

Series on Program Management Success in Government

A Case of Project/Program Management Success within the Office of Justice Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs

KEY FINDINGS

A Case of Successful Executive Engagement in Project/Program Management

In 2009, the Secretary of the Interior and the Assistant Secretary–Indian Affairs established a High Priority Performance Goal (HPPG) to reduce violent crime by a combined 5% within 24 months on targeted tribal reservations with the highest crime rates (at least five times the national average).¹ The selected reservations were Rocky Boy’s (Montana), Mescalero (New Mexico), Wind River (Wyoming) and Standing Rock (North Dakota and South Dakota). According to the *Crime Reduction Best Practices Handbook*, the combined crime rate on these reservations was not only reduced by 35%, surpassing the objective seven-fold, but the objectives were also accomplished several months early and without exceeding the US\$5 million budget.²

There is consensus among those involved, especially among those with formal training and experience, that project/program management played a significant role in this success. Although the training and experience were concentrated at the top, the project’s creators and leaders were able to apply key project management principles to areas they saw most lacking, such as analytics, team building, and strategizing; yet, the project manager and his like-minded hires managed from a distance.

What makes this case of project/program management success that much more interesting — and worthy of mention — is the majority of individuals involved were not even aware that they were practicing project/program management. Most just thought they were doing their job! As one interviewee remarked after some hesitation, “Yes, project management was in place... *operationally*.”

¹ A High Priority Performance Goal (HPPG) is a measurable commitment that represents high priorities for the agency; has high relevance to the public or reflects the achievement of key agency missions; and will produce significant, measurable results over the next 12 to 24 months.

² *Crime-Reduction Best Practices Handbook: Making Indian Communities Safe 2012*. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice Services.

Measures of Success

The following tables illustrate the reduction in violent crime that occurred under HPPG, both across all four reservations and within each reservation the year the project was implemented, 2010–2011.³

