

# South Carolina

## Violent Crime Reduction Project



Orangeburg County Pilot Project Evaluation

Tidwell and Associates, Inc.

June 2004

**SOUTH CAROLINA  
VIOLENT CRIME REDUCTION PROJECT**

*An Evaluation and Report  
Of The  
Continuing Statistical Changes  
In The Success Rate  
Of The  
Orangeburg County Pilot Project*

**Tidwell and Associates, Inc.**

**July 2004**

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## Foreward

The South Carolina Violent Crime Reduction Project was authorized by the South Carolina Public Safety Coordinating Council which, among other duties, oversees grants programs administered by the Department of Public Safety. The Council directed the Department's Office of Justice Programs to develop a strategic plan to reduce violent crime, identify an appropriate county and test the strategy. The strategy postulated that an appropriate application of resources and technical assistance could substantially reduce a jurisdiction's per capita incidence of violence in a relatively short period of time, twenty-four months. At the time of selection, South Carolina was ranked second in the nation for violent crime and Orangeburg County was ranked first in the state. The selection of Orangeburg County was approved by the Council because of its violent crime ranking and because state and local officials in law enforcement, prosecution and the judiciary indicated a willingness to address the problem.

The successful outcome of the project as reflected in this evaluation report leads to several observations. The first is that, much like politics, crime and responses to crime are fundamentally local phenomena. Each city, county and community has its own unique set of social, demographic, economic and cultural circumstances associated with crime. Macro-level criminological theory may explain large scale patterns and trends but ultimately crime occurs, and must be addressed, at the local level. Second, the report confirms the importance of planning as a diagnostic tool. The considerable time and effort devoted to identifying the dynamics of the crime problems in Orangeburg County allowed the project to ignore less important factors and focus on the issues most directly tied to violent crime rates. Finally, this project demonstrates the importance of engaging public officials who are willing to risk innovation in the development and implementation of new criminal justice policies and practices. The result has been that citizens in Orangeburg County are now markedly safer and valuable lessons have been learned for future projects.

This report was partially funded by Federal Grant Number 2003-BJ-CX-K102 from the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. The South Carolina Department of Public Safety, Office of Justice Programs, contracted with Tidwell and Associates, Inc. to conduct the evaluation. The Statistical Analysis Center provided direction and oversight to the evaluation effort. The primary consultant preparing this report was Mr. Charles Bradberry, who was assisted by Mr. Ritchie Tidwell, owner, Tidwell and Associates, Inc. Points of view or opinions stated are those of the principal researchers and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or official position of the United States Department of Justice.

Burke O. Fitzpatrick  
Administrator  
Office of Justice Programs

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) in the South Carolina Department of Public Safety, acting on behalf of the South Carolina Public Safety Coordinating Council, solicited proposals, in 2001, to substantially reduce violent crime in a targeted county during a two-year planning, implementation, and evaluation period. The project was to have three phases: a six-month planning phase, a twelve-month implementation phase, and up to a six-month evaluation phase. Orangeburg County, because of its historically high violent crime rate combined with an inordinately low clearance rate (the rate of arrests to offenses), was selected to be the target county for the Violent Crime Reduction Project. The premise of the project is that a concentrated effort of analysis coupled with sufficient grant funds and other resources would substantially reduce violent crime in a targeted jurisdiction.

In May 2003, the Department of Public Safety issued its report detailing the planning and implementation phases of the project along with an evaluation section. The evaluation section of the May 2003 report, using preliminary data, showed very promising results. The most notable results that this evaluation report showed were that, between 2000 and 2002, the violent crime rate in Orangeburg County *decreased* by 24 percent and the number of violent crimes *decreased* by 22 percent.

OJP was interested in determining if the successes reported in the previous report have continued. In 2003, OJP solicited proposals to conduct this follow-up evaluation. Tidwell and Associates, Inc., a consulting firm located in Columbia, was chosen to conduct this evaluation.

Finalized data through December 2003, as opposed to preliminary data, were used in this report. Data for this report were obtained from the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED), the Division of Court Administration of the South Carolina Judicial Department, the Department of Corrections and the Orangeburg/Calhoun Regional Detention Center.

The data presented in this follow-up evaluation report indicate that the Violent Crime Reduction Project has been *very* successful in reducing violent crime in Orangeburg County. The data presented in this report indicate that, between 2000 and 2003, the violent crime rate in Orangeburg County decreased 33 percent and the number of violent crimes decreased by 32 percent. The data also indicate that the clearance rates for violent crimes increased 53 percent during this period. Disposition rates increased from 88.4 percent in 2001 to 125 percent by December 2003, and the number of pending cases decreased from 1,642 in December 2001 to 1,224 by December 2003.

This report notes that there was a slight drop in clearance rates from 2002 to 2003. One of the recommendations of this report is that the data presented herein should be updated periodically and reviewed by key Orangeburg County stakeholders so that corrective action can be taken if necessary and appropriate.

## Introduction

This report is a follow-up to a previous evaluation report of the Violent Crime Reduction Project in Orangeburg County that was published in May 2003. A copy of this report is located on the Department of Public Safety (DPS) web site. Specifically, this follow-up evaluation report is intended to provide more recent, updated information and data than were available for the previous report in order to determine if the successes that were observed in the previous report have continued. There is some variation, however, in the reporting of crime statistics between this report and the previous evaluation report and with SLED's Crime in South Carolina reports. For the crimes of murder, rape, aggravated assault and simple assault, these documents report the number of *victims* for these crimes, while they report on the number of *incidents* of robbery. This report consistently uses the number of incidents for each of these crimes. This report continues to use the counties of Richland, Charleston, Lexington, York, Spartanburg, and Greenville for comparison purposes. Statewide data are also used in this report.

The crime-reduction initiatives that were implemented in Orangeburg County during the pilot project period, a period beginning in 2000 and continuing to present, targeted, primarily, the reduction in the *incident* of crime that only indirectly affected the reduction in the *number* of victims of a particular crime incident. Initiatives implemented in Orangeburg County that focused on reducing the number of incidents of crime included such crime (i.e., incident) reduction/prevention measures as: 1) making significant changes in the criminal court processes in Orangeburg County to benefit from the incident-deterrent effects of swift and sure punishment and a "get tough on crime" philosophy; 2) increased cooperation among local law enforcement agencies to coordinate activities and resources in order to deter criminal activity; 3) operational changes in both the Department of Public Safety and the Sheriff's office that, according to the previous report, "...center around broad operational policy, basic organizational structure, specific command responsibilities, specific personnel assignments, and specific operating procedures. Command realignments occurred in both departments, and some shifts in personnel assignments also took place in order to increase effectiveness and efficiency."; 4) the utilization of crime mapping to target high crime areas; and, 5) the reduction in the time required to obtain blood, drug, and other forensic analyses by contracting to use the lab at the Lexington County Sheriff's Office. (A complete description of the initiatives implemented during the pilot project period in Orangeburg County may be found in the May 2003 report on the DPS web site.) For these reasons, this evaluation report uses *incidents* of violent crimes, rather than the *number* of victims of violent crimes, as a measure of the success of these initiatives. The terms "offense" and "crime" are used interchangeably to refer to a criminal incident.

The target of these initiatives is a reduction in violent crime. Violent crimes are: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. Each of these offenses is defined as follows:

**Murder:** Murder is defined as the willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another except in those cases classified as

justifiable homicides. Under the UCR definition, justifiable homicides are specifically limited to the killing of an offender by a police officer in the line of duty, or the killing, during the commission of a serious crime, of a criminal by a private citizen. In addition, attempts to commit murder are classified as aggravated assaults.

**Rape:** Forcible rape, by UCR definition, is the carnal knowledge of a person forcibly or against that person's will, or when a victim is mentally or physically incapable of giving consent. Attempts to commit rape are included in this category. Statutory rapes and other types of sexual assaults are not counted as rape under the UCR program.

**Robbery:** Robbery is defined as the unlawful taking of the property of another through the use or threat of force. Robbery is a violent crime in which the element of personal confrontation between the victim and offender is present. Attempts to rob are included in the robbery count. Armed robberies, those involving weapons, and strong-arm robberies, those not involving weapons, make up the two major categories.

