

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES
MOTOR VEHICLE CRIME PREVENTION AUTHORITY
SENATE BILL 224 ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
4000 Jackson Avenue
Building 1
Lone Star Room
Austin, Texas 78731

9:00 a.m.
Wednesday,
April 16, 2025

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Sharon Jones, Chair
Robert Carson
Laird Doran
F. Todd Foreman
Josh Martin
Nathan Nguyen
Ricardo Porras
Stewart Prentice
Jaime Rodriguez
Tchad Taormina
JR Willis

STAFF:

William Diggs, MVCPA Director
David Richards, MVCPA General Counsel

ON THE RECORD REPORTING
(512) 450-0342

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CLOSED SESSION

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| 12. | The Committee may enter into closed session
under one or more of the provisions of the Texas
Open Meetings Act, Government Code, Chapter 551,
including but not limited to:
Section 551.071
Section 551.076
Section 551.089 | none |
| 13. | Action Items from Closed Session | -- |
| 14. | Public Comment | none |
| 15. | Adjournment | 80 |

P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. JONES: Good morning. My name is Sharon Jones, and I'm pleased to open the meeting of the Senate Bill 224 Advisory Committee of the Board of the Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority.

It is 9:10 a.m., and I am now calling the advisory committee meeting for April 16, 2025, to order. I want to note for the record that the public notice of this meeting, containing all items on the agenda, was filed with the Office of Secretary of State on April 1, 2025.

Before we begin today's meeting, please place all cell phones and other communication devices in a silent mode, and please, as a courtesy to others, do not carry on side conversations or other activities in the meeting room.

If you wish to address the committee or speak on an agenda item during today's meeting, please complete a speaker's sheet at the registration table. Please identify the specific item you're interested in commenting on, your name and address, and whether you are representing anyone or representing yourself. If your comment does not pertain to a specific agenda item, we will take your comment during the general public comment period of the meeting.

1 In accordance with the department's
2 administrative rule, comments to the advisory committee
3 will be limited to three minutes. To assist each speaker,
4 a staff member will keep time. When addressing the
5 advisory committee, please state your name and affiliation
6 for the record.

7 There are a few things that will aid in making
8 the meeting run smoother and assist the MVCPA in securing
9 an accurate record: please identify yourself before
10 speaking, speak clearly and slowly, do not speak over
11 others, and please ask the chair for permission to speak
12 and be sure to get recognized before speaking.

13 Before we begin today, I'd like to remind all
14 presenters and those in attendance of the rules of conduct
15 at our advisory committee meetings. The advisory
16 committee chair has the authority to supervise the conduct
17 of meetings. This includes the authority to determine
18 when a speaker is being disruptive of the meeting or is
19 otherwise violating the timing and presentation rules I've
20 just discussed.

21 I now move on to agenda item number 1, which is
22 roll call. I would now like to have a roll call of the
23 advisory committee members. Please respond verbally when
24 I call your name, and please indicate if you are present.

25 Member Carson?

1 (No response.)

2 MS. JONES: Member Doran?

3 (No response.)

4 MR. FOREMAN: Mr. Carson texted me and said he
5 was going to be on virtually.

6 MS. JONES: Okay. Thank you.

7 Member Foreman?

8 MR. FOREMAN: Present.

9 MS. JONES: Member Porras?

10 MR. PORRAS: Present.

11 MS. JONES: Member Prentice?

12 MR. PRENTICE: Present.

13 MS. JONES: Member Rodriguez?

14 (No response.)

15 MS. JONES: Member Martin?

16 MR. MARTIN: Present.

17 MS. JONES: Member Taormina?

18 (No response.)

19 MS. JONES: And Member Nguyen?

20 (No response.)

21 MS. JONES: Let the record reflect that I,
22 Sharon Jones, am present, and we have a quorum.

23 We will now stand for the pledges.

24 (The Pledges of Allegiance - U.S. and Texas
25 were recited.)

1 MS. JONES: We will now move on to agenda item
2 number 3 after agenda item number 2, which are comments
3 from the chair and the MVCPA director.

4 Mr. Diggs.

5 MR. DIGGS: Good morning. William Diggs, MVCPA
6 director, for the record.

7 First, I want to thank everybody for being here
8 to listen to these conversations this morning that we're
9 going to speak about as it relates to our continued
10 efforts for SB 224, catalytic converter theft and
11 prevention support. There's a number of things going on
12 around the state. We're hearing a lot of good work that a
13 lot of the law enforcement agencies are doing as it
14 relates to seizures of catalytic converters.

15 I look forward to hearing from some of our law
16 enforcement partners that are here this morning as they
17 talk about what they are actually doing with some of the
18 funding that has been provided by the Texas Legislature
19 for us to continue these efforts. Obviously, I'm thankful
20 for the industry that is here today as it relates to the
21 precious metals in these catalytic converters and how we
22 can all work together to continue to ensure that, number
23 one, that we're not impeding the flow of legitimate
24 catalytic converters into the recycling process, but yet
25 we work with our partners to ensure that those criminals

1 that would try and insert those catalytic converters that
2 are stolen from the citizens of Texas do not enter into
3 that stream.

4 So with that, Major Jones, I'll turn it back
5 over to you.

6 MS. JONES: I'm pleased to see many of our
7 MVCPA Board members are present, as well a large amount of
8 task force commanders, so it's great to see that. Our
9 Senate Bill 224 Committee meeting members, we do have a
10 couple of vacancies. I'm pretty confident by July, our
11 next meeting, that those vacancies will be filled
12 appropriately.

13 And today, I know we're having some technical
14 difficulties, but our new member Nguyen, Nathaniel Nguyen
15 is from the Houston Police Department. He's the commander
16 of the task force for Houston Police Department.

17 We're still having technical difficulties, but
18 we will move forward as we now move to agenda item number
19 3.

20 Members, I would now like to take several
21 minutes and ask each of you to introduce yourself to the
22 other committee members as I call your name. And I know
23 that we do this normal as a routine, but we have a lot of
24 new faces here. So let us give as much as possible so the
25 new members who are visiting for the first time that they

1 know who you are.

2 So the first person, I'm going to assume that
3 Member Carson is still not -- okay.

4 And let's see, Member Foreman, we'll go to you
5 next.

6 MR. FOREMAN: Thank you, Chair.

7 My name is Todd Foreman. I am the senior
8 direct of law enforcement outreach for REMA, the Recycled
9 Materials Association. I was in law enforcement for 29
10 years; I worked for all the ranks and I retired after
11 7-1/2 years as chief of police in Virginia.

12 I then went to work for the Recycled Materials
13 Association, which was ISRI at the time, the Institute of
14 Scrap Recycling Industries -- all they did was rebranded
15 the name. And I went to work for them and I've been with
16 them the past three years working between the members of
17 the recycling industry and law enforcement, trying to help
18 law enforcement stop the thefts and help the members of
19 the recycling industry not buy stolen materials. So I'm
20 working with both trying to help the issues with all types
21 of metals, catalytic converters, copper, aluminum, all the
22 different types of metals.

23 MS. JONES: Perfect. Thank you, sir.

24 Member Porras?

25 MR. PORRAS: Good morning, everybody. My name

1 is Ricardo Porras. I'm the task force commander for the
2 El Paso Police Department's Auto Theft Task Force, 29
3 years, coming on 30 in September, good Lord willing.

4 Very glad to be a member of this advisory
5 committee, and again, very glad to be here. Thank you.

6 MS. JONES: Yes, sir. Thank you.

7 Member Prentice?

8 MR. PRENTICE: Good morning, Chair. My name is
9 Stewart Prentice. I'm a partner at Techemet, LP.

10 We are one of the largest recyclers of
11 catalytic converters in the world, and definitely in
12 Texas. And we buy literally from everywhere, worldwide,
13 statewide, nationwide, and part of our ongoing sort of
14 concerns are how to stop the theft and how to recognize
15 people with stolen converters. And this committee is
16 certainly helping lead the way for that.

17 One of the problems that we're now facing in
18 the industry is certainly recognizing people, bad players
19 in the industry that aren't legitimate, and maybe that's a
20 topic for future. But other than that, I'm very happy to
21 be part of the committee.

22 MS. JONES: Thank you, sir.

23 Member Martin.

24 MR. MARTIN: Good morning. Josh Martin. I'm a
25 compliance enforcement specialist with the Texas

1 Department of Public Safety Regulatory Services Division.

2 I've been with the department for 16 years.

3 I'm specifically in the Compliance Enforcement Service,
4 and we remain vigilant in our efforts to help combat metal
5 theft by being out there at these metal recycling
6 entities, conducting inspections and investigations, and
7 working with our law enforcement partners.

8 It's a pleasure to be here and thank you.

9 MS. JONES: Thank you, sir.

10 So we now move on to agenda item number 4. And
11 we're going to switch it up just a little bit, and in this
12 section we're going to have a presentation. And the
13 presentation is definitely about catalytic converters, and
14 those that are stolen.

15 There is no requirement for one reporting
16 entity, there's no requirement for law enforcement to
17 actually report catalytic converter thefts, therefore, the
18 number of actual catalytic thefts, we can't capture those.

19 We don't know what they are. There's no way to truly
20 capture them.

21 Also, you have based on the cost of a catalytic
22 converter, the cost versus the actual insurance report and
23 your premium -- there's a lot of factors that goes into
24 that. The deductible, oftentimes when a converter is
25 stolen, it is not reported to law enforcement, it is

1 reported to insurance companies. And there are times when
2 they're weighing the deductible versus the cost to
3 replace, it's not reported at all.

4 And so we have no requirement to report, no one
5 specific agency or entity to report to. And then in
6 addition to that, when it comes to a seizure on a traffic
7 stop, what happens at the end of this investigation when
8 we do not know who owned the catalytic converters that
9 were seized, and also, what do you do with the seizure at
10 the end?

11 You can get a court order and a court order is
12 going to be technically for destruction. And so with
13 destruction, it could very well possibly mean -- based on
14 the agency who seized the converters, destruction could be
15 taken in the parking lot and literally destroy it, you
16 take proof that it's destroyed and you dump it.

17 And so that is what we're going to focus on
18 today and upcoming meetings. When we first were given our
19 224 funds, we focused a lot in our committees on here's
20 what we're doing. We wanted to make sure that our
21 committee members and the public and the legislature
22 understood that we are taking this matter seriously,
23 here's how we are addressing the matter.

24 But now we need to move forward and have
25 different and deeper conversations regarding we're doing

1 what we're supposed to do, we're seizing, but the
2 reporting mechanism is not necessarily there.

