



Camden

Operation CeaseFire-Camden 2008 Analysis

Background on Initiative

Operation CeaseFire is a strategic, data-driven, problem-solving approach to reducing gun violence through a collaborative partnership between law enforcement and the community.

In Camden, the law enforcement component of CeaseFire responds to all shootings throughout the nine square miles of the City. The other program components (Community Mobilization, Clergy Partnership, Public Education, and the efforts of the Outreach Workers) focus on three specific neighborhoods with the highest number of shootings: Cramer Hill, East Camden, and Whitman Park.

The five main components of Operation CeaseFire are:

- **Criminal Justice Collaboration**
 - A jointly operated Shooting Response Team (Camden City Police, New Jersey State Police, and Camden County Prosecutor's Office) responds to every shooting in the City as if it were a homicide in order to increase the likelihood of victim and witness cooperation and thus, ultimately solving the case.
- **Community Outreach Workers**
 - Community Outreach Workers perform three basic functions: 1). Serve as a catalyst for change by sending the message to residents that violence will no longer be tolerated in the community; 2). Assist victims and their families to gain access to various resources and social services in an attempt to address some of the potential root causes for engaging in disruptive behavior; as well as visit victims and their families to discourage retaliation, and 3). Bridge the gap between the community-at-large and law enforcement.
- **Clergy Partnerships**
 - Clergy leaders will assist with the mobilization of their congregations to help spread the CeaseFire message, offer condolences and prayers to families impacted by gun violence, and organize anti-violence marches, prayer vigils, and other activities to engage Camden City residents in this initiative.
- **Community Mobilization**
 - Working with the District Collaborative Council Boards (panels of residents, businesses and community representatives, youth, law enforcement and city departments organized to help improve the quality of life in Camden by engaging in problem-solving and mobilization activities) to help mobilize the community against gun violence in CeaseFire's target areas (Cramer Hill, East Camden, and Whitman Park).

- **Public Education**

- A comprehensive advertising and education campaign to saturate the CeaseFire target areas to help change the norm of using a gun to settle disputes.

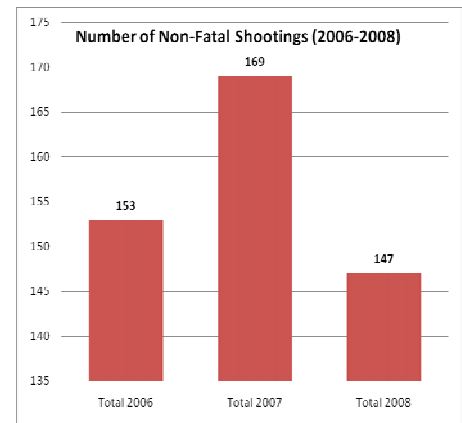
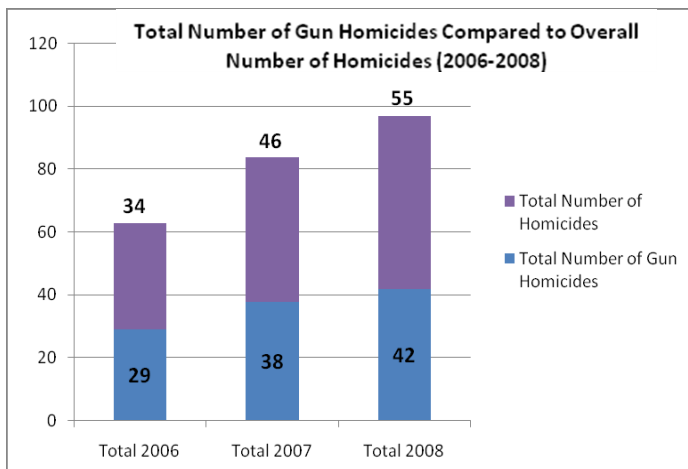
Analysis of 2008

Although the number of shootings in the City is relatively small to conduct statistical analysis with any significance of their increases or decreases, there is value in examining the violent crime and shootings data, as well as the efforts of the Outreach Workers.

