

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.

Public transport safety conference

A conference addressing safety and security of passengers on public transport is being held in London on October 15. Organised by the Parliamentary Advisory Council on Transport Safety (PACTS), the conference will address issues passengers' perceptions of safety in a climate where although statistically it is safer to travel by public transport, people will often be put off from travelling because of fears about their personal security and safety.

The conference is being held at the Royal College of Surgeons of England, 35-43 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3PE. Go to www.pacts.org.uk for more details and joining instructions.

Crime maps for all neighbourhoods

Interactive maps on police websites will allow residents to track crime patterns in their communities.

Public crime maps are part of the government's commitment to get people more involved with their local police. Such involvement is at the heart of the reform programme outlined in the government's policing green paper 'From the neighbourhood to the national: policing our communities together' which sets out the vision for the future of policing (see below).

The new maps will give the public the information they need to hold their local police force to account and by the end of the year, every police force will begin mapping crime online so that residents can:

- See where and when a crime has happened, down to street level for some crimes
- Compare crime rates in their neighbourhood to other areas
- Learn how local neighbourhood policing teams are tackling crime

British Crime Survey results show that despite newspaper headlines, which often fuel people's fear, crime is actually going down. This year's survey showed the risk of being a victim of crime for those aged 16 and over is at its lowest level since the survey began in 1981. In addition, the International Crime Victims Survey shows that crime rates are falling in most developing countries, making reducing the fear of crime an objective of equal importance to reducing crime itself. The government hopes that local crime maps will help to allay fear of crime concerns.

However, the crime mapping proposals have raised concerns that the maps will not reflect a true crime picture. The maps will display offences that are reported to the police, but criminologists say reported crime figures are notoriously unreliable. According to estimates, at least 60% of crime goes unreported, and some critics think the figure could be much higher.

Hampshire, Lancashire, West Yorkshire along and West Midlands are currently the leading forces on crime maps.

Crime mapping is a key component of the government's green paper on the future of policing and includes radical new plans to cut red tape and give the police more freedom to get on with the job of reducing crime, combined with new measures to increase public confidence in the police and give the public a greater say about how their communities are policed. The green paper sets out how the government will build on achievements, working with the police to continue to drive down crime, drive up public confidence and give local people more information and a bigger say in how their neighbourhood is policed. The proposals include:

- A new policing pledge setting out what local people can expect from their local police team - with clear national standards, including the amount of time spent on the beat, easy ways to contact your local Neighbourhood Policing Team and clear response times to all calls and incidents.
- A stronger voice for local people - regular information on crime, including crime maps and action being taken to tackle it and regular local meetings to discuss priorities backed by new directly elected Crime and Policing Representatives.
- Setting only one top-down numerical target for the police service to increase public confidence in the police and other agencies to reduce crime.

The green paper is the government's substantive response to the independent review of policing by Sir Ronnie Flanagan and the review 'Engaging Communities and Fighting Crime' carried out for the government by its crime adviser Louise Casey.

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



Footballers in anti-knife message

Soccer star David Beckham has joined other England footballers in appealing to young people not to carry knives. The England football team has backed the 'It doesn't have to happen' campaign, a Home Office initiative urging teenagers not to carry knives, which can be found at

www.bebo.com/itdoesnthavetohappen

Beckham, Rio Ferdinand and David James took time out from their training schedule to call for an end to the use of knives as status symbols. Beckham has told of his own experience of knife crime as a youngster. When he was 13, his best friend's brother was stabbed and badly injured after he tried to break up a street fight.

Ferdinand has been a long-standing anti-knife campaigner, and, like Beckham, he is passionate about the subject. He grew up on an inner-city estate in Peckham in south London and helped establish the Damilola Taylor Trust in 2000 after the ten-year-old was fatally stabbed nearby.

In the first eight months of this year a total of 24 youngsters have been killed in London alone as a result of violent crime. According to the British Crime Survey (BCS), overall violent crime has decreased by 41% since a peak in 1995. Knives are used in about 8% of violent incidents, according to the BCS, a level that has largely remained the same during the past decade.

