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Dear Camden Community Leader,

With 2006 mostly a blank canvas, I want to reflect on our public safety successes in 2005, but more importantly to focus on the challenges that lie ahead.

Crime in Camden was down 16 percent last year compared to 2004, falling to its lowest level in more than two decades (see chart on the pages that follow). But last year's accomplishments will be meaningless unless we can continue the downward crime trend into 2006.

Before looking to the future, however, it is important to look back briefly and to acknowledge Camden Police Chief Edwin J. Figueroa, whose retirement becomes effective today. The man affectionately known as "Figs" will be remembered for his integrity, his leadership, and his commitment to the city and its citizens. I want to personally thank and commend the chief, not only for his more than three decades of service, but also for working with me in a spirit of respect and professionalism under sometimes difficult circumstances.

I also thank and commend the men and women of the Camden Police Department – commanders, rank and file and support staff – as well as our law enforcement partners who contributed to our success in 2005. The crime decrease is overwhelmingly a credit to them.

Now it is time to move ahead.

Later this month, the Camden Commission on Public Safety will issue its final report. Also known as the Blue Ribbon Panel, the commission's recommendations are designed to help the police department evolve from a 911-driven agency, forced to react to endless emergencies, into a force that works proactively with citizens to make the streets safer.

The department has already begun implementing panel recommendations, adopting a new structure in September. The city is now divided into districts, each headed by a police captain who works directly with officers and the community to address crime issues particular to their area. One of the key responsibilities of the police department's new administration will be to implement the Blue Ribbon Panel's recommendations and to improve accountability throughout the department.

Today, Robert L. Stewart starts his new job as Camden Police Executive on an interim basis. The former Executive Director of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), Mr. Stewart worked in the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, D.C., for 22 years, rising to the rank of captain, and later served as police chief in Tallahassee and Ormond Beach in Florida. He has also served as a reform-oriented manager for police departments in

Louisville, Ky., Kansas City, Mo., Dallas, Albuquerque, and Portland, Maine, as well as in Richmond and Charlottesville in Virginia, the New Jersey State Police and as interim chief for the Rutgers University-Newark Police Department. Furthermore, Mr. Stewart has demonstrated he has the skills and personality to mentor and develop the many fine young officers in the department, one of whom will be the chief someday soon.

In conclusion, we need to address public safety in Camden as a regional issue. The city does not exist as an island, but is inextricably connected with surrounding towns. Suburban drug demand fuels narcotics trafficking, which is at the heart of Camden's crime problems. Highways and public transportation make it easy for criminals to move between city and suburbs. Law enforcement must begin to focus on a regional approach to fighting crime.

I look forward to continuing to work with you in 2006 to enhance public safety in Camden. I am confident that together, we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Vincent P. Sarubbi
Camden County Prosecutor

Major Crime Categories Down 16%; Arrests Hit New Record

Crime was down and arrests were up in 2005. The lion's share of the credit for that goes to the Camden Police Department and Chief Figueroa. The department's law enforcement partners on the county, state and federal level also brought renewed focus to the city, working in a coordinated fashion to provide better coverage. The effort to maximize resources even integrated private security forces at institutions such as L-3 Communications and Cooper University Hospital.

The year-to-year comparison is based on statistics compiled for the Uniform Crime Report (UCR). Eight crimes make up what are known as Uniform Crime Report Part I Offenses – Murder, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Theft, Auto Theft and Arson. These are tracked by police departments across the country and compiled annually by the FBI.

In 2005, UCR crimes in Camden declined 16 percent from 2004, reaching their lowest level in more than two decades (see charts on pages that follow). Each of the eight categories was down except for Aggravated Assaults, which remained static. The largest decrease was for Murders, which fell 30 percent, from 49 to 35. Camden's sharp decline bucked the trend for New Jersey cities – the state's other five major urban centers saw Murder rates climb 39 percent overall. Philadelphia, too, saw Murders increase to their highest level in nearly a decade.

Drug offenses are tracked separately so as not to discourage aggressive proactive narcotics enforcement. That is the main reason arrests are up even as UCR crime is down – thousands of arrests from some of the most intensive proactive narcotics enforcement in city history.