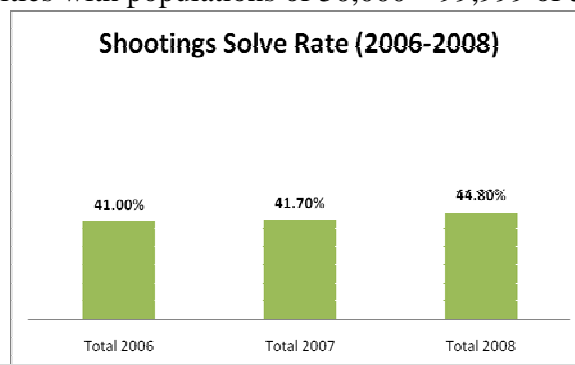
1). Criminal Justice Collaboration

Law Enforcement

- There was a 13% decrease in the number of non-fatal shootings from 2007 to 2008.
- There was a 10.5% increase, however, in the number of gun homicides from 2007 to 2008. Overall, homicides increased by 19.6% from 2007 to 2008.

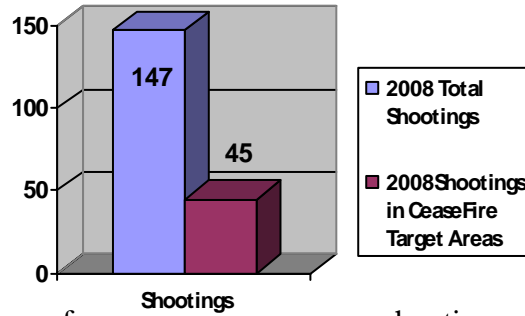


- Camden’s shooting solve rate has consistently increased since 2006, with a solve rate of 44.8% for 2008. This compares favorably to the national clearance rate for aggravated assaults with a firearm for cities with populations of 50,000 – 99,999 of 38.4% (FBI Uniform Crime Data).

