



**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT MAJOR DIVISION**

**Observatory of Best Police Practices**

# **POLICE INTERVENTION: SOLUTION TO A ROAD SAFETY PROBLEM**

**ANCUD 1ST POLICE UNIT**

**CAPTAIN JUAN MUÑOZ**

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**GOBIERNO DE CHILE**  
SUBSECRETARÍA DE CARABINEROS



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT MAJOR DIVISION

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## **SUMMARY:**

1) **Scanning:** In 2008, Ancud 1st Police Unit was alerted that in the commune urban road, clandestine street races were taking place. The community began to express concern about these races due to the risk of serious traffic accidents and because they generated annoying noises and there was also alcohol consumption. *Carabineros* interviewed formal and informal organizations in the commune and also commune residents on an individual basis.

2) **Analysis:** With collected data, *Carabineros* established that the problem was happening for more than a year and that in recent times it was occurring with a higher frequency. The perpetrators were identified as a group named, "Ankud Tunning". Members of the car club that were performing these races were also interviewed by *Carabineros* and they noted that as there were no suitable spaces for this type of racing they carried them out on the public roads. Under this problem, the Chief Officer could detect that these youngsters were not aware of the risks of driving at high speed without considering corresponding precautions to avoid accidents.

3) **Response:** At first, the Chief Officer designed an intervention strategy which fined people that drove at high speed; nevertheless the problem did not stop.

Later on, with the objective of providing an effective solution to this problem, the chief officer decided to look for a suitable place to perform these car races, and he arranged with Air Club to use their fields. Additionally, he coordinated with the municipal authorities to work together with *Carabineros*, the car club, Chilean Security Association and the air club to coordinate these races.



Finally, it was considered necessary to inform and educate young people of the Ankud Tuning Car Club about the dangers involved when carrying out these types of illegal races in places not authorized and unfit for these events, especially, among others, the legal consequences, fines, violations to law and arrests. This not to mention the physical injuries that drivers might suffer that range from minor to serious and including death.

4) **Assessment:** To date there have been no more illegal races; the air club accepted to allow from May this year that these car races took place once a month in their airfields and the head officer has already held eight educational workshops on traffic accidents to the members of the Ankud Tuning Car Club.



## **DESCRIPTION**

### **1.- CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM DEVELOPMENT:**

#### **1.1 Characteristics of Ancud Commune**

Ancud Commune is located to the north of Isla Grande de Chiloé, in the X Region, Los Lagos. This commune holds 3,72% of the total population of the region and its current population is of 41.661 people, of which a 33,18% corresponds to a rural population and a 66,82% to the urban population.

Ancud architecture is characteristic and it is similar to that of the rest of the island. It has old buildings and in general the urban design does not correspond to the traditional order due to the topographic irregularities of the terrain. The geographical peculiarities of Ancud are highlighted by its luxurious forests, channels, islands and by the Calbuco and Osorno volcanoes. Among its tourist attractions we can point out San Antonio Fort, Arena Gruesa Resort, Corona Lighthouse, Quetalmahue Bay and the Viewpoint of Hualhuén Hill.

Despite the natural attractions of this commune, there is almost no infrastructure to support recreation and amusement activities for youth and for the citizens in general. This might be a factor contributing to the emergence of illegal car races conducted mainly by youth.

These races were conducted by the members of the Tuning Ankud Car Club who used public roads very late at night for these competitions.

The phenomenon of clandestine car races has in recent years been transformed into a highly dangerous road safety problem at the national level,



a problem that is also present in a wide number of communities throughout the country. Given the unpredictable nature of these activities intervening by police force was difficult.

One of the duties of *Carabineros de Chile* is to supervise and monitor drivers travelling at excessive speed, according to their legal and institutional powers<sup>1</sup>.

National statistics on traffic accidents indicate that in most cases the fault is excessive speed and that collision is the most frequent reason.

The trend of the past two years shows that traffic accidents have increased considerably.

## **1.2.- Characteristics of perpetrators**

In this case, the offenders (Traffic Law), are the members of the Tuning Ankud Car Club. This group was organized on March 2008 and it obtained legal status, therefore it is a formal organization. Currently, it is formed by 28 partners, most of them young people and all of them are male residents of the Ancud commune. These partners are divided into passive and active ones. The first of them are those on a probationary period of three months, after which, the directive members of the club decide whether they are formally incorporated as active partners. It is not a requirement to be car owners and sometimes, during their evaluation period they participate in some of the decisions of the organization. Active partners are formally ascribed to the organization and they participate in all decision making. A high percentage of these active members have their own cars. These cars are specially modified

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<sup>1</sup> Annex N° 1, Table of Traffic Accidents, according to type and consequences, registered at national level.. Source: "Service Department of Traffic and Highways. Carabineros de Chile", 2009.



for high speed car races such as: tinted windows, exhaust pipe free, Hi-Fi stereo systems, etc.

This group has organized in the commune of Ancud two public presentations of their cars, in order to show them the special features of their cars and also as a recreational activity.

