



HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

Office of Management and Budget 1001 Preston; Suite 500 Houston, TX 77002 713-274-1135

Grants Coordination Section - Conveyance Form Application ☒ Award ☐

Department Name / Number	DUNS	Grant Title
Sheriff - Patrol & Administration - 540	Not Applicable	FY 2024 SB 224 Catalytic Converter Theft
Funding Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles: CFDA# N/A	Grant Agency: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles	
Program Year: 1 st	Program Ending:	
Grant Begin Date: 09/01/2023	Grant End Date: 08/31/2024	
Grant Org. Key:	If applicable, Prior Year Org. Key: N/A	

Grant Description:

The Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority (MVCPA) supports statewide law enforcement through vehicle theft and vehicle burglary reduction initiatives, education, and public awareness, and is part of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV).

	Total Budget	Grant Funded	County Funded
Salary & Benefits	\$57,000.00	\$57,000.00	\$0.00
Non-Labor	\$6,300.00	\$6,300.00	\$0.00
Sub Tot. Incremental Cost	\$63,300.00	\$63,300.00	\$0.00
Indirect Cost	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00*
TOTALS	\$63,300.00	\$63,300.00	\$0.00

* under development

Full Time Equivalent Positions

Date Guidelines are Available

% of Positions Paid by Grant

Grant Submittal Deadline Date

Grant Discussion:

If awarded, this would be the first year for this project under this grant program. Grant funds would be used to provide overtime funding for the Sheriff's Auto Theft Unit to combat vehicle catalytic converter theft. There is no local match requirement.

County Funded Cost Projection

Year	Required	Discretionary
2023	-	-
2024	-	-
2025	-	-
2026	-	-
2027	-	-

Completed by: Michael Mattingly Mattingly, Mike

Date: 4/11/24

Reviewed by: [Signature]

Date: 4/12/2024



SHERIFF ED GONZALEZ

1200 Baker Street, Houston, Texas 77002 ★ (713) 755-6044 ★ www.sheriff.hctx.net

March 18, 2024

To: Ed Gonzalez, Sheriff

Thru: Mike Lee, Chief Deputy
Executive Bureau

Michael Lanham, Director of Finance
Finance Division

Brendan Fullem, Financial Administrator
Finance Division

Brian Schmitz, Grants Manager
Grants Management Office

From: Jazmin Gonzales, Grant Analyst
Grants Management Office

Re: **FY 2024 MVCPA SB 224 Catalytic Converter Grant Application**

The Grants Management Office requests authorization to submit to Commissioners Court a grant **application** for the **FY 2024 Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority (MVCPA) SB 224 Catalytic Converter** grant in the amount of **\$63,300 with no required cash match**.

The FY24 grant year period is **September 1, 2023 through August 31, 2024**. This grant would provide **overtime funding for the Auto Theft Unit** to combat **catalytic converter theft**.

Your consideration in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Regards,

Jazmin Gonzales
Grant Analyst

ORDER

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF HARRIS

On this, the 23rd day of April, 2024, the Commissioners Court of Harris County, Texas, sitting as the governing body of Harris County, upon motion of Commissioner _____, seconded by Commissioner _____, duly put and carried,

IT IS ORDERED that County Judge Lina Hidalgo or her designee be hereby authorized to approve, and to sign any ancillary grant documents, and on behalf of Harris County, Texas, to apply for the following grant:

**FY 2024 MOTOR VEHICLE CRIME PREVENTION AUTHORITY
SB 224 CATALYTIC CONVERTER
– SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

Application Amount: \$63,300

Grant Period: September 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024



Senate Bill 224 Grant Application for 2024

The Application was submitted by Lina Hidalgo at 3/15/2024 7:18:37 AM and is now locked.
The confirmation Number is 2024031500253.

Primary Agency / Grantee Legal Name: *Harris County*
Organization Type: *Law Enforcement*
Organization ORI (if applicable): *TX1010000: HARRIS CO SO (MIP)*

Program Title Please enter a short description of the proposed program that can be used as the title.
Harris County Auto Theft Taskforce Catalytic Converter Theft Prevention and Investigation

Application Category (See **Request for Applications [RFA]** for category details and descriptions RFA Priority Funding Section):
☒ **New Grant** - 2024 is the first year of the MVCPA Catalytic Converter Program Grants. All 2024 grant applicants use the new grant category.

MVCPA Program Category (see **RFA** and **TAC 43, 3 §57.14**). Check all that apply.

- ☒ Law Enforcement, Detection and Apprehension
- ☐ Prosecution, Adjudication and Conviction
- ☒ Reduction of the Theft of Catalytic Converters
- ☒ Education Programs and Marketing

Taskforce Grant Participation and Coverage Area

Provide a General Description of the Participating and Coverage Area of this Grant Application

Coverage includes all areas of unincorporated Harris County, Texas.