**Aggravated Assault:** Aggravated assault, for UCR purposes, is defined as an unlawful attack by one person upon another with the intent of inflicting serious bodily injury. Aggravated assaults are frequently accomplished through the use or threatened use of dangerous weapons. However, assaults resulting in serious injury from the use of hands or feet are also counted in this category. Attempts to assault are counted here since it is not necessary that injury result whenever a dangerous weapon is employed. Attempts to commit murder are classified under this category.

**Simple Assault:** Simple assault is defined as an unlawful physical (not verbal) attack by one person upon another where the offender neither uses nor displays a weapon, nor the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury.

## **Project History**

In 1999, South Carolina ranked second only to Florida in per capita violent crime rate. In May 2001, the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) in the South Carolina Department of Public Safety, acting on behalf of the South Carolina Public Safety Coordinating Council, solicited proposals to substantially reduce violent crime in a targeted county (Orangeburg County) during a two-year planning, implementation, and evaluation period. The project was to have three phases: a six-month planning phase, a twelve-month implementation phase, and up to a six-month evaluation phase.

Despite millions of dollars in grant funding expended for a variety of programs designed to abate crime, violent crime rates in South Carolina have continued to remain high, even in comparison to neighboring states with similar demographics. The Office of



Justice Programs wanted to make an all-out effort to reduce violent crime in a targeted jurisdiction (Orangeburg County). The underlying premise was that if piecemeal efforts would not work, a concentrated effort of analysis and grant funding would. The methodology employed included a three-phase effort of planning, implementation, and evaluation. The planning phase began with an analysis of statewide and comparative county crime data. As a result of that initial analysis, Orangeburg County was selected as the target county for the following reasons:

- 1999 data, which was the latest statewide data available at that time, showed Orangeburg County as having the highest in violent crime rate with a rate in the state of 160.7 crimes per 10,000 population, compared to a statewide average of 86.5.
- Although the statewide violent crime rate was showing a slight decrease during the late 1990's, violent crime, both as a real number, and on a comparative per capita basis, was increasing in Orangeburg.
- In 1999, Orangeburg County's clearance rate (i.e., the rate of arrests to offenses) for violent crimes was the lowest in the state.

In the May 2003 evaluation report, six counties were used for comparison purposes. Those six counties were: Charleston, Greenville, Lexington, Richland, Spartanburg, and York. Statewide figures were also presented. In order to provide continuity between the initial evaluation report and this follow-up report, we will continue to use these sites for comparison purposes. In addition, the format of this evaluation report closely resembles that of the previous evaluation to, again, preserve continuity. Data presented in this report for time periods that were reported on in the previous report may differ for several reasons, including the fact that the SLED data files used in this report have been finalized; whereas, previously, only preliminary data were available for analysis and incidents of crime are used for statistical purposes rather than the number of victims of violent crimes. Also arrest data for 2001 were not available from SLED for analysis; however, offense data for that year were available and are included herein.

## **Law Enforcement**

The following table, Table 1, shows changes in violent crimes and simple assaults since the beginning of the project in calendar year 2000. In 2001, violent crime in Orangeburg County decreased by over 21 percent and every category of violent crime decreased from the previous year. Simple assaults also decreased during this time period. In 2002, murder, rape and robbery decreased while aggravated assaults increased. Simple assaults decreased in 2002 as well. In 2003, murder and robbery increased while rape decreased by 36 percent and aggravated assaults decreased by over 23 percent. Overall violent crime decreased by 17

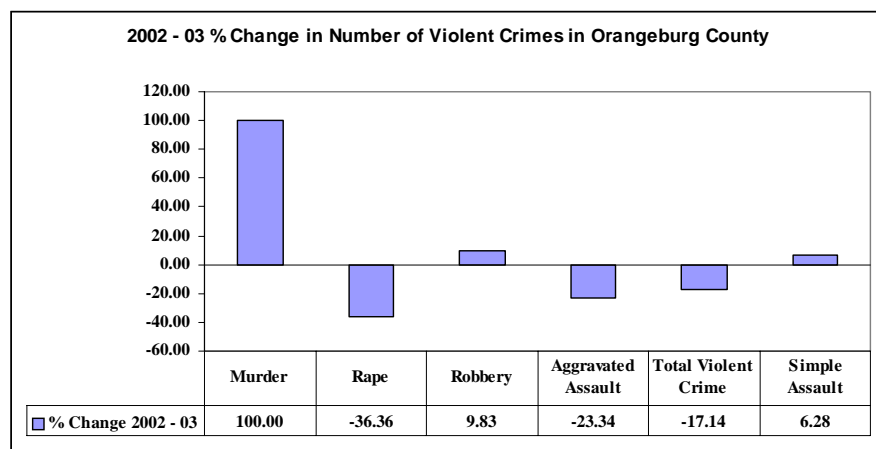
percent in 2003 from 2002 (see Figure 1). Simple assaults increased by about 6 percent in 2003. Between 2000 and 2003, violent crime decreased 32 percent and simple assaults decreased by 2.2 percent (see Figure 2).

**Table 1**  
**Orangeburg County Violent Crime Data**  
**2000 – 2003**

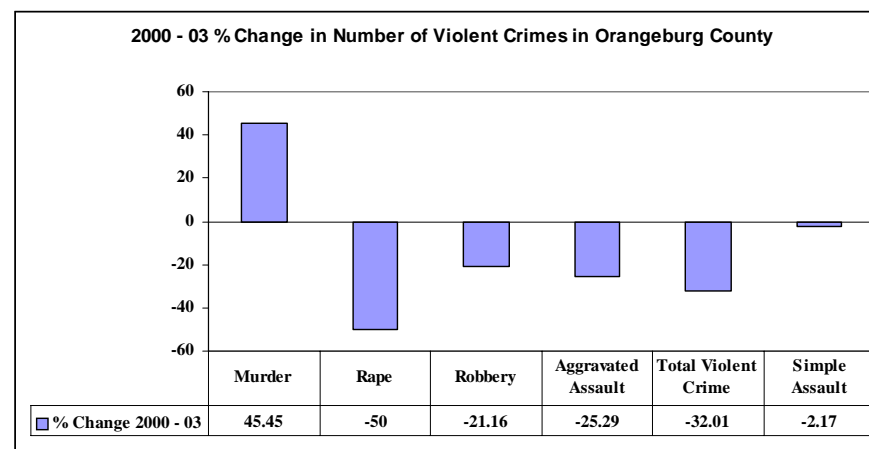
Offense	2000	Percent Change Previous Year	2001	Percent Change Previous Year	2002	Percent Change Previous Year	2003	Percent Change Previous Year	Percent Change 2000 to 2003
Murder	11	-15.38	10	-9.09	8	-20.00	16	100.00	45.45
Rape	56	0.00	50	-10.71	44	-12.00	28	-36.36	-50.00
Robbery	241	-15.73	185	-23.24	173	-6.49	190	9.83	-21.16
Aggravated Assault	901	-0.99	701	-10.93	767	9.42	588	-23.34	-25.29
Total Violent Crime	1,209	-4.43	946	-21.75	992	4.86	822	-17.14	-32.01
Simple Assault	1,748	-4.22	1,666	-4.69	1,609	-3.42	1,710	6.28	-2.17

