BOARD OF
STATE AND
COMMUNITY
CORRECTIONS
BSCC CALIFORNIA

Organized Retail Theft Prevention Grant Program
Third Quarter Status Update (April to June 2024)

About the Grant Program

The Organized Retail Theft (ORT) Prevention Grant Program supports local law enforcement agencies in preventing and responding to organized retail theft, motor vehicle or motor vehicle accessory theft, or cargo theft. In September 2023, a total amount of $242,250,000 in grant funds was awarded to 38 grantees (31 city police departments and 7 county sheriff's offices).[1] The grant service period began on October 1, 2023. Detailed information about the grantees and their funding is available on the grant webpage.[2]

In August 2024, grantees submitted their third Quarterly Progress Report to the BSCC reporting on grant activities that occurred between April 1, 2024, and June 30, 2024. This document summarizes the progress report information submitted by all 38 grantees.

Project Implementation

During the first nine (9) months of a grant service period, grantees are generally focused on project implementation activities necessary for an effective project start. The figure below summarizes the grantees status updates for five (5) project implementation activities.
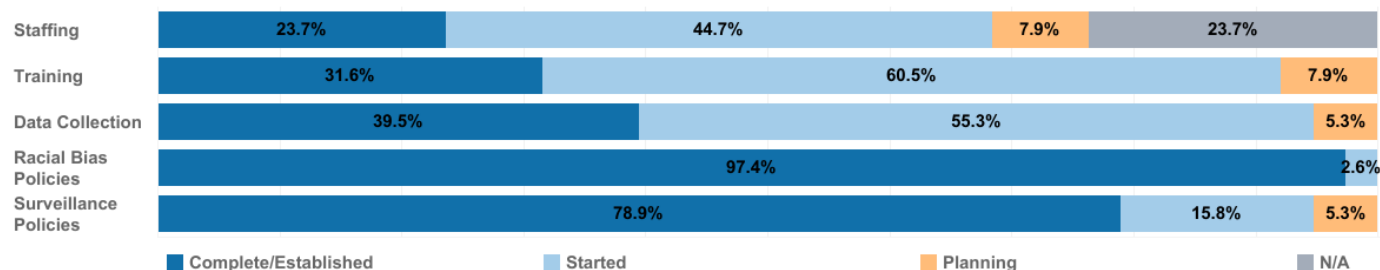

Figure 1. Project implementation status for Q3.

Staffing: Hiring staff for the essential positions of the projects.

- 24 percent of grantees (*n* = 9) completed their planned hiring activities, including hiring analyst(s), detective(s), and staffing out task forces.
- 45 percent of grantees (*n* = 17) began recruitment, interviewing and making tentative offers for positions within their departments. Once backgrounds and other personnel steps are completed, these staff will be assigned to grant-related tasks.
- 8 percent of grantees (*n* = 3) were in the planning stage on staffing activities. Job specifications were being developed or modified for sworn personnel, crime analysts, police aides, and any vacant positions. While some staff may have recently been hired, grantees are still developing plans to formally assign staff to grant-related activities once equipment is procured and put into operation.

[1] Three grantees are multi-agency partnerships: one police department with two partners, one police department with three partners, and a sheriff's office with 13 partners.
[2] https://www.bscc.ca.gov/organized-retail-theft-grant-program/

- 24 percent of grantees (*n* = 9) are not hiring additional staff.

Training: Providing training to staff to support project goals.
- 32 percent of grantees (*n* = 12) completed their planned training activities but continue to seek new opportunities.
- 61 percent of grantees (*n* = 23) began training staff to use new technology and equipment (e.g., drones, automated license plate readers, real time information center activities, etc.).
- 8 percent of grantees (*n* = 3) were in the planning stage of training activities. As new staff and equipment come on board, training needs are being identified, grantees are exploring available training options and coordinating with partners.