Define in the tables below the grant relationships and geographic area of the Catalytic Converter program:

Applicant will add the participating and coverage agencies from the ORI list below. If an agency is not in the ORI list, please include the agency and role in the general description above. Make sure to follow the definitions below and select an agency in the dropdown. Use the *Add as Participating Agency* or *Add as Coverage Agency* button to populate the list.

Participating Agencies are agencies that materially participate in the grant application through the exchange of funds for reimbursement and cash match. Participating agencies are defined after the grant award by interlocal/interagency agreements. Each applicant must select their own agency first. Then select agencies that will receive or provide funding and/or resources. [Note: Interlocal/interagency agreements do not need to be submitted with the application. Interlocal agreements will need to be executed prior to the first payment being made if selected for a grant. Letters of support with the application from the participating agencies are strongly recommended.]

Coverage Agencies are agencies that provided some level of coverage, assistance or support by this grant application but will not materially exchange funds as cash match or reimbursement. The coverage is not supported by an after the award with interlocal/interagency agreements. Coverage agencies as law enforcement agencies may have jurisdictional coverage agreements unrelated to the grant (Ex. City Y is within County X or vice versa). Agencies selected in this list include agencies that will be covered or where the agency indicates that their agency will coordinate or call upon the program. Letters of support with the application from the participating agencies are strongly recommended.

Participating Agencies	Coverage Agencies
TX1010000 HARRIS CO SO (MIP)	

- ☐ **Other Coverage** (Use if ORI not listed or explanation is necessary.):
No text provided.

- ☐ **National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB)** Used as Match (Documentation and time certification required.)
- ☐ **Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)**
- ☐ **Other State or Federal Agency** (specify:)

Resolution: Complete a Resolution and submit to local governing body for approval. *Sample Resolution* is found in the Request for Application or send a request for an electronic copy to grantsMVCPA@txdmv.gov. The completed and executed Resolution must be attached to this on-line application.

Grant Budget Form

MVCPA recommends that the applicant complete the total costs (MVCPA and Cash Match combined) for this program. The applicant can then enter the desired amount of Cash Match (not less than 20% per TAC Title 43, Â§57.36). The system will then calculate the correct grant and match amounts.

Budget Entry Option:

- ☒ Enter Total and let system calculate MVCPA Funds and Cash Match, Match Percentage: 0%
- ☐ Enter MVCPA and Cash Match Amounts

Click on category name to edit budget detail for that category.

Budget Category	MVCPA Expenditures	Cash Match Expenditures	Total Expenditures	In-Kind Match
<i>Personnel</i>				
<i>Fringe</i>				
<i>Overtime</i>	\$57,000	\$0	\$57,000	
<i>Professional and Contract Services</i>				
<i>Travel</i>				
<i>Equipment</i>	\$6,300	\$0	\$6,300	
<i>Supplies and Direct Operating Expenses (DOE)</i>				
Total	\$63,300	\$0	\$63,300	
Cash Match Percentage		0.00%		

Description	Subcategory	Pct Time	MVCPA Funds	Cash Match	Total	In-Kind Match
Personnel						
Total Personnel						
Fringe						
Total Fringe						
Overtime						
Deputy Investigator 1	Investigator/LEO		\$4,265	\$0	\$4,265	
Deputy Investigator 2	Investigator/LEO		\$3,467	\$0	\$3,467	
Deputy Investigator 3	Investigator/LEO		\$4,109	\$0	\$4,109	
Deputy Investigator 4	Investigator/LEO		\$3,718	\$0	\$3,718	
Deputy Investigator 5	Investigator/LEO		\$3,894	\$0	\$3,894	
Deputy Investigator 6	Investigator/LEO		\$4,109	\$0	\$4,109	
Deputy Investigator 7	Investigator/LEO		\$4,109	\$0	\$4,109	
Deputy Investigator 8	Investigator/LEO		\$3,894	\$0	\$3,894	
Deputy Investigator 9	Investigator/LEO		\$3,033	\$0	\$3,033	
Deputy Investigator 10	Investigator/LEO		\$2,750	\$0	\$2,750	
Deputy Investigator 11	Investigator/LEO		\$2,300	\$0	\$2,300	
Deputy Investigator 12	Investigator/LEO		\$4,352	\$0	\$4,352	
Sergeant 1	Investigator/LEO		\$4,238	\$0	\$4,238	
Sergeant 2	Investigator/LEO		\$4,788	\$0	\$4,788	
Sergeant 3	Investigator/LEO		\$3,974	\$0	\$3,974	
Total Overtime			\$57,000	\$0	\$57,000	

Professional and Contract Services

Total Professional and Contract Services

Description	Subcategory	Pct Time	MVCPA Funds	Cash Match	Total	In-Kind Match
Travel						
Total Travel						
Equipment						
Handheld laser engraver			\$6,300	\$0	\$6,300	
Total Equipment			\$6,300	\$0	\$6,300	

Supplies and Direct Operating Expenses (DOE)

Total Supplies and Direct Operating Expenses (DOE)

