PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Friday, July 20, 2012
1 to 3 p.m.
SANDAG Board Room
401 B Street, 7th Floor
San Diego

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

• SUBSTANCE USE TRENDS AMONG THE ARRESTEE POPULATION
• ARJIS LICENSE PLATE READER PROJECT
• 2-1-1 SAN DIEGO

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ITEM # | RECOMMENDATION
--- | ---
1. | ROLL CALL
+2. | APPROVAL OF THE MAY 18, 2012, MEETING MINUTES
3. | PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

Members of the public shall have the opportunity to address the Public Safety Committee on any issue within the jurisdiction of the Committee that is not on this agenda. Anyone desiring to speak shall reserve time by completing a “Request to Speak” form and giving it to the Clerk prior to speaking. Public speakers should notify the Clerk if they have a handout for distribution to Committee members. Public speakers are limited to three minutes or less per person. Committee members also may provide information and announcements under this agenda item.

REPORTS

4. | REPORT FROM THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION
   (Chief Dave Hanneman, San Diego County Fire Chiefs Association)

Chief Dave Hanneman will report on the July 5, 2012, meeting of the San Diego County Fire Chiefs Association.

5. | SUBSTANCE USE TRENDS AMONG THE ARRESTEE POPULATION
   (Cynthia Burke)

As part of an on-going locally supported effort, data are collected from arrestees regarding their drug use histories and other risky behaviors. Recently compiled information from both juveniles and adults through 2011 will be presented.

6. | ARJIS LICENSE PLATE READER PROJECT (Pam Scanlon)

ARJIS is partnering with several of the ARJIS member agencies and the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) on the regional License Plate Reader (LPR) project. ARJIS has developed the applications to provide real-time access to LPR data being captured throughout the County. Representatives from participating agencies will provide an overview of the accomplishments of their specific agencies, the policies for use and retention of LPR data, and how these data have assisted in solving several crimes.

7. | 2-1-1 SAN DIEGO (John Ohanian, Executive Director, 2-1-1 San Diego)

2-1-1 San Diego is a resource and information hub that connects people with community, health, and disaster services through a free, 24/7 stigma-free confidential phone service and searchable online database. An overview will be provided of 2-1-1, including the history of the agency, the current service delivery system, including specialty programs, the data and technology infrastructure, and upcoming goals and priorities.
8. UPComing MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Public Safety Committee is scheduled for Friday, September 21, 2012.

9. ADJOURNMENT

+ next to an agenda item indicates an attachment
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS
Meeting of May 18, 2012

1. ROLL CALL

Chair Mark Lewis (East County) called the Public Safety Committee (PSC) meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present. See last page for attendance.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Action: Upon a motion by Director of Transit Systems Security Bill Burke (Regional Transit) and a second by Vice Chairman Greg Cox (County of San Diego), the minutes of April 20, 2012, were unanimously approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

Councilmember Rosalie Zarate (South County) announced that National City is having their 125th Anniversary of their city this year.

REPORTS

4. REPORT FROM THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION (INFORMATION)

Chief Dave Hanneman, San Diego County Fire Chiefs Association, reported on the May 3, 2012, meeting of the San Diego County Fire Chiefs Association.

Action: This item was presented for information.

5. CRIME IN THE SAN DIEGO REGION 1982 - 2011 (INFORMATION)

As part of a cooperative agreement with local law enforcement agencies, the Criminal Justice Research Division compiles regional violent and property crime statistics on a semi-annual basis to track changes and trends in crime rates and numbers. This information is useful in determining how crime varies across jurisdictions and how it is impacted by prevention and enforcement strategies. Thirty years of crime trend data from the region (1982 through 2011) was presented, including violent and property crime rates and numbers for the nation, region, and local jurisdictions.
Dr. Cynthia Burke, Division Director, Applied Policy Research/Criminal Justice Research, presented this item.

**Action:** This item was presented for information.

6. **PUBLIC SAFETY FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE (INFORMATION)**

Periodic status reports on legislative activities are provided to the PSC during the year. This status report provides an update of federal public safety-related legislative activities, including an update on the Administration’s proposed FY 2013 Federal Budget for the Department of Commerce and Homeland Security, the National Preparedness Grant Program and recent developments to improve interoperable communications for public safety.

