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GATESHEAD WEST AREA COMMAND

Problem Orientated Policing Project

- 1) OPERATION 'G FORCE'
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COMMUNITY ORIENTATED PROBLEM SOLVING **INTRODUCTION**

Community Orientated Problem Solving (C.O.P.S.) was introduced into the Gateshead West Area Command of Northumbria Police to improve the quality of service provided to the community and to reduce demand. It follows the principles of Problem Orientated Policing (P.O.P.) and utilises the S.A.R.A. problem solving model.

It was developed by examining our existing procedures and policies carrying out research in other Police Forces and agencies in England and the U.S.A. as well as taking into account the good practice identified by the Police Research Group (Police and Reducing Crime Unit).

The demand for our service today is greater than it has ever been. At certain times of the day, especially in the evening, officers find it difficult to cope with the level of incidents. Due to the upward trend in incidents our response had become reactive and driven solely by incidents.

Most incidents attended by local officers were found to be repeat quality of life issues. This was reinforced by the findings of the Gateshead Crime and Disorder Audit. Prior to the adoption of C.O.P.S. the traditional area command response proved at times to be ineffective.

C.O.P.S. provides a framework and system that enables the S.A.R.A. methodology to be used on operational problems. (TACTICAL).

At the Strategic level the model provides a means of addressing internal problems effectively and efficiently. (STRATEGICAL).

Since its introduction the indications are that the initiative is proving to be a success. Operation G Force was chosen because it clearly demonstrates that the philosophy of Problem Orientated Policing is an effective means of resolving recurring community problems.

PROBLEMS WITH TRADITIONAL RESPONSES

In today's ever-changing and fast moving environment traditional methods of policing have been found wanting - demand and responding to the needs and expectations of the public are exceeding our capabilities. By analysing the area command's procedures and methods of operation a number of key areas were identified for development to allow problem solving to work effectively. These were:

- 1) Identifying the real problems and concerns of the community
- 2) The collection and centralising of all information to attain the full picture
- 3) Incorporate a quality control system
- 4) Making sure the problem is allocated to the right person who has the time and necessary skills
- 5) Give ownership and responsibility
- 6) Prevent duplication of effort
- 7) Empower and encourage innovation and creativity
- 8) Develop internal and external methods of communication and marketing
- 9) Provide training and support
- 10) Monitor and evaluate initiatives to identify best practice and areas for development

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THE AIM OF C.O.P.S.

Our strategy is to respond to and address the needs and expectations of the communities that we serve by improving our style and approach to local policing. Additional aims include reducing demand and the empowerment of our officers to solve problems.

In order to achieve these strategies the area command aims to:

- 1) Reduce the demand
- 2) Make the best use of all resources to respond to the needs and expectations of the public that we serve
- 3) Develop partnerships
- 4) Tackle the causes as well as the symptoms of community problems
- 5) Improve community relationships and involve them in the problem solving process
- 6) Provide better internal support and training to all our staff

THE FRAMEWORK

In order for problem solving to work effectively in the area command a more streamlined and focused methodology was developed. The model is based around two elements - tactics and strategical.

Tactical Level (Community Problems)

Identification of Problems

In order to obtain a full and accurate picture information and intelligence is collated to identify problems and concerns effecting our community.

Prior to the C.O.P.S. initiative incidents created were not fully analysed. To assist in this process we now gather information from a variety of sources which includes: the local officer's knowledge, reviews of correspondence and routine phone calls, and information from the local authority and other partners. (see fig. 1).

Local Ward Surgeries have been set up by members of the Community Police Team to encourage residents to report their problems.

A researcher scans all incidents and crimes to identify trends and problems. In addition other information is forwarded to the researcher on a Problem Identification Form. (see fig. 2)..

The researcher then develops a package which is fronted by a Scan Form (see fig. 3) which is forwarded to the Problem Solving and Tasking Group (P.S. and T.G.).

What do the P.S. and T. G. do?

- 1) Discuss and Prioritise the problems identified
- 2) Allocate the problem to an owner
- 3) If required, task an owner to carry out short term response in order to suppress or stop the problem escalating.
- 4) Monitor and evaluate ongoing problems
- 5) Discuss bids for resources by the owners for long term problems who either require them for analysing (i.e. door to door enquiry) or responding (i.e. high profile police presence, Crime Prevention etc.) and where necessary consider costing
- 6) Act as an Advisory Group
- 7) Ratify assessments

This group meets at 9.00 a.m. Monday to Friday. It is chaired by the Chief Inspector of Operations and is attended by the Detective Chief Inspector, Detective Inspector, Duty Inspector, Community Sergeant, Intelligence Sergeant and the Crime and Disorder Unit Sergeant.

