in the Collaborative Reform Initiative.

6. Some of the more recent sites are being provided Collaborative Reform via Hillard Heintze, who now has a contract rather than a cooperative agreement with the COPS Office to provide such services.

1. Methodology

We drew upon several information sources to understand better the process and experience of the included sites. We conducted a document review that included both formal publications related to the Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Initiative (CRI-TA) and internal working documents related to individual local processes. We conducted site visits to observe meetings and gain an understanding of the local context within which CRI-TA was taking place. Given that our main charge was to understand the perspectives and experiences of different stakeholders at different sites, we relied heavily on individual accounts and feedback. Stakeholder interviews, both one-on-one and group, are the backbone of our methodology. It is worth noting that quantitative data was not a key component of this study. CRI-TA sites are focused on a variety of issues (further detailed in section on Goals of CRI-TA on page 16), and each jurisdiction has its own individual approach to what data it collects and how it collects it. This leaves limited opportunities for looking at "hard" data across sites.

Site selection

The focus of this study was to examine and understand how different sites experienced the Collaborative Reform process. Thus, we only included sites that had been engaged in the process long enough to have had ample opportunity for learning, omitting sites that were relatively new to CRI-TA. At a minimum, all of the sites included in this study have completed the assessment phase, and their initial assessment reports have been published.

The sites included in this study are a diverse group of law enforcement agencies that vary in jurisdictional size, demographics of the population, size of the department, geography, and local crime levels. As shown in table 2, both departments serving relatively small communities and departments serving major cities are participating in CRI-TA. They range in size from a low of 30 sworn officers in Calexico to a high of over 6,500 sworn officers in Philadelphia. These departments are geographically diverse, with representation from the West, Midwest, South, and Northeast.

One-on-one and group interviews

Our aim was to collect input from a range of stakeholder perspectives, including representatives from CRI-TA's three key groups: (1) COPS Office staff (both current and former), (2) technical assistance (TA) providers and their subject matter expert (SME) partners, and (3) police agency personnel. The Crime and Justice Institute (CJI) team reached out to

Table 2. Selected characteristics of CRI-TA sites

	Jurisdiction population	Number of sworn officers	Annual budget (in millions)	Jurisdiction area (in square miles)
Las Vegas MPD	1,500,942	2,606	$491	7,560
Spokane PD	211,025	295	$53	76
Philadelphia PD	1,546,920	6,526	$643	140
St. Louis County PD	1,003,362	855	$107	589
Fayetteville PD	201,963	433	$51	95
Salinas PD	156,667	133	$40	23
Calexico PD	40,053	30	$0.85	8

Source: See appendix A on page 35 for data sources.

the chief or sheriff at each of the sites included in this effort, as well as to the key staff at each of the four technical assistance providers. We introduced CJI and our study, asked for their support and participation, and answered any questions. Typically, we engaged in several conversations to jointly determine the people in the organization with whom we should speak and how to make those connections. We were interested in talking to individuals who had familiarity with and played a key role in CRI-TA. For most of the sites, we interviewed the chief or sheriff, selected members of the command staff, the department representative who was the local lead and key liaison with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), individuals who participated in the assessment phase by providing requested data and documents to the technical assistance providers, and individuals who were responsible for implementing some of the recommendations. In terms of the technical assistance providers, we spoke with a variety of individuals including the team leads, data analysts, staff who oversaw the day-to-day project management, and several SMEs who played a variety of roles on the technical assistance teams. At the COPS Office, we spoke with Director Ronald L. Davis, as well as former Acting Director Joshua Ederheimer and former Director Bernard Melekian, several members of the COPS Office leadership team, and many staff members who have served or are serving as federal site leads and serve as the day-to-day points of contact with sites and TA providers.

Through these efforts we conducted 64 interview sessions, speaking with 85 individuals, 57 of whom participated in one-on-one interviews[7] and 28 of whom participated in group interviews (see appendix B for a full list of interviewees). Interviews were conducted either by phone or in person as part of a site visit. As shown in table 3, the feedback we obtained represents all three key stakeholder groups: 20 percent of interview sessions included COPS Office staff, 20 percent included members of the TA teams, and 60 percent included representatives of the CRI-TA sites. Table 4 on page 5 shows interview sessions conducted by CRI-TA site. With the exception of Calexico, we conducted between eight and 11 interview sessions for each site.

Table 3. Number of interview sessions conducted by stakeholder group

Stakeholder group	Number of interview sessions
COPS Office	13 (20 percent)
TA Providers / SMEs	13 (20 percent)
Sites	38 (60 percent)
Total	**64 (100 percent)**

Table 4. Number of interview sessions conducted by site

Site	Number of interview sessions
Las Vegas	9 (16 percent)
Spokane	11 (20 percent)
Philadelphia	8 (14 percent)
St. Louis County	8 (14 percent)
Fayetteville	9 (16 percent)
Salinas	9 (16 percent)
Calexico	2 (4 percent)
Total*	**56 (100 percent)**

* Note that the total does not equal 64, as some of the individuals providing input, such as COPS Office staff, were not associated with any particular site, while some TA providers and SMEs were assigned an affiliation with more than one CRI-TA site.

The response rate to interview requests was very strong. Nearly all of the individuals we contacted were responsive to our request and interested in providing feedback. It is our impression, based on the nature of the feedback we received, that interviewees represented a wide range of perspectives on CRI-TA and were largely candid

7. Describing the individual interviews as one-on-two may be more accurate, as two CJI staff participated in each interview with one person serving as the lead interviewer and one person being primarily responsible for taking notes.

and forthcoming in their opinions. All of the interviewees were assured of the confidentiality of their responses.

Site visits

The CJI team conducted site visits at five of the seven sites. These visits were generally between one and three days in duration. During the site visits CJI staff met with several individuals one-on-one, hosted several group meetings, and observed other regularly scheduled meetings. Many of the in-person meetings were recorded with the permission of the participants. Site visits were not conducted in St. Louis County or Calexico. The St. Louis County Police Department was deeply engaged in preparations for a major national event and the preparations for a significant anniversary, making a site visit an unnecessary inconvenience for the department. Several telephone conversations with members of the St. Louis County Police Department were conducted in lieu of a site visit. For Calexico, timing and our inability to engage with the department's top law enforcement executive prevented a site visit.

Topics covered

The CJI team conducted structured interviews to capture similar information across sites and allow for comparison. General interview protocols were developed for each of the three key stakeholder groups. In many cases, these general protocols were slightly tailored to allow for specific questioning about topics upon which individual interviewees had particular knowledge (such as the early history of CRI-TA for the former COPS Office Directors or specific questions about a site's local context for site representatives). However, the questions remained general enough to allow the key issues, which could be notably different from site to site, to emerge. Interview questions touched upon the goals of CRI-TA, the meaning of collaboration, implementation successes and challenges, roles and responsibilities of the various partners, and communication, among other topics. Copies of the general interview protocols are included in appendix C on page 41.

Document review

In addition to speaking with key stakeholders, the CJI team reviewed available documents that could shed some light on the CRI-TA process. We reviewed local media coverage of each of the sites to learn about the local context prior to the start of the CRI-TA process, as well as to gain some perspective on the media coverage itself. All of the official site-specific CRI-TA reports published by the COPS Office and the TA providers were reviewed with an eye toward process, as were documents we requested from the COPS Office such as statements of need, site goals and objectives, work plans, and monthly reports. We also reviewed some of the TA providers' supplemental documentation related to process.

The entirety of this existing documentation, however, proved to be rather limited in its usefulness for this study. There was little consistency in what documentation was available for these seven sites—for example, we were provided work plans for some, but not all, of the sites. What documentation did exist varied so widely in its level of specificity that it hindered our ability to systematically compare across sites.

For example, while COPS Office personnel have identified some factors they have used to assess potential CRI-TA sites (e.g., if the problem is likely to be experienced by other agencies; if an incident jeopardized trust between police and citizens; and if law enforcement, elected officials, and community members are available as potential partners), to our knowledge there is no publicly available, articulated list of these criteria. According to COPS Office representatives, Eligibility Assessment Memos have been developed for more recent potential sites, but these are also not publicly available. CRI-TA was a new initiative and in

Table 5. Launch dates and assessment report release dates by site

	Launch date	Assessment report released	Months to completed assessment report
Las Vegas	January 2012	October 2012	9 months
Spokane	February 2013	December 2014	22 months
Philadelphia	May 2013	March 2015	23 months
St. Louis County	September 2014	October 2015	13 months
Fayetteville	January 2015	December 2015	11 months
Salinas	March 2015	March 2016	12 months
Calexico	April 2015	May 2016	13 months

Source: COPS Office

many ways was being developed and refined in real time, which largely explains the notable gaps we found in formal documentation. However, as we explain further in the section on site selection process on page 15, in our view strengthening and standardizing the documentation related to Collaborative Reform is a needed improvement.

Limitations

This study is an examination of the CRI-TA process and how it unfolded across various sites. The study aims to shed light on how CRI-TA is experienced both by police personnel at the sites and by members of the TA teams. It is also explores the evolution of the initiative at the COPS Office and how its changes have impacted sites, providers, and the process overall. This is not, however, a formal process evaluation in the traditional sense of the phrase. A formal process evaluation typically tries to understand the extent to which a program's implementation adhered to its design and whether there was fidelity to a model. In this case, however, the CRI-TA model was not a well-established or well-documented model; rather, it was refined and developed through the experiences of some of the early sites.

One challenge to our understanding of the CRI-TA process was the number of partners and personnel who were involved. Besides the numerous local personnel from the various sites, four different technical assistance providers (CNA, Police Foundation, the Institute for Intergovernmental Research, and Hillard Heintze) led the assessments and remain closely involved with implementation, which complicates the clarity and consistency of the process. In the COPS Office as well, many different staff members have been involved with the CRI-TA process, and staff assignments, division structure, and even some assigned site managers have all changed during the years that the sites studied were engaged in Collaborative Reform. Five different COPS Office staff members served as the key point of contact at one point in time in the seven sites in this study. Additionally, we have found that the level and nature of involvement on the part of COPS Office staff has varied greatly across sites.

Another limitation of this work is the fact that the sites are at different stages of the process. While all of the sites in our sample have completed the initial assessment phase, they vary significantly in their progress beyond that stage. At one end, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department completed formal oversight in 2014. At the other end, Calexico's initial report was published in May 2016, and they remain in the early stages of implementation and monitoring. Table 5 presents the dates of CRI-TA launch and initial assessment report release for each site. The different sites are not only at different phases in t he CRI-TA process and but are progressing at different paces, which is appropriate given the diversity of the departments engaged in the work and of the issues they are addressing.

Lastly, although we are pleased with the diversity of perspectives we obtained from the 85 individuals we interviewed, we acknowledge that we did not receive much input from the individual line staff at participating departments. We believe that input on a wider scale (such as a department-wide survey) from the men and women working in the departments who have participated in CRI-TA would have enhanced this study. However, time and budget constraints did not allow for such input. Similarly, this study only represents feedback from key stakeholders who were *directly* involved in the process—staff from CRI-TA agencies, members of the TA teams, and COPS Office personnel. The community perspective is not well represented, again because time and budget constraints did not allow. We believe that, given that an overarching goal of CRI-TA is to enhance trust with the community, it is critically important to understand how the communities of CRI-TA sites are perceiving and experiencing Collaborative Reform. We encourage the COPS Office to invest in such learning in the future.

2. What Is Working Well

Before we present our specific findings and recommendations for the three stages of the Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA) process, we want to highlight the overall positive aspects of CRI-TA and the things that generally appear to be working well. In short, it is our impression that collectively all of the sites with whom we spoke felt the CRI-TA process produced a net benefit for their police agencies. There were many areas of contention, frustration, and disappointment, which will be detailed below, but as a whole the stakeholders we talked to generally thought participation had been worth it thus far.