Genevieve Morales (SANDAG) presented this item.

**Action:** This item was presented for information.

7. **INTERNET CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN UPDATE (INFORMATION)**

An update was provided on recent efforts by the Internet Crimes Against Children initiative, including the introduction of soon-to-be-released Public Service Announcements, legislative efforts, and an effort to build a regional database to capture data for law enforcement purposes.

Chief David Ott (City of Solana Beach and Del Mar Fire Departments) and Councilmember Rebecca Jones (North County Inland) presented an overview of this information.

**Action:** This item was presented for information.

8. **SAN DIEGO REGION GRAFFITI TRACKER PILOT PROJECT: OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION FINDINGS (INFORMATION/POSSIBLE ACTION)**

In January 2011, a regional pilot project, the San Diego County Multi-Discipline Graffiti Abatement Program, was launched with the goal of utilizing technology (Graffiti Tracker) to better document graffiti and identify and convict the most prolific offenders through a coordinated regional effort. To ensure that this project was documented and the region’s policy makers had a clear understanding of the usefulness of the system, SANDAG provided resources to conduct a process and outcome evaluation of this effort. An overview of the evaluation findings will be provided.

Dr. Burke provided the update on this item.

**Action:** Upon a motion by Vice Chairman Cox and a second by Sheriff William D. Gore (San Diego County Sheriff), the PSC recommended that the SANDAG Board of Directors have SANDAG staff work with the County to extend the Graffiti regional pilot program for an additional 12 months, encourage the Cities of Escondido and Oceanside to get on the contract to expire on June 30, 2013, and direct SANDAG staff to provide options for transitioning the pilot program to an on-going regional program before June 30, 2013.
9. UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next meeting of the PSC is scheduled for Friday, June 15, 2012.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Lewis adjourned the Public Safety Committee meeting at 2:25 p.m.
<table>
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<tr>
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<th>NAME</th>
<th>MEMBER/ ALTERNATE</th>
<th>ATTEND YES/NO</th>
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<tr>
<td>East County</td>
<td>Hon. Mark Lewis-Chair</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hon. Bill Wells</td>
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<tr>
<td>North County Coastal</td>
<td>Hon. Jack Feller</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hon. Kristin Gaspar</td>
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<tr>
<td>South County</td>
<td>Hon. Cheryl Cox-Vice Chair</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Hon. Rebecca Jones</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hon. Dave Cowles</td>
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<td>City of San Diego</td>
<td>Hon. Marti Emerald</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>County of San Diego</td>
<td>Vice Chairman Greg Cox</td>
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<td>Supervisor Bill Horn</td>
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<td>Chief Jim Abele</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Assistant Chief Esmeralda Falat</td>
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<td>County Chiefs/Sheriff’s Association</td>
<td>Chief John Bolduc</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chief John L. Browning</td>
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<td>Chief Adolfo Gonzales</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chief David Bejarano</td>
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<td>San Diego Police Department</td>
<td>Chief William M. Lansdowne</td>
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<td>Ex. Assistant Chief David Ramirez</td>
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<td>Sheriff William D. Gore</td>
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<td>Homeland Security</td>
<td>Holly Crawford</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Donna Faller</td>
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<td>Regional Fire/Emergency Medical Services</td>
<td>Chief Dave Hanneman</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chief Tony Michel</td>
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<td>San Diego County District Attorney</td>
<td>Bonnie Dumanis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tom Zoll</td>
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**ADVISORY MEMBERS**

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<td>County Public Safety</td>
<td>Mack Jenkins</td>
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<td>Yvette Klepin</td>
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<td>Department of Defense</td>
<td>Colonel Nicholas Marano</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Joseph Stuyvesant</td>
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<td>Federal Public Safety</td>
<td>Michael J. Aguilar</td>
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<td>John A. Garzon</td>
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<td>Laura E. Duffy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern CA Tribal Chairmen’s Association (SCTCA)</td>
<td>Stephanie Spencer</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<td></td>
<td>LaVonne Peck</td>
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Drug Use Among San Diego Arrestees

July 20, 2012

Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM)

