



IACP POLICY PRIORITIES

About the IACP

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) is a professional association for policing leaders worldwide. For 125 years, the IACP has been launching internationally acclaimed programs, speaking on behalf of the policing profession, conducting groundbreaking research, and providing exemplary programs and services to members across the globe.



Introduction

Every two years, the IACP sets its legislative agenda on issues of importance to the policing profession. The priorities outlined in this document are designed to bring awareness to challenges faced by law enforcement and ways in which elected officials can bring forth solutions and change through legislative action.

The IACP's legislative priorities are generated through our membership, the resolutions process, feedback from the field, and from 10 cross-disciplinary Policy Councils that consist of 24 IACP committees, each focusing on specific topic areas in policing. The goal of the Policy Councils is to synthesize ideas and priorities from IACP committees into overarching themes which generate a strategic framework for the organization. As such, Policy Council members discuss critical issues facing the policing profession, identify best practices, and set out to enhance relationships with peers and colleagues in the field.

As a result, Policy Council members have identified three core lens topics that represent overarching areas of focus for IACP, cutting across many areas in policing. It is upon these core lens topics that the Policy Priorities are founded.

- Evidence-Based Practices
- Emerging Technology
- Officer Safety and Wellness

ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

For more than 25 years, the IACP has advocated for the creation of a commission that would follow in the footsteps of the 1965 Presidential Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice. The 1965 commission produced a report with 200 specific recommendations involving federal, state, and local governments; civic organizations; religious institutions; business groups; and individual citizens that were intended to create a safer and more just society. Some of these recommendations that have shaped the current criminal justice system, included the creation of the 911 system, establishment of research organizations like the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the development of the automated fingerprint identification systems; improved training and professionalization for law enforcement; and the foundation to a community policing-based approach to crime.

The IACP believes that the work and recommendations of that commission built the framework for many of the highly effective justice system-wide initiatives that have been in place since that time.

Today, law enforcement agencies are faced with unprecedented challenges, and, for far too long, the law enforcement and criminal justice system has lacked a strategic plan to guide an integrated public safety and homeland security effort in the years ahead.

It is for these reasons that the IACP strongly supports the establishment of a National Criminal Justice Commission to conduct a comprehensive examination of all aspects of the criminal justice system including, but not limited to, the prevention of crime, law enforcement, community-police relations, promoting officer safety and wellness, the courts, prosecution, defense, corrections, and offender reentry.

In conducting this critical review, the commission would have the opportunity to examine and develop recommendations addressing the broad range of new and emerging challenges that confront not only law enforcement but all those involved in the administration of justice—from cybercrime, to non-traditional organized crime, our prison system, violent street gangs, homeland security, the shortage of mental health services and treatment facilities, the increasing homeless population, and our court system. In addition, the commission would be charged with reviewing the impact, difficulties, and opportunities that are presented to the criminal justice community by technological innovations.

Law enforcement agencies must never be complacent in their efforts to improve and sustain trust, which, in turn, increases the legitimacy of the police in the eyes of the communities they serve. The commission will assist police agencies in strengthening and sustaining trusting relationships with all segments of the community.

Law enforcement and criminal justice needs a strategic plan, and it is the IACP's belief that establishing a national commission is the vital, first step in this process.

Action Step:

- ✓ Support legislation similar to the National Criminal Justice Commission Act (S. 573/H.R. 1886) that was introduced in the 115th Congress that would fund the creation of a National Criminal Justice Commission to review and evaluate all components of the criminal justice system for the purpose of making recommendations on comprehensive criminal justice reform.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES & DATA COLLECTION

Law enforcement agencies across the world are increasingly committing to evidence-based policing by collecting data, conducting research, evaluating programs, and implementing practices grounded in data and science.

Improved collection and evaluation of public safety data is needed in order to best inform the field of law enforcement and to ensure that limited resources are being expended on efforts that work. Currently, some of the most comprehensive repositories of gun violence or use-of-force data are being kept by the media, which is unacceptable.

Collaborative partnerships between law enforcement and researchers helps to ensure that the measures to reduce crime, improve officer safety, and connect with the community are as effective as possible. When police practices are scientifically evaluated and factually supportable, police officers and communities mutually benefit.