Specifically, the intense, time-limited assessment process and its resultant findings and recommendations served as a catalyst for change and gave participating departments direction, giving them a road map for achieving their specific goals. And while many site representatives described the assessment process as onerous, it was largely viewed as manageable. We heard a fair amount of critical feedback on the assessment and implementation phases, which we describe in chapters 5 and 6. Despite this volume of criticism, however, sites generally felt that the findings in the assessment report were largely fair and accurate and that the recommendations were reasonable and feasible, although there were exceptions.

One of the strengths of the Collaborative Reform process is that this type of engagement can assist police agencies that differ widely in size, geography, and the issues they face. The flexibility of the program and its ability to be tailored for diverse local contexts is a positive thing. However, as will be discussed below, in some instances that flexibility could be strengthened, as a one-size-fits-all approach to certain elements of Collaborative Reform seems to be unnecessarily constraining the work of the technical assistance (TA) providers and the sites.

Lastly, we heard repeatedly of the legitimizing effect of U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) involvement. In many instances, sites reflected that they were aware of the work their department needed to do, but having the federal government deliver the message enhanced its credibility. Several stakeholders referenced the initial assessment report as something they could present to other local and some state officials as evidence for a need to change policies or to secure funding for such things as training or technology. Several stakeholders mentioned the advantages of the voluntary nature of this engagement with the DOJ, both the positive community optics of a police agency appearing to be proactive about reforms and organizational transformation (rather than being forced to make reforms through a consent decree or settlement with the DOJ) and the greater buy-in within the participating agencies, which is a key component of successful implementation and driver of sustainability. In addition, the fact that the CRI-TA sites have all been run by chiefs and sheriffs open to and eager for reform is likely another foundation of any successes to date.

3. Perceptions of Collaboration

One of the most notable characteristics of this relatively new model of partnership between local police agencies and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) is the voluntary nature of participation. Simply put, departments are raising their hands and asking for assistance to address some of the most challenging and charged issues facing the field of policing today. Indeed, the name itself — Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA)—speaks to the importance of this aspect. We asked many of the stakeholders, including representatives from the sites, the technical assistance (TA teams), and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) to comment on what they thought collaboration meant in the context of Collaborative Reform.

There was no consensus on this point. We heard varying responses regarding which of the involved entities were actually the collaborators, including the participating police agency, the community, the local city or county government, the COPS Office, and the TA providers. We also heard varying responses on which points during the multiyear process should or should not be a collaborative effort. Some stakeholders felt that the process should be collaborative from start to finish, while others thought certain phases of the process—in particular, the assessment phase—should not be collaborative for fear of reducing credibility.

A number of people also noted that the meaning of collaboration has shifted since CRI-TA's formal launch in early 2012. For example, one COPS Office representative explained that when CRI-TA was first conceptualized, the collaboration was envisioned to be essentially between two parties: the police department and the community it serves. The police department and the community "would identify areas of concern and articulate the desired outcomes" and together would then "address the question of what are the issues and what are the solutions." The COPS Office and TA teams were notably absent as collaborators from this viewpoint.

It appears that this conceptualization of who is collaborating has changed over time within the COPS Office. While some staff still held to the view that the collaboration occurs between the police department and the community, a number of other COPS Office representatives were of the mind that the collaboration is between the COPS Office and the police department, not the community. In this view, the police department and the COPS Office (and indirectly the TA providers) are collaborating to identify areas for reform. Interestingly, there was still some uncertainty around this question, as one long-standing COPS Office staff member said what collaboration means in the context of collaborative reform is "still an open question."

Members of the TA teams also had differing opinions on what collaboration means. We heard that collaboration was between (1) the police department and the TA team, (2) the police department and the community but *facilitated* by the TA team and the COPS Office, and (3) the police department, the city, and the community with no mention of the TA team or the COPS Office. Clearly no consensus exists.

TA providers also echoed the view that the level of collaboration seems to be diminishing over time, creating tension with police agency personnel. The extent of collaboration between the TA team and the site representatives was generally deemed strong at the earlier sites but some felt it has been decreasing at the later sites.

We heard from numerous site representatives that they expected their participation in Collaborative Reform to be much more collaborative than it has been. Several stakeholders with whom we spoke

were of the opinion that at times the CRI-TA process felt more like an external audit, with compliance as the ultimate goal, rather than an iterative process of give and take where the various partners worked together to identify and solve problems. As we discuss in the conclusion, establishing more realistic expectations for the sites is an improvement we believe necessary.

Having more clarity around the nature of collaboration and the extent to which it is and is not part of the Collaborative Reform model would, in our belief, benefit the sites.

> ***“It’s not clear that this is a collaborative process.”***
>
> — CRI TA provider

4. Motivation and Process for Becoming a CRI-TA Site

The events, motivation, and process that preceded a department engaging in Collaborative Reform differ across sites. The majority of departments we reviewed were prompted by a high-profile precipitating event to seek assistance from the Office for Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office). That said, the person who initiated communication varied; sometimes it was police agency leaders and sometimes it was other local officials. Further, criteria for becoming a Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA) site are ambiguous, and this ambiguity can result in unnecessary questions. The following section provides brief overviews of the events and motivating factors that caused sites to participate in Collaborative Reform.

Site motivations

The factors motivating sites to become involved with Collaborative Reform varied. The majority of the departments were largely prompted by high-profile events and intense police-community discord that reached a point of crisis. The Las Vegas, Spokane, St. Louis County, and Salinas Police Departments were largely spurred by strong public outcry and increased media scrutiny over officer-involved shootings. The Calexico Police Department was also motivated by a high-profile event— allegations of corruption within the department[8]—but experienced less community outcry, as the allegations were made by insiders rather than community members.[9] Lastly, the chiefs of the Philadelphia and Fayetteville police departments appeared to have been primarily motivated by a recognition that their respective departments had areas of concern that could benefit from an external assessment.

Las Vegas, Nevada

In 2010, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) engaged in 25 officer-involved shootings, eight of which were fatal. This uptick in incidents, from an average of 15 per year in the three years prior, inspired the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* to publish a five-part investigative series entitled "Deadly Force: When Las Vegas Police Shoot, and Kill" in 2011.[10] This report sparked community outcry and led the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Nevada to file a petition with Civil Rights Division (CRT) of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) requesting an investigation into the LVMPD. Then-Sheriff Gillespie recognized the need for outside support for the department's reform efforts. In late 2011, as the LVMPD was looking for assistance to help address this issue of use of force and community trust, the COPS Office was looking to develop a new effort that would work to improve police-community relations on a local level. Following several conversations and meetings between the COPS Office and LVMPD leadership, the two entities agreed to formally kick off the Collaborative Reform Initiative in Las Vegas in January 2012.

Spokane, Washington

The Spokane Police Department's engagement with the COPS Office was prompted by lingering tensions and resentments between police and

8. "Why Is The FBI Investigating A California Police Department?," *All Things Considered*, January 17, 2015, National Public Radio, http://www.npr.org/2015/01/17/378010195/why-is-the-fbi-investigating-a-california-police-department.

9. Jill Replogle, "Calexico Police Dept. 'Plagued by Extortion,' New Chief Says," *KPBS*, January 6, 2015, http://www.kpbs.org/news/2015/jan/06/calexico-police-department-under-fire-alleged-crim/.

10. The Deadly Force series can be found at http://www.reviewjournal.com/news/deadly-force.

residents that lasted for years after a fatal use of force incident between Spokane Police and a developmentally disabled man named Otto Zehm in 2006. This event and the investigation that followed produced local unrest, a federal investigation, and a civil lawsuit that was not settled until 2012. During the six intervening years other events continued to generate tensions, such that in 2012, Spokane's newly elected mayor formed a Use of Force Commission under a city charter provision, and that summer appointed a new police chief, Frank Straub, who began discussions with the COPS Office on how they might assist in reforming the Spokane Police Department, as there was evidence that the community believed the department had done little to change its culture. Spokane's Use of Force Commission released its initial report—independent of CRI-TA—in February 2013. The report included 26 recommendations,[11] and some involved believed that the COPS Office would be able to help implement some of the more controversial recommendations included in the report. Spokane was launched as a CRI-TA site in February 2013.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

In 2013, while violent crimes and assaults on police officers declined in Philadelphia, the numbers of fatal and non-fatal officer-involved shootings were increasing. A May 2013 article on Philly.com brought attention to the rise in these incidents and compared the data from Philadelphia to other cities.[12] Shortly after the article was published, Philadelphia Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey sought technical assistance from the COPS Office in an effort to address the issue before it escalated to a point of crisis, and also as an opportunity to revamp the department's training. According to a CBS News article, Commissioner Ramsey posted the following on the department's Facebook page in May 2013:[13]

> ***"Consulting with an independent party will ensure credibility and an objective view in this process of evaluating our policies and procedures. My primary concern is the sanctity of life equally for members of this department and the public we serve. At no point am I looking to compromise the safety of our officers."***
>
> — Philadelphia Commissioner Charles Ramsey

Commissioner Ramsey had previous experience with Department of Justice intervention during his tenure as chief of the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, DC. In that role he had also requested DOJ intervention and recognized the benefit that this type of relationship could offer.

St. Louis County, Missouri

In August 2014, an officer with the Ferguson Police Department shot and killed an unarmed 18-year-old African-American man named Michael Brown, which led to intense community protests both locally and nationally. The police handling of Brown's death and the subsequent demonstrations brought national attention to police practices in the St. Louis area, including the St. Louis County Police Department (SLCPD). Under the scrutiny of the national media, the relationship between the SLCPD and the community, which had been strained even before Brown's death, was brought

11. City of Spokane Use of Force Commission, "Use of Force Final Report" (Spokane, WA: City of Spokane, 2013), https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/police/accountability/use-of-force-final-report.pdf.

12. Sam Wood, "Exclusive: Shootings by Philly police soar as violent crime plummets," Philly.com, May 14, 2013, http://www.philly.com/philly/news/Police_involved_shootings_in_Philly_soar_as_violent_crime_falls.html.

13. "Three Phila. police-involved shootings in one day, one fatal, amid call for review of deadly force," *CBS News*, May 30, 2013, http://www.cbsnews.com/news/three-phila-police-involved-shootings-in-a-day-one-fatal-amid-call-for-review-of-deadly-force/.

to light. For example, SLCPD was at the center of a 2013 investigation of a lieutenant who was accused of ordering officers to target African-Americans for arrests in and around retail centers in south St. Louis County. The lieutenant was subsequently fired in May of that year, but this incident prompted a request by a local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for a DOJ intervention[14] and further scrutiny of the department.[15]

This combination of events—the unrest in Ferguson in particular—compelled the COPS Office to look more closely at SLCPD practices. Knowing that a pattern or practice investigation had started in Ferguson and aware of the increased attention and the need to improve community relationships, Chief Jon Belmar discussed the possibility with COPS Office Director Ronald L. Davis and agreed to become a CRI-TA site in September of 2014.

Fayetteville, North Carolina

Unlike with many other sites included in this study, no single event precipitated the Fayetteville Police Department's (FPD) involvement in CRI-TA. Rather, police chief Harold Medlock was concerned about a number of officer-involved shootings, both before and after his 2013 swearing-in. These included a May 2013 officer-involved shooting in which a fleeing suspect was shot twice in the back[16] and the fatal shooting of a teenager in August 2014. Following these events, and in the wake of the unrest in Ferguson, Missouri, Chief Medlock soon began to implement reforms aimed at culture and practices of the FPD, such as Fair and Impartial Policing Training in 2014. Chief Medlock learned about CRI-TA while monitoring LVMPD's participation in CRI-TA from a distance. Based on his observations, he felt it could be the right vehicle to continue efforts to modernize and improve FPD. After a few rounds of conversation between Chief Medlock and Director Davis, Fayetteville was launched as a CRI-TA site in March 2015.

Salinas, California

Over the course of five months between March and July 2014, the Salinas Police Department was involved in four fatal officer-involved shootings of Hispanic men.[17] Although the shootings were ultimately determined to be justified by the Monterey County District Attorney, there were a number of protests across the city against what the public believed to be biased policing and excessive force, and some of these demonstrations turned violent.[18] Chief Kelly McMillin requested additional reviews of two of the shootings from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the DOJ CRT and made efforts to be transparent and communicative with the residents, for example by posting responses to frequently asked questions regarding the four shootings and the investigations on the department's website.[19] In addition to the reviews, McMillin also requested technical assistance from the COPS Office, and in March of 2015, CRI-TA was launched in Salinas.

