

Lancashire Constabulary



# PROMOTING PROBLEM ORIENTED POLICING

## *Organisational Support Category*

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# Promoting Problem Oriented Policing

## Executive Summary

Lancashire Constabulary moved to a philosophy of Problem Oriented Policing (POP) in 1997. The move to introduce POP was a logical one and aimed to provide sustainable solutions in crime, disorder and casualties, cost effective policing and a viable strategy for reducing public demand.

However, despite enormous effort and expenditure other Forces failed to achieve sustainable problem solving effort. Officers were cynical and hostile to what they perceived to be additional bureaucracy and tended to fall back on traditional policing methods.

Within Western Division there were similar indications of resistance to change highlighted by the EFQM and Cultural Audit processes. The Change Process created an environment of uncertainty and there was no Force wide strategy for marketing POP. How then was the Division to implement Problem Solving in an environment that was resistant to change and succeed where other Forces had failed?

The Western Division policing plan, 1999-2000 highlighted ways forward, one of which was the appointment of a PR & Communications Officer who developed a Strategy and a Business Plan which was 'action focused' and had a clear set of outcomes and objectives. Identified priorities included marketing 'Problem Solving', the promotion of good practice and establishing that problem solving can be done at various levels.

The plan outlined proposals to provide information support in terms of 'Best Practice', guidance linked to the SARA and PAT processes and make information easily available to everyone through improved IT Systems. It also included plans to develop a means of evaluation and a system of rewards.

As ultimately the division wished to sustain POP, the majority of responses were long term and constantly reinforced the key messages. Responses included Internal and External promotion and short, medium and long term tactics. These included; - POP Page on the monthly Newsletter; Workshops; A5 officers Guide; A 'best practice database'; the introduction of standardised forms; media coverage of initiatives; training days, presentations to partners; the introduction of a POP page on the Intranet and a Guidance and Procedures Manual.

Evaluation included a Force wide Pop Audit, consultation with all ranks of staff in the division and achievements in both local and national competitions. There were significant levels of press and radio coverage of POP initiatives. A further measure of the success of the marketing strategy was the continual development and refinement of problem solving and its extension to support staff and partner agencies.

Western Division has been runner up three years running in the National Tilley Award competition and has won the LANPAC Rose bowl at the Force Annual POP Conference two out of three years.

In addition South Wales Police conducted an independent audit. They found that *the marketing of POP initiatives and its successes around all the stations visited was impressive, and officers agreed-that they feel more informed and included than previously*".

## **Scanning**

Problem Oriented Policing is a process for dealing with problems, which left unattended, repeatedly require police attention. During September 1997 Lancashire Constabulary commissioned a corporate project looking at the feasibility of implementing problem-oriented policing within the Lancashire Constabulary. The project articulated 12 strategic issues which had to be enhanced to sustain this style of policing, these were: human resources, leadership, clarity of purpose, communication, resources at local level, information flow, partnership, knowledge, managing demand, organisational culture, ethics, and evaluation.

The Constabulary moved to a philosophy of Problem-Oriented Policing for a variety of reasons;

- It was consistent with the style of policing the people of Lancashire wanted, in that it focused on community problems and involved a partnership approach.
- It was inevitable as it was in line with forthcoming legislation (Crime & Disorder Act) that statutorily required the police, local government and other partners to improve community safety together.
- It provided a viable strategy for reducing the demand from the public.
- It provided a consistent framework for more effective policing, in that policing issues could be properly identified, analysed, responded to and evaluated.
- It provided more cost effective policing in that resources could be properly targeted and good practice utilised.
- The philosophy works – police forces that have effectively implemented this approach had reduced crime/disorder and overall demand.
- There has been a government push to use partnerships more effectively to produce sustainable reductions in crime, disorder and casualties.

As one of the strategic issues identified in the Corporate Project as vital to the implementation of Problem Oriented Policing, Communication needed to be improved in order to achieve effective implementation.