Budget Narrative**C. Overtime**

Overtime for 12 Auto Theft Deputy Investigators and 3 Auto Theft Sergeants responsible for investigating all motor vehicle thefts, theft from motor vehicles including catalytic converter theft, and fraud-vehicle-related crimes to work VIN etching events, catalytic converter call-outs, and salvage yard/mechanic shop/business inspections to address the catalytic converter problem outside of the regular 8-hour shift during April to August 2024. During April to August 2024, an estimated 5 VIN etching events will be held, approximately 1 to 3 call-outs per person per month on an every other month rotation will take place, and approximately at least 2 business inspections per month will be conducted. Each VIN etching event requires at least 4 Deputies and 1 Sergeant during approximately 7 hours. Each call-out requires at least 4 Deputies and 1 Sergeant during approximately 4 hours. Each business inspection requires at least 5 Deputies and 1 Sergeant during at least 4 hours. Overtime will be paid according to local overtime policy. Deputies: Estimate of 464 hours at an approximate overtime rate of \$43.79 - \$57.75 and 23.6625% fringe benefits rate for a total of \$44,000. Sergeants: Estimate of 107 hours at an approximate overtime rate of \$61.44 - \$65.82 and 23.6625% fringe benefits rate for a total of \$13,000. Total: \$57,000 for overtime and related fringe benefits (FICA 7.38%, Group Health \$18,030 annual, Workers Comp 0.88%, Unemployment Insurance 0.10%, Retirement 15.3025%)

F. Equipment

Handheld Laser Engraver \$5,995 + estimated shipping \$300 To laser engrave serial/VIN numbers on catalytic converters during public awareness events. Etching these numbers on catalytic converters will aid investigators in locating complainants in the event their catalytic converters are stolen and recovered. Currently during etching events, investigators hand-etch converters using a dremel-like tool which runs the risk of burning their hands or forearms even while wearing protective gloves and causes fatigue due to the repetition and under-vehicle positioning. This device will allow for serial numbers to be placed on the converters in a much more legible manner, increase efficiency during the etching process, increase the amount of catalytic converters etched, and reduce physical demand on investigators during the etching process.

Revenue

Indicate Source of Cash and In-Kind Matches for the proposed program. Click on links to go to match detail pages for entry of data.

[Cash Match](#)

[In-Kind Match](#)

Statistics to Support Grant Problem Statement

Reported Cases	2022	2023
Jurisdiction	Catalytic Converter Theft	Catalytic Converter Theft
Harris County	3,026	740

[Add/Edit Statistics](#)

Application Narrative**Grant Introduction (Executive Summary) and General Information**

- 1.1 Briefly describe the organization and program operation. Provide a high level summary to the application and how it will affect the local community. (500 words or less)

Harris County is located in the southeastern part of the state near the Galveston Bay, and its county seat is Houston, the largest city in Texas and the fourth largest city in the United States. Harris County consists of 1,777 square miles, with 1,703 square miles of land and 74 square miles of water. According to a 2023 population report, Harris County's population has grown to an estimated 4.8 million residents, with over 2 million living in the unincorporated areas. From 2010-2023, Harris County's population has grown more than twice as fast as the nation's population and is on track to become the second most populous U.S. county within the next few years. It is estimated that Harris County's population will reach 5 million residents by 2026. The Harris County Sheriff's Office is the primary law enforcement agency responsible for all unincorporated areas Harris County. The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit is a specialized unit within the Criminal Investigations Bureau of the Sheriff's Office. The Auto Theft/BMV Unit works with

municipalities and other agencies within the geographic area to combat motor vehicle theft and catalytic converter theft from motor vehicles. The Harris County Sheriff's Auto Theft/BMV Unit closely works with the Tx-DMV Criminal Investigations Unit and NICB investigators. The Auto Theft/BMV Unit receives case assignments via internal case referrals, outside agency referrals, and self-initiated system searches to uncover trends and patterns related to potential organized criminal activity. According to UCR reports, in 2022, the Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit investigated 7,395 motor vehicle thefts and 20,627 theft from motor vehicles, including vehicle parts/accessories (Larceny from motor vehicles). The reported loss from motor vehicle thefts was \$152,634,039, and the reported loss from theft from motor vehicles was \$41,538,919. In addition to auto theft, theft from motor vehicles, and fraud-related motor vehicle crime investigations, the Auto Theft/BMV Unit conducts salvage yard inspections to ensure compliance with mandates. As a service to the citizens of Harris County, the Auto Theft/BMV Unit conducts 68A inspections at no cost. Investigators conduct and/or participate in training sessions to further educate law enforcement on auto theft and theft from motor vehicle-related crimes. The MVCPA grant funding is essential to ensure that the Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit continues to have the resources and support to continue its efforts to deter vehicle theft and theft from motor vehicles through proactive investigations, high-quality investigative techniques, and collaborating with participating agencies and stakeholders.