However, members of this group also met in different public places of the city (squares, civic center of the city, in the neighborhoods, etc), very late at night in order to race illegally in the public roads of the commune, thus generating a problem of road safety for pedestrians and for other car drivers; at the same time they also generated annoying noises for the neighbors because these car races were made with their car radios at very loud volumes.

## **1.2 Characteristics of the victim**

To identify or define who the **direct victims**<sup>2</sup> of this problem are, it can be established that these are the residents of Ancud commune that live in urban sectors, that is, approximately 28,000 people. Likewise, this population constitutes the universe of **indirect victims**.

In this regard, it is necessary to point out that it cannot be specified exactly the exact number of people directly affected because:

- First, these clandestine car races are held in different locations, and
- Second, there are no formal complaints or declarations of these races.

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<sup>2</sup> Although our legal body defines the victim as the person offended or aggrieved by the commission of any crime (Art.8 C.P.P.), there is a consensus among professionals of this area that together with the person directly affected are those persons that form part of victim's close social environment that are also affected by this fact, These persons are the so called indirect victims.



For the foregoing reasons, in this issue, it has been defined that the victims (direct and indirect) are the residents of Ancud commune that live in the urban area. With respect to the above, it is worthwhile mentioning that in the National Survey of Urban Public Safety 2008, ENUSC, it is noted that Ancud commune has one of the highest rates of lack of complaints, a 84.23% and with respect to the victimization of its population, it presents a 30.45% of the total survey.

## **2.- DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM**

This situation began to generate disturbances among the citizens and they informally and anonymously made phone calls to *Carabineros de Chile*, and they requested the intervention and help of the police to solve this problem, since no other institution or community organization tackled this problem.

With the information given by the community residents, Captain Juan Muñoz, chief officer of the 1<sup>st</sup> Police Unit established that the problems were generated by road safety. In the performance of these car races the lives of the racers were in danger as well as third party drivers who occasionally were driving in those areas. The infrastructure of these roadways was not fit for these types of competitions.

Identified problems were:

- **Infringement to traffic law**, specifically speeding.
- The **use of public roads of the commune** for illegal car races
- **Noise nuisance** caused by vehicles involved in these illegal races.





Additionally, as a result of this situation, citizens began to stigmatize all members of the Tuning Ankud Car Club, which further exacerbated the problems and resident's frustration.

### **3.- POLICE INTERVENTION**

In this context *Carabineros* decided, at first, to solve the speeding problem. The selection of this problem is based on the legal and institutional powers of *Carabineros de Chile*, to arrest and fine those who exceed speed limits. At the same time they also based this decision on their institutional role<sup>3</sup>, especially the preventive efforts and the duties developed based on the operational powers of *Carabineros de Chile*<sup>4</sup>. In this case, the area selected was the Police Prevention, where the objective is to give effect to law provisions.

This intervention was intended to stop car racing and it was performed each time the police received calls from concerned neighbors, attending places where the races were conducted in order to dissuade the members of the Tuning Ankud Car Club and to fine drivers travelling at excessive speed.

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<sup>3</sup> The Mission of *Carabineros de Chile* identifies seven roles that police officers must fulfil. These are: **Preventive**: Work carried out by the Institution through its presence in the community, protecting property and people's lives, **Control of Public Order**: activities performed to restore disturbed public order, **Educational**: activities with the community in order to create in people a willingness to comply adequately with the Constitution and laws, **Public Convenience**: actions in which the Institution provides collaboration and information of general practical interest and utility, **Social Solidarity**: activities undertaken to benefit the national community, in emergencies such as fires, floods and theft., **National Integration**: This feature aims to ensure national sovereignty. **Investigative**: This is done to comply with the work requested by the Public Ministry and the Judiciary bodies, in order to clarify criminal acts.

<sup>4</sup> *Carabineros de Chile* has four distinct areas of operation, one of which is **Crime Prevention**, this action has three dimensions: a) Social Prevention, designed to analyze the social protection and risk, b) Situational Prevention, this is intended to anticipate and reduce violent or criminal acts, and c) Police Prevention, which seeks to give effect to the provisions of law.



The measures taken, at first, did not solve the problem, since the races were held in secret locations and times, making it difficult to be controlled by the police and so they could only intervene when those affected by these events notified the police. In this sense, young people involved in illegal racing continued breaking the law and concerned residents as well as the community in general had a latent fear of becoming victims of a traffic accident.

In this regard, Captain Juan Muñoz of the 1st Police Unit of Ancud, decided in February this year, to generate **a new strategy of police intervention** to solve the problem of illegal racing.

To achieve the proposed objective, he made necessary coordinations with various official organizations of the commune, such as neighborhood associations, the "Asociación Chilena de Seguridad", the Municipality of Ancud, among others. Meetings were held with each one of them to evaluate how they could cooperate in finding a solution to this problem and individual interviews were conducted in parallel with the neighbors. All these interventions aimed to get a wider and better background on this issue.

In addition, it was considered necessary to hold meetings with the members of the Tuning Ankud Car Club to better understand the objectives of this organization.