## **Analysis**

In order to accurately predict the manner and extent of the improvement to communications and associated Marketing that would be required to implement POP effectively it was necessary to carry out extensive research into communication both Force wide and within the division. As many sources of information as possible were accessed in order to inform the required approach. These included;

- Cultural Audits
- EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) findings
- Focus Groups with members of staff
- One to one interviews were conducted with a representation of each rank
- Research into the experience of other Forces i.e. Leicestershire and Surrey Police
- Home Office and other academic research

The Change Process that was implemented throughout the Force to support Problem Solving created an environment of continual change and keeping staff informed and enlisting them in the process of effective communication was vitally important to maintain their commitment. However, in the Cultural Audit of the Force, which was produced in 1998, it was clear that staff perception of the state of communication between the Chief Officers of the Force and themselves was poor.

- Staff did not feel they were asked for their views before changes which affected them were made and this perception had strengthened since the original cultural audit which took place on 1996.
- Over 55% of staff did not feel that they could influence what happened in their place of work
- More than half of all the staff who responded to the questionnaire stated that their views had not been taken into account by managers when introducing changes to their workplace and working practices.
- Staff felt that the Chief Officers did not listen to nor address staff concerns and did not feel that there was adequate recognition of staff efforts and achievements.

### **EFQM findings**

In 1997 the Division undertook an EFQM survey (European Foundation for Quality Management - Continuous Improvement) to assess the areas within the division where there was scope for improvement.

In the section - People Management (how the organisation realises the full potential of its people. *People is defined as all the individuals who participate in the task of serving its customers directly or indirectly*) the following issues were identified;

- The report found that there was no formal communication structure for the Inspectors with supervisory responsibility for the various units and departments and no evidence of formal communication channels between the various departments within the division.
- Another key issue was the inconsistency in communication methods and the report found there was no evidence of the formal structuring of top down, bottom up, and lateral communication within the division.
- Documents within the division had limited circulation and there was little evidence that relevant information was available to all the appropriate staff within the organisation. This was of concern especially where process changes were involved.
- Two other key issues identified were the fact that information systems were not fully integrated and there was no evidence of a structured approach to exploit existing technology.

### **How then was the Force to implement Problem Solving in an environment that was resistant to change and that had poor communications infrastructure to support its introduction?**

In Leicestershire, the initial expectation that self-motivated beat officers, armed with training, forms to help structure the problem-solving process, regular data on incident patterns and a supportive management, would deliver a problem-oriented approach in their beats, was disappointing. Some of the beat officers did indeed quickly become committed, enthusiastic,

imaginative and effective, and produced examples of outstanding work on a wide variety of problems. Many beat officers, however, were cynical, hostile to form-filling, reluctant or unable to analyse incident data and apt to fall back on traditional policing methods.

Senior officers began by becoming more directive towards the beat officers, but this often resulted in lip-service rather than real problem-solving.

Western division taking into account these findings recognised that a longer-term programme of cultural change was needed to alter routine ways of thinking and working. The POP philosophy was integrated into the Force's induction and selection processes however there was no force wide strategy for maintaining that Focus.

### **Why is it so important to maintain the focus on Problem Solving?**

- 4%** of victims represent 44% of crime ( British Crime Survey )
- 10%** of address Locations generate 60% of calls (US research)
- 3%** young offenders responsible for 25% of crime (Home Office)

Traditionally the police investigate crime/incidents concentrating on 3 key areas

**The Offender**

**The Offender**

**And the Offender**

Whilst dealing with the offender very well, we often focus insufficiently on the

**Location**

**Victim**

### **The 'attrition rate'**

- **100 crimes committed**
- **46 reported**
- **23 recorded**
- **5 detected**
- **2 convicted**
- **0.03 imprisoned**

**(Gloria Laycock - Jill Dando Institute)**

## **Objectives**

- in the Organisational Objectives of the Western Division policing plan, 1999-2000, an efficient two way communication process was identified as necessary, in order to improve the way of working in the Division and a PR & Communications Officer was appointed.
- A Divisional Communication Strategy was developed and a business plan formulated. The strategy was 'action focused' and had a clear set of outcomes and objectives.

