



MICHAEL A. ADKINSON, JR., SHERIFF
Office of the Sheriff, Walton County

Standard Operating Procedure

Title: **Stratified Model of Problem Solving**

Number: **2.1.10**

Effective Date: **02/27/20**

Amends: **None**

Applicable Standards

CFA: **None**

FCAC: **None**

Approved by:

Sheriff Michael A. Adkinson, Jr.

I. Purpose: To ensure problems occurring at the immediate, short-term, and long-term levels within the County are identified and addressed quickly and effectively.

II. Authority:

Chapter 30, Florida Statutes

III. Definitions:

Incidents – Individual events to which typically an officer responds to or discovers on patrol.

Significant Incidents – Individual events that arise from calls for service but are deemed more serious by laws and policies of the sheriff's office.

Immediate Problems – Incidents that occur and are resolved within minutes, hours, or days.

Short-Term Problems – Incidents that occur over several hours, days, or weeks.

Repeat Location – Four or more quality of life incidents that have occurred at the same location, typically the same address, within a rolling four week period. Repeat incidents happen within hours, days, or weeks of one another.

Patterns – A group of two or more incidents that share one or more commonalities making them notable and distinct from other activity occurring within the same general date range. The set of incidents are typically limited in duration, ranging from hours to months, and treated as one unit of analysis addressed through focused police efforts. Commonalities may include, but are not limited to: crime types, modus operandi, targets, property, locations, etc.

Spree – A type of pattern occurring within a remarkably short timeframe, typically within hours, and within close proximity of one another (e.g. four vehicle burglaries occurring overnight in a neighborhood).

Hot Spot – A type of pattern occurring at locations within close proximity to one another and occurring over a duration of days, weeks, or months.

Series – A type of pattern with the crimes being committed by the same individual or group acting in concert (e.g. five robberies involving two to three white males in their twenties wearing masks). In general, a series occurring within a remarkably short period of time will include incidents with greater distance from one another (e.g. three neighborhoods several miles apart, each having several vehicle burglaries occur overnight by four males in their teens wearing hoodies, face masks, and gloves).

Long-Term Problems – Incidents that occur over several months, seasons, or years.

Problem Locations – Individual addresses or types of places where there is a concentration of crime and/or problematic activity.

Problem Areas – Relatively small areas (e.g., several block area) with a disproportionate amount of crime or disorder activity that is related.

Problem Offenders – Also called repeat offenders, are either one person who has committed a disproportionate amount of crime or a group of offenders who share similar characteristics.

Compound Problems – Problems that encompass various locations, offenders, and victims and, in some cases, exist throughout an entire jurisdiction.

COAR – Collaborative Operational Analysis and Response.

STARCOM – Statistical Tracking Accountability and Response through Computer Oriented Mapping.

IV. General:

- A. The Walton County Sheriff’s Office employs the Stratified Model of Problem Solving as an approach to crime reduction that seeks to overcome the weakness of current policing methods, while at the same time incorporating evidence-based practices.
- B. The Stratified Model distinguishes among different types of activity for which crime reduction strategies are implemented and designates responsibility based on the type of activity and resources necessary to address them.
- C. Various analyses, responses, and accountability mechanisms are carried out by different personnel within the agency which “stratifies” the workload and responsibility for problem solving and crime reduction.

V. Procedures:

- A. Short-Term Problems:
 - 1. Repeat Incident Locations
 - a) A list of repeat locations are identified by analysts and disseminated in a weekly report.

- b) District lieutenants and their patrol sergeants are expected to monitor and resolve repeat incident locations occurring within their assigned district or area of responsibility.
- c) On a monthly basis, analysts will compile a list of repeat incident locations having been identified in the previous three consecutive weeks. The identified locations will be reviewed by analysts for additional analysis and may be added to the COAR agenda for assignment and follow-up, if applicable.
- d) Repeat incident locations added to the COAR agenda remain active for 14 days from the last incident.