Source: South Carolina State Law Enforcement Division

**Figure 1**

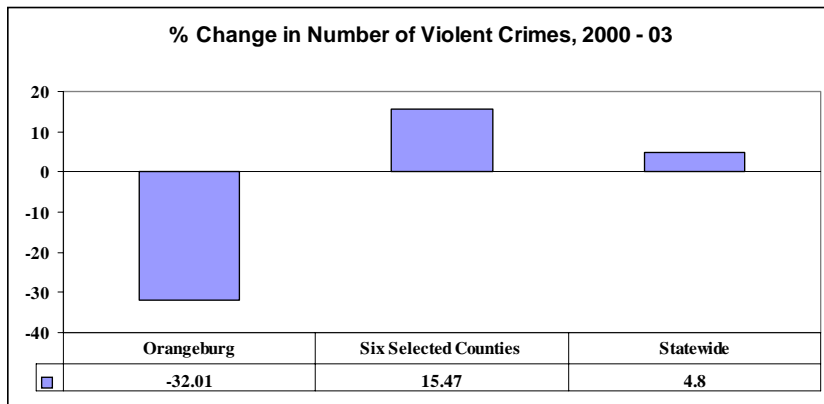


**Figure 2**

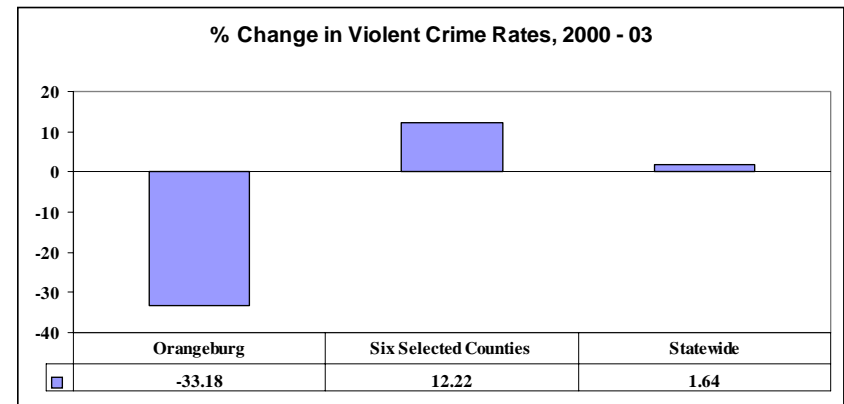


As shown in Table 2 (next page) total violent crimes in calendar year 2000 for Orangeburg County, the six comparison counties, and statewide were 1,209, 12,220 and 29,558, respectively. In 2001, total violent crimes decreased in all jurisdictions shown in this table; however, Orangeburg County experienced a significantly greater drop in both the number of violent crimes (a 21.75 percent drop) and the rate per 10,000 population (a 22.21 percent drop) than the combined six comparison counties (a 9.67 percent drop in violent crimes and a 10.46 percent drop in the rate per 10,000 population) or the state as a whole (a 3.96 percent drop in violent crimes and a 4.94 percent drop in the rate per 10,000 population). By 2002, violent crimes were up throughout the state, including Orangeburg County and the six comparison counties; however, the increase in violent crimes in Orangeburg County, at 4.86 percent, was significantly lower than the increase in violent crimes in the six comparison counties (22.35) and as well as the 8.09 percent increase in violent crimes statewide. In 2003, while violent crime in the six comparison counties continued to increase, at and albeit slower rate of 4.47 percent and a statewide increase of about 1 percent (0.93 percent), violent crime in Orangeburg County *decreased* by over 17 percent! As shown in Figures 3 and 4, below, between 2000 and 2003, the number of violent crimes in Orangeburg County *decreased by 32 percent* and the rate of violent crime per 10,000 population *decreased by over 33 percent*, while the number and rate per 10,000 population of violent crimes in the six comparison counties increased by over 15 percent and 12 percent, respectively, during this time period. Statewide, the number and rate of violent crimes increased at slower rates of 4.8 percent and 1.64 percent, respectively, during this time period.

**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**



**Table 2**  
**Violent Crime Comparisons**  
**Calendar Years 2000 Through 2003**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Violent Crimes 2000</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>	<b>Violent Crimes 2001</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>	<b>Violent Crimes 2002</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>	<b>Violent Crimes 2003</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>	<b>Percent Change 2000 - 2003</b>
<b>Orangeburg</b>	<b>1,209</b>	<b>N/A*</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>-21.75</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>4.86</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>-17.14</b>	<b>-32.01</b>
<b>Rate Per 10,000 Pop.</b>	<b>132.01</b>	<b>N/A*</b>	<b>102.69</b>	<b>-22.21</b>	<b>107.07</b>	<b>4.26</b>	<b>88.21</b>	<b>-17.61</b>	<b>-33.18</b>
<b>Six Selected Counties</b>	<b>12,220</b>	<b>N/A*</b>	<b>11,039</b>	<b>-9.67</b>	<b>13,506</b>	<b>22.35</b>	<b>14,110</b>	<b>4.47</b>	<b>15.47</b>
<b>Rate Per 10,000 Pop.</b>	<b>74.21</b>	<b>N/A*</b>	<b>66.45</b>	<b>-10.46</b>	<b>80.50</b>	<b>21.14</b>	<b>83.28</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>12.22</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>29,558</b>	<b>N/A*</b>	<b>28,387</b>	<b>-3.96</b>	<b>30,683</b>	<b>8.09</b>	<b>30,968</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>4.8</b>
<b>Rate Per 10,000 Pop.</b>	<b>73.67</b>	<b>N/A*</b>	<b>70.03</b>	<b>-4.94</b>	<b>74.94</b>	<b>7.01</b>	<b>74.88</b>	<b>-0.08</b>	<b>1.64</b>

\*Not Applicable

Source: South Carolina State Law Enforcement Division

Tables 3 and 4, below, provide historical crime data for calendar years 1998 through 2003 for Orangeburg County, the six comparison counties and statewide. These tables also show the improvement, in Orangeburg County, in both the number of violent crimes and the violent crime rate per 10,000 population between 2000 and 2003. Table 3 and Figure 5 (next page) show that between 2000 and 2003, Orangeburg County experienced the greatest improvement (i.e., the largest decrease) in the number of violent crimes than in any of the six comparison counties or statewide. In fact, among the comparison counties and the statewide data, only Greenville and Spartanburg counties showed a decrease in the number of violent crimes during this period – and those decreases were much lower than in Orangeburg County, at 1.57 percent and 13.44 percent, respectively.

**Table 3**  
**Total Number of Violent Crimes**  
**By County**  
**Rank From Highest to Lowest Improvement in Number of Violent Crimes**  
**Calendar Years 1998 Through 2003**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Percent Change 2000 to 2003	Rank
Charleston	<b>2,650</b>	<b>2,767</b>	<b>2,475</b>	<b>2,584</b>	<b>2,910</b>	<b>3,246</b>	<b>31.15</b>	<b>7</b>
Greenville	<b>2,906</b>	<b>2,764</b>	<b>2,736</b>	<b>2,772</b>	<b>2,749</b>	<b>2,693</b>	<b>-1.57</b>	<b>3</b>
Lexington	<b>1,157</b>	<b>1,084</b>	<b>1,122</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>1,199</b>	<b>1,308</b>	<b>16.58</b>	<b>5</b>
Orangeburg	<b>1,162</b>	<b>1,265</b>	<b>1,209</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>-32.01</b>	<b>1</b>
Richland	<b>2,834</b>	<b>2,891</b>	<b>2,751</b>	<b>2,206</b>	<b>3,341</b>	<b>3,300</b>	<b>19.96</b>	<b>6</b>
Spartanburg	<b>2,289</b>	<b>2,188</b>	<b>2,001</b>	<b>1,453</b>	<b>1,902</b>	<b>1,732</b>	<b>-13.44</b>	<b>2</b>
York	<b>1,158</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,135</b>	<b>1,044</b>	<b>1,405</b>	<b>1,831</b>	<b>61.32</b>	<b>8</b>
Statewide	<b>31,198</b>	<b>30,225</b>	<b>29,558</b>	<b>28,387</b>	<b>30,683</b>	<b>30,968</b>	<b>4.77</b>	<b>4</b>