Identified priorities included; -

- The promotion of good practice throughout the division including the implementation of the Force's adoption of Problem Orientated Policing
- Establish that problem solving can be done at various levels throughout the division including divisional, geographical, team and individual.
- To support and promote the introduction of 'Problem Solving' within Western Division
- Provide information support in terms of 'Best Practice'
- Hard copy guidance notes linked to the SARA process and the Problem Analysis Triangle (PAT)
- Generate a marketing strategy
- Develop a means of evaluation
- Develop a system of rewards

## **Response**

### ***Internal Marketing***

#### **Short Term**

Initially the division held a 2-day introductory seminar at the Savoy Hotel Blackpool which gave an overview of Problem Oriented Policing and the reasoning behind it's introduction. All officers, team leaders and management attended this training.

An A5 booklet was written and distributed to all operational officers within the division. The booklet contained information relating to the Crime and Disorder Act, Demand versus Resources, problem solving techniques and examples of current POP initiatives that had been successful. The booklet was included in all induction packs given out by Human resources to both new recruits and also transferees with the clear message that this is how we do business in Western Division.

#### **Medium Term**

Until a long term IT solution could be put in place a Lotus Notes database was used to publish items of good practice. All items of good practice relating to Problem Oriented

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**Guide to Problem  
Oriented Policing**

Policing were located on the database. However this was not ideal as the database was not searchable by category and other options needed to be looked at.

A CD Rom was made available providing interactive training on Problem Oriented Policing using best practice identified from looking at the Surrey Police model. The CD was distributed to all POP Co-ordinators who cascaded the training and information down to team leaders and all officers. This was seen as a stimulating way to learn about POP and the test yourself section at the end surprised a few officers regarding how much they knew, or didn't know!

## Long Term

As ultimately the division wished to introduce and sustain Problem Oriented Policing the majority of responses were therefore long term. In order to change organisational culture and perceptions the methodology required constant reinforcing.

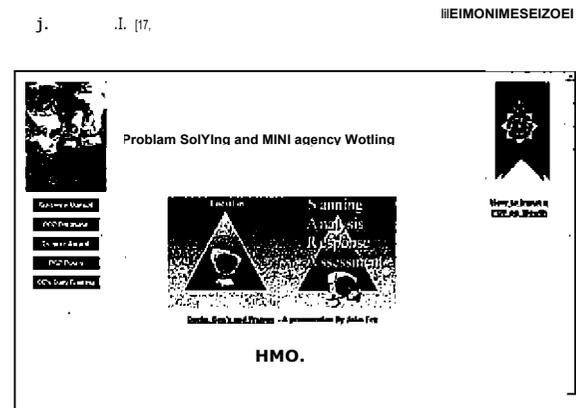
A standing Problem Oriented Policing page was introduced in the Divisional Operational Newsletter to highlight good practice POP stories every month. This benefited the division in two ways; firstly it spread good practice and secondly it was a form of reward and recognition for officers working on initiatives.

Problem Oriented Policing Workshops – Workshops were and still are held on an ongoing and as required basis. Guest speakers are invited in to talk to Co-ordinators or officers as appropriate on topical subjects related to Problem Oriented Policing.

In 1999 a Guidance and Procedures Manual was produced for POP Co-ordinators, all team Leaders and Inspectors in the division. The original Manual was launched in June 1999 with updates in April 2000 and June 2001. The manual was originally produced, as a living document in binder format; POP Co-ordinators used The Manual to store best practice in SARA format for the geographic area until the best practice database was in place. In this way there was an audit trail and reference point for all local problem solving initiatives. The Manual has recently has been rewritten and adopted and produced on a Force wide basis. It was re-launched at the Lancashire Constabulary 5<sup>th</sup> Annual POP Conference.

Once the Intranet was launched in March 2000 the Manual was made available in electronic format and could be viewed by everyone in the division. Other information that was relevant to implementing initiatives was made available at this site. Information was updated as and when it was available making recent innovations easily accessible to officers. The site also provided the gateway for the POP Good Practice database, which contained both good practice examples and also examples of initiatives that had not been successful. In this way officers could learn from other people mistakes or identify tactics that were not successful when applied to their particular problem.