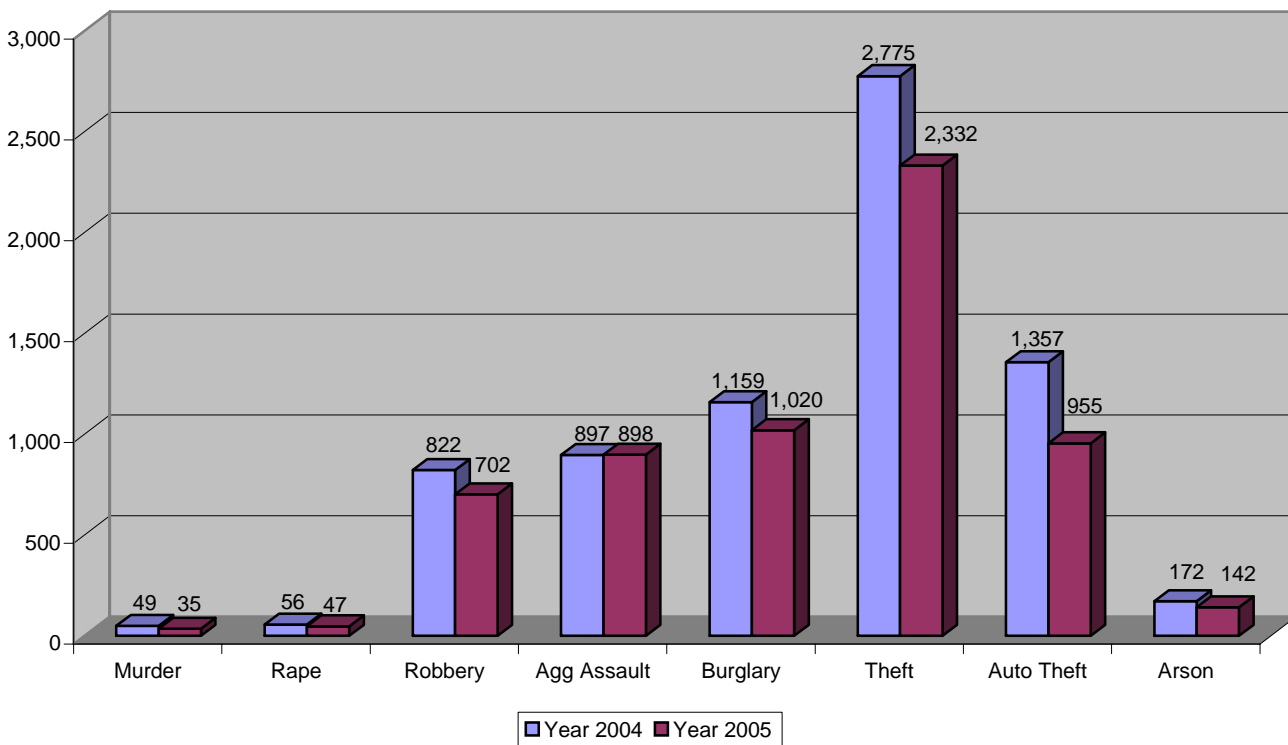
City police made 10,920 arrests in 2005, eclipsing the department's prior record of 10,693 in 2004. The multi-agency narcotics task force overseen by the Prosecutor's Office – known as HIDTA for High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Task Force – made 1,312 city arrests last year, also a record. The New Jersey State Police added an additional 1,547 arrests for a total among the three agencies of nearly 14,000. Clearly, officers on the street are working hard to protect the public and bring criminals to justice.

But, as we know, statistics will not provide the true measure of our success or failure. The true measure of our success will be people feeling safer in the city – safer on their streets and in their homes, safer when they work, walk, play, shop and go to school in Camden. The numbers do, however, provide one objective standard we can use to hold all of us in law enforcement accountable and to gauge our progress.