14. Joe Holleman, "State NAACP asks for federal probe of racial profiling in St. Louis County," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Feb 22, 2013, http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/state-naacp-asks-for-federal-probe-of-racial-profiling-in/article_c9efec67-ae6c-5bb8-b331-0af9aeea88b8.html.

15. Christine Byers, "St. Louis County police lieutenant who allegedly targeted blacks is fired," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 14, 2013, http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/st-louis-county-police-lieutenant-who-allegedly-targeted-blacks-is/article_691eb995-7247-5c0b-a48b-e7048c777b37.html.

16. Joel Brown, "Fayetteville Police Department under Review By U.S. Department of Justice," *WTVD News*, Tuesday, October 21, 2014, http://abc11.com/news/fayetteville-police-department-under-review-/359881/.

17. Richard Gonzales, "Killing Of Four Latino Men Sparks Protests In Salinas, Calif.," National Public Radio, August 1, 2014, http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2014/08/01/337218504/killing-of-four-latino-men-sparks-protests-in-salinas-calif .

18. Amy Larson, *KSBW News*, May 22, 2014, "1 killed during riot in Salinas; Demonstrators turn violent against police," http://www.ksbw.com/news/breaking-news-violence-erupts-on-del-monte-in-salinas/26113072.

19. "Frequently Asked Questions: Officer Involved Shootings in Salinas," last updated September 5, 2015, http://www.salinaspd.com/frequently-asked-questions-officer-involved-shootings-salinas-page.

Calexico, California

In fall 2014, Calexico's Police Chief Pompeyo Tabarez was terminated following accusations that a young man was kidnapped and assaulted by members of the Calexico Police Department. Within days of taking the helm of the Calexico Police Department, the new chief, Mike Bostic, found evidence of widespread corruption, including finding that the department's investigations, narcotics, and internal affairs units were not working any active cases.[20] There was also some suspicion that the Calexico Police Officers' Association and city council members had interfered in investigations and orchestrated extortion plots. Additionally, Chief Bostic found no reports of the alleged kidnapping and assault case. Less than two weeks later, the FBI launched an inquiry into several Calexico police officers, raiding the department and seizing electronic equipment and materials.[21] Chief Bostic and City Manager Richard Warne contacted the DOJ for technical assistance in areas needing reform, and CRI-TA was launched in April of 2015.

Site selection process

Many of the sites involved in CRI-TA to date have demonstrated a need for reform on issues related to constitutional policing (e.g. officer-involved shootings or deadly force) that were believed to be negatively affecting police-community relations. In most of the departments described above, these issues, combined with a police leader poised to make notable change, were present at the time of initial engagement with the COPS Office. From the time former COPS Office Director Bernard Melekian brokered the deal for technical assistance with Sheriff Gillespie in Las Vegas through the engagement of the most recent site included in this study, Calexico, there was no documented or standardized process for initiating a request for assistance, vetting a police agency as a good candidate for Collaborative Reform, or approving police departments to participate.

Based on the collective feedback from our interviews, there is fairly widespread agreement that standard criteria and a documented process for vetting and selecting CRI-TA sites did not exist. There is no shared understanding about what key factors qualify a site to be approved as a good candidate for CRI, or what factors would be considered grounds for rejection. What was evident from feedback received during our interviews was the consistent and substantial involvement of COPS Office executive leadership during the site selection process. In our interviews, we heard that the COPS Office typically consults with the CRT, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Department of Justice's Community Relations Service, and the Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center in the final decision on whether a site is appropriate for Collaborative Reform. Further, we heard a consistent desire to put standardized measures in place and to publicly share the criteria for participation in CRI-TA. For example, for a site to be selected for CRI, many stakeholders interviewed felt that having a law enforcement leader who is ready for and interested in supporting a large-scale progressive reform effort was critical. Some stakeholders articulated that the local capacity of a police agency to undertake a major reform effort should be a key consideration. Some COPS Office staff also expressed a preference that CRI-TA be used as a supplement to support reforms already underway within a department.

Several stakeholders commented on whether the topics a police agency would address should be part of the selection criteria. Said another way, should

20. Rory Devine and R. Stickney, "FBI Investigates Allegations of Corruption Within Calexico Police Department," *NBC 7 News* (San Diego), Nov 19, 2014, http://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/local/Calexico-Police-FBI-Corruption-Extortion-California-Bostic-283264551.html.

21. J. Weston Phippen, "What's Wrong With the Police Department in Calexico, California?," *The Atlantic*, May 19, 2016, http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2016/05/calexico-doj/483482/.

there be guidance to potential sites on the types of issues that would, and would not, be appropriate for Collaborative Reform? Some stakeholders wanted to limit the issues that CRI-TA addresses, including those related to use of force, deadly force, and racial disparity. Others were interested in basing future site selection on a greater diversity of pressing topics, so that CRI-TA could inform policing reform more broadly. (For more detail, see discussion on page 17 on site-specific goals.)

We are aware that staff at the COPS Office have begun efforts to clarify and share standard operating procedures regarding the site selection process. For example, the COPS Office website is now encouraging agencies to submit a Statement of Need providing background on the issues they would like to assess and any areas requiring reform. We support and encourage these efforts and believe that enhanced clarity and transparency on the part of the COPS Office about what makes a police agency a good candidate for Collaborative Reform, and the process involved in being selected as a CRI-TA site, would be beneficial.

Goals of the CRI-TA

We address the goals of the Collaborative Reform Initiative on two levels: overall goals of the Initiative and goals for the individual participating sites.

Overall goals of CRI-TA

We asked numerous COPS Office staff about their perceptions of the goals of Collaborative Reform. We found general consensus around two key goals: organizational transformation and enhancing community trust and engagement. A few secondary goals were also mentioned, including adding to the knowledge base for the field of policing, as well as an added option on the spectrum of federal responses.

- **Organizational transformation:** The focus on organizational transformation, a main tenet of community policing, is an overriding goal in each of the site assessment reports. Director Davis described this process as "sustainable transformation, building the infrastructure and institutional knowledge." Importantly, COPS Office personnel describe CRI-TA as one tool to assist with this transformation, not something that can achieve organizational reform on its own.
- **Community trust and engagement:** According to the COPS Office website, CRI-TA is a strategy for agencies dealing with issues of public trust "to resolve those issues and enhance the relationship between the police and the community."[22] COPS Office personnel indicated that who the "community" refers to may vary across departments, but emphasized the importance of bringing the community into the CRI-TA process early on through meetings and listening sessions.
- **Option on the spectrum of federal response:** Generally, COPS Office staff view CRI-TA as another option for federal / local engagement toward policing reform. While parts of the assessment and implementation process could be viewed as similar to the process departments experience with consent decrees, that CRI-TA is not mandated and the involved departments have not been found to engage in unconstitutional practices makes for a qualitatively different experience.
- **Adding to the field of policing:** Some members of the COPS Office staff mentioned that they saw CRI-TA as a reform model for the entire field. Specifically, some see the assessment and monitoring reports as potential templates for other departments facing similar issues and interested in reform. This desire to inform and support the field across many types

22. Importantly, while "community engagement" is one of the four areas our team identified as central to collaborative reform, there was no evidence of community policing being a goal of CRI-TA either generally or in any of the sites that we reviewed in depth.

of problems is what some at the COPS Office see as the motivation for involving a diverse set of issues, sizes, and geographies in CRI-TA.

The four goals described above were developed by our team based on reviews of available COPS Office documents and interviews with COPS Office leadership and personnel. It should be noted that neither the COPS Office website nor its informational reference page[23] clearly defines the goals of Collaborative Reform. Since the goal of CRI-TA is to transform law enforcement agencies organizationally, using problem-solving analysis to address issues within the department and build stronger relationships with the community to enhance transparency, these goals should be clearly stated on the COPS Office website and marketing materials. We support the COPS Office efforts to improve and enhance documentation and clarity around several components of the CRI-TA. In that spirit, we encourage the COPS Office to clearly articulate and share the specific goals of Collaborative Reform.

Site-specific goals and areas of focus

Turning from overall program goals to site-specific goals, we first examine how goals and objectives at the sites were developed. Generally, the development of a police department's CRI-TA goals and objectives has been an iterative process between the COPS Office leadership and police agency leadership. We heard some sentiment that over time the COPS Office has played an increasingly active role in developing sites' goals and objectives, and that the COPS Office maintains the final decision-making authority on a site's goals. Police agency personnel below the leadership level expressed confusion about how their site's goals and objectives were developed and frustration with this process's scant documentation, as the agreed-upon goals and objectives guide the reform work for the remainder of CRI-TA engagement. One site expressed surprise when CRI-TA work was initiated before the goals or objectives had been established. In some sites, the goals were largely informed by a department's initial outreach to the COPS Office, and the requesting parties were not fully aware of the volume of work and resources necessary to achieve those goals. In addition, we heard of instances in which the COPS Office advocated for changes in sites' goals after initial goals had been agreed upon, which the involved sites met with caution at best and strong pushback at worst.

Technical assistance (TA) providers are not part of this process and are not typically assigned to a CRI-TA site until after the initial goals and objectives are agreed upon. Some TA providers felt that their lack of involvement in developing goals and objectives was helpful in terms of positioning them as neutral players, while others felt that not being involved was detrimental to the process, as they were being asked to execute plans they had no part in shaping.

Turning to the actual goals of the sites included in this study, each site had between three and five stated goals, which are listed on the COPS Office website and generally articulated in a site's initial assessment report. A synthesis of these goals is presented in table 6. We grouped sites' goals into multiple categories. The complete language describing these goals, as presented on the COPS Office website, is included in appendix D (on page 44). The one focus area common to all sites included in this study was an examination and strengthening of internal policies and practices. Addressing use of force issues was a goal at five of the seven sites (Las Vegas, Spokane, Philadelphia, Fayetteville, and Salinas). Additionally, while not every site had an explicit goal related to community trust and engagement, many site specific goals could easily be seen to support better community-police relations.

23. "Collaborative Reform for Technical Assistance" (see footnote 2).

Table 6. Areas of focus by site

	Las Vegas	Spokane	Philadelphia	St. Louis County	Fayetteville	Salinas	Calexico
Use of Force	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Community Trust & Engagement		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Internal Policy & Practices	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internal & External Communication				✓		✓	
Pedestrian and Traffic Stops				✓	✓		
Officer Safety	✓						
Recruitment & Hiring				✓			

Source: COPS Office and CRI-TA sites

Beyond setting the goals and objectives that guide the reform work for the remainder of CRI-TA engagement, this part of the Collaborative Reform process is when impressions are formed and working relationships are established. The goal-setting process matters tremendously: how the goals are established matters; who is involved matters; how the goals are communicated matters; and, perhaps most importantly, how expectations are shaped matters. There were a number of indications that the sites would have been better equipped to undertake Collaborative Reform with a clearer understanding of the scope of their objectives, the impact of their agreed-upon goals on their work, and the resources needed to successfully participate in CRI-TA. The COPS Office could provide greater direction and more education to sites at this stage of the process.

5. Initial Assessment Process

Once a site is accepted into the Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA) process and its goals are developed (in collaboration with COPS Office personnel), the technical assistance (TA) team enters the process. This team typically consists of a third party organization (hereafter "TA provider") hired by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) through a cooperative agreement and one or more subject matter experts (SMEs). Broadly, the TA provider is tasked with conducting an objective assessment of the agency. This assessment focuses on the areas defined in the goals and includes interviewing police personnel and members of the community and collecting and reviewing policies, protocols, training materials, and available data. Typically the SMEs assist with these tasks and, in some cases, provide particular expertise in selected topics.