The introduction of a Pre-Sara and SARA form throughout the division was an important step and was arrived at through the exchange of good practice which took place during the bi-monthly POP Co-ordinators meetings. These meetings have now been running since 1999 and are seen as key in the division to moving problem solving forward and are a vital link in the communication infrastructure. They also provide an ongoing review process for the effectiveness of communications and marketing initiatives relating to POP. In 2000 the first

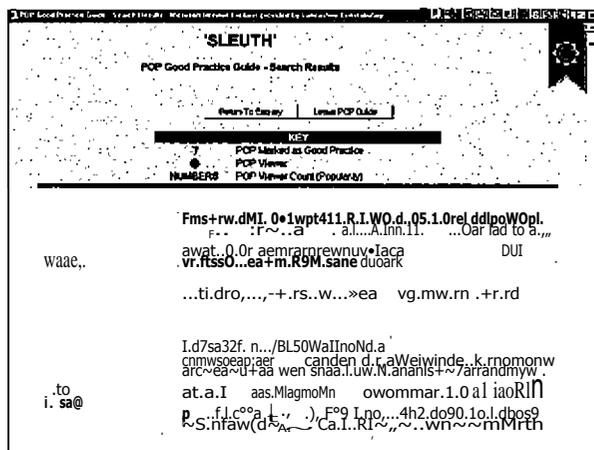


departmental Pop Co-ordinators were invited to join, promoting problem solving within areas such as the Community Safety Department, the Intelligence Unit, ARV, Support Unit, the Criminal Justice Service Department and Reactive CID.

A system of rewards was introduced to incentivise problem solving including the introduction of a Divisional Commanders Award, Local competition, publication of success stories in Context, the Local Operations Newsletter and entry to National Competitions. This addresses the findings of the Cultural Audit which relate to making staff feel valued and respected. Officers winning the divisional De Vere Hotel Problem Solving Award have the opportunity to spend a weekend at any of the De Vere Hotels in the country along with their Partner.

Each year problem solving initiatives which showed both success and innovation were selected to represent Western Division at the Annual POP Conference. Initially there was no prize and the Conference was not regarded as a competition but as an opportunity for spreading good practice. However recognising the need for reward the Force introduced the Rose bowl trophy which was funded by LANPAC (Lancashire Partnership Against Crime) and Western Division have won this two years out of the three since its introduction.

A significant development has been the adoption of the POP Good Practice Database into the Force Sleuth Intelligence system, which is a IT front-end data warehousing process. Sleuth is primarily used as a briefing tool by officers. It is a way of highlighting information from other Constabulary systems in line with divisional priorities. Sleuth scans intelligence, crime, CRS and other databases four times every day to give us easily accessible information as quickly as possible.



The database uses as a base the Pre Sara and SARA forms which were developed in Western Division. Officers enter the POP initiatives onto the system, which is fully searchable and less bureaucratic than the previous paper based system. Officers can also use the system to provide an ongoing record of actions and responses associated with the POP initiative. It provides an audit trail and has been ratified by the data protection office for the Constabulary. In order to maximise its use officers were given additional IT training and support.

### External Marketing

It was important at the outset to demonstrate to both officers, communities and both existing and potential partners the possibilities for success associated with Problem Oriented Policing. The division made a commitment to publish all good news stories in local press and raise awareness through local radio stations.

High profile success stories i.e. Operation Arrival received both local and national coverage and during operations a Press Officer was made available to supply the media with good news stories. This has continued where possible at every opportunity.

The Press have been instrumental in the Divisional De Vere Hotel Problem Solving Competition. The Hotel agreed to sponsor the competition in return for publicity. The divisional winner or winners receive a weekend away at any De Vere Hotel in the Country.