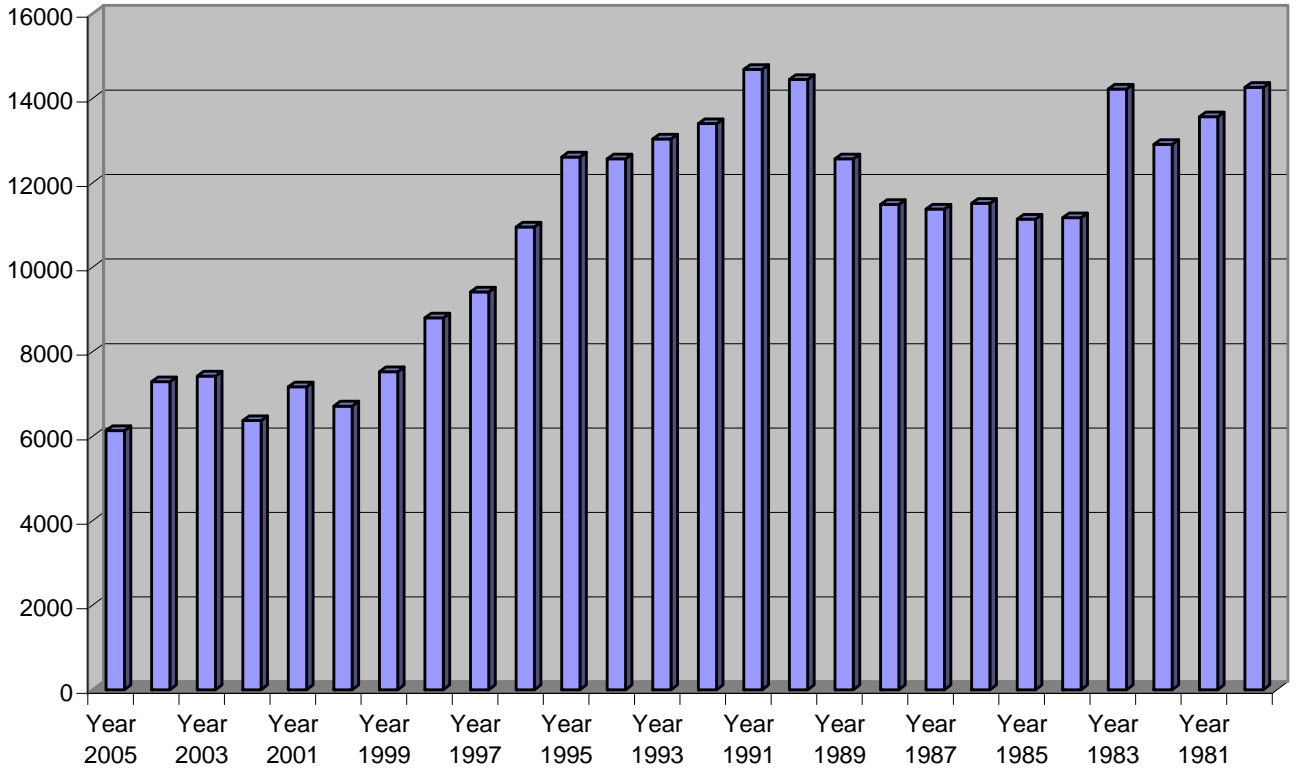
Uniform Crime Report (UCR) Part I Crimes, 2004 v. 2005

Crime	Year 2004	Year 2005	% change
Murder	49	35	-29%
Rape	56	47	-16%
Robbery	822	702	-15%
Agg Assault	897	898	0%
Burglary	1,159	1,020	-12%
Theft	2,775	2,332	-16%
Auto Theft	1,357	955	-30%
Arson	172	142	-17%
Total	7,287	6,131	-16%

