

STRATEGIC MESSAGING ASSESSMENT



An informed and engaged community is one of the greatest assets for any local law enforcement agency. It helps not only to create a partnership between law enforcement and the community that assists with fighting crime together but also to build and maintain positive rapport with the local media and establish a culture of transparency. Through the Department of Justice (DOJ) Bureau of Justice Assistance Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) program, CNA offers sites strategic messaging assessments to support their efforts to strengthen and coordinate internal and external communications and establish a consistent, agency-wide social media team approach.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

- Assess current communications practices.
- Review communications policies such as media relations, social media, and any other policy affecting external communications.
- Develop recommendations for strengthening and coordinating external and internal communications to focus on the agency's overarching key messages.
- Develop recommendations for establishing a consistent, agency-wide approach to the districts' digital community engagement efforts.



THE PROCESS

The key steps of the assessment process include the following:

1. **Pre-assessment data:** The PSN training and technical assistance (TTA) team asks the requesting agency to provide policies, procedures, and other pertinent documents related to the department's communications strategies. The subject matter expert (SME) will review the information in advance of an on-site visit.

PRE-ASSESSMENT DATA



01

KICK OFF CALL



02

SITE VISIT



03

ASSESSMENT REPORT



04

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2. **Kick off call:** CNA will host a kick off call with the PSN TTA team—including the requesting agency’s TTA liaison, analyst, and DOJ support team member—to identify the desired goals and objectives of the assessment and potential dates for the on-site portion of the assessment.
3. **Site visit:** During a two-day site visit, the SME will conduct interviews with key personnel at the requesting agency. The SME may also view community meetings, interview community members, and visit with media personnel, as appropriate.
4. **Assessment report:** The SME will develop an assessment report with findings and recommendations to improve strategic messaging efforts. The SME will discuss findings with the site while developing the report. The PSN TTA team will provide a final report to the site within six weeks of the site visit. The SME can debrief the findings of the report via a conference call, at the request of the site.



SAMPLE ON-SITE VISIT AGENDA

- Hold interviews with local law enforcement agency representatives.
 - Chief of police and command staff
 - Public information officer and staff
 - Social media personnel
 - Other personnel involved in internal and external communications
- Hold interviews with community members and leaders.
- Hold interviews with local media outlets.
- Collect relevant policies.

POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

- Modified practices or implementation of new practices based on lessons learned
- Improved relationships with the community and media as a result of increased transparency
- Reduced crime and increased clearance rates as a result of improved partnership between law enforcement agency and the community

QUESTIONS AND MAKING AN ASSESSMENT REQUEST

If you have questions about this assessment or would like to request the assessment, please consult with your TTA liaison or PSN TTA analyst. You can also complete the PSN TTA request form at the link below.

This project was supported by Grant No. 2018-DP-BX-K013 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART). Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice