

**Actual Expenditures and Performance Results Achieved by the Northern Virginia -
District of Columbia
Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force**

**A Report to the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, the Senate
Finance Committee, the House Appropriations Committee, and the Director of the
Department of Planning and Budget**



October 2023

**Colonel Gary T. Settle
Superintendent**



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

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Superintendent

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October 1, 2023

TO: The Honorable Terrance C. Cole
Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security

The Honorable Janet D. Howell
Co-Chair of the Senate Finance Committee

The Honorable George L. Barker
Co-Chair of the Senate Finance Committee

The Honorable Barry D. Knight
Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee

Mr. Michael D. Maul
Director, Department of Planning and Budget

Pursuant to the 2022 Virginia Appropriation Act, Item 408 H.2; I am respectfully submitting herewith a report on the *Actual Expenditures and Performance Results Achieved by the Northern Virginia – District of Columbia Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force* for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary T. Settle".

Superintendent

GTS/ACW/ch

Enclosure

**REPORT ON THE ACTUAL EXPENDITURES AND
PERFORMANCE RESULTS ACHIEVED BY
THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA-DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ICAC TASK FORCE
DURING THE TWELTH YEAR**

OVERVIEW OF THE TASK FORCE

The Northern Virginia-District of Columbia Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, otherwise known as NOVA-DC ICAC, is charged with the responsibility of investigating crimes perpetrated against children through the use of technology. Despite our efforts to address these complex and very serious crimes, there are still many who choose to actively prey upon our children and they are in a constant search to stay one step ahead of law enforcement.

The Internet and computers have become so commonplace in American life that all communities are impacted by their use. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 92.9 percent of individuals in Virginia live in a household with computer and internet access; 86.6 percent have smartphones up from approximately 75% in 2011. This translates to increased access by online child sexual predators in the state of Virginia, in the United States, and globally. This dynamic has contributed to an increase in the overall activities of the NOVA-DC ICAC. The task force continues to experience a large number of predators willing to travel great distances and even from other countries to meet children with whom they have developed an online relationship. The NOVA-DC ICAC region is home to over 4.2 million residents, so law enforcement is greatly outnumbered when it comes to investigating these dangerous crimes against children. Many law enforcement agencies are closely evaluating their agency's investigative and personnel priorities; however, NOVA-DC ICAC affiliate law enforcement agencies continue to keep Internet crimes against children investigations a priority. This is in large part due to the financial support provided by the Internet Crimes Against Children Fund.

The NOVA-DC ICAC is comprised of the Virginia State Police (VSP) and 68 partnering local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, who work to pursue those responsible for these crimes. With the exception of one federal agency not listed, the following are the participating agencies:

NOVA-DC ICAC TASK FORCE AFFILIATE AGENCIES

Agency	Type
Alexandria Police Department	City
Arlington County Police Department	County
Clarke County Sheriff's Office	County
Culpeper County Sheriff's Office	County
Fairfax City Police Department	City
Fairfax County Fire Marshal Office	County
Fairfax County Police Department	County
Falls Church Police Department	City
Fauquier County Sheriff's Office	County
Frederick County Sheriff's Office	County
Fredericksburg Police Department	City
George Mason University Police Department	Local
Harrisonburg Police Department	City
Harrisonburg/Rockingham County Social Services	State
Harrisonburg/Rockingham County C.A. Office	State
Loudoun County Sheriff's Office	County
Madison County Sheriff's Office	County
Manassas City Police Department	City
Manassas Park Police Department	City
Metro DC Police Department	City
Northern Va. Community College	Local
Orange County Sheriff's Office	County
Page County Sheriff's Office	County
Prince William County Police Department	County
Purcellville Police Department	City
Rappahannock County Sheriff's Office	County
Rockingham County Sheriff's Office	County
Shenandoah County Sheriff's Office	County
Spotsylvania County Sheriff's Office	County
Stafford County Sheriff's Office	County
Town of Culpeper Police Department	City
Town of Elkton Police Department	City
Town of Haymarket Police Department	City
Town of Herndon Police Department	City
Town of Front Royal	City
Town of Leesburg Police Department	City
Town of Luray Police Department	City
Town of Middletown Police Department	City
Town of Quantico Police Department	City

Town of Strasburg Police Department	City
Town of Vienna Police Department	City
Town of Warrenton Police Department	City
Town of Woodstock Police Department	City
NASA Office of Inspector General Computer Crimes Division	Federal
U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations	Federal
U.S. Army - CCIU	Federal
U.S. Bureau of ATF & Explosives	Federal
U.S. Coast Guard Investigative Unit	Federal
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Federal
U.S. Department of Energy - OIG	Federal
U.S. DHS - Immigration and Customs Enforcement	Federal
U.S. DHS - Custom & Border Protection	Federal
U.S. DHS - Office of Inspector General	Federal
U.S. Department of Transportation - OIG	Federal
U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation	Federal
U.S. Federal Housing Finance - OIG	Federal
U.S. General Services Administration - OIG	Federal
U.S. Government Accountability Office - OIG	Federal
U.S. Health & Human Services - OIG	Federal
U.S. Internal Revenue Service - CIU	Federal
U.S. National Reconnaissance Office - OIG	Federal
U.S. Naval Criminal Investigative Services	Federal
U.S. Postal Inspection Service	Federal
Virginia Attorney General's Office	State
Warren County Sheriff's Office	County
Winchester Police Department	City

In a continuing effort to expand the task force, meetings were held with a number of potential affiliate agencies. The cooperation and collaboration of these agencies has led to many successes. These affiliated agencies work tirelessly to support one another and protect our children from those who seek to exploit their innocence. A few examples of their hard work are as follows:

- On July 7, Front Royal Task Force Officer Det. Marc Ramey, arrested a suspect from Fairfax County for online solicitation of a juvenile. The suspect traveled to Front Royal to meet what he believed was a fourteen-year-old female.
- On July 15, Arlington County Police Department Task Force Officer, Det. Hermes Molina executed a search warrant at a residence in Arlington. The investigation was in response to a Cybertip received from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children that numerous images of child pornography were uploaded to a social media site. TFO Molina obtained a

confession from the suspect and evidence was located during on scene forensic examinations of several electronic devices.

- On August 2, Harrisonburg Task Force Officer, Det. Greg Miller arrested a suspect who was sentenced to 127 years of incarceration. The investigation began as a result of numerous Cybertips received from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.
- On August 31, City of Falls Church Task Force Officer Det. LeGrand-Douglass, executed a residential search warrant in Falls Church. The investigation was in response to a Cybertip received from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children that images of child pornography were shared through an Email. Det. LeGrand-Douglass obtained a confession from the suspect and several items were seized for forensic examination.
- On November 2, NOVA ICAC Task Force Officer Special Agent Joel Totten executed a search warrant at a residence in Warrenton, VA. Several electronic devices were analyzed and determined to contain images and videos of Child Sexual Abuse Material. A confession was obtained from the suspect who was arrested on three charges of possessing child pornography.
- On January 6, NOVA ICAC Task Force Officers from Fairfax County and Virginia State Police, executed a residential search warrant in Rockingham County. A confession was obtained from the suspect who was arrested on ten charges of possessing child pornography.
- On February 7, NOVA ICAC Task Force Officer Special Agent David Cook executed a residential search warrant at a residence in Stafford County. Several electronic devices were analyzed and determined to contain images and videos of Child Sexual Abuse Material. The owner was arrested on 10 charges of possessing child pornography.
- From March 13 through 17, NOVA ICAC Task Force Officers along with VSP Human Trafficking Unit conducted a proactive Undercover Operation with the purpose of identifying and arresting individuals engaged in online solicitation of juveniles. Task Force Officers based in Stafford County arrested three adult offenders, who traveled to a location where they believed a minor was meeting them for a sexual encounter. The Stafford operation also identified more than thirty separate offenders, which required ongoing investigation after the operation ended. NOVA ICAC Task Force officers based in Harrisonburg and the Shenandoah Valley during this time frame arrested two offenders who traveled to meet a minor they communicated with online. More than fifteen separate offenders were identified which required followup investigation.

- On March 14, Special Agent Michael Bullock arrested an adult male during a proactive undercover operation in Stafford County. The suspect solicited what he believed to be a thirteen-year-old female, for a sexual encounter and the production of child pornography. Subsequent to his arrest, Ecstasy and Methamphetamine were recovered from the suspect. A forensic examination of the suspect's mobile phone revealed he had communicated with a juvenile in Texas, soliciting her for child pornography. Follow up investigation with Texas ICAC investigators, located the juvenile and provided victim services.
- On March 20, Front Royal Task Force Officer, Det. Marc Ramey initiated an investigation and identified an adult male subject soliciting juveniles for sexual encounters through social media sites. Senior Special Agent Chad Morris was also investigating this suspect for similar offenses in another jurisdiction. Det. Ramey and Senior Special Agent Morris coordinated their investigations, which resulted in the arrest and a confession from the suspect. The suspect plead guilty in both cases and was sentenced to several years in incarceration.
- On May 9, Town of Hemdon Task Force Officer Det. Jay Choi executed a residential search warrant in Fairfax, VA. Numerous electronic devices were analyzed and determined to contain images and videos of Child Sexual Abuse Material. The owner of the devices was identified as a director of a childcare facility. Child Pornography was located on his computer, and he was subsequently arrested for both Possession & Distribution of Child Pornography.

These brief case summaries are intended to be a very small representation of the volumes of complex and noteworthy criminal investigations being handled by the NOVA-DC ICAC Task Force. The task force is committed to providing highly efficient and professional services across its region, as well as collateral support to the other 60 task forces nationwide. As such, special training and equipment are necessary on an ongoing basis to keep pace with evolving technologies and the complexities associated with these investigations. In addition to evolving technologies, media capacity continues to grow, which demands increasing efficiency for the forensic analysis of digital evidence. Details concerning personnel, training, and equipment purchases are included in the subsequent pages.

**Northern Virginia-DC ICAC Task Force
Appropriation Expenditures during July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023**

PERSONNEL

Expended: \$667,510.08

TRAINING/TRAVEL EXPENSES

Expended: \$9,567.66

EQUIPMENT EXPENSES

Expended: \$168,308.90

OTHER

Expended: \$60,227.55

TOTALS

Revenue Received: \$ 897,996.96
Expended: \$ 905,614.19
Over-expended: \$ 7,617.23

PERSONNEL

As a result of sustained funding support, the NOVA-DC ICAC is able to employ one supervisor, three special agents, and one agency lead analyst to complement the three special agents, one fiscal technician, and two forensic examiners funded through alternate sources. This funding also provided overtime pay for personnel to work Pro-Active/Undercover investigations.

These additional human resources enhance the task force's capacity to conduct child exploitation investigations, and further support the needs of the various affiliate agencies. Additionally, human resources impact the task force as a whole by increasing the hours dedicated to ICAC investigative work, as well as improving the continuity of administrative functions that ultimately benefits the overall efficiency of the task force. These partnerships provide resources to work cooperatively across the task force region to combat Internet crimes against children. Together, personnel initiate investigations related to technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation and child pornography with a goal to reduce child victimization through the identification, apprehension and prosecution of child sexual predators.

TRAINING

Task force members are required to successfully complete an essential training regimen that includes specified courses encompassing many technical topics of study. Courses normally range in duration from two days to one week depending on the depth and complexity of the subject matter. Minimum standards of training must be achieved to remain in compliance with the ICAC Investigative Guidelines and Operational Standards. The focus of these training endeavors includes:

- Increasing the investigative capabilities of state and local law enforcement officers in the detection, investigation, and apprehension of Internet crimes against children offenders, including technology-facilitated child exploitation offenders.
- Providing advanced capabilities/skills and technical assistance to other ICAC task forces and other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in the areas of investigations, forensics, prosecution, community outreach, and capacity-building, using recognized experts to assist in the development and delivery of a wide array of training programs.
- Enhancing a uniform nationwide response to Internet crimes against children offenses, including assisting other ICAC task forces, as well as other federal, state, and local agencies with Internet crimes against children investigations and prosecutions related to the Commonwealth.
- Developing and delivering Internet crimes against children public awareness and prevention programs.