Table 1: Reduction in Violent Crime at HPPG Reservations

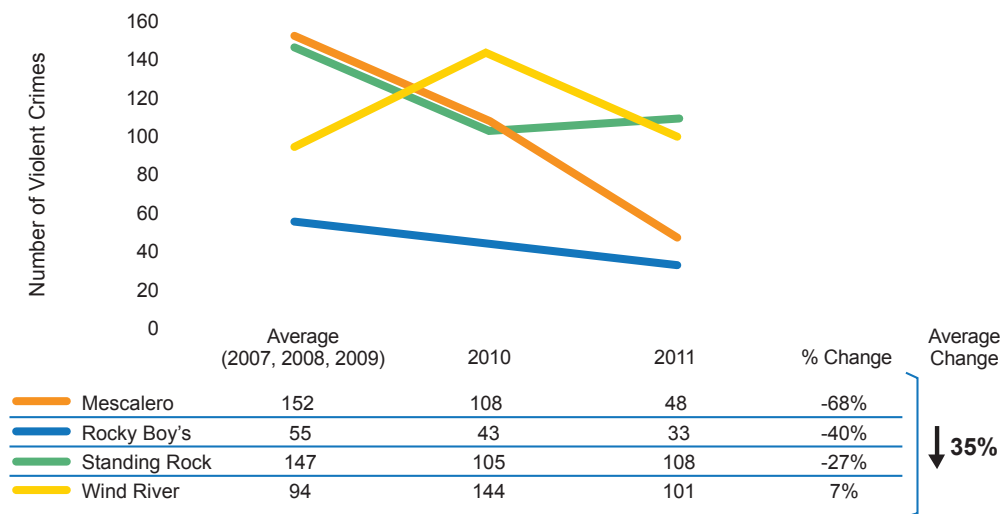
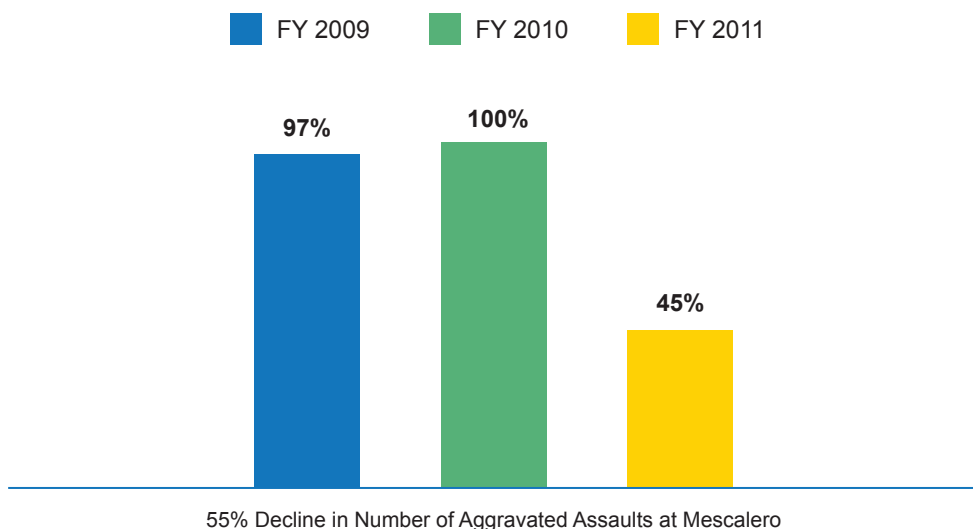
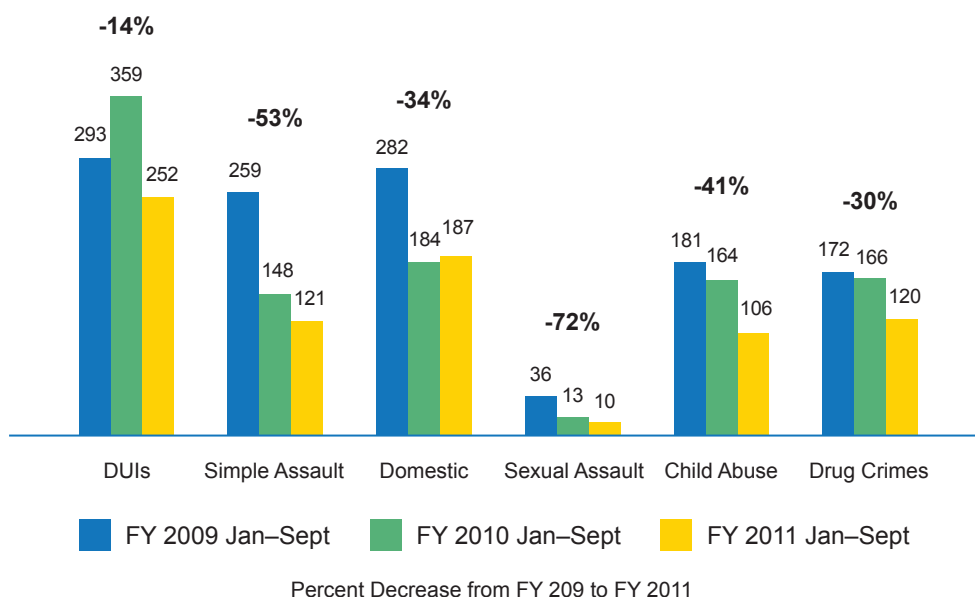


Table 2: Decline in the Number of Aggravated Assaults at Mescalero



³ Ibid

Table 3: Percentage Decrease in Crimes FY 2009 to FY 2011, Standing Rock**Table 4: Outcomes**

There were also less quantifiable changes that took place. For one, **the tribal court system** appeared to undergo a major transformation. Up until HPPG, there was not a high degree of accountability demanded from residents by the courts — the tribal judicial system was described by one interviewee as “lackadaisical.” Luckily, once tribal leaders convinced the courts to change their behavior and hold residents responsible for their actions, the quality of life in their communities began to visibly change. With a reduction in violent crimes, **communities also began to feel safer** as officers worked to build trust and confidence in their ability to tackle violent crime among the residents.

Key Elements of Success

Numerous factors contributed to the success of this initiative. However, the primary interest of this study is to highlight the role that project/program management played in ensuring that success. The amount of detail surrounding the crime reduction activities and their implementation are limited to areas of overlap with project management.

Strategic Budgeting

By virtue of a presidential initiative, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Department of Interior (DOI) was granted US\$5 million to use toward crime reduction on four reservations. It was decided early on that the bulk of these funds would be directed toward law enforcement. From a management perspective, the decision to prioritize law enforcement over the court system or social services was straightforward. Law enforcement in Indian Country was generally understaffed and overwhelmed. In trying to impact the crime rate, the logical first step had to be increasing the number of officers on staff.