- 1.2 Describe the taskforce governing, organization and command structures. Include a description of the nature of support and agreements that will be in place if the grant is awarded. Provide any details unique to the taskforce organization or geographical target area. Describe whether any part of this grant will be directed to serve a specific target population (or subset of the community)?
- The Harris County Sheriff's Office is divided into three major commands, law enforcement, detentions, and administrative operations. Each command falls under the leadership of an assistant chief who directly supervises bureau commanders or Majors who are the head of each bureau that falls within the specific command. The Harris County Auto Theft Unit falls under the law enforcement command under the Criminal Investigations Bureau. Within the different bureaus there are numerous divisions which are led by division commanders or Captains. Due to Auto Theft being a specialty trait and also having several undercover officers assigned it falls within the Special Investigations Division. The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft Taskforce works in close proximity with the City of Houston Police Department's Auto Theft unit as well as surrounding counties such as Galveston, Montgomery, Chambers, Brazoria, and Waller. Also the HCSO Auto Theft Taskforce works with its state and partners such as DPS. Any requests for collaboration or assistance from any outside agencies are often met with due diligence and are prioritized. This includes any training or equipment that the taskforce is awarded by the MVCPA grant. The Harris County geographical area has some extremely unique characteristics including: - Several major interstate highways that intersect in the Houston area and connect to the Mexico border through the Southern District of Texas to the rest of the United States. - Houston's airports create one of North America's largest public airport systems and positions Houston as the international gateway to the south central United States, Mexico, Central, and South America. In 2022, over 40 million travelers passed through Houston's airports, including over 9 million international passengers. - The Port of Houston is a 25 mile long industrial complex of more than 150 diversified public and private facilities located just a few hours sailing time from the Gulf of Mexico. The Port of Houston has expanded with facilities now in multiple communities. The port consists of a petrochemical complex that is one of the largest in the world, and most of the Volkswagen cars sold in the United States pass through the Port of Houston. The port is ranked first in the United States in foreign waterborne commerce, second in the U.S. in total tonnage, and fifteenth in the world in total tonnage. - Houston is home to the Texas Medical Center, the largest in the world. The Texas Medical Center employs over 120,000 employees and hosts over 10 million patient encounters annually. - Numerous research facilities, diplomats, and international businesses sponsor H1B visa applications for workers. - Many major corporations have corporate headquarters located in the unincorporated areas of Harris County with the Northwest area of the county rapidly expanding business space. - There are 25 school districts located in Harris County and many college universities including TSU, Rice, and University of Houston, the third largest university in Texas. Harris County has 34 incorporated cities included in its boundaries along with 47 designated places or unincorporated communities. Despite the massive population in the Harris County area, there are significant numbers of agricultural and livestock communities which increase the demand for inexpensive, manual labor. These unique qualities make all of Harris County a thriving, international hub of commerce and culture, yet these same qualities create the opportunity for a multitude of organized criminal activity, which poses numerous threats to our community. From the manufacture, sale, and distribution of narcotics, to human trafficking, smuggling, forced prostitution, weapons trafficking, robbery, and all other crimes there is a direct link to motor vehicle theft. Stolen vehicles are often used to facilitate other criminal activities whether being used for financial proceeds, a getaway vehicle, transportation of illicit items (drugs, humans, weapons, etc.), or domestic terrorism. The unincorporated areas of Harris County exceed 2 million people and has grown 4.1% annually since the 2000 Census. From 2010-2021, Harris County's population has grown more than twice as fast as the nation's population and is on track to become the second most populous U.S. county within the next few years. The Harris County Sheriff's Office is the primary provider of law enforcement services to the unincorporated areas of the county and supplements police forces of incorporated areas.

Grant Problem Statement

- 2.1 Provide an assessment of the Catalytic Converter Theft problem in the coverage area of this application. Include loss data consistent with the reported incident numbers above.

From 2020 to 2022, Harris County has also seen a dramatic increase in catalytic converter thefts. The theft can occur quickly and discreetly. The item is then sold for the valuable precious metals it contains. Because of the lack of an identifier on the catalytic converter, it is complicated for investigators to determine and/or prove the vehicle it was stolen from or locate a complainant. Additionally, the greater Houston/Harris County area is home to over 2,800 automobile dealers which includes 395 franchise dealers. These dealerships have been prone to becoming victims of catalytic converter theft sometimes suffering hundreds of vehicles in one criminal episode. More than half of these dealers are located directly off of a major interstate which often provides criminals a quick avenue of escape when committing these crimes. From FY 2022 to 2023, Harris County did see a significant decrease in catalytic converter-related thefts due to the decrease in palladium, rhodium, and platinum prices in addition to the imposition of Senate Bill 224. In 2022, the taskforce had reports of 3,026 incidents stemming from catalytic converter theft. Those numbers as reported by our Criminal Analysis Intelligence Division (CAID) dropped to only 740 incidents in 2023. As we all know, the theft of the metal copper was at a high during the early 2000's (2001-2008) when the price increased to more than 500 percent. Those numbers eventually decreased as the value of the precious metal fell and law enforcement's efforts began to echo throughout the criminal community. In recent months, numerous law enforcement agencies in Texas have highlighted the trend as a "concerning uptick" due to prices rising and the metal being easily accessible in wires used for internet and electrical transformers. Like the stock market, the prices of