Source: South Carolina State Law Enforcement Division

Figure 5

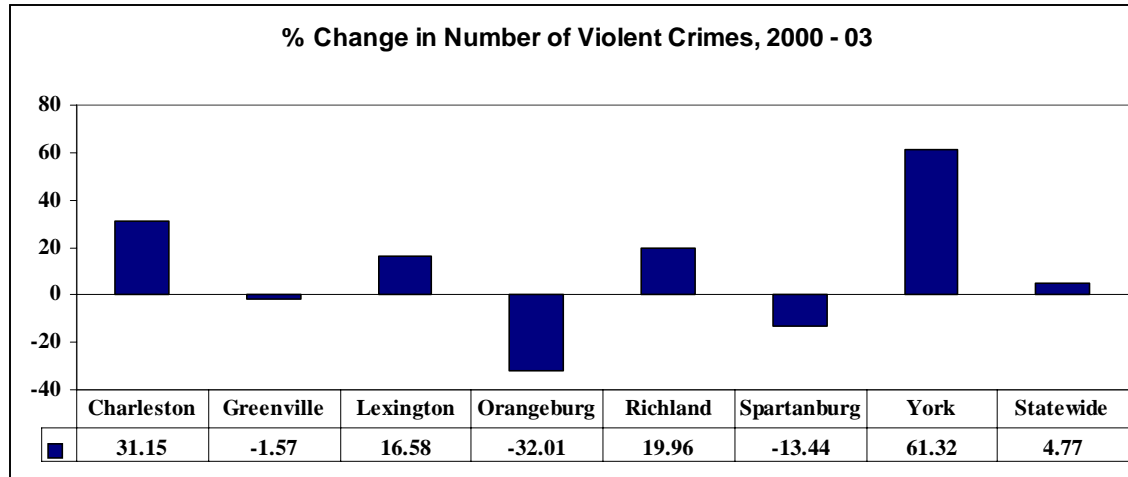


Table 4 and Figure 6, on page 15, show that between 1998 and 2002, Orangeburg County consistently had the highest violent crime rate of any of the six comparison counties. In 2003, Orangeburg County dropped from having the highest rate of violent crime to fourth. Between 2000 and 2003, the violent crime rate per 10,000 population in Orangeburg County decreased by over 33 percent – the largest decrease in this rate among the six comparison states and the statewide rate. Again, only two of the six comparison counties had decreases in their violent crimes rates per 10,000 population during this period – Greenville, with a decrease of 4.3 percent, and Spartanburg, with a decrease of 16 percent. During this period, the violent crime rate per 10,000 population in York County *increased* by 54 percent and *increased* by about 29 percent in Charleston County.

It should be noted, however, that while the violent crime rate in Orangeburg County decreased between 2000 and 2001, it *increased* from 2001 to 2002, and then decreased again from 2002 to 2003. Five of the six counties also experienced increasing crime rates between 2001 and 2002, and the State, overall, had an increase in the violent crime rate. Greenville County was the only county among the six comparison counties to experience a decrease in violent crime (a 2 percent decrease) between 2001 and 2002. The violent crime rate in Orangeburg County increased by only 4.9 percent between 2001 and 2002 while the violent crime rates in five of the six comparison counties (those which had any increase at all) rose at even higher rates than in Orangeburg. Statewide the rate

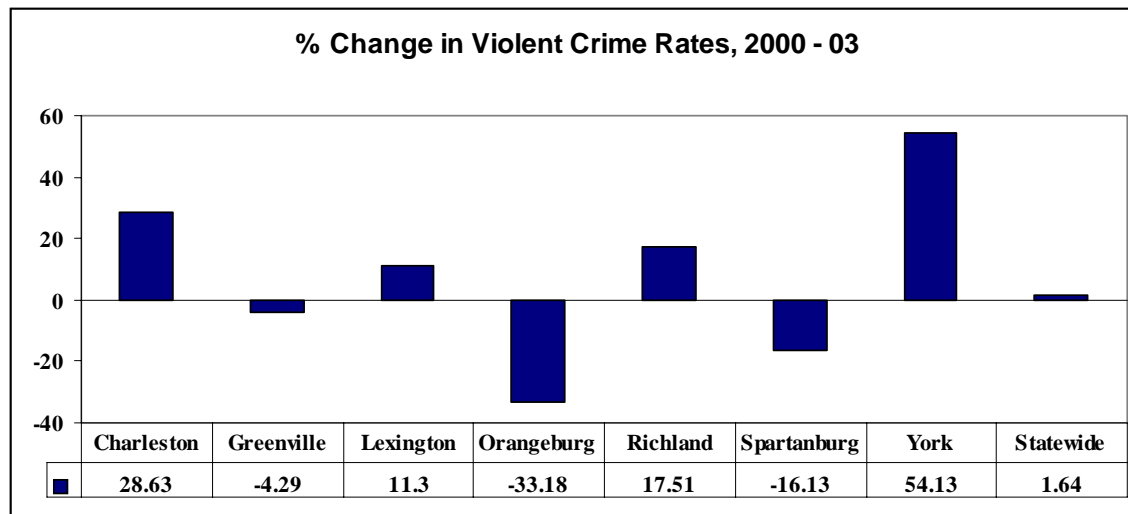
increased over 7 percent. In Spartanburg and York counties, the rate increased 30 and 33 percent, respectively. In Richland County, the violent crime rate increased 50 percent, and in Lexington County, 20 percent. The violent crime rate increased 12 percent in Charleston County. It is entirely possible that South Carolina's poor economy during this time was a factor in the rise in crime rates, especially in rural areas of the state, like Orangeburg County. The fact that crime rates increased at a slower rate in Orangeburg County between 2001 and 2002, a county with historically high crime rates, than in the comparison counties (except Greenville), or statewide, may imply that efforts to combat violent crime in Orangeburg County continued to be effective under adverse circumstances. It is also possible that Orangeburg County was not following the statewide trend in rising violent crime rates, but that efforts there may have slipped somewhat in that year. But this seems implausible given the fact that the next year, between 2002 and 2003, Orangeburg County had, by far, the largest drop in the violent crime rate (17.6 percent drop) than any of the six comparison counties, or statewide.

**Table 4**  
**Violent Crime Rate Per 10,000 Population**  
**By County**  
**Rank From Highest to Lowest**  
**Calendar Years 1998 Through 2003**

	1998	Rank	1999	Rank	2000	Rank	2001	Rank	2002	Rank	2003	Rank	Percent Change 2000 to 2003
Charleston	86.27	4	89.48	3	79.85	3	82.82	2	92.67	3	102.71	2	28.63
Greenville	78.98	6	73.74	6	72.07	6	72.34	3	71.07	7	68.98	6	-4.29
Lexington	55.38	8	50.83	8	51.94	8	44.66	8	53.81	8	57.81	8	11.30
Orangeburg	127.61	1	138.53	1	132.01	1	102.69	1	107.07	1	88.21	4	-33.18
Richland	90.03	3	90.90	2	85.79	2	68.32	5	102.76	2	100.81	3	17.51
Spartanburg	91.84	2	86.86	4	78.84	4	56.64	7	73.37	6	66.12	7	-16.13
York	73.64	7	67.72	7	68.95	7	62.45	6	82.77	4	106.27	1	54.13
Statewide	79.60	5	76.04	5	73.67	5	70.03	4	74.94	5	74.88	5	1.64

Source: South Carolina State Law Enforcement Division

**Figure 6**





## Clearance Rates

Tables 5, 6, 7, and 8, below, show offenses, arrests and clearance rates Orangeburg County for calendar years 2000, 2002 and 2003. (Note: as stated earlier, arrest data for 2001 were not available; therefore, clearance rates for that year could not be calculated.) According to SLED, for crime reporting purposes, a crime is cleared when a law enforcement agency has identified and located the offender and there is enough evidence to charge him. The arrest of one person can clear several crimes, or several persons may be arrested in clearing one crime. Clearances are recorded in exceptional circumstances when some element beyond law enforcement control precludes the arrest of the offender. Clearance rates presented herein, as in SLED and FBI reporting, include crimes cleared by arrests and by exceptional circumstances. Table 8 and Figure 7 show that between 2000 and 2003, the clearance rate for violent crime in Orangeburg increased by over 50 percent. It is of concern, however, that Table 8 also indicates that between 2002 and 2003, the clearance rates for violent crimes, with the exception of rape, decreased. This may indicate that the very high efforts on the part of law enforcement in Orangeburg County between 2000 and 2002 in solving crimes have slipped somewhat. However, it is too early to determine whether this slippage is the beginning of a downward trend in the clearance rates or is simply an aberration. These data should be monitored on an on-going basis in order to make this determination.

