

Brief Lines

A bridge between business and the local community

About CSP

Welcome to the latest edition of the Brief Lines newsletter, published by Community Safety Partnerships Ltd (CSP) which offers quality solutions to help address safety and other risks. Specialising in personal, community and system safety issues, CSP provides a holistic intelligence-led approach to partnership between business and community, business and regulator and other interfaces where risk arises.

CSP is headed by Aidan and Sue Nelson who between them have wide experience in corporate reputation handling, developing and delivering community safety strategies and campaigns, crisis management, and the advancement of health, safety and environmental policy both internationally and nationally at industry, multi-party programme and individual company levels.

Effective partnership working guidance

New guidance to support crime and disorder reduction partnerships has been issued by the Home Office as part of the CDRP reform agenda. 'Delivering community safety: A guide to effective partnership working' has been developed in support of new legislative requirements (*Brief Lines*, August 2007) to be implemented by CDRPs following a wide-ranging review. For more information on how the guidance can be adapted to suit your needs, contact suenelson@comsafetypartners.com

CSP delivers police workshops

CSP has undertaken a number of workshops for British Transport Police to bring officers up to speed with the external community safety agenda. Entitled 'Policing the rail network within the national community safety framework' the workshop syllabus takes delegates through the background to community safety legislation and how the government's National Community Safety Plan, new cutting crime strategy and neighbourhood policing programme can impact on rail industry activity to tackle crime and disorder. A key part is the mapping of NCSO objectives and actions to BTP's Policing Plan, elements of which have been drawn up in consultation with railway businesses. The workshops also feature the outcomes of the CDRP reform agenda plus ideas and practical suggestions for engaging with communities and tapping into funding mechanisms. Future workshops will further emphasise practical aspects of partnership working by showing how the government's new guidance for CDRPs can be adapted for use in the rail industry both with internal and external partners.

Contact suenelson@comsafetypartners.com for more details.

Cut police red tape call

The government's senior professional advisor on policing, Sir Ronnie Flanagan, has called for police officers to be given more freedom from red tape and paperwork. His views are part of an interim report into an independent review of the police service he is conducting for the Home Secretary, Jacqui Smith. The interim report has been welcomed by British Transport Police (BTP) which is already taking significant steps to reduce bureaucracy and paperwork through the introduction of hand-held computers for officers.

Deputy Chief Constable Andy Trotter said: "Policing today is much more complex than it used to be and it takes longer to process prisoners and complete the associated paperwork and I welcome any opportunity to reduce this time.

"We began rolling out handheld computers to officers on London Underground last October to allow them to spend more time on their frontline policing duties. By eliminating time-consuming paperwork generated by stop and searches and intelligence reports, officers now spend up to an hour extra per day out on the beat rather than in the office."

More than 400 BTP officers are having a more effective and visible presence on the Underground thanks to Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) which are slashing paperwork. While out on the beat officers can use their PDAs to gain instant access to vital police information systems.

"PDAs are providing officers with a piece of equipment as crucial to their efficiency and safety as their radios, batons and stab vests," added Mr Trotter.

The interim report is strongly focused on addressing the continuing problem of bureaucracy in police forces, and to get a real first-hand look at just what police really wrestle with, Sir Ronnie went out on operational patrols with officers to see for himself. The full review report on policing is due early next year.

For more information go to: www.homeoffice.gov.uk



New powers to stop gun and knife violence

A range of tough new powers to fight gun and knife crime is taking effect from October 1. The new anti-crime measures tighten the rules on possessing imitation guns and air rifles, and the sale of knives. Imitation guns feature in a significant number of crimes each year - in 2005-06 more than 3,000 crimes involved imitation weapons, accounting for 15% of all firearms offences. In 2006-07 that figure decreased to 2,493 crimes and these measures are designed to help lower that figure even further. Air rifles were used in more than 10,000 crimes in 2005-06, resulting in more than 1,100 injuries. The new rules restrict the sale of air rifles to licensed firearms dealers. Police will be able to withdraw a seller's licence if they violate age restrictions and other rules designed to keep neighbourhoods safe. In addition, young people between the ages of 10 and 17 account for 20% of those convicted of carrying knives. The new knife laws are intended to make it harder for children and teenagers to get their hands on illegal knives by raising the minimum age for knife buyers. The new measures are part of the Violent Crime Reduction Act which received royal assent in November 2006. For more information go to the Office of Public Sector Information website at www.opsi.gov.uk

Say no to crime week

Not in My Neighbourhood Week from October 15 to 21 aims to foster a sense of empowerment in local communities and raise awareness of crime reduction work in local areas. During the week Crime Reduction Partnerships and Drug Action Teams will encourage local people to join forces with them and say no to local crime, robbery and burglary, anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and drug misuse. The toolkit "Not in my Neighbourhood Week - do you want to be involved?"

provides more details and advice for those wishing to take part. It includes ideas to try, key messages, publicity and tips for working with local media. Download the guide at: <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/notinmyneighbourhood.pdf>

Stop, look and listen...