But the BCS figures do not include under-16s something that the Home Secretary Jacqui Smith announced in August would change.

- A board charged with tackling serious youth violence in London is being set up in a fresh bid to improve cooperation between

councils on the problem.

The London Community Safety Partnership is setting up the Serious Youth Violence Board to devise a more child-centred approach to tackling youth violence in the capital.

Knife crackdown success

More than 55,000 people have been stopped and searched since the government launched its Tackling Knives Action Programme, Home Secretary Jacqui Smith has announced.

In total 2,500 arrests have been made for knife-related offences and 1,600 knives seized since the programme was launched on June 5. In London alone, the number of people charged with possession of a knife or blade since April has increased by 150 per cent compared to the same period in 2007.

Police forces in the ten areas taking part in the programme have also increased their work in engaging with young people and have begun to prepare educational packs for schools and organise events to warn young people of the danger of carrying knives.

Meanwhile, a police campaign in Coventry, UK has halved the number of teenagers charged with knife offences. The six-month Get Caught - Go to Court scheme was launched in April to tackle knife crime in the city. Anyone found with a knife or bladed article is taken straight to court rather than cautioned. Since the campaign started, 32 adults and eight people under 18 have been charged with offences involving a knife or bladed article.

This compares with 46 adults and 16 under-18s charged last year before the campaign was introduced.

Neighbourhoods join forces to tackle community safety

Local communities are being urged to take part in a 'Not in My Neighbourhood Week' to address community safety issues.

This dedicated week of action follows on from the highly successful week last year, which saw more than 500 local agencies and police forces working with local residents to make their community a safer place to live. Key aims of the week are to inform the public what action is being taken in their area to:

- Tackle crime
- Increase public confidence in the work being done by local agencies
- To encourage the public to play their part

The week provides an excellent opportunity for local partners, including CDRPs local police and residents' associations to demonstrate the work being done to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and substance mis-use in their area. Such weeks of action can bring public and professionals close together to provide greater knowledge, greater empowerment, and greater reassurance. The week has been designed to be as flexible as possible with communities encouraged to roll out existing initiatives, or theme activity to focus on specific issues they wish to promote – such as action to tackle robbery, crack house closures or better street lighting.

For more ideas go to last year's Not in My Neighbourhood page at www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimereduction019.htm

Train drivers urged to help fatality management

Stickers featuring British Transport Police's fatality hotline are being put into every train cab in Britain to cut the time it takes to deal with non-suspicious fatalities.

Being involved in an incident that results in a fatality is one of the things most dreaded by train drivers. But for between 250 and 300 a year, that nightmare turns into a reality.

In 2007, 270 people died trespassing on the railways of which 181 were confirmed or suspected suicides. British Transport Police works alongside Network Rail and train operators to deal with non-suspicious fatalities as quickly as possible.

When a death occurs, the first thing the police want to establish is whether there are any suspicious circumstances. This is crucial - if a suspicious death has occurred, there needs to be a criminal investigation and evidence must be secured immediately from the crime scene and elsewhere. Inevitably, that will cause delays, whilst detectives and forensic experts attend the scene, which will need to be photographed, processed and documented.

If the death is not suspicious, there still needs to be an investigation - the Coroner in England and Wales or the Procurator Fiscal in Scotland, will want to know exactly how the person died and under what circumstances, but things can move a great deal faster with dignified body recovery a priority so that the line can be reopened speedily.

"Railways are not like roads, where you can often re-route traffic around a cordon," said Assistant Chief Constable (Operations) Alan Pacey. "They are a highly interdependent network, often with limited scope to

re-route if the line is obstructed. People can also be trapped in trains, sometimes without power, so it is important that the recovery operation is as fast and efficient as possible."

Train drivers are very often the crucial or only witnesses to a death on the railways - so the sooner that police can talk to them directly, the sooner railway services can be running smoothly again.

The stickers, funded by Network Rail and featuring BTP's Fatality Hotline number, **020 7391 5304**, are being put in every train cab in the country to encourage drivers to make early contact with a BTP control room. They also list the sort of information that police will be looking for - everything from the train headcode and journey details to the actions of the person immediately before they were struck.