Expenses for training include tuition, transportation, fuel, lodging, parking, and meals. Although the COVID-19 pandemic converted many training classes to virtual platforms such as ZOOM and webinars, the following is a list of courses completed through the appropriated funding:

- Cellebrite Certification & Re-certifications
- Computer Forensic Lab Accreditation and membership
- NW3C Social Networking course
- Reid Interview training
- Virginia Procurement training
- ICAC Supervisor's training
- Various mobile device forensic and investigative trainings
- Various ICAC investigative techniques training

TRAVEL

In order to build a robust investigative foundation, it is essential that the NOVA-DC ICAC support affiliate agencies with authorized travel related expenses. Such expenses involve support for applicable transportation, meals and lodging for personnel attending specialized training and operational meetings. NOVA-DC ICAC personnel also travel to conduct field work and ICAC pro-active/reactive investigations, which often require investigators to work lengthy hours.

Through the appropriated funding, task force personnel participated in Pro-Active Operations, and supervisors worked jointly in support of ICAC field personnel. Several task force members travelled out of their assigned area for follow-up investigative work and court proceedings on child exploitation cases. Travel expenses were supported for the NOVA-DC ICAC regional meetings, human trafficking prevention meetings, and ICAC Operational meetings.

EQUIPMENT

The NOVA-DC ICAC investigates technology facilitated criminal activity. These complex investigations are conducted in an evolving environment. While emerging technologies may serve to enhance the capabilities of the investigator, they also serve to advance the criminal element making investigations even more challenging. The NOVA-DC ICAC strives to ensure that each fully participating affiliate has the necessary equipment and software to enable them to conduct thorough and comprehensive investigations. Such expenditures include equipment as well as the ongoing support and maintenance required for software licenses and updates.

The revenue for this fund is still approximately 30% less than pre-pandemic levels. Purchases to replace end-of-life equipment was put off until such time as revenues improve. However, through the appropriated funding, the NOVA-DC ICAC purchased much needed equipment and renewals for member agencies to include the following:

- Dropbox renewal
- Wasp Inventory Software renewal
- Cellebrite renewal
- FTK renewals
- Snagit renewals
- Parallels Pro
- RECON renewal
- Oxygen
- XRY Renewal
- Graykey
- Battery charger/batteries
- Air Purifier Supplies
- Challenge Coins
- Cables and peripheral equipment
- MacBooks & AirPods
- Digital external storage
- Whooster
- 1TB flashdrives
- Peripheral accessories
- Desktop printer

OTHER

A recent report by the United States Marshals Service Behavioral Analysis Unit that surveyed 500 Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) personnel and 85 spouses or significant others noted specific findings with regards to secondary stress in ICAC personnel. The report seeks to provide an idea of how secondary stress can impact the investigator and their loved ones; communicate which coping skills were related to lower secondary traumatic stress scores; and share the advice offered by significant others of ICAC personnel. The author was surprised by the number of comments from the significant others stating the need for mandatory mental health check-ins or counseling.

Through the use of appropriated funds, the NOVA-DC ICAC has been proactive in its approach to the issues surrounding secondary stress. Consistent with the report, NOVA-DC ICAC personnel operate in a supportive work environment; meaning one where respondents feel their co-workers can be relied on in difficult situations, are easy to communicate with, and are willing to extend help on challenging cases. Affiliates are invited to take part in peer discussion groups, and they are afforded the confidential services of a highly qualified mental health provider. The task force recognizes the value of human resources and the serious nature of secondary stress. The Mental Wellness Program continues to provide support and guidance in an effort to protect the welfare of personnel subjected to disturbing and graphic depiction of child victimization.