Project managers relied on data to make this decision. The number of officers per 1,000 residents was severely short of the national average. "In a rural community similar to these tribes, the average number of officers in relation to the population is 3.5/1,000 residents," said one interviewee. However, among these four reservations, the ratio reached as low as 0.98.⁴ According to one interviewee, "That was the very first thing you have got to have before you can make any kind of impact."

Approximately 52 sworn law officers were recruited to augment sworn staffing levels at the four locations, beginning in May 2010, from other federal and tribal agencies, over a period of six months while the agencies hired permanent officers to fill their vacancies. There were over 300 law enforcement officers who were detailed (2-week to 30-day details at a time) in rotations (some came for multiple rotations) to fill these 52 positions throughout the 6-month period. Most came from the BIA, but many others came from other agencies or bureaus within the Department of the Interior, such as Fish and Wildlife, Park Service, and Park Police.

The reasons for this approach were twofold: On the one hand, the project needed expertise lacking within the BIA. Second, hiring interim officers from the "outside" provided a larger talent pool from which to select, since the BIA had to hire using Indian-

The study may depart from the key elements laid out in the "Handbook" that do not pertain to project/program management and place greater emphasis on ones that have yet to receive much attention in the public literature.

Indian Country (as defined in 40 CFR 71.2) means: all land within the limits of any Indian reservation under the jurisdiction of the United States government, notwithstanding the issuance of any patent, and including rights-of-way running through the reservation; all dependent Indian communities within the borders of the United States, whether within the original or subsequently acquired territory thereof, and whether within or without the limits of a State; and all Indian allotments, the Indian titles to which have not been extinguished, including rights-of-way running through the same. This definition parallels the definition of Indian country contained in 18 U.S.C. section 1151 and has been applied extensively by the federal courts.

⁴ HPPG Handbook

“If you don’t have officers on the street, you are never going to make an impact because you are never going to do progressive law enforcement. You’re being reactive not proactive.”

preference and, as noted previously, very few Indian officers had the necessary expertise to qualify. The goal, however, was to eventually replace the external hires with permanent BIA officers, once the project got off the ground.

The result was an enhanced officer presence in communities and on the highways. The strategy employed combined risk-based deployment of officers with (new and old) prevention activities. Risk-based deployment — not something law enforcement could do in the past due to lack of adequate crime data — meant police officers could now focus their efforts on the highest crime areas because the intelligence was available. Prevention

activities also targeted those high-crime areas, not just geographically but by type of crime. Officers began to take on new roles working with alcohol-related crimes, which were found to be highly correlated with more serious crimes.

Bringing in Private Sector Project/Program Management Expertise

The lead project manager on HPPG saw great value in recruiting someone with a similar outlook and expertise in project/program management to manage day-to-day operations, and in doing so impose a much-needed degree of structure and accountability to HPPG beyond just the top level.

The Deputy Associate Director (DAD) for Law Enforcement Operations position was held by a former private sector project manager — with over 13 years of experience with a large management consulting firm — before bringing his management expertise to fighting crime at the FBI. In his own words, “I spent over 13 years with the firm rising from a staff analyst through increasingly responsible positions to senior manager. Everything we did was project based. From the time I started with the company, I worked on projects that ranged in length from 6 months to 2 years. They trained us on project planning and estimating, project execution, project controls, running effective meetings, performance management, etc. At the consultant level, I supervised teams and was held responsible for their performance.”

In terms of formalized learning and credentials, this firm had its own project management methodology that is said to closely mirror PMI methodology. He continues, “At the end of my career there, I was responsible for selling work, scoping the services we would provide, negotiating the contract, planning and estimating the work, internally staffing the team, managing communications with the client and delivering the project through completion. We used numerous tools such as Project Workbench, Microsoft Project, proprietary modeling tools, and so forth to manage the projects.”

The DAD became the head of a project management pyramid, which included 20 police departments and 130 Special Agents in Charge (SAICs), all reporting to him. In similar project/program management fashion, the DAD arranged for weekly field meetings with the four communities. “I was provided with crime reports each week. We briefed out, talked about strategies across all four, and then I provided direction on what they needed to do,” he explains. The DAD, in turn, was able to report to the lead project/program manager and Director of the Office of Justice Services (OJS) directly.

