

TAYSIDE JOINT POLICE BOARD

29 January 2001

Report by the Chief Constable No. PB 5/2001

SUBJECT: CRIME HIGHLIGHT REPORT

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| Abstract: This report details crime issues affecting Tayside Police. |
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1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Board note the position with regard to crime in Tayside

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Reference is made to Paragraph 7 Minute of Meeting of Tayside Joint Police Board of 13 November 2000 wherein the Board noted Report PB 40/2000 by the Chief Constable.

3. CURRENT POSITION

3.1 Violent Crime

Between October – December 2000 Operation Safer Scotland was run as a nationwide initiative targeting violent crime in the community.

In Tayside reported crimes in the categories Murder, Attempted Murder, Serious Assault and Robbery/Assault with intent to Rob all declined.

Within the Operation Safer Scotland timescale there was one murder compared with three the previous year. Attempted murders fell from 19 to 7 and Serious Assaults fell from 60 to 53. Minor Assaults also fell by over a quarter.

Robberies remained at approximately the same level however analysis shows that the percentage of robberies taking place in commercial premises declined from 23.8% to just under 8%.

In conjunction with the Safer Scotland Operation, Tayside Police ran Operation Combat, the ongoing initiative targeting knives and offensive weapons. The combination of the two campaigns reaped rewards as figures for offensive weapons declined. Operation Combat is designed to tackle the culture of knife carrying and it is critical that the public continue to support the aims of the Operation as the results of weapons attacks can have a devastating effect on victims, their families and the community. The dangers of carrying weapons were highlighted in August when a young man was murdered after two teenagers assaulted and stabbed him. The ensuing court case resulted in one of the youths being sentenced to life imprisonment for murder. Analysis shows that during the period of the Safer Scotland initiative more young people in the age group 12–19 were discovered in possession of knives or other offensive weapons. The figures for possessing knives rose from 31.25% to 72% and for offensive weapons the figure rose from 38.8% to 49.5%.

The dramatic increases in the figures can be partially attributed to increased stop and search tactics used by the Police during the initiative.

This tactic is aimed at discovering individuals in possession of weapons as well as increasing the fear of detection among weapon carriers and it is interesting to note that during this period fewer males over 16 years of age were reported for carrying offensive weapons but more females were reported for the same crime.

Tayside Police was fully supportive and committed to Operation Safer Scotland and following evaluation, were second only to Strathclyde Police in delivering the range of activities undertaken during the Operation. Considering the size and resources available to the Force this is a remarkable and positive commitment by the Officers and Support Staff.

3.2 **Drugs**

Seizures of class A drugs have increased dramatically compared with 1999.

Seizures of Heroin actually fell from 24 to 17 but amounts seized rose from 113.63 grams to 1190.63 grams.

Seizures of Cocaine increased from 4 in 1999 to 13 in 2000 resulting in a rise from 1.87 grams to 1956.6 grams.

Seizures of Ecstasy rose from 45 to 57 and again the increase in the number of tablets recovered was spectacular, going from 801 tablets in 1999 to 10,212 tablets in 2000.

Class B drugs such as Cannabis Resin and Amphetamine saw fewer cases but much greater amounts being recovered.

This increase in the amount of drugs can be attributed to a significant increase in intelligence on drug dealers, which in turn has led to more efficient targeting of these individuals by the Police.

The increases in the amounts of Heroin and Cocaine seized are reflective of the national trend and there should be no doubt that the increased availability of Heroin and Cocaine in Tayside is a real cause for concern.

The Scottish Drugs Enforcement Agency (SDEA) continues to carry out operations Tayside and works closely alongside the Tayside Drugs Branch and the Drugs Enforcement Unit to support and carry out joint operations within the Force area.

3.3 **Vehicle Crime**

The number of stolen vehicles and other vehicle related crime has increased compared to the same period last year and this is an issue which is being addressed by the Force. This year to the end of December, 1222 vehicles were stolen, there were 366 attempts to steal vehicles and there were 490 thefts from motor vehicles.

A large proportion of these crimes are committed by a minority of juvenile offenders who continue to re-offend even after they have been caught and charged. Crime pattern analysis, targeted operations and the extensive use of DNA and fingerprint techniques are being deployed to identify those responsible.

3.4 National Intelligence Model

Tayside Police have been selected as a pilot Force for the implementation of the National Intelligence Model which is a process for dealing with community problems and crime through a structured intelligence and information gathering process to ensure that the Police have the best information available and are able to target areas of concern. This is an ongoing pilot and depends heavily on information and intelligence being received from members of the public.

3.5 Crime Recording Review

The introduction of the National Intelligence Model along with the impact on Police Forces from other areas such as the Lawrence Enquiry mean that effective systems must be established to ensure that as much information as possible within Police Systems is available for examination and analysis. Tayside Police are undertaking a fundamental review of their recording systems to ensure that the highest standards are in place in order that effective analysis of crime and disorder offences can be carried out.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 The Clerk and the Treasurer have been consulted in the preparation of this report

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Recent developments in technology (e.g. DNA identifications, CCTV and the increase in intelligence) have greatly assisted in tackling crime within Tayside and reflects the advantages of analysing and developing intelligence from all sources to focus on those committing crime in the area.

The disappointing figures for vehicle related crime reflect a problem within Tayside and a number of initiatives are being planned and resources deployed to reverse this trend.

This year to date there have been nine deaths which are considered to be drug related and the seriousness and dangers as a result of the increased availability of Heroin and Cocaine in Tayside cannot be over-emphasised.

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30 December 2010

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.