How do the P.S. & T.G. allocate problems?

All problems that are to be allocated will be graded as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| <u>RED</u> | COMMAND AREA PROBLEM
i.e. Escalation of burglaries in a particular area |
| <u>GREEN</u> | LONG TERM PROBLEMS
i.e. Disorder in a particular area |
| <u>AMBER</u> | SHORT TERM PROBLEM
i.e. Horses escaping from a field
Shoplifting at a particular shop |

The P.S. & T.G. review the daily incidents and crimes and if any recurrent problems arise, task the researcher to carry out background research and if appropriate develop a package for allocation. (see fig. 4 & fig. 5).

What do the owners of problems do?

The owner of the problem is responsible for fully analysing it to identify the underlying causes then formulate and implement a long term solution.

For a problem graded Red the owner will discuss the result of their analysis at a P.S. & T.G. to consider the most appropriate method of dealing with the problem.

Amber or Green graded problem owners are responsible for analysing and formulating the response. The P.S. & T.G. act as an advisory body.

During the analysis stage of all problems owners complete a Green Analysis Form (see fig. 6) asking themselves two basic questions:

- ▶ What do I need to know about this problem to understand it better
- Who can provide the answer to the questions

This allows the owner to identify the possible cause of the problem. Once this has been achieved the owner formulates a response on the Pink Response Form (see fig. 7).

Who does the Assessment?

Objectivity is important. For this reason the assessment is carried out by the Area Inspector who has responsibility for the area where the problem emanates from. If the Inspector is the owner, then the assessment is carried out by a Chief Inspector.

A completed Yellow Assessment Form (see fig. 8) is forwarded to the P.S. & T.G. who discuss the result and decide whether to finalise or re-allocate the problem.

In order that a problem can be finalised one or more of the below must be satisfied - the problem has been:

- 1) Eliminated
- 2) Reduced as far as possible
- 3) Displaced to another area
- 4) Removed from Police consideration and given to other agencies which are better qualified to deal with the problem
- 5) Dealt with more effectively

The details of the whole problem, how it is solved and who assisted is then kept on a Database to act as a Good Practice Guide.

STRATEGICAL

Strategical Problems (Internal) are those issues within the area command that are considered to be effecting the efficiency of the service we provide to the community. (e.g. management of property, issues relating to fleet management).

These problems are identified in the same way as Tactical problems but are submitted directly to the Management Team who will allocate an owner.

The owner is then responsible for analysing and implementing a response.

TRAINING

All staff working within the Area Command were given a one day input into the theory of C.O.P.S. The training was also attended by a number of managers from other agencies, i.e. Housing Office Managers from the local authority.

In addition to the above a training guide was produced together with aide memoire cards.

Every probationer posted to the Area Command is taught the principles and concept of C.O.P.S. and allowed to develop their skills and level of confidence during a five week attachment to the Community Policing Team

MARKETING

The marketing of C.O.P.S. and its principals was considered to be an important element if it was to be successful.

Internally this was achieved by a poster campaign and the issuing of booklets to all staff. Externally the strategy involved extensive media exposure and personal meetings with Neighbourhood Watch Team Leaders, Residents' Associations, and local councillors. In addition to these meetings presentations were given at Community Forums and a special training day was given to the Community Safety Team at the Local Authority.

ABSTRACT

OPERATION 'G FORCE'

This application details the Problem Solving Initiative developed and implemented by Gateshead West Area Command of Northumbria Police Community Orientated Problem Solving (C.O.P.S.) demonstrating how a specific problem of disorder was successfully addressed using the S.A.R.A. methodology.

C.O.P.S. was developed in order to improve the service given to the community and to reduce demand on operational officers. The initiative has been used to address a wide range of problems from repeat incidents of disorder to instances of crime. The attached example highlights an every day example that police forces around the world regularly encounter - Juvenile Disorder: In this particular scenario the reported incidents of juvenile disorder had escalated to an unacceptable level. It provides evidence that the S.A. R.A. methodology can be extremely successful.