Meanwhile, the lead project/program manager also had 25 years of law enforcement experience under his belt, 15 of which were in management by way of advanced training classes and seminars. He takes pride in having

managed both small and large law enforcement programs that had limited analytical capabilities. Although lacking specific credentials on paper, he asserts that his experience in managing many large, complex projects was the determining factor in his success. In the case of HPPG, he began taking a lead role in Community Oriented Policing techniques during his first law enforcement management position as a Chief of Police. After studying different techniques used in other areas that contained analyzed crime data, he started looking at ways to identify crime trends and analyze raw data in his programs. As he suggests, "If other law enforcement managers would have embraced the Community Oriented Policing techniques prior to the beginning of the initiative, it would have allowed managers to focus on additional milestones and make an even bigger impact."

Analysis of Crime Records and the Establishment of a Recordkeeping System

The next step, after securing sufficient personnel, was to develop an accurate grasp of the problem at hand. Up until 2010, law enforcement overseeing Indian Country did not keep accurate or uniform records of crimes committed in their jurisdictions. In fact, they did not always employ uniform definitions of crime. As a result, they had no data from which to base crime reduction efforts. (A glaring example: Most of the crime committed on Indian reservations occurs after midnight, but since the departments did not keep records of this, they did not know to schedule more late night shifts.) The project/program manager in charge of the initiative assembled a team of crime experts, led by the DAD to address this tremendous obstacle.

"We were expected to report crime statistics to the President [of the United States]. How confident were we in our crime stats? Not very. There was no system in place, it was a crapshoot."

In order to successfully move forward, the team needed to understand what had happened in the past, to be able to target communities (and behaviors) with the highest crime on record. "You need to establish a baseline to understand what you're trying to reduce," asserted one interviewee. "We didn't have that." So began the long and arduous road of analyzing crime statistics from the previous three years. Part of this analysis meant having to "rescore" (provide uniformity in definition and other variables) according to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. Recalls one interviewee, "We started using the spreadsheet, plotting information correctly. We tracked it and arrived at as true a picture [of violent crimes that had been committed] as possible." The result allowed for more accurate and effective analysis not only within the reservations, but also across them as well.

Training in Crime Statistics Analysis

Adding to the difficulty of this task was that virtually no one in Indian Country law enforcement had any training in the UCR Program. The FBI was asked for help and worked with the BIA and local law enforcement offices to provide training in this practice. Each reservation was assigned a team, including senior auditors from the FBI's Bureau of Justice Statistics, who taught officers to read and rescore every single crime report from the past three years. "This task was an immense amount of work and took several weeks of working 14-hour days. But it allowed them to have an accurate starting point for the initiative," says one interviewee.

As a result, officers were able to identify high crime areas (including the types of crimes committed), which in turn meant clear targets where they could place their newfound resources. For example, aggravated assault was atop the list of crimes being committed on one reservation, with 94% of incidents said to involve alcohol.

“There are many aspects to [HPPG] beyond better use of data, but enhanced crime information data collection and use significantly contributed to the 35% reduction in violent crime during the first 24 months of the program, far exceeding the agency’s goal of lowering crime by 5%.”⁵

“We took that information, having been trained to utilize the new spreadsheets correctly, and we began to see patterns,” says another interviewee.

To develop a consistent process for reporting crime, the FBI helped ensure that local law enforcement defined crimes uniformly across all the different tribes. Up until HPPG, the penal codes on the four reservations varied (much like penal codes vary from state to state). Aggravated assault, for example, may mean different things to different tribes. “We had to train in definitions... there was a lot of grey area, it was highly subjective,” he continues.