• Funded by the National Institute of Justice since 1987
• Locally funded beginning in 2004
• Interviews with adults and juveniles booked into detention facilities
• Urinalysis identifies recent drug use
• Platform for other research
SAM Provides Valuable Information

- Indicators for the Meth Strike Force & Prescription Drug Abuse Report Cards
- Demonstrates severity of problem in San Diego County
- Measures change over time and can be tied to other changes in the community

2011 Samples

- 776 adults
  - 509 males and 267 females
  - Average age 33.5 (18-71)
  - 40% arrested for drug offense
- 124 juveniles
  - 95 males and 29 females
  - Average age 15.9 (12-19)
  - 4% arrested for drug offense
Juveniles Now Testing Positive Close to Adult Rates

Percent Positive for Any Drug

More Juveniles Testing Positive for Marijuana Over Past 5 Years

Percent Positive for Marijuana
Adult Females Most Likely to Test Positive for Meth in San Diego

Use by Adult Males in Sacramento Up More Than San Diego
Six Most Commonly Tried Drugs Used by One-Quarter or More of Juveniles

Percent Who Report Ever Trying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug</th>
<th>Marijuana</th>
<th>Alcohol</th>
<th>Ecstasy</th>
<th>Cocaine</th>
<th>Mushrooms</th>
<th>Meth</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
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"Gateway Drug" Use by Juveniles

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alcohol</th>
<th>Marijuana</th>
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<tr>
<td>1st Drug Used</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Age 1st Use</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceive Harm</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easy to Get</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used Past Year</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used 30 Days</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>87%</td>
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More Juveniles Reporting Ecstasy Use Over Past Five Years

Percent Who Ever Tried

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ecstasy (%)</th>
<th>Mushrooms (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>24%</td>
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Other Drugs Used by Juveniles of Community Concern

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oxycontin</th>
<th>Spice</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ever Used</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>52%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avg. Age 1st Use</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>15.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perceive Harm</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easy to Get</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Used Past Year</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Used 30 Days</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>72%</td>
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Other Juvenile Statistics

- 82% report previous truancy
- 52% have a parent and 48% a sibling who has been arrested and booked
- 44% have run away from home
- 42% report parental alcohol and/or other drug use
- 27% report previous family CPS contact
- 15% have been in foster care
- 9% have children

Six Most Commonly Tried Drugs Used by One-Quarter or More of Adults

Percent Who Report Ever Trying

- Binge Alcohol: 83%
- Marijuana: 82%
- Meth: 53%
- Cocaine: 46%
- Mushrooms: 28%
- Crack: 28%
About One in Four Adult Heroin Users Used Rx Opiates First

- 24% of arrestees had tried heroin
- 24% of these individuals said they were hooked on Rx opiates prior to using heroin
- Most common Vicodin, Oxycontin, and Percocet
- 70% of these said heroin was a substitute for Rx opiate

Prior Justice System Contact by Adults

- 79% prior arrests
- 75% on probation in the past
- 73% prior jail time
- 38% had juvenile justice contact
- 24% prior prison time
Other Adult Statistics

- 52% ever homeless
- 45% unemployed
- 39% received treatment before
- 32% have gone to work drunk or high in past year
- 25% previous mental health diagnosis
- 24% visited ER for drug-related incident

Other Adult Statistics

- 26% have ever had an open CPS case
- 17% have been approached to transport drugs across the U.S./Mexican border
- 12% have been in foster care
ARJIS License Plate Reader Overview

Regional System
July 20, 2012

Why is LPR Valuable to Law Enforcement?

- **Locate and Recover Wanted Vehicles**
  - Mobile units use California Department of Justice alert lists
    - Stolen Vehicles & Plates
    - Felony Alert List – Associated with Wanted Felons

- **Provide Investigative Leads**
  - Vehicle Locations
  - Photos of Suspect Vehicles

- **LPR – True Force Multiplier**
  - Uses Technology to Increase
    - Officer Effectiveness
ARJIS Regional LPR System

- Connects 13 separate efforts – Accessible by all 82 ARJIS members. Funded primarily by UASI funds (Urban Area Security Initiative)
- Accessed via SRFERS (State, Regional, Federal Enterprise Retrieval System)
- Can send alert to investigator when target vehicle plate is captured
- Also checks LPR from Border
- Regional database = 20+ million records
ARJIS participated in national privacy impact assessment funded by National Institute of Justice and directed by International Association of Chiefs of Police.
Regional LPR Retention Criteria

- Fixed Camera Reads
  - 12 Months

- Mobile Unit Reads
  - 24 Months

- Consistent with national trends and shorter than many areas of the country
  - Approved by Chiefs and Sheriff group

- Agencies may set their own retention period

---

LPR Works!

