



Governor's Council  
to Combat Human  
Trafficking in Arizona

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN ARIZONA**  
**Virtual Meeting**  
**April 17, 2024, 9:00 AM**

A general meeting of the Governor's Council to Combat Human Trafficking in Arizona convened on **April 17, 2024**, notice duly given.

Members Present (13)	Members Absent (8)
*Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair	Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair
*Lt. Nick Alamshaw	Nathaniel Brown
*Dr. Sarah Beaumont	Lois Lucas
*Gina Read (Proxy for Sarah Chung)	David Lujan
*Doug Coleman	Sophia Philis-Ortiz
*Erin Garcia	Senator T.J. Shope
*Maj. Frank Griego, Jr. (Proxy for Col. Jeff Glover)	Brian Steele
*Ann Carver (Proxy for Tonya Hamilton)	Jim Waring
*Joseph Kelroy	
*Sara Micflikier (Proxy for Rachel Mitchell)	
*Maj. Andrew Orozco	
*Jill Rable	
*Ezequiel Dominguez (Proxy for Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz)	
Staff & Guests Present (5)	
*Amy Peep, GOYFF	*Dr. Angela Salomon, Workgroup Co-Chair
*Chantel Hutchinson, GOYFF	*Lt. Chris Parese, Presenter
*Emily Uline-Olmstead, GOYFF	

*\*Indicates Virtual Attendance*

#### Call to Order

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, called the Governor's Council to Combat Human Trafficking in Arizona meeting to order at **09:03 AM** with 13 members and five staff/guests present. She reviewed meeting procedures, welcomed all for joining, and thanked them for their flexibility.

#### Approval of Minutes

- With quorum met, **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, requested a review of the **February 15, 2024** meeting minutes.
  - **Sara Micflikier** moved to accept the **February 15, 2024** minutes.
  - **Joseph Kelroy** seconded the motion.
- The motion passed with no dissenting votes at **09:17 AM**.

#### Phoenix HEAT Unit

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, introduced **Lieutenant Chris Parese** to provide an update from the [Phoenix Police Department \(PD\)](#) Human Exploitation and Trafficking (HEAT) Unit. Specifically, he gave an update regarding the current anti-trafficking efforts and the initiatives they are participating in.
  - **Lieutenant Chris Parese** has worked for Phoenix PD for over 24 years. As of November 2023, Lt. Parese supervises four undercover squads: two street drug enforcement squads and two human trafficking enforcement squads.
- **Lieutenant Chris Parese** explained that the HEAT Unit is responsible for the investigation, suppression, and prevention of human trafficking in all forms, with a focus on the rescue of child and adult sex trafficking victims. HEAT

identifies targets, investigates, and aids in prosecuting traffickers. HEAT works responsively and proactively with Patrol to address trafficking-related and community concerns appropriately. Detectives employ innovative and advanced undercover techniques and investigative strategies to apprehend and prosecute offenders successfully. The Administrative Licensing Investigator maintains all license, zoning, and liquor-related logs and files, including the Department of Liquor License and Control, Special Event Permits, and Zoning Ordinances. The Unit comprises two sergeants, nine detectives, and three civilians (an analyst, a civilian investigator, and a liquor liaison).