UCR Crimes, 2004 v. 2005



Uniform Crime Report Part I Offenses, Camden, 1980-2005



Uniform Crime Report Part I Offenses, Camden 1980-2005

				AGG					
YEAR	MURDER	RAPE	ROBBERY	ASSAULT	BURGLARY	LARCENY	MV THEFT	ARSON	TOTAL
2005	35	47	702	898	1020	2332	955	142	6131
2004	49	56	822	897	1159	2775	1357	172	7287
2003	41	56	857	974	1459	2686	1150	201	7424
2002	33	45	609	801	1155	2423	1081	222	6369
2001	25	58	715	913	1376	2552	1264	267	7170
2000	24	69	670	905	1177	2515	1160	196	6716
1999	24	59	746	984	1497	2622	1351	243	7526
1998	30	91	971	1013	1687	3215	1503	293	8803
1997	42	96	1110	1164	2452	2780	1492	277	9413
1996	28	102	1280	1188	2784	3507	1701	367	10957
1995	58	89	1593	1488	3200	3799	2017	367	12611
1994	45	87	1482	1351	3609	3735	1941	323	12573
1993	42	90	1654	1156	4039	3933	1817	306	13037
1992	47	116	1611	1172	3588	4050	2466	350	13400
1991	35	100	1962	1110	3176	4368	3521	413	14685
1990	44	138	1684	1198	3642	4294	2992	454	14446
1989	25	142	1294	1033	3164	4051	2615	248	12572
1988	31	122	1233	995	2514	3967	2469	160	11491
1987	23	124	1025	890	2889	3877	2423	129	11380
1986	27	140	1203	914	2845	4207	2032	144	11512
1985	12	129	1331	874	2644	4304	1732	118	11144
1984	23	119	1379	917	2622	4034	1973	111	11178
1983	16	107	1594	1055	3800	4797	2690	157	14216
1982	29	85	1492	934	3654	4527	2033	155	12909
1981	34	102	1534	930	4463	4674	1694	132	13563
1980	27	121	1770	1055	4371	4867	1907	141	14259

Shooting Response Teams

Also known simply as “Shoot Teams,” these specialized investigative units were formed in August 2004 after a spate of homicides the previous month. Shooting Response Teams quickly respond to reports of Aggravated Assaults with a handgun to immediately and aggressively investigate these crimes.

The strategic decision to focus on non-fatal shootings was based largely on clearance rates, that is, the percentage of cases cleared by arrest or other means. Over the years, arrests had been made in the majority of Camden homicides – approximately 70 percent, well above the national average. However, the clearance rate for non-fatal shootings was approximately 18 percent, well below national standards. The Shoot Teams respond to aggravated assaults in a manner similar to homicide investigations, with an immediate and vigorous effort to locate and interview witnesses, gather physical evidence and identify and apprehend suspects. The philosophy behind the Shoot Teams is that solving today’s aggravated assault may prevent tomorrow’s homicide.

In addition, a Victim/Witness Advocate from the Prosecutor’s Office is assigned specifically to support victims and witnesses of Aggravated Assaults with a handgun and to encourage their cooperation with investigators.

Despite obstacles, such as a reluctance of some witnesses and even victims to cooperate, the Shoot Teams have achieved a significant increase in the clearance rate for Aggravated Assaults with a handgun – from 18 percent to nearly 33 percent. The table below shows the clearance rate for aggravated assaults with handguns in 2005.

Aggravated Assaults w/handgun	243
Cases cleared	80
Clearance rate	32.9%

Gun Prosecutions Unit within the Camden County Prosecutor's Office

Last year, I designated an Assistant Prosecutor to work closely with Shooting Response Team detectives and focus exclusively on cases involving illegal possession and use of handguns and other firearms. This enabled the Prosecutor's Office to obtain a federal grant to fund the Gun Prosecutor's position. The grant is administered by the New Jersey Attorney General's Office and funded by the U.S. Department of Justice through its Project Safe Neighborhoods, a nationwide commitment to reduce gun crime.

Consolidating gun prosecutions with a single Assistant Prosecutor provides for a consistent and cohesive approach to prosecuting gun cases, ensuring high bails, fast tracks to trial and consistently stiffer plea policies.

The Gun Prosecutor works closely with a federal investigator who reviews each case and consults with the U.S. Attorney's Office to determine if it meets the criteria for prosecuting the matter in federal court. Federal prosecution allows for holding the defendant without bail, stiffer sentences upon conviction and no parole.

The table below synthesizes cases assigned to the Gun Prosecutor in 2005:

CONVICTIONS/DISPOSITIONS:

Total convictions: 48

INDICTED CASES:

Total cases: 97

Total defendants: 100

Cases pending court hearings: 51

AWAITING GRAND JURY PRESENTATION:

Total cases: 3

Total defendants: 3

CASES ACCEPTED/UNDER REVIEW BY U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Total cases: 8

Total defendants: 8

Narcotics Enforcement

Narcotics enforcement officers had a busy 2005, with arrests, search warrants executed and gun seizures reaching their highest levels (see attached chart) in at least five years.