Today I was looking for a 288 PC (Child Molest) suspect. We had a known plate for his car and a home address, but didn't know where he was during the day. We used the SRFERS LPR search, and found multiple recent records of his car parked at his place of business in National City.

We went directly there, found his car in the same spot as the LPR reads. We recognized the car due to the color picture from SRFERS. He was arrested without incident.

This child molester was quickly arrested. The LPR data and SRFERS was directly responsible for the speedy resolution of this case!

Detective – National City PD
More Successes

- **District Attorney Fraud Case**: A fraud detective working complex cases involving automobiles reported the use of LPR information obtained through SRFERS has been instrumental in closing several large fraud cases. He noted that relevant data was often nine to twelve months old.

- **Carlsbad Homicide**: Investigators used LPR data to place the victim’s vehicle on the roadway after the time of her death. This helped detectives confirm the suspect had used the victim’s own vehicle to transport her body away from her home.

Escondido PD and LPR (Con’t)

**Commercial Burglar**: Detective issued probable cause pickup request and suspect was located and arrested within one hour using information from LPR system.

**Fatal Hit and Run Arrest**: Suspect towed and stored vehicle to avoid apprehension. LPR system led to new information one year after victim died. Vehicle located, evidence recovered that identified suspect.
Additional Escondido PD Info

- LPR use governed by department computer and information systems policy.
- 25,000 to 30,000 plate reads per day.
- Averaging 6–8 stolen vehicle recoveries monthly. 75% in-custody rate.
- Escondido LPR alerts are broadcast on North Command resulting in arrests by SD Sheriff.
Why 2-1-1?

• Easy to remember, 3-digit dialing code, especially in disasters
• 24/7 service
• Confidential and stigma-free
• Highly-trained Specialists (70% bi-lingual)
• Offered in more than 205 languages
• Free from all wireless services
• AIRS accredited and Full Quality Assurance
• Pre-screenings for specific services
• Tailored programs take the client beyond just a referral
• Searchable online database with 6,000+ resources
• Disaster Preparedness and Response
2-1-1’s Service Delivery Highlights

- Average of 1,000 calls per day
- Information and Referral
- CalFresh pre-screenings & application completion
- Medi-Cal pre-screenings & application completion
- Healthy Families application completion and WIC referrals
- LIHP application completion
- Utility Assistance & application completion
- Services for children under 6 and their caretakers
- Health Navigation
- Susan G. Komen Breast Health Project
- Military and Veterans services
- Housing & Shelter services:
  - Sheltering – Voucher program – EFSP
  - Housing – Board & Care – DV Links & Crisis

2-1-1’s Disaster Response Function

- Non-emergency disaster information
- Provide Real-Time Information to Public Safety (OES)
  - Needs Assessment
  - Rumor Control
  - Status of Crisis
- 24/7 information dissemination to the public
- Ability to expand by more than 7,000% and handle a large volume of public inquiries
- More than 200 Disaster Response Team Volunteers
is there a word missing here? ....and handle?
Tedi Jackson, 7/16/2012
2-1-1’s Disaster Response Function

Infographic: Call Volume and Staffing During the '07 Fires

- 1,235 staff & volunteers
- 35 staff
- Two Weeks Before the Fires
- Two weeks during the fires

2-1-1’s Disaster Response Function

- Emergency Department Information
- 211 Reports Feedback to Emergency Dept
- Alert System or Public Alerts
- Caller Analysis and Feedback
- Calls to 2-1-1
2-1-1’s Disaster Response Resume

- 2007 Firestorm
- 2008 Flooding
- 2009 H1N1
- 2010 Easter Earthquake
- 2010 Northern California (support provided)
- 2011 Region-wide Power Outage
- 2011 San Onofre Nuclear Plant Alert
- Dozens of smaller fires and emergencies

Beyond Disasters...