**Table 5**  
**2000 Orangeburg County Violent Crime Data**  
**Offenses, Arrests and Clearance Rates**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Number of Offenses</b>	<b>Cleared by Arrest</b>	<b>Exceptionally Cleared</b>	<b>Not Cleared</b>	<b>Clearance Rate</b>
<b>Murder</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>72.7</b>
<b>Rape</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>21.4</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>21.2</b>
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>30.1</b>
<b>Total Violent Crime</b>	<b>1,209</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>28.3</b>
<b>Simple Assault</b>	<b>1,748</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>1272</b>	<b>27.2</b>

**Table 6**  
**2002 Orangeburg County Violent Crime Data**  
**Offenses, Arrests and Clearance Rates**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Number of Offenses</b>	<b>Cleared by Arrest</b>	<b>Exceptionally Cleared</b>	<b>Not Cleared</b>	<b>Clearance Rate</b>
<b>Murder</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Rape</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>43.2</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>28.3</b>
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	<b>767</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>51.4</b>
<b>Total Violent Crime</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>47.4</b>
<b>Simple Assault</b>	<b>1,609</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>42.6</b>

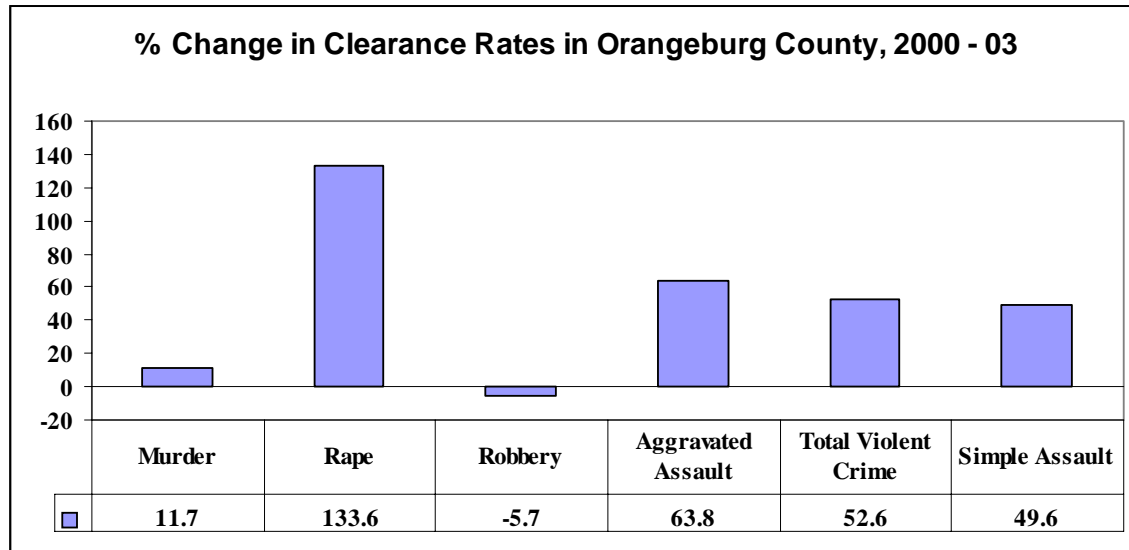
**Table 7**  
**2003 Orangeburg County Violent Crime Data**  
**Offenses, Arrests and Clearance Rates**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Number of Offenses</b>	<b>Cleared by Arrest</b>	<b>Exceptionally Cleared</b>	<b>Not Cleared</b>	<b>Clearance Rate</b>
<b>Murder</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>81.2</b>
<b>Rape</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>50.0</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>20.0</b>
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>49.3</b>
<b>Total Violent Crime</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>43.2</b>
<b>Simple Assault</b>	<b>1,710</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>1,014</b>	<b>40.7</b>

**Table 8**  
**2000 - 2003 Orangeburg County Clearance Rates**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>2000 Clearance Rate</b>	<b>2002 Clearance Rate</b>	<b>2003 Clearance Rate</b>	<b>Percentage Change in Clearance Rate 2000 - 2002</b>	<b>Percentage Change in Clearance Rate 2002 - 2003</b>	<b>Percentage Change in Clearance Rate 2000 - 2003</b>
<b>Murder</b>	72.7	100.0	81.2	37.6	-18.8	11.7
<b>Rape</b>	21.4	43.2	50.0	101.9	15.7	133.6
<b>Robbery</b>	21.2	28.3	20.0	33.5	-29.3	-5.7
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	30.1	51.4	49.3	70.8	-4.1	63.8
<b>Total Violent Crime</b>	28.3	47.4	43.2	67.5	-8.9	52.6
<b>Simple Assault</b>	27.2	42.6	40.7	56.6	-4.5	49.6

**Figure 7**



Tables 9, 10, 11, and 12, below, show offenses, arrests and clearance rates the Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office for calendar years 2000, 2002 and 2003. Table 12 and Figure 8 show that between 2000 and 2003, the clearance rate for violent crime for the Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office increased by 65 percent.

**Table 9**  
**2000 Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office Violent Crime Data**  
**Offenses, Arrests and Clearance Rates**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Number of Offenses</b>	<b>Cleared by Arrest</b>	<b>Exceptionally Cleared</b>	<b>Not Cleared</b>	<b>Clearance Rate</b>
<b>Murder</b>	7	5	0	2	71.4
<b>Rape</b>	42	7	0	35	16.7
<b>Robbery</b>	147	23	3	121	17.7
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	692	174	21	497	28.2
<b>Total Violent Crime</b>	888	209	24	655	26.2
<b>Simple Assault</b>	1,450	294	73	1,083	25.3

**Table 10**  
**2002 Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office Violent Crime Data**  
**Offenses, Arrests and Clearance Rates**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Number of Offenses</b>	<b>Cleared by Arrest</b>	<b>Exceptionally Cleared</b>	<b>Not Cleared</b>	<b>Clearance Rate</b>
<b>Murder</b>	7	7	0	0	100.0
<b>Rape</b>	32	7	4	21	34.4
<b>Robbery</b>	120	37	2	81	32.5
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	563	218	52	293	48.0
<b>Total Violent Crime</b>	722	269	58	395	45.3
<b>Simple Assault</b>	1,291	338	146	807	37.5

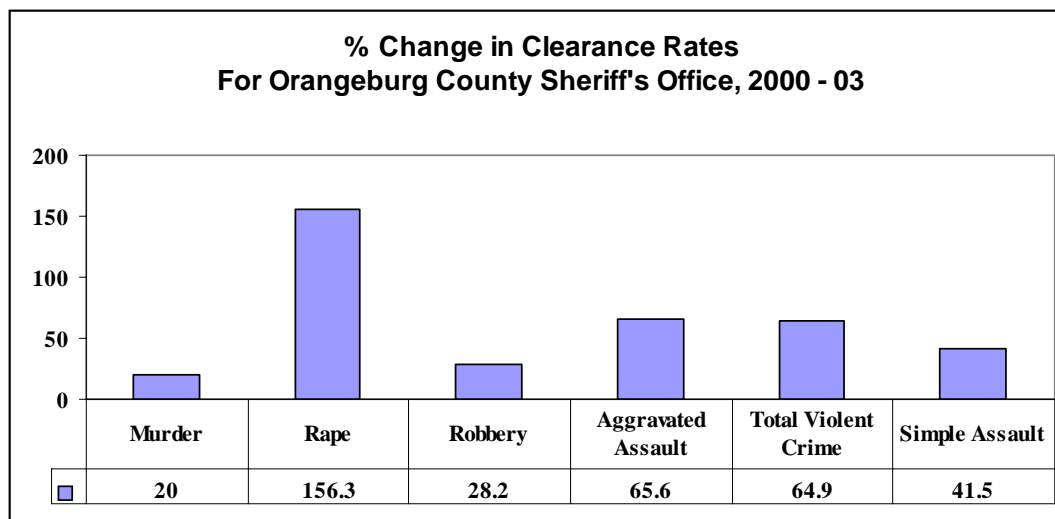
**Table 11**  
**2003 Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office Violent Crime Data**  
**Offenses, Arrests and Clearance Rates**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Number of Offenses</b>	<b>Cleared by Arrest</b>	<b>Exceptionally Cleared</b>	<b>Not Cleared</b>	<b>Clearance Rate</b>
<b>Murder</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>85.7</b>
<b>Rape</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>42.8</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>22.7</b>
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>46.7</b>
<b>Total Violent Crime</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>43.2</b>
<b>Simple Assault</b>	<b>1,306</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>838</b>	<b>35.8</b>

**Table 12**  
**2000 - 2003 Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office Clearance Rates**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>2000 Clearance Rate</b>	<b>2002 Clearance Rate</b>	<b>2003 Clearance Rate</b>	<b>Percentage Change in Clearance Rate 2000 - 2002</b>	<b>Percentage Change in Clearance Rate 2002 - 2003</b>	<b>Percentage Change in Clearance Rate 2000 - 2003</b>
<b>Murder</b>	<b>71.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>85.7</b>	<b>40.1</b>	<b>-14.3</b>	<b>20.0</b>
<b>Rape</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>106.0</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>156.3</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>32.5</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b>83.6</b>	<b>-30.2</b>	<b>28.2</b>
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>46.7</b>	<b>70.2</b>	<b>-2.7</b>	<b>65.6</b>
<b>Total Violent Crime</b>	<b>26.2</b>	<b>45.3</b>	<b>43.2</b>	<b>72.9</b>	<b>-4.6</b>	<b>64.9</b>
<b>Simple Assault</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>35.8</b>	<b>48.2</b>	<b>-4.5</b>	<b>41.5</b>

**Figure 8**



Tables 13, 14, 15, and 16, below, show offenses, arrests and clearance rates the City of Orangeburg Department of Public Safety for calendar years 2000, 2002 and 2003. Table 16 and Figure 9 show that between 2000 and 2003, the clearance rate for violent crime for the Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office increased by 65 percent.

