

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.

Police crime reduction guide

Greater Manchester Police has produced a comprehensive family crime reduction guide which covers all aspects of security from burglary prevention to personal safety and vehicle crime. As well as giving advice to potential victims, there is a strong emphasis on helping vulnerable groups such as students and older people. The booklet is written in plain easy-to-read English and offers practical advice that everyone can follow.

For further information about the guide, please contact Fiona Murray (Divisional and Partnership Support Unit) on 0161 865 0329 or e-mail her at:

Fiona.Murray@gmp.pnn.police.uk

Violent rail crime down, but ASB an issue for passengers

Serious violent crime on Britain's railways has decreased but passengers are more likely to experience low level disorder and anti-social behaviour, according to figures released by British Transport Police (BTP). They show that national police force for Britain's railways achieved all its operational targets in 2006/07. The 11 targets included detecting more violent crime, detecting more robberies and more assaults on staff, reducing thefts and bringing more people to justice for anti-social behaviour.

But despite achieving all its operational targets, Deputy Chief Constable Andy Trotter acknowledged growing concern about low level disorder, which pervades society and the rail network. "The increased industry investment in BTP is paying dividends and has helped to make the railway network safer," he said. "However, an increase in low level disorder and anti-social behaviour means passengers are more likely to fear becoming a victim of crime. BTP has taken a zero tolerance approach to this type of disorder and as a result over 4,000 more offenders were brought to justice than the previous year.

He added: "This lack of respect for fellow passengers and staff, as well as rail property, makes passengers feel uneasy and creates a perception of an unsafe environment."

BTP has dedicated neighbourhood policing teams on some sections of the rail network across the country who provide high visibility policing. The teams are focused in areas where anti-social behaviour is a problem and they have been hugely successful in reassuring passengers and staff alike, said Mr Trotter.

He went on: "BTP has a positive arrest policy and our officers will continue to intervene and target this type of behaviour when it occurs. We want the millions of passengers who depend upon the network to feel safe, as well as be safe when they are travelling, and I would urge passengers and staff to support our officers by reporting anti-social behaviour when they witness it rather than suffering in silence or simply ignoring it."

Serious assaults were down 16% in 2006/07, robberies by 10% and thefts by 6%. Route crime (crimes such as obstructing trains and endangering safety) was down 17%.

Recorded assaults on staff increased by 8% to 3,026 offences, but BTP have been encouraging reporting of these offences, more than half of which - 51% - were detected in 2006/07. Officers continue to work with train operators to offer conflict avoidance training as well as provide staff with DNA spit kits to assist in detection. In addition, the Crown Prosecution Service now treats rail staff as public servants meaning that offenders are likely to face harsher penalties.

Police activity has also led to increases in hate crime, up 13% in 2006/07, with BTP encouraging reporting of these types of crime. Graffiti crimes also went up, largely as a result of a push against graffiti vandals on London Underground where maintenance contractors are now encouraged to report and record every incidence of graffiti so it can be recorded as a crime. BTP has also expanded the use of Operation Shield, the deployment of archway metal detectors to detect and deter the carrying of knives and other offensive weapons on the rail network.

To view annual report highlights, go to www.btp.presscentre.com



Government teenage crime pledge

Prime Minister Gordon Brown has promised the government will carry out "intensive work" to deal with the growing problem of teenage crime and gang culture. Mr Brown said tougher enforcement of existing laws and the passing of new laws, if required, were high on the government's agenda following a spate of recent stabbings and shootings involving young people.

The Prime Minister hosted a previously-planned seminar on youth crime with Home Secretary Jacqui Smith and representatives from the police, government and voluntary agencies less than 24 hours after the killing of 11-year-old Liverpool schoolboy Rhys Jones who was shot as he walked home from soccer practice. Authorities now plan to target 10 areas around the country with measures including an alcohol crackdown and early intervention to deter young people from "gangs and guns and knife crime." Mr Brown said that since taking over at the end of June his government has been working urgently to examine what more can be done to heal the problems of guns, knives and gangs and more generally the problem of youth disorder. He pledged: "Where there is a need for new laws, we will pass them, where there is a need for tougher enforcement we will make sure that that happens." Referring to the murder of Rhys Jones Mr Brown said the "heinous crime" had "shocked the whole nation" and that those responsible would be "tracked down, arrested and punished."