How 2-1-1’s Public Safety Role Assists Cities

- Offsets non-emergency calls to 9-1-1
- Saves staff time answering phones
- Manageable consistent messaging
- Resource for constituents
Future Projects and Partnerships

San Diego County’s One Click / One Call Project

• The FTA announced on Monday, July 2, that San Diego County was awarded the competitive Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative (VTCLI-2) grant.

• This is a multi-million, multi-year grant that was submitted collaboratively with SANDAG, Full Access and Coordinated Transportation (FACT) and 2-1-1 San Diego.
One Click / One Call Project

PROJECT GOAL:

This project will improve the accessibility of information for San Diego County’s transportation services through:

1. An enhanced directory of resources
2. A one-click transportation website
3. 24/7 live telephone service
4. A free mobile transportation application for smart phones
5. At least 20 interactive transportation kiosks at military facilities, workforce one-stops and other veterans sites

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION:

Project partners, which include other transportation, military and veterans stakeholders, and human service providers, will join the Council on Access and Mobility (CAM) forums to increase veteran representation.

These partners will serve as the Key Stakeholder Group and advise the project’s Steering Committee on critical action steps.

The project’s Steering Committee will meet monthly and includes:

- SANDAG
- 2-1-1 San Diego
- FACT
- San Diego Veterans Coalition
no period here
Tedi Jackson, 7/16/2012
One Click / One Call Project

PARTNERSHIPS:

Partnership of three agencies:
• The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)
  The region’s Metropolitan Planning Organization responsible for public transit implementation and assisting in social service transportation coordination
• 2-1-1 San Diego (lead agency for implementation)
  The County’s information and referral provider for all health and human services
• FACT
  San Diego’s CTSA responsible for assisting seniors, persons with disabilities, and social service recipients identify resources to meet their transportation needs

Integrated Health Community

• Development of a social services tool to be used by military health systems to identify non-healthcare resources appropriate for patients.
• Identify high-needs military health system (TRICARE) beneficiaries and create actionable intervention strategies that improve health, reduce costs and improve patient experiences.
• Expand the tool to all healthcare organizations within San Diego County to address the non-healthcare needs of patients for continued health after discharge.
Re-Entry Project with 2-1-1, the District Attorney and San Diego Sheriff Corrections

- Incorporate expanded re-entry resources in the 2-1-1 Database
- Develop a re-entry focus page on the 2-1-1 website
- Reciprocal 2-1-1 services and cultural competency trainings
- Conduct community outreach and establish partnerships with re-entry service providers and key stakeholders

North County Service Expansions

Strategies targeting North County nonprofit organizations include:

- Outreach and education
- Focused improvements on quality and quantity of agency profiles
- Redeveloped website to enhance usability and functionality
North County Service Expansions: Program Outcomes

- Increased accuracy and quantity of North County agency profiles and service listings in the database
- Increased number of North County agencies with login accounts to independently update agency and service information
- Increase call volume from North County zip codes by 10%

Community Information Exchange

The CIE will develop a community-wide information exchange infrastructure that works in harmony with other information exchanges based on national standards for interoperability, information exchange and secure messaging.

The Vision
Strengthen healthcare and social services delivery to the underserved of San Diego by establishing a collaborative electronic exchange of social service and clinical information.
Community Information Exchange

CIE Steering Committee
2-1-1 San Diego
Beacon Community Program
Father Joe's Villages
Regional Task Force on the Homeless
Rural/Metro of San Diego (City Paramedic Provider)
San Diego Fire-Rescue Department
Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties
Regional Continuum of Care Council
San Diego State University Institute of Public Health

2-1-1 San Diego has been a collaborative effort since its inception, the result of support from multiple public and private organizations. We are extremely grateful for their commitment.
Presented by:

Bill York
Chief Operating Officer
Rise in Synthetic Marijuana Use by Teens an Issue Locally and Nationally