- He mentioned that the unit is smaller than historically; the Phoenix PD is currently experiencing a staff shortage.
- **Lieutenant Chris Parese** explained that from April 2023 through April 2024, the HEAT Unit participated in 96 activities focusing on the 27th Ave corridor. Activities included:
  - Twenty-six (26) Customer Apprehension Operations (CAPs)
    - Resulted in 179 arrests and 155 vehicles towed on the 27th Ave corridor
  - Forty-three (43) Street Enforcement Operations
    - Resulted in 359 arrests on the 27th Ave corridor
  - Twelve (12) Street Outreach Operations
  - One (1) Multi-Agency Operations (Child Predator/Prostitution Enforcement)
  - Three (3) Adult Recoveries
  - Eleven (11) Juvenile Recoveries
- **Lieutenant Chris Parese** provided a breakdown of the 13 HEAT Units outreach operations in partnership with the [Arizona State University Sex Trafficking Intervention Research \(ASU STIR\)](#) from April 2023 through April 2024.
  - From April 2023 through April 2024, the Phoenix HEAT unit participated in four (4) hotel outreach events and nine (9) outreach events at the Helen Drake Senior Center in partnership with ASU STIR and other community partners.
  - The list of activities is included below.
    - 04/12/23 Hotel Outreach.
    - 05/31/23 Hotel Outreach.
    - 06/20/23 Helen Drake Senior Center.
    - 07/29/23 Hotel Outreach.
    - 08/30/23 Helen Drake Senior Center.
    - 09/09/23 Hotel Outreach.
    - 10/19/23 Helen Drake Senior Center.
    - 11/08/23 Helen Drake Senior Center.
    - 12/12/23 Helen Drake Senior Center.
    - 01/17/24 Helen Drake Senior Center.
    - 02/29/24 Helen Drake Senior Center.
    - 03/26/24 Helen Drake Senior Center.
    - 04/09/24 Helen Drake Senior Center.
  - In total, 151 females were contacted and offered services during this period.
- **Lieutenant Chris Parese** explained two notable investigations the HEAT Unit has had.
  - Child Sexual Exploitation:
    - A 38-year-old male sentenced to 30 years for molestation and sexual conduct with a minor.
  - Labor trafficking case was a joint investigation between Phoenix PD and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI):
    - Two Cuban national victims were smuggled into the United States and were forced to work in local adult entertainment establishments to repay the smuggling fees.
    - The suspects were later identified.
- **Lieutenant Chris Parese** explained the current strategies the Unit is developing.
  - Financial investigations into traffickers, including targeted charges of money laundering and illegal enterprise, to bypass the difficulty in obtaining a charge by getting a trafficked person to flip on the trafficker.
  - Mobile security cameras for intelligence gathering and deterrent effect.
  - Placing a greater emphasis on tracking traffickers in a database for case building and information sharing with other agencies.

- **Joe Kelroy** asked, because of the effort to raise awareness, is the Phoenix HEAT Unit receiving more calls regarding possible instances of human trafficking?
  - **Lieutenant Chris Parese** answered yes, specifically in the 27th Avenue corridor. This area garners the most attention, and they receive many calls from it.
- **Claire Sechler Merkle, Co-Chair**, commented that she has been able to attend a number of the outreach events. She explained that these events are heartwarming because of the service providers, and she recognizes that the community wraparound approach is working. She also commented that the volunteers for the Final Four event were required to complete the same Human Trafficking Awareness training required of the 2023 Super Bowl volunteers.
- To view **Lieutenant Chris Parese's** presentation, [click here](#).

#### ADOT Human Trafficking Initiatives

- **Claire Sechler Merkle, Co-Chair**, introduced **Major Andrew Orozco** to present the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)'s current anti-human trafficking initiatives.
  - **Major Andrew Orozco** has been with the [ADOT Enforcement and Compliance Division \(ECD\)](#) for 12 years, overseeing field operations of the Enforcement Services Bureau, which is responsible for 16 open ports of entry statewide. He is the ADOT/ECD liaison leading the [Arizona Commercial Vehicle Safety Partnership \(ACVSP\)](#) alongside his [Arizona Department of Safety \(AZDPS\)](#) counterpart. In July 2023, he was appointed to serve as a member of the Governor's Human Trafficking Council.
  - Completing his time at the [Yuma County Sheriff's Office \(YCSO\)](#) as a Deputy Sheriff, Major Orozco's assignments included leadership roles in Patrol, Special Response Team (SRT), joint YCSO, and the [US Border Patrol Border \(USBP\)](#) Disrupt Task Forces. He is a veteran of the US Marine Corps with an honorable discharge and ranking of Sergeant.
- **Major Andrew Orozco** explained that ADOT has 3,336 employees; the ECD houses 261. These numbers fluctuate weekly, but he emphasized ADOT's presence statewide:
  - Office of Inspector General (OIG personnel).
  - Law Enforcement Service Bureau (ESB personnel).
  - Twenty-two (22) Ports of Entry Statewide (16 operational ports).
  - Five (5) fixed Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) Inspection Offices.
- **Major Andrew Orozco** discussed how the ACVSP comprises AZDPS Commercial Vehicle Enforcement troopers and ADOT Enforcement and Compliance Division officers, a governor-approved partnership with the mission to ensure safe, secure, and efficient commercial transport across Arizona. They partake in four major commercial operations statewide, two in Northern Arizona and two in Southern Arizona. Between those four operations, numerous statewide blended operations also occurred.
  - All enforcement Driver/Vehicle Examination Reports (DVERs) issued on inspections now have the [Truckers Against Trafficking \(TAT\)](#) message and website printed.
  - Participation in the annual [Commerical Vehicle Safety Alliance \(CVSA\)](#) Human Trafficking Awareness Week (January 8 to January 12, 2024) yielded:
    - One hundred four (104) inspectors conducting 690 inspections (including roadside) where they issued awareness materials at the Ports of Entry (POE) and safety outreaches made.
    - Distributed 8,494 TAT wallet cards.
    - Distributed 2,953 TAT window decals.
    - Conducted four (4) safety presentations.
- **Major Andrew Orozco** discussed how the ECD works with the TAT and how Arizona adopted and implemented the Iowa Motor Vehicle Enforcement (MVE) model in April 2023.
  - Officers/troopers trained.
  - Stocked POE with TAT material.
  - Implemented TAT training as part of mandatory safety meetings for truck and bus companies.
  - Visited truck stops with TAT material, urging them to train employees and distribute.
  - Ensured every Commerical Driver's License (CDL) issued (or renewed) was accompanied with TAT material and information.
  - Visited bus terminals with TAT material, urging them to train employees and display signage.
- **Major Andrew Orozco** played a [video](#) for the Council, Kevin Kimmel Be A Changemaker.