As a key output of the seminar, the Home Secretary has asked the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) to conduct a review of the approaches to gun control employed by the police service and partners with a view to driving down the availability of illegal guns. ACPO president Mr Ken Jones said: "ACPO welcomes this commission and will now work tirelessly to see what more can be done. In this endeavour chief officers across the country will be speaking to affected communities who suffer from this blight.

The police need their help because they are part of the solution. We also look to our partners to aid and assist us to make the most of this opportunity."

US legislature considers railway safety

A bill to improve railway safety in the US which is working its way through Congress includes provisions relating to level crossing safety, trespass prevention and the support of those affected by train accidents.

Pedestrian safety is targeted in the proposed legislation through a requirement for the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to provide guidance to railways. The bill also builds on existing arrangements for grants to the states with the highest number of collisions on level crossings with a requirement for state - based action plans. To help improve safety at level crossings, the bill addresses sighting requirements for all public and private crossings and sets out arrangements for each railway to post a telephone number at each of their level crossings for quickly advising and the railway responding to vehicles fouling a crossing, obstructed sight lines and defective crossing equipment.

Operation Lifesaver's core federal funding to educate users of level crossings is specifically addressed and additional provision is made for a pilot state-level public awareness programme that "addresses the need for targeted and sustained community outreach" to improve public safety.

The bill sets out the central role of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) in assisting families of passengers and on-train railway staff killed or injured in train accidents. The core role of NTSB provides for it engaging specialist "not for profit" support to:

- Provide mental health and counselling services
- Provide an environment in which families can grieve in private
- Meet with families travelling to the site of an accident and contact them and those unable to travel to identify

longer term assistance that may be required

- Arrange, in consultation with the families, a suitable memorial service

The proposed legislation also sets out requirements for train operators to have plans in place addressing the needs of bereaved families of those killed while travelling by train. Interestingly, the legislative proposal does not see a need for railway infrastructure providers to put similar plans in place. Certainly, from British experience this is essential where the cause of an accident is infrastructure related.

For further information on the proposed US legislation go to:

<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/C?c110:./temp/~c110QMQB TN>

Community safety improvement

The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), which works for local government improvement, recognises the importance of community safety as a priority issue for councils. It is therefore seeking to update its community safety information on its Knowledge website (www.idea.gov.uk) and has commissioned ARCS (Applied Research in Community Safety) to undertake this work. The project is being conducted with assistance from the National Community Safety Network, and in consultation with other research organisations and government bodies currently focusing on these areas.

The aim is to provide up-to-date material of relevance for councils and their partners in order to support local government improvement. The focus is on the CDRP reform programme and related areas of work that seek to improve council practice and performance in community safety. The material that ARCS will provide will not only give examples of best and innovative practice, but will also put information into context in a bid to make it as useful as possible to practitioners and elected members alike.

Public transport's 'poor links'

Insecure cycle parking, poorly-lit footpaths and buses that don't connect with train times are barriers to people using their local rail station, according to a survey.

UK environmental transport body Transport 2000 undertook the survey to find the best and worst stations to travel to in England and Wales. The survey found that 60% of respondents said they would not feel safe leaving their bike at the station, with 62% saying there was not a safe cycle route to their station. Only 36% felt the paths to their station were safe, well-lit and free of obstacles, while only 12% thought that bus timetables generally connected with the train timetable.

