

“To Protect and Defend”

**CHALLENGES TO PUBLIC SAFETY
AND HOMELAND SECURITY
FACING THE NEXT U.S. PRESIDENT**



MESSAGE FROM THE IACP PRESIDENT

On January 20, 2009, the next President of the United States will be sworn into office. At that time, any number of issues will compete for his attention: the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the state of the economy, energy policy, and health care reform, to name just a few.

However, despite the importance of these issues, the paramount priority of the next President will be to protect and defend the security of the United States and the lives and well-being of its citizens.

“Protecting the homeland” is a phrase that means much more than securing the borders and preventing enemies from engaging in acts of terrorism on U.S. soil. It must also encompass addressing the violent crimes and illegal drugs that are wreaking havoc on urban and rural communities across the nation.

Every day, citizens throughout the country face increasing threats to their safety and well-being, not only from terrorists but also from criminals. The news is filled with stories documenting the horror that violent crime visits upon community after community and family after family.

The simple truth is that average Americans are much more likely to find themselves victims of crime than of a terrorist attack. ***In fact, in the years since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, 99,000 Americans have been murdered, and each year roughly 1.4 million Americans are the victims of violent crime.***

The ability of U.S. law enforcement agencies to reduce these horrific numbers has been hindered by a combination of factors. Since the September 11 attacks, local law enforcement agencies have been required to do more to protect their communities against terrorism.

Yet surprisingly, resources available to the local law enforcement community have been decimated. As a result, the ability of law enforcement agencies to remain fully staffed, purchase necessary equipment, and ensure that their officers receive essential training has been severely hindered.

These increased pressures, coupled with the continuing need to address gun violence, gang activity, and illegal narcotics, as well as a growing demand that local law enforcement agencies handle issues related to illegal immigration, have stretched many police agencies to the breaking point. This overextension has left many agencies unable to mount proactive policing programs and has instead limited their roles simply to reacting to acts of crime and violence as they occur, rather than focusing on preventing them.

As a result, violent crime is now on the rise in many communities. This continuing wave of crime and victimization has many causes that need to be considered and evaluated as part of a concerted national effort to mitigate and ultimately prevent violent criminal activity. Failure to act will lead to further increases in crime and a further deterioration in quality of life for all Americans.

In response to this need, the International Association of Chiefs of Police has prepared this document to outline some of the major homeland security and public safety challenges that will be faced by the next President of the United States and to offer our suggestions for how they may be overcome successfully.

The IACP looks forward to working closely with the next President and the next Administration as we strive to meet our shared obligation to protect and defend the citizens of the United States.

Sincerely,



Ronald C. Ruecker
IACP President

THE NEED FOR A PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION

The events of September 11, 2001, fundamentally altered the traditional role of the law enforcement profession and have ushered in a new era of policing in the United States. In the aftermath of these attacks, as the nation struggled to comprehend the new menace confronting our society, law enforcement agencies realized that they now had a new and critically important mission. No longer could they focus their energies solely on traditional crime-fighting efforts. Now they would be asked to confront a new threat to their communities, perpetrated by individuals and organizations that had motivations and means of attack vastly different from those of traditional criminals. Accepting this challenge required law enforcement and other public safety agencies to reassess their operations and reevaluate their priorities.

Over the last seven years, a number of dramatic steps have been taken to confront the menace of terrorism, including the passage of the Patriot Act, the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security, and the creation of a variety of programs designed to assist states and local governments in their efforts.

Unfortunately, despite these valuable initiatives, state, tribal, and local law enforcement executives have grown increasingly concerned with the lack of a central, comprehensive plan to guide national efforts to adjust to the realities of the world after September 11. This fractured approach has sown confusion among public safety agencies, delayed progress, resulted in the waste of limited resources, and in the end, left the United States far less secure than it needs to be. We cannot allow this to continue.

At the same time, the law enforcement community's traditional crime-fighting efforts have suffered. Already tight state, county, municipal, and tribal budgets have been forced to absorb the costs associated with increased training needs, overtime, and equipment purchases.