After the CRI-TA team is assembled, there is usually an initiation phase during which COPS Office personnel visit the site and host a press conference to announce that the Department of Justice (DOJ) will be conducting work to build trust with the community. At this time the COPS Office arranges for high-level interviews with command staff, the chief, and potentially members of the community. Open community listening sessions are hosted, where members of the public can share their concerns about the agency.

At the early sites, COPS Office site managers and other COPS Office personnel did not participate in the site visit work, as it was thought that the presence of DOJ representatives could be intimidating or could make it difficult for the TA providers to conduct their work. Over time, this seems to have evolved such that COPS Office personnel are now involved in all site visits and are included in all communication with the sites. This allows the COPS Office to remain up to date on the process so they may address any issues or roadblocks between sites and TA providers as soon as they arise.

Once the TA providers submit the findings and recommendations to the COPS Office, COPS Office personnel review the findings and recommendations to ensure they are appropriately supported by documentation. This initial review has shifted from involving only the COPS Office site manager and supervisor to involving many in the leadership team, including the director. The entire draft report is then sent to an external panel of three anonymous, independent reviewers—typically a former law enforcement executive, a practitioner, and an academic. The U.S. Attorney's Office and the DOJ Civil Rights Division are also given an opportunity to review. Only after these reviews are complete is the report sent to the CRI-TA site, where local agency personnel then go through each of the findings and recommendations with the TA provider, and together they develop a plan for implementation. The following section describes some elements of the assessment process in detail and begins to highlight areas in which it might be improved in the future.

Size and make-up of TA teams

The TA teams that work with the CRI-TA sites are important components of the assessment process. The makeup of TA teams and the skills and experiences of their members varied greatly across the sites in this study. Their size ranged from three members to seven members, though interviewees felt in one instance that a team of seven was too expensive and contained too many competing voices. Teams contained both TA providers and SMEs; however, these groups were often indistinguishable to police departments, and were seen as performing the same functions. Similarly, many police department personnel

outside of leadership also seemed to be unclear about the differing roles of the TA team and the COPS Office.

Some teams collaborated well with the police departments and COPS Office representatives, while others had challenges, particularly with communication: some departments held regularly scheduled conference calls with the command staff, the TA team, and COPS Office staff, while other sites reported that communication was infrequent and lacked clarity on when the next contact would be.

Technical assistance providers

Based on our site interviews, TA providers were met with differing levels of acceptance. Generally, sites found the TA providers to be knowledgeable, skilled at collecting and analyzing data, and responsive. For example, members of the leadership team in Fayetteville recounted a positive relationship with all of the TA providers, SMEs, and COPS Office staff with whom they worked and extended many compliments regarding their work.

However, not all reviews of the TA team were so positive. One site representative said that the TA team members had a "surprising lack of understanding [of policing] at times." In another case, a CRI-TA police agency was so concerned by its TA team lead's perceived lack of experience that the lead was eventually replaced. Further, in one site, police department personnel were frustrated by the COPS Office's failure to acknowledge or fulfill their request to include at least one expert from their state who understood the nuances of law enforcement specific to their region This failure damaged the site's buy-in to the process and its trust in the TA provider's abilities. Additionally, police personnel were frustrated that a SME unfamiliar with Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) requirements recommended training counter to POST guidance and state law.

As with any program of this nature, not all personalities from the various entities gelled, and there were conflicts of varying intensities. While on balance the feedback from the sites about the TA teams was positive, the negative sentiments and damage to the process that resulted should not be discounted.

Subject Matter Experts

Subject matter experts joined the TA teams in different ways at different sites. At some locations, TA providers selected their SMEs, while at others at least some SMEs were appointed by the COPS Office. According to interviews with COPS Office personnel, the COPS Office made efforts to recruit SMEs with particular kinds of relevant experience. The TA providers were given latitude to hire particular people, but SMEs were ultimately vetted and approved by the COPS Office, which sought to identify any potential conflicts of interest, negative perceptions, or mismatches between an individual's background and the issue being assessed. The COPS Office director and other senior personnel weighed in on the selection of the SMEs in an effort to ensure the SMEs were a good fit with which the COPS Office was comfortable.

Police department representatives from various CRI-TA sites and TA providers both highlighted the need to hire well-qualified SMEs with recent, relevant experience and an understanding of the current state of policing (e.g., familiarity with the *Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing*). Interviewees at one site reported being concerned about a SME who had been retired for over three decades and was not familiar with current practices in contemporary policing. One chief suggested that SMEs' background and experience be better matched to the size of the department they are serving—for example, SMEs consulting in a large city should have big city policing experience. Other interviewees suggested that it is important to include not only command staff, but also mid-level officers who have been involved more closely with line officer work—for example, if part of the work of the SMEs is to review

> ***" The evaluators need to have an understanding of what the department has been through. We had been through some brutal times, with disconnect between the community and police—betrayal from our local leaders, the 12-hour days, no days off, a lot of family and personal issues. That all plays into the psyche of the police officers. Government intervention can cause a lot of harm. The law enforcement experience of the TA providers and their team helped bridge that gap. Having that connection, understanding, and empathy went a long way. "***
>
> — Police captain from CRI-TA site

investigation files, then someone on the team should have experience conducting investigations.

Experience itself is not a panacea. The SMEs chosen were often former police chiefs or other high-ranking police personnel; however, these former law enforcement SMEs often deferred to or relied on the experiences of their own departments, frustrating some CRI-TA site representatives who saw their own departments as different or facing unique challenges. Some TA providers, police department personnel, and even SMEs interviewed advocated for a greater diversity of experiences among SMEs. Non–law enforcement personnel they suggested as possible SMEs include university social scientists for statistical analysis and civil rights experts and community aid workers to better represent the community. Some sites included individuals who filled these roles but were also former law enforcement, such as retired police with PhDs or who work with non-profit organizations involved in policing research.

TA provider appreciation of the local context

Different sites had contrasting perceptions about how well the TA providers, the SMEs, and to an extent the COPS Office staff understood the context and challenges unique to their departments. Having an understanding of the influence of local politics, community relations, local unions, and staffing constraints on potential reforms helps an outside TA provider to establish trust and build credibility when coming into a police department. Based on our interviews, it appears that TA providers have made efforts to understand local context and the complexities of department structures. TA providers and SMEs described different approaches to becoming familiar with the sites prior to launching their work, including public records searches, open source media reviews, review of the city structure, use of SMEs' professional networks to learn more about the sites, and an "environmental scan."

However, some site representatives felt that TA providers and SMEs could do a better job of understanding the local context of their respective sites, and that the process sometimes felt too "one-size-fits-all". One area in which understanding of context could have been improved across a number of the sites was the assessment team's knowledge of the role and impact of the local police union. The strength, makeup, and legal context of the police union or unions at each site varied greatly and affected the ease with which certain policy changes could be enacted. For example, in Philadelphia, certain policies could not be changed without the approval of the union, which would not consider some of the changes raised until the next collective bargaining agreement.

> ***"I don't know if they ever really understood the culture of the department and how bad it was at the time. Because they didn't understand the dynamic and struggle for control, it became a prophylactic series of recommendations. It's easy to do the cosmetic changes, easy to say 'We have body cameras now.' Big deal. As long as you have money you can go out and buy a piece of equipment and implement it. The problem is really holding the department to change its culture, and I think in order to do that you really need to be able to call out the reality and help the chief, help the mayor, help whoever purge the system or hold those people accountable."***
>
> — Police chief from CRI-TA site

Additionally, some individuals interviewed felt that the TA teams revealed a lack of knowledge about local context by making recommendations that were in conflict with local laws or standards. For example, the Salinas Police Department (SPD) works with Lexipol, a private sector organization that describes itself as "America's leading provider of defensible policies and training for public safety organizations." Recommendation 1.5 of the Salinas Assessment Report asserted that "SPD should include and emphasize the importance of de-escalation in its Use of Force (UOF) policies. De-escalation and the tactics that are appropriate in de-escalating situations should be emphasized within the applicable UOF policies, as should the importance of consistently moving down the use of force continuum when reasonable."[24] Many interviewed within the SPD found this recommendation to be in conflict with what they had been advised by attorneys with Lexipol, who considered use of force continua outdated.

In at least one site, police department staff expressed frustration about the assessment team's apparent lack of understanding about the department's limited financial or personnel resources. Many believed certain findings or recommendations to be unrealistic within their current context. In another site, there was frustration over how long it took the assessment team to visit the training division, as the site believed that the information they provided would have been helpful earlier in the process.

Lastly, sites reacted poorly when outside personnel—either TA providers or COPS Office staff—continually drew comparisons between themselves and other departments, or when experiences from other departments were generalized to their own. In other words, while it may be helpful to discuss how CRI-TA has worked in other locations, this should be done while acknowledging the unique circumstances and makeup of the present site, and such references should be made judiciously.

Community engagement

Communities were typically first made aware of their jurisdictions' participation in CRI-TA by a press release and press event. This event informed the public and local media about Collaborative Reform, why the decision was made to engage that jurisdiction, and what the plans were for engagement with the DOJ. Although the initial press event sometimes allowed for questions and answers, the most community input was gathered

24. Santos, Roberto, Rick Gregory, Leocadio Cordero, and Gerald Richard. 2016. *An Assessment of the Salinas Police Department.* Collaborative Reform Initiative. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-w0799-pub.pdf.

through community listening sessions hosted by the COPS Office. So that community members could speak candidly, police departments were typically not a part of these meetings. However, police agencies did help to identify community members and stakeholders who were specifically invited to participate. Meetings were also open to the general public. These listening sessions allowed the TA provider and COPS Office to solicit input and opinions from the community and local stakeholders at the very early stages of CRI-TA engagement. The role and voice of the community in this process was not consistent across all sites; as the CRI-TA process has changed, the timing and the proxies for the community have changed. The COPS Office personnel report making efforts to bring the community on board early in the process through town halls and meetings with such stakeholders as the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and community activist groups.

Some of the efforts to collect community input were perceived by sites as problematic. In at least one location, informal interviews with community members were conducted by the assessment team to supplement the information collected during the listening sessions. These interviewees were identified using a snowball sampling technique, during which each interviewee recommends one or more additional people in their social network. The police were frustrated by the use of this approach, as they felt it was unlikely that this sample would capture the people in the community who were supportive of the police. Instead, they were concerned that a potentially biased sample was being generalized to the entire community, causing police-community relations to appear worse than they actually were. Others were concerned that the listening sessions were being held in places where police-community relations were particularly strained, and not in other parts of the city, where the feedback would be much more positive and thus created a skewed view of the department.

There was no similar effort to collect community opinions in St. Louis County, where, because of the exceptionally charged environment at the time,[25] the TA provider was told not to hold a public community listening session. Instead, the assessment team was restricted to conducting small group interviews with community representatives.

Best practices

One of the challenges of the assessment phase is to identify best practices on which to base the recommendations. This difficulty is largely due to the relatively limited research and consensus on what is considered a "best practice" in policing, particularly in the areas, such as how best to improve police-community relations, commonly addressed by CRI-TA. Thus, determining what is and is not best practice can be quite subjective—a fact acknowledged by TA providers, SMEs, and COPS Office staff. For example, in Philadelphia there was much discussion on the use of a carotid control technique (also referred to as a neck restraint or chokehold); there is no clear ruling on the use of these restraints across CRI-TA sites, nor consistency across police departments' use of the technique more generally. While some departments, including Philadelphia, have scaled back their use of carotid control, the profession has certainly not reached a point of consensus.

We asked many interviewees how their teams had determined best practices for the initial report's recommendations. Many of the SMEs and TA providers interviewed reported consulting professional reports and after-action reports issued by organizations such as the Police Executive Research Forum, the Major City Chiefs Association, and the Police Foundation. Others mentioned referring to academic publications, industry

25. This charged environment was due to the police-involved shooting death of an unarmed black man, Michael Brown, in Ferguson, Missouri, shortly before SLCPD engaged in CRI. While an SLCPD officer was not involved in Brown's death, the department's involvement in the aftermath and geographic proximity to Ferguson caused unrest within the community.

standards approved by CALEA, and individual states' POST Commissions. The assessment teams reported different levels of reliance on personal experience for identifying best practices. For example, one SME acknowledged that his first course of action was to think back to what he did in his home department, which he believed to be on the cutting edge of policing.

