



Australian Government

Australian Institute of Criminology

Reviewing the New South Wales local crime prevention planning process

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August 2005

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Disclaimer

This research report does not necessarily reflect the policy position of the Australian Government.

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Abbreviations

| | |
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| AIC | Australian Institute of Criminology |
| CP | Crime prevention |
| CPD | NSW Attorney General's Crime Prevention Division |
| CPP | Crime prevention plan |
| CPO | Crime prevention officer |
| LGA | Local government area |

Executive summary

In common with most other Australian government agencies charged with promoting a crime prevention agenda, the Crime Prevention Division (CPD) of the NSW Attorney General's Department supports a process for assisting local communities to develop crime prevention plans to address local crime problems. Again, like most other Australian jurisdictions, a primary target for this process is local government authorities and the main mechanism is the provision of detailed guidance and some resources to assist in the development of local crime prevention action plans.

Unlike most other Australian jurisdictions, the NSW work is carried out under a legislative mandate, the *Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997*. Part Four of this Act empowers the Attorney General to endorse local crime prevention plans as Safer Community Compacts, thus inferring a level of formal status on them. It is this legislative provision that makes the NSW local crime prevention planning process more like the UK Crime and Disorder Partnerships, set up under the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*. The British Act requires local agencies to work together to reduce crime and for local government authorities and police to shoulder the main responsibility.

Early in 2005, the NSW Crime Prevention Division (CPD) contracted the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) to undertake a brief review of the overall quality, appropriateness and effectiveness of local crime prevention planning activities in NSW. The brief did not extend to a review of the statutory underpinnings of the enabling Act, as this was undertaken in 2001.

The overall aim of the review was to contribute to the further development of the CDP's goal of establishing and developing an evidence base for the future planning and implementation of crime prevention work in NSW. In particular, it was intended to assist in the development of options for the future direction of the Division's crime prevention planning program by assessing the appropriateness and effectiveness of current local crime prevention planning activity.

There were two key parts to this project:

1. a program performance analysis; and
2. a program outcome analysis.

The program performance analysis focused on issues to do with the relative quality, implementation performance and output measurement issues. This part of the program employed a modified form of program logic analysis to identify and assess:

- program inputs;
- implementation processes;
- outputs and outcomes; and
- performance measures employed.

Methods used to analyse program performance included in-depth interviews with key stakeholders in Manly, Queanbeyan and Taree and a survey sent to the 49 local government areas (LGAs) with a crime prevention plan endorsed by the CPD (to ensure access to key stakeholders who normally might not be able to be reached with a project of such short duration). Thirty-nine LGAs (i.e. about 80 per cent) responded to the survey.

Findings from the program performance analysis are presented in terms of three performance measures: program implementation; the quality and usefulness of guidance from the CPD; and the ability to capture and retain any lessons to emerge from the crime prevention planning processes. These findings are discussed in detail in the report, but briefly summarised below.

1. Program implementation

- Where LGAs were physically located affected their success in implementing plans. Key issues here included their capacity to attract project funding and adequate staff. This was especially noticeable in remote/rural LGAs.
- The propensity to have a successful program appeared to be more a function of the quality and motivation of stakeholders than the levels or availability of funding.
- The presence of dedicated crime prevention officers appeared to improve the capacity to implement plan initiatives.
- Establishing and fostering successful partnerships is a key to implementing plans.
- While Indigenous communities were generally consulted with during the planning processes for the crime prevention plans, there was a widespread failure to effectively engage Indigenous people in the practical implementation of projects emerging from the plans.

2. Quality and usefulness of CPD guidance

- Many of those interviewed or surveyed felt that while there was good assistance during the development phase of the plans, the CPD offered little guidance and support to LGAs once the plans had been endorsed and needed to be implemented.
- There was a wish for more information on the processes involved in not only implementing plans, but also determining how to select initiatives to address in the plans.
- Much of the information that the respondents requested was found on the CPD website, but many crime prevention officers (CPOs) and plan implementers were not necessarily aware that this resource exists or find it too difficult to navigate, thus suggesting that the need to better promote the services the CPD offers.
- There was little evidence to suggest that the crime prevention planning processes were becoming embedded in local government authorities as 'whole of council' initiatives in the sense that other issues have been.
- That being said, it is considered that local government authorities are still the best-placed institutions to support and develop local crime prevention plans.

3. Ability to capture and retain lessons from crime prevention plans

- Choosing appropriate measurements for an initiative's outcome was problematic for the majority of the LGAs, and therefore evaluations of completed plans were rarely adequately conducted, if at all.
- Many local crime prevention committees expressed a significant level of confusion over the role and the nature of support expected from the CPD.
- Allowing plans to be flexible and evolve was seen as necessary to improving the design and aims of the plans.

The overall quality of the endorsed plans was highly variable. Generally speaking some aspects of the plans were executed well, while others needed to have more work put into delivering their stated aims. The area where LGAs generally excelled was in consulting with the community and gathering relevant crime statistics to identify the most appropriate crimes to address. On the other hand, the indicators

used to measure the outcomes on the whole appeared inadequate, and is one of the areas that needs attention. This finding is consistent with the findings of the recent UK National Audit Office review of the Home Office's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (NAO, 2004).

The second key component of the review of local crime prevention planning processes in NSW, the analysis of what, if any, impacts the plans had had on crime rates in their areas, unfortunately could not be carried out as it was not possible for the AIC to obtain access to the necessary data. However, it was the consistent view of respondents that the plans did have an impact, or would have an impact when adequately implemented.

Above all, there was widespread enthusiasm for crime prevention (CP) plans. Even among those who acknowledged that the implementation of their plans had been relatively unsuccessful there was a sense that they had learnt from previous mistakes and that they were confident that the plans, when implemented correctly, would have an effect on local crime levels.

This report makes the following specific recommendations:

1. create a communication link on a redesigned CPD website where CPOs and other plan implementers would be able to access a variety of relevant crime prevention material and potentially establish contact with other CPOs;
2. identify a funding source to enable the establishment of permanent CPOs in each LGA with an endorsed plan. If this proves not to be feasible, consider a mechanism for establishing a network of regional CPOs to support the crime prevention work of a number of linked LGAs;
3. improve communication and assistance between the CPD and LGAs;
4. simplify the crime prevention planning guidelines to make them more accessible to a wider range of community members;
5. further investigate and support methods for promoting the ongoing engagement of Indigenous communities in the implementation of local crime prevention plans, not just their development;
6. develop a program of training and support for disseminating practical performance measurement and evaluation techniques for crime prevention plans. This might be achieved through revising the local crime prevention planning guidelines, as recommended above, so these issues are addressed and through putting in place appropriate support mechanisms; and
7. make the findings of this report widely available to LGAs and other interested parties.

In developing an implementation strategy for these recommendations, it is suggested that the NSW CPD give consideration to the operational principles outlined in the following table. They are presented in terms of a set of generic problems associated with centre-local crime prevention relationships for program implementation and are accompanied by a set of practical solutions matched to each problem.

| Typical implementation problem | Proposed solution |
|--|---|
| 1. The central agency will often operate as a 'hands-off' provider of resources, target setter, and passive monitor of progress in circumstances when capacity for local delivery may be poor. | Establish a pro-active, adequately informed central agency willing and able to participate directly in the partnership process and technical support arrangements at the regional and local level. |
| 2. There is an inadequate local supply of people with the necessary skills to develop and implement sound and well thought through projects. | <p>Require the inclusion of human resource recruitment and staff development strategies within local crime prevention program implementation plans.</p> <p>Invest in the establishment of an accessible training and development program specifically targeted at known deficit areas at central, regional and local levels, including project and resource management as well as education in effective crime prevention practice.</p> <p>Include training and knowledge development strategies as core components within plans for program delivery.</p> <p>Assist in the establishment of a self-support and mentoring network among local crime prevention practitioners.</p> |
| <p>3. There is an apparent lack of leadership with the required qualities to conceive and operate a crime prevention program or its constituent parts across various levels of the delivery process.</p> <p>This is often associated with poor role delineation and a lack of capacity for effective problem solving and for strategic thinking.</p> | <p>Promote the routine use of a form of 'logic model' analysis for designing programs as well as their constituent projects. This will provide a rational, outcome-focused framework for analysing problems and managing initiatives.</p> <p>Close cooperation between central, regional and local staff to forge effective, collaborative ways of working.</p> |
| <p>4. Program monitoring is ineffective.</p> <p>This is important for feedback on program performance in order that adjustments can be made when necessary throughout the life of the program, not just after it has finished. Adequate tools for basic program performance monitoring are often not available.</p> | <p>Development of a comprehensive program management information system, extending well beyond the monitoring of simple output measures such as financial performance.</p> <p>Application of program performance monitoring processes as an integrated part of program management and as an ongoing component of program development and evaluation.</p> |
| <p>5. Past lessons are not heeded.</p> <p>Many programs often fail to take advantage of the experience of previous crime prevention programs and available research. As a result many avoidable errors are reproduced.</p> | Development, implementation and use of a working knowledge management system and good practice tools to aid program implementation and avoid repeating past errors. |
| 6. While a program may aspire to be an evidence-using and evidence-generating program, this goal is often not translated into supportive, practical on-the-ground activities. | Establishment of adequately resourced and appropriately skilled teams within all the central agencies assisting in local crime prevention work. These teams should work with regional staff in transferring the specialist technical and program design and management skills, to initiate and sustain effective local delivery. |
| 7. Programs are always subject to many external pressures (such as political or bureaucratic imperatives) that may impact on their integrity and capacity for effective implementation. | Development of a simple applied risk management approach to program development and implementation at central, regional and local levels. This is because not all influences on crime prevention policy, projects and programs will always be within the direct control of policy and program managers. |

Introduction

This report contains the findings of a performance analysis of the part of the local crime prevention planning process in New South Wales managed by the CPD of the NSW Attorney General's Department. The NSW Police and the NSW Department of Community Services' Community Solutions Strategy manage other local crime prevention work in NSW. Work undertaken under the auspice of these other NSW agencies was only considered in so far as it impacted on the work sponsored by the Crime Prevention Division (CPD).

The Australian Institute of Criminology undertook the review during the first half of 2005 as a contract project for the NSW CPD.

This report is divided into five sections. Part one describes the background to the crime prevention plans, including its connection to the *Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997* and the role of the Attorney General in encouraging community involvement in crime prevention.

Part two details the overall objectives of the review and the questions that the report will answer. This part also details the methods adopted in the data collection process.

Part three documents the findings and analysis of the main findings from a survey of 65 LGAs with crime prevention plans endorsed under the *Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act* and more detailed interviews with a number of key stakeholders in three areas of NSW. The findings are organised under three sections: implementation; CPD assistance; and reflections on the experience and lessons learnt. Additionally, the data are used to obtain the respondent's perceptions of whether crime prevention plans were effective in reducing crime.

Part four answers the four questions as requested by the CPD. These were:

1. the adequacy of the planning processes;
2. the impact of the plans on crime levels;
3. whether appropriate local crime measure indicators were selected and if these were appropriate to the local crime problems; and
4. the overall quality of the plans.

This section also offers concluding thoughts on the crime prevention processes in local government areas.

Part five offers recommendations to improve the crime prevention planning process, thereby helping to develop options for the CPD in providing future direction for the crime prevention plans.

1 Placing the NSW local crime prevention planning process into a wider context

When people talk about crime prevention in Australia they usually mean approaches that are community-based. Over the past twenty years, along with New Zealand and some parts of Western Europe (notably France and the Netherlands), Australia's national state and territory governments have consistently turned to the community development model as the basis for constructing viable strategies for the prevention of crime (Cameron & Laycock 2002).

The community development model places a strong emphasis on the underlying belief that crime in a particular community is not primarily or solely the result of the actions of a small number of criminogenically disposed individuals, but the result of the coincidence of a series of structural determinants present within particular communities (e.g. differential rates of access to housing, employment, education and health services, to name just a few factors). The argument goes that if these crime-promoting structural stress factors can be relieved, reconfigured or removed then crime will be reduced and prevented (Hope 1995).