2. Patterns

- a) Analysts will search for patterns daily and post any identified as soon possible.
- b) Patterns remain active for 14 days starting from when the last incident occurred. If an additional incident occurs after the pattern has been identified and activated, the 14-day systematic response will restart on the date of the last incident.
- c) Patterns are tracked using a numbering system beginning with the year and followed by the next consecutive pattern number (e.g. 19-01, 19-02, etc.).
- d) Active patterns will be given a letter designation for any additional incident occurring in the identified area after having been activated (e.g. 19-01A, 19-01B, etc.).
- e) A district commander will be assigned and is responsible for implementing evidence-based strategies.
- f) Sergeants and investigators assigned will establish goals and objectives for the pattern.
- g) Successful resolution of a pattern generally means there were no further incidents occurring within the 14-day period of being active.

B. Long-Term Problems:

- 1. Analysis covers two or more years in many cases. Analysis for long-term problems is much more extensive and is not limited to but may include, if applicable: trend analysis, link analysis, spatial density mapping, comparisons, and an overall in-depth level of research.
- 2. The Patrol Bureau Chief is responsible for implementing evidence-based strategies to reduce the effects of the underlying causes of the problem.
- 3. Command staff will establish goals and objectives for the long-term problem.
- 4. Long-term problems will be closed after responses have been implemented and crime data is compared to the data used to initially assign the long-term problem.

C. Roles and Responsibilities:

1. Sheriff

- a) Formulates the agency's goals and objectives.
- b) Will be aware of problem areas within the county.
- c) Will ensure, to the extent possible, that bureau chiefs have the resources necessary to address problems.
- d) Shall attend and lead the monthly accountability meetings (STARCOM).
- e) Shall attend and lead the annual accountability meeting.
- f) Will hold bureau chiefs accountable for results.
- g) Ensures accountability through all facets of the agency

2. Criminal Intelligence Unit Commander

- a) Coordinates the STARCOM meeting agenda and associated documents and products.
- b) Supervises crime analysts and holds them accountable for their role in problem solving and crime reduction activities.
- c) Assists the executive staff in formulating agency goals, strategies, or agendas
- d) Attends and participates in daily, weekly, and monthly meetings.

3. Analysts

- a) Produce and distribute reports such as the Daily Briefing Report, the Weekly Report, the COAR Report, the Monthly Report, and the STARCOM Report.
- b) Crime analysts' primary focus and responsibility with regard to the Stratified Model is to identify both short-term and long-term crime patterns and problems, to identify repeat and known offenders, and to relay information and/or intelligence through actionable oriented products.
- c) Maintain communication with outside agencies such as neighboring analytical units, Crime Stoppers, ROCIC, North West Florida Fusion Center, etc.

4. Patrol Bureau Chief

- a) Has ultimate responsibility for the strategies employed to address all levels of problems in their respective bureau and are accountable for the results.

- b) Assists and takes the lead in addressing long-term problems that may require extensive organizational resources.
 - c) Attends and participates in daily, weekly, and monthly meetings.
 - d) Holds district lieutenants accountable for results.
5. Criminal Investigations Bureau Chief
- a) Responsible and held accountable for providing support to and coordinating/collaborating with the Patrol Bureau Chief to assist in resolving identified crime patterns and problems.
 - b) Coordinates with their respective lieutenants and sergeants to make certain they assist district lieutenants and patrol sergeants in resolving crime patterns and hold them accountable for results.
 - c) Responsible to take an active role in conducting known offender checks.
 - d) Attends and participates in daily, weekly, and monthly meetings.
6. District Lieutenants
- a) Must be aware of all types of criminal activity occurring in the districts and engaged in resolving short-term and long-term problems.
 - b) Employ strategies to address crime patterns and problems in their respective districts and are accountable for the results.
 - c) Responsible for facilitating, directing, and holding personnel accountable for resolving crime patterns in their respective districts.
 - d) Attends and participates in daily, weekly, and monthly meetings
7. Patrol Sergeants
- a) Must be aware of, and ensure their patrol deputies are aware of, all types of criminal activity occurring in the districts and engaged in resolving short-term and long-term problems.
 - b) Responsible for addressing repeat locations.
 - c) Takes an active role in assisting deputies to address crime patterns (e.g., assist with directed patrols, conducting field interviews, and traffic stops) and documents all efforts via SharePoint.
 - d) Holds deputies accountable for responses to crime patterns and the documentation of responses via SharePoint.
 - e) Attends, at minimum, one COAR meeting each quarter and one STARCOM meeting semi-annually.
8. Patrol Deputies