Accuracy of findings

In interviews, representatives of the CRI-TA sites described nearly all their assessment reports' findings as accurate. However, the reports included some findings that police departments challenged. Many police personnel were frustrated by these perceived inaccuracies and felt that they could have been prevented if their department had been allowed more input or, in some cases, a chance to screen the report prior to publication. Police personnel from numerous sites indicated that they expected to be able to provide some level of input across all phases of the program.

Generally, overwhelmingly, the findings were accurate. Some were incorrect, some were wrong. But I give them the benefit of the doubt, being outsiders.

— Police chief from CRI-TA site

Interviewees from the various sites highlighted a few of the inaccuracies they found in the reports. For example, one department took issue with a finding that suggested that they were not complying with state statutes on traffic stop reporting. Interviewees felt that their department was a leader in the state on that front and could not understand how the TA provider reached this conclusion, even after discussing it with both the TA provider and the state's Attorney's office. This disagreement stalled the CRI-TA process, and damaged working relationships between the various entities. In another department, the chief was frustrated by a finding about a policy involving the use of neck restraints. The chief pointed out that these restraints had not been used in practice since the early 2000s, but the TA provider would not remove the finding. The chief found that the provider's unwillingness to receive feedback, coupled with the very short amount of time allotted to the department to review the report, created a feeling of distrust between the department and the TA provider.

Interviewees took issue with the tone of the findings as well as their accuracy. An interviewee from one site reported finding a single positive line in the initial assessment report and was disappointed the department's good work was not better recognized. Conversely, interviewees from a different site felt that their report was *too* positive at times, which they feared could undermine the urgency driving the reforms.

Lastly, many interviewees pointed to the name "Collaborative Reform" when voicing frustration about their lack of a role in developing findings and recommendations or their inability to review the assessment reports before publication. It appears, from many conversations, that police personnel expected to actively collaborate throughout the entire CRI-TA process. While there was general agreement that the development of goals and objectives is collaborative, interviews with some COPS Office personnel acknowledged that the assessment phase is not collaborative. Instead, COPS Office personnel see this process as a review by an external entity that is tasked with "doing some digging" and seeing what they find. By its very nature, some COPS Office staff do not see how this could function as both a collaborative process and a legitimate third-party assessment.

Feasibility of recommendations

Across the sites, the number of recommendations issued ranged from 42 in Spokane to 110 in Salinas. When standardized by the number of officers in each

Table 7. Number of recommendations per 100 officers

	Number of recommendations	Number of sworn officers	Recommendations per 100 sworn officers
Las Vegas MPD	75	12,606	2.9
Spokane PD	42	2295	14.2
Philadelphia PD	91	6,526	1.4
St. Louis County PD	109	855	12.8
Fayetteville PD	76	433	17.6
Salinas PD	110	133	82.7
Calexico PD	169	30	563.3

Source: See appendix A on page 35 for data sources.

of the seven departments, the recommendations ranged from 1.4 per 100 officers in Philadelphia to 563.3 per 100 officers in Calexico, which has a sworn staff of only 30 (table 7). Interviews at various CRI-TA sites indicated that police departments had different perspectives on how feasible the recommendations issued in the assessment report were. Feedback from multiple departments indicated that recommendations were generally reasonable and feasible for departments to complete, and did not require too much money to be spent. Some sites found that the recommendations were helpful in giving police departments the support and justification to implement desired reforms. However, there were notable exceptions, with some departments concerned that their limited staffing and resources could prevent them from completing a significant number of the recommendations for which they were responsible.

One concern raised was that police departments did not know how best to triage their recommendations. Some recommendations were small in scope, while others required a great deal of time and effort. However, when reviewing progress on the number of recommendations completed, both would be weighted the same—CRI-TA sites would receive just as much credit for adjusting the wording in a policy as for developing and implementing a new program.

Providing additional training opportunities for sworn staff was a common recommendation. While departments acknowledged the value of some of the recommended trainings, they were also concerned about how to provide enough coverage across shifts as the number of hours each officer was to spend in training continued to rise. In at least one site, this issue highlighted some department representatives' perceptions that the assessment team did not fully comprehend the local context, particularly with regard to staffing and resource challenges. Another department felt some recommendations were not feasible due to the level of pushback or obstruction that they anticipated facing from their local union. In this case, the union had introduced legislation to prevent one of the recommendations and would not discuss another recommendation until their next contract negotiation period in 2017.

Timelines

Feedback about the feasibility of the timelines and schedule driven by the COPS Office was mixed. Generally, TA providers, SMEs, and police department representatives tasked with culling data or addressing recommendations found their timelines to be too short. Many raised the concern that expediency was coming at the cost of quality and accuracy—particularly given the volume and nuance of the data being assessed. This was a point

of frustration, as the assessment teams and police departments knew that the reports would attract a high level of scrutiny and attention and wanted the data to be correct.

Additionally, the different entities agreed that there was not enough time allotted for the different phases of the review process. Many TA providers and police departments felt that they were often rushed to complete their work in order to meet an established deadline, at which point the document seemingly idled in the COPS Office for extended periods of time. The sentiment from many stakeholders was that the aggressive timelines imposed by the COPS Office appeared to be arbitrary and often came without explanation. Further, some police departments reported having only a few days or even hours to review a document ahead of publication, at which point their requests for edits met with varying degrees of success. Other departments reported being frustrated by the lack of official channels available for them to review the reports in advance of their publication, leading to some sharing of unauthorized versions. We believe it is reasonable for the COPS Office to permit sites to review reports prior to publication, and that this review period should allow ample time for reviewers to make comments and clarifications.

6. Implementation and Monitoring

As illustrated in table 5 (on page 7), the various Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA) sites started at different times and thus are at notably different phases of the process. In fact, as of this writing Las Vegas is the only site to have completed the formal oversight of CRI-TA and have a final report published. It would be premature to do a final examination of the monitoring phase in most sites. That said, we can learn from what sites have experienced so far about implementation and monitoring. This section organizes those lessons around three categories: staffing and implementation approaches, traditional technical assistance (TA), and police department leadership and buy-in.

Staffing and implementation approaches across sites

The seven sites vary notably in their approaches to staffing and organizing the implementation and monitoring stages. Some sites have taken a relatively centralized approach, in which one individual bears a significant share of responsibility for implementing and tracking progress on the recommendations. Other sites are more decentralized, with responsibility for recommendations shared across many staff at varying ranks and roles within the department; within these sites, the level of coordination among staffers also varies. For example, at one site several staff members have been assigned responsibility for certain recommendations and, aside from periodic conference calls, they generally work independently from one another. At another site, while the recommendations have also been assigned across several staff, the chief holds monthly meetings with them as a group to get updates on progress and work through issues, leading to a much more collaborative implementation process. In our view, sites with a more decentralized, yet coordinated, approach to implementing CRI-TA recommendations are more likely to increase local buy-in, which can strengthen chances for sustainability.

Las Vegas appears to be the only site that changed the department's organizational chart and established a new unit tasked with implementing and sustaining the CRI-TA recommendations, among other roles and responsibilities. The Office of Internal Oversight, within the Internal Oversight and Constitutional Policing Bureau, was established in February of 2012 to provide a continual review process for all issues surrounding the use of deadly force by police officers.

During the monitoring phase, sites' progress on recommendations is monitored by the TA providers and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office). Our interviews revealed confusion over just what compliance with the CRI-TA recommendations entails. For example, one site reported that they spent time and resources completing specific tasks that they thought would bring them into compliance with a recommendation only to be told by the TA provider that they needed to complete different and additional tasks to be deemed compliant. This proved very frustrating, as valuable time and resources were expended.

It is our understanding that sites are provided a series of "performance metrics" as part of their implementation plan. Performance metrics are a set of tasks that a site should complete in order for a recommendation to be deemed complete. At least one site expressed surprise when the performance metrics were provided; the site had not been involved in their development and felt that completing the totality of the list was not reasonable or feasible. Our ability to assess the performance metrics process is limited as we were unable to find any written documentation on the

process for identifying these performance metrics. However, several sites raised questions around what it takes to be deemed compliant with a recommendation, and this issue is clearly something that would benefit from additional clarification as more sites transition from the assessment phase to the monitoring phase.

Extent of technical assistance

One issue brought up repeatedly in our interviews was the disconnect between sites' expectations of what traditional technical assistance would be provided during the monitoring phase and what was actually provided. In this context, "traditional technical assistance" would entail CRI-TA sites being provided with peer-to-peer learning opportunities or training.[26] Several sites noted their frustration with the scarcity of learning opportunities and training they were provided after the publication of the assessment report. They held that, at best, the TA provider team made referrals upon request, simply serving as brokers; at worst, the TA provider team did not respond to their requests. Some sites had expected the TA provider and the COPS Office to be more proactive and financially supportive of peer-to-peer and training opportunities. We also heard about dissatisfaction with the quality of some COPS Office–funded training.

> ***"We would have also liked more conversation about the depth of technical assistance that would have followed in each of the various aspects of the project. We wanted a clearer definition of what TA looks like."***
>
> — Police chief from CRI-TA site

> ***"If they are going to go in and point out a department's faults, then the COPS Office should be prepared to support them in those changes. If the COPS Office put as much emphasis on the TA piece as they did on assessment piece, it would be a more balanced approach."***
>
> — CRI TA provider

It is worth noting however, that representatives from one site were pleased and satisfied with the traditional technical assistance that they have been provided. This site appears to have been fairly proactive and assertive in making requests for peer-to-peer learning and training, presenting the COPS Office with specific learning opportunities, the staff who would participate, and a budget request. Representatives from this site noted the benefit of making such requests relatively early in the monitoring phase. Once the requests were approved, the rest was largely scheduling and logistics.

One subject matter expert who has worked in multiple sites attributed the differences in sites' experiences with traditional technical assistance to the individual sites' approaches. According to this SME, one chief encouraged his staff to investigate opportunities for traditional technical assistance, while another department seemed to be passively waiting to be provided guidance and information about opportunities.

Given that several sites seemed to have expectations around traditional technical assistance opportunities that differed from experience, the COPS Office should make efforts to clarify these expectations such that they are clear and consistent across sites, TA providers, and even COPS Office staff.

26. The role of the technical assistance providers and their relationship with CRI-TA sites in many ways can be considered technical assistance, but we are being purposefully narrower in our definition here.

Interviewees also expressed confusion and dissatisfaction over the extent to which TA providers assisted sites in implementing the recommendations. Representatives from several sites mentioned that the phrasing of many recommendations was overly general, which made it difficult for sites to know how to implement them. Some individuals looked to the TA provider teams to assist them in designing an implementation plan but found their guidance lacking. One interviewee noted, "[T]hey told us that they wanted change, but they didn't tell us how." Several interviewees expressed an interest in receiving guidance and input from their TA teams on best practices, or seeing sample policies or practices from other departments on which they could base their efforts.

Police agency leadership and buy-in

Generally, the sites included in this study have been guided through the CRI-TA process under the leadership of chiefs and sheriffs who are open to change and eager for reform. While the context that led the departments to participate in Collaborative Reform has differed and the types of departments have varied by characteristics such as size and geography, each of the sites at the time CRI-TA was launched was under the leadership of an individual who generally, if not wholeheartedly, welcomed the process. That said, various strategies were used to communicate about CRI-TA participation and foster buy-in with personnel.

We heard from numerous interviewees that police department personnel as a rule are resistant to reform, and that in order for CRI-TA to be successful, fostering commitment and buy-in throughout the department was crucial. It was vital both for the successful implementation of the recommendations and for long-term sustainability. The general consensus was that it was the chief or sheriff's responsibility to foster such commitment.

