

TAYSIDE JOINT POLICE BOARD

14 May 2001

Report by the Chief Constable No. PB 17/2001

**SUBJECT: TAYSIDE POLICE HIGHLIGHT REPORT
PERIOD 1 FEBRUARY – 20 APRIL 2001**

<p>Abstract: This report provides an update on Crime Initiatives and includes a selection of incidents which have taken place in the force area together with various comments received from members of the public.</p>

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 The Board is requested to note the terms of the report for its information.

2. CRIME HIGHLIGHTS

Drugs

In January 2001 Operation Jaguar, an intelligence led drugs operation which targeted individuals involved in the supply of controlled drugs was undertaken across the Force. The objective was to disrupt the supply of controlled drugs and to provide intelligence on persons involved within the drug culture, the way they conduct their criminal business and how these activities were financed.

The Operation was the largest anti-drugs operation ever mounted by Tayside Police with over 100 uniform and specialist officers taking part. 36 houses in Dundee, Angus and Perthshire were raided, 44 suspected drug dealers were arrested and over £200,000 of controlled drugs recovered.

Operation Jaguar will continue throughout the year and a number of significant drug recoveries and arrests have already taken place since the commencement of the Operation in January.

Analysis of drugs intelligence reports submitted highlighted the growing problems of Heroin and Cocaine abuse in the Tayside area. Comparisons with the equivalent quarter the previous year underlined the dramatic increase, not only in intelligence submissions, but also in seizures for the two drugs.

Intelligence reports relating to heroin and cocaine abuse and / or dealing increased by approximately 300%.

Heroin seizures rose from 38 to 58 (489 grams to 1133 grams) in 2000/01 compared to the previous year. Seizures of cocaine rose from 11 to 35 (119 grams to 2068 grams) in 2000/01 compared to the previous year.

These increases reflect national trends.

Vehicle Crime

Theft of motor vehicles, including take and drive away offences, have risen by 20% which represents an increase of 279 crimes from the previous year. The detection rate has remained fairly constant.

Operation Valiant is the Force's response to vehicle crime in Tayside and was launched on 13 April 2001. The objective is to reduce vehicle crime through enforcement, education and crime prevention techniques and a number of innovative and imaginative ideas have been planned to tackle this area of concern for the Force.

Housebreaking

Housebreakings in general have declined by 14.5% whilst the percentage detection rate has remained fairly constant. This represents a reduction of some 373 crimes.

Based on the quarterly analysis (January to March 2001) domestic Housebreakings in Tayside fell compared with the equivalent time period the previous year although break ins to commercial premises increased slightly. Domestic Housebreakings decreased in every division but the increase in commercial premises is mainly centred within Central Division.

Whilst recognising the general downward trend, Tayside Police continue to acknowledge the impact such crimes can have on victims and the community and will in the near future launch an initiative to combat this form of criminality. The initiative will be timed to coincide with identified annual trends in an intelligence led fashion.

Violent Crime

Tayside Police have been successful in obtaining Scottish Executive Domestic Abuse Development Fund funding of £81,400 to finance posts in Central and Western Divisions to provide Barnardos domestic abuse workers to work alongside Divisional Domestic Abuse Officers and to provide comprehensive support for victims of domestic abuse and their families. A similarly funded post is already in place in Eastern Division and is providing a significantly enhanced service to victims and their families.

The most significant decreases in violent crime occurred in respect of Child Cruelty / Neglect which has fallen by 45.5% - 69 crimes were reported this year compared to 120 during 1999/2000. This decrease highlights the significant impact of the Domestic Violence Liaison Officers and the Family Protection Units.

Attempted Murders and Serious Assaults have fallen by 26.39% (19) and 15.79% (39) respectively.

Incidences of Carrying of Knives have reduced by 24.55% and Offensive Weapons have also decreased by 8.79%. These decreases highlight the value of high profile operations such as Operation Combat which continues to tackle weapons carriers

Overall Crime

The end of year crime statistics have been collated and Tayside Police once again have shown a reduction in overall crime of almost 7%. Crimes of violence have decreased by 14% and crimes against property by 9.4%. The greatest increase is in vehicle crime and along with drugs trafficking and housebreaking these are the crime priorities for the Force

A review of the crime recording methodology within the Force has been undertaken as a consequence of the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry and HMCIC reports and the recommendations will be implemented during 2001/2. Robust recording methods and monitoring of crime and disorder are essential to ensure that an accurate picture is established for Divisions and communities in order to deploy appropriate resources to deal with these issues.