In addition to the Mental Wellness Program, other miscellaneous and/or recurring costs are necessary for the support of the ICAC office and personnel. Through the appropriated funding, the ICAC was also able to procure or provide the following:

- Office Supplies
- Ink and Toner Cartridges
- Misc. Vehicle Expenses (Fuel, Insurance, Repair, and Maintenance)
- Meals Reimbursement
- Payroll Service Bureau Yearly Fees
- Cox Communications (Internet for field offices)
- VITA Service Fees (for air cards, cell phone service, and laptops)
- Line of Duty VRS Fees
- Worker’s Compensation Fees
- Liability Insurance Fees

Performance Results and Enforcement Activities

The hard work and dedication of the many NOVA-DC ICAC personnel are documented in numerous reports, media releases, and public presentations. Additionally, the NOVA-DC ICAC is mandated to report monthly to the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (DOJ/OJJDP). The various metrics included in the DOJ/OJJDP Reports have been compiled and incorporated below for the fiscal year July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

Traveler complaints have increase by 57% since last report in 2022. Enticement complaints have decreased by 20%, a 9% decrease in Obscenity Directed to Minors and a 124% increase in Child Pornography Distribution complaints were also investigated this fiscal year. Additionally, the number of Cybertips received increased from 6,023 to 8,216 this fiscal year; a 36% rise.

The NOVA-DC ICAC personnel routinely support one another in various ways. Such support and collaboration are reflected in the number of task force affiliate members and other professionals sent to ICAC training. The training sessions provided decreased 20% this reporting period. The task force was able to engage in 102 Community outreach events, such as internet safety presentations for schools, churches, and social organizations and public awareness events reaching 4,025 community members, an increase of 50%.

Documented Complaints

Traveler	Proactive	38
	Reactive	6
Enticement	Proactive	51
	Reactive	88
Obscenity Directed to Minors	Proactive	51
	Reactive	73
Child Prostitution	Proactive	8

	Reactive	36
Manufacture Child Pornography		
	Proactive	39
	Reactive	75
Distribution of Child Pornography		
	Proactive	121
	Reactive	330
Possession of Child Pornography		
	Proactive	221
	Reactive	463
<u>Case Information</u>		
Case Dispositions		
	Unfounded	642
	Suspended	76
	Plea	82
	Trial	25
Case Referrals		
	Federal	53
	State	19
	Local	4520
Submitted for Federal Prosecution		28
Accepted for Federal Prosecution		21
<u>Number of Investigations</u>		1756
<u>Arrests</u>		266
<u>Goals</u>		
Cybertips Received		8216
CVIP Submissions		79
Affiliated Agencies Added		9
Child Victims Identified		
	With Images	42
	Without Images	24
<u>Court Actions</u>		
Subpoenas or Court Orders		
	Federal	1150
	State/Local	1599
Search Warrants		
	Federal	87
	State/Local	634
<u>Technical Assists</u>		
Forensic Previews		192
Forensic Exams		502
Total Gigabytes Examined		196,218

Training

Training Sessions Provided	57
Law Enforcement Trained	656
Prosecutors Trained	50
Other Professions Trained	120
Number sent to ICAC Training	63
Number sent to Other Training	38

Community Outreach

Presentations	75
Number of Attendees	2,928
Public Events	27
Number of Attendees	1,097
Public Awareness	89

Department of Criminal Justice Services Funding for NOVA-DC ICAC Affiliates

The Virginia State Police (VSP) entered into an inter-agency agreement with the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to disburse allocated ICAC funds in support of local NOVA-DC ICAC Task Force affiliates. The hard work and dedication of the many NOVA-DC ICAC personnel is documented in numerous reports, media releases, and public presentations. Additionally, the NOVA-DC ICAC is mandated to report monthly to the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (DOJ/OJJDP). The task force's metrics are denoted on page 12 - 14 of this report and are consistent with the time period of this DCJS award.