**Table 13  
2000 City of Orangeburg Public Safety Violent Crime Data  
Offenses, Arrests and Clearance Rates**

Offense	Number of Offenses	Cleared by Arrest	Exceptionally Cleared	Not Cleared	Clearance Rate
<b>Murder</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Rape</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>45.4</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>24.3</b>
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>36.0</b>
<b>Total Violent Crime</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>33.6</b>
<b>Simple Assault</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>31.7</b>

**Table 14**  
**2002 City of Orangeburg Public Safety Violent Crime Data**  
**Offenses, Arrests and Clearance Rates**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Number of Offenses</b>	<b>Cleared by Arrest</b>	<b>Exceptionally Cleared</b>	<b>Not Cleared</b>	<b>Clearance Rate</b>
<b>Murder</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Rape</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>66.7</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22.8</b>
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>71.2</b>
<b>Total Violent Crime</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>61.7</b>
<b>Simple Assault</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>71.5</b>

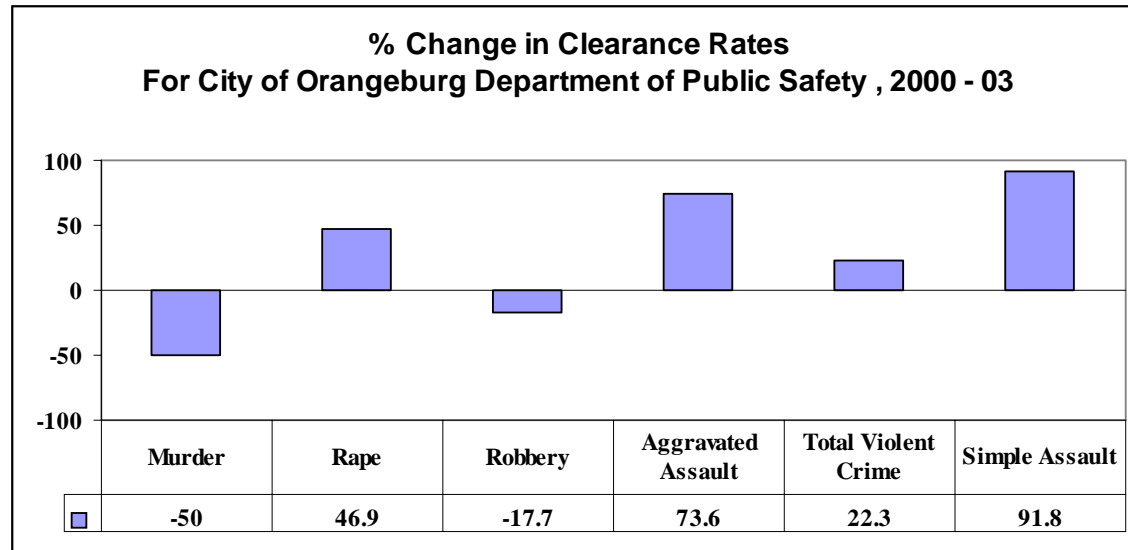
**Table 15**  
**2003 City of Orangeburg Public Safety Violent Crime Data**  
**Offenses, Arrests and Clearance Rates**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Number of Offenses</b>	<b>Cleared by Arrest</b>	<b>Exceptionally Cleared</b>	<b>Not Cleared</b>	<b>Clearance Rate</b>
<b>Murder</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>50.0</b>
<b>Rape</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>66.7</b>
<b>Robbery</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>20.0</b>
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>62.5</b>
<b>Total Violent Crime</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>41.1</b>
<b>Simple Assault</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>60.8</b>

**Table 16**  
**2000 - 2003 City of Orangeburg Public Safety Violent Crime Data**  
**Clearance Rates**

Offense	2000 Clearance Rate	2002 Clearance Rate	2003 Clearance Rate	Percentage Change in Clearance Rate 2000 - 2002	Percentage Change in Clearance Rate 2002 - 2003	Percentage Change in Clearance Rate 2000 - 2003
Murder	100.0	100.0	50.0	0.00	-50.0	-50.0
Rape	45.4	66.7	66.7	46.9	0.0	46.9
Robbery	24.3	22.8	20.0	-6.2	-12.3	-17.7
Aggravated Assault	36.0	71.2	62.5	97.8	-12.2	73.6
Total Violent Crime	33.6	61.7	41.1	83.6	-33.4	22.3
Simple Assault	31.7	71.5	60.8	125.6	-15.0	91.8

**Figure 9**





## **Trial Process**

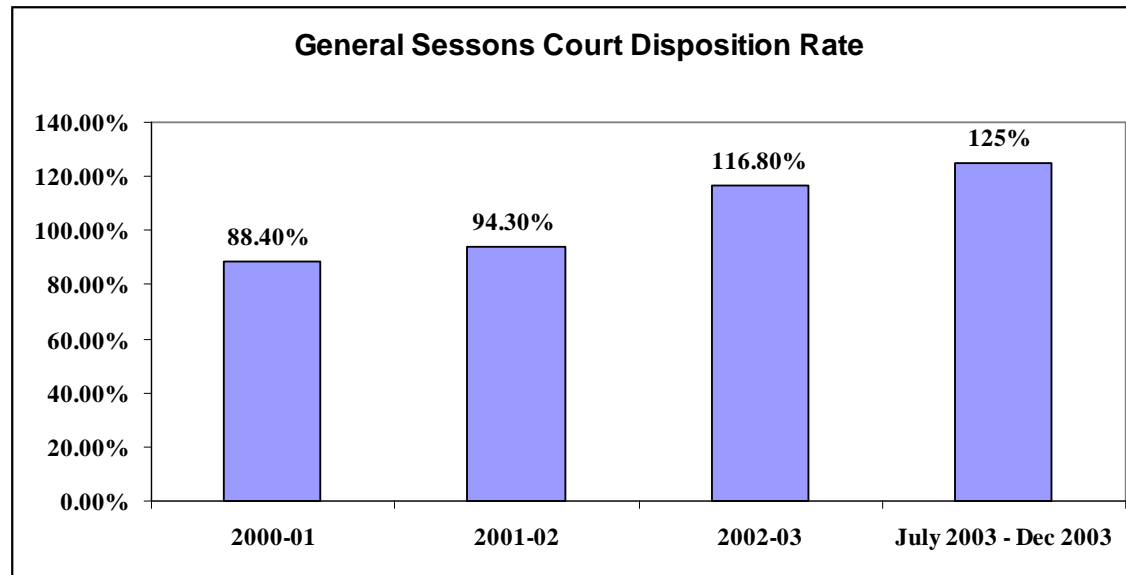
One of the measures implemented was the assignment of a non-rotating judge for the General Sessions Court in Orangeburg County, in order to "...bring more rigor to the criminal trial process and to increase the deterrent effect for violent crimes." A grant to the South Carolina Judicial Department was developed and submitted to the Public Safety Coordinating Council. The grant funded a retired judge and a law clerk for 12 months. Judge Edward Cottingham began trying all General Sessions cases in Orangeburg County in October 2002 and continued through December 2003. As a component of the grant, terms of court were also increased by almost 50 percent. In fiscal 2000-2001, there were 1,642 pending cases with a disposition rate of 88.4 percent. Although the disposition rate went up slightly in 2001-2002, to 94.3 percent, the pending caseload had also increased to 1,795, a backlog of about 10.5 to 11 months. The disposition rate is defined as the number of cases disposed of during the time period divided by the number of cases added during the time period times 100. (A disposition rate of 100 percent represents the point of equilibrium in which a pending caseload is neither increasing nor decreasing.) The results of the judicial system efforts are shown in Table 17 and in Figures 10 and 11, below. During Judge Cottingham's assignment in Orangeburg County, the disposition rate increased by almost 33 percent (to 116.8 percent), and the number of pending cases decreased from a high of 1,795 in 2002, to 1,224 by the end of December 2003 – a decrease of about 32 percent. These figures clearly indicate speedier times-to-trial which has exerted a positive effect on deterrence in Orangeburg County.