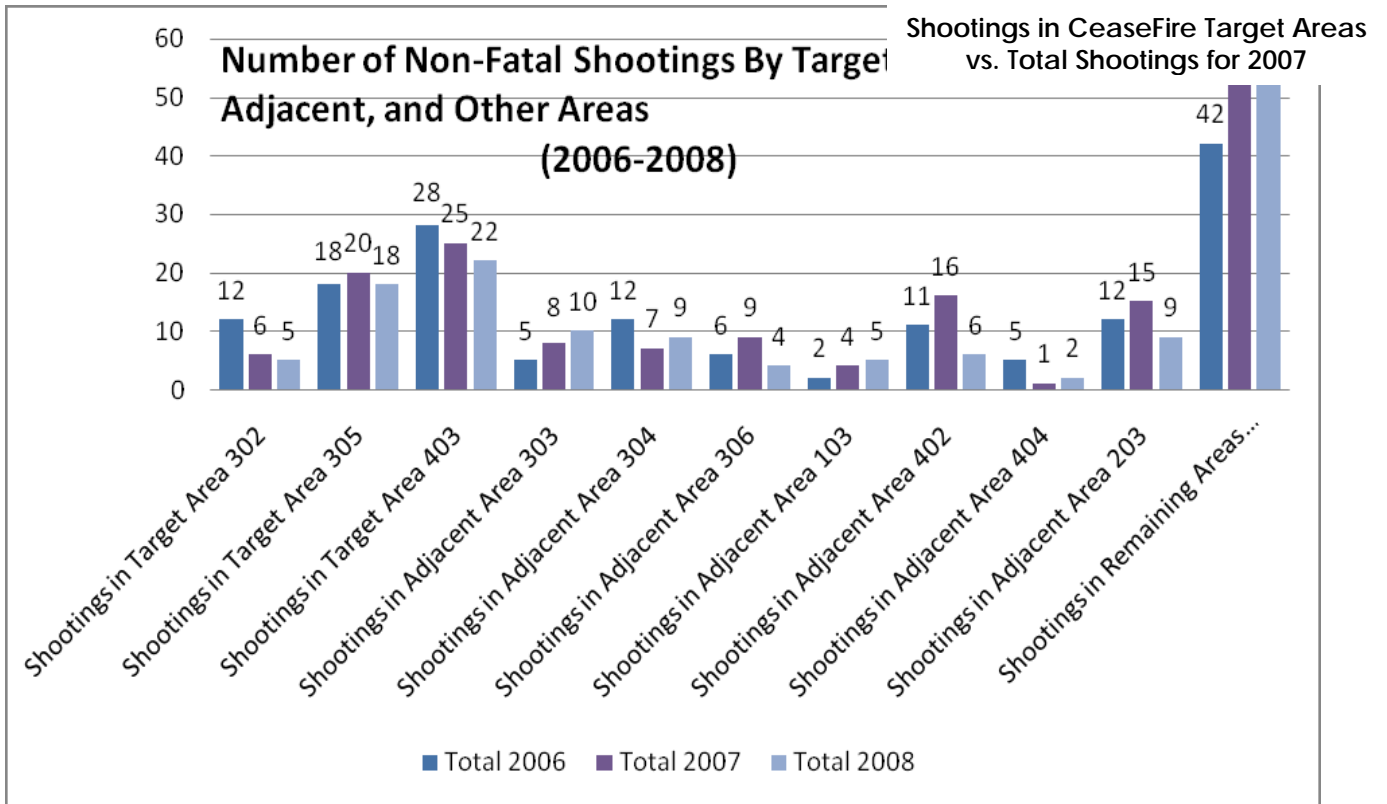


- Shootings in the CeaseFire target areas totaled 45 in 2008. This represents 30.6% of all shootings in the City for that year.

Shootings in CeaseFire Target Areas vs. Total Shootings for 2008

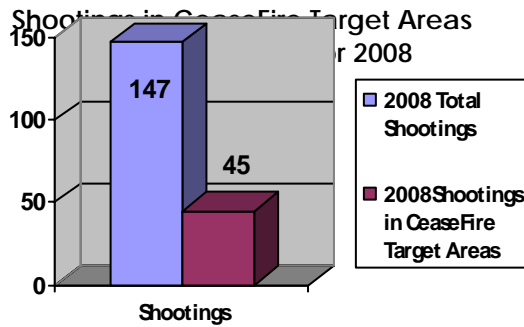
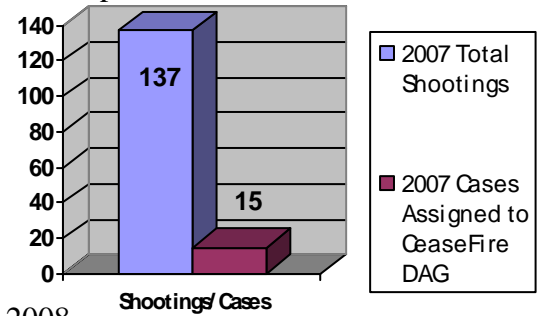


- Although the numbers of shootings are relatively small to indicate any statistical significance, shootings in the CeaseFire target areas *decreased* by 11.8% in 2008. Specifically, Cramer Hill shootings decreased by 16.7% (or 1); East Camden shootings decreased by 10% (or 2); and Whitman Park shootings decreased by 12% (or 3).
- Shootings in neighborhoods adjacent to the CeaseFire target areas also decreased and by 20%; while shootings in the remaining areas of the city increased by 7.4%.



Prosecution

- Of the 137 non-fatal shootings in 2007, only 6.6% (or 15) were assigned to the special deputy attorney general assigned to CeaseFire-Camden. It is important to note, however, that the deputy attorney general worked only 4 months in 2007 exclusively on CeaseFire cases. Other cases assigned the deputy attorney general consisted of: gun possession and shootings without a victim.