> ***" The COPS Office can provide an assessment and best practices, but the department leadership still has to bring people on board. . . . If a chief can adopt 90 percent of the recommendations, that's leadership. "***
>
> — Ronald Davis, COPS Office Director

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

As we stated in the introduction to this report, the COPS Office describes the Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA) as "a long-term, holistic strategy to improve trust between police agencies and the communities they serve by providing a means to organizational transformation."[27] Of the 16 jurisdictions to date that have been launched as CRI-TA sites, only one (Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department) has formally completed the process, so it is too early to comment on the long-term impacts of an agency's participation in CRI-TA or to venture many generalizations about some site goals, such as improving trust between police and the community, that may take many months to effect.[28] Organizational transformation, however, is a key goal of all seven sites in this review, and evidence for it was abundant: we found many examples of revised policies, new trainings, and new programs. We hope the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) invests in research and analysis of this new and innovative model so that in time we can learn from this experiment with a greater degree of analytical rigor.

Based on our review and the collective feedback of 85 individuals who have been engaged with CRI-TA in some fashion, we are hopeful that this model can be a viable option for the federal government to support local police agencies' reform efforts. Sites report that organizing change, securing expert assistance, and undergoing a third-party assessment are the primary benefits of engaging in Collaborative Reform. CRI-TA has been shown to be a valuable tool for inspiring and accelerating change in many of the departments included in this study. It has provided momentum for reform without all of the burdens of a consent decree. However, participation in CRI-TA in and of itself is not sufficient for effective, sustainable change. The organization's experience of the process makes a difference to its outcomes. How police department personnel experience the process matters. How the technical assistance providers engage with the sites matters. How the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) oversees and leads these efforts matters. It is in this realm—*how* things get done—that we believe there is much work to be done.

Before delving into specific recommendations, we feel it is important to acknowledge the courage of the participating police agencies. They have opened up their files, their patrol cars, and their meetings for close inspection. In some ways, these departments are making themselves vulnerable as they figuratively raise their hand, ask for help, and, for the most part, do the best they can to navigate the CRI-TA process. It is this voluntary openness, in contrast to mandated reform, that in our view should compel the COPS Office to pay attention to how the process is experienced.

As we noted in chapter 2, "What is Working Well," most of the key stakeholders with whom we spoke were able to articulate the overall positive aspects of participating in CRI. However, as CRI-TA continues to grow and expand to additional jurisdictions, in order to strengthen credibility and improve the experiences of the sites and TA teams, we offer the recommendations below, organized around three stages of the process.

27. "Technical Assistance" (see footnote 1).

28. The Crime and Justice Institute conducted a related but distinct assessment of the Collaborative Reform Initiative that examines the impacts of CRI-TA two years after formal participation ended. That report is forthcoming.

Recommendations related to site selection

Recommendation 1

The COPS Office should identify and share the areas of reform that they consider to be appropriate for the CRI-TA process.

We support the stated goal of trying to improve relations between a police agency and the community through organizational transformation. Pursuing this goal has allowed the sites included here to address a range of topics, including reducing use of force incidents, enhancing community trust and engagement, and improving internal policies and procedures (see table 6 on page 18 and appendix D on page 44). Despite this diversity of topics, almost all of the sites were motivated to engage in Collaborative Reform by concerns about issues related to constitutionality.

It is our understanding that the COPS Office is interested in diversifying the topics that new and future CRI-TA sites address, potentially expanding CRI-TA beyond the scope of constitutionality and community trust and engagement. We heard this interest expressed in interviews with COPS Office personnel and we are witnessing it as we learn about the goals of sites new to Collaborative Reform. For example, the Chester (Pennsylvania) Police Department seeks to achieve a reduction in violent crime (particularly gun violence) and enhance data collection and analysis.[29] While the continued expansion of CRI-TA beyond issues of constitutionality is an exciting endeavor with tremendous potential, we feel it would be beneficial to place some boundaries on the types of issues considered most appropriate for Collaborative Reform. Said another way, presumably not all of the issues that police departments are currently facing would be good candidates for the Collaborative Reform process. We recommend that the COPS Office provide the field some guidance on the types of reforms that would be a good fit for CRI-TA. In our view, the CRI-TA process should be reserved for police agencies that are wrestling with issues related to constitutionality but are not at the point of needing a consent decree to make meaningful change. Regardless of whether the COPS Office is supportive of a tie to constitutional issues, we believe that the COPS Office should have clear guidelines for the types of issues most appropriate for CRI-TA and communicate those guidelines to police agencies.

Recommendation 2

The COPS Office should be clear and transparent about the criteria for becoming a CRI-TA site.

As detailed in chapter 4, the site selection process has lacked stated criteria for whether potential jurisdictions would be a good fit or were ready for Collaborative Reform. What characteristics of a police agency does the COPS Office consider when vetting a potential site? What external environmental factors play a role in the COPS Office's decision? Based on our review, we recommend the COPS Office consider the following criteria during the site selection process:

- Police agency leadership's commitment to reform
- A sense of urgency on the part of the police agency to address its issues
- Internal capacity in terms of staffing and other resources to handle a major reform initiative
- No prior history with DOJ consent decrees or settlement agreements
- Ability and willingness to capture and share necessary data
- Sufficient level of interest on the part of the police agency in participating in CRI
- Community relations being strained to the point that the police agency is essentially paralyzed and in need of a third party to make positive progress

29. "Collaborative Reform," accessed December 29, 2016, https://cops.usdoj.gov/collaborativereform.

Whatever set of factors the COPS Office ultimately decides upon, they should be shared publicly for the benefit of future potential CRI-TA sites.

Recommendation 3

The COPS Office could make improvements in setting expectations for police agencies that are interested in CRI-TA or currently participating in CRI.

One of the themes that emerged from our review was the recurrent disconnect between sites' expectations and what actually transpired in the CRI-TA process. We heard time and again that sites believed the process would to happen in a certain way but that things unfolded quite differently. Stakeholders reported misunderstandings or miscommunications related to the scope of work, the levels of traditional technical assistance provided, timelines, and the extent of collaboration, among other issues. This disconnect often had negative effects on the process, as misunderstandings led to distrust, injured CRI's credibility locally, and resulted in resources being expended unnecessarily. It is worth noting that while we have included this recommendation under the section "Recommendations related to site selection," the need to improve expectations applies to all parts of the CRI-TA process.

We recommend the COPS Office adopt the following practices to improve the chances that sites' expectations are met:

- Adhering to a site's scope of work after the goals and objectives have been agreed upon and work is well underway
- Providing greater clarity around the type and level of traditional technical assistance (i.e., training and peer-to-peer learning opportunities) available to departments
- Striving to adhere to agreed-upon timelines
- Taking into account a police agency's local needs, risks, capacity, and budget when creating the recommendations and planning for implementation
- Being more explicit about the nature of collaboration throughout the Collaborative Reform process.

We are aware that the COPS Office is working to improve documentation and standardization of the CRI-TA process and we support such efforts. Any attempt to better document the process will likely reduce instances of expectations not being met. However, we caution that too much standardization and too much of a one-size-fits-all approach can be problematic as well, given the diversity of agencies engaged in the process. There are numerous individuals at CRI-TA sites and at the four technical assistance (TA) provider organizations who have a wealth of knowledge and useful insight into the CRI-TA process. These people can be a valuable asset to the COPS Office as they strive to improve the experiences of new and future sites, and we encourage the COPS Office to also solicit the input and review of individuals who have gone through the CRI-TA process.

Recommendations related to initial assessment

Recommendation 4

Thought and consideration should be given to the size and composition of the technical assistance teams that work with individual sites, and efforts should be made to be responsive to site requests.

The TA providers and the subject matter experts (SME) are critical components in the CRI-TA process, as these individuals typically have the most interaction and closest working relationships with the sites. This is one area in which site feedback varied tremendously. Some sites were very pleased with the members of the TA teams and described successful working relationships. Others were far from pleased with some TA

providers and SMEs, and this conflict impeded the process overall. The size of TA teams and their members' background and experience varied significantly across sites. Given that these working relationships will typically last for two or more years, making efforts to ensure that all parties are working well together seems worthwhile. In particular, if a site makes a request for a specific skill set or background to be represented on the TA team, we recommend that the COPS Office make reasonable efforts to accommodate such requests.

Recommendation 5

There should be authentic and repeated engagement with all of the key internal and external constituency groups, including police unions, community stakeholders and the media, during and after the initial assessment.

The CRI-TA process generally has a track record of ongoing and sustained engagement with personnel in the participating police agencies. Engagement with other key local stakeholders, such as police unions and the community, has not been as robust. While many of our interviewees referenced examples of including union leadership in a site visit or meeting with community groups, these efforts were often viewed as token rather than authentic. In addition, any engagement with external constituency groups has mostly occurred during the assessment phase, and little to no engagement with these groups has occurred after the initial assessment report was published. If the overarching goal of CRI-TA is truly to improve trust with the community, then we believe a reexamination and reprioritization of community involvement throughout the CRI-TA process is warranted.

Recommendation 6

The full set of recommendations coming out of the assessment report should be ranked or prioritized to assist with implementation.

All of the seven sites included in this effort have completed the assessment phase and been faced with the daunting task of implementing a large number of recommendations. As we detailed in table 7 (on page 25), the number of recommendations per site ranged from a low of 42 to a high of 169, with an average of 96. While the full set of recommendations as presented in the initial assessment reports are generally organized around topics or issues, they are essentially a laundry list of activities that departments are expected to undertake.

However, though they are presented in the same way, all recommendations are not created equal: some represent a minor wording change to an existing policy; some, a major rewrite of an existing policy; and some no less than an agency-wide change in culture. We heard from many site representatives that recommendations could be organized and presented with an eye toward how the agency can best approach them.

We recommend that the COPS Office and TA providers consider ranking or prioritizing the recommendations to assist sites as they move from the assessment phase to implementation. Recommendations could be prioritized by level of effort, level of urgency, or alignment with a site's specific goals.

Recommendation 7

The assessment report should recognize positive changes that are underway in a department, and the CRI-TA process should acknowledge and allow for incremental change while the process is underway.

By definition, a police agency engaged in CRI-TA has serious issues that need to be addressed. That said, police departments are dynamic places largely staffed by committed professionals who strive to make their departments better—and agencies that participate in CRI-TA are, as a group, self-selected by their willingness to undertake organizational change. Many of the police agencies that have engaged in Collaborative Reform were engaging in reform efforts prior to becoming Collaborative Reform sites, making efforts to improve training, revise policies, or increase transparency. We believe the assessment reports

would be strengthened if they acknowledged and recognized any such positive work underway in an agency undergoing the CRI-TA process.

Recommendations related to implementation and monitoring

Recommendation 8

The COPS Office could provide guidance on how police departments should house, staff, and implement CRI-TA to enhance the pace and rate of buy-in to departmental reform.

Earlier in this report we described the notable differences in how the CRI-TA sites have staffed and implemented CRI-TA. We believe there are lessons to be learned and shared in this realm, and that the COPS Office and TA teams could assist sites in how they house this major reform effort organizationally. In our view, the departments with the greatest success are those that have shared the implementation responsibilities across multiple staffers and encouraged them to collaborate. In particular, by dispersing responsibility among personnel—including command staff—they strengthen buy-in to the reforms themselves, increasing those reforms' chances of sustainability.

Recommendation 9

The COPS Office should pay careful attention to how CRI-TA is staffed internally, especially in light of the increasing number of sites.

Seven new Collaborative Reform sites have been added in 2016. We heard numerous times from all three stakeholder perspectives (COPS Office, TA teams, and sites) about the importance of the COPS Office site managers and the difficulty of their role. Several veteran COPS Office staff members reflected that the best training for managing a CRI-TA site was to watch and participate in a supportive role in other CRI-TA sites. However, the remarkable expansion of this program over the last two years, along with normal staff turnover, could result in individuals without this background becoming site managers. We recommend COPS Office leadership pay particular attention to the hiring and training of staff who will be responsible for managing sites.

Recommendation 10

The COPS Office should foster and create more opportunities for cross-site learning.