- **Major Andrew Orozco** explained the other outreach initiatives the ECD is participating in.
  - All Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) CDL Offices provide TAT material to new commercial drivers.
  - The Governor's Human Trafficking Council posters are statewide at all Arizona Rest Areas, POE, and MVD locations.
  - The Bumper Sticker Initiative is still being planned and developed; he continuously pushes to include awareness materials (including the Arizona tip line) in ADOT fleet cars.
- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, commented that she was pleased to see human trafficking posters statewide, especially in rural areas. She also mentioned supporting the Bumper Sticker Initiative and would like it to move forward.
- To view **Major Andrew Orozco's** presentation, [click here](#).

#### AZDPS ACTIC Anti-Human Trafficking Campaign

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, introduced **Major Frank Griego, Jr.** to present the AZDPS [Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center \(ACTIC\)](#)'s anti-human trafficking campaign and provide an update regarding the Arizona Tip Line.
  - **Major Frank Griego, Jr.** has been employed with the AZDPS since November 1999. He currently serves as the ACTIC Director and AZDPS Intelligence Bureau Commander. Before being assigned as the ACTIC Director, **Major Griego, Jr.** served as the AZDPS Technical Services Division Chief of Staff. He has been assigned to multiple operational and administrative positions in every division of the Department and stationed in remote, rural, and urban areas around Arizona.
- **Major Frank Griego, Jr.** began his presentation with an update on call statistics from the ACTIC Human Trafficking Tip Line (1-877-4AZ-TIPS):
  - 2023 (February through December): 112 calls received
  - 2024 (January through March): 86 calls received.
  - Case management statistics:
    - All-time (February 2023 through March 2024):
      - Ongoing: 48
      - Closed cases: 99
      - Total cases: 157
    - Quarter 1 of 2024 (January through March):
      - Ongoing: 31
      - Closed cases: 12
      - Total cases: 42
  - Counties provided with services:
    - All-time (February 2023 through March 2024): 12 counties provided victim services.
    - Quarter 1 of 2024 (January through March): Five (5) counties provided victim services.
- **Major Frank Griego, Jr.** provided three narratives from Tip Line callers.
  - "Sarah's" narrative (slide 5):
    - This caller's journey with the ASU Tip Line Support Team began in February 2024, when she reached out for help after escaping an unsafe situation in Tucson; this caller needed a safe place to go. The caller is a self-reported victim of familial sex trafficking. The ASU Tip Line Support Team contacted the [Phoenix Dream Center](#) and secured placement for the caller. After two weeks at the Phoenix Dream Center, the caller realized it wasn't the right fit, and the ASU Tip Line Support Team agents swiftly arranged transportation to the [Central Arizona Shelter Services \(CASS\)](#) for the caller to connect with the [Homeless Services Campus \(HSC\)](#) and the [Community Bridges, Inc. \(CBI\)](#) Path Team for further assistance with substance abuse and mental health services. The caller had a crucial immigration court hearing in Tucson, which required the caller to attend in person. The ASU Tip Line Support Team secured transport via Greyhound to ensure her attendance and transportation back to Phoenix to the CASS shelter. The ASU Tip Line Support Team continues to provide support and connection to resources as needed.
  - "Emily's" narrative (slide 6):
    - In March 2024, the ASU Support Team received a call from a 19-yr. old female in a critical situation.