Illegal narcotics trafficking is the fuel that fires the bulk of violent crime in Camden. It is estimated that up to 70 percent of all crime is related to drugs in some way. Narcotics enforcement has been and continues to be a focal point of public safety efforts in the city. This area of enforcement demonstrates, perhaps more than any other, the importance and effectiveness of collaboration among law enforcement agencies at various levels of government – city, county, state and federal.

The main entity responsible for attacking illegal drug trafficking is the Joint Camden Task Force of the Philadelphia-Camden High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Task Force. Along with the Prosecutor's Office and Camden Police, the task force includes personnel from the FBI, DEA, New Jersey State Police, New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice, Camden County Sheriff's Office, as well as the U.S. Attorney's Office and the U.S. Marshal's Service.

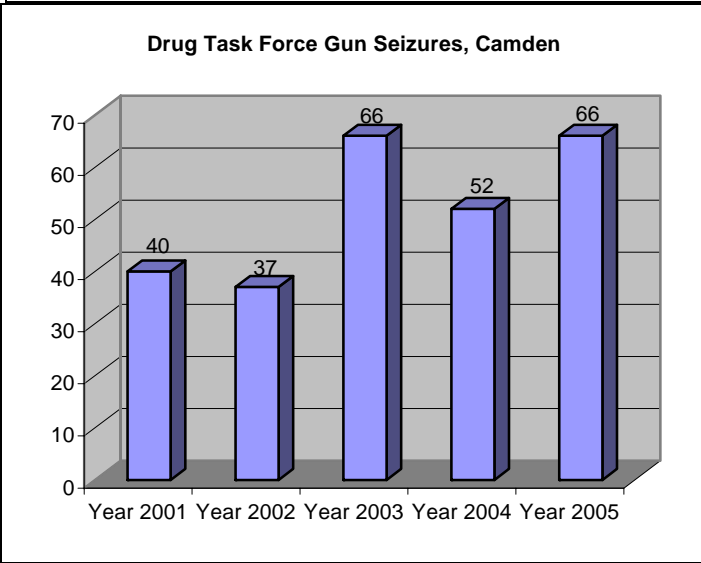
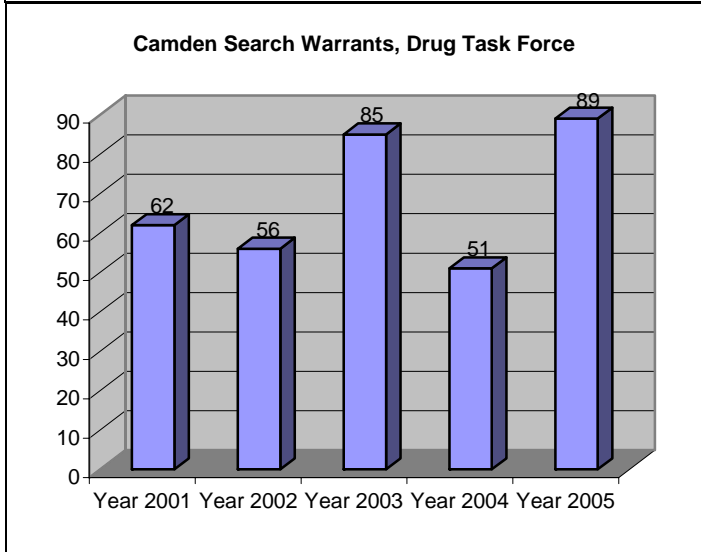
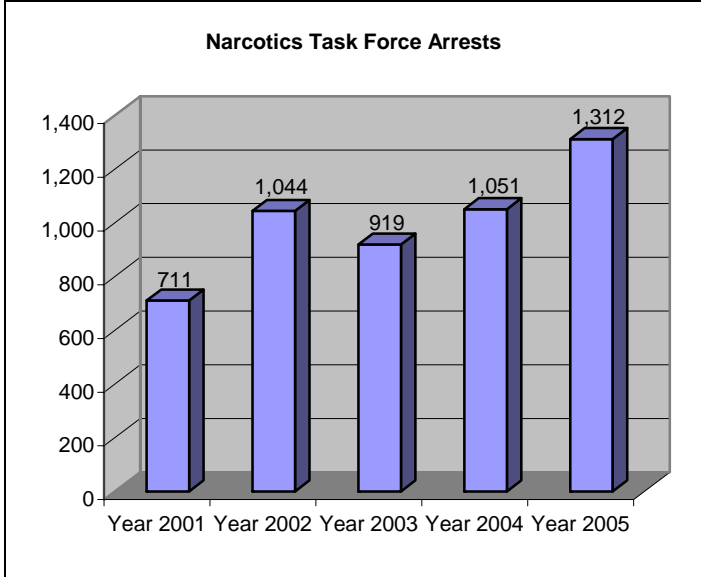
HIDTA personnel arrested 1,312 people in 2005, executed 89 search warrants, and seized 66 guns, \$586,000 in currency and drugs valued at \$679,000.