3 Zach, you're going to have to figure out the
4 cues and when to switch for me.

5 So the first, second picture -- okay, that's
6 not the one I sent to you.

7 Give us about five minutes, please. It is now
8 9:28. We're in a quick recess, 9:28.

9 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

10 MS. JONES: Okay. It is now 9:29 and we are
11 back from our brief recess. And also, please note for the
12 record that Member Carson and Member Nguyen are on, and at
13 some point I will get them to introduce themselves.

14 Zach, you're going to have to switch for me
15 because this is not letting me switch. Just switch to the
16 next one. Okay, perfect. Thank you.

17 What you're looking at is a seizure of 306
18 catalytic converters, where they had one firearm and
19 \$2,000 were seized. Of course, with the firearm, then we
20 have the enhancement. But the point of the next four
21 slides is we have these seizures and then at the end of
22 the seizures, what is the outcome?

23 The second seizure on the next slide, that is
24 an inspection by one of Texas DPS's inspectors. And when
25 she went to this establishment and she's questioning them,

1 it's: Hey, we purchased from junk cars, we just purchased
2 junk cars, the catalytic converters came with the junk
3 cars. There's no way to prove where any of those came
4 from based on it's just simply we purchased the cars.

5 Does it make sense, do we believe it, is it
6 legitimate? We can't prove the origin of where those
7 catalytic converters came from.

8 For this slide, Giddings Police Department,
9 fourteen. That person was charged with unauthorized
10 possession of a catalytic converter. But once again, you
11 can't associate a person to each one of those, and so
12 therefore, prosecution oftentimes is reluctant because no
13 victim -- basically the concept is, okay, no crime, no
14 victim.

15 The next one is Nacogdoches County Sheriff's
16 Office, 800, possession of marijuana, failure to identify,
17 and the subjects claimed they purchased from a salvage
18 yard. Some of these that are up here, and one in
19 particular, have been linked to overseas where the federal
20 government was brought in. So we've linked funds from
21 catalytic sales, the illegal sales of these, we have
22 linked these to overseas profits based on different
23 investigative types.

24 And the last one that I have up there, it's a
25 continuous cycle/recycle. Literally those two are from

1 two different agencies so literally every day it's
2 consistent and it's a recycle. And it's actually a cycle
3 of law enforcement seizures, we have no way of identifying
4 who the catalytic converters belong to.

5 And then in addition to that, what happens at
6 the end of the investigation or either it's we're not
7 going to accept a charge from a prosecutor -- which we
8 understand why -- or we ran the course. The person is not
9 talking, they're not cooperating with law enforcement,
10 they're not giving us any information. And then at some
11 point in time you have to get a destruction order. And as
12 I mentioned earlier, depending on the agency's policy,
13 they're going to be destroyed.

14 So just for future thought -- we don't have a
15 lot of our members here today, but going forward, these
16 are some of our challenges that we need to discuss as a
17 board. And let's figure out what we can do to assist the
18 industry as well as law enforcement and the citizens who
19 these are being stolen from.

20 I know, Member Prentice, you said earlier today
21 that your team, you guys were having discussions about
22 basically the same issue.

23 MR. PRENTICE: That is correct.

24 MS. JONES: Okay. Are you able to share at
25 least some of it?

1 MR. PRENTICE: Certainly. We recently were
2 approached by a seller that had purchased from St. Louis,
3 I believe it was, or at least in Missouri. Some U.S.
4 Marshals confiscated catalytic converters and it was an
5 open bid, anyone can bid on that.

6 And lo and behold, he found out he didn't have
7 an MRE. So he legally bought the material, now he can't
8 sell them because we just said we can't deal with you.
9 And it's a conundrum, because he did nothing wrong.

10 And now, you know, if law enforcement were to
11 come onto our premises and said, who did you buy those
12 from? We say, well, it's this guy. And they go, well,
13 show us his. And so I don't know.

14 Certainly in Houston and Harris County, where
15 we're from, certainly have confiscated converters that I
16 don't know how they get rid of them. I think they auction
17 them off as well. We're not part of that process or we've
18 just never looked into it.

19 And it would be interesting to get all the
20 confiscated material together, or the people in the state
21 that are dealing in confiscated material. And maybe get
22 the bonafide recyclers on a database so that you get them
23 to bid on those confiscated units.

24 But other than that, the guy that we were
25 talking to is pulling his hair out. He doesn't know what

1 to do with these, because he spent a lot of money on them.

2 MS. JONES: Absolutely. I'm pretty sure he's
3 frustrated. When you mentioned perhaps having a bidding
4 process, also, my suggestion -- and I'm sure that I'm
5 speaking for law enforcement agencies in this room and
6 throughout Texas -- is let's discuss the option of asset
7 forfeiture sharing from the sale. And those can be
8 completed with MOUs, that way everyone is on the same page
9 with expectations.

10 But basically when you sell twelve or 800 or
11 3,000 that were purchased and have that as also an
12 incentive for asset forfeiture sharing.

13 MR. PRENTICE: Certainly we would agree to
14 that.

15 MS. JONES: Okay, perfect. Thank you.

16 Mr. Foreman, do you have anything to add?

17 MR. FOREMAN: I would think there are many of
18 the agencies, hopefully, that are using these in ways to
19 catch those who are illegally purchasing them so as you
20 get them into evidence. You can take them and try to sell
21 them to somebody that shouldn't be purchasing them also.
22 So I would say for small amounts -- that would be a way
23 you could do for small amounts.

24 But I agree with Mr. Prentice and you that we
25 need to have an asset forfeiture. There needs to be a way

1 to sell them back, because if you're just destroying your
2 evidence, as we do most of our evidence in law
3 enforcement, it's destroyed and there's nothing gained
4 from it. But these are valuable items that the funds can
5 go back to the police departments and be used for funding
6 other things.

7 MS. JONES: And absolutely when it comes to
8 having different operations, like we're not necessarily
9 going to discuss what can be done here, but there is so
10 many different ways that once the court has said, Agency,
11 do as you wish, either purchase or use for investigative
12 purposes, there are many ways to make this crime into a
13 conspiracy.

14 Mr. Diggs, do you have anything to add?

15 MR. DIGGS: Thank you, Major Jones. William
16 Diggs, MVCPA director, for the record. I'm used to saying
17 that because I do this routinely now.

18 But anyway, currently the MVCPA grantees and
19 task forces, they report catalytic converter crimes
20 through our quarterly reporting process in our grant
21 management tracking system. Now, obviously, this is just
22 a small part of what goes on around the State of Texas as
23 it relates to catalytic converter theft. And myself and
24 Major Jones, we've had a number of conversations as it
25 relates to this.

1 I believe there needs to be standardized
2 reporting for catalytic converter crimes in the State of
3 Texas. These reports need to be reported by law
4 enforcement and industry, metal recyclers, used auto parts
5 recyclers, into the system so that we can accurately
6 account for the total number of criminal activities that
7 are actually taking place, because today there is a
8 shortfall there. It's a challenge for us to accurately
9 account for the total number of catalytic converter crimes
10 in the State of Texas today as statutorily required. I
11 think that we are in a much better place today than we
12 were four years ago prior to the legislation; I think
13 we've come a long ways.

14 But I would also echo some of the things that
15 Todd was talking about as far as asset forfeiture goes.
16 These catalytic converters, these are valuable. If they
17 are seized by law enforcement, I look at this as no
18 different than when we seize vehicles out there on the
19 side of the road, and this is just a part of it. We need
20 to have an avenue.

21 Stewart brings up an excellent point. I'd hate
22 to be that entrepreneur that actually went out there and
23 bought all those and then realized that, oh, I can't even
24 do anything with them now because no one is going to buy
25 them from me. Right?

1 So we need to enhance the current legislation
2 to address some of those shortcomings. And I feel like
3 that's what this committee was all about when we formed it
4 a little over a year ago. It was to continue the
5 conversations, to talk about the things that we need to do
6 to actually even put more teeth into what we've got today
7 and to more accurately account for the problem that still
8 exists around the State of Texas as it relates to
9 catalytic converter theft so that we can better protect
10 the citizens of the State of Texas.

11 So with that, I'll take a pause.

12 MR. FOREMAN: Chair, may I speak?

13 MS. JONES: Yes, sir, Member.

14 MR. FOREMAN: I agree with Mr. Diggs, and
15 actually, this is a national problem with recognizing the
16 number of catalytic converters that are stolen. It's
17 because in NIBRS they recognize them as auto parts. So a
18 lot of places, they are having to have their analysts pull
19 through and pull out that information.

20 So it's a problem nationally. There are tools
21 out there -- and I won't name them because I'm part of
22 them -- but there are tools out there where there are some
23 areas where you can put the thefts into them. But again,
24 it takes an extra step for law enforcement to do that, to
25 put the information into that system.

1 And this goes with a lot of different materials
2 that are stolen. It's hard to track them because the way
3 they're listed in the NIBRS system, so I'm not sure how to
4 correct that. You can correct it in the state, but
5 nationally is where the issue is.

6 MS. JONES: And also with NICB, the National --

7 MR. FOREMAN: National Insurance Crime Bureau.
8 Yeah, they track what's sold through -- or what's
9 reported to them through the insurance corporations, so
10 they have a different number.

11 You know, I have numbers from State Farm and
12 different ones that I've looked at, so you can't really
13 track it because everybody has got different numbers.
14 Carfax actually has some numbers also because they're able
15 to track it. So Carfax is one that tracks it through a
16 different method because they're able to track the repairs
17 to the vehicles. So when somebody has a new catalytic
18 converter put on their vehicle, they're able to track
19 that.

20 Now, they're not able to track which ones are
21 stolen or which ones are from coming from repairs, so
22 their numbers are a little different also. So there's
23 different numbers from all different areas.

24 MS. JONES: Absolutely. It doesn't matter
25 which entity you ask to give a total, it will never match,

1 simply because of the way it does not have to be reported
2 or the way it is reported. Oftentimes, you said how it's
3 reported, it's also reported as theft.

4 And so if it's reported as theft, based on how
5 it's entered into the system, you still can't relate it
6 back to a catalytic converter. So the numbers will never
7 be accurately displayed or be able to be presented to a
8 body when asked because of the way our reporting system is
9 now.

10 And, Member Martin, I cannot wait to hear what
11 you have to say on this topic and how it relates to the
12 job that you have to do.

13 MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Major. I'll just agree
14 with you, yes, I think unified reporting is definitely
15 needed and would be very helpful. As far as trying to
16 gauge what we're doing, are we making a difference, I know
17 different things drive theft in the market, but I think
18 the laws that we've put into place -- you know, being able
19 to look at data and see hard numbers that we're making a
20 difference, I think that's needed.

21 Going back to your slides, I agree that it's a
22 big challenge for our program investigators out in the
23 field when they come across these catalytic converters at
24 a MO recycling yard, trying to determine when those were
25 purchased, how they were purchased, if they were purchased

1 legally, and it's a challenge for our guys. You know,
2 depending on what the metal recycling entity says
3 verbally, they can just say, oh, those have been laying
4 around for years, we bought those from another muffler
5 shop years ago. And they might not have any
6 documentation, nothing is marked, but our hands are tied.