Another statistic is also very meaningful in terms of overall deterrent effect. In conjunction with increased efforts from both law enforcement and the Solicitor's Office, and particularly from the chief prosecutor for Orangeburg County, Robbie Robbins, the conviction rate for General Sessions (Circuit Criminal) cases has increased from 37.5 percent in Fiscal Year 2001 to 47 percent by December 2003. The impact which this overall court initiative has had is also important in other, less quantifiable ways. As was noted in the previous study, the perception that juries in Orangeburg County will not convict is changing. An example of this was presented in the previous report. At an armed robbery trial, three witnesses testified that the defendant was with them at the time of the robbery. The Sheriff's Office was able to disprove the alibi through one of the witnesses' work records. The jury convicted the defendant despite the testimony of the three alibi witnesses, and in the jury's absence, Judge Cottingham ordered the three witnesses arrested in the courtroom and charged with perjury. The experience was so unusual for Orangeburg County that several lengthy newspaper articles were written to report the story. The development of a case management system, consistently administered by a determined judge, better cooperation and communication between Solicitor and Public Defender, additional focused effort by the Solicitor, and better law enforcement investigation have resulted in a decreasing backlog and an increasing conviction rate. During 2003, this has continued to result in additional deterrent effects, and additional decreases in the Orangeburg County crime rates have occurred.

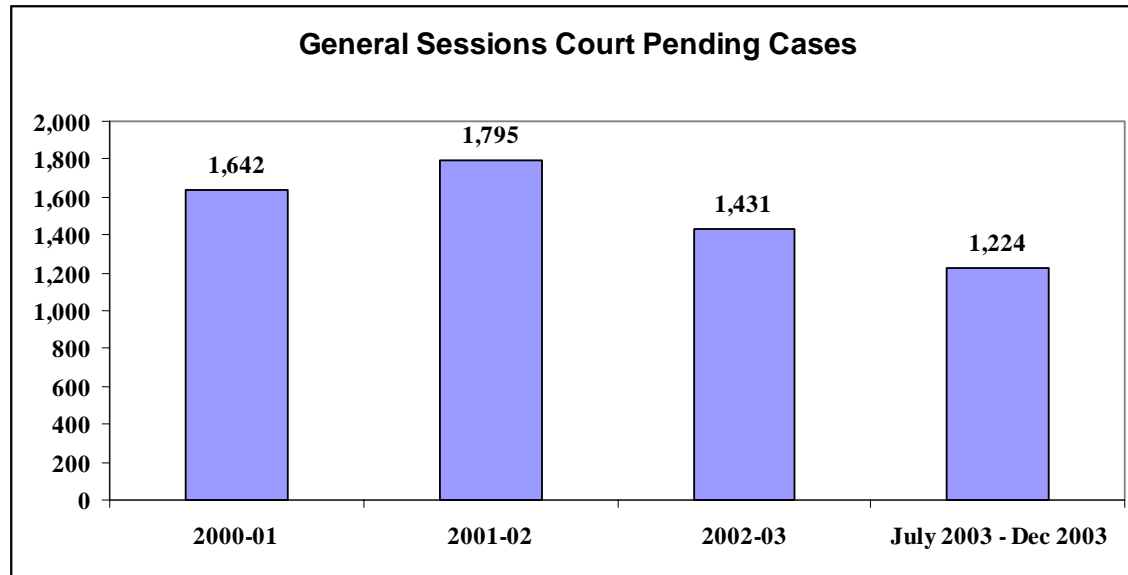
**Table 17**  
**Orangeburg County General Sessions Court**

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	July, 2003 – Dec., 2003	% Change 2001-02 to December 2003
<b>Disposition Rate</b>	<b>88.4%</b>	<b>94.3%</b>	<b>116.8%</b>	<b>125%</b>	<b>32.6%</b>
<b>Pending Cases</b>	<b>1,642</b>	<b>1,795</b>	<b>1,431</b>	<b>1,224</b>	<b>-31.8%</b>

**Figure 10**



**Figure 11**

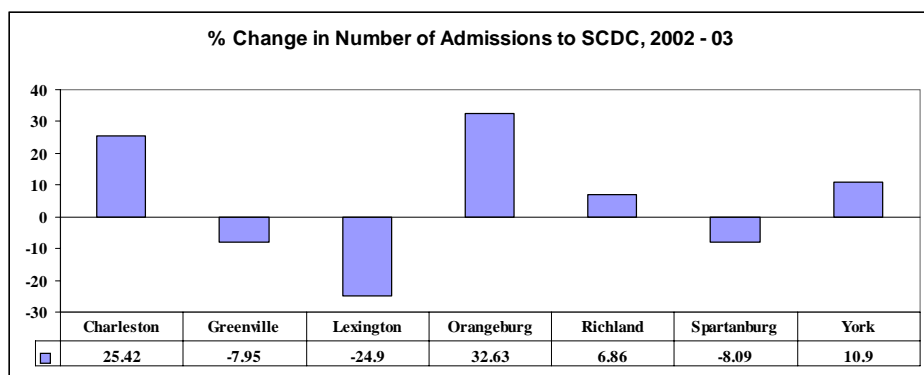


The efforts of Judge Cottingham and other law enforcement officials are also evident in the increased admissions to the South Carolina Department of Corrections (SCDC) between 2002 and 2003. As Table 18 and Figures 12 and 13, below, indicate, the number and rate per 10,000 population of admissions from Orangeburg County to SCDC, between calendar years 2002 and 2003, increased by 33 and 32 percent, respectively. These changes in rates exceed those of all of the six comparison counties as well as the statewide figures. Figure 14 shows that the average daily population of the Orangeburg County Jail (the official name of the jail is the Orangeburg/Calhoun Regional Detention Center) did not increase substantially between calendar years 2000 and 2003. This would support the notion that initiatives in Orangeburg County are focused on the reduction of violent criminal activity that warrants longer sentences than state statutes permit to be served in county jails. By state law, offenders sentenced to 91 days or more are under the jurisdiction of the South Carolina Department of Corrections. The majority of individuals held in local jails are unsentenced individuals who are awaiting trial and a much smaller percentage (usually less than 30 percent) are offenders who are serving short sentences for lesser offenses.

**Table 18**  
**Number and Rate of Admissions**  
**To The South Carolina Department of Corrections**  
**For Selected Counties**  
**Calendar Years 2002 and 2003**

	<b>Number of Admissions to SCDC CY 2002</b>	<b>Rate Per 10,000 Pop. CY 2002</b>	<b>Number of Admissions to SCDC CY 2003</b>	<b>Rate Per 10,000 Pop. CY 2003</b>	<b>% Change in Number of Admissions 2002 - 2003</b>	<b>% Change in Rate Per 10,000 Pop. Admissions to SCDC 2002 - 2003</b>
<b>Charleston</b>	932	29.68	1,169	36.99	25.42	24.62
<b>Greenville</b>	1,608	41.57	1,486	38.06	-7.95	-8.44
<b>Lexington</b>	494	22.17	371	16.40	-24.90	-26.03
<b>Orangeburg</b>	285	30.76	378	40.56	32.63	31.86
<b>Richland</b>	1,254	38.57	1,340	40.93	6.86	6.13
<b>Spartanburg</b>	1,014	39.12	932	35.58	-8.09	-9.04
<b>York</b>	653	38.47	724	42.02	10.9	9.23
<b>Statewide</b>	13,279	32.43	13,642	32.98	2.73	1.71