Coupled with these pressures is the continuing need to ensure the protection of civil rights and civil liberties, which is central to a strong community-police relationship and therefore vital to our crime-fighting and homeland security efforts.

It is for these stated reasons that the IACP urges the next President to establish a national commission to conduct a comprehensive review of the criminal justice system and to provide the nation with a strategic plan that will guide an integrated public safety and homeland security effort in the years ahead.

Such a commission has succeeded before. In July 1965, President Lyndon Johnson issued an executive order establishing the Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. The commission and its recommendations marked the beginning of a sea change in our methods for dealing with crime and the public and built the framework for many of the exemplary programs that continue today.

Forty-three years have now passed since that commission completed its work. The International Association of Chiefs of Police now calls for the establishment of a new commission to address and solve the issues facing the law enforcement community and the criminal justice system in the 21st century.

The United States needs a strategic plan embracing the reality that protecting our communities depends on our ability to fight both crime and terrorism. It is the IACP's belief that establishing a national commission is the vital first step in this process.

Therefore, we urge the next President to issue an executive order establishing this vitally needed commission within the first 100 days of his administration.

In this call for a national commission, the IACP leaves to the ultimate designers of the commission decisions about all of the logistics and administrative details that must be made. However, the IACP stands ready to provide assistance as called upon.

We also recommend the adoption of certain principles that would serve to guide the work of the commission.

- First, we believe the commission should include all of the elements of the criminal justice system in its examination.
- Second, we believe that the commission should comprise individuals from within and outside the criminal justice system and that, in the interest of hearing from every stakeholder in this process, every effort should be made to include individuals with the broadest possible perspective on the areas selected for review and concentration.
- Third, we believe that the commission must be given all the resources it needs to conduct a rigorous and thorough investigation and that it be given sufficient time to conduct an exhaustive review.
- Finally, it is our strongest possible recommendation that this examination be conducted in a thoroughly nonpartisan manner.

It is our hope that a commission so structured will allow us to focus this discussion on ensuring the safety of our communities and a continued partnership with them. We look forward to working with and supporting this commission when established.

To help guide the work of the commission, the following pages outline those issues that the International Association of Chiefs of Police have determined are the primary homeland security and public safety challenges facing the United States today.

CHALLENGES TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND HOMELAND SECURITY

The public safety and homeland security challenges facing our nation are numerous. This listing is not meant to be exhaustive; rather, it is intended to highlight those priority areas that U.S. law enforcement executives believe are in the greatest need of immediate action.

REDUCE VIOLENT CRIME

According to the FBI’s Uniform Crime Report, in the years since 2001, more than 99,000 Americans have been murdered, and more than eight million have been the victims of violent crime. In addition, more than 60 million have been the victims of property crime.

Although crime rates fluctuate from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, all communities have one fact in common: no place is immune from crime and violence.

As illustrated in the table to the right, high crime rates are not limited to major metropolitan areas; smaller cities, suburbs, and even rural locations are affected. What were once considered urban problems—drug addiction and distribution, violent crime, gangs, and poverty—have migrated to suburban and even rural locations. Given these facts, it is clear that state, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies continue to face a difficult and demanding challenge in combating crime.

Highest Violent Crime Rates in the United States	
Geographic area	No. per 100,000
1. Memphis, TN	1,262.7
2. Sumter, SC	1,244.0
3. Shreveport–Bossier City, LA	1,187.9
4. Florence, SC	1,160.6
5. Saginaw–Saginaw Township North, MI	1,089.8
6. Alexandria, LA	1,067.4
7. Miami–Miami Beach–Kendall, FL	973.5
8. Gainesville, GA	934.1
9. Anchorage, AK	932.3
10. Flint, MI	926.6
11. Salisbury, MD	907.6
12. Stockton, CA	907.2
13. Little Rock–North Little Rock–Conway, AR	905.5
14. Orlando–Kissimmee, FL	879.2
15. Jackson, TN	879.2
16. Las Vegas–Paradise, NV	877.2
17. Lubbock, TX	869.7
18. Pine Bluff, AR	866.5
19. Texarkana, TX–Texarkana, AR	861.4
20. Lawton, OK	859.6
21. Nashville–Davidson–Murfreesboro, TN	857.7
22. Myrtle Beach–Conway–North Myrtle Beach, SC	849.4
23. Baltimore, MD	823.8
24. Baton Rouge, LA	821.1
25. Fairbanks, AK	819.8