However, the willingness to continue using the community-based crime prevention model in Australia needs to be put into context:

- community-based crime prevention does not have a strong track record for positive evaluations (in Australia or overseas);
- Australian crime prevention work has been characterised by frequently inconsistent strategic approaches and leadership;
- the crime prevention field has been quick to adopt the 'whole of government' approach to implementing its policy and program agenda. This approach reflects a more general shift in public administration away from a command and control mode of governance and towards governance through multiple stakeholders working together to deliver integrated solutions to social problems across sectors and tiers of government. However, to be implemented effectively it requires a high level of interagency cooperation and integrated governance – modes of operation which are time consuming and frequently difficult to achieve; and
- many of the crime prevention initiatives that have been implemented have struggled to be sustainable, or have the capacity to be converted to ongoing programs (Hemel 2005).

In our federal system, most crime prevention activity is implemented and managed by state and territory agencies, although the Australian Government plays a significant role through the work of the National Community Crime Prevention Program and other initiatives.

The following table provides an overview of current community crime prevention strategies in Australia.

| Jurisdiction | Strategic approach and responsibility |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| New South Wales | <p>The Crime Prevention Division of the NSW Attorney General's Department shares responsibility for managing the strategic approach to crime prevention work in NSW with the NSW Police and Community Solutions and Crime Prevention Strategy of the Department of Community Services. The common strategy of the NSW approach is to engage local communities in playing a more proactive role in crime prevention.</p> <p>The NSW CPD has taken specific responsibility for working to enhance the role of LGAs in the community crime prevention process, under the auspices of Part 4 of the <i>Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997</i>.</p> <p>The legislative underpinnings for crime prevention work in NSW makes it distinctively different from other Australian jurisdictions. In this sense, the most comparable local crime prevention planning structure is the UK's Crime and Disorder Partnerships, set up under the <i>Crime and Disorder Act 1998</i>. The British Act requires local agencies to work together to reduce crime and for local government authorities and police to shoulder the main responsibility.</p> <p>(More details on the NSW situation may be found at www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/cpd.nsf/pages/index.)</p> |
| Victoria | <p>The Victorian Government has been implementing a program known as Safer Streets and Homes for a number of years. The program is managed by Crime Prevention Victoria, a unit of the Victorian Justice Department, in partnership with the Victorian Police. It is designed to establish a statewide partnership with local governments and recently has been subjected to a review to assess its performance and identify future crime prevention directions. (More details may be found at www.crimeprevention.vic.gov.au/.)</p> |
| Queensland | <p>Crime Prevention Queensland, a unit of the Department for Communities, manages the Queensland Government's Strategic Framework for Community Crime Prevention. While designed to provide a statewide strategic framework the program involves projects being planned and implemented in partnership with local government authorities in areas of designated high crime or need. More information about the Queensland strategy can be found at www.communities.qld.gov.au/community/crimeprevention/index.html.</p> |
| Western Australia | <p>The Western Australian Community Safety and Crime Prevention Strategy involves targeting coordinated and consultative crime prevention and reduction initiatives. The Office of Crime Prevention within the Department for the Premier and Cabinet manages the WA crime prevention initiative, which places an emphasis on evidence-based strategies when distributing funds and the establishment of strong working partnerships with local government authorities. Details can be found at www.crimeprevention.wa.gov.au/html/index.cfm.</p> |
| South Australia | <p>Crime prevention in South Australia is coordinated principally through the SA Attorney General's Crime Prevention Unit. The South Australian strategy was an early proponent of the development of local community crime prevention work in partnership with local government, based on the French Bonnemaison model. The South Australian program is presently undergoing change due to altered government priorities. (More information can be found at www.cpu.sa.gov.au/.)</p> |
| Tasmania | <p>The Tasmanian Crime Prevention and Community Safety Council offers guidelines to implement community safety plans, however there is no grant scheme to fund any plans. The Council does, however, undertake partnership projects for crime prevention. (See www.police.tas.gov.au/community/cpsc for more details.)</p> |
| Northern Territory | <p>Northern Territory Office of Crime Prevention is part of the Justice Ministry and supports a program of community grants to communities for crime prevention initiatives. There are also Regional and Indigenous Crime Prevention Councils, which allow the state government to stay in touch with communities at a local level. They are currently developing Community Safety Plan implementation grants. (More information is available at www.nt.gov.au/justice/ocp/graphpages/)</p> |
| Australian Capital Territory | <p>Crime prevention work in the ACT is coordinated through the Department of Justice and Community Safety. ACT Policing has not developed any specific community crime partnerships. (See www.afp.gov.au and http://www.jcs.act.gov.au/agencies.html for more information.)</p> |
| Australian Government | <p>The National Community Crime Prevention Program was established in 2004 under the auspices of the Attorney General's Department. The program provides non-recurrent grants for community-based crime prevention initiatives across Australia. They also award grants under the Indigenous Community Safety Stream. (See www.crimeprevention.gov.au for more information.)</p> |

The operation of local crime prevention planning in NSW

Part 4 of the *Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997* describes a provision that supports the development of local crime prevention plans by LGAs. The aim of these plans is to reduce crime and develop a safer environment through promoting community involvement in plan development. An LGA has the responsibility to draft a local crime prevention plan, present it to the community for general public comment, and advise the community when the plan has been formally adopted.

Unlike the UK's *Crime and Disorder Act*, the NSW legislation does not make the development of crime prevention plans mandatory. However, if LGAs in NSW wish to apply for financial assistance from the government to implement some of the initiatives contained in their plans, they need to apply to the Attorney General to have their plans endorsed as Safer Community Compacts. Doing so unlocks access to some financial assistance. Significantly, until recently local crime and disorder partnerships in the UK were unable to apply for the sort of project-based funding support that their NSW counterparts have been able to do. Consequently, significant implementation problems were noted for the UK partnerships in their early days (Homel et al. 2004).

In order to qualify for the Safer Community Compact under the *Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997*, the LGAs must submit a request for funding based on certain guidelines outlined in a manual by the CPD. The crime prevention manual outlines ways to undertake community consultations, set up a crime prevention committee responsible for the implementation of the plan, establish partnerships, compile crime data for the area, and how to select appropriate strategies to suit the plan's objectives. The main points made in the plans are presented in the table below, which are designed to assist plan development.

The CPD manual indicates that for a plan to be endorsed, LGAs require an action plan similar to the one below when developing a crime prevention plan:

1. determine a list of priority problems;
2. from this list, formulate objectives to tackle the problem;
3. for each objective, develop numerous strategies to fulfil its goal;
4. outputs: determine how to measure the performance of each strategy;
5. outcomes: determine how to measure the impact of each strategy;
6. determine a timeframe for completing these objectives; and
7. establish the resources (both monetary and in human resources) needed to achieve these objectives (Manual, pp15-16).

Table 1: Selection of suggested approaches to developing crime prevention plans

- Whole of council approach
- Introduce a crime prevention officer
- Establish a crime prevention committee
- Adequate resources to be available
- Committee includes consultation with broad cross-section of community
- Designated spokesperson
- CPP must be based on understanding of residents' needs
- Determine the nature and extent of crime in the area
- Ideally one person should be given overall responsibility for implementation and keeping plans on track
- **CP must be a core value/business activity**
- CP committees must be flexible
- Select only 2-3 high priority issues
- A communications strategy built in from the start
- Evaluation plan built in from the start
- Gain commitment of stakeholders prior to the implementation of the plans
- Include both **output** and **outcome** indicators
- Don't measure too many things
- Plan needs community consultation
- Prepare to work outside council boundaries

Source: NSW CPD website: /www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/cpd.nsf/pages/index

Together with a range of support processes, including the planning manual, this framework has guided the development of local crime prevention planning activity in NSW for the past seven years. LGAs in NSW have been central players in the development and coordination of local crime prevention activity. Furthermore, using the statutory planning framework is voluntary. This has meant that some local authorities, such as the City of Sydney, have developed significant crime prevention plans but have never submitted them for endorsement.

The local crime prevention planning provisions of the *Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act* were last reviewed in 2001. However, this was done as part of a wider statutory review of the Act and the final report dealt with the full range of functions enabled by the Act, as well as local crime prevention planning. This evaluation addresses the CPD's need for a specific review of its local crime prevention planning activities to determine future directions in this area.

2 The overall evaluation goals and method

There were originally two parts to this evaluation project: a program performance analysis and a program outcome analysis. Owing to the unavailability of necessary data, it was not possible to undertake the outcome analysis. Therefore this report concentrates exclusively on the program performance analysis.

The performance analysis has concentrated on determining the quality of the plans, implementation performance, and output measurement issues. The project focused on three specific questions:

1. How appropriate have the indicators used to measure local crime levels actually been?
2. How well have the initiatives within the plans been linked with the identified local crime problems?
3. What is the overall quality of the local crime prevention plans?

A fourth question regarding whether the local crime prevention planning processes had a general impact on local crime levels could not be assessed because of the lack of access to the necessary data, as referred to above.

Crime statistics alone are not conclusive enough to determine the success of the CP plans. Many outcomes were not measured specifically in the data (for example, theft specifically from beaches, not just theft in general, and fear of crime), or had the goal to enhance the incidence of crime reporting, thus an increase of crime for a particular offence may be misrepresented. For this reason in depth interviews were conducted in three of the six areas targeted for more detailed analyses were the subject of in-depth interviews.

Key stakeholder interviews

In three sites in-depth interviews were conducted with key people involved in the development, implementation and management of the crime prevention plans within their areas. The locales were chosen with the guidance of the CPD, although the individual interviewees were organised by the AIC.

The selected areas were:

- Manly Council, a beachside suburb of Sydney. This LGA provided an opportunity to gauge the experience of LGAs in urban areas;
- Taree, on the NSW mid-north coast was selected as a rural community and for its high Indigenous population; and
- Queanbeyan City Council, because it is a large regional city.

The interviews were generally undertaken as group sessions, but were relatively free flowing. They were built around a basic structure that addressed the experience of developing the plans and their implementation. Questions were asked about how easy the planning process had been, the extent and importance of support from the CPD, how easily partnership arrangements had been established and how effectively they had operated, and aspects of the plan's implementation and review. A copy of the interview format is at Appendix 6.

Survey of LGAs with endorsed crime prevention plans

In order to obtain a broader understanding of the council experience in implementing a crime prevention plan, the 49 LGAs in NSW that had an endorsed crime prevention plan on the NSW CPD Safer Community Compact Applications Register list were sent a survey via email. The survey was adapted from a survey previously undertaken to review the UK's Crime Reduction Programme (Homel et al. 2004) and modified to fit the NSW evaluation's objectives. (See Appendix 4 for a copy of the questionnaire).

The survey was broken into four parts, which encompassed their current roles and details of the plan; their opinion of the current state of the plan; the next steps needed in continuing with a CP plan; and their opinion on what was needed to enhance future CP plans. The questions were predominantly closed-ended, with the opportunity to expand on questions in the opinion section of the survey.

LGA representatives were given a two-week timeframe to complete the survey. A reminder was sent to those who had yet to respond to the survey a week before it was due, and again, two days after the deadline, in the form of either an email or phone call. After numerous follow-ups for the completed survey, 39 responses were received (a response rate of about 80 per cent).

In interpreting the findings from the survey a number of factors have to be taken into account. These include:

- different LGAs were at different stages in the implementation of their plans, therefore responses reflected their progress in these stages (e.g. some had only just started implementation while others had completed one planning/implementation cycle and had commenced preparing revised plans);
- while those responding were currently responsible for crime prevention activities, many had not been involved in developing the plans and therefore had limited knowledge of past experiences; and
- the individual responses are not always representative of the general view of the committee implementing the plan.

3 Findings and analysis

It became apparent from the interviews with the three LGAs and through the survey responses that a successful crime prevention plan (CPP) is multifaceted and requires a substantial degree of dedication from not only the overseer of the plan, but all its stakeholders, the council and the local community.

The key stakeholder interviews allowed for an exploratory investigation into the implementation of CPPs in NSW. The interviews were instrumental in teasing out the experience of local council areas and what they thought made their plans function.