With all the information gathered by *Carabineros de Chile*, the following diagnosis was developed:

- Races took place during the night and in different locations and people directly affected often did not process formal complaints with the police. They only made informal phone calls to make their claims.
- The discomfort of the community was based on two situations; the first one was the fear of being a victim of a traffic accident and the second one was the annoyance generated by the high noises produced by the



race cars.

- The fundamental problem was because the Tuning Ankud Car Club, a formal and legal organization did not have a physical space in which to carry out safe racing cars, and as a result of this they used the community public roads to perform their competitions.
- The members of the Tuning Ankud Car Club, mostly young people, did not view or consider the risks involved in being possible victims of a traffic accident or the fact that others could also be injured during this dangerous illegal races.

Faced with this situation, Captain Muñoz decided to seek a new solution to the problem by identifying two intervention areas, each with a specific objective:

### **Management Area**

The **aim** of this area is to prevent illegal races from taking place in public locations. To achieve this objective, Captain Muñoz decided to manage through the municipality and other communal organizations the creation of an adequate physical space, that is, a place with all necessary and corresponding security and safety measures to carry out these races and to invite the citizens to become spectators.

To this end, he coordinated and had a meeting with the president of the air club of the commune, Mr. M.Sparza, to request the authorization of this organization to provide a physical space within Pupelde Aerodrome to carry out these car races without affecting the public order of the community. It is necessary to explain that this air club is the only communal organization that has a physical space suitable for car racings.

Finally, he established a partnership with the municipal authorities, the Mayor, Mr. Federico Krüger, the Head of other departments *Carabineros de Chile*, the car club and the air club to collectively develop a solution to the illegal car races.



It is necessary to point out that based on these arrangements; the directors of the Tuning Ankud Car Club began coordinating with the municipality to obtain Concourse Funds to perform their car races.

### **Information Area:**

The **objective** of this intervention area was to inform the young members of the Tuning Ankud Car Club about the consequences of carrying out these illegal races in unauthorized areas, especially given the legal consequences, the fines these involved, the legal violations and arrests, and most important of all, the physical injures ranging from minor ones to serious injures and the possibility of death. To achieve this goal, a workplan was developed to hold a series of eight lectures to provide information on:

- Causes of traffic accidents
- Impact and consequences of traffic accidents
- Legal Provisions of Law N° 18.290 on transit rules.

To facilitate this, Captain Juan Muñoz of the 1<sup>st</sup> Police Unit of Ancud, made all necessary coordinations and arrangements with representatives of the “Asociación Nacional de Seguridad” with the purpose of requesting a physical space to hold these educational lectures.

## **4.- RESULTS**

With the efforts and work done by Captain Muñoz of the 1st Police Unit of Ancud, Carabineros de Chile achieved the following objectives:

- The Tuning Ankud Car Club **has not conducted any illegal car races.**



- There has been a decrease of phone calls denouncing and requesting the intervention of *Carabineros*.
- The air club of the commune accepted the request of permitting the performance of these races in their airfield from May this year. These races will take place once a month in the local Aerodrome.
- It was agreed that the residents of the community were to be invited to participate in these events as spectators, thus generating a massive recreational activity for the community.
- To date, the Police Unit has already held eight educational workshops on traffic accidents for the members of the Tuning Ankud Car Club.
- The development of these initiatives of Ancud Police Unit and of the Tuning Ankud Car Club has the support of the Ancud Municipality, the "Asociación Chilena de Seguridad" and of the Air Club of the commune.

In addition to the above described work, unintended and unexpected side effects were generated that account for the successful results of the police intervention. In this case, it was required that all members of the Tuning Ankud Car Club needed the appropriate car accident insurance for third parties. Those members that did not have it had to obtain the insurance prior to participating in the races.



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT MAJOR DIVISION

## **AGENCY AND OFFICER INFORMATION**

### **KEY PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS**

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## APPENDICES

### 1. Table of Traffic Accidents, According to Type and Consequences, Registered at National Level

CARABINEROS DE CHILE  
DEPT. OF SERVICE, TRANSIT AND HIGHWAYS  
DEVELOPMENT AND ENGINEERING SECTION

Traffic Accidents, according to type and consequences, registered at national level during 2007-2008, where the baseline case is associated with "Speeding"

Type	Accidents		Casualties		Serious		M/Serious		Minor
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007
Car hit	110	105	1	1	26	31	19	8	81
Fall	91	74	0	0	16	6	11	7	64
Collision	742	826	21	21	114	122	82	81	628
Car Crash	381	369	34	47	54	71	43	48	328
Car Turnover	290	312	39	47	100	109	74	85	405
Others	10	13	0	0	0	4	1	1	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.624</b>	<b>1.699</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>1.515</b>

SOURCE: Integrated Statistic System of Carabineros de Chile (SIEC 2)

NOTE: Associated Causes

Code	Cause
71	SPEED GREATER THAN PERMITTED BY LAW
73	NOT PRUDENT OR REASONABLE SPEED
73	NOT TO REDUCE SPEED IN STREET CROSSING, HILLS, CURVES, ROADS/HIGHWAYS
74	SPEEDING IN RESTRICTED ZONES (SPEED EXCESS)