Building Analytics into Law Enforcement Culture

Also impressive is that the analytic approach by law enforcement began to be applied elsewhere, including two subsequent crime reduction endeavors on reservations in other states. Law enforcement officials at multiple levels began to recognize the value in collecting and using data correctly and strategically to help inform decision making. It evolved from a highly reactionary, knee-jerk response system without any reliance on data, to “a performance-based approach to assessing community conditions and baseline crime statistics; developing an action plan based on this assessment; and reporting on key metrics and milestones to track progress.”⁶

According to the Partnership for Public Service, which showcased the HPPG Initiative in a recent publication, “An analytics approach to management is at the heart of an agency’s ability to know how well it is performing and helps it determine what it can do better.”⁷ This approach is explained in more detail below:

The BIA utilized the Department of Justice (DOJ) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program to properly score and report Part I offenses. The BIA would tabulate the number of Part I offenses (murder and non-negligent manslaughter, what was then called “forcible rape” (since changed to “rape”), robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft and arson) brought to their attention based on records of all reports of crime received from victims, officers who discovered infractions, or other sources, and submit them each month to the BIA District office where they were entered into a Monthly Crime Report database and submitted to the FBI. The monthly crime statistics were then validated by a Program Analyst to ensure accuracy. The BIA then analyzed the monthly crime data to identify crime trends. After crime trends were identified, the Law Enforcement managers developed crime reduction strategies to address the trends and guide them on resource allocations, if needed.

Strategic Team Building from Day One

Project leaders had the experience and intellect to know that to reduce violent crimes, especially in areas where there are significant cultural differences, the entire community needed to be involved and take responsibility. Key players spanning top to bottom and across were identified early. On the law enforcement side, representatives from the BIA, FBI, local sheriff’s departments, and tribal courts were convened. Various

⁵ From *Data to Decisions II: Building an Analytics Culture*. Partnership for Public Service. October 2012.

⁶ From *Data to Decisions II: Building an Analytics Culture*. Partnership for Public Service. October 2012.

⁷ Ibid.

tribal services were also brought to the table, including health/mental health providers and social workers and, of course, tribal leaders were pivotal.

Team building appeared to be a win-win for all involved. Use of a community-wide team “led to a shared sense of responsibility,” claims one interviewee, as those involved had a vested interest in making it work. The team effort also managed to strengthen the various relationships involved, with collaboration in crime reduction efforts among some continuing today. Field officers, for example, created new relationships with tribal members that led to an increase in mutual understanding and respect.

Securing Community Buy-In

It was one type of hurdle to assemble a wide variety of players, but securing their support in an endeavor of this size added another level of complexity. Two important components needed to be swayed in order for any strategies to be implemented effectively and actually produce results. Field officers, in particular, had to be persuaded to change their way of doing business, as noted earlier, and embrace the collection and use of analytics to move from being a reactive to a proactive force. “We had to get the local officers [on our side],” recalls one interviewee, “... show them this is the way to go, this is how we are going to be as a department from now on.” Also critical to success was securing the buy-in of tribal leaders. Proactive policing meant greater scrutiny, and harsher penalties for tribe members, considered to be an unnecessary imposition by many.

But buy-in was accomplished successfully, albeit slowly, by a combination of strong and convincing leadership; leveraging of top-level relationships; effective communication, transparency and collaboration that came from the lead project/program manager; and eventually the visibility of the success.

Regular, Effective Communication with All Parties

Stemming from the Director of Office of Justice Services at the top, down to residents of the tribal communities, all vital partners were asked to attend regular meetings. A series of consistent meetings was put in place during which all parties were encouraged to share their concerns, ask for help if needed, and most importantly, as time went on, to share stories of success and failure/concerns from which to learn from, thus creating a living “best practices” approach along the way.

Leaders emphasized an “open door” policy, where everyone could voice grievances without fear of repercussion, as well as interact on a consistent basis. Tribal leaders were especially pleased with these meetings, as it enabled them to return to their often skeptical communities armed with information, explanations and justifications for the new policing tactics.

Open channels of communication, as exemplified through these meetings led to an atmosphere of transparency that increased trust among all parties. But transparency was also increased through the sharing of crime statistics data and performance measures, something that law enforcement was not able to provide before analytics.

Executive Level Support

Interviewees report executive level investment and support to have been forthcoming from day one, emanating from the Secretary of the Interior and the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, both of whom met personally with tribal leadership in an effort to secure their needed buy-in. The importance of this executive level support and involvement should not be underestimated. Their higher level standing enabled them to reach out to other agencies, at both the federal and state levels (Justice, Agriculture and Housing and Urban Development, for example), ask for assistance and not be turned down. This top-level involvement also helped to pull in all of the stakeholders to the same table and remain committed to the cause.