Mr Pacey added: "Drivers giving us first hand evidence as quickly as possible helps enormously. We understand that being involved in a fatal incident can be very traumatic, so we can delay taking a full statement until the driver has had time to recover, but that early initial account is absolutely vital. We want drivers to contact us immediately after they have spoken to the signaller."

Dealing efficiently with rail fatalities has a major impact on minimising disruption to the network, but it can be a real challenge. Many occur in difficult to access rural areas and many involve body parts spread over considerable distances. The current average time for dealing with a non-suspicious fatality is 74 minutes.

Metal haul tops £700K

Suspected stolen metal seized at a scrap yard in Cheadle, Staffordshire, is estimated to be worth more than £700,000.

In what is the biggest seizure of suspected stolen metal ever made in Britain, the figure could rise even further as a full inventory is carried out.

Officers from British Transport Police (BTP) and Staffordshire Police have recovered more than 350 tonnes of stolen rail track, along with other rail equipment, beer kegs, cabling and fencing.

A 43-year-old man arrested during the operation has been interviewed and released on police bail until December, pending further enquiries.

DS Tony Nugent, from the BTP Organised Crime Unit, who led the operation, said: "With the high price of metals on world commodity markets, metal and cable theft has become a significant problem for the rail industry, utilities and telecommunications providers.

"On the railways, theft of cable and other metals causes massive disruption to services. Thieves are risking their lives as well as prison. Only this month a man from Stockport was jailed for three years. This has been a major seizure and scrap dealers need to be aware that police forces across the country are co-operating in a crackdown on metal theft."

Chief Inspector Simon Tweats, Staffordshire Police lead on metal thefts, said: "The extensive search carried out at the Cheadle site by both Staffordshire and BTP officers is an excellent example of partnership working - which will continue as we work to bring offenders to justice."

Anyone with information on metal and cable theft on the rail system should contact British Transport Police on Freefone **0800 405040** or Crimestoppers anonymously on **0800 555 111**.

Transport safety: is the law an ass?

This is the topic of this year's joint Imperial College London and Lloyd's Register Educational Trust Annual Lecture in Transport Risk Management to be given by system engineer and barrister Dr Chris Elliott. Further details about the free lecture on October 8, are available from Laura Brown at l.brown@imperial.ac.uk.

Life means life

A man who placed his road vehicle on a California level crossing causing a train crash which killed 11 people has been given 11 consecutive life sentences for murder. Juan Manuel Alvarez positioned his sports utility vehicle on the railway near Glendale in California in January 2005, which was struck by a Metrolink commuter train that in turn hit two other trains has been sentenced to 11 consecutive terms of life imprisonment without parole.

Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge William R Pounders told Alvarez he lacked genuine remorse for the crash and "if there were a sentence 'forever,' I would certainly give it to you."

Arguments in the eight-week trial centred around the prosecution case that Alvarez's intent was that commuters would die as part of a macabre attempt to gain the attention of his estranged wife. Conversely the defence had argued that Alvarez aborted a suicide attempt when he left his vehicle on the railway line.

Notice of an appeal has been lodged.

Safety leadership

The scale of harm arising on roads across the world, despite very significant expenditure on infrastructure and vehicle safety enhancements, is increasingly unacceptable. The quality of leadership is a key element of any safety improvement programme. Although leadership is often considered an intangible there are common characteristics attributable to those who are most effective in securing positive safety outcomes. Both senior and grass roots professionals have to be engaged and able to motivate others, including the public, to work with them to identify, prioritise and address safety issues. Leveraging partnership commitment whether

between national and local government or with other local agencies is essential. Successful leaders are, according to Professor Mark Roberts at Harvard University, able to:

- Articulate a clear, timely, challenging yet achievable vision mission and goals to motivate others
- Operate within an authorising environment which allows stakeholders to progress
- Realise the organisational capacity necessary to achieve the mission and satisfy the concerns of stakeholders

To read more of the ways in which safety leaders are recognised in US highway safety programmes see <http://www.tfhrcc.gov/pubrds/08july/02.htm>

Keep in touch...

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 or aidannelson@comsafetypartners.com