- Of the 147 non-fatal shootings in 2008, only 4.1% (or 6) were assigned to the special deputy attorney general assigned to CeaseFire-Camden. It is important to note, however, that the deputy attorney general was also assigned to the Governor's Crime Plan Task Force on Investigation, while

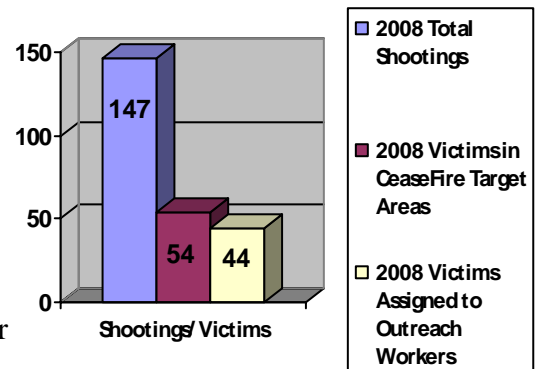
simultaneously working on CeaseFire cases.

- It is also important to note that there were no bail source hearings requested in any of the CeaseFire cases assigned to the special deputy attorney general in either 2007 or 2008.
- None of the CeaseFire cases assigned to the special deputy attorney general were referred to federal prosecution in either 2007 or 2008.
- There were no CeaseFire cases assigned to the special deputy attorney general that were sentenced in 2007. Sentences in 2008 ranged from 2 years probation to 8 years NERA (must serve 85% of sentence prior to becoming eligible for parole).

Implementation of the 24 Hour Gun Tip Line

- Approximately \$31,125 has been raised by members of the Greater Camden Partnership to pay rewards for tips leading to the recovery of an illegal firearm, arrest of an individual in the possession of an illegal weapon, and arrest and conviction of a suspect in a shooting.

2008 Shootings vs. Victims in CeaseFire Target Areas vs. Victims Assigned to Outreach Workers



2). Outreach

Victim Visits

- The number of victims from shootings in the CeaseFire target areas in 2008 totaled 54. Of that total, 44, or 81.5%, were assigned to be visited by an Outreach Worker.
- Outreach Workers averaged 2.2 visits per victim before either successfully meeting with the victim or moving on to another victim.

- 50% of the assigned victims were touched by an Outreach Worker, either directly or through a family member.
- 15 of the assigned victims, or 34.1%, had either given law enforcement an incorrect home address or were no longer living at the address at the time of the Outreach Worker's visit.
- An additional 4 victims, or 9%, reported living outside of Camden City and therefore were not a priority to be visited by the Outreach Workers.
- Law enforcement confirmed that none of the assigned victims have retaliated in any criminal manner for their shootings.

3). Community Mobilization

- CeaseFire participated in the nation's Day of Action, with four community service projects in each of the CeaseFire target areas. Three of the projects involved clean up and beautification efforts, while the fourth involved a back to school celebration with the children from one of the target areas' public housing complexes. The Outreach Workers were responsible for organizing these community service projects and successfully recruited roughly 30 adult volunteers and 100 children to participate.
- The Outreach Workers participated in at least 10 city-wide or neighborhood gatherings (block parties, clean-ups, National Night Out).

4). Public Education

- Utilized some SVORI (Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative) funding to purchase approximately 35 billboards in the City of Camden highlighting Operation CeaseFire messages and advertising the Gun Tip Line.
- Two CeaseFire brochures have been developed and widely distributed at community and CeaseFire events (approximately 2,000 pieces of literature distributed). One brochure is a general education piece on the objectives of CeaseFire. The other provides safety tips for residents.
- The Outreach Workers regularly participated in the following community meetings:
 - District Council Collaborative Boards
 - City Council
 - Board of Education
 - Camden Housing Authority
 - Curfew Runs
 - Mayor's Youth Council
 - Ablett Village Tenants Association

5). Clergy Involvement

- CeaseFire held two clergy recruitment activities, resulting in 21 clergy leaders pledging their support of CeaseFire. Additionally, these clergy leaders enlisted in a CeaseFire Clergy Day on celebrated on August 17, 2008.