"We've said it over and over... the leadership and the buy-in from the top to the bottom was paramount to us being successful. I don't know that we've ever had folks from such a high level [involved] like this."

"There was focus by the executive management on doing the right things, being proactive and holding people accountable."

Executive involvement appears to have been sustained throughout the duration of the project. As one interviewee added "They never dropped the ball on any level." Both the Department of the Interior, Secretary and Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs were present at all quarterly meetings, involved in monitoring progress, ensuring coordination among the many parties and generally "wanting to know what they could do to help," he recalls. The DOI Secretary was personally involved in making sure the recruiting of new officers went smoothly. Her office assisted with getting background checks done in a timely manner and ensuring the necessary resources were available.

Leadership via a Lead Project/Program Manager

In addition to the leadership provided from executive levels, a lead project/program manager was pivotal to making sure things ran smoothly at the lower levels where he remained "hands-on," physically involved, and visible to those he was managing. When asked how a program manager made a difference to this project, interviewees were enthusiastic in their responses. For one, he provided the **necessary focus** to keep officers on track, especially during the initial implementation period. "If we hadn't had someone that brought everyone back in, sat them down, walked them through [the initiative] line by line, this is what we will do and how... without that we would've lost sight of our goal, just because of all the other day-to-day things going on."

Another contribution made by the lead project/program manager was **educating officers on how to think more strategically** and the value of new ways of doing and thinking. The best example is the move from reactionary to proactive policing. He worked with the FBI, post-training, to explain crime statistics and how they could be used effectively to address crime, how to use resources and allot officers based on the stats. In the case of alcohol-related crimes, which were high, he instructed officers to ask themselves, "What are you doing to curb alcohol [abuse]?" and suggested apprehending culprits before they leave the bar or through increased vehicle checks.

The operating environment created by the lead project/program manager also facilitated success. Consistent follow-up became an essential tool employed early and throughout the project. For example, quarterly meetings held by the DOI Deputy Secretary's office included all goal leaders and weekly conference calls with all of the

HPPG law enforcement managers/stakeholders and were key components in the project/program manager successfully managing the project. The weekly conference calls with the agency staff allowed the project/program manager the ability to analyze the progress weekly, make any necessary changes and assist the local stakeholders with overcoming obstacles without being physically at all four locations.

Not only was the crime reduction plan formalized, but the program manager ensured that it was **monitored regularly** for progress. Recalls one interviewee, “We had to see if it was working and then build upon what works. If not, we would go back to the table.” These calls continued after the project ended. “We stayed involved, not just through the initiative but two years after, to make sure the strategies were still in place,” says one interviewee.

Key leadership at the Secretary, Assistant Secretary, BIA Director and OJS Director levels assisted the program manager in bringing stakeholders to the table that were not under the program manager’s line of authority. This provided **positive coordination between all parties** and placed a priority status on the initiative. Without the unwavering support at all levels of the administration, the program manager would have wasted valuable time overcoming obstacles instead of focusing on managing the project (along with all the other day-to-day duties involved in running a national law enforcement program). The application of this concept actually empowered the program manager to manage the project, with all stakeholders being aware of the high priority placed on the initiative goals and milestones by department and agency management at the highest levels.

Raising Cultural Awareness through Formal Orientation

The influx of personnel from outside Indian Country (and outside the BIA) created a force of officers largely unfamiliar with Indian cultures and customs. “We had officers who had never worked in Indian Country before and were unaware of how to speak to an elder, or how to search a medicine bag... people didn’t mind being searched but the lack of knowledge was disturbing,” recalls one interviewee.

Project/program managers soon became aware of the needs for education and cultural sensitivity training for their field officers to secure long-term buy-in from the tribal communities generally, and tribal leaders and officers specifically. Regular meetings were helpful in this regard, because both parties were forced to meet face-to-face on a regular basis and get to know one another and discuss not only grievances, but also highlight positive experiences. “By the eighth or ninth month,” says one interviewee, “we had good coordination. We really started to gel.” But also helping to heighten this understanding was the creation of a PowerPoint-based curriculum that became the foundation for a two-day orientation program for new officers.

Challenges

Although success was undeniable, many challenges kept HPPG from reaching greater heights. Notably, many of the areas that are deemed challenges were eventually tackled and became success factors. But, as one interviewee explains, “In the beginning, we thought it was going to be hard anyway because of all the different factors involved.” These “factors” are discussed in the following section.