The C.O.P.S. initiative follows the principles of problem orientated policing. It provides a framework that can identify community problems and concerns and, by using a partnership approach, address underlying causes to implement long term solutions. This initiative was implemented at a minimum financial cost whilst maximising the use of existing technology, personnel and partnerships.

Following numerous complaints from local residents and business people in the area, research was carried out showing that from 1998 there was a constant rise in the number of disorder calls, to over 60 per month at the beginning of 1999, when Operation G Force commenced.

An in depth analysis was carried out of the reported incidents and callers were, when appropriate, questioned at length regarding the scale of the problem including specific information relating to the main perpetrators, the numbers involved, the relevant times and days and aggravating factors e.g. drink, drugs etc..

This process identified various causes of the problem, ranging from anti-social behaviour and total disrespect for authority, inadequate security and ineffective policies for letting Local Authority accommodation to a lack of direction and motivation.

To find a lasting solution to the problem the response included working with other partners particularly the Local Authority, local councillors, business people, local residents and associated residents groups, associations and Neighbourhood Watch schemes. Equally important was the need to work with the youths involved.

This involved setting up regular Police surgeries within the Area Housing Office on the estate, these were backed up with joint Police and Councillor surgeries also on the estate. Dedicated high profile patrols were focused in the area with officers regularly briefed by the Problem Manager with objectives clearly set out.

A youth Drop In Centre, supported by the police, was set up in the immediate area. Regular visits to meet youths and staff were made by the community officer and area patrol officers. This led to joint sporting activity suggested by the young people and setting up '5 a side' football matches.

The installation of C.C.T.V. was regularly suggested by residents on the estate. Their comments together with support from the police were instrumental in a successful bid for Home Office funding for a comprehensive C.C.T.V. system covering the estate and surrounding area.

During the assessment stage it was found disorder had reduced by nearly 70 % and the quality of life for the community had increased significantly. The trend continues into 2000.

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OPERATION 'G FORCE'

Scanning

This problem was identified by researching incidents created in Gateshead West Area Command of complaints from all sections of the community in the area of Ravensworth Road, Dunston, concerning the incidents of juvenile disorder.

An initial search was carried out of Police held data on the Crime Pattern Analysis System. During the first six months of 1998 there were 117 disorder calls in this area and in the latter six months there were 195 calls, an increase of 62%. This trend continued into 1999 when during the first four months disorder calls were averaging almost 60 per month.

The nature and number of calls was a constant drain on police resources. It was clear that attempts at using traditional police methods to solve the problem was having no effect. The use of covert C.C.T.V. had little effect. It was established that the majority of calls centred around a specific area of Ravensworth Road and virtually on a nightly basis during a specific time period.

A task manager was appointed to focus on the problem orientated policing solution. As a result Operation 'G Force' was initiated.

Analysis

To establish and analyse the problem to find the true cause information was sought from the following sources.

What the victims say.

As many victims as possible were questioned and as much information as possible gleaned from them detailing identity of offenders, description, age, numbers, time periods, dates, location, behaviour patterns, aggravating factors e.g. drink, drugs etc.

What the officers say.

All officers patrolling the area were tasked with providing maximum feedback from the incidents they attended, thereby supporting the information gleaned from the victims.

What offenders say.

Youths involved were questioned by patrolling officers regarding their needs and concerns. Their response was unanimous: They were bored and requested some form of Club or Youth Drop In Centre to focus their attention.

Survey of the location.

The task/problem manager visited the area with the local housing manager and crime prevention officer. Meetings were held with all area housing staff from assistant director to caretaker level.

The survey and information gleaned from close liaison with all housing staff identified the following causes of the problem.

- 1) Disorder centred around a shopping precinct which was surrounded by a number of council owned multi-storey maisonette housing blocks and a single. 24 storey tower block of 'single person' tenants. There were many concealed areas and alley-ways that were 'adopted' by local youths
- 2) Several of the single persons in the main block were involved in the disorder and were the cause of the attraction for other youths from the area to visit and congregate

Youths gathered mainly after shopping hours often up to 20 - 30 strong. This alone intimidated residents.