The Department for Transport says it is working constantly to improve the integration of the transport network, with £150m to be invested in re-furbishing and modernising 150 mid-sized stations and a further £370m being spent on the Access for All station programme. Although Transport 2000 welcomes government moves it says all stations should have good bus links, decent footpaths and secure cycle parking and must be accessible to all. For more details go to

www.transport2000.org.uk

New ASBO guidance

The Home Office has published new guidance aimed at those on the front-line who are tackling the fight against anti-social behaviour. Advice has been drawn up with the support of a range of agencies, including the police and local authorities and brings together examples of best practice being used effectively across the country as part of the toolkit for tackling anti-social behaviour. The guidance specifically references the use of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC) which is a written, voluntary agreement between a person who has been involved in anti-social behaviour and the police and local services whose role it is to prevent it. An ABC features an acknowledgement by the individual

that their behaviour is having a negative impact on the community and an agreement to stop that behaviour. ABCs are useful for stopping low levels of anti-social behaviour but their flexibility means they can also be used in more serious situations. They can also include agreed positive activities such as attending school or college or attending treatment for alcohol or drugs if they are an aggravating factor for the anti-social behaviour. Download a copy of the guidance from

www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk, or get more information on tackling anti-social behaviour from www.respect.gov.uk

Probation service changes

A new Act that aims to improve probation services has now become law. The Offender Management Act 2007 removes the public sector monopoly on the provision of probation services, and enables the Secretary of State to commission services from providers in the public, private or voluntary sector. The aim is to improve overall performance, and to capitalise on the potential benefits of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) reform programme.

The Act transfers the power to make arrangements for the provision of probation services from probation boards to the Secretary of State. High performing probation boards will be turned into trusts and their membership will include a local councillor. Probation trusts will be partners in their Local Strategic Partnerships and will sign up to local area agreements. The plan is for all probation boards to become trusts by 2010. Clause 10 of the Act will also enable better information sharing between the bodies and individuals involved in offender management.

Under the Act, the commissioning of probation services will take place at national, regional, and local levels. Local lead providers will work under contract to Regional Offender Managers (ROMs) for the delivery of services in a

probation area.

Assuming their performance meets local requirements, the lead provider in a probation area will be the probation trust. The lead provider will concentrate on the delivery of offender management, while commissioning many of their interventions work from other providers based on what is most effective, and who is best placed to deliver to their local community.

For more information on the Act go to www.noms.homeoffice.gov.uk

Designing out crime

An alliance of independent UK design experts is setting to work to raise awareness about how design can be used to make life more difficult for criminals. Along with the Home Office, they will spread the word both in the public and private sector about designing out crime as part of the government's overall crime strategy. Design and technological innovation have often been used in the past to stop specific crimes, and to solve complex societal problems. Well-known examples include:

- Development of routine baggage screening technology in the 1970s - it directly decreased aircraft hijackings from 70 per year to 15
- The recent introduction of chip and pin technology at retailers - it slashed credit card fraud by 46%
- The construction of gates on 5,000 alleys in Liverpool - burglaries have dropped by 37%

Home Office Minister Vernon Coaker said innovative design played a critical role in driving down crime in England and Wales by more than a third over the last decade, adding that much of the 51% fall in vehicle crime can be attributed to design improvements such as immobilisers and toughened glass. The Design and Technology Alliance will seek to build on these achievements by pushing the message that designing out crime is about sustainable and innovative design of products, space and places to make crime unattractive and communities safer.

Malz Rulz...

A text message-style code of conduct targeting people using shopping malls in the United States aims to discourage anti-social behaviour. Malz Rulz (malls rules) have been introduced in all shopping centres owned by the Simon Property Group in a bid to maintain a pleasant shopping experience and protect businesses. The simple rules - lngwij, actNz, attitude: Kep it clEn, which translate as 'language, actions, attitude: Keep in clean' are posted at the entrances to the malls. The code of conduct seeks to prevent inappropriate, obscene or loud language, yelling, running, horseplay, loitering or gathering in large groups.

Stop youngsters' ASBO custody

A new consultation paper from the Sentencing Advisory Panel suggests young people who breach anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) should be given community orders rather than custodial sentences. The paper recommends that if young people breach their ASBO, custody should not be "inevitable".

The paper says in most cases a community order should be chosen over detention unless this is "impossible or impractical." It suggests that with younger offenders community orders will be more effective than detention in preventing re-offending.