In recent years the proportion of children aged seven to 10 who are sometimes allowed to cross roads alone has fallen to 51%. In the same period the number of children of this age killed on Britain's roads has risen from 10 to 18 each year. Looking more widely at road deaths of children under the age of 16 the figures for 2006 recorded 169 fatalities, an increase of 20% on 2005 bucking the long-run decline seen over a generation or more. The statistics raise concerns that over-protective parenting may be a factor in the worsening safety record of the young on Britain's highways. Rob Gifford the Director of the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety says: "Parents should consider whether forbidding their children from crossing the road unaccompanied is exposing them subsequently to additional risk as they may not acquire the skills they need."

Children need to learn to cross the road on their own and the increase in the proportion always driven to school may be part of a vicious circle in which children grow into car drivers not understanding the needs of pedestrians. The government's Child Road Safety Strategy published earlier this year sets out a range of initiatives to improve pedestrian safety. To learn more visit:

www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roadsafety/child/childroadsafetystrategy2007

Level crossing behaviour project

Under Australia's National Railway Level Crossing Behavioural Strategy, work has begun on a targeted education and enforcement pilot

project. The objective is to develop guidelines for effective, practical and sustainable enforcement and community education programmes at level crossings, for use across all jurisdictions.

Key stakeholders of the project are governments, railway companies, transport safety organisations, police and community road safety councils. The project includes a review of existing research literature to establish best practice and the efficacy of past and present enforcement and associated education or awareness programmes, both nationally and internationally. In addition the project team will examine existing data, conduct statistical analyses and prepare a report on company-based enforcement. This will serve as a "case study" which demonstrates how companies might change the behaviour of their own employees/contractors where level crossings are involved. The project is expected to be completed by the end of January 2008. For more information contact: Rhianne Piamsa-Art at rpiamsa-art@ara.net.au

Patrol and response guards on Manchester's buses

Patrol and response guards working in pairs at bus stations and on buses across Greater Manchester have been hailed a success. In the last year they have responded to 130 incidents at bus stations and boarded nearly 100 buses a week to address anti-social behaviour. Now the Greater Manchester Bus Operators' Association has agreed to contribute 40% and the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority (PTA) the other 60% of the scheme's £142,000 annual running costs. Deployment of the patrol and response guards is intelligence led and shows how the PTA, bus operators and Greater Manchester Police are partners in a drive to address anti-social behaviour on buses and at bus stations.

Young people link between offenders and victims

A pioneering project where young people act as mediators between offenders and victims has been launched in Lancashire. Youth peer panels will manage meetings between young offenders and individuals or community representatives who have been affected by their behaviour in the hope they will have more influence over their peers. Panel members are drawn from local secondary schools and trained to deliver restorative justice case conferences. They will draw up acceptable behaviour contracts for offenders, one of the conditions of which will be attendance at an eight-week "peer education programme" covering the consequences of crime and issues such as bullying, binge drinking and truancy. The government-backed scheme is being run by the Lancashire Restorative Partnership Group, led by crime reduction charity Nacro and including Lancashire police, the county's youth offending team and Preston City Council. It is being funded through a £487,000 Treasury grant from its Invest to Save budget which is used to support programmes offering the possibility of long-term savings by supporting people before the problems they face get worse.

£11m boost for youth football

A scheme that uses football to combat antisocial behaviour has been given an £11m funding boost. Kickz works with top football clubs to run activities on week nights for young people to keep them off the streets. The Football Foundation is investing £4.7 million into the scheme, the Metropolitan Police Service £3 million and £1 million through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport from the Premier League's good causes fund. Matched funding provided by local bodies will boost the total amount to more than £11 million over three years. Kickz, a partnership of 19 Premiership and 11 Football League clubs, offers young people the chance to take part in sports sessions three nights a week, 48 weeks of the year. Activities include

football leagues, tournaments and coaching sessions. Educational sessions are also offered to young people about issues such as healthy lifestyles and the dangers of drug use and carrying weapons. As a result of the investment, Kickz will now be extended to more than 100 projects and 12,000 teenagers in the most deprived areas of the country, more than four times the existing provision. It will now be run with every Premier League and Football League club in London, and three more clubs outside the capital: Aston Villa, Sheffield United, and Reading. The eventual aim is to make the scheme England-wide. Figures gathered from the initial schemes found crime fell by 27 per cent on nights when activities were run, compared to a year earlier. For more information go to: www.footballfoundation.org.uk

Rowdies top complaints table

Rowdy behaviour is the worst offender in a list of complaints made to landlords by tenants living on housing estates, according to a survey for the Housing Corporation by Edinburgh's Heriot-Watt University. Verbal abuse and "youth nuisance" also accounted for a large number of complaints. But only 29% of registered social landlords took out anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs), preferring instead to evict tenants after gaining possession orders which are seen as cheaper and faster. Meanwhile, a four-year study by Encams, the charity behind the Keep Britain Tidy initiative, shows that cleaner areas are safer and more crime-free than those strewn with litter and dog mess. The research strengthens the government's National Community Safety Plan philosophy that living in an area free from crime and anti-social behaviour with green spaces is an important factor in having a good quality of life.