Lack of Wider Funding

Though the project stayed within budget, funding was insufficient beyond that of beefing up law enforcement. Interviewees stress the relationship between law enforcement and other agencies, such as social services, healthcare and the court system, yet there was no funding left to enhance any of those services. For example, more officers on the streets meant more arrests, which put a burden on the courts that could not effectively

deal with the increased volume. Social services struggled with lack of resources as well. “There was no funding for social services, yet they play a huge role. That was a weak link. We couldn’t get everybody that needed resources,” laments one interviewee.

Lack of Formal Project/Program Management Training and Experience

While many stakeholders were involved at the federal level, and there was a lead project/program manager and his Deputy beneath that, there was little experience in project/program management on the ground. In fact, it was limited to the top level (BIA officials) and the Deputy brought in to address this exact problem. There was no formal program management office, according to one interviewee. The lead project/program manager had only what he coined, two “semi project managers” and the FBI official detailed to his service. “For the first year,” he recalls, “We did all the other duties ourselves. Remember, this was a side project for us.” Although officers were eventually trained and brought up to speed on analytics and other key processes, it ate up valuable time and money.

“We could have had larger success — made a quicker and bigger impact — and better management if we had brought all [the other agencies we work with] up to par.”

Lack of Communication within the Tribal Communities

Tribal leaders had their own culture of communication, which did not always align with that of their non-Indian partners. And expectations were often interpreted differently by different tribal communities. For example, on at least one reservation, tribal leaders failed to tell their residents that the initiative was even happening before it was implemented. Suddenly the number of police officers on the street tripled, with largely unfamiliar faces, and arrests were being made for crimes virtually ignored until then (drunk driving, for example). “Community members had no idea what was going on,” recalls one interviewee.

On another reservation, the traffic code was enhanced but no one was told that the tribal council passed the ordinance. Residents began to be pulled over and arrested but without understanding why. The resulting sentiments in both areas were anger and suspicion, directed not at the tribal leaders but at law enforcement instead. Although eventually overcome, the initial antagonism that ensued managed to slow progress in that community. “It took several months and meetings to educate the community [about what we were doing]. We spent ten months recovering before making any ground.”

Cultural Un-Awareness and Insensitivity

Having to reach outside their own Agency meant bringing in officers unfamiliar with the Indian environment, as mentioned earlier. Nor were the residents familiar with the officers. “People didn’t recognize the officers,” says one interviewee. “The first meeting we convened was full of hate. It was horrible. [My] community had disdain for the initiative, and we had to win them over.” Had there been greater awareness and understanding on the side of law enforcement, and better communication and preparation on the side of the tribal leaders, prior to implementation of HPPG, progress may have come sooner and resulted in even greater success.

Difficulty Sustaining, Spreading Success

Although all four reservations saw a drop in violent crime, it appears some have been better at sustaining their success than others. At least one reservation is struggling with a return to past behaviors among its officers. Recall that the largest influx of manpower came from outside departments and agencies. When these individuals left the reservations, along with them left some of the new, proactive mindsets. Proactive policing was never organic. According to one interviewee, “[Reactionary policing] had been ingrained in our local officers for years, due to being shorthanded; [it was] the norm for how they did their police work.” The buy-in around the new outreach philosophy, for example, was imposed from the top-down in the first place and lacked buy-in from the rank and file charged with implementing the new procedures.

“The younger generation is more on board with the [new] policing aspect than the older folks who are set in their ways. Answering phones with limited resources is all they knew.”

And, as the sidebar quote indicates, officers were more familiar with a working environment in which resources (money and manpower) were limited and where they often did very little besides respond to emergency calls.

Best Practices/Lessons Learned

As noted, the OJS created its own best practices handbook following the success of the HPPG initiative. As a result, what worked is already well known, at least within Indian Country law enforcement. This study deviates from the handbook’s best practices to refocus emphasis on elements most closely related to project/program management.

