BJA VALOR Program
Assistance to select VRN sites
GUN VIOLENCE REDUCTION STRATEGIES

The VALOR Program's mission is to **improve the immediate and long-term safety, wellness, and resiliency of law enforcement professionals**. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, the VALOR Program seeks to achieve its goal through a multifaceted approach that includes the **delivery of training, resources, research, and partnerships** that benefit today's law enforcement.

The VALOR Program is offering focused training and technical assistance (TTA) to selected VRN sites to provide assistance on making the connection between firearms-related information and violent crime strategies. Because firearms are often the nexus between the most serious crimes (homicides, aggravated assaults, robbery, street gang-related assaults, narcotic violations and, recently, acts of terrorism), specially trained officers working in police departments that prioritize reducing gun violence often become the nucleus within their agencies. By receiving and channeling critical firearms-related intelligence and information to appropriate units, these officers can provide a proficient mechanism for advancing both internal case coordination, as well as liaison to outside agencies where potential criminal investigations, narcotics violations, or firearms trafficking schemes are identified.

The proposed TTA has two parts:

1. **Firearms-related Assessment:** Conduct an on-site assessment and analysis of the site, including geographic crime analysis, gun violence deployment strategies, arrest procedures, processing firearms and related evidence, and firearms case articulation (narrative report) and case preparation.

   On-site Assessment: Typically 2 day on-site interview process and review of applicable policies and procedures.

   Timeframe: To be completed by late spring 2017.

   Site Responsibilities: Assist in identifying specific interviewees based on interview scheduled provided by the SMEs; provide policies, procedures, and gun-related strategy descriptions; and participation in planning and on-site activities.

   Output: Assessment report will include analysis of firearm-related processes, review of current firearm-related training, and proposed customized training plan.

2. **Customized Training:** The training curriculum will emphasize proven street enforcement and investigative activities tailored to that site within analysis-based areas of deployment. The primary topics will include officer safety considerations through firearm detection, recovery, and enforcement techniques; the characteristics of armed persons; firearms case articulation and report writing; case preparation for successful prosecution; suppression hearing exercises; processing firearms and related evidence and laboratory submissions; firearms identification and tracing procedures; the National

Integrated Ballistic Identification Network (NIBIN); and firearms trafficking investigations.

Training: The course will consist of traditional classroom-/conference-style instruction, interactive discussion, practical skills, written exercises, and an interactive, in-class, video-based mock suppression hearing exercise (developed pre-seminar by the SME in conjunction with the participating Assistant U.S. Attorney or Assistant State's Attorney's representative). Two of the courses structured for the seminar include:

What Every Officer Needs to Know About Crime Guns
This topic explores the myriad schemes by which criminals and other prohibited persons obtain firearms at the street level. By utilizing effective trace data, officers will learn how to interpret firearms-trafficking indicators through the examination of firearms trace reports. The block covers tracing, the utilization of trace data, firearms trafficking indicators, and the use of eTrace and NIBIN systems.

Firearms Identification

Accurate firearms identification is crucial to a firearms investigation, trace, and officer testimony in court. A simple misidentification—referring to a Calwestco firearm as a Jennings brand in paperwork or testimony, for example—can be disastrous to a firearms prosecution. Yet, relatively few state and local law enforcement officers are formally trained in this discipline at the academy level. Using interactive, practical skills exercises, this course seeks to take the mystery out of firearms identification by teaching officers how to systematically and accurately identify firearms for successful tracing and criminal prosecution.

The trainers will use an interactive, hands-on style of instruction to engage student officers in relevant dialogue and challenging practical skills exercises designed to enhance their ability to recognize potential criminal gunmen; make safe firearm recoveries, thereby increasing officer safety; prepare comprehensive cases; and advance fruitful evidence-based laboratory submissions and results. Constitutional policing practices as they relate to citizen interaction and appropriate use of force justification as well as VALOR core components will be emphasized throughout the training.

Timeframe: To be completed by 9/30/2017.

Site Responsibilities: Assist in identifying and securing appropriate training facility and participants and provide feedback on training.

Output: Delivery of customized training at the VRN site.

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