Tackling booze problems

Alcohol support workers are interviewing suspects in police cells to help combat binge drinking and alcohol-related crime. The scheme, in Plymouth, Devon, is said to be the first

of its kind in the UK, with more than 1,000 suspects taking part to date, although similar schemes are now underway in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. Although police, door staff and CCTV operators in Plymouth have a well-organised operation to tackle anti-social behaviour and violence that occurs as a result of drinking, police wanted to look at ways they could engage at an early stage with people whose drinking brought them into contact with the criminal justice system. Drinkers who are arrested for associated criminal behaviour end up sleeping it off in the cells but are visited the following morning by alcohol support workers and offered drink awareness advice and phone numbers to call if they need help. Six months into the scheme it is too early to say whether it is a success, but a large number of people with alcohol-related problems are at least being assessed and given basic information and advice about their drinking habits.

Construction fatalities at a five year high

Workplace safety statistics for 2006-7 make for grim reading as they show fatalities on building sites across the UK have reached a five year high, with 77 people killed - 28% higher than the previous year. With more than a death a week there are calls for more prosecutions of construction companies and those that manage them. Since April the Construction Design & Management Regulations 2007 have widened the responsibility of clients, be they companies or individuals. The new regulations make clear that care must be taken in selecting only competent contractors for both design and build phases of a project. As clients may incur liability where previously they were shielded, it is now a good time to make sure what the law requires whether involved with large new build projects or small scale refurbishment of existing facilities.

Bombings inquest delays

Bereaved families of the July 7 bombings which killed 52 and four terrorists in 2005 have been told no inquests will be held into the atrocities until next year at the earliest. First inquests were provisionally scheduled for September but coroners have now told families they have been postponed indefinitely as police investigations continue. Now some families fear they may have to wait as long as the relatives of the Marchioness boat disaster who had to wait almost six years before the first inquest took place. The delay into the 7/7 inquests has been explained by the need not to prejudice forthcoming terrorism trials and the ongoing criminal inquiries. But families are said to be growing increasingly anxious that they have yet to learn the true circumstances into the events leading up to and during July 7. They say they cannot find 'closure' until they hear the specific circumstances of the death of their loved ones. Details such as whether they died in a carriage or as they were dragged along the tunnel or even if their lives could have been saved remain unanswered. Previous disasters and multi-fatality events have shown that gaining specific information about the circumstances surrounding a relative's death can be of particular importance for many bereaved families as they try to come to terms with their loss.

Handling public inquiries

The government's Emergency Planning College (EPC) at Easingwold, North Yorkshire is

running a course on how to deal with public inquiries following a disaster or emergency. The course, from October 24 to 26, is designed for anyone who faces the possibility of having their decisions and actions put under scrutiny at a public inquiry following an emergency. It includes not only those responding to the incident at operation, tactical and strategic levels, but also those with management or executive responsibility in the areas of assessment, prevention and preparedness.

The EPC is also running a course on humanitarian assistance centres from October 31 to November 2 aimed at those involved in the development of centre plans and management strategy around the relevant service delivery, for example, education, social services, housing, emergency planning, voluntary organisations, crisis support teams and primary care trusts. For further information on these and other courses go to:

www.epcollege.gov.uk

Partnership case study

Partnership is key to engaging communities in the fight to tackle community safety. In this series *Brief Lines* looks at examples of partnership in action.

NORTH Somerset CDRP successfully bid for £8,000 funding from Government Office South West which was match-funded by the partnership. With a total budget of £16,000 North Somerset was able to fund nine separate initiatives, each one conceived and run by members of the community. Each became known

as Sparkplug projects, and as grassroots projects they successfully engaged the community in solving problems. Each had genuine community ownership and was well-respected in their individual areas, helping build more effective links between the CDRP and community. Examples of Sparkplug projects included:

- Together We Stand - a women's networking group that engaged with other ethnic minority groups in North Somerset to coordinate an event called 'Together We Stand' to celebrate cultural diversity in the area
- Crimebusters project with a local church where young people are making improvements in their community
- A safer cycling project based in a local neighbourhood
- Growing together - a community garden project a community centre with 15 volunteers actively engaged in the work
- Community open space - a project to improve the open space around a youth centre
- Phone a Friend community safety project involving the local Youth Council. Fridge cards were designed and 10,000 printed containing contact details for young people

Keep in touch...

If you have any news you wish to share, details of an event you want to highlight, or would like further information on Community Safety Partnerships Ltd contact suenelson@comsafetypartners.com or aidannelson@comsafetypartners.com