As we noted in chapter 2, "What is Working Well," there are many positive and encouraging elements to this innovative model of police agency reform. As the number of new sites continues to grow and interest in the model expands, the club of police agencies that have been or are involved in the CRI-TA process is growing, and they have much learning to share. We are aware of previous information-sharing efforts among CRI-TA stakeholders, but these were generally not viewed as effective and have largely dissipated. We believe the COPS Office should do more to facilitate opportunities for CRI-TA sites to learn from one another. In addition, the COPS Office should foster opportunities for learning internally, especially in light of the growing number of sites and the presumed increase in the number of COPS Office staff who will work on CRI-TA.

Appendix A: Data Sources for Selected Characteristics of CRI-TA Sites

Sites are named chronologically in order of their entry into the CRI-TA process.

Jurisdiction Population

- Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department: Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. 2015. *2014 Annual Report*. Las Vegas, NV: Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. http://www.lvmpd.com/Portals/0/pdf/2014AnnualReport.pdf.
- Spokane Police Department: Federal Bureau of Investigation. 2015. "Table 78, Washington Full-time Law Enforcement Employees by City, 2014." In *Crime in the United States 2014*. Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation. https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2014/crime-in-the-u.s.-2014/tables/table-78/table-78-by-state/Table_78_Full_time_Law_Enforcement_Employees_Washington_by_Cities_2014.xls.
- Philadelphia Police Department: "QuickFacts: Philadelphia city, Pennsylvania." Accessed January 5, 2017. http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST040215/4260000,29189,00.
- St. Louis County Police Department: "QuickFacts: St. Louis County, Missouri." Accessed December 30, 2016. http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST040215/29189,00.
- Fayetteville Police Department: "QuickFacts: Fayetteville city, North Carolina." Accessed December 30, 2016. http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/3722920.
- Salinas Police Department: "QuickFacts: Salinas city, California." Accessed January 5, 2017. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045216/0664224,06.
- Calexico Police Department: "QuickFacts: Calexico city, California." Accessed December 30, 2016. http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/0609710,3722920.

Number of Sworn Officers

- Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department: Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. 2015. *2014 Annual Report*. (Las Vegas, NV: Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department). http://www.lvmpd.com/Portals/0/pdf/2014AnnualReport.pdf.
- Spokane Police Department: Federal Bureau of Investigation. 2015. "Table 78, Washington Full-time Law Enforcement Employees by City, 2014." In *Crime in the United States 2014*. Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation. https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2014/crime-in-the-u.s.-2014/tables/table-78/table-78-by-state/Table_78_Full_time_Law_Enforcement_Employees_Washington_by_Cities_2014.xls.
- Philadelphia Police Department: Fachner, George, and Steven Carter. 2015. An Assessment of Deadly Force in the Philadelphia Police Department. Collaborative Reform Initiative. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-w0753-pub.pdf.
- St. Louis County Police Department: Norton, Blake, Edwin E. Hamilton, Rick Braziel, Daniel Linskey, and Jennifer Zeunik. 2015. An Assessment of the St. Louis County Police Department. Collaborative Reform Initiative. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-p316-pub.pdf.

- Fayetteville Police Department: Rodriguez, Denise, Laura Kunard, Will Johnson, James LaRochelle, and Zoë Thorkildsen. 2015. Assessment Report on the Fayetteville (North Carolina) Police Department. Collaborative Reform Initiative. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-w0790-pub.pdf.
- Salinas Police Department: Santos, Roberto, Rick Gregory, Leocadio Cordero, and Gerald Richard. 2016. An Assessment of the Salinas Police Department. Collaborative Reform Initiative. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-w0799-pub.pdf.
- Calexico Police Department: Bouche, Kenneth A., Robert L. Davis, Stephen C. Grant, Christi L. Gullion, Arnette F. Heintze, Will D. Johnson III, and Edward Medrano. 2016. An Assessment of the Calexico Police Department. Collaborative Reform Initiative. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-w0804-pub.pdf.

Annual Budget

- Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department: Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. 2015. *2014 Annual Report.* (Las Vegas, NV: Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department). http://www.lvmpd.com/Portals/0/pdf/2014AnnualReport.pdf
- Spokane Police Department: Spokane, Washington Office of the Mayor. 2014. *2015 City of Spokane Proposed Budget.* Spokane, Washington: Office of the Mayor. https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/budget/2015/2015-proposed-budget-summary-schedules.pdf.
- Philadelphia Police Department: "City of Philadelphia Open Budget." Accessed December 30, 2016. http://www.phila.gov/openbudget/index.html.
- St. Louis County Police Department: Stenger, Steven V., Michael F. Chapman, and Paul Kreidler. *St. Louis County, Missouri 2016 Recommended Budget*. St. Louis, MO: St. Louis County Executive. https://www.stlouisco.com/portals/8/docs/document%20library/budget/2016/RecommendedBudget/2016RecommendedBudgetSummaryBook.pdf.
- Fayetteville Police Department: Voorhees, Theodore. City of Fayetteville FY16 Annual Budget. Fayetteville, NC: Office of the City Manager. http://fayettevillenc.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=2826.
- Salinas Police Department: "Budget and Financial Reports." Accessed January 5, 2017. http://www.cityofsalinas.org/our-city-services/finance/budget-financial-reports.
- Calexico Police Department: "Department Funding." Accessed December 30, 2016. http://www.calexico.ca.gov/index.asp?SEC=029A22CB-1659-4003-84BC-20534F81C51A&DE=59C05E67-7307-48D2-B929-811057E8ADA4&Type=B_BASIC.

Jurisdiction Area

- Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department: Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. 2015. *2014 Annual Report.* (Las Vegas, NV: Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department). http://www.lvmpd.com/Portals/0/pdf/2014AnnualReport.pdf
- Spokane Police Department: "Spokane City : Police Department: Officer." Accessed January 5, 2017. https://my.spokanecity.org/police/officer/.
- Philadelphia Police Department: "About the Department." Accessed December 30, 2016. http://www.phillypolice.com/about/.

- St. Louis County Police Department: Norton, Blake, Edwin E. Hamilton, Rick Braziel, Daniel Linskey, and Jennifer Zeunik. 2015. An Assessment of the St. Louis County Police Department. Collaborative Reform Initiative. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-p316-pub.pdf.
- Fayetteville Police Department: Rodriguez, Denise, Laura Kunard, Will Johnson, James LaRochelle, and Zoë Thorkildsen. 2015. Assessment Report on the Fayetteville (North Carolina) Police Department. Collaborative Reform Initiative. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-w0790-pub.pdf.
- Salinas Police Department: Salinas Police Community Advisory Committee. 2015. *Salinas Police Department Annual Report 2014*. (Salinas, CA: Salinas Police Department.) https://www.salinaspd.com/sites/default/files/spd_ar_2014_print.pdf.
- Calexico Police Department: "QuickFacts: Calexico city, California." Accessed December 30, 2016. http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/0609710.

Appendix B: List of Interviewees

- **Kathy Armstrong,** Program Manager, Spokane Police Department
- **Jacqueline Bailey-Davis,** Captain, Philadelphia Police Department
- **Patrick Baldwin,** Director of Crime Analysis, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Tracie Bass-Caine,** Captain, Fayetteville Police Department
- **Breean Beggs,** Spokane City Council
- **Jon Belmar,** Chief, St. Louis County Police Department
- **Melissa Bradley,** Policy Analyst, COPS Office
- **Rick Braziel,** Executive Fellow, Police Foundation
- **Tony Bricker,** Sergeant, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Patrick Burke,** Officer, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Helene Bushwick,** Supervisory Policy Analyst, COPS Office
- **Rob Chapman,** Deputy Director, COPS Office
- **Charles Cochran,** Sergeant, Fayetteville Police Department
- **Chip Coldren,** Managing Director for Justice Programs, CNA
- **Billie Coleman,** Collaborative Reform Specialist, COPS Office
- **Nazmia Comrie,** Senior Program Specialist, COPS Office
- **Stanley Cooper,** Commander, Salinas Police Department
- **Christine Coulter,** Deputy Commissioner, Philadelphia Police Department
- **Keith Cummings,** Captain, Spokane Police Department
- **Robert Davis,** Senior Vice President, Hillard Heintze
- **Ronald L.** Davis, Director, COPS Office
- **Pastor Shon** Davis, Jesus is the Answer
- **Jan Dobbs,** Director, Spokane Mental Health
- **Rick Dobrow,** Assistant Chief (Ret.), Spokane Police Department
- **Colby Dolly,** Sergeant, St. Louis County Police Department
- **Joshua Ederheimer,** Senior Advisor, Office of Tribal Justice
- **Tawana Elliott,** Senior Program Specialist, COPS Office
- **George Fachner,** Collaborative Reform Specialist, COPS Office
- **Teresa Fuller,** Public Information Officer, Spokane Police Department
- **Rod Garcia,** Analyst, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Henry Gomez,** Commander, Salinas Police Department
- **Rick Gregory,** President and CEO, Institute for Intergovernmental Research
- **Erin Williams Hueter,** Lutheran Community Services Northwest
- **Steve James,** Assistant Research Professor, Washington State University
- **Will Johnson,** Chief, Arlington (Texas) Police Department
- **Anthony Kelly,** Assistant Chief, Fayetteville Police Department
- **Kevin King,** Lieutenant, Spokane Police Department
- **Kasey Kirkegard,** Officer, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department

- **Jim LaRochelle,** Captain, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Kevin Lawson,** Lieutenant, St. Louis County Police Department
- **Joseph Lombardo,** Sheriff, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Justin Lundgren,** Major, Spokane Police Department
- **Sarah Lynds,** Director of Strategic Initiatives, Spokane Police Department
- **Norman Mann,** Captain, St. Louis County Police Department
- **Jessica Mansourian,** Supervisory Social Science Analyst, COPS Office
- **Matthew McCarthy,** Captain, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Blake McClelland,** Lecturer, Arizona State University
- **Kelly McMahill,** Lieutenant, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Kevin McMahill,** Undersheriff, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Kelly McMillin,** Chief (Ret.), Salinas Police Department
- **Katherine McQuay,** acting Chief of Staff, COPS Office
- **Harold Medlock,** Chief (Ret.), Fayetteville Police Department
- **Tracie Meidl,** Lieutenant, Spokane Police Department
- **Bernard Melekian,** President, The Paratus Group
- **Mary Muramatsu,** Assistant City Attorney, Spokane City Attorney's Office
- **John Murray,** Commander, Salinas Police Department
- **James Nolette,** Captain, Fayetteville Police Department
- **Blake Norton,** Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Police Foundation
- **Mari Odle,** Spokane Police Department
- **Robert Plummer,** Captain, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Toni Pond,** Analyst, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Kirk Primas,** Assistant Sheriff (Ret.), Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Jamie Prosser,** Lieutenant, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- **Charles Ramsey,** Commissioner (Ret.), Philadelphia Police Department
- **Kim Robinson,** Sergeant, Salinas Police Department
- **Denise Rodriguez,** Research Scientist, CNA
- **Richard Ross,** Commissioner, Philadelphia Police Department
- **Roberto Santos,** Assistant Professor, Radford University
- **Matthew Scheider,** Assistant Director, COPS Office
- **Tim Schwering,** Director of Strategic Initiatives, Spokane Police Department
- **David Shaw,** Deputy Chief, Salinas Police Department
- **Ryan Shaw,** Crime Analyst, Spokane Police Department
- **Ashley Shultz,** Senior Research Specialist, CNA
- **Selby Smith,** Assistant Chief (Ret.), Spokane Police Department
- **James "Chips" Stewart,** Senior Fellow, CNA
- **Zac Storment,** Sergeant, Spokane Police Department
- **Frank Straub,** Director of Strategic Studies, Police Foundation
- **Tim Szambelan,** Assistant City Attorney, City of Spokane

- **Kyndrin Tenny,** Supervisory Analyst, Spokane Police Department
- **John Wall,** Sergeant, St. Louis County Police Department
- **Dan Waters,** Sergeant, Spokane Police Department
- **Darry Whitaker,** Commander, Fayetteville Police Department
- **Noble Wray,** Policing Practices and Accountability Initiative, COPS Office
- **Jennifer Zeunik,** Director of Programs, Police Foundation

Appendix C: Interview Protocols

The following are the standard sets of questions used to guide the interviews that informed this assessment. Every question was not asked of every respondent. Instead, the questions that were asked were tailored to align with the individual interviewees' experiences, role, and time constraints.