7 And maybe they're telling the truth. Maybe
8 they're not. But there's nothing we can do as far as
9 enforcing that or looking into that further, because
10 there's no identifying markers on these.

11 Yes, it's a challenge. I think it's something
12 that discussing here in these meetings is needed to come
13 up with solutions.

14 MS. JONES: And you made a great point, we are
15 seeing a difference. We're seeing a difference with the
16 possession.

17 There are a lot of businesses and companies
18 that I spoke with right before we started the committee,
19 and some of them specifically stated, we're no longer
20 accepting catalytic converters. We don't want to have to
21 answer. We don't want to have to figure out is this
22 person legitimate, are they telling the truth.

23 So the bill itself, Senate Bill 224, is
24 definitely working the way it's supposed to. We just need
25 to add some enhancements and a little bit more teeth to

1 make it even greater than it already is.

2 Member Porras, what are your thoughts?

3 MR. PORRAS: Well, first of all, may I speak,
4 Madam Chair?

5 MS. JONES: Absolutely, sir.

6 MR. PORRAS: Thank you very much. Rick Porras,
7 for the record.

8 I agree with everything that's been said. I
9 think enforcement is being done, it's just a matter of
10 capturing the numbers accurately. I'm sure our department
11 does it a lot different than Houston and Austin, and
12 everything. So being consistent throughout the State of
13 Texas, I think, is the number one requirement.

14 What would definitely help is the legislature
15 standardizing, you know, what we need to report. But
16 until that happens, I don't know what the process is and
17 how long it would take. Maybe, again, through discussions
18 we could come up with something that all of us that are
19 grant recipients could abide by and start from there and
20 build upon it.

21 That's all I have to say, ma'am.

22 MS. JONES: Thank you, sir.

23 Your comments lead me to this: we've been
24 meeting quarterly and we're having discussions but we need
25 to have meetings and conversations in between. We need a

1 working committee. So we're going to start a working
2 committee.

3 And on that working committee, of course, is
4 going to be our industry subject matter experts. We'll
5 have law enforcement, of course, and then some of the task
6 force commanders on that committee so that we can best
7 have solutions and possibilities. And you're absolutely
8 correct, unless it is mandated to be reported, catalytic
9 converter numbers will never be accurately reported, nor
10 will they be reported.

11 So definitely we'll have a sub working
12 committee to address this issue and figure out what we can
13 do for next legislative session, if that's the direction
14 that the industry and those who drafted Senate Bill 224 --
15 if that's the direction they would like to go in.

16 But I'm quite positive that having been on the
17 committee and those who are not on the committee, they
18 understand what needs to be done and how it needs to be
19 done to make it an even better and more enhanced bill.
20 Then we can start off leading the nation with this,
21 because it's a nationwide problem, as Member Foreman
22 pointed out. And we can start that conversation here in
23 Texas and lead the way.

24 Any other comments on this section? Yes, sir,
25 Member Foreman.

1 MR. FOREMAN: Todd Foreman.

2 I just had one question for you because I saw
3 the slides where they were having all these seized --
4 because the possession law doesn't specifically say you
5 have to have a victim, when I read what the law says --
6 are they having problems prosecuting these?

7 MS. JONES: So we have commanders who are here.
8 If you want to address that piece, prosecution, let me
9 know. Anyone want to address that? I'm giving you the
10 floor.

11 Yes, sir. Thank you. Have a seat and grab a
12 mic and introduce yourself.

13 MR. McBROOM: Patrick McBroom, the commander of
14 the Panhandle Auto Burglary and Theft Unit.

15 On those 360 we seized, the DA is going to file
16 300 case on the guy.

17 MS. JONES: Perfect. Anyone else?

18 I do know that they are in some areas where it
19 is difficult to have prosecution. And then there's some,
20 of course, who are like, okay, who do these belong to, how
21 can we prove who they belong to? So that is a discussion
22 that is definitely worth having and also on a working
23 committee having a prosecutor, district attorney, someone
24 who can actually give us some sound advice of how to
25 proceed, and then also, advice for other district

1 attorneys who may be facing similar challenges.

2 MR. PORRAS: Madam Chair, may I be acknowledged
3 again? May I speak?

4 MS. JONES: Yes, sir, Member Porras.

5 MR. PORRAS: Rick Porras, for the record.

6 I would suggest maybe creating a survey,
7 whether it's like a SurveyMonkey, and send it out to
8 everybody that's part of this committee and part of, I
9 guess, the actual grant itself, and see specifically how
10 each jurisdiction handles their catalytic converters and
11 how their district attorneys prosecute them. I think
12 we'll get a lot of insight and a lot of good information.

13 MS. JONES: That's an excellent idea, and based
14 on how it's done in different jurisdictions can also help
15 with us and how we proceed forward with our suggestions if
16 we do decide to move forward with some type of legislative
17 intervention. Excellent idea.

18 Mr. Diggs, can you make that happen, please,
19 SurveyMonkey?

20 MR. DIGGS: Yes, ma'am, we can.

21 MS. JONES: Perfect. Thank you.

22 Any other comments or suggestions?

23 MR. CARSON: Major Jones, can you hear me?

24 MS. JONES: Oh, yes, sir. Yes, I can.

25 MR. CARSON: This is Sergeant Carson.

1 One of the things on the SurveyMonkey I'd like
2 to see added is what do they do with them once you have a
3 property room full of them. How long are they holding on
4 to them? And I know a lot of it depends on the court
5 case.

6 But like Houston, here shortly we're going to
7 be -- the Houston Forensic Science Center is going to be
8 taking over our property room, so we're not going to have
9 control of that. Right now, I believe, we have a contract
10 with an MRE. So what happens from there, once somebody
11 else takes over that process?

12 And maybe there needs to be an exemption in the
13 legislative process saying if you're, you know, a police
14 organization or a law enforcement organization that you
15 can sell these without an MRE license. Obviously, the
16 city doesn't have one. So I don't know the next step in
17 that, and I'd like to kind of hear Todd's thoughts from
18 REMA and also Mr. Prentice from Techemet.

19 MS. JONES: Great thoughts, Member Carson,
20 excellent thoughts.

21 Mr. Prentice.

22 MR. PRENTICE: Stewart Prentice, for the
23 record.

24 We had discussed this a little earlier and one
25 of the -- I guess police departments need to be exempted

1 from the MRE status. I mean, if they're not reliable, who
2 is? I mean, they have proper possession of them. So I
3 think it's just a case of they should be able to put them
4 out themselves on the usual competitive bid process, and
5 as long as qualified buyers are bidding on it, to me that
6 would be the simplest way to move forward on that.

7 MS. JONES: Thank you, sir.

8 Member Foreman.

9 MR. FOREMAN: I agree with Mr. Prentice. I
10 think you just have to have the bidding vetted first, but
11 I think that's a great way to do it.

12 MS. JONES: We can be very detailed in whatever
13 legislative process that we have to make sure that it
14 definitely works for all involved.

15 MR. DIGGS: William Diggs, MVCPA director.

16 So I was going to say to Member Carson, you
17 know, if everybody recalls, in statute there's a way to
18 destroy certain parts of large quantities of illegal
19 drugs, right, and contraband. We're not storing, you
20 know, 10,000 pounds of marijuana. We're taking samples
21 and then we're getting court orders to go ahead and
22 destroy those large quantities to avoid the issue that
23 Member Carson is talking about which is, you know, we've
24 only got so much space.

25 We saw some large seizures of catalytic

1 converters. I couldn't imagine that if we're going to
2 wait two years, four years for a case to be adjudicated
3 that we're going to hold onto and store all 800 catalytic
4 converters. Maybe we store a certain amount of them and
5 then get a court order to go ahead and dispose of the
6 others through the processes that Todd and Stewart are
7 talking about.

8 And obviously, those proceeds either need to go
9 back to victims themselves, right, through a civil process
10 and even possibly through the criminal case, or they need
11 to come to law enforcement to further our efforts, you
12 know, around Texas.

13 So I agree with everyone, there's a number of
14 things that we can detail out on how to specify to
15 alleviate some of these issues because, obviously, we
16 can't store thousands of catalytic converters in law
17 enforcement property rooms all over Texas. We're going to
18 run out of space. So we need to address it, so this is
19 excellent conversation.

20 MS. JONES: Absolutely. And some of those
21 storage facilities are not large enough. And then you
22 can't take -- I can't hold it in this county but my
23 next-door county has space -- you can't move evidence from
24 county to county without a court order.

25 So I do like the representative sample idea. I

1 have plucked and cut many a marijuana grow, and you're
2 absolutely correct. We have the representative sample,
3 that is what is used for the court, and the remainder of
4 the marijuana grow is destroyed. It's burned, it's
5 destroyed. So that's an excellent idea.

6 MS. JONES: Yes, sir, Member Foreman.

7 MR. FOREMAN: Chair, may I speak?

8 MS. JONES: Yes, sir.

9 MR. FOREMAN: That's a great idea, Mr. Diggs,
10 about having something go to the victims. I think maybe
11 you could have a portion of it go to a fund specifically
12 for victims of catalytic converter theft who could apply
13 for it, just like where we have a violent crimes victims
14 fund where victims of violent crimes can apply for funding
15 to help them pay for medical or whatever resource. We can
16 probably have something like that where they'd apply for
17 those funds, and also have a percentage go to that and
18 have a percentage go back to the police department.

19 MS. JONES: There are definitely other states
20 that have the victims involved and that's also a great way
21 to have it reported by the victims, and that way we're
22 having true accurate numbers. If you want to get a
23 portion back of that \$2,500 that you're getting ready to
24 spend, then have it reported.

25 Great ideas and discussion.

1 MR. PORRAS: Madam Chair?

2 MS. JONES: Yes, sir.

3 MR. PORRAS: Rick Porras, for the record.

4 I believe we already have something in the
5 State of Texas, a victims assistance program. We would
6 just have to kind of tap into and figure out how, you
7 know, we could allocate these funds once this gets going
8 to benefit victims of catalytic converter crimes.

9 MS. JONES: Absolutely, sir. I read that
10 statute and we definitely will have to get amendments to
11 that, definitely. Great idea. Lots of great ideas.

12 Any other questions, comments or concerns?

13 (No response.)