The caller contacted the Arizona Human Trafficking Tip Line with the [Chandler Police Department](#) after an encounter with Chandler PD that resulted in taking the caller's trafficker into custody. Afraid her trafficker would be released the next morning, the caller asked the ASU Tip Line Support Team for assistance in securing placement for her and her 13-month-old child. The ASU Support Team contacted the Phoenix Dream Center and secured temporary placement for the caller and her child. Recognizing the need for a more permanent solution and after much discussion about family and support out of state. The ASU Support Team assisted the caller in connecting with her sister in Philadelphia, who stated that the caller and her child would be safe with her. The ASU Support Team arranged a flight to Philadelphia for the caller and her child. The ASU Tip Line Support Team contacted the caller to confirm she arrived in Philadelphia safely and in her sister's care. The caller expressed gratitude, and her case was closed.

- "Rachel's" narrative (slide 7):
  - A caller who initially contacted the ASU Support Team in 2023 from [Maricopa County Sheriff's Office \(MCSO\)](#) jail has continued to make remarkable progress after the ASU Tip Line Team secured a placement at [Dignity House](#) and arranged transportation upon her release. After not feeling the shelter was a suitable placement, the ASU Support Team secured a bed at the [Washington St. Shelter](#). The caller contacted CBI support staff and [Saint Vincent De Paul](#) case managers for services and further support. The ASU Support Team worked with the shelter partners and secured a bed for the caller at the [New Life Center](#). After completing New Life Center's 120-day program, she achieved a monumental goal: securing an apartment in March 2024. Remarkably, her new home is just minutes from where her child lives, rekindling the hope for a brighter, more connected future. This narrative is a testament to her resilience and the pivotal role of the support she received from the ASU Support Team in providing pathways to recovery and empowerment.
- **Major Frank Griego, Jr.** explained that the initial appropriation stated 2 million for the Department of Public Safety Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center for anti-human trafficking operations that work to reduce human trafficking by providing assistance and analytical services to law enforcement agencies or that provide services to victims and training to law enforcement agencies, prosecutorial agencies, and the public on preventing and identifying human trafficking. **Major Griego, Jr.** mentioned that the ACTIC expects to spend the entire budget by June 2024.
- **Major Frank Griego, Jr.** discussed the ACTIC's human trafficking awareness events for 2024.
  - February 21: Arizona Anti-Trafficking Network (AATN) Breakfast in Tucson.
  - March 15 & 22: Spring Break Outreach Mohave County.
  - April 5-8: Final Four events.
  - April 6: Casa Grande Public Safety Day.
  - April 9: Human Trafficking presentation at Arizona Moving Association.
  - April 26: Human Trafficking Summit in Page.
  - April 28-May 2: Rocky Mountain Information Network (RMIN) Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS) Human Trafficking Summit.
  - May 18: Phoenix 1st Step Drop-in Center.
  - May 21: Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT)'s Coalition Build in Tucson.
  - June 10-12: National Institute for Jail Operations Jail Con 2024 in Chandler.
  - September 29: Sex Trafficking Awareness 5k CATE.
  - September 30-October 2: Sex Trafficking Summit YCSO.
  - October 22: [JuST Conference](#).
- **Major Frank Griego, Jr.** explained the media campaign materials released for the Final Four.
  - Digital billboards included the tip line number and used the [US Department of Homeland Security's Blue Campaign](#) materials.
  - Posters included in airports and restaurants.
  - 30-second radio ads played in both English and Spanish.
- **Ezequiel Dominguez** commented that he is fortunate for the partnerships with AZDPS and the ACTIC and cannot overstate the importance of working together to connect with victims of human trafficking.

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, commented that the tip line has only been active for over a year and commended the women running the hotline. She also mentioned that she was pleased to learn that the ACTIC's Final Four campaign included sex and labor trafficking messaging.
- **Joe Kelroy** commented that it was moving to hear about AZDPS' continuous and collaborative efforts and emphasized the importance of this work.
- To view **Major Frank Griego, Jr.'s** presentation, [click here](#).

#### Workgroup Updates

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, introduced the Victim Services Workgroup Co-Chairs, **Dr. Sarah Beaumont**, and **Dr. Angela Saloman**, to share any updates with the Council.
  - **Dr. Angela Saloman** reported that the Victim Services Workgroup met on March 26, 2024, focusing on identifying individuals who would increase the group's diversity.

#### Upcoming Meeting

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, reminded members to mark their calendars for the next meeting on **June 5, 2024**, at **09:00 AM**, held in person at the Executive Tower and available in a hybrid format for Council Members and the public to join virtually.

#### Adjournment

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, thanked everyone for being part of the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn.
  - **Joseph Kelroy** moved to accept the motion.
  - **Major Frank Griego, Jr.** seconded the motion.
- The motion passed with no dissenting votes at **10:01 AM**.

Dated 18 of April 2024  
Governor's Council to Combat Human Trafficking in Arizona  
Respectfully Submitted By:  
Amy Peep  
GOYFF