precious metals are unpredictable and can increase or decrease overnight. Even though the trend of catalytic converters is down at the moment, it is not guaranteed that this trend will not return. While in this stage law enforcement agencies can combat and prepare for any changes by continuing the efforts to make the general public aware through means of advertising and social media posts and also during public events such as VIN etching events. Also when these types of thefts do occur, investigators can thoroughly look into all leads and perform more business inspections on metal recycling shops and junkyards. With all of these types of activities in addition to their normal list of duties, the means for overtime would be a great asset to this mission. Investigators do often adjust or "flex" their duty hours in order to adapt for these types of events but generally do end up going over their 8 hour shifts regardless.

Grant Goals and Activities

There are two parts to this section: 1) Functions of Proposed Program and 2) Goals Strategies and Activities (GSA). In the following boxes, describe the functions of the proposed program and then complete a fillable form called GSA.

MVCPA programs must completely describe the actions, methods and tactics that law enforcement and civilian staff will perform for each of the categories below. Describe the reliance on technology or other program elements to solve the problem statement above and goals below. Functions must be detailed and consistent with the requested budget. If a grant is awarded, funds expended towards activities not described in this section will result in the reimbursement being denied.

Part 1

3.1 Functions of the proposed program related to Catalytic Converter Theft from a motor vehicle.

The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Units conduct proactive and reactive investigations receiving cases via internal referral, outside agency referral, and proactive system searches for open case assignments. The Harris County Sheriff's Auto Theft/BMV Unit consists of seventeen (17) investigators who are responsible for investigating all motor vehicle thefts, theft from motor vehicles to include catalytic converter theft, and fraud-vehicle-related crimes for the entire agency. The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit conducts reactive investigations through the following activities: Receive and review newly assigned cases daily and conduct follow-up investigations of reported thefts from motor vehicles such as Catalytic Converters. Contact victims of theft from motor vehicle crimes, and determine resources and investigative methods required to identify potential suspects and recover stolen property. Collaborate with other law enforcement agencies, insurance companies, tax offices, local businesses (pawn shops, cell phone providers, etc.), or any other entity to identify potential suspects or recover stolen property. Collaborate with the district attorney's office to accept and file criminal charges on suspects identified during the investigative process once probable cause has been established. Collaborate with other entities to identify patterns of criminal activity related to catalytic converter theft from motor vehicles and/or to identify prolific catalytic converter offenders. Collaborate frequently with the Harris County Sheriff's Office Crime Analysis and Intelligence (CAID) Unit to identify crime patterns and/or prolific offenders to target specific geographic areas with high levels of reported catalytic converter thefts from motor vehicle crimes or stolen vehicle parts and accessories. Collaborate with other agencies to reduce the number of catalytic converter theft from motor vehicle incidents and assist in reducing the number of thefts from motor vehicles, including motor vehicle parts and accessories. Identify, arrest, and participate in the prosecution of offenders who engage in catalytic converter theft and motor vehicle-related crimes, including theft of parts and accessories from a motor vehicle. In addition, the Harris County taskforce responds to "call-outs" after their normal duty hours that may involve any type of catalytic converter thefts or recoveries. These call-outs can occur during any of the other 16 hours of the day outside of the investigators' regular 8 hour shifts. While we are not privy to the schedule of prolific criminals, we often try to respond to these call-outs as often as possible in order to obtain fresh leads and gather evidence. Most call-out type of situations regarding catalytic converter thefts can be resolved in 4 hours or less. The taskforce hopes to host more catalytic converter etching events around the county in hopes of spreading awareness throughout the local populace. During these events, the taskforce often partners with local automotive businesses who allow the taskforce to utilize a vehicle maintenance bay or port to streamline the etching process for attendees. These events are often time-consuming in nature due to the amount of preparation and advertising that is required. Often, in order to be convenient for the citizens, these events are scheduled on the weekends which often require numerous personnel to work on their days off. At the moment, investigators are not paid for any overtime but are given compensatory time or COMP time which has to be managed to keep below a certain threshold. The overwhelming amount of cases each investigator is required to manage coupled with the lack of manpower often creates a challenge to maintain increased morale levels amongst the unit. Another plan to continue the efforts against catalytic converter theft is to perform additional salvage yard and mechanic shop inspections. These operations can vary in duration as the complexity differs from business to business depending on size. These types of operations usually require several investigators along with a sergeant to be present and can be complicated due to the amount of checks that are usually required.