14 MS. JONES: This will be continued for sure,
15 especially once we know we get our other members involved.

16 Definitely we'll have some more in-depth conversations
17 and solutions to the problems that are occurring.

18 And, Member Carson, can you introduce yourself,
19 please, sir?

20 MR. CARSON: Yes, ma'am.

21 Robert Carson. I'm the supervisor over the
22 Metal Theft Unit with the Houston Police Department.

23 We actually fall under the property and
24 financial crimes aspect, but we're a grantee under kind of
25 a wing of the Houston Police auto theft grant. That's how

1 we are able to do these. I have six detectives assigned
2 to me. Not all are dedicated to catalytic converter, but
3 I have three detectives that are dedicated to conducting
4 regulatory inspections at scrap yards.

5 We've seen over the last few months that some
6 larger companies have bought some of the smaller MREs, so
7 we are in the mid 80s as far as the number of scrap yards
8 within the City of Houston, and my group inspects them
9 four times a year, each scrap yard. So we are constantly
10 going through them, and with the help of the grant, we're
11 also able to do surprise inspections.

12 Pretty much all of them know that we work
13 Monday through Friday, we're day-shift type deal. So when
14 you start showing up on Saturdays, you start finding
15 things that you didn't find Monday through Friday because
16 they know our schedule better than we do. So this has
17 been very helpful.

18 And that's pretty much what we do. We do work
19 closely with our auto theft, and with that, I will say
20 that Commander Nguyen, who has taken over and is now a
21 member of this committee, was our commander up until last
22 Saturday. So he's familiar with this part of it and he's
23 been very supportive of every aspect of our
24 investigations, so I think he's a great addition to this
25 committee.

1 Thank you.

2 MS. JONES: You're welcome, sir.

3 Great passageway to Commander Nguyen. Please
4 introduce yourself.

5 MR. NGUYEN: Good morning, everybody. Thank
6 you for the introduction. I'm glad I'm able to be part of
7 this great committee.

8 I know in the past I was over -- right before
9 property and financial crimes, I was at Northwest Patrol,
10 where we had several incidents with the catalytic
11 converter theft where the suspect was actually killed. So
12 this issue, even though it died out somewhat -- but I
13 believe with the economic conditions right now, I believe
14 the price of the metals, especially the precious metals,
15 will go up again. And that will be one catalyst to drive
16 up the thefts again.

17 So it's always good to have a proactive
18 approach to all these problems, and I'm glad to be part of
19 this great committee. Thank you.

20 MS. JONES: You're welcome, sir. We are
21 pleased to have you and your expertise, and it's even
22 better that you have a background in what we're doing, so
23 you're going to hit the ground running, especially on the
24 subcommittee.

25 (General laughter.)

1 MR. NGUYEN: Sounds good. I look forward to
2 it, Major Jones.

3 MS. JONES: Yes, sir, absolutely. Thank you,
4 sir.

5 It's now 10:04. We are going to recess until
6 about 10:15.

7 (Whereupon, at 10:04 a.m., a brief recess was
8 taken.)

9 MS. JONES: It is now 10:19 a.m., and we will
10 now resume the Senate Bill 224 Committee meeting.

11 We are on agenda item number 5, partner agency
12 coordination and also partner agency meeting frequency.
13 This will be presented by Major Diggs.

14 MR. DIGGS: William Diggs, MVCPA director, for
15 the record.

16 So I did want to report that the partner
17 agencies, Texas DPS, TDLR, Texas DMV, and MVCPA, we
18 continue to meet monthly. We have good conversations
19 about best practices, intelligence sharing, some trends
20 that some of these guys are seeing around the state. We
21 talk about any unmet needs, are there things that they
22 still need that are not currently included in some of our
23 interagency contracts with them. We also discuss, you
24 know, any shortcomings as far as reimbursement goes
25 because there's reimbursable process for even the partner

1 agencies to be reimbursed.

2 So we're having good conversations. We've got
3 faces with names, we know each other now. We've been able
4 to navigate some criminal activity around the state
5 because now we know who to pick the phone up and call.

6 We can connect TDLR with any of our task forces
7 around the state. Obviously they've got good working
8 relationships with Texas DPS in their local areas, and
9 even working with Texas DMV, there's some tools and
10 resources that Texas DMV bring to bear that we're able to
11 utilize, again, all in support of catalytic converter
12 theft and prevention, which is what SB 224 was all about.

13 So with that, Madam Chair, I'm going to yield
14 back over to you, and I guess if you have anything to add,
15 or we can go to agenda item number 6.

16 MS. JONES: Let's go.

17 MR. DIGGS: All right. So talking about just
18 partner agency updates, we've got a couple of the
19 different agencies that are here today. I first want to
20 call up Texas Department of Public Safety, Captain Mark
21 Berry is here today.

22 So, Captain Berry.

23 MR. BERRY: I'm going to yield a few minutes to
24 Josh Martin first.

25 MR. DIGGS: Okay.

1 MR. MARTIN: Josh Martin, Compliance
2 Enforcement Service, Regulatory Services Division, DPS.
3 Thank you.

4 Compliance Enforcement Service, we are now
5 fully staffed, as you know, with the grant-funded
6 positions that are dedicated to the Texas Metals Program.

7 Those are stationed at five program investigators in the
8 North Texas Region. We've got five program investigators
9 in the Southeast Texas Region, two investigators in the
10 Central Texas Region, one in West Texas and one in South
11 Texas. In addition to those, we also have two case
12 support specialists in the Texas Metals Program.

13 So our program investigators have been
14 successful in conducting these routine onsite inspections.

15 They're on pace for two inspections per year per
16 business. So there are roughly 630 active registered
17 metal recycling entities throughout the state, and we
18 anticipate completing well over 1,200 onsite inspections
19 by the end of the year.

20 So since January 1, we've got 81 inspections
21 that were conducted that resulted in administrative
22 violations being assessed. And then out of those, it was
23 roughly 15 percent that involved catalytic converter
24 violations.

25 I think it's important to note that our goal,

1 it's not to punish scrap yards by assessing administrative
2 fines and penalties, but rather work with them, ensuring
3 that they're complying with and understanding the rules
4 and the laws and educating where we can. So that being
5 said, there are bad actors. And when criminal activity is
6 discovered through our inspections, we work with our local
7 law enforcement partners and our commissioned personnel in
8 DPS and assist with those investigations.

9 It's important that our investigators continue
10 to build on and establish those working relationships with
11 our law enforcement partners. An example of that recently
12 is up in Dallas, some of our investigators conducted some
13 training with the newly formed Metal Theft Unit with
14 Dallas PD, along with some individuals from the Fort Worth
15 PD. So I think that was a success. They've been working
16 with them, some issues with stolen copper up there.

17 And then as well, the same thing down in
18 Houston, we continue to have a good relationship with the
19 Houston Police Department. I can't say enough good things
20 about Sergeant Carson and his team, and we continue to
21 work with them as well.

22 Lastly, our folks continue to stay apprised of
23 the market trends, the industry trends. They routinely
24 attend industry stakeholder meetings. Down there in
25 Houston, I know they have a monthly meeting with people in

1 the business. So I think that's essential to make sure
2 that we're doing our part and having those conversations
3 to effectively combat metal theft.

4 With that being said, I will hand it over to
5 Captain Berry and he can kind of talk about things on the
6 commission side.

7 MR. BERRY: Captain Mark Berry, Texas
8 Department of Public Safety, for the record.

9 I work for the Texas Department of Public
10 Safety, obviously, and I work in the Regulatory Services
11 Division, whose responsibility is to regulate metals
12 recycling entities. And I'm one of very few commissioned
13 people in the division. I have one special agent and then
14 Texas Highway Patrol has graciously loaned me three
15 troopers recently; they started January 6. So those four
16 commissioned people, plus myself, are the only
17 commissioned people we have.

18 And what we do is pretty much what Member
19 Foreman was talking about earlier. We go out and try to
20 find suspicious activity at MREs and try to see if they're
21 willing to engage in illegal activity. Over the last two
22 days Josh and I and a couple other of those four
23 commissioned people, we were down in the Houston area and
24 surrounding counties and we did seven different MREs.

25 And the good news is six out of the seven said,

1 no, we don't want any part of that. So that's a good
2 thing. It shows that 224 is making an impact and people
3 are like, no, you don't have the paperwork and we don't
4 want to deal with it if you don't have the paperwork, or a
5 few of them are just flat out, no, we don't do that
6 anymore.

7 Which I think is good, too, because it drives
8 the business to the larger legitimate entities, right,
9 like the people that are willing to do the paperwork and
10 file the stuff. And I think that's a good thing. Also,
11 on occasion, not that the smaller MREs should be abolished
12 because they definitely shouldn't, but it makes sure that
13 all the business flows through a legitimate stream.

14 So in that one particular instance where they
15 did purchase, I sent in my undercover officer with six
16 catalytic converters and the guy initially was like:
17 Okay, sure do you have any paperwork? And my undercover
18 officer said, No, I don't have any. He was like, Well,
19 okay, that's no problem, I just need your identification
20 and your driver's license.

21 She's like, yeah, I got it. And then she went
22 to her truck and dug through the paperwork and said, Oh, I
23 forgot it, I left it at home. And he's like: Ah, don't
24 worry about it. And then she was like: Well, do you want
25 me to give you my name? Nah, I don't need that.

1 So there was three different opportunities
2 where they had to say, you know, this looks a little
3 shady. They don't have the paperwork, she doesn't have an
4 ID, she didn't give her name, there was three different
5 opportunities. So we called the Harris County DA and the
6 DA was willing to accept the charges, Texas Penal Code
7 3121, which is unauthorized possession of catalytic
8 converter, and so that person went to jail yesterday.

9 So we're continuing to do those operations. We
10 find those tips and leads from people like yourselves who
11 are willing to offer up information to us, as well as the
12 program investigators that are assigned to the Compliance
13 Enforcement Section. If they go out and do an inspection
14 and see something a little shady or something a little
15 weird, then they give that information to us and that's
16 how we generate those leads.

17 I don't want people to feel like we're just
18 randomly targeting MREs, because we're not. We are
19 looking specifically at MREs that are generated from tips
20 from other law enforcement agencies, citizens of the
21 community who feel like there might be something
22 articulable that looks suspicious, and our program
23 investigators. We don't just randomly target people, we
24 do that through leads generated from those three sources.

25 So if you are an MRE, you shouldn't have to

1 worry about, you know, us coming in to try to arrest you
2 or your employees; it's generated only from information.
3 Also, one other source that we get it from is our case
4 support specialists, one of which is here this morning.

5 And she is one of the two case support
6 specialists that's assigned to just catalytic converters,
7 paid for by the grant from MVCPA. This is Luana.

8 Go ahead.

9 MS. WILLIAMS: Hello. I'm Luana Williams, case
10 support specialist with Texas Department of Public Safety.
11 I would like to speak with you about case support and what
12 we actually do to help out.