The experiences of Manly, Taree and Queanbeyan in implementing a crime prevention plan were remarkably similar. Major differences in implementing the plan mostly appeared to be associated with the different social and demographic fabric of the communities rather than any systematic differences. Three themes recurred throughout the interviews with the key stakeholders in these LGAs:

1. the importance of an ongoing and adequate funding stream to support program implementation;
2. the need for a permanent and committed manager of the crime prevention implementation process; and
3. the importance of effective and functioning partnerships for achieving successful CPP implementation.

The open-ended responses in the surveys were largely consistent with the major themes emerging from the interviews. The following sections use the interview and survey responses to delve more deeply into the implications of these issues for future local crime prevention planning activity in NSW.

Planning and development processes

The first step in the development of a community CPP is a process of community consultation and the compilation of the local crime statistics for the area. Based on this information, LGAs develop a plan that best reflects their community’s capacities and needs as well as addressing agreed priority crime problems.

This planning and development is an activity that appears to have been done quite well by the LGAs. Overall the respondents felt that most community groups were adequately represented. Examples of groups consulted included among others:

- police, including their own crime prevention and community liaison officers;
- Indigenous elders and representatives;
- youth groups and youth liaison officers; and
- local business owners and liquor licensees.

The different LGAs generally developed plans that targeted three to four issues. Alcohol-related offences, youth-related crime and community safety were common areas targeted. The box below presents a list of the range of crime types or offences that were generally targeted. Some areas highlighted only one issue or theme, while in one case all of the issues listed below were targeted.

| <i>Key target areas</i> | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Assault | Drink driving | Motor vehicle theft | Property theft |
| Sexual assault | Fear of crime | Alcohol-related offences | Community violence |
| Intervention | Domestic violence | Youth-related violence | Anti-social behaviour |
| Drug offences | Indigenous issues | | |

While most LGAs selected similar target areas, there were a variety of methods adopted for addressing the consultation processes. Many LGAs also conducted community surveys to gauge community concerns of crime and what they feel should be addressed.

Once the key target areas were selected, action plans were developed. Each LGA had similar action plans, and Appendices 1, 2 and 3 have extracts from the plans of Manly, Taree and Queanbeyan, respectively, to illustrate the variety of methods used and initiatives adopted.

Funding

The importance of access to an adequate funding flow for implementing successful crime prevention strategies was a consistent concern for all the areas interviewed and was echoed in the survey responses. These opinions can be broken down into three areas: the perceived problems of the funding process; the perceived benefits; and the reported solutions to the problems.

Problems

- The acquisition of funding from the CPD was cited as being not only a difficult process, but time-consuming, complex and, in some cases, ineffective. The point was conceded in one interview however, that being in possession of funds could often cause its own difficulties, such as having to decide where to invest the money and what project would benefit the most from the funds.
- The point was made that the most valuable resources were people donating their time and skill for the plan, as opposed to money. The need for skilled practitioners in many of the initiatives was often highlighted. This was supported in another interview where, although funding was emphasised as being inadequate, it was admitted that they occasionally had a difficult time spending the money when it became available.
- Funding issues were not restricted to the LGA's experience with the CPD. Some noted that it was sometimes difficult to get funding from local sources. This was especially the case in rural areas. A respondent from a rural/remote area commented that the problem with the current funding arrangement was that "we can't reverse five generations of disadvantage within four years and with inadequate funding", indicating the desire of some local councils to target more long-term strategies.
- Applying annually for new funding when some projects extend over a period greater than 12 months, with no guaranteed funding for the full term of the project was deemed a hindrance. A respondent commented that the funding should "...allow for projects to be implemented over the life of the compact, and not be expected to finish within one year to make way for a new batch of projects to be funded in the following year. After all, the plans are over three years and to maintain momentum and consistency, projects cannot necessarily be effective for any less time than full term".
- The current limited timeframe to apply for funding was seen as problematic due to some projects having to meet other specific timelines (e.g. a Youth Week activity).
- Getting council backing for a plan was viewed as difficult for some LGAs. One respondent suggested that in their LGA, gaining funding for environmental issues appeared easier than obtaining money for crime prevention.

Not all problems were seen as related to a lack of money. Administrative issues were also cited as problematic. As one respondent mentioned in relation to their plan, "there have been significant administrative issues in the determination of funding and distribution of funding. The Regional Advisors

have too large an area to provide adequate support at a local level. This required better strategic planning.”

Perceived Benefits

- Several comments supported the view that the benefits of the funding scheme extended beyond the simple receipt of money. For example, a benefit of gaining funding for the plan was that it was a product or reward for undertaking a substantial planning process and therefore encouraged others to invest. It was also viewed as a stimulus to initiate plans that would otherwise not have funding allocated.
- Funding from the CPD was seen to make it easier to draw funding from other sources, since others saw the department’s financial backing as adding legitimacy to the plans.
- The perception that access to funds was difficult was seen to sometimes promote innovative ways to attract funding from other sources, and additionally give those involved in providing resources a sense of ownership and involvement in the community crime prevention plan.
- One respondent mentioned that ‘hunting’ for money was a concern, however it was not always a negative experience as it got others involved and lifted the profile of partnerships in that particular area.

Solution suggested by respondents

There was a call to have the ‘window’ in which funding was allocated (once a year) to be more flexible. This would entail allowing communities to submit funding applications throughout the year, as opposed to hastily trying to compose a plan by the due date.

Conclusion

Not surprisingly, funding was a concern for all respondents. Interestingly, the remote/rural areas in the survey appeared to be more pragmatic in their responses about the funding restraints. A possible explanation for this is that the rural sector is more accustomed to operating with limited funds, and therefore were more realistic about what initiatives could work on a limited budget.

Generally there appeared to be an expectation that the CPD would provide more funding than was given, and the LGAs were unclear about their role in garnering funds from other sources. As mentioned by some respondents, solutions and plan success are not guaranteed by funding, but rest more on the quality and motivation of the stakeholders. This indicates a possible need to promote more effective planning and project management skill amongst LGAs and less emphasis on money as the key ingredient in successful plans.

A dedicated position to implement the crime prevention plan

In the interviews, all participants emphatically supported the need to consolidate a dedicated position within their organisations to implement the crime prevention plan. Most often it was suggested that this should take the form of a permanent crime prevention officer (CPO). The following reasons were presented as to why a CPO is integral with the implementation of a successful plan:

- the officer is able to oversee everything and make sure that problems can be identified swiftly and to bring everything back together;
- strong leadership is required to garner support for the various initiatives; and

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- one interview group felt that the police background of their CPO was an invaluable resource, as the officer was able to utilise this background to act as a police and community liaison.

The respondents outlined the challenges faced by the CPOs, which they believe should change to increase the success of plan implementation. The respondents generally concurred on the problems, as listed below:

- respondents felt that the onus to network with others in the position was on the CPOs, without any perceived assistance from the CPD to establish these networks;
- the CPOs needed assistance from the CPD in organising crime prevention plans;
- one CPO was a part-time position, and it was emphasised that this was inadequate to deal with the demands of the job; and
- many felt that the CPO was given a lot of work for little reward, especially in relation to individuals responsible for CP duties with other work commitments. One respondent felt that “the CPD is trying to get huge outcomes with minimal investment, (as) projects need drivers and drivers need to be paid”.

Conclusion

The role of CPO is clearly perceived to be fundamental to the successful implementation of a crime prevention plan. Whereas it is recognised in the guidelines that plans should have a CPO, the reality for LGAs appears to be that the CPO role can only rarely be successfully mixed with other commitments, and needs to be an almost exclusive focus. This poses a problem for those LGAs without the funds to support a full- or part-time CPO, particularly in non-urban areas. This is perceived to negatively impact the success of a plan. Those councils with a permanent officer (if not permanent, at least the job is exclusive, as opposed to having the role on top of other duties) appeared to have more satisfaction in the outcomes of the plan.

However, it is recognised that the capacity of the CPD to fund the demand for such a position is not adequate. Therefore it is recommended that the CPD give consideration to supporting the establishment of some sort of permanent and regionally-based implementation positions that may be shared between various LGAs on a rotating, needs-defined basis.

Partnerships

“(Partnerships are) fundamental now that funding has come to an end”

It was a unanimous view in the interviews and written survey responses that the partnerships between stakeholders were fundamental to the effective operation of crime prevention initiatives. Communication between stakeholders sometimes presented problems in both the development of the plan and its implementation phase. Some interviewees found that there are times where the roles of the stakeholders, community and the CPD are unclear.

The most successful plans appear to be the ones that had what they perceived to be strong working relationships between the members of the crime committees. One such area where the partnerships proved powerful is illustrated in the commitment of CP committees in pursuing liquor accord agreements with licensees in their area (see box on following page).

Several points emerged from the respondents that they felt influenced the nature and success of the partnerships:

- geographical features of an area can add either advantages or disadvantages to workable relationships between partners. As one LGA mentioned, its position in an urban area with small and easily accessible boundaries aided in providing services to its community;
- partnerships need to be consolidated and organised;
- spin-off relationships with other partners often occurred;
- problems such as domestic violence (DV) involve joining unlikely parties together previously not considered (e.g. police support for Indigenous groups to tackle DV); and
- the reason for encouraging partnerships was as one respondent reasoned, “No one agency [has] all the answers”.

“Partnership work requires a lot of patience, particularly when some members have totally different ideas as to what prevents crime or how to achieve outcomes.”

Conclusion

The fostering of successful partnerships to achieve the plan’s aims was recognised by the respondents as a key part of implementing CPPs. The respondents seemed aware of the work needed to ensure partnerships, and were not under illusions that they could be established without some conflict. However, overall the process was seen a positive one for those involved.

Most respondents were willing to illustrate how partnerships worked, however less is known about the problems encountered between partnerships. This could either be due to the respondents not actually experiencing any problems, or the interviewees not wishing to express their views in front of the other interviewees.

Liquor accords: an example of partnership operation

All plans reviewed for this evaluation tackled alcohol-related offences on some level, and a successful accord appears vital to addressing these issues. This area highlighted a part of crime prevention planning that is not well documented in guidelines: how to approach initiatives that may potentially impact negatively on an individual’s business.

In general, it was a challenge for CP plans aiming to address alcohol-related anti-social behaviour to develop a liquor accord. As highlighted in one interview, the problem with implementing a liquor accord was grounded in the need for cooperation with the local licensees, which often proved difficult. Liquor accords often raised many challenges to the CPP implementers for a number of reasons:

- Licensees resistant to accords because:
 1. the accords often propose limited drinking hours, affecting their profits;
 2. if they participate in voluntary restrictions and other licensees don’t, there is a possibility that they will lose business to the other licensee.
- Problems arose when trying to implement accords imposed by the NSW State Government: one group mentioned that they did not like the State coming in from above to interfere with the local initiatives with contradictory proposals. This was seen as making the licensees anxious, and therefore the accord harder to implement.

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- One particular point was made in an interview on the hypocrisy that was present in negotiating a liquor accord. The council members would go into meetings trying to work out an accord, and yet leave bragging about the alcohol they consumed on the weekend.

Liquor accord implementation does not always pose a problem for planners, as shown in one of the interview sites. The interviewees in that location were unable to pinpoint why the implementation was so successful, but they assumed it was in part for the following factors:

- a small number of licensees within the area;
- the licensees in general had a good rapport with the police and stakeholders, and were considered “a good bunch”.
- the ability to use legislation and emerging legislation to make licensees adhere to the accord.

That being said, during interviews with this area it was apparent that strong leadership within those responsible for implementing the accord also had a part to play in its successful adoption.

The role of crime prevention committees

The crime prevention committees were consistently seen as a place where all the issues to do with implementing the crime prevention plans could be brought together in an inclusive way. Meetings were sometimes perceived as catalysts for new ideas, but interviewees saw them as developing into more of a forum for sharing experiences and ideas. Overall the crime prevention committees generally had similar characteristics across the LGAs.

Using a crime prevention plan

It was observed that there were many benefits to a well-written plan. Key among these were that having the plan guidelines in the committee meetings assisted the organisers to stay focused on what was important. It was also remarked that a well-constructed plan established a structure to projects.