- a) Must be aware of all types of criminal activity occurring in the zones and engaged in resolving short-term and long-term problems.
- b) Takes an active role in responding to crime patterns to include, but not limited to, the following responses: directed patrol, field interviews, traffic stops, contacting known offenders, and contacting potential victims.
- c) Documents all responses conducted in crime patterns via SharePoint.
- d) May be invited to COAR and STARCOM meetings to explain the actions they have taken to give them exposure and recognition.

D. Evidence-Based Crime Reduction Strategies:

1. Crime patterns require immediate responses primarily at the times when the crimes in the pattern are occurring. The Walton County Sheriff's Office will implement an immediate and systematic response to crime patterns as follows

a) Patrol

- (1) Crime patterns will be assigned to a patrol sergeant.
- (2) Quality investigations conducted during initial investigations to include processing for evidence, neighborhood canvas, well-written case reports, etc.
- (3) Directed patrols, both marked and unmarked, in the pattern areas.
- (4) Specialized tactics in the pattern area (surveillance, bait car/property/victim etc.).

b) Crime Prevention

- (1) Contact potential victims directly (letters, flyers, in person, reverse 911).
- (2) Provide sanitized bulletins to potential victims, when appropriate.
- (3) Coordinate a media release with the Public Affairs Coordinator.

c) Criminal Investigations

- (1) Crime patterns will be assigned to an investigator.
- (2) Crimes in the pattern will be assigned for follow-up.
- (3) Contact known offenders.
- (4) Follow-up on latent prints and evidence obtained during initial investigations.
- (5) Follow-up on field interviews generated by directed patrol efforts.

- (6) Assist patrol with specialized tactics in pattern area (surveillance, bait car/property/victim etc.).

2. Accountability Meetings

a) Daily Meeting

- (1) Facilitate action-orientated accountability for strategies implemented for immediate and short-term problems.
- (2) Used to develop, monitor, and asses implementation and effectiveness of strategies for significant incidents, repeat incident locations, and patterns.

b) Weekly Meeting

- (1) COAR meetings occur on a weekly basis and facilitate action-oriented accountability within and/or among divisions (e.g. patrol, investigations, crime analysis, crime prevention, and media relations), so employees can come together to develop, coordinate, and assess strategies implemented for short-term problems.
- (2) The Chief Deputy, or his designee, will facilitate and lead this meeting. Bureau chiefs and district lieutenants will report on strategy development, resource coordination, and accountability for crime reduction.

c) Monthly Meeting

- (1) STARCOM meetings occur monthly and facilitate evaluation-oriented accountability. These meetings are used to assess whether short-term crime reduction activities are effective, whether long-term problems are emerging, and to monitor the progress of ongoing long-term crime reduction strategies.
- (2) Discussion will focus on actions taken on crime patterns occurring or ongoing since the previous meeting.
- (3) The Sheriff, or his designee, will facilitate and lead this meeting. Directors, bureau chiefs, lieutenants, crime analysts, and invited guests will attend.
- (4) The Criminal Intelligence Commander, or designee, will present statistical and trend analysis covering short-term and long-term patterns/problems and the agency's current targeted offenses.
- (5) District lieutenants will present on short-term and long-term patterns/problems within their respective areas of responsibility with focus toward strategy and results.
- (6) The CIB Bureau Chief, or designee, will report on cases of interest and significant incidents. Cases will be presented until resolved (may be discussed for several meetings).

d) Annual Meeting

- (1) Facilitate evaluation-oriented accountability for the entire organization. These meetings are used to examine long-term trends to determine the effectiveness of the agency's overall crime reduction approach and to identify new long-term problems to be addressed over the next year or more, as well as to formulate agency goals and any new or modified strategies for the coming year.