

# 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.

If you have any news to share, details of an event you want to highlight, or want further information on Community Safety Partnerships Ltd contact [suenelson@comsafetypartners.com](mailto:suenelson@comsafetypartners.com) or [aidannelson@comsafetypartners.com](mailto:aidannelson@comsafetypartners.com)

## LXinfo launch

CSP is this month launching an e-magazine covering all things level crossing. Whether you call them grade crossings, paso a nivel, spoorwegovergang, passage a niveau, bahnüberbergang or something different, LXinfo will be of interest to practitioners worldwide. Coverage includes policy issues, accident investigation, what's new in research, campaigns and education, technology and dates for your diary. Watch out for the first edition in your inbox.

If you have news to share or just want to learn more, please contact [aidannelson@comsafetypartners.com](mailto:aidannelson@comsafetypartners.com) or [suenelson@comsafetypartners.com](mailto:suenelson@comsafetypartners.com)

## Consultation support for neighbourhood policing

Responses to the policing green paper published this summer show that both the police and public strongly back measures to cut red tape and ensure police spend more time on the beat.

Consultation also shows people support the proposed Policing Pledge and want a stronger voice in how crime is dealt with in neighbourhoods.

During the past three months the Home Office has heard from the public via letters and in public meetings up and down the country and received submissions from policing organisations including British Transport Police, chief constables, police authorities and local councillors.

The green paper called for regular information on crime, including crime maps, to be made available to residents. It also called for police to explain the actions they are taking to tackle crime. These proposals have won strong support during the consultation and there is also overwhelming support for the role of PCSOs – separate research shows that more than 90% of the public recognise PCSOs and see them of value.

Strong support was also voiced for a model that provides a clear national framework, supported by force-wide and more local neighbourhood level pledges/charters that can be tailored to needs, circumstances and operational capability across the country.

Respondents also said police need to be more visible in communities, should attend more public events and should engage more widely including with hard-to-reach groups.

Local people must get as much information as possible, regular updates on local action and follow-up for victims and witnesses. This latter point is key, as research indicates that 79% of people think offenders get more support and services than the people they commit crimes against.

Consultees said the police need to do more to respond specifically to issues highlighted by the media, and that officers should receive training on engaging with volunteers and communities with specific objectives for officers on public engagement. This is core to Neighbourhood Policing and indeed, the consultation highlighted that neighbourhood policing teams are key to the delivery of the public elements contained in the green paper.

Go to [www.police.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/police-reform/green-paper-responses](http://www.police.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/police-reform/green-paper-responses) for a summary of the consultation responses and next steps.



## CSP community engagement project

CSP has just completed the first phase of a project working with neighbourhood policing team leaders to develop effective partnerships and enhance community engagement. The work, undertaken with officers in British Transport Police's London North Area, covered major rail hubs at Euston, King's Cross, St Pancras, Liverpool Street and Paddington, as well as areas covered by London Overground rail services.

The aim of the project was to support neighbourhood policing team leaders develop effective external partnerships, highlighting areas of transferable good practice. The next step is to outline the findings in a workshop for officers and explore with them how to take forward some of their ideas for local campaigns and initiatives.

## Tasers to roll out to all police forces

The government is to fund 10,000 Tasers for police officers in England and Wales following completion of a successful pilot programme.

For some time select firearms squads have carried the weapons, which fire barbed darts charged with enough electricity to stun an attacker. They will now also be carried by thousands of trained frontline officers.

In the pilot, carried out by officers from ten forces, the weapons proved to be safer for police and the public than other alternatives. In the vast majority of cases in which officers drew their Tasers, suspects chose to co-operate, and did not need to be subdued.

Statistics from the trial show that, of the 661 uses of Tasers, in more than 75% of those cases, the weapon was merely drawn but not fired. Tasers were only fired 93 times in the trial.

Home Secretary Jacqui Smith said, 'I am proud that we have one of the few police services around the world that do not regularly carry firearms. And I want to keep it that way.