The NOVA-DC ICAC Task Force actively engaged in training, community outreach, and enforcement to enhance capabilities and encourage increased participation. Additionally, task force staff engaged many non-affiliated agencies in an effort to increase task force membership. Capacity building across the region continues to be a priority for the task force. This is a dynamic goal that is accomplished through proactive and ongoing collaboration with all affiliates that affords them technical support, as well as the ability to fund jurisdiction specific needs.

Each respective jurisdiction is different, and their community has unique demands of their law enforcement. Some agencies require support for overtime to conduct ICAC investigations, while others need advanced equipment and training. As such, this funding was distributed across the region directly to NOVA-DC ICAC affiliate agencies via memorandums of agreement. Affiliated agencies expended the funding on their unique ICAC related expenses, which included training, community outreach, equipment, overtime, and salaries. The agencies worked with task force command to identify and prioritize their needs, which enabled each agency to build capacity within their specific area of responsibility. The positive feedback from the ICAC affiliates has been extraordinary and agencies are more prepared to engage in these highly complex investigations. In addition to the areas identified earlier in the report, some additional training and community outreach efforts:

- Several investigators attended National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C) trainings.
- Personnel attended National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) training.
- Many affiliate members participated in a variety of mobile device certification classes.
- Numerous task force personnel participated in many unique ICAC specific training courses designed to enhance their investigative capacity.
- Task Force personnel conducted 75 presentations and other community outreach events attended by approximately 4,025 persons.

Disbursement of Funds

Budget Category	Budget	Total Expenditures	Unexpended Budget
Support Staff	\$57,903	\$57,903	0
Consultants	\$546,307	\$546,307	0
Grand Totals	\$604,210	\$604,210	\$0

Consultants – This category reflects funding provided directly to local affiliate agencies for capacity building. Many affiliates have as in the past utilized their funding to send investigators to the Department of Justice Law Enforcement Training Conference in Atlanta and The Dallas Crimes Against Children Conference.

Support Staff – This category reflects funding provided for the necessary support staff personnel as described in the funding narrative and budget.

To further enhance capacity, NOVA-DC ICAC Task Force affiliates utilized their funding to procure highly technical equipment that enables investigators to conduct these complex investigations in an ever-evolving cyber environment. Additionally, the task force thrives on collaboration to enhance effectiveness and efficiency. Affiliates support one another through mobile on-scene response, technical assistance, search warrant execution, and intelligence sharing to enhance awareness and their knowledge base. Further, the funding provides some relief to agencies struggling with limited budgets, and it prevents them from being forced to choose whether or not to investigate these unconscionable crimes.

Affiliate agencies utilized their funding to address their individual needs in a variety of ways to include:

- Purchasing computers, tablets, printers, scanners, and related accessories.
- Off-setting salaries to dedicate a full-time investigator to combating child exploitation.

- Paying overtime for investigators to complete these complex investigations.
- Purchasing software and license renewals.
- Off-setting vehicle costs for full-time task force investigators.
- Paying travel expenses and registration fees for high quality specialized training.
- Procuring specialized equipment to enhance officer safety.
- Purchasing enhanced communication devices.
- Purchasing on-scene triage equipment and software.
- Procuring digital cameras and video equipment.
- Purchasing digital storage devices and additional portable hard drives to support investigations.

Each agency is staffed and equipped differently, which validates the methodology employed by the NOVA-DC ICAC Task Force. With funding being distributed to the affiliates, they are empowered to make decisions that directly impact their ability to engage in these complex investigations. A number of our valued affiliates use this allocated fund to pay for travel and training expenses for their investigators.

All of these agencies work very closely with the task force to ensure that all expenditures are consistent with the goals and objectives of the state and national ICAC Program. The NOVA-DC ICAC affiliates are highly professional organizations dedicated to protecting the Commonwealth's most vulnerable citizens.

As the coordinating agency, the Virginia State Police respects and appreciates the collaboration of the 68 participating agencies. Collectively, we are proactive in our pursuit of those who prey upon our children, while simultaneously striving to prevent child victimization through collaboration, training, community outreach, and enforcement.