3.4 Functions of the proposed program related to preventing Catalytic Converter Theft

As mentioned earlier, the taskforce hopes to host more catalytic converter etching events around the county in hopes of spreading awareness throughout the local populace. We are hoping to host an estimated 5 etching events between the months of April and August 2024. Each event often requires 1 sergeant and 4 deputy investigators and normally last 7 hours per event including time for preparation and clean-up. During these events, the taskforce often partners with local automotive businesses who allow the taskforce to utilize a vehicle maintenance bay or port to streamline the etching process for any attendees. These events are often time-consuming in nature due to the amount of preparation and advertising required. Often, in order to be convenient for the citizens, these events are scheduled on the weekends which often require numerous personnel to work on their days off. At the moment, investigators are not paid for any overtime but are given compensatory time or COMP time which has to be managed to keep below a certain threshold. The overwhelming amount of cases each investigator is required to manage coupled with the lack of manpower often a challenge to maintain increased morale levels amongst the unit. In addition, these etching events sometimes attract up to 50 or so vehicles who request their catalytic converters to be etched and treated with a high-heat enamel paint. Investigators at the moment are utilizing a handheld etching tool which is similar to a Dremel or electric engraver. Often times the investigator will etch the last eight digits of a VIN number onto the catalytic converter; however, depending on the operator it may or not be easily legible. After a few hours, fatigue does tend to become an issue as investigators are often in awkward positions when performing these engravings,

especially underneath hot vehicles. The taskforce is requesting funding to purchase a handheld laser engraving device which would allow for quicker turnaround times for these events in addition to a cleaner more professional look while also being less physically demanding on our investigators. The taskforce also works closely with local media outlets in order to reach out to both the English and Spanish speaking communities to spread awareness about the prevention of motor vehicle theft, burglary of motor vehicle, and theft of vehicle parts and accessories. The HCSO also has its own social media team who aids in producing public awareness videos through various social media platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook. The taskforce is also currently working on a special project which is the restoration or re-purposing of a seized 50 series Chevrolet pickup truck. Our team is currently in the designing phase of a vehicle wrap which will be applied to the vehicle which will be used as a travelling showpiece to numerous public awareness and safety events.

3.6 Collaboration Effort -- Describe the taskforce method to collaborate, and not duplicate existing activities. Describe the cross boundaries regional approach to grant activity implementation. Describe how the applicant staff and jurisdiction will coordinate with other taskforces and law enforcement agencies to implement this program.

The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Units regularly supports other local municipalities, adjacent counties, NICB, TxDMV, insurance companies, tax office investigators, TxDPS, and federal agencies responsible for cargo at area ports. This support covers all communities within the Harris County area including adjacent counties. The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit works together with all incorporated municipalities within the geographic boundaries of Harris County as well as jurisdictions outside the immediate area to combat catalytic converter theft, and other motor vehicle crimes. The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit regularly communicates with agencies throughout Harris County to share information and intelligence. The unit is often called upon by other agencies to assist with providing offense reports, identify vehicles, and to assist with investigations. The unit conducts joint undercover operations with other agencies to combat vehicle thefts and thefts from motor vehicles. The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit regularly assists other local task force agencies including the Houston Police Department, Pasadena Police Department, Galveston County Sheriff's Office, and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office by sharing resources and combined efforts to combat vehicle related criminal activity. The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit regularly participates in intelligence sharing and educational endeavors across jurisdictional boundaries to coordinate efforts in combating vehicle related crimes. The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit will continue to collaborate with other task force agencies who are dedicated to implementing grant funded activities by freely sharing resources, intelligence information, personnel, and training resources. The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit regularly collaborates and provides information and assistance to other law enforcement agencies and other parties with a vested interest in the prevention and investigation of catalytic converter theft, motor vehicle theft, theft from motor vehicle and fraud-vehicle related crimes (i.e., district attorney's office, insurance companies, NICB, tax office, TxDMV, etc.) The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit regularly collaborates with other entities to identify patterns of criminal activity related to theft from motor vehicles and/or to identify prolific offenders. The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit collaborates with other agencies responsible for crimes involving motor vehicle theft and theft from motor vehicles, and provides assistance to reduce the number of criminal incidents including conducting salvage yard or title service inspections and enforcement of regulations. The unit also collaborates with other agencies (law enforcement, insurance companies, tax office, TxDMV, NICB, TxDPS, etc.) to identify crime patterns and/or prolific offenders in order to target specific geographic areas with high levels of reported catalytic converter thefts and other vehicle related crimes. The Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit will continue to provide assistance to other law enforcement agencies to combat catalytic converter theft and will continue the open information sharing and collaboration with other law enforcement agencies and those who have a direct interest in the prevention and investigation of catalytic converter theft.

3.7 If the proposed application requests any exceptions or deviation from any general grant rules, RFA conditions or grant administrative policy, please indicate in the section below. Indicate the section of the specific issue and citation that you are asking the MVCPA to consider and the rational for the request.