Those interviewed generally concurred that developing the plans was the ideal situation. Some of the reasons why one group found a benefit in the plan being locally-based included:

- plans cannot be organised from an outside source, as they are local issues as known by the locals;
- community members care about the community and what affects it; and
- many have personal experiences of the community’s issues and therefore know what needs to be done.

Crime prevention plans and the Indigenous community

One of the requirements for endorsement as a Community Safety Compact is the consideration of the Indigenous community in the development of plans.

The questions to interviewees regarding Indigenous populations highlighted the need for crime prevention planners to address the multiple populations that the plan should encompass. The complexity of the many approaches to gaining Indigenous opinion on the plan was highlighted in the varying ways the Indigenous

and non-Indigenous communities perceived the situation in their area. In general, the plans were seen to benefit the Indigenous community; however there was a need to further maximise this potential.

- An “us and them” mentality sometimes prevailed (Indigenous versus non-Indigenous community).
- While the plans may properly identify Indigenous concerns and propose strategies to address them, often in practice there was limited engagement.
- There was criticism that the government did not want to hear whether initiatives with the Indigenous community were successful. It was mentioned that all they needed to do to get funding was basically “tick a box” on a form saying they conferred with the Indigenous groups, regardless of whether they were effective. This was seen as unproductive, with a need to pay the issues more than lip service.

Issues that were raised in interviews and survey responses included:

- it is essential that solutions for the Aboriginal community develop from the ground up, rather than being imposed from an external source;
- the demise of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) led to reduced funding and thus sustainability of some of the activities;
- it was felt that Indigenous youth needed to go out and engage in the broader community more (from the Indigenous representatives);
- plan creates a good referral network;
- the Indigenous people in the communities need a person to trust in the police, especially in situations of domestic violence; and
- one of the major problems in the Indigenous community is the perceived intimidation of the women by men in the community.

Conclusion

There appeared to be a degree of disillusionment among the respondents and interviewees regarding the effectiveness of the plans at providing relevant crime prevention initiatives for the Indigenous community. However, this appeared to derive not from a lack of motivation to engage this community, but rather a lack of knowledge of how to do this. Those interviewed within the Indigenous community were positive about the programs, yet external factors, such as the demise of ATSIC, impacted on the ability to sustain initiatives. This illustrates the way outside influences can affect the implementation of initiatives, and the need for organisations to have flexible plans that can cope with unexpected changes.

Conflict and challenges

As expected, most plans encountered problems during their implementation. A particular point made in some interviews was the clash of agendas for individuals involved in the plan. Conflict could arise in a number of arenas:

- council members using the crime prevention committees and plan as a way to promote their particular policies;
- groups involved having a very narrow vision about what should take priority;

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- using crime prevention discussions as a platform to discuss matters unrelated to the issue of crime prevention.

Other challenges and points of possible conflict included:

- adopting strategies relevant and accessible to migrant communities was a challenge highlighted by some LGAs. One respondent remarked, it is “an ongoing challenge to getting information to a linguistically diverse community with a significant proportion not speaking English well or not at all”; and
- it was often difficult to know what projects took precedence over others when deciding which ones to fund and implement.

Keeping crime prevention meetings in focus and restricted to discussing CP issues could cause problems, yet it was noted that the presence of clear CPD guidelines on how to develop a plan could be successfully used to steer the meetings in the right direction. For example, one attendee at a CP meeting wished to discuss the introduction of tsunami warnings for the LGA, yet the organisers were able to effectively turn conversation away from that suggestion by noting it simply would not fit the criteria for the CPP.

Issues associated with the location of the LGA implementing a plan

The location of an LGA had an effect on the types of challenges reported by plan implementers. In particular, respondents from rural/remote LGAs remarked on the challenges faced due to their isolation from resources more abundant in urban areas. Major issues here were:

- attracting and retaining qualified staff;
- limited access to appropriate resources (e.g. funding from other sources, other crime prevention officers etc.); and
- attracting local funding. This is particularly problematic in areas struggling with influences unrelated to the plans, such as the drought.

A perception exists among non-urban LGAs that regional considerations are not taken into account when designing plans. There is also a belief that the CPD is detached from what happens outside Sydney LGAs.

Another comment made by non-urban LGAs was that perceptions of their LGA by people coming from outside the area do not often fit the reality of the situation. In other words, it was mentioned that stereotypes of particular towns were generally negative from outsiders, and it was difficult to break that perception. This was seen as negatively impacting on their efforts to promote their town and the CP initiatives (such as attracting funding).

Respondents mentioned that meetings with other crime prevention personnel organised by CPD are hard for rural people to attend (due to factors such as distance, money, and time). As one respondent noted, “training needs to be [brought] out to the rural country areas to be easily accessed, as travel to Sydney or other larger centres takes up an extra two days”. It was also suggested that many strategies were needed for regional problems, but focus is almost exclusively on city initiatives and plans do not go outside city boundaries. Conversely, respondents also felt that not enough credit goes to the rural and regional areas for implementing good programs from the CPD.

Staff attrition and sustainability

High staff turnover is a problem faced by most LGAs. This often leads to successors being unaware or ill informed about what occurred prior to their joining the CPP. Problems associated with new committee members include:

- the clash of old members with the new over the way things should be approached;
- council elections resulting in new people taking over projects;
- organisations frequently changing committee representatives;
- continuity of staff and stakeholder representatives is needed for successful implementation of the projects.

Above all, the quest for sustaining CP initiatives for the duration of the plan was a clear goal for the majority of the respondents. Even though most interviewees felt that the current processes for implementing CPPs are unsustainable, there was a consensus that it definitely has the potential to be sustainable.

The notion of sustainability appeared to have close links to the perceived need for a permanent CPO and improved distribution of funding. Many reasons were proposed as to why this is so:

- no job security under the current situation of not having a permanent CPO. As one respondent commented, “if the stats are there, why isn’t it permanent?”;
- not having a permanent position can sometimes make service providers uneasy because if there is no certainty that things will be done as proposed, people are sometimes reluctant to invest in the project;
- the long-term nature of many projects needs to be recognised, instead of having to apply every year for funding for the same project. There is a reluctance to initiate projects which may not be able to follow through with their aims; and
- CPD needs to recognise that long-term projects may involve many small steps, and may not have immediately measurable results, e.g. parenting programs.

There were a few suggestions as to how to improve sustainability:

- funding should be consistent for the life of the project without the uncertainty of having to apply for a new grant; and
- making all CPO roles permanent, so there would be one person with the time and capacity to keep the plan on track and be able to deal with any changes.

Conclusion

The challenges for the LGAs tended to differ depending on factors such as ethnicity, demographic characteristics, urban/regional status and the availability of staff. Once again, permanency of the CPO and funding improvements were the two prominent themes respondents felt were needed to improve CP initiatives. The regional and remote areas have a particular issue in attracting and retaining qualified staff, as well as garnering additional funding. There appears to be a need offer more assistance to LGAs outside urban areas to access more skilled staff, and the means to retain this staff.

Crime Prevention Division assistance and guidelines

The need for clear and relevant guidelines from the CPD appears to be crucial in the development of successful plans. The framework supplied by the CPD was often praised as having a positive effect, with Departmental endorsement of the plans assessed as extremely beneficial. There was also recognition of the need to have an actual plan with the aims, measurements and desired outcomes specified, as is required for each LGA in order to qualify for CPD funding.

Perceived benefits

Having a structured plan outlining activities and purpose to use as a framework for plan implementation was viewed as an advantage for the following reasons:

- it adds structure to committee meetings. This prevented individuals with their own agenda dominating, and deviations from the issues at hand;
- it aids in garnering external funding by presenting to potential stakeholders clear aims and methods to achieve them, instead of requesting money for vague purposes;
- prior to the plan people wanted to do something in their community, but didn't know how. The structured plan gives them a sense of something they can do; and
- the plan also provides a clear direction for project managers and those taking up the plans.

The funding and additional support was also recognised as beneficial for the following reasons:

- the promise of additional funding for existing CP initiatives makes the plan a worthwhile investment;
- it establishes a foundation to start the process, maintains commercial interest and allows the community to see that the plan is going somewhere, thus the impetus to do something;
- the current structure gives relative autonomy in allocating resources, with no feelings of being micro-managed; and
- the endorsement of plans by the Attorney General gave the project 'a touch of prestige'. As one interviewee succinctly stated, the plan "would not have had the same impact if it had been endorsed by the [Department of Community Services]". It is also seen as 'drawing a bigger crowd'.

The LGA plans often encompassed initiatives previously existing in the areas, but the plan allowed them to be monitored and assessed with more purpose. In addition, respondents felt that the existence of a plan created the impetus to do something within a specific time and with measured outcomes.

Criticism

That being said, there was some criticism over perceived CPD lack of interest in the plans once they were endorsed. Many interviewees were perplexed as to why the CPD would not appear to take more interest in the plans that were being funded by the Attorney General's Department, and whether the programs were successful. There is also a general wish for more guidance from the CPD on how to evaluate and implement projects. Overall, many just wished to gain more information about crime prevention plans. They are also aware that there are contacts in the CPD, but do not really know how or who to approach.

Respondents noted having poor communication with the CPD, and often felt that assistance in maintaining plans was inadequate. They perceived there was no way to report to the CPD regarding their experiences, and thus there exists no motivation among plan implementers to make the CPD aware of any challenges or successes they experienced. Many believed:

- the CPD didn't always understand the communities they were funding; and
- the CPD did not follow up on the plans they endorsed and help establish. It was suggested that if they did, the CPD would benefit from learning the implementation experiences of the plan and therefore use this knowledge to assist other LGAs with their plans.

There was also confusion among various respondents regarding the role of the CPD:

- some respondents were not aware of the CPD's role in crime prevention, and how to apply the guidelines; and
- they wanted some degree of CPD assistance in implementation, but were unsure of how to request this need.

Other concerns included that acquiring funding was a tedious, slow process which occasionally interferes with implementing initiatives on time. There is also a definite desire to share information with other CPOs of their experiences, yet many respondents didn't think that the CPD offered support for this type of network.

Conclusion

There was a high level of ambiguity in the responses given to questions about the CPD's role. It is therefore difficult to determine whether the problem lies in the CPD not having clear and relevant guidelines available for LGAs, or with plan implementers not investigating all the information before initiating a plan.

This is even harder to determine when taking into consideration that many who completed the surveys had only recently joined the crime prevention effort, and are reflecting on projects and aims that others initiated.

Regardless of the different opinions, there was a call for more information regarding crime prevention from the CPD, which would point to a need from the CPD to supply more crime prevention-related information to those with CPD grants. That being said, much of the information requested (such as clear guidelines, ways to evaluate CP plans, and access to other council's initiatives) are currently available on the CPD website. It is possible that CPOs and plan implementers are unaware of the crime prevention link on the website, or it wasn't available at the time of their plan's inception.

The other prominent issue emphasised was the CPD's lack of keeping in touch with the LGAs after endorsing plans. In defence of the CPD, it is specified in section 41 of the *Children (Protection and Responsibility) Act 1997* that the council is to "report periodically on implementation of compact" to the Minister, thus indicating that the responsibility for reporting back to the CPD was the local council's. The confusion could possibly be explained by the constant change occurring within participants in plan administration, and therefore more recent CPOs may be unaware of the procedures.

Role of local council

The local council is responsible for applying for the Safer Community Compact. For this reason, one of the questions asked of the interviewees was whether local councils were suitable vehicles for implementing the plan as opposed to another organisation or group. There was consensus that council was perhaps the only place that had the potential to adequately initiate the crime prevention plans. Reasons for this are listed as follows:

- more possibility of a conflict of interest if any other group or organisation were in charge;
- council holds a unique position of being a key interface between the community and other levels of government, and thus has more opportunity to implement strategies;
- they have the power to apply political pressure, and are able to 'make a noise' on various issues without worrying about it impacting on their jobs;
- many in the community wish to liaise with the council because some see it as a powerful relationship to have, as long as council 'doesn't just pay lip service' to the issue;
- council has the ability to administer funds; and
- progress can continue even if personnel change within the organisation.