**Figure 12**



**Figure 13**

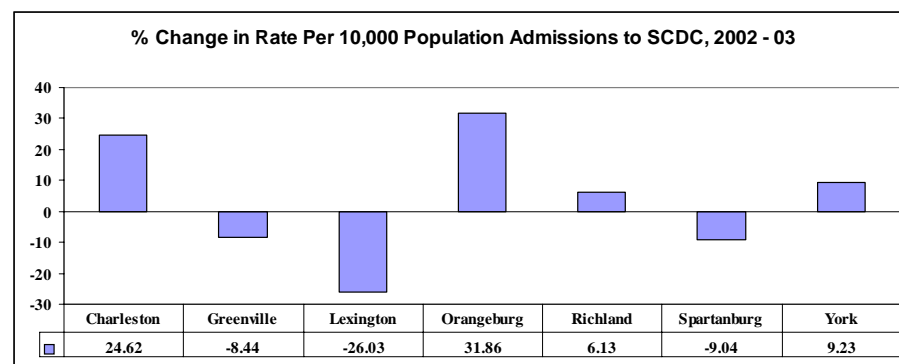
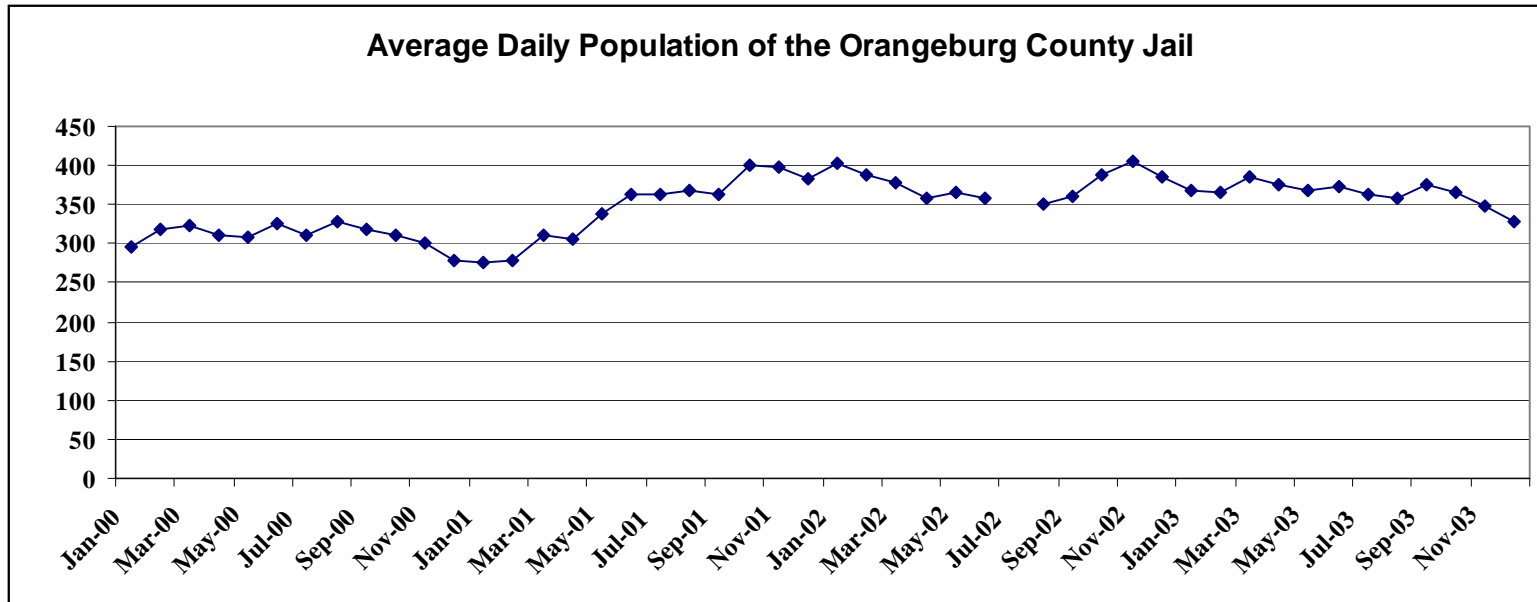


Figure 14



## Conclusion and Recommendations

The data presented in this report clearly indicate there has been a *substantial* reduction in violent crime in Orangeburg County between 2000, when the project began, and the end of 2003. Between 2000 and 2003, the number of violent crimes in Orangeburg County decreased by 32 percent and the per capita rate (i.e., the rate per 10,000 population) of violent crime in Orangeburg County decreased by 33 percent! During this time period, the number of rapes, robberies, aggravated assaults and simple assaults decreased. The number of murders increased during this period, but the absolute number of murders in Orangeburg County is very small relative to the other crime figures. There is no evidence that the reduction in violent crime in Orangeburg County is due to any downward trends in the incidence of violent crime. Statewide, the number of violent crimes increased 4.8 percent, and the per capita statewide rate increased 1.6 percent. Among the six comparison counties, only Greenville and Spartanburg had a reduction in violent crime. Collectively, the six comparison counties experienced a 15 percent increase in violent crimes and a 12 percent increase in the per capita rate. There is clear evidence, however, that certain initiatives implemented in Orangeburg County between 2000 and 2003 had a direct and substantial effect on violent crime in that county. Evidence indicates that the performance of law enforcement agencies in Orangeburg County, namely the Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office and the City of Orangeburg Department of Public Safety, which handle the vast majority of the violent crimes in Orangeburg County, have improved considerably during the project time period. The clearance rates for violent crimes in Orangeburg County increased by over 50 percent between 2000 and 2003; they increased by 65 percent for the Sheriff's Office, and by 22 percent for the City of Orangeburg.

Significant contributors, if not the *most* significant contributors, to the reduction in violent crime in Orangeburg County are due to efforts of the Circuit Court Judge, Judge Cottingham, the Solicitor's Office, and the Public Defender's Office. By installing a non-rotating judge, with a get-tough-on-crime attitude, and increasing the terms of court by 50 percent between 2002 and 2003, which placed, and continues to place, considerable strain on the resources of both the Solicitor's Office, as well as the Public Defender's Office, the backlog of pending cases dropped 32 percent between July 2002, and December 2003. By the end of December 2003, the disposition rate had increased to 125 percent, up from 94 percent in July 2002. The rate of convictions also increased from 37.5 percent to 45.6 percent. Also, and certainly not least, the number of offenders from Orangeburg County sentenced to the Department of Corrections increased 32 percent between January 2002, and December 2003. The strain that this level of effort has placed on the Public Defender's Office and the Solicitor's Offices cannot be understated. With an increase in terms of court of fifty percent and without additional resources (i.e., additional staffing) for these agencies, it is only a matter of time before adverse effects appear in the form of staff turnover, attrition, or other negative effects. In interviews with the Solicitor, Public Defender and Judge Cottingham, all acknowledged that this effort has greatly increased the workload for these offices and has placed a tremendous strain on their resources. *It is recommended that the terms of court continue at its current rate in order to further reduce the backlog of cases; however, it is also recommended that careful consideration be given to providing additional resources to the Solicitor's Office and to*

*the Public Defender's Office.* It should be clear that providing additional resources to one of these offices and not to the other would create an imbalance that would likely create a bottleneck of cases in one office or the other.

The initiatives that were implemented in Orangeburg County were the products of a very deliberative process that took place during an extensive planning phase which required many months to complete. This important phase of the project involved the active participation and collaboration of the entire criminal justice community in Orangeburg County. The success of this project, as this report indicates, is directly attributable to the earnest efforts of these individuals and their commitment to reducing violent crime in their community. *It is recommended that any community which seeks to replicate the successes that have been achieved in Orangeburg County, must also replicate the process by which Orangeburg County achieved its successes, namely, by devoting the time and resources necessary to obtain a clear understanding of where the problems exist in their community and developing a plan of action to address those problems. When the problems are identified, it is important that all stakeholders work together to solve them.*

*Also, it is recommended that the data presented in this report be updated periodically, e.g., quarterly, so that the stakeholders, e.g., members of the Public Safety Coordinating Council and the key stakeholders in Orangeburg County, are able to monitor the performance of each component, e.g., clearance rates, disposition rate, and pending caseloads, etc., of the criminal justice system in Orangeburg County on an on-going basis. This will provide a mechanism whereby problems can be identified before they reach a crisis level so that corrective action can be taken. This will ensure that the current level of success continues. It is also suggested that an objective third party be chosen to collect and analyze these data.*

The most important lesson learned from Orangeburg County is that there are no easy answers, no quick fixes, and no 'one-size-fits-all' solutions. Officials in Orangeburg County, working together, and committed to a common goal devoted the time and energy to identify the problems, and then to work together to fix them. And it worked!