13 So we look at the activity within the Texas
14 Online Metals Database, regulating the MREs with their
15 reporting, how often they're reporting. So with TOM, the
16 support that we supply for law enforcement is the ability
17 to be able to search the database. You can find out
18 information on the MREs, their certification, their
19 transactions, the owners, and so forth.

20 So the features that they search for is through
21 the MRE, a metal search, seller search, vehicle license
22 plate, as well as the transaction searches. And in there
23 we have the case file which is everything on an MRE, so
24 you can see who the owner is, statutory agent, their
25 inspection history, as well as any administrative actions

1 that have been taken on them.

2 With case support, it is a team of myself and
3 Bradley Heselmeyer. We provide the research so you can
4 request what you want about the MREs, and we can give you
5 the transactions, the license plate information, criminal
6 history, as well as social media research; we supply that.

7 You can create an account, a law enforcement
8 account in TOM, as well as we have the link provided for
9 you to request any of the information that I've stated.
10 If there's any extra information that you would like, you
11 can send that to us as well and we create a research
12 packet for you. And that's to help with your cases and
13 investigations, pretty much just giving you everything
14 right on the spot so you don't have to do that.

15 And lastly, we've supplied the email address,
16 the DPS Metals email address. That is our main contact,
17 but you can contact me or Bradley by phone as well, and
18 we'll be happy to assist you.

19 MR. BERRY: I'd like to reiterate that that
20 email is available to any law enforcement in the state.
21 We're a statewide agency, so anybody in any region needs
22 some information from Texas Online Metals, they're
23 available to help from anywhere.

24 That's all I've got, unless you guys have any
25 questions.

1 MR. DIGGS: Captain Berry, I don't have any.

2 MR. BERRY: Okay. Thank you very much.

3 MR. DIGGS: Madam Chair, I'd now like to call
4 up Charlie Escobedo, with the Texas Department of Motor
5 Vehicles Enforcement Division.

6 MR. ESCOBEDO: Good morning, Board. My name is
7 Charlie Escobedo. I am the section director for
8 compliance services within the Enforcement Division of the
9 Texas Department of Motor Vehicles, and I'm here just to
10 provide you a brief overview and some remarks regarding
11 our operations with Senate Bill 224.

12 So the department is engaged in an area that
13 was unmonitored prior to Senate Bill 224, which now
14 expands the oversight of our motor vehicle dealer
15 licensees to their repair operations. So to this effect,
16 we are continuing our data-gathering initiatives with the
17 licensed GDN and with franchised dealerships. As part of
18 this effort, we are currently inquiring with dealers as to
19 whether they're engaged in the business of repairing or
20 replacing catalytic converters, and this inquiry is
21 structured as a basic simple yes-or-no question.

22 So to date, we have engaged with 754 dealers
23 across the state, of which 57 have confirmed their
24 involvement with catalytic converters so far. So this
25 represents approximately 7.5 percent of the dealers

1 visited.

2 Our efforts to gather more information are
3 still ongoing and we will soon commence additional site
4 visits to review documents associated with Occupations
5 Code 2305.

6 So with that event, I will open it up to any
7 questions y'all may have.

8 MS. JONES: I'm impressed at the rate you guys
9 are moving, especially since 224 came into effect. You
10 literally came from zero and sped forward and you're in a
11 great place. And we're looking forward to see how you can
12 expand and support more.

13 MR. ESCOBEDO: Yes, Madam Chair. Thank you.

14 MS. JONES: You're welcome.

15 MR. DIGGS: Thank you, Charlie.

16 So I'd now like to call up -- I did not see
17 him, Ford Strawn with TDLR, and if Ford is not here, is
18 anyone else here representing TDLR?

19 (No response.)

20 MR. DIGGS: So, Madam Chair, that will complete
21 agenda item number 6.

22 MS. JONES: Okay.

23 MR. DIGGS: So I'd now like to call up the
24 Seguin Police Department to provide an operational update,
25 Detective Ethan Clendenen.

1 MR. CLENDENEN: Good morning, committee.

2 I presented a PowerPoint, so I just wanted to
3 give you some insight on some issues that we've been
4 having with awardment of the grant funds and then kind of
5 go into some issues that we've been having in the city in
6 implementing those grant funds into catalytic converter
7 theft and auto theft crimes.

8 I'm Detective Clendenen, Air Force veteran, ten
9 years law enforcement. I've been employed at the Seguin
10 Police Department five years and a detective for two years
11 of that. I'm in charge of motor vehicle crimes, burglary
12 of motor vehicles, catalytic converter thefts, and
13 anything auto-related, whether it be UUMV -- anything
14 that's got wheels, it comes to me.

15 A little back story on Seguin. Currently
16 Seguin is the 21st fastest growing city in the nation and
17 11th in the state. We're having some growing pains and
18 we're trying to work through it. Currently we have 71
19 sworn officers.

20 Our population sits at 36,000, but during the
21 daytime hours it swells to 45,000. Our projected growth
22 in 2030 is projected to grow to 52,000. With that being
23 said, our median income per household is around \$61,000;
24 we're not a rich community.

25 We do have a lot of crime that happens in our

1 community and a lot of that crime is motor vehicle crime.

2 With that being said, we are opening up our city to a lot
3 of manufacturing jobs and factories are coming in,
4 including Caterpillar, Vitesco. All these companies, they
5 all have equipment and they all have massive parking lots
6 that usually get hit during the day, due to Seguin being
7 located on I-10.

8 We found that a majority of our crime comes
9 from outside of Seguin. They'll come into Seguin from San
10 Antonio, Houston, Austin, using our major thoroughfares
11 such as I-10, 130, US90 and 46 that goes up towards New
12 Braunfels.

13 These are just a little bit more demographics.

14 Our median property value right now is \$227,000, which is
15 about half of what the nationwide median property value
16 is. So like I said, we're not a very rich community, but
17 what we do have, we do like to take care of.

18 Getting into the grant issues that we've had.
19 We were awarded the 224 catalytic converter grant through
20 the MVCPA. Our LPR deployment issues -- our plan for the
21 funds that we were awarded was to use these funds to
22 deploy LPR systems throughout the city. Currently we do
23 use Vigilant LPR systems on our canine units, and do have
24 one stationary camera, but we just implemented having Axon
25 into our patrol vehicles and Axon was supposed to

1 coordinate with Flock, but apparently they cut ties.

2 So our issues that we've been having. We spent
3 several months attempting to dial down specific locations
4 that would work for us and work within our budget. Once
5 we did this, we were notified that everything was good to
6 go with Flock. We had dialed down that we wanted to use
7 Flock as our agency.

8 We were notified after signing the contract
9 that all cameras that we had chosen, even though they were
10 on city poles, would require TxDOT approval. We're still
11 awaiting TxDOT approval. It's been about -- I think we're
12 going on ten months now that we haven't had TxDOT
13 approval.

14 The other issue is that Guadalupe County
15 Sheriff's Department, we work hand-in-hand with their task
16 force. And they are awaiting 20 cameras from Flock that
17 they still haven't had TxDOT approval, and it's almost
18 been about a year and a half.

19 Currently, due to the lack of approval, we
20 haven't actually used any of the funds from MVCPA that
21 we've been awarded. We are awaiting final approval from
22 TxDOT so that we can get those cameras deployed to try to
23 combat some of these catalytic converter thefts, these
24 auto theft related crimes, and also comes with LPR cameras
25 we're able to solve major crimes as well.

1 Our temporary resolutions that we kind of got
2 into. December of last year, we had a big meeting with
3 Flock and made them aware of the issues that we've been
4 having and that we were not in compliance with the MVCPA
5 grant. The grant required us to have functional cameras
6 up and running and providing data to other agencies and
7 also share data with MVCPA, TxDOT. But without approval
8 from TxDOT, we were unable to get these cameras up.

9 So with that being said, we've been using our
10 preexisting Vigilant cameras to assist in motor vehicle
11 crimes and they have been detrimental in solving these
12 issues. We have not had any catalytic converter thefts
13 this year.

14 Our usual suspects for our catalytic converter
15 thefts are on the highway and it's our hotels. We have
16 not taken any catalytic converter theft reports anywhere
17 other than our hotels. I did have some lady come to me
18 one day and said she got in her car and she thought she
19 had a race car now.

20 So as of March, we had that meeting with Flock,
21 we went over our major concerns with the deployment of
22 camera systems. They've agreed to give us three free
23 cameras that we could place on their poles that would not
24 need TxDOT approval. Those cameras are supposed to be up
25 next week and operational -- fingers crossed.

1 These cameras will be placed in hotspot areas
2 for vehicle crimes. One of the camera locations will be
3 near the hotels where we get hit with our catalytic
4 converter crimes. And like I said, these cameras will not
5 require TxDOT approval.

6 When we got our MVCPA grant, we were also in
7 the process of developing -- we noticed crime trends were
8 on the rise and we needed to do something about it,
9 especially with the rapid expansion of the city. And we
10 wanted to be prepared for that rapid expansion, so we went
11 ahead and developed a C.A.S.E. unit, which is a Criminal
12 Apprehension Street Crimes Enforcement Unit. These guys
13 are handpicked by the supervisors to go out and do
14 directed patrols in areas that we have high crime.

15 I've used them multiple times when I've had
16 stolen vehicles, I've had issues of vehicles being broken
17 into. I can direct them to go to a certain area and they
18 take care of it. We work hand-in-hand with them, the
19 Criminal Investigations Unit works hand-in-hand with
20 C.A.S.E. Their mission is to positively impact the
21 quality of life for all Seguin residents through proactive
22 policing.

23 Moving forward, our goals is to continue to
24 partner with MVCPA. We want to establish and maintain a
25 working partnership with them and all area agencies to

1 prevent and curb vehicle-related crimes, both inside the
2 City of Seguin, as well as assist outside agencies with
3 solving automobile-related crimes. We want to showcase
4 the advancements and achievements of new technologies and
5 tactics related to automobile-related crimes, and we would
6 eventually like to establish or join a full-time unit or
7 task force related to these crimes.

8 We're still in the building phase of getting
9 everything started, and our chief kind of wants to see
10 where this goes. I keep telling him, hey, we need to get
11 up with these LPRs, we need to move forward. The future
12 is coming, technology is where it's at.

13 So he's kind of getting onboard with us, so
14 that's kind of why he had us apply for this grant. Like I
15 said, we're not a very rich community so a lot of our
16 extra stuff for the police department is grant-funded.

17 So with that being said, that's kind of where
18 we're at. I'll open it up for questions. Thank you very
19 much.

20 MR. DIGGS: Thank you, sir.

21 So now I'd like to call up Detective Jon
22 Kundak, with Prosper Police Department, for an operational
23 update.

24 MR. KUNDAK: Good morning, everyone. I'm happy
25 to be here. My name is Jon Kundak. I'm with the Prosper

1 Police Department.

2 So I kind of want to give you an overview as
3 far as what Prosper has been doing with our partners.
4 Specifically this is more about our partners and not
5 really about the Town of Prosper and how we're trying to
6 develop into a bonafide auto task force and catalytic
7 converter task force.

