

PART 10



DETECTIVE PERSPECTIVES

ON CRIME GUN INTELLIGENCE

PART 10: RELENTLESS FOLLOW-UP AND FEEDBACK:

HOW DO YOU STOP GUN VIOLENCE WHEN IT HAS REACHED THE POINT THAT AN INNOCENT 13-YEAR-OLD HONORS STUDENT . . . IS GUNNED DOWN WHILE SIMPLY TAKING OUT THE TRASH ON CHRISTMAS DAY . . . ? THE ANSWER IS - YOU DO EVERYTHING IN YOUR POWER—YOU MARSHAL YOUR FORCES AND DEPLOY THEM USING A PROVEN PLAN.

- John J. Hoffman, Acting Attorney General, New Jersey, April 16, 2014

This session will provide some perspectives on the importance of relentless follow-up and feedback mechanisms, as they relate to effective and sustainable Crime Gun Intelligence (CGI).

The perspectives presented on the matter of **“relentless follow-up”** will be addressed in the contexts of investigative follow-up and follow-up related to *policy, plans and processes*.



NYPD CompStat dashboard detailing crime across the city. (CLICK image to enlarge)

RELENTLESS INVESTIGATIVE FOLLOW-UP

In this context, the need for relentless investigative follow-up may not need much convincing. Maintaining trust in policing today through transparency is a front and center issue confronting law enforcement leaders today. Well managed CGI, will increase the potential for positive results when seeking justice for the victims of gun related violence, resolution for their loved ones and peace for their neighbors – all righteous pursuits. However, if well managed CGI is only applied in some violent crime cases and not others, it will raise suspicion as to why and foster mistrust. Therefore, in order to best serve the community and be most effective, CGI efforts must be applied consistently and relentlessly across all cases involving victims. Trust will be maintained through accountability and when it becomes transparent that the leaders of the organization **“walk their talk”**. (Gagliardi)

RELENTLESS FOLLOW-UP ON POLICY, PLANS AND PROCESSES

In this context, relentless follow-up on policy, plans, and processes relates to continuous

assessment and accountability. In terms of assessment, relentless follow-up translates to the ongoing measurement of performance – to determine if the intended outcomes are being realized and if not why not. Holding the team accountable for adhering to the purpose of the driving CGI policy and procedures, also shows respect for the time, attention and labor contributed by the team members to collect, examine and follow-up on the crime gun intelligence generated on behalf of the public that is served. (Gagliardi)

COMPSTAT

In 2013, the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) produced a publication entitled: **“COMPSTAT: Its Origins, Evolution, And Future In Law Enforcement Agencies”**, with the support of the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The publication documented the discussions of a roundtable of police executives providing deep insight into the COMPSTAT performance management system that the New York Police Department developed to reduce crime and achieve other police department goals. Several chiefs emphasized that accountability and follow-up go hand in hand. (PERF)

IF YOU DON'T DO RELENTLESS FOLLOW-UP, THE FIRST THREE TENETS OF COMPSTAT (THE ANALYSIS, DEPLOYMENT, AND TACTICS) FALL APART.

- Commissioner Hartnett.

Bill Bratton and the late Jack Maple, created Compstat. Bratton told the PERF members that although tough questions play a key part in Compstat, these questions: **“are not intended to be a ‘gotcha’; they are designed to ensure police understand the problems in their areas. If someone’s strategy is working, then great, let’s share it. If it’s not, let’s see how we can improve it with the knowledge of other professionals in the room.”**

ATF on Investigative Follow-up and Feedback Over and over, ATF has stressed the importance of investigative follow-up on NIBIN leads and other CGI sources for the identification and prosecution of criminal shooters. However, ATF has also stressed the value of feedback, emphasizing the key contributions of each team member, to keep the entire CGI team thinking and acting together. Communication and process improvements emerge from the feedback provided to the entire team of **“technicians performing NIBIN entries and correlation reviews, intelligence analysts developing investigative leads, and investigators working the violent crime cases”**. (ATF Fact Sheet)

Circling back to let the patrol officer know that the fired cartridge case the officer found at the crime scene helped catch the killer, will not only be greatly appreciated but will keep the whole team motivated and locked-on going forward. Everybody likes to get those kind of **“job well done”** calls.

THE LOMBARDI CODE

Renowned football coach, Vince Lombardi must have understood the fundamental relationship between, relentless follow-up, feedback and accountability. His unique ability to motivate people to make winning a habit, was most probably rooted in more than just passion and inspirational words. Therefore, it’s reasonable to believe that the habit of winning was shaped and sustained through his policies - the team rules - that his son would later refer to as the **“Lombardi Code”**. Lombardi held himself and his players accountable for living and playing by his code. If a player on Lombardi’s team broke a rule in public, he was held accountable for it in public.

Not everyone embraced and accepted Lombardi’s policies. Some found them unexpected—like the one prohibiting a player from sitting or standing at the bar in a public restaurant. There was pushback, which is to be expected whenever change is introduced into an organization. A naysayer could find himself traded to another team before he dried off from his shower after practice that day.

Undaunted, Lombardi persevered. Once the team found itself at the top of the standings, the coach’s policies went unquestioned. There came a time, one player said, **“that if the coach told you to go to hell, you’d look forward to the trip.”**

None of this happens overnight and there is no silver bullet, quick fix. It takes the right people thinking and acting together in a cross-jurisdictional and collaborative manner.

For example, In 2023, the Office of Justice Programs posted a study entitled: Research on a 15-Year Statewide Program to Generate Enhanced Investigative Leads on Crime Gun Violence.

<https://www.ojp.gov/library/publications/research-15-year-statewide-program-generate-enhanced-investigative-leads-crime>

This study investigated a 15-year program in New Jersey to enhance violent crime investigations that changed the use of firearms forensic evidence from a sole evidential focus to one that also incorporates a premonitory focus required to generate investigative leads. The study demonstrated the value of ballistics imaging to connect previously unconnected incidents, individuals, and weapons particularly when combined with other law enforcement data sets. Moreover, it illustrated the critical need of information sharing across forensic, criminal intelligence (such as fusion and real time crime centers), and investigative entities across all levels of government – local, state, and federal - in supporting violent crime suppression efforts.

One of the many programs examined was New Jersey's Rapid Assessment in NIBIN (RAIN) program. RAIN reduced NIBIN turnaround time for firearms evidence from 6 – 10 months to 24 – 48 hours.

A major value of the study is that it presents a blueprint for leadership and action that other agencies can follow. By reading about the steps that New Jersey took and instituted over a fifteen-year period, interested agencies can save much time and effort in doing the same. Much can be adopted rather than having to be re-invented, in some cases modifications may be necessary to meet an agency's unique individual needs, and some steps can be simply skipped.

All to say that while the blueprint that this study offers should not take another agency 15 years to implement, neither is it a silver bullet quick fix, it will take thoughtful consideration and action.



NEXT UP ON DETECTIVE PERSPECTIVES:

Part Eleven of Twelve: Balancing People, Processes and Technology

SOURCES:

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2. COMPSTAT: ITS ORIGINS, EVOLUTION, AND FUTURE IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, POLICE EXECUTIVE RESEARCH FORUM (PERF), 2013. WASHINGTON, DC 20036
3. ATF FACT SHEET [HTTPS://WWW.ATF.GOV/FIREARMS/DOCS/UNDEFINED/NIBINBESTPRACTICESPDF/DOWNLOAD](https://www.atf.gov/firearms/docs/undefined/nibinbestpracticespdf/download)