N/A

Part II

Goals, Strategies, and Activities

Select Goals, Strategies, and Activity Targets for the proposed program described in the application.

Click on the link above to open a new table called Goals, Strategies, and Activity. Applicants will review the statutory and optional activities. The first section is the statutory measures. Grantees may not provide targets for this section but need to review the descriptions to ensure that they understand the statutory minimum requirements associated with this grant. Applicants will then review the other items and estimate targets for only the activities that the applicant has described and plans to complete under this application.

ID	Activity	Measure	Target
Measures for Grantees. Add Target values for those that you will measure.			
1	Goal 1: Reduce the Incidence of Catalytic Converter Theft through Enforcement Strategies		
1.1	Strategy 1: Conduct Activities that Result in the Arrest, Clearance, and Recoveries of Catalytic Converter Theft		
1.1.1	Identify groups of catalytic converter theft offenders through intelligence gathering, crime analysis and the use of informants	Number of catalytic converter theft groups identified. Include gangs, cartels or other criminal enterprise with two or more members	3
1.1.2	Identify and document/record prolific Catalytic Converter Theft offenders [Prolific is defined as "linked to Catalytic Converter Theft offenses three or more times"]	Number identified/documented offenders	15

ID	Activity	Measure	Target
1.1.5	Conduct inspections of local businesses related to vehicle enterprise (transportation code or occupation code authorized companies such as salvage yard, repair shop, parts recycling center, used car dealership, salvage rebuilder, title service company, other).	Number of businesses inspected	10
1.1.6	Conduct bait vehicle operations that target Catalytic Converter Theft offenders	Number of bait vehicle deployments. Include Catalytic Converter Theft bait operations here.	15
1.1.8	Deploy license plate readers (LPR)	Number of times LPR deployed. Deploy: If stationary unit then total number of days or partial days unit was operable and on. Mobile unit number of days the unit was on and operable.	60
1.1.9	Respond to taskforce license plate reader (LPR) alert notifications	Number of times investigators responded to taskforce LPR alert notifications regardless of whether vehicle was located	60
1.1.12	Conduct covert operations targeting Catalytic Converter Theft offenders	Number of covert operations	
1.1.13	Conduct warrant "round-up" operations targeting catalytic converter crime offenders, including people wanted for Catalytic Converter Theft	Number of warrant round-up operations performed Catalytic Converter Theft	
1.1.15	Increase the recovery rate of stolen motor vehicle Catalytic Converter Theft	Report the number of Catalytic Converters recovered by taskforce	100
1.1.16	Increase the clearance rate of Catalytic Converter Theft	Report the number of Catalytic Converter Theft cases cleared	75
1.1.17	Increase the number of persons arrested for Catalytic Converter Theft	Report the number of persons arrested for Catalytic Converter Theft by taskforce	20
1.2	Strategy 2: Conduct Collaborative Efforts that Result in Reduction of Incidents of Catalytic Converter Theft		
1.2.1	Provide Agency Assists for Catalytic Converter Theft	Number of agency assists related to catalytic converter theft. Assist means responding or answering questions via phone, e-mail, or in person. Providing recommendation, guidance, strategy, support or information that other LEOs will use to resolve their cases. The assist generally does not have the direct responsibility for an investigation nor uses LEO authority. The assist helps another LEO or agency investigate cases. Analysts and civilian employees will record their assists to outside LEOs and agencies met here along with officers.	25
1.2.2	Collaborate with other units or divisions (i.e. homicide, vice, narcotics, etc.) within the taskforce department(s) where there were crimes involving catalytic converter theft. Include all participating jurisdiction departments here.	Number of times collaborated within departments or SOs participating in taskforce related to Catalytic Converter Theft. Collaboration means physically using law enforcement resources, tactics and authority to perform activity on cases that draw upon or aid in the investigation intended to further the resolution of any case, identify parties to crime, identify vehicles, interview witnesses/suspects and apprehend suspects. Collaboration will include any help, recommendation, contribution or support requested from or provided to another unit or offered by the taskforce that aids in the furtherance of Catalytic Converter Theft investigations.	15
1.2.3	Collaborate with all other outside LE agencies and other organizations that assist in the reduction of Catalytic Converter Theft. Include all coverage jurisdictions here	Number of times collaborated with coverage area agencies or other law enforcement agencies and organizations that assist in the reduction of Catalytic Converter Theft. Collaboration means physically using law enforcement resources, tactics and authority to perform activity on cases that draw upon or aid in the investigation intended to further the resolution of any case, identify parties to crime, identify vehicles, interview witnesses/suspects and apprehend suspects. Collaboration will include any help, recommendation, contribution or support requested from or provided to another unit or offered by the taskforce that aids in the furtherance of Catalytic Converter Theft investigations	10
1.2.5	Conduct intelligence information-sharing (Personal attendance)	Number of intelligence meetings attended (include attending as presenter, participant or attendee)	5
1.2.6	Conduct intelligence information-sharing (Written information)	Crime analysis bulletins disseminated (include information distributed to law enforcement agencies via text, e-mail, or intra-net communications)	10
1.2.7	Collaborate with other MVCPA taskforces	Number of times collaborated with other MVCPA taskforces that assist in the reduction in Catalytic Converter Theft	10
3	Goal 3: Educate/Train Citizens and Qualified Personnel in Detection and Prevention of Catalytic Converter Theft		
3.1	Strategy 1: Conduct Public Awareness Related Activities Used to Educate Citizens		
3.1.1	Conduct educational outreach events (include trade show, exhibits, booths)	Number of outreaches	10