Commanders use an array of short- and long-term operations to target drug traffickers – from low-level street corner “trappers” to major suppliers and kingpins. These include secret surveillance of open-air drug-trafficking areas or “sets,” undercover street-level drug buys, long-term surveillance and court-approved search warrants.

Other operations are designed to reduce the demand for illegal drugs, which comes largely from the suburbs. During operations known as “reversals,” officers arrest drug dealers. The officers then pose as dealers and sell imitation drugs to unsuspecting buyers, who are arrested and charged with Attempt to Obtain a Controlled Dangerous Substance. Historically, more than 60 percent of these would-be buyers live outside the city and have traveled to Camden to buy drugs.

Many high-level narcotics trafficking defendants have been prosecuted in federal court by the United States Attorney's Office in Camden. Last year was a banner year for the local USAO, culminating in the conviction of Leonard “Pooh” Paulk, who was sentenced to life in prison for conspiracy to distribute drugs. Paulk was among 12 defendants convicted of participating in a violent drug trafficking network in Camden.

Activity/Property Seized	Amount	\$ value
Total Arrests	1,312	
Juveniles	164	
Intel Contacts	88	
DORO Arrests	4	
Warrant Arrests	3	
Search Warrants	89	
Crack Cocaine		
\$10 Bags	13,930	\$139,300
\$20 Bags	30	\$600
Grams	25	\$2,000
Ounces	55	\$82,500
Cocaine		
\$10 Bags	842	\$8,420
\$20 Bags	694	\$13,880
Grams	14	\$1,120
Ounces	5	\$7,500
Kilos	2	\$120,000
Heroin		
\$10 Bags	6,950	\$69,500
\$20 Bags	0	\$0
Grams	279	\$55,800
Ounces	1	\$4,000
Marijuana		
\$10 Bags	3,025	\$30,250
\$20 Bags	371	\$7,420
Ounces	19	\$3,800
Pounds	39	\$96,875
Plants	0	\$0
Pills		
LSD (Hits)	0	\$0
MDMA Ecstasy (Pills)	436	\$8,720
Oxycontin (Pills)	834	\$20,850
Crystal Meth. (oz.)	0	\$0
Methamphetamine (oz.)	1	\$500
Morphine (Pills)	24	\$360
Percocet (Pills)	391	\$1,955
Methadone (Pills)	77	\$1,925
Xanax (Pills)	449	\$2,245
PCP (liquid ounces)	0	\$0
PCP (vials w/marj.)	68	\$680
Guns	66	
Vehicles	4	
U.S. Currency	\$586,353	
		\$679,520



Rand Transportation Center Initiative

Working in concert with the Camden Police Department, the police departments from NJ Transit and the Delaware River Port Authority/PATCO have increased their numbers, visibility and vigilance at and around the Walter Rand Transportation Center (WRTC), a public transit hub in the heart of downtown Camden. While the vast majority of those who use the Center are law-abiding citizens, the facility has also been a gateway for individuals who come from the suburbs to purchase narcotics and engage in other illegal activity. Because of this, the area has also drawn people from the city who cater to suburban narcotics demand.

NJ Transit Police and DRPA Police have increased enforcement at and around the Rand Center not only to prevent individuals from engaging in inappropriate or illegal conduct, but also to act as a deterrent for others who would do so. The result has been to make the center and surrounding area safer and more appealing to law-abiding citizens.