There was recognition however that problems could occur with council in the implementation of plans. For example:

- council priorities can be a barrier. As one interviewee stated, there appeared to be more money available for environmental issues than in investing money to 'preserve human life', and it was also harder to obtain funding;
- competing agendas can hinder implementation of initiatives, with this problem sometimes surfacing when two different councils try to combine more than one council's aims; and
- the philosophical stance on the best ways to approach a plan can vary within an LGA, thus causing delays in implementing any projects.

Conclusion

Respondents thought local council was best placed to support and develop plans, yet they did identify problems in using council as the plan's principle driver. Even though council was the vehicle for initiating CPPs, and the guidelines available from the CPD advocate a whole of council approach to crime prevention implementation, it was surprising that a large number of councils contacted had no knowledge of a crime prevention plan existing in their area. It was sometimes difficult to find individuals who had been a part of, or were currently involved in the plans. The general inquiries sections often had no knowledge of plans, and this was even common among community service sectors within council. The lack of plan awareness by council members was disturbing, as in effect it means that the CPD is funding projects that councils are unaware they are running.

Initiatives such as CPTED, liquor accords, and revamping public spaces all need council approval, and therefore are an integral part of crime prevention implementation. The mixed success of implementers in stimulating council interest highlights that although motivation may be there to fulfil the initiatives proposed, much depends on the political climate of the area. Incorporating the many facets of council into plans is an area that needs more attention, and one that the CPD may need to help implementers of CP plans strengthen.

4 Lessons from crime prevention plans

Measurement of outcomes

Measurement of outcomes was an area that posed a problem for the LGAs. Each initiative proposed to address the key target areas selected by an LGA should have stated in the proposed plan what action was to be taken, what would result from that action at the end of a specified timeframe (the output), and what the eventual outcome of that action would achieve (refer to appendices 1, 2 and 3 for examples of the action plans for Manly, Queanbeyan and Taree respectively). Each LGA is responsible for evaluating their initiatives at the completion of the plan. Overall, many found it difficult to assess the initiatives.

Unsurprisingly, it was suggested that the evaluation process was not given enough money by the CPD, although this was not the greatest hindrance to evaluating plans. The main issue respondents had was they were unsure of where to find adequate evaluation techniques for the initiatives they had chosen to target their key areas. Interestingly though, the majority of respondents thought the outcome measures they eventually selected adequately assessed what they targeted in the plans.

Overall, however, some respondents conceded that they did not employ initiatives that were specific enough to allow for outcome evaluation (e.g. whether the printed material on domestic violence awareness actually reached victims of DV and thus impacted on reducing the incidence of DV). To prevent an LGA completing a plan after three years only to face evaluating initiatives with immeasurable outcomes, a respondent suggested there was a need for someone from outside the LGA to assess the programs to help avoid complacency and monitor progress.

Reviewing performance

There was some reflection on their performance by various LGAs after the evaluation process, and many commented on areas where they thought they could improve. There were also observations on how some plans were more successful than first thought, and how they can use the results of the evaluation to their benefit.

Some of the observations on this issue included:

- one interview group mentioned that when formulating their new plan, they will evaluate more, which they realised they lacked in the past plan;
- another group found that by evaluating, they now know where they have been, know where they are going and where they want to be;
- one area felt that it exceeded the expectations outlined in the original plan, with the unanimous perception that all the actions proposed were implemented and had achieved their goals. They felt this was attributed to a well-developed plan with attainable, clear and relevant initiatives;
- the way the results and evidence are stored was mentioned as an area needing to be improved; and
- one respondent conceded plans had to be promoted more “so people know what’s happening”.

In general, evaluation was an area that crime prevention committees had trouble fulfilling, although there were exceptions to this experience. Lack of funding was frequently cited, and reasons for inadequate measurement are generally summarised in one respondent’s remark:

“Most measures require continuity: how long does it take it before a community can become self reliant, particularly when affected by issues of poverty, unemployment, lack of transport, unaffordable housing or drug abuse? Certainly more than four years.”

Conclusion

Respondents appear to be confused over what assistance the CPD offers, and what duties are the responsibilities of the LGAs in implementing the measurement methods for the plans. It could also be tentatively concluded that there was a degree of confusion over what the respondents saw as adequate measures of their target plans. Where many thought that the measurement methods chosen for each target area were appropriate, this was not very evident in the findings. Some initiatives outlined did not have realistic measures, or were unmeasurable.

There were exceptions to this, as evidenced in the LGAs who outsourced their evaluation to other organisations. Yet many who had completed their plans did not complete an evaluation, highlighting the problems measurement provided. Overall, there are three areas that need to be considered to improve the performance measures:

- place an emphasis on the need to set aims that link to measurable performance indicators and then provide some basic guidance on the implementation of performance measurement systems;
- make a provision that there should be a process of ongoing review for the duration of the plan to avoid finding out too late that the objectives of the plan are unrealistic; and
- encourage outsourcing the evaluation to professionals unrelated to the plan.

Impact on crime

Because of the unavailability of the relevant crime data for this review, it is only possible to report on qualitative assessments of the impact of the crime prevention plans on crime.

The overall opinion was that crime rates were affected by the plans. However, this was extremely difficult to determine as the plans frequently targeted specific crime types in conjunction with the general aims. Recognising this problem, the survey responses were used to determine if at least the respondents thought that crime rates were affected.

Frequency tables and cross-tabs were run on the responses to the data, yet due to the low sample size (n=39), the results were not expected to produce many relevant findings. In general there were not many patterns that developed within the survey responses.

An example of a cross tabulation is contained in the table in the box over page to give an indication of the data yielded by the analysis of the survey responses. The lack of definite patterns in the survey responses lends support to the observation made in the open-ended responses that the LGA experience of implementing and interpreting what needs to be done for a CP plan varies for each LGA.

Table 2: The understanding of crime prevention plan aims in relation to whether the respondents conducted crime prevention activities prior to the plan

| Crime prevention activities prior to plan | Fairly high or more understanding | % | Mixed/patchy understanding | % | Don't know | % | Total | % |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|-------|------------|------|-------|-----|
| No | 12 | 44.44 | 14 | 51.85 | 1 | 3.7 | 27 | 100 |
| Yes | 10 | 83.33 | 1 | 8.33 | 1 | 8.33 | 12 | 100 |
| Total | 22 | 56.41 | 15 | 38.46 | 2 | 5.13 | 39 | 100 |

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology NSW community crime prevention evaluation survey results [computer file]

The level of understanding for the CPPs aims was compared between respondents who reported participating in CP activities prior to the plan and those reporting no previous activities.

The table illustrates the high likelihood that experience in CP activities could be an advantage when implementing a plan endorsed by the CPD. Although the number of respondents with prior experience was small (n=12) 83 per cent of these had either a fairly high or greater understanding of the plan's aims, compared with 12 respondents (44%) from 27 who did not having experience reporting a fairly high or more understanding of the aims.

Even in areas that seemed cynical about the success of their previous plan, most indicated that the new plans would have an impact on crime. This suggests that most respondents were confident that the plans would benefit their community in some way. The information from the surveys is rather inconclusive, yet overall most assume there was an impact on local crime levels due to the prevention initiatives.

Above all, there was a consensus that the plans constantly evolve and usually do not end up as they start. This evolution was seen as necessary to improving the design and aims of the plan. One interview response indicated that the plan would never mature, as it is more a matter of process than an entity with a clearly defined end.

Reasons why plans were evolving

- new plans are building on the old ones;
- spin-off relationships are continuously developing;
- when benefits become visible, more people want to become involved; and
- community evolves and changes, ergo you cannot afford to take your eyes off the ball.

Perceiving the plans as constantly evolving and needing to be updated is a good indication that crime prevention facilitators are willing to adapt and continue with the plans. Their desire to keep plans relevant provides evidence that most LGAs take the safer community endorsed compact seriously and want the initiatives to succeed.

5 Conclusion

There were some general concerns that emerged in the data collection process that influenced the interpretation of the findings.

Many respondents who were contacted to fill in the surveys were not confident they could complete the survey satisfactorily. In addition, some felt that they were unable to properly answer the survey, citing that their plan was not focused on 'those types of issues.' One respondent wrote that the survey was "almost totally unrelated to our circumstances", and although the respondent was referring to the previous plan and not the one currently being developed, this should be a concern since the survey's questions were based on the prerequisites outlined by the CPD to obtain funding in the first place. One LGA specified that it did nothing that it proposed, which certainly highlights the CPD's need to have more contact with the funding recipients to at least be aware of where that money is going.

Overall it seems the CPD appears not to require much accountability as to where the money is being distributed. The freedom given to LGAs to decide where they choose to spend the money appears to be effective at promoting innovation. However, it is perhaps prudent to insist on a check after the plans to make ensure the money has been spent on the specified crime prevention initiatives and if not, why this is so.

Key points to make crime prevention plans work

- Enthusiasm and drive in crime prevention officers and key stakeholders;
- Good partnerships;
- Strong leadership;
- Good communication between all players: the community, local councils and with the CPD;
- Measures to counteract problems of remote LGAs;
- Permanent CPOs;
- Sustainable funding and plan initiatives.

Did local crime prevention planning processes have an impact on local crime levels?

Overall the aim of CPPs is to reduce the level of crime in the community for the targeted crimes. All the same, the interviews and surveys revealed that the prevention of crime, whilst desirable and the rudimentary aim of the plan, gradually took a backseat to the stakeholders' desire to forge greater ties within the community. The strengthening of community ties and the establishment of workable relationships between the groups involved in the plan were often mentioned favourably by the respondents.

Since a good relationship between community partners is an essential ingredient in successful plans, and the *Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997* aims to foster community involvement in crime prevention, this is a positive outcome. However, it does not necessarily suggest that the plans will have impacted on local crime levels and fear of crime, which ultimately is the desired goal of a crime prevention plan.

As indicated, from a perception point of view, the majority agreed that the CPP had an impact on the crime levels in their community. Even those in the surveys who noted that the CPP would have had little impact on the crime rate did not appear to consider the plans as a waste of time and resources, with most indicating that a change in direction was needed to improve many problems. In one instance, a respondent mentioned that crime, if not decreased, had at least seemed to level.

Were the indicators used to measure local crime levels appropriate?

According to the survey results, the majority (65.79%) thought that the quality checking at a local level of the outcomes was fairly thorough or higher. As evidenced from the interviews, many found as they progressed with the plan that many of the initiatives proposed were either unable to be measured, or were not viable to implement in the first place.

Overall, the measurement techniques for many initiatives appeared inadequate and need revising. This was recognised by respondents both in the interviews and through the surveys, and needs improvement for most LGAs, although there were notable exceptions. It seemed that some LGAs had trouble determining appropriate measures for initiatives. Due to time constraints, it was not possible to analyse all 49 LGAs with CPD-endorsed plans to see if this was norm for the majority. In addition, when speaking to the plan representatives in each LGA, it appeared that many have not fulfilled the requirement to conduct an evaluation of the completed plan, thus emphasising the weakest area of the crime prevention planning. The evaluation methods also appeared to lack the ability to take into consideration other factors that may have existed at the time of implementation.

Did the initiatives within the plans link well with the identified local crime problems?

From the evidence collected, it would be a safe assumption that the majority of the committees consulted the community on some level in identifying their perceived needs, in conjunction with analysing local crime figures. To confirm this, all the plans contained on the CPD website were checked to see if they had obtained crime statistics for their local area to determine problem areas, in conjunction with community consultation.

As of May 2005, the plans listed on the website showed that almost all had considered local crime statistics. The plans substantiated the assertions made in the surveys and key stakeholder interviews that the local community in each area was extensively consulted in most areas with a safer community compact. This was perhaps the area that the LGAs have the most proficiency in conducting; the only issue seemed to be in translating these concerns into relevant and effective initiatives.

What is the overall quality of the local crime prevention plans?

In order to determine the overall quality of the local CPPs, there must be a general measure of what constitutes quality. Since the plans are multidimensional, so must be the quality measures. Quality in this evaluation was determined by:

- responses made by the respondents in the survey; and
- adherence to the CPD manual requirements for a crime prevention plan.