The method of security entry to all the blocks was ineffective and in need of upgrading

- 5) The system of secure vetting of young single tenants was ineffective and in need of improvement
- 6) There was no C.C.T.V. system in place to combat the problem
- 7) The majority of the youths involved lacked motivation to make better use of leisure time
- 8) Lack of dialogue between young people and police in the area

All information gathered was focused to a central point for analysis and the problem analysing triangle method (PAT) was used.

These three main areas are:

- 1) Offender
- 2) Location
- 3) Victim

As it is imperative that all three areas are looked at together and not in isolation all were analysed in order to seek a permanent solution to this problem.

The analysis found

the offenders were in the 14 - 18 years age group

all were resident in the housing block or within a short distance

they were attracted to the area by the ease at which they could conceal themselves and make use of the many and varied escape routes

victims were often literally living 'on top' of the problem

victims were clearly intimidated

- many were repeat victims
- some were afraid to pass on relevant information for fear of reprisals

Response

In order to have some immediate effect on this problem it was decided to adopt a long and short term approach. In the long term for incidents of juvenile disorder to be reduced to an acceptable level, investment in amenities for young people in the area had to be addressed, the availability of council tenancies to certain young persons had to be addressed and overall quality of life issues for the other residents in the area had to be restored. In the short term the strategy was to target known offenders, those seen as the 'ring leaders', and prosecute them and maintain a sustained high profile positive approach until, with the assistance of the other agencies, the long term aims could be achieved.

It became obvious that a multi-agency approach involving all our partners was needed. The initial response was to develop much closer working relationships with our partners and appropriate channelling of information to the most relevant resources to assist in gaining a permanent solution.

To this end the following initiatives were developed.

- Police and Community surgeries held in the local housing office combined with police and local councillor surgeries
- Dedicated high profile patrols by the Area Command Disorder Team, shifts and Community Officer

Targeting and intelligence gathering on ring leaders

Regular contact with local businesses, in particular shopkeepers, especially off-licensees and licensees

Letters sent to parents of children persistently loitering in 'hot spot' areas, inviting dialogue if required

Programme of visits to the local comprehensive school to target age groups involved and discuss citizenship and dangers of alcohol and drug abuse carried out by the Youth Issues Officer .

- 'Safer estates' initiative by Area Housing Office to identify nuisance and problem tenants and work through the eviction process. Door entry upgraded
- Setting up and support of youth Drop-In Centre at premises supplied free of charge by local businessmen, funded by Local Authority for 2 years
- Encourage and support work by Local Authority Community Education outreach workers with young people

- Closer relationships with young people at street level, developing trust and open dialogue leading to joint sporting ventures e.g. '5 a side' football games with young people from the Drop-In Centre
- Supporting the need for C.C.T.V. in area

Assessment

Once all the measures were put in place a data assessment consisting of checking all disorder incidents was carried out on a monthly basis. An initial assessment showed that the number of incidents had dropped dramatically.

Feedback gained from the visitors to the Community surgeries highlighted the police presence and lack of disorder. Re-visits to businesses in the area supported this feedback. Local Housing Department staff also remarked on the sustained period of improvement. The vast majority of feedback was positive, supporting the view that the problem had been resolved.

Five of the ringleaders were arrested leading to conviction for affray.

During the second half of 1999 levels of disorder calls fell to 117 compared to 264 in the first half of the year, a fall of 69%.