3. INCIDENTS DURING PERIOD 1 FEBRUARY – 20 APRIL 2001

The following is an example of incidents which have taken place in the force area during the period 1 February to 20 April 2001.

Petrol Bombs – Male on a bicycle threw 3 or 4 petrol bombs at a house and also a car parked outside. Minor scorching to house and vehicle. Warrant Information submitted for apprehension of 1 male.

Serious Assault – Two visitors to the area were assaulted by two local males in Marketgait, Dundee. Victims were struck over the head with a bottle. Two males were arrested.

Vehicle Followed – Followed motor car which failed to stop for police in Central Division. Contact maintained with the vehicle for about a mile before the suspect vehicle mounted a roundabout and the two occupants made off. Both detained following a search and driver charged with drink driving and several outstanding warrants.

Sudden Death – Sudden death of young man. Deceased was a known drug abuser and appeared to have died rapidly after having self-injected an unknown substance.

Vehicle Followed – Followed a motor car which failed to stop for police in Central Division. Contact maintained with vehicle by Mobile Support Unit before being called off by the Duty Officer due to the high speeds involved and the volume of vehicular traffic and pedestrian accident in the area. Vehicle found abandoned.

Fatal Road Traffic Accident – Occurred in Western Division when a northbound motor van collided with a southbound Renault motor car. Both drivers were fatally injured.

Notable Drugs Seizure – Following the receipt of information, a search under warrant was conducted at a house in Central Division by officers from the Drugs Branch and Drugs Enforcement Unit. As a result the following was recovered; 91 grams of Cannabis Resin with an illicit value of £435, 193 grams of Amphetamine with an illicit value of £4,150 and 504 grams of Cocaine with an illicit value of £40,240. Total illicit value £44,825. The occupier of the house was arrested and

charged with being concerned in the supply of the aforementioned drugs.

Firearms Incident – A male was observed on CCTV in possession of a semi-automatic pistol. Firearms trained personnel assembled and suspect later arrested. Recovery of imitation firearm by CID later same day.

Fire – Serious outbreak of fire at Morgan Academy, Forfar Road, Dundee. Fire fighters with breathing apparatus were forced to withdraw from the school as the wind caused rapid fire spread. The flames engulfed the school, destroying it in the process. The cause of the fire has not yet been established.

Use of CS Spray – In Eastern Division in the course of the arrest of a 26 year old male during a street disturbance. Charged with breach of the peace, police assault, resist arrest Incident captured on CCTV.

Injury to Police Officer – Two males arrested for theft in Eastern Division. During the arrest the officer was struck on the face causing retinal damage via a contact lens and is to attend Ninewells Hospital to undergo tests. Both males in custody for a variety of offences including police assault and resist arrest.

Concern for Missing Person – Concern for a man suffering from depression who walked off into hills. Police and civilian search teams deployed and RAF helicopter mobilised. Male traced and conveyed to hospital for psychiatric assessment. Helicopter recalled 10 minutes from scene.

Recovery of a Body – Body recovered from the Tay near Perth. Police boat launched, body retrieved and identified from personal effects.

Bomb Hoax – BT Exchange Operator received a call from a local sounding male who told her there was a bomb on the premises. All checks carried out but it appears that this has been a hoax call.

4. **SELECTION OF COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC DURING THE PERIOD 1 FEBRUARY TO 1 APRIL 2001**

“Both these men did a difficult job exceptionally well and their help and support was greatly appreciated by our family.”

“Real Knights of the Road, gallant and courteous, we cannot thank them enough - as Chief Constable you must be very proud of these men.”

"I sought help at Police Headquarters in Perth and we were given most excellent assistance by a young male and a young female officer, both of whom were kind, patient and understanding - they were a great credit to your force."

"The officer was only carrying out the duties of a police officer but his consideration and compassion to us made a difficult situation just a bit easier."

"It must be very difficult upholding the law without offending some people and this incident, although minor, gives a pointer to how your police force deals with the general public and I am most grateful it was handled by such young and caring police men and women."

"All my family were deeply impressed by the compassion, understanding and dedication shown by all the officers involved with our case."

"In these days when so much criticism is levelled it is pleasant for us to record our appreciation for his efforts."

"I would ask that you convey my thanks and appreciation for the professional and friendly manner in which your officers dealt with the incident."

"It is so pleasant to be able to say a genuine "thank you" to someone in the present days of bad service and lack of courtesy."

"I would just like to express our thanks to the operator who answered the call, who was extremely calm and efficient as were the police officers who arrived, particularly a police lady who was very kind, friendly and reassuring."

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