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Report 2006

ADDRESS GANG VIOLENCE AND GANG MIGRATION

The proliferation and spread of gangs has fueled much of the increase in violent crime. What were once loosely knit groups of juveniles and young adults involved in petty crimes have become powerful, organized gangs. Some gangs appear interested only in claiming “turf”; others appear intent on controlling lucrative drug trade through intimidation and murder. Today, as never before, cities and neighborhoods—even those without long histories of youth gang activity—have been overrun by both types of gang violence. Although gangs are not new, today's level of gang violence, organization, and sophistication is unprecedented.

REDUCE FIREARMS VIOLENCE AND TARGET ILLEGAL GUNS

Nearly 30,000 American lives are lost to gun violence each year—a number far higher than in any other country. Since 1963, more Americans have died by gunfire than perished in combat in the entire 20th century.

Far too many of our citizens live with the fear of gun violence each day. They live in communities where the constant level of violence means they cannot sit on their porches at night. Many have reason to be afraid even inside their own homes because of the real possibility that bullets may come flying through their windows and walls. All too often, innocent children are the victims of drive-by shootings and retaliatory gunfire.

Beyond the personal tragedies and emotional wreckage, gun violence also imposes extraordinary societal burdens and financial costs. It results in more than \$2.3 billion in medical costs every year—of which taxpayers pay \$1.1 billion.

COMBAT ILLEGAL NARCOTICS

Law enforcement professionals understand and continue to be alarmed by the magnitude of drug abuse, illicit production, and trafficking in narcotics and psychotropic substances, including synthetic or designer drugs, that threaten the health and well-being of millions of individuals, in particular youths.

In addition, there is a close relationship between drug abuse and other crimes. For example, studies within the United States have found that 82 percent of all jail inmates admitted to a prior use of drugs and 36 percent acknowledged being on drugs at the time of their offense. Other studies have found that up to 75 percent of those charged with crimes had drugs in their systems at the time of their arrest.

ENSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR STATE, TRIBAL, AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

State, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies continue to face a difficult and demanding challenge in combating crime and fulfilling their sworn duty to protect the public. Unfortunately, instead of increased assistance to state, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies at this challenging time, the last several years have witnessed a steady and substantial decline in funding for federal government assistance programs. Today, police departments throughout the United States have far fewer officers and resources than they did in the 1990s. Community-oriented policing is but one of the duties of state, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies that have suffered as a result of reduced resources.

Many claim that the reduction in resources for state, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies is a result of the federal government's need to focus on homeland security efforts. Unfortunately, funding federal homeland security efforts at the expense of state, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies weakens, rather than enhances, national security.

SECURE THE BORDERS/ENHANCE FEDERAL IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

The inability of the federal government to secure U.S. borders, the absence of a clear national policy on immigration, and limited federal assistance and resources have placed many state, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies in a difficult position as their communities look to them to address these critical issues.

However, the complex nature of federal immigration law, conflicting state and local ordinances, questions surrounding the authority of state and local officers to act, and differing community expectations are just a few of the issues surrounding the question of state and local involvement in enforcing federal immigration law. The result is a patchwork of approaches that often sees adjacent jurisdictions adopting differing enforcement policies. In addition, even in those communities that choose to enforce federal immigration law, there is frustration because of the limited capacity of the federal government to respond when a suspected illegal alien is apprehended or detained.

FOCUS ON TERRORISM PREVENTION

The prevention of terrorist attacks must be viewed as the paramount priority in any national, state, tribal, or local homeland security strategy. Unfortunately, to date, the vast majority of federal homeland security efforts has focused on increasing national capabilities to respond to and recover from a terrorist attack.

Although there is a need to enhance response and recovery capabilities, such preparations must not be made at the expense of efforts to improve the ability of law enforcement and other public safety and security agencies to identify, investigate, and apprehend suspected terrorists *before they can strike*.