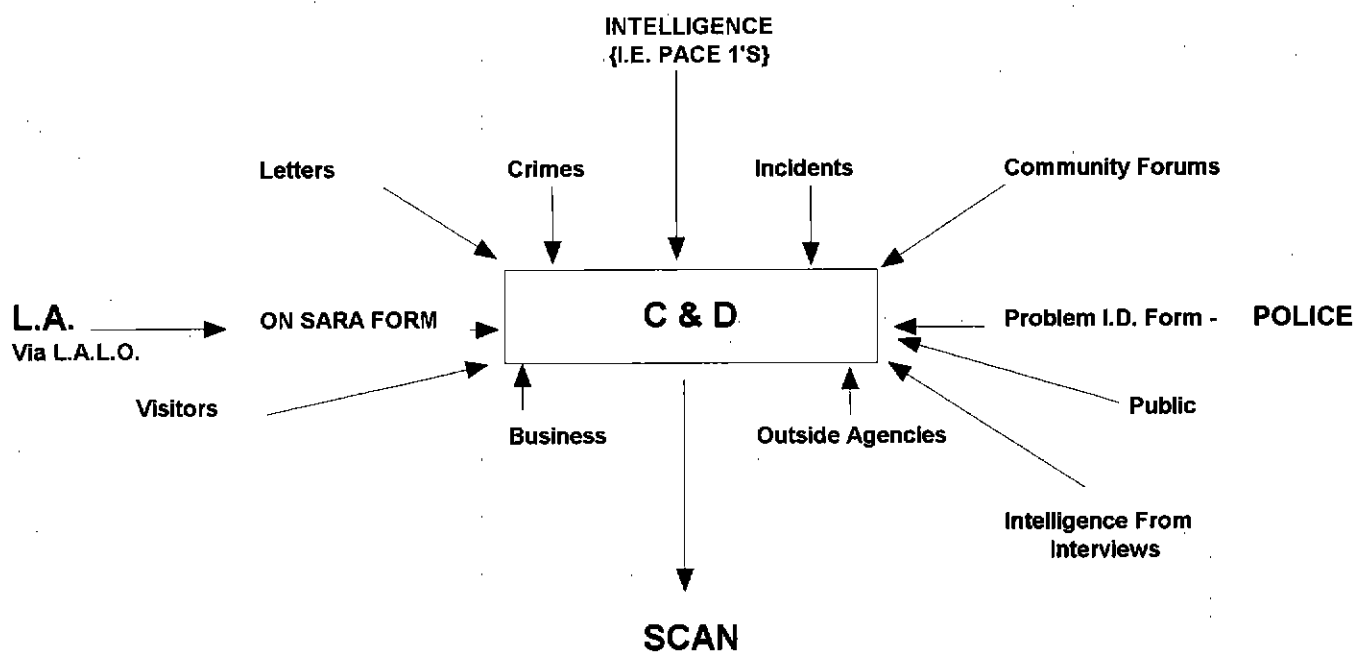
The success continues into the first quarter of 2000 with only 60 incidents reported of juvenile disorder.

A recent bid by Gateshead M.B.C. supported by Gateshead West Area Command for Home Office funding for a C.C.T.V. system covering the Ravensworth Road area of Dunston, was successful, with a grant of £380,000.

Fig 1

Community Orientated Problem Solving

TACTICAL



IDENTIFY PROBLEM

DEVELOP PACKAGE

P.S. & T.G.

- 1 Prioritise New Packages
- 2 Allocate owners short and long term
- 3 Monitor progress of live packages
- 4 Monitor all daily incidents and task for further research
- 5 Advisory Group
- 6 Allocate resources for long term problems
- 7 Finalise



GATESHEAD WEST AREA COMMAND

COMMUNITY ORIENTATED PROBLEM SOLVING

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

The identified problem may relate to a Crime Disorder or a Community Concern or an Internal Issue.

This form should be submitted via your Supervision to the Crime & Disorder Unit with as much detail as possible continuing on the rear if necessary.

Location of Problem

Beat

Describe Problem

Please continue on separate sheet if necessary

Source of information

Action/Advice already taken

Signed _____ Rank/No _____ Relief/Dept _____ Date _____

Supervisor _____ Rank/No _____ Relief/Dept _____ Date _____

CRIME & DISORDER UNIT		Ref No: _____
Date Received: _____	Researched By: _____	Date: _____
Result:		
Feedback Sent: _____	By: _____	Rank & No: _____

GATESHEAD WEST

Fig 3

COMMUNITY ORIENTATED PROBLEM SOLVING

Date:

Pol.Ref:

L.A. Ref:

PROBLEM

LOCATION

Beat:

SCAN

Describe the problem (including times, location and frequency)

Continue on Continuation sheet.

How did this problem come to your attention

ICAS

Other

Specify

Name/Rank:

Address/Dept:

Tel:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Supervision/LALO

Signature _____

<u>Problem Solving and Tasking Group</u>		
<u>Short Term</u>	<u>Long Term</u>	GOLD / SILVER / BRONZE
Owner	Owner	
Comments	Comments	
Return By	Updated By	
Signature	Ch/Insp. Ops.	Date