One of the greatest weaknesses evident in the plans was the lack of adequate records, which became evident when stakeholders and/or implementers left and those responsible for replacing them have little guidance on what has been done, and what needs to be done. This hindered many LGAs in implementing plans on time.

Respondent satisfaction with crime prevention plans

Once the interviewees started talking about the plans, the more enthused they became that a) they could make a difference, and b) even with problems, they were making an impact on the crime levels. Reviewing the findings from the survey and interviews, it is safe to assume that the majority of respondents are satisfied with the crime prevention program. Even respondents who indicated their LGAs plans were not overly satisfactory were determined to improve the design for the next plan. Therefore, even if the quality of the measurement techniques needs to improve, the quality of staff commitment and enthusiasm for making plans work was very high.

Adherence to the CPD manual requirements for a crime prevention plan

This is a difficult aspect to determine. Even when it was admitted that the plans were not fulfilled, it may reflect the respondent's limited knowledge of the plan's inception and therefore the guidelines used because the respondent is relatively new to the CPO position. It seemed that most respondents were not familiar with the services the CPD website provides, though this was perhaps more the fault of the crime prevention facilitators than the CPD.

All the LGAs interviewed for the study appeared to approach designing the CPPs in a similar way, and it is assumed that this would be the same for the other LGAs. The method of developing a community crime prevention plan generally contained the following processes.

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Community consultations</p> | <p>Most LGAs were proactive in garnering public opinion on the proposed plan. This was done by advertising the consultations in the media. The most utilised method of consulting the community appears to be by approaching the potential partners and plan implementers for their input.</p> <p>This includes representatives from domestic violence committees; local business owners (especially licensees due to the high number of alcohol-related offences targeted); youth officers; schools; local community groups (e.g. Rotary, etc.); Indigenous groups; and school visits.</p> <p>There is no prescriptive list of which organisation should be involved in the formation of plans, and there was no clear agency (besides the police) that should be included in consultations in each area. This will be different for each community and each set of crime problems. The most important factor was the enthusiasm and attitude of the people attending to actually want the plans to work.</p> <p>Community surveys were often distributed within an area. This was done by various methods depending on the area, and often more than one method was adopted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. mail-out surveys to all households in the area, or a random sample; 2. putting a survey in the local newspaper for comment; 3. in some cases, going door-to-door to ask the survey questions; and 4. the online e-survey approach appears to be growing in popularity, and advertised in the media. The survey is put on the local government website. <p>Public meetings advertised through the media</p> |
| <p>Crime statistics</p> | <p>Crime statistics were used by almost all LGAs when trying to determine the nature of crime in the area. Most appeared to incorporate this into their committee meetings when determining what should be the target areas</p> |
| <p>Selection of crime prevention key target areas</p> | <p>In general, the key target areas were selected by consensus of the key crime prevention committee members, through the various consultations with the community. It is also evident from the community crime prevention plans that the committee used the crime statistics to substantiate why the target areas were chosen.</p> |
| <p>Selection of the crime prevention initiatives</p> | <p>The initiatives were selected on the basis of the skills of those stakeholders present at the committee and brainstorming what they think would be the best approach.</p> |

* information in this table was gathered from the key stakeholder interviews; the surveys of LGA CPP crime prevention officers and by referring to the endorsed plans' outlines on the AG CPD website.

One problem cited in an interview site was that the proliferation of opportunities for people to 'have their say' was eventually perceived as being tedious, with interviewees noting that most wanted the committee to stop asking what they want done, and to just start doing something. This probably indicates that although it is good to offer different ways for the public to become involved in the plan development, the methods should be coordinated to include the maximum number of people with as little repetition as possible.

Generally there appears to be a good adherence to the manual requirements, though many avenues are open for improvement. This is evidenced in all plans viewed containing the mandatory seven requirements (outcome, output, responsibility, etc.). The only point of contention is the quality of the measurement instruments. This appears to be recognised by the LGAs, with those interviewed intending to apply what they learnt from the success and failures of the plan.

Recommendations

The purpose of this evaluation was to determine the impact of CPPs and the quality of the plans developed, and to use this information to enhance crime prevention planning and implementation in NSW.

A prominent concern raised by respondents was the dearth of information available to CPOs when implementing plans. After reviewing the information and links contained on the CPD's website, it can be confirmed that the CPD does provide evaluation guides, ways to implement plans and access to other CP plans. It is possible that information from the CPD is not as lacking as perceived by respondents, with this view more likely the result of one of the following:

- CPOs are unaware of the services offered on the CPD website;
- CPOs have trouble finding and/or interpreting the information available on the website;
- CPP implementers would prefer face-to-face interaction with a CPD representative to develop the plans rather than obtaining information from the internet; or
- the information was not available at the time of plan implementation.

Create a crime prevention communication link on the CPD website

It is proposed that an improved crime prevention link should be developed to address the need of crime prevention plan implementers to establish contact with other crime prevention facilitators and gather information for their plans. Although the CPD website contains much of what the respondents requested, it perhaps needs improvement to make it more user-friendly. A link to a crime prevention site on the CPD website should be easily accessible and presented in a straightforward manner. From the feedback of those involved in CPP implementation, it is suggested that such a link would be extremely useful if it included the following:

- a contact details list of all the current CPOs and those in charge of crime prevention planning in NSW;
- access to other councils' evaluations of completed plans;
- a site where CPOs can see what councils have targeted what areas in a simplistic form;
- tips and hints supplied by CPOs on how to approach aspects of crime prevention plans;
- a section on ways to maximise the benefits of the plan for Indigenous communities and other minorities; and
- a quick links section that displays relevant links to websites that are related to crime prevention issues (e.g. UN guidelines).

Most of this information should be provided by the CPOs, and should be interactive in the sense that they can add any extra comments to the site with ease in order to update any information or amend comments. There was also an eagerness expressed by police CPOs to offer their initiatives on a website, which would be another valuable source of information.

Funding permanent crime prevention officers

Realistically, no council implementing a CPP will feel they have adequate funds to resource all their desired goals, and the CPD would be unable to supply than to all councils applying for grants under the Safer Community Compact. In reality, with progressively more councils applying for funding, there is the likelihood that funding will be even further stretched than it has been. Both the interviews and surveys responses revealed the widespread view that the position of CPO should be a permanent role. Bearing in mind the special interests of those involved in the interviews and the survey and the problem of resourcing, this suggestion needs to be seriously considered.

The benefits of providing funding for the position would be numerous. As mentioned in one interview (where the CPO is funded part-time), many of the projects were designed for a low-resource base, and therefore were not too reliant on more funding. A permanent officer could not only devote time exclusively to CPP implementation, but also monitor the success of each initiative, including evaluation. A qualified CPO would be able to devote time to investigate innovative ways to approach CP strategies, strengthen partnerships, look for funding from appropriate sources and have the time to adapt plans when circumstances change. A permanent officer would also help offset the impact of staff attrition on the organisations involved in the plan, by keeping appropriate records and having the knowledge to educate new stakeholders and implementers of the plan.

Funding a CPO for each LGA, although ideal, may also not be plausible. An alternative could be to have regional CPOs, responsible for many LGAs in a set area. The position should be full-time and would require the CPO to travel between LGAs to assist as much as possible in plan development and implementation. It is not proposed that the regional CPO be responsible for the plans in each area, as each community should still have a local representative to be in charge, but the regional CPO would offer support and guidance when needed.

At the very least, someone from the NSW CPD should be trained in these skills (such as best practice in crime prevention, evaluation techniques, how to design a plan within the LGAs capacity, etc.), be up-to-date with the latest crime prevention developments, and be easily accessible to any LGA wanting to get a plan endorsed.

Improved guidelines for crime prevention implementation

Many thought the guidelines for implementing CPPs lacked clarity, so changes should be considered to make them more accessible. Although the manual for implementing a CPP is rather straightforward, the length of the document may pose a barrier to those in charge of implementation, since many appear to have this position in conjunction with another job. An abridged version may be required to briefly highlight important points that caused problems in the implementation, such as the sections on:

- not relying on much funding;
- having a designated spokesperson/CPO; and
- allocating money in advance for the plan's evaluation.

The guidelines may also benefit from including suggestions on how to make use of available data in plan development, and methods that could be used to monitor a program throughout its duration.

CPD guidance

A mutual relationship between the CPD and CPOs and/or crime prevention committee representatives in exchanging ideas and information was widely sought by the respondents. There was a clear desire for CPOs to have regular feedback and contact with someone from the CPD, including concrete feedback from the CPD on whether the aims and plans are realistic. Possible ways for CPD to strengthen ties with plan implementers are as follows:

- encourage and promote networking amongst the CPOs and other crime prevention facilitators;
- find a way to nurture potentially beneficial long-term projects;
- encourage the development of leadership skills among CPOs;
- assist the CPOs in developing strategies to get local stakeholders more involved in CP, which will not only benefit the community, but ease the reliance of LGAs on CPD funding;
- sort out discrepancies between the state's aims and the local initiatives that work for an area (as the liquor accord illustrated), instead of potentially beneficial initiatives stalling due to bureaucratic differences;
- educate those wanting to implement plans to prepare for unanticipated delays or outcomes, so that the plans are flexible enough to accommodate any changes; and
- encourage good record keeping. Some respondents in both the interviews and surveys revealed that when they took over the CP duties, they were unaware of what had previously been done. Better records would make it easier for an individual to take on the CP responsibilities if the CPO leaves and there is no one able to explain the responsibilities.

Encouraging more efficient evaluation techniques

Evaluation is a crucial part of initiating new strategies. Without knowing a strategy's impact on the intended target, it is impossible to determine whether the project has:

- had the anticipated effects; or
- been worth implementing in the first place.

The LGAs appeared to struggle when it came time to evaluate their plans. Although some were well prepared for evaluation (as in one area where the evaluation was outsourced to the local university), there needs to be a greater stress placed on the role of evaluation prior to the implementation of strategies. One possible option is to encourage the adoption of results-based accountability.

Results-based accountability

Essentially, results-based accountability makes communities focus on looking at their plans backwards; in other words, the final outcomes are decided first and then help determine the strategies. Appendix 5 outlines the steps that should be used to create the most effective results-based accountability for a community project. In general, the approach requires both the community and the stakeholders implementing initiatives to consistently assess their performance every time they meet regarding matters such as the progress of an initiative, how it could be improved, what has worked, etc. For a more detailed look at results-based accountability, refer to the websites www.raguide.org or www.resultsaccountability.com.

Obviously there are other evaluation methods that can be employed to evaluate local crime prevention plans, but it is imperative that the methods used are consistent and realistic. (See www.aic.gov.au/research/cvp/evaluation.html for some examples.) However, before an approach can be decided on, the plan implementers must be trained in the chosen evaluation technique.

The following should be considered when training LGA representatives in evaluation techniques.

- Commitment and support are needed for those involved with performing evaluations from the local leadership (Broom & Jackson in Newcomer 1997). In the NSW case, this could also refer to the CPD's role in emphasising the importance of evaluation.
- Training should be supplied to all those involved: a method of achieving this is to train a core group from different areas at the CPD or elsewhere. These individuals could then educate a broader group in their area. The initial training should be delivered by experts in performance measurement techniques and evaluations.
- This training should highlight that expectations and plans inevitably evolve, and therefore evaluators in each area should be prepared to deal with changes.
- Emphasise the need to look into ways to evaluate initiatives. This should include how success will be measured. It is important that meaningful measures are investigated and included in the design phase (such as the results-based accountability strategy).
- Performance measurement evaluations must not be 'one size fits all' for the LGAs in NSW. Rather, each evaluation needs to be designed to suit the individual plans within the community context.

Although the output of the initiative is a major indicator of its success, each initiative should not be examined solely on this factor. If this was the case, the reasons behind the success (or failure) may be wrongly attributed to the initiative. For this reason, evaluators should be trained in taking into account events that occurred in the community during the life of the CPP. Other factors that should be considered when evaluating a plan could include:

- environmental factors: situations such as drought can impact on the level of participation in projects and the funds available for implementing a project;
- funding of the initiative: although money may be set aside to implement a project, it may eventuate that the initiative is more expensive than first thought, sponsors pull out, or there were unexpected costs that were not anticipated; and
- human resources: the amount of participation from initiative implementers may have been higher/lower than expected, therefore influencing the potential success of an initiative.