8 So let me go ahead and start this, but the
9 title is Northern Collin/Denton County Auto Theft,
10 Catalytic Converter Task Force. So quite frankly,
11 Frisco -- who is here, Lacey is in back -- we have
12 partnershiped moving forward in 2026, as well as with
13 several other agencies.

14 Background. For those who don't know Prosper,
15 Prosper is between the City of Denton and the City of
16 McKinney in Collin County and Denton County, so we are in
17 North Central Texas. We are growing; we roughly have
18 about 350,000 vehicles traverse through the Town of
19 Prosper every day. However, that number is extremely low;
20 I would anticipate about a half million, if not more.

21 We were awarded a catalytic converter grant for
22 2024 and 2025, as well as an auto theft task force grant
23 for 2025. We currently have 70 sworn officers and are
24 growing annually. We anticipate being at 150 to 200
25 officers pretty much in the very near future as we are the

1 second-fastest growing city in the United States -- or
2 town is what we're called. Okay?

3 Background. How we started this is originally
4 our task force component was really driven on technology.

5 So what we did is we ended up installing several Flock
6 cameras throughout the city to basically combat motor
7 vehicle activity in the area. We also have Title 19
8 cross-designation, and what that is is some of our
9 detectives and personnel are cross-designated as Customs
10 special agents, which allows them to take cases federally
11 if they want.

12 Also, what it allows us to do is to work with
13 Customs and Border Protection, Homeland Security
14 investigations, as well as other law enforcement agencies,
15 on border-related crimes. So if we have a vehicle which
16 is going outbound or going into Mexico or wherever, or
17 maybe is loaded up in a container in New York or New
18 Jersey, then our officers and our detectives have that
19 information, as they are cross-designated.

20 We also rely on the stratified policing model,
21 and what that stratified policing model is is everyone is
22 involved. So a detective is involved, a patrol officer is
23 involved, and they're there combating auto theft,
24 catalytic converter theft, whatever vehicle crimes that we
25 come across. So that's the way we do it.

1 It's a holistic approach to policing, so it's
2 more of a community policing pretty much on steroids,
3 because everyone from top to bottom is involved. So
4 another thing is that our partnerships, including Frisco
5 and Salina and McKinney, have the same mindset to where
6 everyone is involved. They may not call it stratified
7 policing, but everyone is involved.

8 This is Prosper, so if you can see the blue dot
9 up there, it's up there. 380 is a road that kind of goes
10 from east to west. Also what happens is we do have the
11 Dallas North Tollway which goes all the way to Dallas and
12 it's expanding in Prosper. I'll show a video of this in a
13 minute.

14 Our population, which I'll go over that, is
15 growing exponentially, as well as with the area between
16 Collin and Denton counties. Also, the growth is going
17 north of Denton and Collin counties into Grayson and to
18 Cooke County, so we're growing. Just for instance, I
19 moved there in 2008 and we probably had 3,000 people, now
20 we're well over 50,000 people. Our population is going to
21 exceed probably about 80- to 120,000 people, depending on
22 who you speak to.

23 So with that said, Salina north of us will be
24 the largest city in Collin County, which Plano is huge, as
25 we all know, Frisco is huge, McKinney is huge. Salina is

1 going to eclipse those numbers.

2 So here's a video. Can someone push play,
3 please, for me?

4 That is our U-Haul which we do have a lot of
5 thefts out of there. That is Dallas North Tollway heading
6 north which is under construction. That is going to show
7 three of our dealerships. We are expanding.

8 One thing you're going to notice -- you're
9 going to pass over our Dodge dealership, which had a large
10 catalytic converter theft a couple of years ago; we're
11 still working that investigation. And we just learned
12 about a week ago that Salina and other agencies had
13 extensive catalytic converter thefts over the last year,
14 year and a half, two years, so those are still under
15 investigation.

16 We are going to be expanding other dealerships
17 probably in the very near future. That is what's called
18 the Gates of Prosper. And the Gates of Prosper is a
19 development which was brought to Prosper through Jerry
20 Jones, who is the owner of the Dallas Cowboys. So that is
21 Preston Road which goes to Dallas, of course, so it's
22 expanding.

23 We have a lot of people who would love to come
24 to Prosper from Dallas, from other states and commit
25 crimes. So whether it's burglary of a motor vehicle,

1 whether it's stolen vehicles, that's what we see. And
2 it's just not a Prosper issue, it's a Frisco issue, it's a
3 Salina issue.

4 As my chief always says: If you build it, they
5 will come. They're there. Okay? Unfortunately, a lot of
6 the people who we arrest are not from Prosper. Most of
7 them, you know, are from all over and they come to
8 Prosper.

9 We have solidified partnerships with several
10 agencies in Collin and Denton counties, as well as Cooke
11 County. So what we do is we have, like I said, several
12 ongoing investigations related to auto theft, catalytic
13 converter theft, burglary of a motor vehicle and vehicle
14 fraud. Our vehicle fraud numbers increased this past
15 year, just a lot of people doing certain things -- because
16 one thing about Prosper is a lot of people who live in
17 Prosper own businesses, auto businesses in North Central
18 Texas, so they like to do certain things that are not
19 legal. So I'll just put it to you that way.

20 We have recovered several stolen vehicles
21 lately tied to gang and narcotics activity. One of the
22 cases, we ended up identifying a stolen vehicle out of
23 Frisco that Frisco had in their seizure lot for about two
24 weeks. So based on one of the investigations we worked,
25 it was able to address another stolen vehicle.

1 We also recovered a stolen vehicle -- this is
2 within the last month. We also recovered another stolen
3 vehicle which was stolen out of Austin and that was given
4 back to the insurance company, State Farm.

5 We do have ongoing arrests and prosecutions.
6 We also host meetings with task force members, auto
7 dealerships and our retail partners. So we do host those
8 meetings because it's a great intelligence collaboration
9 tool on what's happening.

10 One thing that we did find out is that our auto
11 dealerships, if somebody would come in and they would
12 attempt to buy a vehicle with a false ID, they would just
13 let them go out the door and go to the next dealership and
14 to the next dealership without notifying us. That has
15 stopped.

16 Also what happened is if, let's say -- and kind
17 of back to y'all's point earlier about the under-reporting
18 of catalytic converter theft, we had a dealership who
19 didn't report it. And how we came across that, we ended
20 up having one of our personnel who we hired who used to be
21 a manager at that dealership who goes: Hey, here's what
22 happened, they never reported that. So we went and are
23 currently doing an investigation on that right now to see
24 where it's going to lead us.

25 We have Flock mobile trailers. And one thing

1 about the Flock mobile trailers is they're fantastic,
2 okay. Because if we have an area which is prone to
3 burglary of motor vehicle or maybe at the auto
4 dealerships, then we will take those trailers, and we have
5 four through MVCPA. And we will put them at the high, you
6 know, traffic or high related -- vehicle relating to
7 those.

8 We're also in the process of developing our
9 website and instituting a social and news media campaign.

10 And kind of getting back to this, this is not about
11 Prosper; it's about Frisco, it's about Salina, it's about
12 Collin County, Denton County, it's about MVCPA, it's about
13 the State of Texas. Whatever we can do to help alleviate
14 motor vehicle crime and auto theft, that's what we want to
15 do.

16 So before this plays, the call was actually a
17 man with a weapon who was going to cause damage in
18 Prosper, Texas, and shoot up some residences. So we used
19 our DFR program to basically find this individual after
20 getting information from McKinney Police Department. So
21 if you can hit play, please.

22 To the right is Frisco and to the left is
23 Prosper and that is US Highway 380 which is about to go
24 freeway mode. So if you see the vehicle in front of the
25 Panda Express, it's going to be that silver vehicle I

1 believe in the middle. And that's our drone, that's when
2 we found the vehicle, and to the left is going to be the
3 axe.

4 It wasn't a weapon; it was actually an axe. So
5 that's when we responded with our units and shut down I-
6 380, and he was taken into custody.

7 And then also what we're going to show in a
8 minute is actually a demo of actually doing a traffic
9 stop, so you'll see that in a second.

10 But that's when he's getting out of the vehicle
11 with our officers who are approaching. So if it wasn't
12 for DFR, we wouldn't have found this vehicle, so I'll just
13 put it to you that way -- our drone first responder.

14 And there it's heading back home. So one thing
15 about these DFRs is they fly about 55 miles an hour and
16 they can be on scene faster than our officers can, so --
17 unless you have an officer who's there. And that is an
18 exercise we did just to test the drone and that's about
19 400 feet up in the air.

20 And these things can pick up license plates.
21 And eventually within a short time, the drones from Flock
22 are actually going to have license plate reader technology
23 embedded in them.

24 So path forward. And this is one thing that I
25 really love about my job is work collaboratively and

1 jointly on investigations and seek prosecution for
2 vehicle-related crimes. Partnerships are extremely
3 important; if you don't have partnerships, you don't
4 really have anything.

5 So one thing that we try to do is your badge
6 doesn't matter. I don't mean that in the sense of it not
7 mattering, but you are one. Okay? If we can do
8 everything that we can as one, then that lessens all the
9 criminal activity around you, and that's how we try to
10 operate.

11 We're looking to expand Flock and other
12 technologies to investigate auto and catalytic converter
13 theft and other vehicle-related crimes, integrate
14 technology, intelligence sharing. We are hosting
15 intelligence meetings with a lot of the partners in North
16 Central Texas. 68-A VIN inspections to try to find out,
17 okay, are these vehicles stolen, are they not, you know,
18 and that's one thing that we're getting into.

19 And the DFR program active with ground radar in
20 the near future. MOUs link Frisco's DFR program for 2026
21 with Prosper, coverage will be 110 square miles. That's
22 110 square miles of ground radar which will go into
23 Salina, it will go into some parts of Plano. It will
24 cover Prosper, it will cover some parts of McKinney, it
25 will cover a whole bunch of jurisdictions.

1 And forward, this is one thing we want from
2 MVCPA is we'd love to have the hosted training for patrol.

3 Okay? Because, like I said, it's not just the
4 investigators or the detectives, it's the patrol officers.

5 If they're out there on the street and they have
6 additional tools to either thwart catalytic converter
7 theft or investigate or be first on scene, that's what we
8 want to do, basically spread the wealth.

9 Training, intelligence sharing meetings -- and
10 this is one thing that I'm excited about, we actually have
11 true partnerships with Frisco Police Department, Collin
12 County Sheriff's Office and Salina Police Department for
13 2026, working collaboratively, working daily with one
14 another, that is growing. So we're actually going to have
15 more because when we have our meetings, everyone shows up,
16 NICB, everybody does. The Colony, all the different
17 agencies, Plano shows up.

