

CRIME PREVENTION

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*Paper presented at the Art Crime
Protecting Art, Protecting Artists and Protecting Consumers Conference
convened by the Australian Institute of Criminology
and held in Sydney, 2-3 December 1999*

* The views expressed in this paper are the author's alone. They are presented in the interest of a better society and cannot be attributed to the Queensland or any other Australian Police Service, organisation or agency.

Police Strategies and Crime Prevention

One of the issues confronting the art industry at the moment is silence. Its secretive nature is a characteristic that is not unique to Australia and perhaps reinforces the global aspect of the industry. There are many reasons that have been advanced to explain this attitude of "keeping in house" information about offences being committed ranging from apathy and financial considerations to "We know best" which are beyond the scope of this paper. What is important to recognise is that if left unchecked, it has the potential to cause a serious crisis of confidence throughout the industry. When a market loses confidence the effects are often calamitous and require a significant investment in time, resources and effort before they recover.

It may be an acknowledgment of this potential, a greater degree of insight and maturity that has caused a number of industry insiders to speak out about some of these practices (Hall & Diggins). They should be commended for their integrity and resolve. Failure to exercise responsible ownership of these issues has left a vacuum of important information which could be used to provide effective solutions to the various dilemmas' which now confront the industry. Indeed, it's been advocated that a passive attitude about crime can become a self-fulfilling prophecy which leaves a community or an industry exposed to increased criminal exploitation (Fleissner & Heinzlmann, 1992, pp.1and2). For those reasons, I'd just like to provide you with some insight into policing strategies and in particular, crime prevention.

In their strategies for dealing with crime Police will generally choose an approach that is either proactive or reactive in concept. In contemporary reactive policing, Australian police possess an impressive repertoire of skills and resources. They include modern capabilities in forensic science, human behaviour, communications, intelligence and refined procedures to name but a few. The cost of maintaining these abilities and continuing development associated with projects like the national DNA database, are considerable. However well developed those abilities are, their use acknowledges that a crime has already been committed. As such, the opportunity to prevent or reduce the incidence of crime is limited.

Proactive policing, or crime prevention on the other hand has the potential to produce significant reductions in the occurrence of targeted crime with reductions between 35- 75% quoted in relation to property crime projects by the Canadian based International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC)(1999, p.2), in their Crime Prevention Digest. The employment of these techniques has already been demonstrated in numerous instances around the world (ICPC, 1999, pp.5-7). The implementation of successful crime prevention strategies produces corresponding reductions in other areas. They have resulted in a commensurate drop in the financial cost of crime as well as those costs which the Canadian National Crime Prevention Centre (1999) says 'cannot be quantified', the human side of victimisation.

So, what is crime prevention? The ICPC in its Crime Prevention Digest describes it as 'anything that reduces delinquency, violence and insecurity by successfully tackling the scientifically identified causal factors', (ICPC, 1999, p.1). It is the result of an ongoing process commonly referred to as the S.A.R.A. model which those familiar with the principles of risk management will recognise. The model was developed by the Newport News Police Department under the sponsorship of the United States National Institute of Justice (Fleissner & Heinzlmann, 1996).

The four steps of the model are:

1. *Scanning - To identify the problem;*
2. *Analysis - To study the problem and identify possible solutions;*
3. *Response - To implement a custom designed response or strategy; and*
4. *Assessment - To evaluate the action taken.*

The eventual strategy needs to involve the active participation of all key stake holders that have a capacity to contribute to the problem solving process. There will usually be an emphasis on strengthening the bond of community, and as in our case, an industry, through partnerships. What type of people and organisations are the key stakeholders who comprise the 'community' of this industry? I'd suggest that the participants here represent a significant cross section of those who should be involved

While not exhaustive, one would expect to interact with representatives from international organisations, 'Commonwealth agencies, State, and Territory governments, police services, local government, non government organisations, academic institutions, community groups and the business sector' (Australian National Crime Prevention, 1999). The eventual product of the problem solving process should be a comprehensive strategy which focuses on victims, offenders or both. These approaches fall into two categories which are:

1. *Opportunity reduction - Which is often victim oriented with a focus characterised by approaches which make the commission of crime more difficult, which reduce or eliminate the potential profit and which may increase the risk of discovery, apprehension, prosecution and being penalised; and*
2. *Social development - Which is often offender oriented with a focus characterised by approaches which aim to address the social factors which predispose individuals to become persistent offenders.*

One avenue being utilised with increasing frequency as part of a comprehensive strategy to reduce opportunity and minimise the impact of crime is Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). CPTED, as it's known, with its emphasis on 'the systematic analysis of crime in a particular location directly supports community policing by providing crime prevention strategies tailored to solve specific problems' (Travis, 1996, p.1). CPTED principles can and are being applied easily and inexpensively when building or remodelling in the home or work place. It relies on design that eliminates or reduces criminal behaviour while encouraging the surrounding community to become actively involved in 'keeping an eye out' for each other.(Howe, 1999). Crime prevention through environmental design relies on four overlapping strategies, they are:

1. Natural Surveillance

Which is effected by design that aims to increase the ability to observe potential offenders. It is characterised by features that maximise visibility of people at all times. It includes the ability to see into and be seen from parking areas, building entrances, veranda's, doors, windows as well as pedestrian friendly footpaths and streets.

2. Territorial Reinforcement

Is effected by physical design that creates or extends an area of influence and control. Where employed it results in an increased sense of territorial control which deters potential offenders. It is characterised by features that define property lines. It establishes and delineates boundaries distinguishing between private and public space using landscaping techniques including selected planting, pavement design, gates and appropriate fencing.

3. Natural Access Control

Is effected by design that aims to decrease the opportunity to commit crime by denying access to crime targets and creating in offenders, a heightened sense of risk. It is created by designing streets, footpaths, building entrances and gateways to clearly indicate public routes and discourage access to private areas with structural elements.

4. Target Hardening

Is effected by design features that prohibit entry or access such as window locks and dead bolts for doors.

Using these crime prevention through environmental design strategies, here are some guidelines that are suitable for either a residential or commercial environment

Applied CPTED has resulted in the reduction of crime in some communities by up to 40% (Howe, D., 1999, p.2). Safer more liveable communities result in an improved quality of lifestyle and improved opportunity for individuals, families and business.

An environmental scan of the industry indicates the primary types of offending behaviour to include theft, receiving, fraud, extortion, smuggling, vandalism, money laundering, tax avoidance and copyright infringement. In attempting to assess the state of the industry in order to formulate a comprehensive plan one is struck by an absence of reliable data upon which to base decisions. In that aspect, Australia is again, not unique. In a commentary on this year's Interpol conference on stolen art it was noted that only 53 nations out of 167 even bothered to submit a national response for information, many not bothering to use the "Crigen" forms supplied by the organisation (Cremers, T., 1999). Even then, there is a disparity in the way information is collected and stored, further eroding the quality of the eventual product. Interpol's Assistant Director (General Crime) was recently quoted in the 'International Criminal Police Review' lamenting the fact that traffic in stolen works of art was booming despite the considerable efforts made by Interpol, UNESCO and the International Council of Museums (ICOM). But it was the fact that 'there was a lack of accurate statistics' with the figures available 'in no way reflecting the real losses suffered by member countries' that were deplored for what should be obvious reasons.

Australia has a burglary rate that is 'comparatively high by international standards, reflecting our relative affluence and the abundance of valuable and portable objects' primarily in the home. (NCP, 1999, p.1) 'In 1997 a total of 417,845 offences were recorded nationally by police as relating to unlawful entry into premises with intent' including the category of 'other theft' (Australian Bureau of Statistics). The national statistics supplied to Interpol relating to the theft of art in the same year show that out of a total of 2572 instances of theft, there were 1013 recorded instances of theft from private homes or just over 39% of the total. There were another 464 instances of theft or 18% from 'Other' places not including art galleries with 23 instances, museums, 11, and Places of Worship which had 8 recorded thefts for the same period.