Operation Arrival was the division's first major problem solving success. As a divisional initiative with divisional resources it provided immense Marketing opportunities due to the huge impact and reductions it had on crime and disorder in the town. This was seen as key to gaining both officer and community buy-in to the principle of problem solving.

Every year since its inception Western Division initiatives have been submitted for the National Tilley Award and have attained runner up status in the crime and Disorder reduction category in 1999, 2000 and 2001.

Community Beat Officers are also put forward for the Community Beat Officer of the Year Award. In 2001 six officers were nominated from the division all of whom were involved in problem solving and had used this to address problems in their communities. Again for the last three years a Western Division Officer has represented the Force at National Level.

### **POP In Partnership**

The Geographic POP Co-ordinators were tasked at the outset to bring on board potential partners who could have an impact on reducing problems. It is important to remember that no matter how good we think we are, no single agency working in isolation can have an impact on the root causes of crime, disorder and casualties. In order to effectively Introduce POP to local partners, Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and Local Authorities the Co-ordinators were provided with a presentation and other literature and materials including the booklet to implement Multi Agency training days.

### **How the successful Implementation and Marketing of POP would be assessed**

An exit strategy was put in place which included various methods of evaluating how successful the division had been at implementing and marketing Problem Oriented Policing.

We would look at success on a local and national level taking into consideration

- Whether POP is ingrained into the divisions way of working
- Acceptance of the problem solving philosophy with none or little cynicism.
- Press Coverage
- Success in competitions
- Recognition of the Problem Oriented Policing philosophy in the community and our partner agencies.

The evaluation process itself would be approached from an internal aspect and also use an external source to check for accuracy of findings.

## **Assessment**

### **District Audit**

A survey was undertaken in September 1999 by District Audit who are Lancashire Constabulary's external auditors. At this time the Communication and Marketing Strategy had been underway for approximately six months. A questionnaire was sent out to a sample of relevant officers with the undertaking that all replies would remain anonymous. It was designed to gauge views about the Force's "Problem Oriented Policing " policy and looked at the following areas;

- Attitudes to core values of POP
- Policy, development and determination
  - Linking corporate and local divisional plans
  - Policy Implementation
  - Monitoring and review of performance

The findings stated that 'A' Division (Western) performs significantly better than other divisions with 91 % of staff agreeing or strongly agreeing that POP produced positive results.

Whilst the division outperformed the rest of the Constabulary the survey also identified areas for improvement, one of which was reward for good performance, which is something the long-term response took into consideration. Following the Audit the Divisional Commanders Award was introduced.

### **Assessment of the POP Guidance and Procedures Manual**

Officers were interviewed as to the effectiveness of the Manual as a tool to tackle problem solving. This is an extract from the report evaluating the Manual which was conducted in 2000.

Sergeant Darwin from Kirkham, stated that the POP Guidance and Procedures Manual is used as a reference document not only by the Sergeants but by PC's embarking on an initiative. Selected information from the document has been used for presentations to staff and partnerships and also to local councillors giving not only officers a better understanding but also the public and our partners. The improvement in levels of understanding of POP at Kirkham has been significant in reducing crime and addressing our corporate objectives within the Geographic Area.

Sergeant Darwin feels that the manual has been excellent for those officers with a minimal understanding of POP, who are willing to embrace the methodology, however there are a number of officers that need further input and reinforcement. He suggests something in the way of crib cards, which outline the differences between an operation and an initiative, or a further reference booklet, which can be circulated to everyone.

### **South Wales Police Evaluation of Problem Oriented Policing within Western Division, Lancashire Constabulary**

The report was significant in evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation and marketing of Problem Oriented Policing in the Division. A summary of key findings relating to communication and marketing follows;

- The POP philosophy together with direction through tasking and co-ordinating appears to be braking down many traditional barriers. Indeed it is fair to say that



POP is now established to the extent where officers are using the SARA methodology unconsciously. Simple evidence to support the increasing acceptance of POP is the fact that there are now over 93 divisional POP initiatives on the Force POP Database. One officer, when asked what he would do if the POP policy was discontinued by the force, answered that he would carry on doing POP because it made his job easier.