PROMOTE INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION SHARING

As the 9/11 Commission properly noted, the lack of effective information and intelligence sharing among federal, state, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies was, and continues to be, a major handicap in U.S. homeland security efforts.

The simple truth is that while planning, conducting surveillance, or securing the resources necessary to mount their attacks, terrorists often live in our communities, travel on our highways, and shop in our stores. As we discovered in the aftermath of September 11, several of the terrorists involved in those attacks had routine encounters with state and local law enforcement officials in the weeks and months before the attacks.

If state, tribal, and local law enforcement officers are adequately equipped and trained and fully integrated into an information- and intelligence-sharing network, they can be invaluable assets in efforts to identify and apprehend suspected terrorists.

In addition, the timely and effective sharing of information among law enforcement agencies will also benefit law enforcement efforts to combat all crimes.

ADOPT A BROAD-BASED HOMELAND SECURITY STRATEGY

It is critically important that the United States commit to the development and the maintenance of a broad-based effort that builds our national prevention and response capabilities from the ground up. It is vital that a baseline capability be established in all communities, not just urban areas or those determined to be at greatest risk.

Once these basic capabilities are established nationwide, they can be used as the foundation on which more advanced homeland security capabilities can be built. Regrettably, the current homeland security strategy and funding formulas appear to have the opposite goal. The last several years have witnessed a pronounced shift away from a broad-based homeland security program toward a program that targets primarily urban areas for assistance.

The failure to implement and adequately fund a broad-based effort that will improve the security of all communities weakens our overall approach to securing the homeland. For as larger metropolitan areas become more secure, terrorists will seek out other, more vulnerable, high-risk targets in outlying areas to attack. As the United States moves forward in developing a national homeland security strategy, we must remember that we are a nation of communities and that *all* of our communities are at risk.

PROTECT CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

All law enforcement leaders recognize the ethical and legal imperatives to which they and their officers must adhere to ensure the protection of civil rights and civil liberties for all individuals in their communities. Law enforcement officers, in fact, are the most visible and largest contingent of the nation's guardians of civil rights and civil liberties. Every police officer commits to upholding the nation's prime guarantor of rights, the U.S. Constitution, when sworn into office. To be effective, a police department and its individual officers must be seen primarily as protectors of civil rights and civil liberties, rather than agents of social control whose main purpose is to limit individual freedoms.

The effectiveness of police in their varied missions—from law enforcement to homeland security—depends on the trust and confidence of the community. Public trust and confidence are severely reduced when individuals' civil rights and civil liberties are compromised. When any community perceives that its civil rights and civil liberties are violated, all sense of trust, cooperation, and partnership between the police and that community is undermined.

STRENGTHEN THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Equality of justice, fairness, and equal protection under the law are premises every American should take for granted as inalienable rights. Unfortunately, many individuals and groups of people in our society feel that the treatment of people of color when it comes to arrest, representation, sentencing, and offender reentry programs is disparate and therefore a cause for concern. They support their belief with the results of a recent Pew Survey that found that 1 in every 100 Americans is incarcerated and that a disproportionate number of prisoners are people of color.

These issues are complex and often controversial; however, it remains clear that, to ensure justice and to maintain orderly and peaceful communities, arrest, representation, sentencing, and offender reentry programs must be conducted in an effective manner that builds and maintains a trusting and confident relationship with all citizens in every part of the country.

THE CHALLENGE OF 21ST-CENTURY POLICING

Each of the issues presented in this report represents a significant and pressing challenge to the ability of the law enforcement community to protect the citizens of the United States. However, although each issue addresses a unique area of law enforcement or homeland security policy, there is one considerable overarching factor that will affect our ability to overcome these challenges: the relationship between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve.

Over the last 40 years, communities throughout the United States have changed dramatically. The global economy and more transient populations are resulting in waves of new residents, unprecedented in numbers and diversity, that must be served and protected by law enforcement agencies at all levels of government.

Addressing this new reality is essential because our nation's past success in reducing crime and protecting our citizens from harm was dependent on the realization that law enforcement officers cannot just patrol a community; they must be part of the community. Conversely, members of the community must be active participants in law enforcement efforts, willing to step forward and assist officers and their departments when necessary.