ID	Activity	Measure	Target
	at community events, vehicle displays, brochures, etc.)		
3.1.2	Conduct educational presentations to the public	Number of presentations. Presentation means in person, on-line, original written document, article, or webpage.	10
3.1.4	Conduct vehicle identification initiative/event	Number of etching events. Including catalytic converters.	10
3.1.4.1	Conduct vehicle identification initiative/event	Number of Participants/Attendees Catalytic Converters Marked)	10
3.1.5	Purchase advertisements in local outlets	Number of advertisements purchased or provided complimentary for taskforce. Include all types of media purchased or provided free (social, tv, utility inserts, billboards, transportation, etc.)	5
3.1.7	Utilize social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	Number of postings in social media outlets	20
3.1.8	Deploy outdoor public notification signage	Number of deployments per month (if sign remains several months, count as 1 deployment per month)	12
3.1.10	Conduct media outreach, including, public service announcements, press releases, and interviews	Number of outreaches	5
3.2	Strategy 2: Conduct Law Enforcement Training Activities to Educate Officers on Recognition and Apprehension of Stolen Vehicles and Property		
3.2.1	Conduct law enforcement training (TCOLE)	Number of classes provided for TCOLE credit	3
3.2.3	Conduct vehicle crimes presentations to law enforcement agencies (non TCOLE)	Number of classes or presentations. Presentations may include electronic roll call documents, shift BOLOs and other written or presented materials based on local practices.	3

Grant Evaluation

- 4.1 Describe the local method and/or practice used to collect the data for reporting Goals, Strategies, and Activities and to evaluate the grant program effectiveness. Describe management and staff participation. Include descriptions of systems (forms and software) that will be used to ensure reliable and accurate data is collected and reported. Describe any other evaluation methods used in the applicant agency to determine effectiveness or cost efficiency of the program.
- Statistical data is collected and maintained by Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit administrative personnel on a continual basis. The raw data and unit statistics are compiled monthly through the "Superior" software program, and the information is submitted through the chain of command via monthly reports. Up-to-date case information is also compiled weekly from investigator case files, significant event bulletins, and call-out reporting documents and are submitted through the chain of command to the Criminal Investigations Bureau Commander for use and presentation during staff meetings with the Sheriff and Executive personnel. These statistics are also reviewed and evaluated internally to determine the productivity and effectiveness of the units through basic Excel spreadsheets. Charge information and arrest information are obtained from the J-Web software program. Indicators that are reviewed and considered during the evaluation include: charges filed, cases received, cases closed, vehicles/property recovered, salvage/title service inspections conducted, bait operations conducted, training events, 68A inspections completed, etc. When compiling the monthly progress reports for MVCPA, all raw data and reported statistics are compared to proof documents to verify and confirm the numbers provided in the report. All proof documents are maintained for audit requirements. Monthly reports are compared to prior annual reports to evaluate the effectiveness of the program's Goals, Strategies, and Activities. The goal of the Auto Theft/BMV Unit is to increase performance and surpass the stated goals and objectives through more efficient and effective investigative techniques. Continued evaluation of statistical data including Comstat reporting analysis ensures all objectives and goals will be met and properly reported to the Sheriff's Office command staff as well as to the MVCPA Board and staff.
- 4.2 Provide any other suggested measures that would better reflect the law enforcement or prevention work that the proposed program will perform. If the suggested measure fits into one of the stated goals above please indicate.
- Because of the high recidivism rate associated with motor vehicle theft and theft from motor vehicle crimes, a good measure of success for the Harris County Sheriff's Office Auto Theft/BMV Unit is reflected by identifying prolific catalytic converter offenders (1.1.2) and to conduct educational outreach events (3.1.1) and conduct vehicle identification/initiative events (3.1.4). Additionally, the unit plans to increase statistics under (1.1.5) Conduct inspections of local businesses related to vehicle enterprise (transportation code or occupation code authorized companies such as salvage yard, repair shop, parts recycling center, used car dealership, salvage rebuilder, title service company, other). Our jurisdiction especially in east Harris County has numerous salvage yards and repair shops that go unnoticed due to the lack of inspections.

TxGMS Standard Assurances by Local Governments

- ☒ We acknowledge reviewing the *TxGMS Standard Assurances by Local Governments* as promulgated by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and agree to abide by the terms stated therein.

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