- \* ■ The cultural change in particular for reactive officers was difficult and for a small percentage of officers continues to be so. For example, ARV officers stated that POP had nothing to do with them in their role, but when pressed they agreed fully with the philosophy of POP, and in fact had submitted two POP initiatives in the last twelve months.
- The third area where the impact of POP against performance was examined was that of general working practice. The evaluation team consider that POP is now so embedded into the culture and working practices within the division, that any work undertaken and therefore any results produced can be inextricably linked to POP. It was also noted that in interviewing staff who had just returned to operational duties, they all stated that they had noticed a change for the better in terms of direction and day to day working practices. A quote made by one reactive officer was "We are now shaping events not responding to them".
- The appointment of a PR & Communications Officer facilitated good communication across all levels. The work done by Elann Galloway and the planning team in reinforcing the POP message, and providing meaningful performance information has contributed to a more focussed problem solving approach. There were some cries of POP overload but the marketing of POP initiatives and its successes around all the stations visited was impressive, and officers agreed that they feel more informed and included than previously. Whilst many officers were unsure of what exactly the role was, there was agreement that the greater communication provided had proved beneficial.
- Information Technology: - the development of SLEUTH in the minds of officers has been critical in terms of directed and targeted patrols. In relation to POP it has enabled them to scan and to a degree analyse problems without being reliant on others. The evaluation team attended scale briefings and was impressed at how effective operationally focussed IT systems can be. Dynamic and meaningful intelligence and information has created an intelligence led environment in the division, which acts as a conduit for POP to drive the divisional workload and performance targets

In summary the evaluation team concluded that POP has made a positive difference to performance, culture and working practices within the Western Division.

#### **In Conclusion the South Wales Evaluation Team stated**

Overall the evaluation team were impressed with the implementation of POP within Western division. They made a concerted effort to find gaps and negativity towards the concept from staff, but could find only positive and focussed staff who felt, as one officer put it, that they were **"shaping events not responding to them"**. The morale within the division, taking into account all the normal operational issues such as abstractions and sickness was good, and staff felt involved in the development and direction that the management team was taking. There was consensus from all staff interviewed that POP had made a positive difference to the division both in terms of working practices and performance. In conclusion, POP was clearly facilitating a more effective use of limited resources which could be linked to an improved level of performance, and in utilising partners in the imaginative ways evidenced by the initiatives examined, the division was making the public of Blackpool and Fylde feel safe, involved and reassured.

\* *PC Mark Booth, a Western Division ARV officer was the winning entrant with Operation Aim in 2002*

## **Other Evaluation Methods**

Feedback is collected in an ongoing process from the POP Co-ordinators with regard to marketing initiatives. The Posters and other communications materials produced are key to promoting problem solving initiatives within the community and gaining their help and support.

Western Division hosts seminars organised by the PR & Communications Officer for other Forces with regard to the effective Implementation and Marketing of Problem Oriented Policing. Other Forces that have visited have been South Wales Police; Hampshire and Isle of White Police and Warwickshire Police.

## **The Way Forward**

MAPS (Multi Agency Problem Solving) Teams have now been introduced to the division to capitalise of Multi Agency approaches to tackling the root causes of crime, disorder and casualties. This has meant a leap forward in promotional terms in the slant on problem solving. Every initiative officers or support staff are involved in must be approached from a multi agency angle.

The introduction of Community Beat Managers in the Division also reinforces the divisional commitment to problem solving in the community. Community beat Managers have the benefit of an Administrative Assistant who will assist with community questionnaires, newsletters, and other research relating to problem solving.

The Lancashire Constabulary 5th Annual POP Conference also saw DCC Paul Stephenson launch the new POP Guidance Manual.

Mr Stephenson said: "The Manual builds on previous experience and gives us practical advice and help as well as groundbreaking ideas. No matter how far ahead of the game that we think we are, let us remember no single agency working in isolation can effectively tackle the complex problems that so often lie at the root of crime". He went on to say "Evidence has already shown that when POP is done properly the prizes are there for the taking".