Compared with the statistics for 1996 and 1998 we see a similar strong trend emerging. In 1996 out of a total of 2264 instances of theft, 61%(1382) was from private homes and 38% (861) from 'Other' places not including museums, places of worship or art galleries which only recorded 1, 9 and 11 thefts respectively. In 1998, there were a total of 1653 instances of theft recorded with 62% (1025) of those coming from private homes and 36% (600) from 'Other' places not including museums, places of worship or art galleries which recorded 1, 9 and 19 thefts respectively. These statistics appear to be consistent with those obtained by the Art Loss Register over the period 1991 to '98 which while not as conclusive or detailed as the latter, indicate domestic dwellings at 54% as the most likely source of stolen property. Museums and galleries are each recorded showing 12% with churches at 10% followed by commercial premises (4%), public institutions (3%), warehouses (2%) and other (3%) making up the balance . Combined with an annual recorded clear up rate running consecutively from 1996 at 31%, dropping to 13.14% in '97 and finally to 10.3% in 1998. For the sake of the industry, we can and must do better.

Crime Prevention, the Police and You

In simple terms, your relationship with police should include joint action that occurs before, and in the event that you are offended against, after the commission of that offence. The increased interaction leads to greater deterrence through improved security and information sharing. It can also significantly improve the chances of stolen property being recovered, successful prosecution and obtaining restitution. It doesn't matter if you request their services as an individual, a community group or business. The service is provided free of charge. Importantly, don't wait until you become a victim of crime. Be proactive in your management practices. Implement current best practices that include:

1. Ensure you obtain photographs which clearly show the identifying details of each item of property. Take particular care to photograph and note the details which are seldom seen. The backs and underneath often have a range of identifying marks. Digital photographs are preferable because they can be transmitted quickly and with remarkable clarity. Make sure to store a copy in a separate secure location. Update it regularly.
2. Establish and regularly maintain your catalogue or register of works. As a guide, the minimum standard should be in accordance with that promulgated by the Getty Information Institute.
3. Regularly assess and update the value of property. Current values of property if stolen or damaged are very important in a criminal prosecution and to ensure that you have sufficient insurance cover. Restitution, when awarded and insurance payments are based on it. Be aware that time is limited from the apprehension of an offender and the Court will require an up to date value. Police may be many things but they are not trained art valuers! If you don't have a recent assessment, the Court may be forced to rely on the last which may be years old. Bearing in mind the sort of appreciation which is a feature of good art, the potential to be seriously short changed is significant. As part of the process, you will identify property that has significantly increased in value. That may necessitate a reassessment of your security arrangements.
4. Evaluate your employees' compliance with written policy and procedures. Overseas experience indicates that there is a risk to be managed. It is estimated that up to '90% of all museum thefts that are resolved turn out to be inside jobs' (Wittman, 1999). Careful and objective examination often reveals the difference between what people

should be doing and what they are actually doing. Rules that have been carefully developed to protect property are often ignored in part or total because of time constraints, sometimes with the acquiescence of management.

Australian police services are amongst the most professional in the world, use them. Your police should have members available with expertise in many areas including:

1. Theft prevention and recovery measures including significant works, cash handling, clientele and staff property;
2. Anti-fraud strategies;
3. Minimising the risk of vandalism;
4. Provision of advice on criminal legal issues;
5. Conduct of threat and venue assessments;
6. Bomb threat and extortion procedures;
7. Hazardous materials;
8. Review of security procedures and ethical operating practices;
9. Major events planning;
10. Scientific advice;
11. Risks associated with computer crime; and
12. Advice on procedures to follow if offended against.

Use their services at every opportunity to obtain an independent view, to validate and enhance the standard of your own policies and procedures. Regular meetings and personal contact will ensure that you have the best chance of not suffering the affects of not only criminal but also possible civil action in a case of premises liability (Gordon, C.L. and Brill, W., 1996). There are also a number of other public and private organizations such as the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in New South Wales, the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) in Queensland which can assist with advice on ethical operating practices as well as a number of reputable private security firms which also have an extensive range of expertise. They can help to minimise and prevent crime through their own risk assessment procedures and recommendations. The latter's services however, are rarely free.

Procedures in Dealing with Crime

In the event you become a victim of crime, what should you do?

1. At the first opportunity, report the matter to police;
2. Protect the scene of the crime in order to permit an untainted and exhaustive search for evidence; and
3. Assist by providing the investigators with information on your security systems, property and key registers, descriptive information about property, security video, staff rosters, incident and observation logs as well as your written policy and procedures.

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