Fig 4

Community Orientated Problem Solving TACTICAL

DAILY ALLOCATION AND TASKING

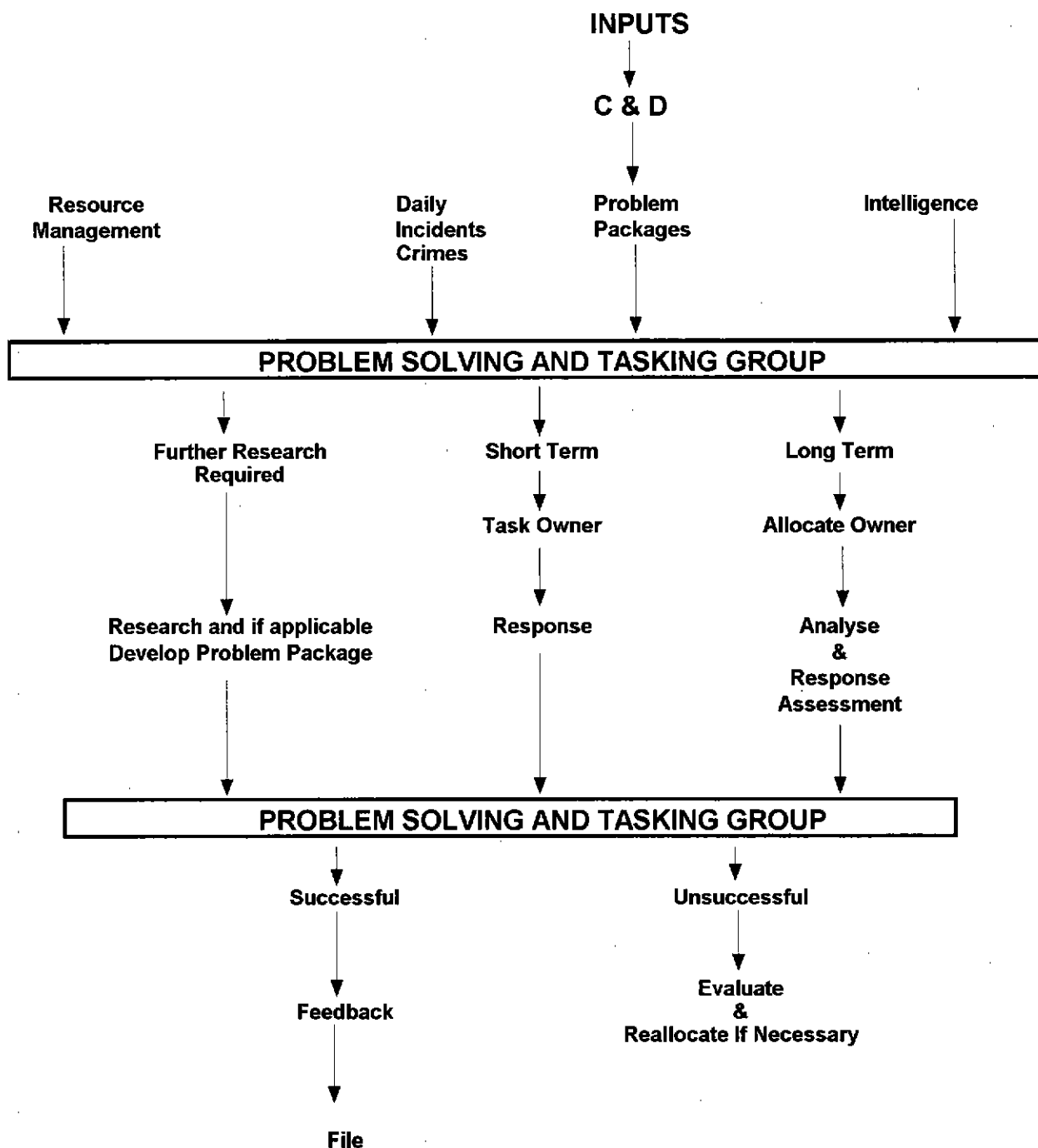
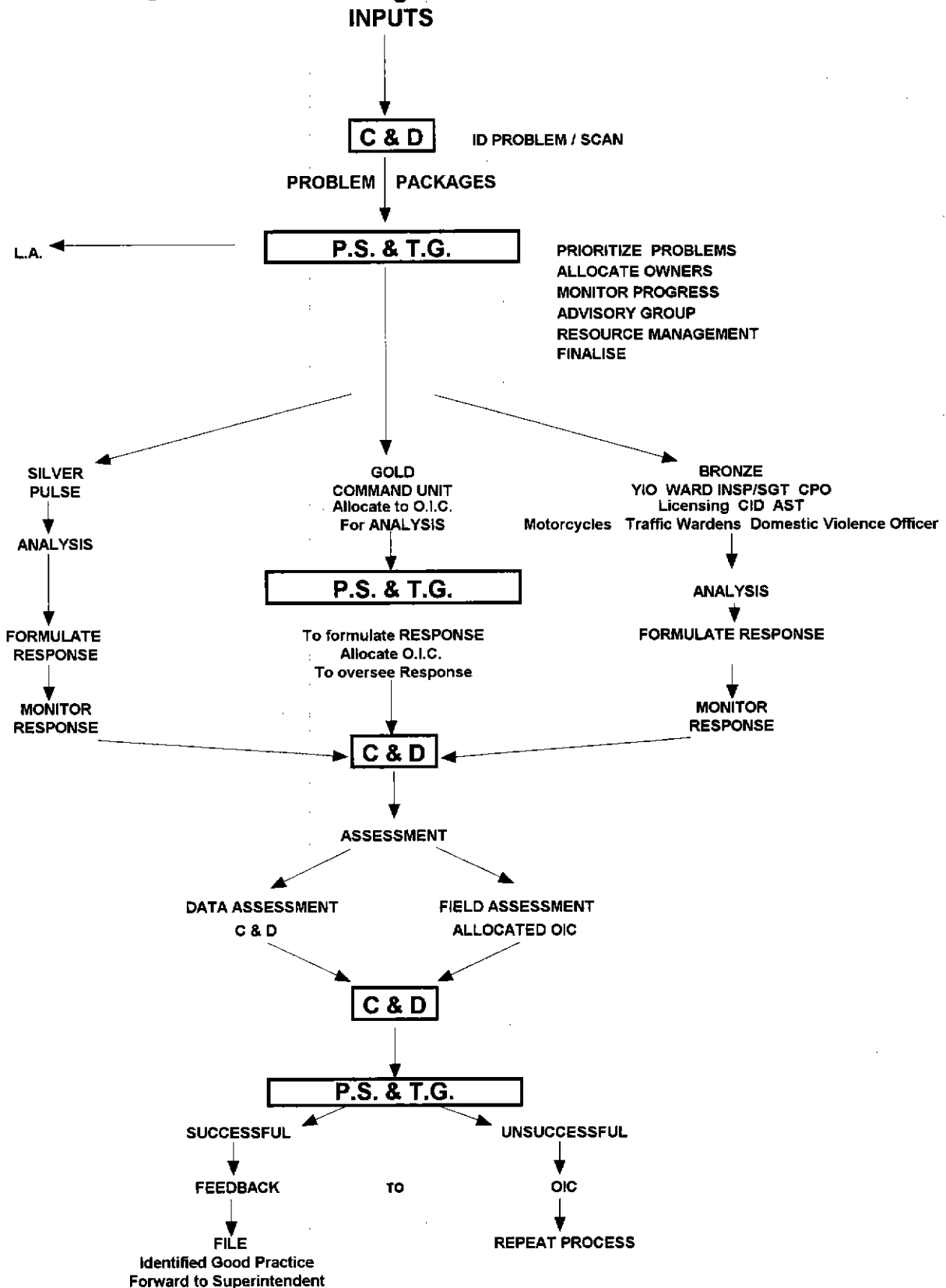