This problem was recognised by Hope et al. (2004) in a study on residential burglary. For the study, they introduced a diary that participants (in the NSW case, this would refer to the individuals responsible for a particular initiative's implementation) would have to fill out what they were doing, how they were doing it, when it was being implemented, the resources put into the initiative, how an initiative was (or was not) successful, what could improve, and what factors influenced the success (or failure) of an initiative. This would be filled out for the duration of the plan, and for every initiative implemented (or planned but not implemented). This could be a useful tool for NSW crime prevention planning for three reasons:

- the LGAs will have a record of activities that can easily be given to anyone taking over an implementer's role, and thus there will be a guide for the new implementer to follow;

-
- the LGA will have a much easier time evaluating the plan and its initiatives if elements of what is to be evaluated have already been recorded, as opposed to retrospectively speculating on what was done over a three-year period; and
 - if comparing crime trend data with the time of implementation of initiatives, the LGA will have a record of any factors that may have influenced any differences in crime statistics.

It needs to be highlighted that plans are going to have unsuccessful elements, and therefore it is acceptable to report findings that may not have been intended outcomes. If the evaluation thoroughly examined what influenced the way an initiative was implemented (as mentioned above), implementers would be able to consider these factors in the future and adapt their plans accordingly. As the interviewees mentioned, the plans constantly evolve, and therefore this process is what the evaluations should reflect.

Making the findings of this evaluation available to the stakeholders

The interviews and surveys generated a lot of interest in the overall evaluation findings, as the majority of those involved had a general enthusiasm in wanting to learn the outcomes and how they can apply any findings to their plan. It is recommended that the findings of this evaluation be made available to the respondents who participate in the evaluation process. The participants in CPPs have their ideas and experiences of the crime prevention plan and are eager to share what they know to improve the situation, and would like to be aware of any areas where they feel they can better their own plans and methods.

Overall, the CPPs appeared to have a positive effect on the communities implementing them. The nature of the plans and initiatives chosen make it difficult to measure the impact on crime, thus this is still unknown at this point. However, since the object of the CPPs in Part 4 of the *Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997* stipulates that the CPPs are to work towards building community involvement in crime prevention activities (section 30) the safer community compacts so far have assisted in promoting this goal.

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Appendix 1

Example of initiatives proposed in the Manly crime prevention plan

Alcohol related violence and anti-social behaviour in Manly CBD

Strategy: Safety audits of areas of community concern & hotspots in CBD.

Output: Four community safety audits of CBD at night: Public toilets, transport points & hotspots.

Resources: Report of results including recommendation & actions required within two weeks of audit.

Timing: 1. June 2000, 2. Sept 2000, 3. Jan 2001, 4. May 2001.

Responsibility/partnerships: Manly Community Safety Committee, Crime Prevention Coordinator.

Outcome: Compare results of the four audits for improvements. Improve feelings of safety in CBD at night.

Strategy: Co-ordinate Safety by Design seminar for town planners with (Warringah/Pittwater).

Output: Identify appropriate participants. Plan seminar. Coordinate field work. Evaluate results.

Resources: \$7000 grant received for SHOROC from NSW Health Safe Communities.

Timing: July-March 2001

Responsibility/partnerships: SHOROC, Manly Warringah/Pittwater Mosman Councils Safety Committee, Police Safe Communities Co-ordinator.

Outcome: Local town planners informed on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) concepts. Application of CPTED in DCP work.

Strategy: Improve Council response to complaints from public about safety concerns in public areas, e.g. poor lighting or signage issues.

Output: Problem locations identified by community through precincts and general complaints to be followed up by Council audit.

Resources: Audit to be completed within a week of notification and relevant bodies notified of improvements required.

Timing: Hotspots (as detailed in the profile) first, then as required.

Responsibility/partnerships: Council – Crime Prevention Coordinator; Manly Community Safety Committee; AMC; rangers.

Outcome: Areas perceived as unsafe now considered safe. Recommendations from audit acted upon.

Source: Manly Crime Prevention Plan section 4 www.manly.nsw.gov.au/_Upload/Files/CrimePrevention.pdf

Appendix 2

Example of initiatives proposed in the Taree crime prevention plan

Alcohol and other drugs/Anti-social behaviour

Strategy: Encourage utilisation of accessible structured recreational and development programs and other support services for people who participate in public anti-social behaviour.

Rationale: Much anti-social behaviour stems from groups that loiter in public spaces. Many young people indicated they would utilise a PCYC or other facilities if they could access them. As many other people who gather publicly are perceived to be affected by alcohol and other drugs, promotion of community based support services may also steer people away from public anti-social behaviour.

Action: 4.1 Finalisation of the Police Community Youth Centre Management Plan to include; structured and unstructured recreation programs, development opportunities, a referral point for support services for young people and extended opening hours to promote maximum participation of young people.

Outputs: Implementation of activities program. Purchase of equipment, Promotion of activities. Increased hours of operation

Resources: Premises. Coordinator. Resources for activities, operational costs.

Responsibility: Co-ordinator Police Community Youth Centre, other local youth service providers.

Outcome: Adoption of the recommendations in the Management Plan. Increased number of participants in all programs.

Strategy: Encourage utilisation of accessible structured recreational and development programs and other support services to discourage participation in behaviour that is perceived as anti-social.

Rationale: Much anti-social behaviour stems from groups that loiter in public spaces. Many young people indicated they would utilise a PCYC or other facilities if they could access them. As many other people who gather publicly are perceived to be affected by alcohol and other drugs, promotion of community based support services may also steer people away from public anti-social behaviour.

Action: 4.9 Research school holiday activities for young people.

Outputs: A report with recommendations on school holiday activities. Promotion and implementation of structured youth activities.

Resources: Administration facilities.

Responsibility: Greater Taree Youth Advisory Committee, in association with youth service providers, e.g, Police Community Youth Centre, My Place, Koori Youth Network.

Outcome: Circulation and promotion of activities. Calendars of activities distributed throughout schools and youth organisations. Implementation of report recommendations.

Action: 4.10 Initiate, coordinate and promote Youth Week and other structured youth recreation programs through “Exile” mail out list, “The Guide” TV Guide, and on posters in spaces where young people gather.

Outputs: Distribution of promotional fliers, inclusion in newsletters and in local media

Resources: Administration facilities

Responsibility: Council’s Greater Taree Youth Advisory Committee in association with youth service providers.

Outcome: Wide distribution to young people aged 13-24 years. Increased participation in structured programs.

Action: 4.11 Research provision of transport for young people to attend youth programs.

Outputs: Transport of young people.

Resources: Vehicle and drivers.

Responsibility: Council’s Youth Development Officer and Greater Taree Youth Advisory Committee.

Outcome: Improved access for young people.

Source: Greater Taree City Council. Taree Crime Prevention Plan www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/cpd.nsf/pages/cpplans_taree2.

Appendix 3

Example of initiatives proposed in the Queanbeyan crime prevention plan for violent crime

| Action plans | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Key result area: Violent crime | | | | |
| Aim no. 1: To reduce the level of anti-social behaviour in the Queanbeyan CBD area associated with liquor use. | | | | |
| Strategy | Responsibility | Resources re-quired | What is the output | How do we measure progress and outcomes |
| <p>Trial a security guard service for five months to patrol the CBD area each Friday and Saturday where alcohol-related violent crime and anti-social behaviour is occurring.</p> | <p>Project Manager to coordinate.</p> | <p>Financial resources provided by key stakeholders.</p> | <p>Reduced level of alcohol-related violent crime and anti-social behaviour in the CBD area.</p> <p>A safer environment.</p> | <p>October 2000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of alcohol-related recorded crime incidents occurring in the CBD area from 12.00 midnight to 4.00 am. Compare with same period as 1999 and for the previous six months. |
| <p>Develop a Liquor Consultative Committee to encourage networking and coordinated approaches to crime prevention.</p> | <p>Project Manager</p> | <p>Time.</p> | <p>Formation of a Liquor Consultative Committee.</p> | <p>Formed by October 2001, then ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liquor Consultative Committee well attended on a regular basis. |
| <p>Develop a Liquor Accord</p> | <p>Licencees Police Health Council Other relevant stakeholders (e.g. Taxi Cooperative, RTA).</p> | <p>Time.</p> | <p>A comprehensive, effective Liquor Accord that minimises harm associated with liquor use.</p> | <p>Development of Accord by November 2000. Evaluation is ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level and quality of participation by stakeholders in the development of Accord. Level and quality of consultation by other community representative. Review and evaluation of accord at each Liquor Consultative. |

Source: Queanbeyan and Yarrowlumla crime prevention strategy 2000-2001; Helen Swan, November 2000

Appendix 4

Crime prevention questionnaire sent to LGAs with an AG endorsed crime prevention plan

NSW Community Crime Prevention Evaluation Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. This survey is part of a project that the AIC is undertaking on behalf of the NSW Crime Prevention Division. This project is aimed at improving the implementation of community crime prevention strategies in NSW. Your completing this questionnaire will help us to gather a more comprehensive picture of the experience of developing and implementing local community crime prevention plans over the past five years.

The information you provide through this survey will be kept in complete confidence by the AIC. No individual response or local area will be identified in any way.

INSTRUCTIONS: To select a response, please put an X underneath or beside the corresponding answer. PLEASE DON'T PROVIDE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER PER QUESTION UNLESS YOU ARE SPECIFICALLY ASKED.

Example:

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------|------------|
| The impact of partnerships working on our plan's success has been | Very strong | Fairly strong X | Fairly weak | No effect at all | Don't know |
|---|-------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------|------------|

PART 1: YOUR DETAILS

Please provide some information about yourself and your role in your community's crime prevention plan below. (Remember, the survey is confidential to the AIC.)

1.1 What is your **main** relationship with the plan? (Mark one box)

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Community Crime Prevention officer (or similar) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Council member | <input type="checkbox"/> | Regional Office | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Govt Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | Other govt dept | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Evaluator | <input type="checkbox"/> | Practitioner | <input type="checkbox"/> | Community or non-government sector | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Advisor / Consultant | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) | <input type="text"/> | | |

1.2 How would you describe your **primary** role? (Mark one box)

| | | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| Implementing | <input type="checkbox"/> | Advising | <input type="checkbox"/> | Evaluating | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|

1.3 How would you describe your Local Government Area (LGA)? (Mark one box)

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Metropolitan Developed (Population >100,000) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Regional town/City (population <100,000 but greater than 20,000) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Outer urban (90% population is urban and is on the margin of a developed or regional urban centre) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agricultural | <input type="checkbox"/> | Remote | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

1.4 Which key target areas have your local crime prevention plan identified to address? (Choose 3-4 that most accurately encompass your plan's aims) (Mark multiple boxes)

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Drink Driving | <input type="checkbox"/> | Anti-social behaviour | <input type="checkbox"/> | Alcohol-related offences | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Property Theft | <input type="checkbox"/> | Community Violence | <input type="checkbox"/> | Domestic Violence | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sexual Assault | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fear of Crime | <input type="checkbox"/> | Drug issues | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Youth-related crime | <input type="checkbox"/> | Indigenous concerns | <input type="checkbox"/> | Assaults | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Motor vehicle theft | <input type="checkbox"/> | Intervention strategies for young offenders | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (specify) | <input style="width: 100px; height: 15px;" type="text"/> |

1.5 How much time have you spent working on the Crime Prevention Plan in your area (CPP)? (Tick one box)

| | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 0 – 12 months | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 – 2 years | <input type="checkbox"/> | More than 2 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|

1.6 Were you involved in crime prevention work anywhere else prior to the CPP?

| | | |
|-----|--------------------------|---|
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | (If yes state briefly what area) <input style="width: 300px; height: 15px;" type="text"/> |

If yes, indicate the time you spent on crime prevention in the other area(s)

| | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 0 – 12 months | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 – 2 years | <input type="checkbox"/> | More than 2 years | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|

PART 2: YOUR OPINION ON THE CURRENT STATE OF THE CRIME PREVENTION PLAN TODAY

The following section contains a series of statements that relate to your perception of the current Crime Prevention Plan. Please put an X underneath the answer that best reflects your view on the issue. If you are unsure of the answer or unable to answer it, respond with putting an X in the “don’t know” column. Please only mark one box per answer.