Data Collection: Systematic, ongoing data collection for the progress reports and local evaluation.
- 40 percent of grantees (*n* = 15) have established their data collection systems. Contracts with external evaluators are finalized and oversight personnel, including crime analysts, are in place to monitor trends and share progress with patrol staff.
- 55 percent of grantees (*n* = 21) began implementation, with staff continuing to refine data collection procedures for internal and external reporting requirements as well as working with external evaluators to finalize evaluation standards and procedures and submit their local evaluation plans.
- 5 percent of grantees (*n* = 2) were in the planning stage for data collection.
  - Grantees report continual work on evaluating and establishing the best data resources and core areas to measure program effectiveness.
  - Some developed requests for proposals to procure evaluators who will be responsible for data collection, evaluation, reporting, and quality assurance.

Racial Bias Policies: Policies or training to limit racial bias in the facilitation of project activities.
- 97 percent of grantees (*n* = 37) already had established policies and/or training to limit racial bias.
  - These were included within existing policies and procedures and are followed by all department members and all partner agencies.
  - Training was provided for new hires; subsequent mandatory training sessions held as needed.
- 3 percent of grantees (*n* = 1) started reviewing established policies as new hires are made and new technologies are procured.

Surveillance Policies: Policies or training to govern the use of surveillance technologies.
- 79 percent of grantees (*n* = 30) already had established policies and training to govern the use of surveillance technologies.
  - These were included within existing policy and procedure manuals and are followed by all department members and all partner agencies.
  - Training was provided for recent hires and subsequent as-needed training sessions were held in support of the policies.

- Policies and training were in accordance with privacy laws, focusing on automated license plate readers, closed-circuit television use, facial recognition, unmanned aerial systems (drones), public safety video surveillance systems, surveillance and undercover equipment, and guidance for the capture, storage, and use of digital data.
- 16 percent of grantees (*n* = 6) started establishing these policies and/or training. New policies are being developed by internal staff and discussions were held to examine the potential need to update policies and training as new technologies were put into operation. Once established, training will be held for all staff.
- 5 percent of grantees (*n* = 2) were in the planning stage. Grantees are in the process of purchasing new technologies or discussing the potential need to update policies and trainings as new technologies are procured and implemented.

Organized Retail Theft Metrics

For organized retail theft, between April 1, 2024, and June 30, 2024 (Q3), grantees reported:
- 6,347 ORT incidents.[3]
- 2,497 arrests related to ORT.
- 2,109 referrals to the District Attorney's Offices for ORT prosecution.
- Cumulatively, between Quarters 1 and 3:
  - 19,506 ORT incidents occurred.
  - 8,006 arrests related to ORT were made.
  - 6,788 referrals were made to the District Attorney's Offices for ORT prosecution.

Of the 2,497 arrests made related to ORT during Q3:
- 54 percent (*n* = 1,343) were attributed to four grantees – the San Francisco Police Department (*n* = 536*),* the Daly City Police Department[4] (*n* = 371), the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office (*n* = 229), and the Bakersfield Police Department (*n* = 207).
- 19 percent (*n* = 481) were attributed to the work of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (*n* = 152*),* the Fresno Police Department[5] (*n* = 129), the San Jose Police Department (*n* = 101), and the Modesto Police Department (*n* = 99).
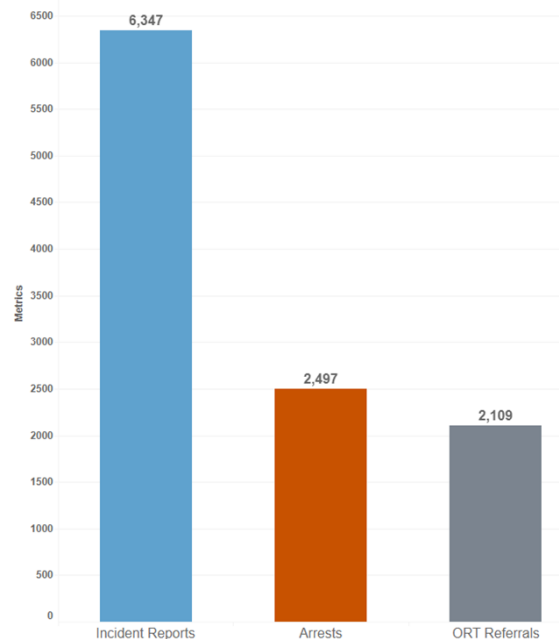

Figure 2. Organized Retail Theft Prevention Metrics for Q3.