A form of synthetic marijuana, commonly referred to as “Spice” or “K2”, began appearing across the U.S. in 2008, and its popularity grew over the past few years mainly because it could be sold legally and not be detected in urinalysis drug tests. However, its legality has been temporarily suspended after the DEA took emergency action in late 2011 by giving five synthetic cannabinoids Schedule 1 status under the Controlled Substances Act (through August 2012), making it illegal to sell, buy, or possess it. While a urinalysis test was recently developed to detect Spice, the test remains cost prohibitive for many jurisdictions to include in their regular drug testing panel. Unfortunately, Spice remains available, particularly through black market Internet sites, indicating a need for continued education and prevention¹. As awareness about synthetic marijuana broadened across the U.S., the Monitoring the Future survey added questions in 2011 that asked high school seniors about their experience using these drugs, with nearly 1 in 9 (11%) reporting they had used them in the past year (not shown)².

Locally, SANDAG added new questions about Spice to their 2011 Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) interview conducted in Juvenile Hall with recently arrested youth. As Table 1 shows, these interviews revealed that one in every two juvenile arrestees had ever tried Spice, with 41 percent having done so in the past year and 18 percent having used it as recently as three days prior to their arrest. The youth who had ever tried Spice did so for the first time on average at age 15.17 (SD=1.30, range 11 to 18 years) (not shown).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ever tried Spice</th>
<th>52%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Used Spice in last year</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used Spice in last 3 days</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1
MORE THAN HALF OF LOCAL JUVENILE ARRESTEES EVER TRIED SPICE

NOTE: Cases with missing information not included
SOURCE: Substance Abuse Monitoring Survey, 2011

Through the SAM project, SANDAG will continue to monitor trends in arrestees’ use of Spice to determine if recent federal controls on its availability and developing drug screens have an effect on its use among this population. In June 2012, SANDAG will release its SAM bulletin summarizing 2011 data from interviews with juvenile arrestees. To access the SAM bulletin and other SANDAG publications, go to www.sandag.org/cj. For more information about Spice, visit the National Institute of Drug Abuse Web site at www.drugabuse.gov.

ECSTASY USE ON THE RISE AND IMPACTING A NEW GROUP OF USERS

Once thought of as purely a “club” drug of the 1990s, ecstasy1 is seeing a resurgence, especially among African-Americans and Hispanics who are a new customer base in the U.S. for the drug.2 Across the nation there have been several reports indicating an increase in both the number of youth who have tried ecstasy and in the availability of the drug. In the 2010 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study, there was a notable 67 percent increase in teens reporting ecstasy use from 2008 to 2010.3 The U.S. Department of Justice attributes this increase to Asian drug trafficking organizations, which have expanded the production of ecstasy and its availability in the United States since 2005. Utilizing street gangs for distribution, the amount of ecstasy on the market has increased in the Southwest, Southeast and Great Lake Regions.2

Recent data available from the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) are in alignment with these national trends in ecstasy use. As part of the Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) program4, results from local interviews with recently arrested juveniles show an increase in those reporting having ever tried ecstasy from 2005 (19%) to 2010 (40%) (Figure 1). Following marijuana use (89%), ecstasy was the second most frequently used drug among juvenile arrestees in 2010 compared to cocaine (30%), inhalants (24%), and meth (22%). Interestingly, unlike marijuana, which is not viewed has harmful by most juvenile arrestees (25%), almost two-thirds (63%) of those who had ever used ecstasy still acknowledged it could be bad for them and over 70 percent said that it was easy to get (not shown).

Figure 1

ECSTASY SECOND MOST FREQUENTLY USED DRUG AMONG SAN DIEGO JUVENILE ARRESTEES

Given the current distribution pattern of ecstasy and San Diego County’s Southwest location, these data draw attention to a possible growing problem. To learn more about drug use among local juvenile arrestees and access past and current Substance Abuse Monitoring reports, please visit www.sandag.org/cj. Comprehensive data from interviews conducted in 2010 will be available beginning in July 2011.

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1 Ecstasy, or MDMA, is a psychoactive drug that creates feelings of euphoria, increased energy, and produces distortions in perceptions and tactile experiences.
4 The SAM program is partially supported by funding from the County of San Diego and California Border Alliance Group (CBAG).