NJ Transit Police **arrested 247 people** at and around the Walter Rand Transportation Center in 2005, on charges that included drug offenses, panhandling, robbery, disorderly conduct and simple assault, as well as execution of outstanding warrants.

NJ Transit Police also issued **243 summonses** in and around the center last year, including motor vehicle violations, fare disputes, motor vehicle impounds and disorderly conduct. In addition, officers ejected 24 people from the center, mostly for disorderly conduct, and aided numerous riders.

DRPA Police made **arrested 101 people** at the WRTC for offenses that included drug offenses, weapons offenses, panhandling, robbery, assault and drinking in public. DRPA Police also issued **237 summonses** at the center.

NJ Transit and PATCO have also undertaken environmental design improvements to make the center more visually appealing while also providing practical benefits, such as benches with individual seats to prevent people from stretching out on them to sleep.

New Jersey State Police

The New Jersey State Police continue to provide a full-time presence in Camden – the Southern Anti-Crime Partnership, which operates out of a headquarters in the city.

The State Troopers and supervisors assigned to Camden focus on neighborhood patrols. They provide a high-visibility presence and general enforcement, with particular attention to quality-of-life offenses such as drinking in public. State Police also conduct vehicle tow details, removing abandoned or otherwise illegal vehicles. Quality-of-life enforcement is often carried out in response to citizen complaints.

State Police also team with other agencies on narcotics enforcement and high-intensity crime suppression in targeted areas. In addition to working in neighborhoods, State Troopers also work in coordination with the Prosecutor’s Office and other agencies to patrol business districts, such as the Broadway and Marlton Pike commercial corridors, during holiday shopping seasons.

State Police also conduct periodic prostitution stings using both male and female troopers working undercover to arrest both prostitutes and men soliciting prostitution. The stings are a key component of quality-of-life enforcement. As part of a protocol developed by the Prosecutor’s Office, those arrested are provided general counseling as well as behavioral risk reduction counseling and addiction services.

The table below provides a brief synopsis of New Jersey State Police activity in Camden during 2005.

New Jersey State Police Activity in Camden, 2005	
Total arrests	1,547
Summonses	645
Seized drugs value	\$258,615
Seized currency value	\$349,583
Weapons recovered	196
Municipal ordinance violation	125
Vehicles towed	334

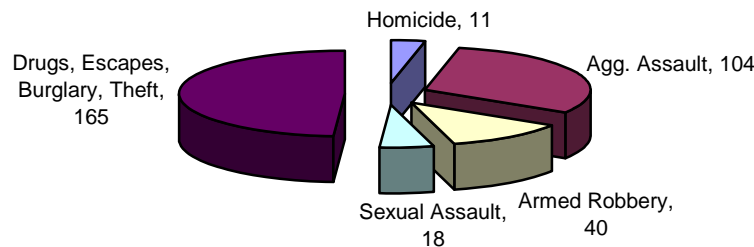
Camden Initiative: U.S. Marshal's NY/NJ Regional Fugitive Task Force

Under the leadership of James Plousis, the United States Marshal for New Jersey, the Regional Fugitive Task Force concentrated last year on fugitives with ties to Camden. In addition to a dedicated squad of Deputy U.S. Marshals, the task force is staffed by detectives from the Camden Police Department, Camden County Prosecutor's Office, New Jersey State Police and the New Jersey Department of Corrections.

This focused mission allows task force detectives to develop and follow leads, bringing continuity and eventually closure to fugitive investigations. The task force also relieves local detectives of the burden of tracking charged defendants and leaves them free to investigate other cases.

The task force apprehended 338 Camden fugitives wanted for such crimes as Murder, Attempted Murder, Aggravated Assault and Sexual Assault. Subjects were tracked and arrested in Camden City, throughout Camden County and in other New Jersey municipalities, as well as in Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland and Delaware. In addition, at least four defendants were located and apprehended in Puerto Rico. Aggressive tracking and apprehension of defendants both nearby and in far-flung places sends a powerful message that there is nowhere to hide and acts as a deterrent.

Camden City Initiative 2005 338 TOTAL ARRESTS MADE



Source: U.S. Marshal's Service