Police department leadership (sheriff or chief)

- When and how did you first hear about Collaborative Reform?
- What were your motivations to seek out assistance from the COPS Office?
- What are your goals for Collaborative Reform? Have they changed since Collaborative Reform began?
- What does collaboration mean in the context of Collaborative Reform?
- Did you feel like the assessment findings were accurate?
- Did you think the recommendations were feasible for your department to implement?
- Please describe the department's relationship with and/or the level of responsiveness of the COPS Office.
- Do you think the TA provider and Subject Matter Experts had an appreciation/understanding of policing in your jurisdiction?
- What steps did you take to create buy-in throughout the department?
- What have been the greatest successes of Collaborative Reform to date?
- What have been the biggest challenges of Collaborative Reform to date?
- What are the biggest lessons learned to date?
- If you could make changes to CRI-TA without political or fiscal constraints, what would they be?
- Are there any other comments you'd like to share regarding CRI-TA that would be helpful to our process evaluation?

Police department CRI-TA liaison and other key staff

- Please describe your involvement with the Collaborative Reform Initiative.
- How was the decision to participate in Collaborative Reform communicated to the department?
- What are the goals of Collaborative Reform?
- What does collaboration mean in the context of Collaborative Reform?
- How is Collaborative Reform housed organizationally within the department and how is it staffed?
- Please describe the department's relationship with and/or the level of responsiveness of the COPS Office.
- Do you think the TA provider and Subject Matter Experts had an appreciation/understanding of policing in your jurisdiction?
- What was the department's involvement in the development of the initial report, including the findings and recommendations?
- Did you feel like the assessment findings were accurate?
- Did you think the recommendations were feasible for your department to implement?
- Were the proposed timelines reasonable? Were they adhered to?
- What have been the greatest successes of Collaborative Reform to date?

- What have been the biggest challenges of Collaborative Reform to date?
- What have been the biggest lessons learned to date?
- If you could make changes to CRI-TA without political or fiscal constraints, what would they be?
- Are there any other comments you'd like to share regarding CRI-TA that would be helpful to our process evaluation?

COPS Office staff and leadership

- Please describe your involvement with the Collaborative Reform Initiative.
- What are the key goals of CRI-TA?
- What does collaboration mean in the context of the Collaborative Reform Initiative?
- Please describe the COPS Office's process when approving a jurisdiction to be a Collaborative Reform site, including who is involved and what are the factors considered? Has that changed over time?
- What have been the biggest changes in how CRI-TA has been implemented across the various sites over time?
- We'd like to talk about challenges that the COPS Office has faced in launching and expanding CRI-TA.
- What have been the most significant political challenges?
- What have been the most significant implementation challenges?
- Please describe the process for developing a sites' goals and objectives.
- How does the COPS Office stay connected to the work being done with the site during the assessment phase? Is the COPS Office involved in any of the site visits?
- Describe the relationship and communication between the Technical Assistance Provider and the Police Department. How has it changed?
- Please describe the reporting requirements that Technical Assistance providers must adhere to.
- Please describe the role of the COPS Office staff in the development and release of the findings and recommendations and the initial report. How does the COPS Office respond to questions asked by the department?
- What is the process in place for cross site learning? How do Site Managers regularly share information and lessons learned?
- If you could make changes to CRI-TA without political or fiscal constraints, what would they be?
- What are the biggest lessons learned to date?
- Are there any other comments you'd like to share regarding CRI-TA that would be helpful to our process evaluation?

Technical Assistance providers

- Please describe your involvement with CRI-TA to date.
- How was the team developed? Was this different for different sites? (if applicable)
- What interested your group in becoming a TA provider under CRI-TA?
- What were your agency's goals and expectations for Collaborative Reform? Have they changed since Collaborative Reform began?
- What does collaboration mean in the context of Collaborative Reform?
- Was the COPS Office involved in the development of a relationship between your team and the Police Department? If yes, in what way(s)? If yes, did the level of involvement change over time?

- Did your agency conduct prep work or research prior to launching any of the sites? If yes, what and how?
- Do you feel that creating buy-in from the site is a role for TA providers? If yes, how do you do this?
- Please describe the process for the selection of Subject Matter Experts.
- Were the proposed timelines reasonable? Were they adhered to?
- Was the COPS Office involved with the development of recommendations? What was their role?
- Was the site involved with the development of the recommendations? If yes, in what way?
- How were best practices identified in the context of developing findings and recommendations?
- Can you tell us about how the findings and recommendations were shared with the site? To your knowledge, how was your report received by the site?
- Please talk about the extent to which technical assistance has been part of CRI-TA.
- What have been the most significant challenges that you've witnessed in the implementation of CRI-TA?
- What are the biggest lessons learned to date?
- If you could make changes to CRI-TA without political or fiscal constraints, what would they be?
- Are there any other comments you'd like to share regarding CRI-TA that would be helpful to our process evaluation?

Subject Matter Experts

- Please describe your involvement with CRI-TA to date. Was your role defined at the beginning of your involvement? Did it evolve over time?
- Can you tell us a little bit about your background in law enforcement?
- How did you come to be aware of and involved in CRI? Through the TA provider? COPS Office?
- How would you distinguish the role of an SME from the role of the TA Provider?
- How do you familiarize yourself with a site prior to starting work and in the early stages of your involvement in Collaborative Reform?
- [If relevant for interviewee] Did you encounter any noticeable differences across the sites you worked in? Differences across TA providers?
- What does collaboration mean in the context of Collaborative Reform?
- [If relevant for interviewee] Please describe the process for developing recommendations.
- How were best practices identified in the context of developing findings and recommendations?
- Please describe the role of the COPS Office in the site work.
- Please talk about the extent to which traditional technical assistance, such as training and peer-to-peer learning has been part of CRI-TA.
- What have been the biggest successes that you've witnessed in the implementation of CRI-TA?
- What have been the most significant challenges that you've witnessed in the implementation of CRI-TA?
- What are the biggest lessons learned to date?
- If you could make changes to CRI-TA without political or fiscal constraints, what would they be?
- Are there any other comments you'd like to share regarding CRI-TA that would be helpful to our process evaluation?

Appendix D: Site-Specific Goals of Collaborative Reform

The COPS Office website outlines the different focus areas and goals for each CRI-TA site. The following are the goals for the seven sites reviewed in the present document, exactly as they are stated on the COPS Office website (https://cops.usdoj.gov/collaborativereform) as of November 2016.

Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department

The COPS Office piloted Collaborative Reform with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) in order to examine policies and practices related to use of force. The COPS Office sought to help LVMPD achieve the following:

- Reduce the number of officer-involved shootings (OISs)
- Reduce the number of persons killed as a result of OISs
- Change the culture of LVMPD as it relates to deadly force
- Enhance officer safety

Spokane Police Department

The goal of Collaborative Reform for the Spokane Police Department (SPD) is to improve departmental use of force processes in the SPD taking into account national standards, best practices, current/emerging research and community expectations. The COPS Office seeks to help SPD achieve the following:

- Examine departmental use of force policies and procedures in comparison to national best practices and existing research, identify areas for improvement, and provide recommendations
- Analyze a sample of use of force investigation files from 2009-2012 and identify trends, strengths, and weaknesses
- Examine the role of the ombudsman in use of force investigations in comparison to national best practices and existing research
- Improve SPD organizational culture as it relates to use of force to build trust with the community

Philadelphia Police Department

The goal of Collaborative Reform for the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) is to reform deadly force policies, practices, and related processes in the PPD, taking into account national standards, best practices, current/emerging research, and community expectations. The COPS Office seeks to help PPD achieve the following:

- Enhance training as it relates to officer and public safety in deadly force situations
- Improve the quality and transparency of deadly force investigations from both a criminal and administrative standpoint
- Strengthen the use of force review process
- Institutionalize organizational learning processes and practices related to deadly force incidents

St. Louis County Police Department

The initial focus of Collaborative Reform with the St. Louis County (MO) Police Department (SLCPD) is to improve constitutional policing policies, practices, and related processes, taking into account national standards, best practices, current and emerging research, and community expectations. The COPS Office seeks to help SLCPD achieve the following:

- Enhance in-service training with a specific focus on fair and impartial policing, community engagement, and partnership development
- Improve the process quality for traffic stops, searches and frisks to prohibit racial profiling

- Strengthen the policies, practices, training and response for handling protests and mass demonstrations
- Develop a comprehensive communication strategy for SLCPD personnel and community partners that will serve to increase transparency
- Improve the recruitment, selection and hiring processes to address minority population underrepresentation on the force

Fayetteville Police Department

The initial focus of Collaborative Reform with the Fayetteville Police Department (FPD) is to review policies, training, and operations as they relate to use of force and interactions with citizens, taking into account national standards, best practices, current/emerging research, and community expectations. The COPS Office seeks to help FPD achieve the following:

- Improve training and policies as they relate to use of force and interactions with citizens
- Improve the quality and transparency of deadly force investigations from both a criminal and administrative standpoint
- Improve community engagement at all levels of the department, particularly with communities of color
- Improve oversight and monitoring of uses of force, traffic stops, and pedestrian stops conducted by Fayetteville officers

Salinas Police Department

The initial focus of Collaborative Reform with the Salinas Police Department (SPD) is to improve the responsiveness and accountability to the community by taking into account national standards, best practices, existing research and community expectations. The COPS Office seeks to help SPD achieve the following:

- Analyze the responsiveness and deployment of resources to maximize their impact on police effectiveness and police/community relations
- Examine the agency's use of force policies, practices, training, and related processes
- Assess communication between command staff, mid-level supervisors, line officers and external stakeholders
- Examine community trust and engagement, particularly with communities of color, at all levels of the department

Calexico Police Department

The initial focus of Collaborative Reform with the Calexico Police Department (CPD) is to improve the policies, procedures, practices, training and operations by taking into account national standards, best practices, existing research and community expectations. The COPS Office seeks to help CPD achieve the following:

- Examine community engagement policies, procedures and practices
- Analyze accountability, oversight and transparency to maximize impact on police effectiveness and police/community relations
- Assess internal and external investigation policies, procedures, practices and training

About CJI

The Crime & Justice Institute (CJI) at Community Resources for Justice (CRJ) works with local, state and national criminal justice organizations to improve public safety and the delivery of justice throughout the country. With a reputation built over many decades for innovative thinking, unbiased issue analysis, and a client-centered approach, CJI helps organizations achieve better, more cost-effective results for the communities they serve. For more information, see http://www.crj.org/cji.

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 is critical to public safety, ensuring that all stakeholders 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.

The COPS Office awards grants to hire community policing professionals, develop and test innovative policing strategies, and provide training and technical assistance to community members, local government leaders, and all levels of law enforcement. Since 1994, the COPS Office has invested more than $14 billion to help advance community policing.

Since it was launched in 2011 as a form of technical assistance offering a non-adversarial alternative to other means of promoting organizational reform in law enforcement, the Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA) program has helped 16 agencies make meaningful commitments to change and reform. To assess the program, determine means of expanding or improving it, and learn how CRI-TA was experienced by the participating law enforcement agencies and those who worked with them, the COPS Office requested an evaluation by The Crime & Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice. This report, which presents the assessment team's findings, covers the entire evaluation process, which included document reviews, interviews with technical assistance teams, agency personnel and others involved with the effort as well as visits to seven participating agencies: Las Vegas, Nevada; Spokane, Washington; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; St. Louis, Missouri; Salinas, California; Fayetteville, North Carolina; and Calexico, California.

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

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To obtain details on COPS Office programs,
call the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770.

Visit the COPS Office online at **www.cops.usdoj.gov**.

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