'But every day the police put themselves in danger to protect us, the public. They deserve our support, so I want to give the police the tools they tell me they need to confront dangerous people. That is why I am giving the police 10,000 Tasers to ensure that officers across the country benefit from this form of defence.'

Paul McKeever, chairman of the Police Federation of England said the investment is testament to the hard work, dedication and professionalism of police officers nationwide, and recognises the vital role Tasers plays in the fight against crime.

## Millions seized from criminals given back to police

Police forces in England and Wales, including British Transport Police, will receive nearly £6m this quarter from funds seized from criminals. The money comes from funds seized by police and other government agencies between April and June this year. During that time, a total of £28.6m was taken from criminals.

Under a pre-set arrangement, police, prosecutors and courts share half - or £14.3m - of that money. That means just under £6m will go to police forces a substantial increase over the same

quarter last year when police received just under £4m.

Since the Proceeds of Crime Act came into effect in 2003 nearly half a billion pounds has been seized from criminals. A programme introduced in 2006 ensures that police and other criminal justice agencies retain half of that.

The other agencies involved in the programme include HM Revenue and Customs, the Serious and Organised Crime Agency, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Assets Recovery Agency, HM Courts Service, and the Office of Criminal Justice Reform. Major recipients are:

- Police: £5.97m
- HM Courts Service: £2.39m
- Crown Prosecution Service: £2.74m
- HM Revenue and Customs: £1.56m
- Serious Organised Crime Agency: £0.4m

Mick Creedon, of the Association of Chief Police Officers, said: "The public are quite rightly sick and tired of seeing criminals leading lavish lifestyles without challenge, and all forces across England and Wales are determined to respond to this, and make full use of the available powers granted under the Proceeds of Crime Act and other legislation."

British Transport Police is to receive £15,830.09 under the scheme. To see what other police forces have been allocated go to: [www.press.homeoffice.gov.uk/press-releases/6-million-seized](http://www.press.homeoffice.gov.uk/press-releases/6-million-seized)

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## Young people join fight against knife crime

Young people's anti-knife messages are at the heart of the next phase of a national billboard campaign to tackle knife crime.

The interactive campaign encourages young people to show their support by uploading their own anti-knife photo pledges to the Bebo website (new window). These images have been used on the latest versions of the billboards.

The billboards are the latest step in the government's £3 million marketing campaign, It Doesn't Have to Happen, which has used radio and viral adverts to direct young people to the Bebo site. So far 9.6 million young people have seen the adverts on websites and 2.8 million people have heard the radio adverts.

The campaign recently ran a competition among its Bebo friends to design a logo to support campaign activity. The winning logo was designed by Hannah Cooper, aged 15, from Wolverhampton.

There are several billboards around the country featuring the anti-knife crime messages, a number close to railway stations or on railway bridges. To view the locations go to: [www.press.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/list-anti-knife-billboards](http://www.press.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/list-anti-knife-billboards)

Meanwhile, a police-backed guide on avoiding violent crime written by young Londoners is to be rolled out nationwide. Youngsters in the London borough of Harrow created the recipe-style card as part of a

guide on how to work more effectively with young people. The card lists five ways to avoid violent crime and has been supported by police, handed out on the streets and supported by local newspapers. It offers advice on how young people can be a leader rather than a follower and tells how they can make a commitment against violence.

## Young people to inspect youth services

More than 1,000 youngsters from disadvantaged areas across England are to be trained to inspect youth services under a £4.5m government scheme.

The Young Inspector service will be piloted in up to 36 local authorities across the country. Around 30 young marginalised young people in each local authority will be trained to have a real influence and voice in assessing the quality of their local services, based on robust standards that young people themselves will devise.

The government is looking for a voluntary sector organisation to work with local authorities and government offices to develop and run the Young Inspector project. The process is being administered by the Youth Sector Development Fund and the closing date for applications is January 23, 2009.

