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NEWS RELEASE
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Department Receives Federal Grant to Reduce Violent Crime
St. Louis to be Incubator for Best Practices in Fighting Crime

The Metropolitan Police Department announced today that it has received a \$500,000 grant from the United States Department of Justice through the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Grant Program to reduce violent crime in the St. Louis region through a unique partnership between the Police and Police Executive Research Forum (PERF).

Colonel Joseph J. Mokwa, Chief of Police, made the announcement at the Board of Police Commissioners regular meeting on Wednesday, September 19, 2007 at Police Headquarters. "We believe that this joint venture will help us understand and examine the root causes of violent crime, especially those involving firearms," stated Chief Mokwa. "It will help us create strategies to interrupt the cycle of violence."

Even though total crime is down nearly 14 percent in St. Louis, one of the main goals of the partnership is to develop and evaluate a comprehensive gun-violence reduction strategy that can be replicated throughout the City and also serve as a "Best Practice" for Departments around the country.

"PERF is pleased that the Justice Department has agreed to support this vital program that will target the serious problem of gun violence in St. Louis and across the nation," said PERF Executive Director Chuck Wexler.

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Another goal is to enhance the Department's internal capacity to rapidly analyze crime data and share information. The Department hopes to improve police-community relationships and involve the community in crime reduction efforts. "Chief Mokwa has demonstrated a commitment to addressing violent crime issues within a community-policing context," added Mr. Wexler. "Working with the chief, we will use the combined expertise of the police, other criminal justice agencies, business leaders and faith-based leaders to find a gun-violence prevention program that everyone will support."

Approximately \$250,000 of the grant will be used to partner with the PERF and \$250,000 will be dedicated to purchase a "gunshot detection monitoring system" that can be rapidly deployed to high crime areas to pinpoint gun fire in real time.

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