Fig 5

Community Orientated Problem Solving

TACTICAL

Allocation for Long Term Problems



ANALYSIS

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List the questions you have for each individual/group that is affected by this problem.
What specific source would you go to for the answer.

Question	Source	Answer

What have you identified as the CAUSE of the problem?

Date Completed

Signature

Supervisor

PHOTOCOPY AND FORWARD TO CRIME & DISORDER UNIT

RESPONSE

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GOALS FOR PROBLEM SOLVING

SHORT:

--

LONG:

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Strategies	Resource/Agency	Date Completed

	/ /		
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	/ /		
--	-----	--	--

Gateshead West Area Command



C.O.P.S.

ASSESSMENT

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METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

DATA ASSESSMENT

Date Started O.I.C. Supervisor

RESULT

Attach documentary evidence

FIELD ASSESSMENT

Date Started O.I.C. Supervisor

RESULT

Attach documentary evidence

UNSOLVED

Date Re-allocated O.I.C. Relief Supervisor

SOLVED
PROBLEM

COMMENTS

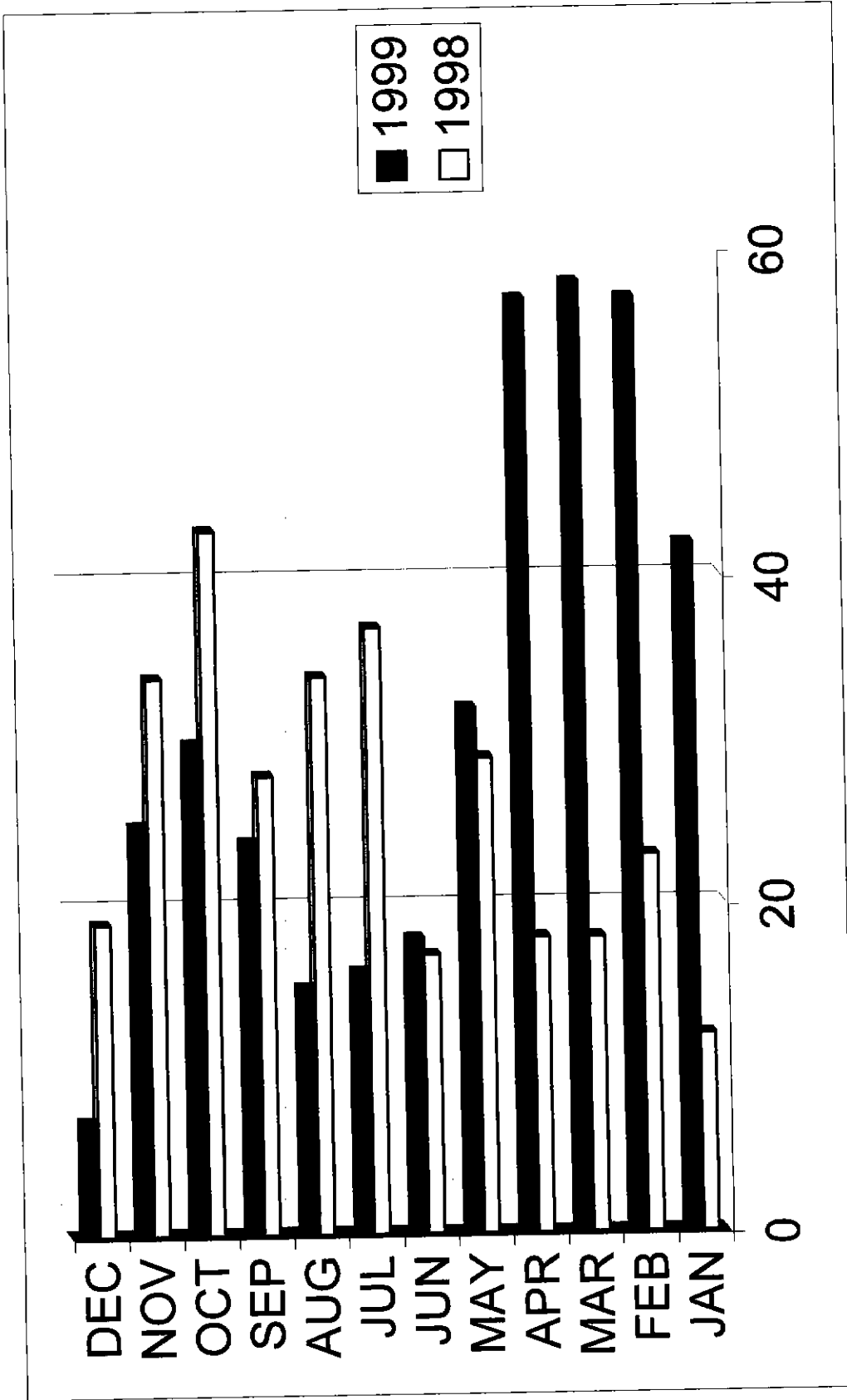
FINAL DECISION

Signature _____ Date _____

C.O.P.S. Database Finalise

Date By

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1998	12	23	18	18	29	17	37	34	28	43	34	19
1999	42	57	58	57	32	18	16	15	24	30	25	7



DUNSTON DISORDER 1998 and 1999