- **Strategic Thinking enabled the shift from reactive to proactive policing.** Police officers saw their roles evolve from that of simply reactionary (responding to 911 calls) to “anticipating, addressing, and preventing conditions that may lead to crime.”⁸ This also resulted in an evolution in the mindset of law enforcement, which began to understand how much more could be done to prevent crime. None of this would have been possible without the direction of the lead project/program manager who prioritized addressing the void in analytics and other processes.
- **Raising cultural awareness early resulted in a more cohesive team approach.** Project leaders had the foresight to know that with so many stakeholders involved, all from different backgrounds, it would be critical to understand and respect cultural differences. This was particularly true in the case of officers working directly in and with the various tribal communities, for whom a curriculum was designed and incorporated into their mandatory orientation. The result was a heightened sense of trust and security on both sides, without which the project would not have been so successful.
- **The importance of pre-planning.** According to more than one interviewee, pre-planning (or lack thereof) may have made the difference between success on these four reservations and the subsequent two (one of which has shown limited progress). “I think if we could’ve done more pre-planning with the tribes and all the stakeholders before it kicked off, I think we could have really made a larger difference, been more coordinated and brought a lot more to the table,” says one interviewee. Apparently, the two additional reservations were added last minute, affording managers little time to fully assess the situation and identify key stakeholders beforehand.

⁸ HPPG Handbook.

- **Bringing in experts to conduct and teach crime analysis.** HPPG illustrated the importance of accurate, universal crime analysis as being pivotal to crime reduction. But this expertise was lacking internally and had to be brought in. John Jay College, a known source of expertise in crime statistics and analysis, was hired to provide training in those areas on one of the two subsequent (post-HPPG) reservations, which facilitated greater success—the initial goal of 5% crime reduction was surpassed by 3%, for a total of 8% reduction overall. “We were able to do this with one of the two follow-ups. It would have been nice to do it with the first four,” reflects one interviewee.
- **Documenting what worked.** Leaders once again had the foresight to see beyond their current success to understanding how they might create a pattern of success for the future. The best practices and lessons learned handbook was created in 2011 and its principles became the instruction guide of sorts for use in other Indian communities.

CONCLUSION: PROJECT/PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND FIGHTING CRIME

The HPPG project resulted in a successful reduction in violent crime across its four target reservations, surpassing its original percentage goals *seven-fold* (5% compared with the actual 35%). What makes this success particularly noteworthy is the role project/program management played — enforced top-down, expertise was brought in from the outside, and stakeholders were largely asked to make sweeping cultural changes. Subsequent strong project/program management leadership enabled practices, processes and a new culture put in place under HPPG to be maintained. Analytics was introduced, often for the first time (reporting, record keeping and analysis of crime statistics), which allowed for more strategic, proactive thinking and behavior, both of which have spread to numerous other reservations beyond the initial four by individuals who brought project/program management skills with them. All in all, the future looks bright for fighting crime on Indian reservations, especially where project/program management plays an active role.

ABOUT THE STUDY

The goal of this study is to highlight the management (principles, practices and activities) of the High Priority Performance Goals (HPPG) project and to better understand and learn from its success in order to ultimately incentivize other projects. The study examines HPPG from the perspective of project/program management and pays specific attention to areas of success — measurement, leadership, processes, communication and other formal aspects of the discipline. Key perspectives of those deemed essential to the success of this program were sought and incorporated: leadership (executives and project managers), stakeholders and partners (law enforcement officials and tribe members — who were often one and the same), and workforce representatives (BIA and FBI Special Agents in Charge).

A note to the reader: Agencies within the federal government often use “program” and “project” interchangeably. Where possible both terms will be identified to avoid confusion.

Methodology

PMI hired M/A/R/C® Research Inc. to design and conduct a series of in-depth telephone interviews with individuals deemed responsible and relevant to project/program management success within the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice Services. HPPG illustrated many successful components of project/program management over its short duration and, as such, was selected as the subject of this study by a joint effort between PMI and the qualitative research team at M/A/R/C®.

A total of five in-depth telephone interviews were conducted between April 10 and May 22, and incorporated the following roles:

- Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Office of Justice Services (OJS)
- Project Manager, Associate Director of Field Operations, BIA, OJS
- Former FBI Analyst, Crime Statistics Reporter
- Special Agent in Charge, Rocky Boy and Wind River Reservations
- Lieutenant, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Standing Rock Agency

PMI recognizes all those who agreed to be interviewed for this study but, having promised anonymity, their names shall not be revealed.

ABOUT THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

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