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[3] Incidents refer to known events or occurrences, including dispatch incident reports, officer incident reports, etc. The count includes incidents reported across all partners of the grant funded project.
[4] Daly City Police Department is in a multi-agency partnership grant with San Bruno Police Department and San Mateo Police Department.
[5] Fresno Police Department is in a multi-agency partnership grant with Clovis Police Department, Fresno County Probation Department, and Fresno County District Attorney's Office.

About the Collection of Incident, Arrest and Referral Metrics

The relationship between arrests by law enforcement and referrals to the District Attorney's Offices (DAs) for prosecution is complex. Once an arrest is made, law enforcement must conduct an investigation *prior to* referring a case for prosecution. The investigation, which includes the collection of evidence, witness interviews, victim statements, etc., takes a significant amount of time. For this reason, arrests are not always equal to or greater than the number of referrals for prosecution. Arrests made in one quarter may not be referred for prosecution until subsequent quarters. Similarly, an incident may occur in one quarter which prompts an investigation during the same quarter and, given the time to investigate, an arrest may not be made until a subsequent reporting period. Finally, not all incidents involve an arrest and not all arrests result in a referral for prosecution. An arrest may not lead to a referral for prosecution due to insufficient evidence or a variety of other factors at the local level.

Incident and arrest metrics are totals for the grantee (and any partner agencies). Incidents are known occurrences that are reported from a variety of sources, including from the public to dispatch, officer incident reports, etc. Arrests can be made by any officer on any assignment and therefore difficult to directly attribute to the ORT Prevention Grant Program. The number of referrals to DAs is collected by funding source (ORT Prevention Grant funds and other funding sources). For this document, the total of all referrals to District Attorney's Offices for ORT prosecution was used to be consistent with the reporting of incident and arrest metrics.

The incident, arrest, and referral metrics were also collected for the year prior to grant funding and are referred to as the baseline metrics. As these baseline metrics span a full year, once four quarters of metrics are available for the grant period, it will be possible to evaluate trends in incidents, arrests, and referrals pre-grant funding and for the first year of grant funding. These trends may be influenced by both grant funding and any other state or local efforts to address ORT. It is anticipated that these trends will be available in January 2025.

Motor Vehicle and Motor Vehicle Accessory Theft Metrics

For motor vehicle and motor vehicle accessory theft (MVT/MVAT), between April 1, 2024, and June 30, 2024 (Q3), grantees reported:
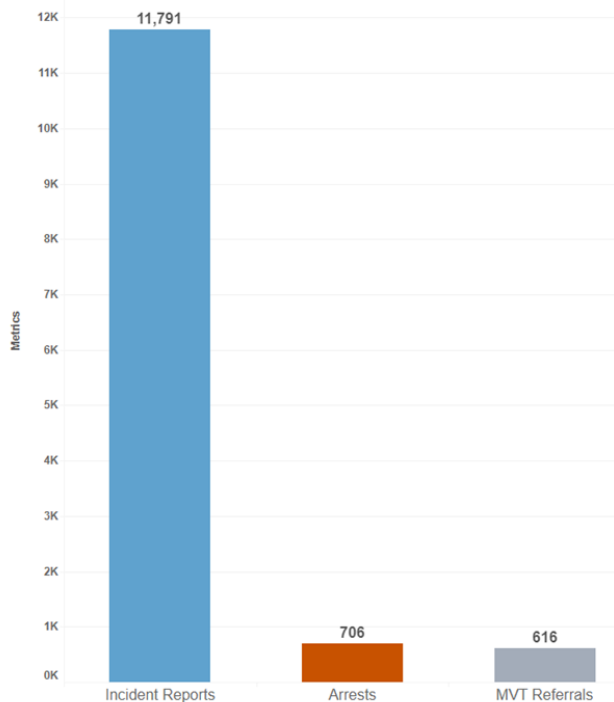

Figure 3. Motor Vehicle and Motor Vehicle Accessory Theft Metrics for Q3.