Action Steps:

- ✓ Support funding efforts for the creation, growth, and sustainment of evidence-based policing and data collection efforts at all levels. Funding is needed to support local data collection initiatives; state-level data collection efforts; and, ultimately, the management of the data at the national level.
- ✓ Support legislative proposals and efforts that include both the collection of data on the use of force by police and against police.
- ✓ Support partnerships between public and private institutions to initiate and evaluate policing practices.
- ✓ Support efforts to allow federal data collection and research on firearm violence.

COMBAT THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Communities are suffering from a skyrocketing crisis related to opioid deaths and overdoses. The rise in prescription drug abuse, increased heroin addiction, the movement by some U.S. states to legalize medical and recreational marijuana, and the emergence of new drugs add to this problem. In recent years, overdose deaths from synthetic opioids like fentanyl and carfentanil surpassed those from heroin. In a one-year period between 2016 and 2017, overdose deaths from synthetic opioids increased 47 percent.¹

Substance abuse within communities also precipitates other problems, such as individuals committing crimes to fuel their addictions. And finally, jails—where many individuals who are addicted to drugs end up—are not always the appropriate place to provide services for individuals going through withdrawal or the recovery process.

In addition, the growing violence and economic power of criminal organizations and terrorist groups that engage in the production, traffic, and distribution of drugs are extremely alarming and pose a threat to many communities.

Action Steps:

- ✓ Oppose efforts to legalize, decriminalize, declassify, or classify as a medical substance any illegal drug—including marijuana. The public safety risks heavily outweigh any purported benefits legalizing drugs may have.
- ✓ Provide funding to support naloxone being made available to first responders to help minimize the number of deaths that occur from overdoses on heroin, morphine, oxycodone, methadone, hydrocodone, codeine, and other opioids.
- ✓ Enact laws clarifying that the presence of any illegal drug in a driver's body is *per se* evidence of impaired driving.
- ✓ Support anti-drug efforts that blend drug enforcement, drug education, and drug treatment.
- ✓ Fully fund all federal agencies involved in combating drug crime.
- ✓ Fully fund High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area programs.
- ✓ Support efforts for a unified prescription drug monitoring program to combat prescription drug abuse.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Opioid Overdose: Fentanyl," December 19, 2018, <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/opioids/fentanyl.html>.

ADEQUATE & TIMELY FEDERAL FUNDING

Police officers are continually expected to do more with less resources. Federal funding assistance distributed through competitive and formula grants are a vital resource to the law enforcement agencies that are responsible for safeguarding communities.

Unfortunately, there has been a steady decline in funding for federal government assistance programs due to the increase in assistance to state, local, and tribal law enforcement.

The following grant programs are essential to law enforcement agencies, and the IACP supports providing adequate funding to these valuable programs.

Department of Justice

- **Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne-JAG):** Byrne-JAG is the cornerstone federal crimefighting program, supporting the federal government's crucial role in spurring innovation, as well as testing and replicating evidence-based practices. Because Byrne-JAG is flexible, states and local communities are able to use funding to address needs and fill gaps across the entire criminal justice system in prevention, enforcement, courts, prosecution and indigent defense, corrections, victim assistance, and other community support. This flexibility is the hallmark of the Byrne-JAG program and is vitally important. The IACP opposes any proposals that would restrict the flexibility of this program.
- **Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program:** Since its inception, the COPS program has provided law enforcement agencies with the resources necessary to mount effective anticrime programs, which also serve as effective antiterrorism programs. The COPS program has a clear record of success. This program has made it possible for communities to not only hire and retain police officers, but also to ensure that these officers are well trained, well equipped, and positioned to safeguard citizens.
- **Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act:** The IACP supports legislation to reauthorize and fund the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act that has enabled the purchase of more than a million vests for law enforcement officers throughout the United States.

- **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA):** IACP supports funding of programs and initiatives to address issues surrounding domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
- **Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Act:** Due to significant funding deficiencies, forensic science laboratories at the local and state levels are experiencing significant caseload backlogs that severely impact the timeliness of examinations critical to solving crimes; limit the ability to acquire modern technology, provide adequate training, provide forensic analyses in a timely manner; and impede the ability of local and state forensic service providers to attain professional accreditation. The IACP supports this program that seeks to improve the quality and timeliness of forensic laboratory services.

Department of Homeland Security

- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Preparedness Grants:** Preparedness grant programs through the Department of Homeland Security's FEMA, such as the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP), Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), Port Security Grant Program (PSGP), and Transit Security Grant Program (TSGP), are essential resources to aid state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, as well as transportation authorities, as they work to improve the prevention, protection against, response to, recovery from, and mitigation of terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.

Action Steps:

- ✓ Fully fund critical programs outlined above in the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security budgets.
- ✓ Oppose any congressional proposals or federal regulations that would withhold grant funds as a penalty or sanction for noncompliance with federal criminal justice policies.
- ✓ Oppose any legislation that would restrict the flexibility of current grant programs.
- ✓ Oppose the consolidation of grant programs.

REDUCE AND PREVENT FIREARMS VIOLENCE

Gun violence is not a new issue—it is a continuing tragedy that destroys innocent lives, families, and communities. Ranging from random shootings and suicides to retaliatory assaults and targeted mass killings, violence committed with firearms universally challenges law enforcement and taxes resources. It is also taking a toll on our law enforcement officers, who risk their own lives to protect the public.

A comprehensive approach is needed in order to prevent further violence in our communities.

Action Steps:

- ✓ Support legislation and policies that prohibit the sale or transfer of armor-piercing and tracer ammunition.
- ✓ Support legislation that expands background checks and requires background checks for all firearm purchasers.
- ✓ Support legislation that would provide sufficient resources for the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS).
- ✓ Limit high-capacity ammunition magazines to 10 rounds.
- ✓ Support legislation that strengthens penalties for straw purchasing and makes firearms trafficking a federal crime.
- ✓ Support legislation to create a mandatory five-day waiting period prior to the completion of a handgun purchase.
- ✓ Support legislation that creates a mechanism for legal removal of firearms when an individual meets the criteria for an “Extreme Risk Protection Order or red flag” that prohibits firearm possession.
- ✓ Oppose any federal legislative proposals that would either preempt and/or mandate the liberalization of individual states’ concealed-carry weapons (CCW) laws pertaining to the carrying of concealed weapons in other states without meeting that state’s requirements.
- ✓ Supports legislation that addresses the threat posed by untraceable firearms (e.g., ghost guns), firearm frames and receivers requiring minimum finish work, and 3D printed firearms by ensuring that these firearms have proper serial numbers, are detectable at security checkpoints, and are subject to the same laws and regulations as firearms defined in the Gun Control Act of 1968.

- ✓ Support legislation to prohibit the mail-order sale of bulletproof vests and body armor to all individuals except sworn or certified law enforcement officers.
- ✓ Support legislation that increases resources to better allow state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies and the U.S. Department of Justice to enable greater prosecution of individuals for Brady Act violations.
- ✓ Support firearms enforcement programs that involve local, state, and federal agencies, such as Project Safe Neighborhoods and Project Exile, which have shown significant reductions in firearms-related violent crime.
- ✓ Support creating a federal registry, similar to the sexual offender registry, for offenders who have been previously convicted of a felony firearm violation or a misdemeanor that involved violent or threatening acts with firearms.
- ✓ Support legislation to reauthorize a revised ban on the production and sale of semi-automatic assault weapons.
- ✓ Oppose any legislation that would limit or reduce the ability of U.S. law enforcement agencies to combat the sale of illegal guns.
- ✓ Support legislation that provides funding and technical assistance for threat assessment training for state/local law enforcement.
- ✓ Support for amending the definition of “Fugitive from Justice” as codified at 18 U.S.C. § 921 (a) (15) which states that the term “Fugitive from Justice” means any person who has fled from any state to avoid prosecution for a crime or to avoid giving testimony in any criminal proceeding. The Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Legal Counsel (OLC) has determined that under federal law, a “Fugitive from Justice” is prohibited from purchasing or possessing a firearm only if they flee the state in which they are the subject of an active warrant. IACP supports amending 18 USC § 921 (a) (15) to strike “from any state.”
- ✓ Support legislation that prohibits the possession, import, manufacture, transfer, and sale of attachments/accessories designed or intended to increase or modify semi-automatic firearms to automatic firearms.
- ✓ IACP opposes any efforts to remove silencers (suppressors) from the purview of the National Firearms Act, in which these devices have been registered under since 1934.