Go to [www.ysdf.ecotec.com](http://www.ysdf.ecotec.com) for more details.

## New education messages common sense approach

Two new animated television public service announcements (PSAs), which use humour to convey a serious message about

train safety for pedestrians and drivers, have begun airing on broadcast stations in the US. The 30-second PSAs are the first animated spots for Operation Lifesaver, America's national rail safety education not-for-profit organisation.

The PSAs will initially air on approximately 20 broadcast stations throughout Georgia, reaching some viewers in the neighbouring states of Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, and South Carolina and will air repeatedly over the holiday season into the first week of January 2009.

Other states, including Idaho, Washington, and Mississippi, will see the PSAs before the end of the year.

The engaging, fast-paced PSAs, which emphasise common sense while appealing to people's sense of intelligence, can be viewed at [www.oli.org/shark](http://www.oli.org/shark)

About every two hours in the US a person or vehicle is struck by a train. Statistics show that in 2007, 335 people were killed and 1,047 were injured in 2,752 highway-rail crossing collisions nationwide. An additional 469 pedestrians were killed and 399 injured while illegally trespassing on railroad tracks in 2007.

## Music to die for

Not quite - but a judge in Colorado has a novel way to tackle noise nuisance, often from teenagers. His approach is to sentence them to listen to music they don't like. Offenders must listen to an hour of the likes of Barney, the Purple Dinosaur or even Barry Manilow.

Now, what's your poison?

## 90% of survivors feel guilt

Work in Buenos Aires to support survivors of disasters and accidents, takes as a starting point that as many as 90% of those who have survived a disaster or accident where loved ones are lost feel some degree of guilt. This is particularly acute where a family member or close friend has died.

Seeking an answer to the question "Why have I survived and others died?" can become an obsession as can "What could I have done to prevent the tragedy?" In reality, continually theorising about what might have been is often destructive and a barrier to coming to terms with what's happened and, in due course, moving on. However, it is important to differentiate between those whose actions directly led to an accident and those who merely believe they might have prevented the loss of life.

Prosamic, the provider of a critical incident support service within the provincial mental health agency in Buenos Aires deploys a team of psychologists and psychiatrists to meet the needs of both survivors and the families of those who have died both immediately after the event and as needed over the following months. Where support remains beyond three months there is often a post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) dimension.

In the first ten months of 2008 the Prosamic team has supported

405 people including both the bereaved and survivors of the collision of a train with a bus on a level crossing in which 17 people were killed and at least 25 injured.

Prosamic also works with first responders to help prepare them to deal with events where lives have been lost, for example, to explain to them that quickly removing survivors from the scene of a disaster is beneficial as the time of exposure to a traumatic event is directly proportional to the likelihood of developing PTSD. Evidence shows that the longer people are able to see the consequences of an accident, the more chances they will relive the images, smells and sounds of the accident.

## Call for community safety papers

The National Community Safety Network is seeking submissions from across the UK and Europe for presentation at its annual conference in June 2009.

Subject matter is being sought around connecting children's services with community safety teams, neighbourhood management and the outcomes of the policing green paper, and community engagement. In addition papers are also sought on preventing violent extremism, offender management, knife and gun crime, media and communications and community safety around the world. Submissions must be received by January 16, 2009.

The conference will be held at the Royal Armouries, Leeds on June 9 and 10 and is supported by Leeds City Council and the Safer Leeds Partnership.

Go to [www.community-safety.net/conference2009/home.htm](http://www.community-safety.net/conference2009/home.htm) for further information.

## No level crossings, but in the highway code

The Rwandan Highway Code covers arrangements at level crossings - surprising given there are no level crossings in the country. This is treated with mirth when perhaps more seriously, one might see it as a case of preparing citizens for the level crossings to be found in neighbouring Uganda and Tanzania even if the real reason is they have just 'lifted' the highway code of the country's former colonial power.

## LXinfo is on the way

Please look out for the first issue of our new e-magazine for the level crossing fraternity.



## Keep in touch...

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