18 So it's actually pretty good. Eventually,
19 we're going to work with the other task forces regionally
20 and expand those meetings, so it's actually pretty cool.

21 That is the coverage area for the drone first
22 responder program for Frisco and Prosper, hopefully for
23 2026, which will cover a lot of ground. So another thing
24 is the population, we're looking at well over 2 million
25 people between Collin and Denton counties. And by the

1 way, I think that catalytic converter theft is going to
2 increase in the near future based on some of the costs
3 associated with it and probably some of the tariffs. So
4 that's just my opinion, but I think that's what you're
5 going to see.

6 And that is it.

7 MS. JONES: Thank you, sir. When you mentioned
8 Title 19 and the cross-designation, so you have your
9 officers embedded in HSI, or is it vice versa?

10 MR. KUNDAK: So what they are is they've
11 allowed us to remain in North Central Texas and not have
12 to go to an office and work collaboratively. But what it
13 does is it allows access to systems, to federal systems.
14 I mean, I retired out of HSI, so I know the systems which
15 helps with investigations and other sharing whatever.

16 What it does is it allows our personnel to have
17 access to things that maybe we would not have accessed if
18 we were not Title 19 cross-designated, because it does
19 require a security clearance and so forth.

20 One thing is we also partner with our Fusion
21 Center. Our crime analyst has access to that and also
22 they are a actual partner with us and they support us 100
23 percent. So Title 19 cross-designation, it does help,
24 because it allows you to work cross-border crimes.

25 And as we all know, a lot of these vehicles, a

1 lot of these catalyst converters, you know, end up
2 overseas, and that's just been the nature of it for years.
3 And one thing about being a crook or a criminal, whatever
4 you want to call it, that if you can't sell the stuff
5 here, you're going to go overseas. It just happens.

6 MS. JONES: Absolutely. If you can't sell it
7 in Texas, you just go across state lines.

8 MR. KUNDAK: Absolutely.

9 MS. JONES: So I want to applaud you for
10 wanting your officers to be trained. I will say that I've
11 seen the crossover before when I first started
12 investigations. It was heavy on investigators and those
13 who were actually working, the detectives working those
14 crimes, to now it does involve those on the traffic stops
15 definitely.

16 With Texas DPS, before recruits are released
17 from recruit school, we have a basic training -- we call
18 it Beyond the License Plate. And then once they get out
19 into the workplace and they're deployed, then those
20 troopers are encouraged to attend any training, doesn't
21 matter if it's by NICB, MVCPA, or Texas DPS, but
22 definitely to get the training that's needed.

23 Because they're the ones, 99 percent of the
24 time it comes to them first, they're the ones stopping it.
25 And they need to recognize what they're stopping, what

1 they're looking for. And oftentimes I tell people when
2 you start thinking there's something about this car and
3 you look and oftentimes you're doing interdiction and
4 you're looking for drugs, and you don't find what you're
5 looking for, you just start remembering your training,
6 like oh, wait, there might be something else. Let me
7 figure out something else.

8 And then also letting them realize the
9 possession laws. A lot of officers are not familiar with
10 the charges of what to file and to make sure that, okay,
11 don't just put it down as a theft or add it as an auto
12 part. So we definitely need to have that specific
13 training for all law enforcement, and not just law
14 enforcement but the support staff, the analysts, the
15 administrator, the person who's reading the reports to
16 remember, hey, I went to this training and they said don't
17 forget there's a specific law or crime that pertains to
18 catalytic converters.

19 So it's an excellent idea to make sure that you
20 want your patrol officers to be trained.

21 MR. KUNDAK: I mean, I look at it, right, so
22 our investigators, our detectives are not out there 24/7.
23 Okay? And we give them the tools and the methods, then
24 you're going to uncover a lot of different things.

25 With the vehicle which was stolen, Officer

1 Weikel was with me in Laredo during the 68-A training,
2 whatever. He took that training and he's probably one of
3 our best people out there on the street. And he got
4 back -- within a week or two was when he recovered that
5 stolen vehicle at night.

6 So our goal with Frisco and Salina and the
7 other departments is to actually train as many as we can
8 regarding auto theft, including our traffic personnel, to
9 where it's a holistic approach, you know, and identify
10 vehicles, identify issues, to where we can take action.
11 So that's one thing is I think that this patrol officer
12 training on stolen vehicles, MVCPA is beneficial. It's
13 going to be beneficial -- I really do.

14 MS. JONES: And I also want to point out that
15 oftentimes, yes, it comes back stolen. But equally as
16 important when that return comes back, no stolen, no
17 record, just don't let it by.

18 MR. KUNDAK: And we see a lot of fictitious
19 plates, a lot of fraud now, which quite frankly -- because
20 now we're looking. Okay? So once you start looking, then
21 your eyes go, oh, my gosh, it's here. So you know, and
22 that training, it reinforces officers looking and doing
23 the good work that we try to do every day.

24 MR. DIGGS: William Diggs, MVCPA director, for
25 the record.

1 Jon, thank you for being here today, excellent
2 update.

3 I'm going to age myself a little bit. 38 years
4 ago, almost, when I went to Collin County as a trooper,
5 Prosper was, for the most part, farmland, so what a
6 change. I see the flyover there, I'm thinking that used
7 to be a pasture right there for most of it.

8 I did want to say we do have our MVCPA Basic
9 Auto Theft for Patrol Officers. We're going to brief the
10 MVCPA Board this afternoon. We've got a great course.

11 Herman Adair is going to brief the Board and
12 we're actually going to roll this out in Alpine in June.
13 We'll work with you, we'll look forward to coming to North
14 Texas and putting this course on up there for a number of
15 folks in that Collin-Denton County area up there.

16 So again, thank you for being here, good
17 update.

18 MR. KUNDAK: Thank y'all so much, appreciate
19 y'all. And yes, we all are going to look forward to the
20 training, so thank you.

21 MS. JONES: Yes, sir. Thank you.

22 MR. DIGGS: I'd now like to call up Lieutenant
23 John Wells, Cibolo Police Department.

24 MR. WELLS: Hello, here I am. Good morning,
25 members. Lieutenant John Wells, for the record.

1 I'm the criminal investigations lieutenant for
2 the Cibolo Police Department. So a pleasure being here
3 for the first time in front of y'all.

4 We're a recent awarded under the second
5 solicitation. So my goal today is just kind of go through
6 our operations plan, let y'all kind of know what our
7 pillars are that we're going to enforce, how we're going
8 to use the funds or we plan to use the funds, and then
9 just kind of provide an update on where we're at.

10 So again, Cibolo -- for those not familiar,
11 we're a pretty small community. 36,000 population, again,
12 very similar to Prosper. We're growing pretty fast the
13 last 10 years.

14 You know, 10-15 years ago, we were 4- or 5,000
15 people, so we're one of the fastest growing communities
16 kind of on the east-northeast side of San Antonio. A lot
17 of military retirees, a lot of people are coming out of
18 San Antonio moving into our area. Southern part of our
19 community is a lot of farmland just north of I-10, but
20 numerous housing communities there under development in
21 and around the Cibolo area.

22 So again, we're situated right between I-10 and
23 I-35, so easy access in and out for our criminals. Our
24 intelligence so far tells us that we don't have a lot of
25 criminals within our community; a lot of them are coming

1 from San Antonio. We've caught some from the Houston area
2 coming back and forth using I-10, as well as the Austin,
3 Dallas areas as well.

4 So I'll start with the operations plan. We
5 have four pillars that we're going to focus on. The first
6 is enhanced enforcement capabilities. So with the grant
7 we were awarded the funding for two uniformed police
8 officers, so we're going to stand up what we're calling a
9 Street Crimes or HEAT unit, High Enforcement Activity
10 Team.

11 And this is going to increase proactive
12 enforcement within our community, you know, specifically
13 focusing on motor vehicle crime and catalytic converter
14 theft. So again, we're a growing area. We've had some
15 increases in that.

16 Those crimes -- for example, in 2023 we had 32
17 stolen vehicles in our community. Last year in 2024, that
18 increased to 42 and we're still working on some numbers
19 this year. This year is looking a lot better so far and I
20 think that's because of some of these strategies we're
21 starting to roll out. We'll talk about that more in a few
22 minutes.

23 But again, we have a lot of people coming in
24 and out. One of our hotspot areas is a Santikos movie
25 theater that opened up a few years ago. We've actually

1 had quite a few catalytic converters stolen while people
2 are in the movies in the last few years specifically at
3 that location.

4 So we're going to stand up this unit that will
5 work some modified evening hours, kind of a power shift,
6 and completely focus on those hotspot areas for us. And
7 again, also included in that is a new FTE position for a
8 crime analyst. We do not have a crime analyst with
9 Cibolo, it's been an unmet need for our department for a
10 while.

11 And actually, thank you to the subcommittee
12 that we met with in January. That came up during the
13 subcommittee meeting as a recommendation. There was some
14 discussion about us not having it, and the subcommittee
15 kind of recommended we kind of use that as part of our
16 negotiations. So we're very thankful for being able to
17 help us fill that spot as well using those grant funds,
18 and very thankful for the subcommittee being proactive and
19 helping us to achieve that goal.

20 Pillar number 2, so proactive real-time
21 intelligence. We do have currently eleven Flock cameras
22 that we installed last summer; they went live in August.
23 Those were funded with some budget funds that we had kind
24 of in excess.

25 We had one neighborhood that had private Flock

1 cameras and we started seeing some success with capturing
2 BMV suspects and things like that with that neighborhood,
3 kind of turned us on to Flock. Honestly, a lot of our
4 surrounding communities started looking at them,
5 specifically through the MVCPA. Seguin was looking at
6 them, Guadalupe County, the New Braunfels Police
7 Department, all of our neighbors, so we started looking as
8 well.

9 Our council authorized us some funds to install
10 those eleven cameras kind of in a ring around the
11 community and we started immediately having a lot of
12 success with them. We've recovered several stolen motor
13 vehicles, stolen U-Haul truck in the last couple of
14 months.

15 We've actually utilized the cameras to capture
16 one suspect in catalytic converter theft already. He
17 wasn't successful in it. He was sawing it off at an
18 apartment complex, a neighbor heard the noise, came
19 outside and kind of yelled at him, was filming his
20 vehicle.

21 We put the vehicle into the Flock system and
22 within a week, a neighboring agency, the Live Oak Police
23 Department, actually got a hit on that vehicle, stopped
24 him. He had a catalytic converter in the trunk, they
25 arrested him on our warrant as well as the possession, and

1 they were also working a case on his same vehicle too, so
2 that cleared up a case for them. So even before getting
3 the grant, we've already had some success with the Flock
4 cameras.