REDUCE CRIME IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

Cybercrime is an increasing threat to our communities and police. Access to interconnected mobile devices and other advanced communications systems has transformed how we live, work, and communicate. This interconnectivity has also provided a new tool for criminals and create new challenges for police investigators.

The issue of “Going Dark”—law enforcement’s decreasing ability to lawfully access and examine digital evidence at rest and evidence in motion due to technical and nontechnical barriers—is increasingly placing public safety at risk.

The expansion of communications technology means that crime scenes are often digital rather than physical, which poses a growing challenge to investigators. In addition, physical crime scenes—the ones that state and local law enforcement respond to every day—are much more complex than ever before. Crime scenes from homicides, kidnappings, assaults, and incidents of domestic violence—crimes that impact thousands of victims, families, and communities annually—now, more often than not, include digital communications evidence. The “footprints” left at the “scene” are no longer just physical pieces of evidence, but digital traces that can be accessed from anywhere in the world through smartphones or computers. These are the modern-day fingerprints that police use to uncover offenders and increase public safety. Law enforcement needs access to digital information to solve crimes, locate perpetrators, protect victims, and ensure successful prosecutions.

Not only does law enforcement often lack the technical ability to access communications and information pursuant to a lawful court order, but industry is also, by design, incapable of accessing or retrieving the information. This inability to access digital communications data not only inhibits access to evidence in federal criminal and terrorism cases, but also keeps state and local law enforcement from being able to do their job. The ability of the police to build criminal cases is dependent on discovering facts and evidence that will identify the person(s) responsible for the crime. Technologies and strategies that keep them from accessing digital evidence when legally authorized are putting public safety at risk.

Action Steps:

- ✓ Update the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA) to provide for immediate compliance when law enforcement certifies an imminent threat to life and safety.
- ✓ Support a federal penalty for carriers and manufacturers that fail to comply with a lawful request for assistance.
- ✓ Include a clear definition of exigent circumstances and emergencies in any legislative proposal.
- ✓ Support legislation that requires mobile network operators to participate in the global Groupe Spéciale Mobile Association (GSMA) IMEI Blacklist database by reporting lost or stolen devices and blocking service to any device on the GSMA IMEI Blacklist database regardless of country origin.
- ✓ Support the inclusion of cybercrime reporting in NIBRS.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

For most of the people whom law enforcement agencies are sworn to protect, the greatest threat to their safety comes from traveling in a vehicle.

According to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2016, 37,461 people were killed in an estimated 7,277,000 police-reported motor vehicle traffic crashes. NHTSA's data also show that, in 2016, an estimated 3,144,000 people were injured on U.S. roadways. Injury crashes can have far-reaching impacts including wage loss and medical costs.

Tragically, these fatalities and injuries are, to a great extent, preventable. Crucial risk factors such as speeding; distracted driving; not wearing seat belts or using child restraints; poor road design; and, most critically, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs can be reduced and even eliminated.

That is why effective traffic safety enforcement programs are so vital to our efforts to protect our communities.

Action Steps:

- ✓ Provide funding to support the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
- ✓ Implement incentive grants for states that pass progressive highway safety laws and achieve specific performance goals and use the threat of reduction in federal highway funding only as a last resort.
- ✓ Oppose any federal effort that would legalize, decriminalize, declassify, or classify as a medical substance any currently illegal drug—including marijuana. The public safety risks heavily outweigh any purported benefits legalizing drugs may have.
- ✓ Support the development of a National Registry of Commercial Drivers that would be available to licensing agencies, police, and the motor carrier industry.



44 Canal Center Plaza, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314

703.836.6767 • FAX 703.836.4743 • www.theIACP.org