- 11,791 MVT/MVAT incidents.
- 706 arrests related to MVT/MVAT.
- 616 referrals to the District Attorney's Offices for MVT/MVAT prosecution.[6]
- Cumulatively, between Quarters 1 and 3:
  - 36,816 MVT/MVAT incidents occurred.
  - 2,095 arrests related to MVT/MVAT were made.
  - 1,918 referrals were made to the District Attorney's Offices for MVT/MVAT prosecution.[7]

Of the 706 arrests made related to MVT/MVAT during Q3:

- 50 percent (n = 351) were from the efforts of three grantees – the Fresno Police Department[8] (n = 191), the Bakersfield Police Department (n = 99), and the Garden Grove Police Department (n = 61).
- 19 percent (n = 136) were attributed to the work of the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office (n = 56), the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office[9] (n = 47), and the Ventura County Sheriff's Office (n = 33).

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[6] Los Angeles Police Department referrals are excluded as the data is not available at this time.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Fresno Police Department is in a multi-agency partnership grant with Clovis Police Department, Fresno County Probation Department, and Fresno County District Attorney's Office.

[9] San Mateo County Sheriff's Office is in a multi-agency partnership grant with Atherton Police Department, Belmont Police Department, Broadmoor Police Department, Burlingame Police Department, Colma Police Department, East Palo Alto Police Department, Foster City Police Department, Menlo Park Police Department, Northern California Regional Intelligence Center Fusion Center (NCRIC), Pacifica Police Department, Redwood City Police Department, San Mateo County Vehicle Theft Task Force (VTTF), and South San Francisco Police Department.

Cargo Theft Metrics

For cargo theft, between April 1, 2024, and June 30, 2024 (Q3), grantees reported:

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- 363 cargo theft incidents.
- 3 arrests were made related to cargo theft.
- 4 referrals to the District Attorney's Offices for prosecution.
- Cumulatively, between Quarters 1 and 3:
  - 842 cargo incidents occurred.
  - 37 arrests related to cargo theft were made.
  - 30 referrals to the District Attorney's Offices for cargo theft prosecution.

Of the 3 arrests made related to cargo theft during Q3, 100 percent (n = 3) were from the efforts of one grantee – the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.
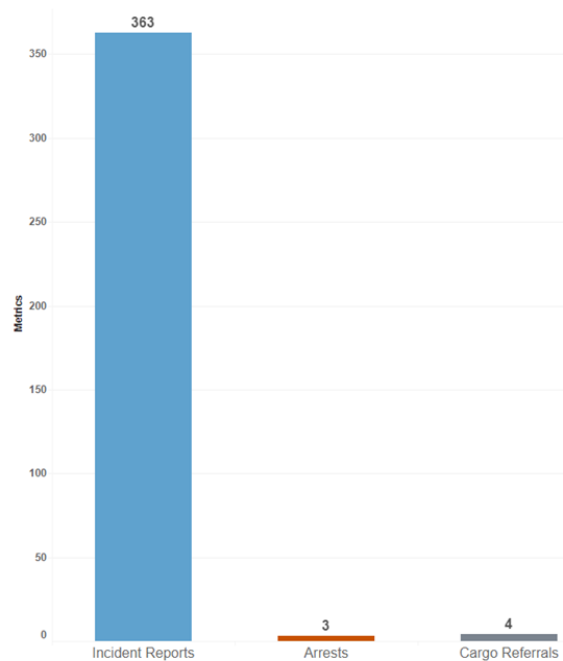

Figure 4. Cargo Theft Metrics for Q3.

Summary

In the first nine months of the 39-month grant service period, most grantees made substantial progress in project implementation activities including the hiring and training of staff; developing and implementing data collection procedures; and have or are establishing policies to limit racial bias in project activities and to govern the use of surveillance technologies. Across the 38 grantees, a total of **10,138 arrests** occurred related to ORT, MVT/MVAT, and Cargo Theft with **8,736 referrals** to District Attorney's Offices for prosecution. The next Quarterly Progress Report is due from grantees on November 15, 2024. Following BSCC's review and subsequent analysis of the reports, updates regarding grantees' progress and reported metrics will be made available on the grant webpage.[10]

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[10] https://www.bscc.ca.gov/organized-retail-theft-grant-program/