2.1 Key Aims

| | | | | | |
|--|------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|------------|
| 2.1.1 I feel that the crime prevention (CP) aims and objectives were | Very clear | Fairly clear | Not very clear | Not at all clear | Don't know |
| 2.1.2 The understanding of the aims of the plan by all stakeholders has been | Very high | Fairly high | Mixed / patchy | Fairly low | Don't know |
| 2.1.2 The aims have been achieved | Fully | Largely | Partially | Not at all | Don't know |

2.2 Secondary Aims

| | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|------------|
| 2.2.1 In your opinion, the impact of the CP initiatives on crime reduction has generally been | Very strong | Fairly strong | Fairly weak | No effect at all | Don't know |
| 2.2.2 The evidence base being generated will be | Very strong | Fairly strong | Fairly weak | Very weak | Don't know |
| 2.2.3 Crime prevention innovation activities have been | Strongly encouraged | Moderately encouraged | Not encouraged | Discouraged | Don't know |
| 2.2.4 Plan effectiveness will eventually lead to financial savings | In all cases | In most cases | Hardly ever | Never at all | Don't know |

2.3 Implementation

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------|
| 2.3.1 Adequate resources were made available by the council | All of the time | Most of the time | Hardly ever | Never at all | Don't know |
| 2.3.2 Adequate resources were made available by the Attorney General's Crime Prevention division | All of the time | Most of the time | Hardly ever | Never at all | Don't know |
| 2.3.3 The initiatives outlined to address each key target area of the plan's projects were fully implemented | In all cases | In most cases | Hardly ever | Not at all | Don't know |
| 2.3.4 Planned project outputs / activities were completed | Always on time | Mostly on time | Hardly ever on time | Never on time | Don't know |
| 2.3.5 The impact of partnerships working on plan success has been | Very strong | Fairly strong | Fairly weak | No effect at all | Don't know |
| 2.3.6 Availability of suitably experienced and qualified staff was a | Very large constraint | Fairly large constraint | Fairly small constraint | Not a constraint | Don't know |
| 2.3.7 Staff training / development has been | Too much | About right | Inadequate | Never enough | Don't know |
| 2.3.8 Organisation culture has influenced program success | Very strongly | Fairly strongly | Rarely | Not at all | Don't know |

2.4 Communication

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------|
| 2.4.1 Guidance provided from the NSW Attorney General's Crime Prevention Division (CPD) has been | Very relevant | Fairly relevant | Not very relevant | Not at all relevant | Don't know |
| 2.4.2 Communication from the CPD to local projects has been | Very clear | Fairly clear | Not very clear | Not at all clear | Don't know |
| 2.4.3 Communication between local crime prevention committee members has been | Very clear | Fairly clear | Not very clear | Not at all clear | Don't know |
| 2.4.4 Local feedback has been taken into account by the local crime prevention committee | All of the time | Some of the time | Rarely | Not at all | Don't know |

2.5 Local work issues

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------|
| 2.5.1 Staff commitment and motivation at a local level has been | Very high | Fairly high | Mixed / patchy | Fairly low | Don't know |
| 2.5.2 Project management skills at a local level have been | Very strong | Fairly strong | Mixed / patchy | Fairly weak | Don't know |
| 2.5.3 Quality checking at a local level has been generally | Very thorough | Fairly thorough | Not very thorough | Not at all thorough | Don't know |
| 2.5.4 Relationships between staff at a local level have been | Very good | Fairly good | Mixed | Fairly poor | Don't know |
| 2.5.5 The culture of local partnerships has been orientated towards | Power | Roles | Tasks | Individuals | Don't know |
| 2.5.6 When there were differences of opinion between community representatives regarding CP initiatives, these were resolved | All of the time | Some of the time | Rarely | Not at all | Don't know |

PART 3: NEXT STEPS

The following section asks you to identify any changes that are needed to improve the implementation of crime prevention plan for the future. Please mark the response that best fits your assessment of each issue in your community crime prevention plan with an X. Please select only one answer per question.

| Factor | Needs to change completely | Has to change quite a lot | Need to change about 50% | Needs only minor changes | Does not need to change |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 3.1 More realistic strategy with clear objectives | | | | | |
| 3.2 Receiving a more appropriate level of funding | | | | | |
| 3.3 Provision of clearer guidance about best practise | | | | | |
| 3.4 Being more innovative and willing to take risks | | | | | |
| 3.5 Better co-operation between partnerships | | | | | |
| 3.6 Better and clearer rules and procedures | | | | | |
| 3.7 More local input into decisions affecting the plan | | | | | |
| 3.8 Better CPD, council and local communication | | | | | |
| 3.9 Higher level of commitment to program objectives | | | | | |
| 3.10 Higher level of staff training and skills | | | | | |
| 3.11 Better monitoring from the CPD | | | | | |
| 3.12 More dynamic and inspirational leadership | | | | | |
| 3.13 Improved work environment and facilities | | | | | |

PART FOUR: YOUR OPINION

This part of the questionnaire allows you to offer your opinion on the success of different aspects of the crime prevention plan. Supporting statements should be limited to 3-4 sentences, or in dot point format. Any examples to illustrate your views would be appreciated.

Give comments to support your answer

| | |
|--|------------|
| 4.1 In your opinion, has the crime prevention plan (CPP) increased the crime prevention evidence base? | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.2 Do you feel that the CPP addressed the main crime issues identified in the community? | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 4.3 Has the plan taken into consideration the needs of the different populations such as: | |
| 4.3.1 Indigenous | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.3.2 Women | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.3.3 Youth | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.3.4 Elderly | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.3.5 People from non-English speaking backgrounds | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.3.6 Other (eg, people with disabilities, homosexual lifestyles) | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.4 Do you feel that the CPP has stimulated innovation in how crime prevention work is done your area? | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.4 Have strategic partnerships been necessary to achieve the CPP goals? | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.6 Have the partnership members been appropriate? | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.7 Has implementation timing been sensible? | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.8 If no, how could this improve? | |
| 4.9 Have the right type of skills and training been available? | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.10 Has a decentralised approach been adopted for encouraging innovation? | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.11 Have resources been available at the right time for CPP implementation? | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |
| 4.12 Has funding from other sources been important to your plan's operation? | Yes |
| | No |
| | Don't know |

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| 4.13 If the plan was to start again, what key areas would you like to see improved? | List key areas |
| 4.14 What have been the major obstacles and barriers to plan delivery? | List major obstacles |
| 4.15 How could these obstacles be avoided / overcome or better managed? | |
| 4.16 Do you have any further comments or observations? | |

Thank you once again for completing this questionnaire. Please return the form in one of the following ways:

1. Via mail at the following address:

Jessica Anderson
 Australian Institute of Criminology
 GPO Box 2944
 Canberra ACT 2601

2. Via email to Jessica.anderson@aic.gov.au
3. Via fax to Jessica Anderson on 02 6260 9201

Please return the survey form by 5pm Friday 18th March 2005.

Any questions or enquiries about the questionnaire can be forwarded the above email address, or call Jessica on 02 6262 9223.

Appendix 5

Results-based accountability: steps from talk to action

These steps are taken from www.raguide.org.

The steps from talk to action

The community step-by-step process starts by bringing together a group of partners who wish to make things better. This group then uses the following thinking process:

1. What are the quality of life conditions (results) that we want for our community and the children and families who live here?
2. What would these conditions look like if we could see, feel and experience them?
3. How can we measure if these conditions exist or not (indicators)? Are the measures getting better or worse? Where are we heading if we just keep doing what we keep doing what we are doing now?
4. Why are these conditions getting better or worse?
5. What are the partners that have a potential role to play in doing better?
6. What works to do better? What can we do that is no-cost or low cost in addition to things that cost money?
7. What do we, individually and as a group, propose to actually do?

The program step-by-step process starts with managers who care about the quality of their services. The managers, individually or in groups use the following thinking process:

1. Who are our customers?
2. How can we measure if our customers are better off (customer results)?
3. How can we measure if we are delivering services well?
4. How are we doing on the most important of these measures?
5. Who are the partners that have a potential role to play in doing better?
6. What works to do better, including no-cost and low-cost ideas?
7. What do we propose to actually do?

Repeat the steps each time you want meet. The steps can be done in any order as long as you do them all.

Appendix 6

Interview format for key stakeholder interviews

General Questions

IMPLEMENTATION

A: Your Role and Aims

1. Briefly describe your role and your organisation/group's role in the CP plan.
2. Were you involved in the plan's development? If so:
 - Briefly explain what that role was.
 - In your opinion, how satisfactory was the planning and development process?
3. Did you have responsibility for any particular initiatives or projects under the plan? If so:
 - What were the goals of your particular project?
 - Do you feel that the aims and objectives of your project were fulfilled at the completion of the designated timeframe? Why/why not? And to what extent?
4. In your opinion, were there any particular problems in implementing the overall range of initiatives set out in the plan (such as any internal/external factors that interfered; lack of communication between committee and community, etc)?
5. Do you think adequate resources were provided when required to implement the initiatives? If not, how did that affect the implementation of the plan?

B: Guidelines and support for developing plans

1. Guidelines for developing and setting up local crime prevention plans were provided by the NSW CPD. To what extent were these guidelines:
 - a) Used in the establishment of this plan (why/why not)
 - b) Relevant in practical terms?
 - c) Did the recommendation to focus on 2-3 key areas work for you?
2. Other guidelines for developing and implementing local crime prevention plans are available from a number of different locations (e.g. the UN and UK, and other Australian states). To what extent did you make reference to these during the development phase of your plan or project?
3. Do you have any comment on the adequacy and appropriateness of the information and type of support that the AG CPD provided to you:
 - During the development phase of your plan
 - During implementation; and
 - Towards the end?
4. Do you have any suggestions for how it might be improved into the future?
5. Do you see any flaws in the approach you took to developing your local CP plan that could be addressed in future CP planning?

C: Role of Council

1. How would you describe the council's role in the implementation of the plan (such as support for your group's initiative, information given, etc)?
2. In what ways do you think that it could have been improved?
3. What elements of council's involvement was vital for the process (i.e. could not have occurred without their involvement)?

D: Teamwork/Partnerships

1. CP plans require partnerships with other groups and organisations. We would like to hear about your experience in working in a partnership with other groups on this project.
 - How did the partnership arrangements work during the design stages of the plan?
 - Do you feel the partnership approach was successful?
 - What were the strengths/weaknesses of this approach?
 - Are there any particular incidences which demonstrate the point?
2. Were there any situations where conflicts emerged?
3. How were these resolved if there was a divergence between groups/partnerships in making decisions?
4. What suggestions would you make to avoid conflicts or the best way to approach differences in the future (such as determining the key target areas, responsibility etc)? Please offer any illustrations/examples.

E: Outcomes

1. Measurement

- How did you determine what would be the best measure of the success of each individual initiative?
- Do you feel that the outcome measures have accurately measured the initiative?
- On reflection, was the initiative appropriate for the target behaviour/activity?

2. The Impact on Crime and the Community

- What are your perceptions regarding the CP impact on crime?
- Just how realistic were the aims that the plan hoped to achieve?
- Community concerns about certain crimes played a key factor in designing your plan. Please tell us your opinion of whether you feel that community members perceive themselves as being safer since the plan was initiated?
- Were the key target areas selected adequately addressed (may mention any particular comment from the community or individuals to illustrate)?

3. Overall

- Were there any unexpected outcomes to eventuate from this plan?
- Overall, describe your thoughts on the advantages and disadvantages on the CP implemented.
- If you were to start on a new CP project, what changes, if any, would you consider implementing to improve plan, and are there any other services that should be offered to help make a more effective plan?

General comments