5 So we decided to work with Flock, they came in,
6 sat down, we looked at a lot of locations. Again, we're a
7 fairly small community, but our intent was to build a big
8 network across the city. What we found is they'll pass
9 the camera, we'll get the alert, and even though we're a
10 small city, they end up disappearing on us and our
11 officers have a hard time finding them.

12 So looking at some of the deployment strategies
13 used in the DFW area, we applied for 41 more cameras which
14 were approved. So we'll have 52 cameras across the
15 community which is going to give us a pretty wide network
16 of those cameras in most of our neighborhoods and
17 adjoining streets.

18 And again, our intents, our officers have had a
19 lot of success. They love the cameras, they've always got
20 them up and responded to the alerts. So having that real-
21 time intelligence, we've got a lot of feedback from our
22 officers that they enjoy having that and they're making it
23 work for them. So being able to enhance that with the
24 grant is going to be a huge plus for us.

25 The third element is going to be public

1 education initiatives. We also applied for a laser
2 engraver that was approved that we're going to be
3 purchasing. And our plan is to hold a minimum of four
4 events per year, one per quarter, using our PIO section
5 and our crime prevention unit, you know, within the
6 community and start engraving those catalytic converters
7 for our citizens. So we're looking forward to getting
8 that started as well and doing a lot of public campaigns.

9 We've already kind of started. We're trying to
10 do a social media focus on sharing a lot of the social
11 media that y'all are putting out, as well as making y'all
12 aware when we have a big, you know, arrest or something
13 related to motor vehicle theft so that we can both share
14 it on either side.

15 And finally, in the long term, you know, just
16 sustainable community impact. We're trying to improve
17 safety, reduce crime rates and strengthen that public
18 trust in law enforcement. And we expect to be able to
19 help that tremendously with using the grant funds.

20 Our long term goals, again, strengthen that
21 community safety, critical benefits. The grant will
22 provide the necessary resources to expand our law
23 enforcement capabilities and decrease those vehicle crimes
24 and catalytic converter thefts within the community.

25 Having a dedicated crime analyst, finally, and

1 additional patrol officers that will work directly with
2 that analyst will enable our law enforcement to identify
3 crime patterns, predict those trends, and allocate
4 resources more efficiently. You know, we have started
5 doing some crime analysis with our system now and that
6 duties kind of follow me as a lieutenant, so I'm looking
7 forward to having somebody to handle those who is more of
8 a subject matter expert than I am.

9 And those officers will also be able to
10 increase our proactive enforcement toward reducing
11 catalytic converter and vehicle crimes. And again, using
12 the power of data-driven policing in the long term, real-
13 time crime data, and intelligence-led strategies. We're
14 hoping to prevent those crimes before they occur, so
15 getting out there and being proactive.

16 Again, I mentioned earlier, so far this year in
17 2025, knock on wood, we've only had three stolen vehicles,
18 and we are starting to really see that we think that's
19 related to some of the Flock cameras. You know, we're not
20 hiding them. We don't put the locations out there, but we
21 make it known publicly and our city council members talk
22 about it a lot that we have those deployed in our
23 community, and so we have seen some crime reduction
24 already this year. We're hoping that that trend
25 continues.

1 Long term impacts -- you know, modern policing
2 methods reduce crime rates, enhance officer effectiveness
3 and foster stronger partnership between law enforcement
4 and the public. We are seeing those increased
5 partnerships as well. There's a lot of Flock cameras
6 coming into our area.

7 Again, we heard from Seguin, Guadalupe County.
8 We only have three right now that are pending TxDOT
9 approval; there will be a few more under this grant that
10 we're going to be applying for as well. But we really
11 only have two TxDOT right-of-ways along FM78, FM1103 in
12 our city, so most of ours will be going on city streets so
13 the permitting process is a little easier. But we still
14 are waiting on three cameras, as well, that are kind of in
15 the TxDOT process since last September.

16 But again, I mentioned, we've partnered with
17 Live Oak, had a joint arrest on that. We've already
18 shared a lot of data with the Converse and Universal City
19 police departments. I know San Antonio is fixing to come
20 online with Flock, so those partnerships are being built.

21 I know a lot of those agencies, New Braunfels,
22 are using MVCPA funds. So I think the grant is definitely
23 helping our area kind of come together and use
24 intelligence-led policing to increase those partnerships.
25 So this is kind of where we're at.

1 Again, we're in the very infant stages of this.

2 We submitted our grant, met with the subcommittee back in
3 January. Ultimately, everything was approved in March.

4 Our Cibolo City Council approved the grant
5 award and accepted it on March 25. We got the acceptance
6 letter sent back to MVCPA on March 27; we hit the ground
7 running immediately.

8 We have had multiple meetings with our HR
9 department, they're drafting job descriptions for the
10 crime analyst position. Our goal is to be advertising
11 that by April 30, and then hopefully have the position
12 filled within a month by June 1 and have that person off
13 and running. We'll be looking for somebody who's got some
14 experience already doing that so will not have to have
15 some training issues. So we're hoping to kind of grab
16 somebody out there that's got experience.

17 MS. JONES: You'll probably need to steal one.

18 (General laughter.)

19 MR. WELLS: I'm not going to come out and say
20 that. But, yes, ma'am, that is the goal to make it easier
21 for us to build the program since we don't have one. So
22 we're hoping somebody is wanting to come build their own
23 program and take ownership of it and likes that.

24 Again, two street crimes officer positions;
25 we're not going to wait and actually hire them, they'll be

1 filled with officers that are already on patrol with us
2 that have experience. And then we will just backfill
3 those positions as we hire the vacancies. So our goal is
4 to, again, have those filled and have them ready to go by
5 June 30.

6 And then just some of the equipment. Again,
7 the grant paid for patrol vehicles and outfitting
8 equipment, things like that, so we're working on the
9 procurement process for that now. We do have vehicles
10 they can use in the meantime.

11 And then once we get those -- because I know
12 that can take a little while to get those vehicles
13 sometimes ordered and in -- and then, again, the laser
14 engraving machine, we've identified the vendor and we're
15 just working through our procurement process to get that.

16 We'll be able to start some of those pretty soon because
17 we can get it with our crime prevention officer and start
18 learning how to use it and maybe host our first event
19 sometime in the next few months.

20 And the Flock process, again, 41 additional
21 cameras, that's going to be the biggest addition for us.
22 Our city attorney is currently reviewing the contract.
23 They've already sent us a contract that we have on hand.
24 It's in the review process, so we hope to have that back
25 in front of our city council in the next few weeks to

1 start that procurement.

2 And then they're just waiting on us. They're
3 kind of chomping at the bit to get those cameras started
4 for us in the areas that we can -- so they're just waiting
5 on us to do that.

6 That's really all I had today. Does anybody
7 have any questions for me? I look forward to coming back,
8 hopefully, again in a few months and giving a better
9 update of where we're at once we start getting some things
10 rolled out and having some successes.

11 MS. JONES: Perfect.

12 MR. WELLS: Thank you very much.

13 MR. DIGGS: Thank you.

14 So I'd now like to call up Commander Todd
15 Johnson with the Elgin Police Department.

16 MR. CRIM: Good morning, Madam Chair and
17 committee. I'm Aaron Crim, commander with the Elgin
18 Police Department. Todd isn't with us today.

19 Unfortunately, I don't have a PowerPoint to
20 share. We were just recently awarded the grant. We
21 currently have 12 Flock cameras deployed throughout our
22 city, mainly on residential roadways because of the TxDOT
23 delay.

24 We wanted to go ahead and roll those out as
25 quick as possible. So with the issuance of the grant, our

1 intent is to start that TxDOT process and get these
2 cameras deployed into our retail and commercial districts
3 where we have seen the majority of our catalytic converter
4 thefts.

5 We are located just east of Austin here, and
6 290 runs right through the middle of our town, which is
7 obviously a direct corridor between Houston and Austin.
8 So we see almost, I would say, 90 percent of our catalytic
9 converter thefts occurred on that major corridor there at
10 our Walmart. Our transportation division for our school
11 district backs up to 290 so that's been a hotspot for them
12 to hit.

13 And the few that we have solved and been able
14 to apprehend, they were all out of the Houston area,
15 College Station area, so they're just passing through. So
16 we're hoping that this camera system, being able to tie
17 into the network of other departments using these cameras,
18 that we can all work together in solving these types of
19 crimes.

20 That's really all I have. I didn't have a big
21 PowerPoint to share. Any questions?

22 (No response.)

23 MR. DIGGS: Thank you, sir. Thank you for
24 being here.

25 MR. CRIM: Thank y'all.

1 MR. DIGGS: And Madam Chair, I'll turn this
2 back over to you. That completes the operational updates
3 from the law enforcement today.

4 MS. JONES: Excellent updates today. Very
5 good.

6 Number 11 is referencing the future dates. The
7 next committee meeting is the week of the conference,
8 actually the Thursday of the conference, which will be in
9 Fort Worth. So those of you who have not registered, we
10 have a link.

11 Be sure to register, and we expect to see you
12 there. We have a great plan for our working relationships
13 with our partner agencies and with the industry. So
14 again, I know I've mentioned this before, this is the
15 first time that I know of that we've relaxed the criteria
16 to where it's not an all law enforcement conference; it is
17 an all persons conference.

18 And law enforcement, you will still get your
19 TCOLE credit, don't worry there. But we're also having it
20 to where those who support us, the civilians, those who
21 are non law enforcement and those who are working for the
22 recycling industry, the auto parts, melting and sweltering
23 all of that, everyone is invited to the conference.

24 We will not have, of course, closed session.

25 Ma'am, Miss Cassandra, do we have public

1 comment?

2 MS. FLINT: Madam Chair, we do not have any
3 comments. Thank you.

4 MS. JONES: Okay. Hearing none, I will
5 entertain a motion to adjourn.

6 MR. PORRAS: Rick Porras, for the record. I
7 make a motion to adjourn.

8 MS. JONES: I just need a second.

9 MR. FOREMAN: Todd Foreman. I second.

10 MS. JONES: Perfect. Thank you, gentlemen. We
11 are adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

12 (Whereupon at 11:26 a.m., the meeting was
13 adjourned.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

MEETING OF: TxDMV MVCPA SB 224 Advisory Committee

LOCATION: Austin, Texas

DATE: April 16, 2025

I do hereby certify that the foregoing pages,
numbers 1 through 81, inclusive, are the true, accurate,
and complete transcript prepared from the verbal recording
made by electronic recording by Nancy H. King before the
Texas Department of Motor Vehicles.

DATE: April 25, 2025

/s/ Nancy King
(Transcriber)

On the Record Reporting
7703 N. Lamar Blvd. #515
Austin, Texas 78752