The advisory panel also recommends halving the maximum custodial sentence for under 18s to one year, with sentences only extending beyond if the young person's actions have caused "serious harassment, alarm or distress". Consultation on this issue ends on 9 November.

For more details go to <http://www.sentencing-guidelines.gov.uk>

New out-of-court guide

A new guide from the Office of Criminal Justice Reform provides practitioners with information on out-of-court disposals available to deal with low-level and mostly first-time adult offenders outside of the court system including Penalty Notices for Disorder, Simple Cautions and Conditional Cautions. The guide helps practitioners understand the wide range of out-of-court disposals available to deal with low-level and mostly first-time adult offenders outside of the court system. A comprehensive booklet, a quick reference leaflet, a poster which is ideal for custody suites and charging rooms have been produced and will be distributed to the police, Crown Prosecution Service and defence lawyers.

An advisory group, comprising representatives of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS),

the senior judiciary, the Magistrates' Association as well as Criminal Justice System policy officials, worked together to develop the guide which has been tested and refined by police officers and the CPS. Download a copy from www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk

£8 million crime prevention scheme

Crime prevention charity Crime Concern has been awarded £8.3m of lottery funding to deliver 70 England-wide projects for young people at risk of anti-social behaviour or offending.

The Community Space Challenge scheme is a five-year programme aimed at re-engaging young people with their local communities and involving them in improvements to their neighbourhoods.

Development of community gardens, graffiti removal and wasteland regeneration are some of the projects earmarked as part of the scheme which will include young people who have been excluded or suspended from school.

Youngsters will have the chance to gain qualifications for the work they do, which can be used instead of standard qualifications like GCSEs. The aim is to reach more than 7,000 young people in the lifetime of the project.

Trauma police officer issues writ

A police officer who was left traumatised by dealing with dead bodies following a helicopter crash in which 11 people were killed, has issued a writ against Norfolk Police. Brian Swales, a coroner's officer involved in investigating the North Sea helicopter tragedy in July 2002, says he suffered stress but received insufficient support and is now claiming compensation. The helicopter was transporting offshore oil workers between rigs in the North Sea off Great Yarmouth when it crashed, and a report by the Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB) concluded it crashed after one of its main rotor blades failed. The progress of the legal action is likely to be watched closely by those concerned with the training and management of police family liaison officers. There may also be spin-off lessons to be learned for organisations and agencies involved in providing humanitarian assistance in the event of crisis or disaster.

Community policing - Boston (US) style

Boston, Massachusetts has expanded its Safe Street Team initiative with the introduction of nine new teams to supplement three pilot teams set up in the city. According to the city's police department,

the expansion of its walking beat programme is the latest community policing effort focused on a proactive and preventative crime reduction strategy, with the nine new Safe Street Teams deployed in areas experiencing violent crime and disorder. The three pilot teams with six officers in each have been deployed for six months and have apparently been hugely successful in deterring crime and making important and meaningful connections with residents. Safe Street Teams allow officers to have sustained, meaningful contact with business owners and families and provide a valuable opportunity to address quality of life issues effecting local residents. Locations were decided using data analysis, coupled with local concerns about violent crime working closely with the Boston police intelligence unit and district commanders.

The Boston initiative mirrors in part the UK's neighbourhood policing programme which has been implemented by British Transport Police and the 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales where local policing initiatives, defined through the use of the National Intelligence Model are having an impact on neighbourhoods and how they perceive crime. Having a range of measures that involve the local community and use problem

solving techniques is key - community foot patrols alone are not enough to make a difference.

Partnership profile

Watch out for a profile of a crime and disorder reduction partnership or community safety partnership operating in England, Scotland or Wales in the October edition of *Brief Lines*.

And finally...

A surface-to-air missile launcher was handed in to police in Orlando, Florida, as part of a gun amnesty. The 'Kicks for Guns' programme encouraged locals to hand in a gun in return for a free pair of trainers, no questions asked. How many pairs of trainers equate to a missile launcher has not been made clear...

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