It is vital, therefore, that we move forward in our efforts to combat crime and prevent terrorism. We, as a nation, must do all that we can to meet our obligations to develop and protect public trust and confidence and to ensure that law enforcement agencies and the entire justice system provide equal service and protection for all our citizens. To move in this direction, the IACP views the creation of a commission on law enforcement and the administration of justice as an absolute priority. Looking to the legacy of the 1965 commission, we fully anticipate that this new commission will produce a road map to guide U.S. law enforcement and the justice system for decades to come.

IACP RESOURCES

As the next President and his administration seek to address these challenges, we urge them to carefully review and adopt the extensively researched and proven solutions that the IACP has developed to address these issues. These include the following reports:

- *From Hometown Security to Homeland Security: IACP's Principles for a Locally Designed and Nationally Coordinated Homeland Security Strategy*
- *Taking a Stand: Reducing Gun Violence in Our Communities*
- *Police Chiefs Guide to Immigration Issues*
- *Criminal Intelligence Sharing: A National Plan for Intelligence-Led Policing at the Local, State, and Federal Levels*
- *Post 9-11 Policing: The Crime Control–Homeland Security Paradigm*
- *The IACP Law Enforcement Legislative Agenda for the 110th Congress*
- *The Role of State and Provincial Law Enforcement Agencies in a Post–9/11 Era*
- *The Impact of the Proposed FY 2009 Budget on State, Tribal, and Local Law Enforcement*
- *Offender Re-Entry: Exploring the Leadership Opportunity for Law Enforcement Executives and Their Agencies*
- *Leading from the Front: Law Enforcement's Role in Combating and Preparing for Domestic Terrorism*
- *Protecting Civil Rights: A Leadership Guide for State, Local, and Tribal Law Enforcement*
- *Crime Gun Interdiction Strategies for the 21st Century*
- *Enhancing Law Enforcement Response to Victims: A 21st Century Strategy*
- *A Symbol of Fairness and Neutrality: Policing Diverse Communities in the 21st Century*

The proposals contained in these reports and publications are drawn from the experience and expertise of our nation's law enforcement leaders. They represent a vast wealth of practical, firsthand knowledge that will serve to assist the next President and his administration.

These reports and additional information can be found on the IACP Web site at www.theiacp.org or by contacting the IACP at 1-800-THE-IACP.



ABOUT THE IACP

The International Association of Chiefs of Police is the world's oldest and largest non-profit membership organization of police executives, with nearly 22,000 members in over 100 different countries. The IACP's leadership consists of the operating chief executives of international, federal, state, tribal and local agencies of all sizes.

Founded in 1893, the association's goals are to advance the science and art of police services; to develop and disseminate improved administrative, technical and operational practices and promote their use in police work; to foster police cooperation and the exchange of information and experience among police administrators throughout the world; to bring about recruitment and training in the police profession of qualified persons; and to encourage adherence of all police officers to high professional standards of performance and conduct.

Since 1893, the International Association of Chiefs of Police has been serving the needs of the law enforcement community. Throughout the past 115 years, we have been launching historically acclaimed programs, conducting ground-breaking research, and providing exemplary programs and services to our membership across the globe.

Professionally recognized programs such as the FBI Identification Division and the Uniform Crime Records system can trace their origins back to the IACP. In fact, the IACP has been instrumental in forwarding breakthrough technologies and philosophies from the early years of our establishment to the present. From spearheading national use of fingerprint identification to partnering in a consortium on community policing to gathering top experts in criminal justice, the government and education for summits on violence, homicide, and youth violence, the IACP has realized our responsibility to positively affect the goals of law enforcement.

Even with such an esteemed history, we are continually initiating programs to address the needs of today's law enforcement professionals. Our members have let us know that they consider the IACP to be a progressive organization, successfully advancing the law enforcement profession.

If you would like additional information about the IACP, please contact IACP Headquarters at 1-800-THE-IACP (1-800-843-4227) or visit our Web site at www.theiacp.org.