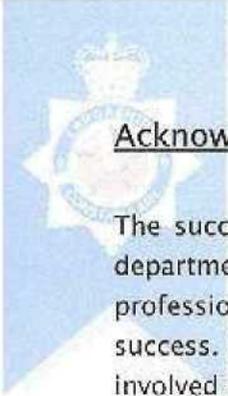


Putting the Brakes on Lorry Trailer Thefts

Tilley Award 2003 Submission
Crime and Disorder Reduction Category

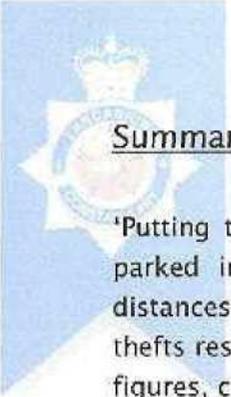
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Summary

'Putting the brakes on lorry trailer thefts' was a response to the thefts from lorry trailers parked in lay-bys on Pimbo Industrial estate, Skelmersdale. These lorries travel long distances to deliver to Skelmersdale. During the first two months of 2000 Pimbo had four thefts resulting in £5000 of property stolen. Evidence defining this problem came from crime figures, colleagues, personal knowledge of the ongoing problem and contact from Proctor and Gamble Ltd (P&G).

The analysis could be categorised as follows:

The Location

Natural geographical features of Skelmersdale exacerbate the problem; the estate is busy by day, quiet by night, surrounded by trees giving cover to offenders. The road targeted is Pimbo Road, which is directly opposite a residential estate. The goods had a ready market, as they are a popular products e.g. Pantene shampoo, Always Ultra, Pampers nappies. These thefts were responsible for 71% of all vehicle crime on the Pimbo Estate.

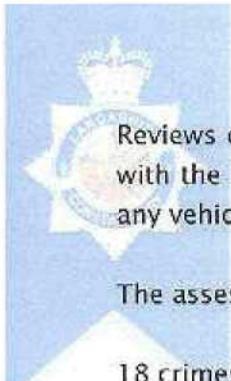
Offenders

Offenders moved around, almost unnoticed due to excellent road networks and easy access to footpaths and subways. Offenders are travelling criminals we had little or no information about and local criminals living on the Digmoor estate, aged between 15-25yrs, well organised, using radio scanners and mobile phones. Property has been dropped near the scenes, in subways leading to Digmoor. Forensic evidence was also being lost.

Victims

Drivers were repeat victims parking fully laden wagons in lay-bys, awaiting delivery to P&G. They are from Eastern Europe and don't speak English most are employed by Willi Betz and were invariably asleep during the offence. Drivers have no understanding of crime issues in this country and goods stolen have a ready market locally. Trailers are continually parked on the roadside despite thefts, as there is no lorry park in the area.

The response was to use signs and leaflets in Russian and Bulgarian that were handed out informing the drivers to park at authorised lorry parks. A meeting with Willi Betz took place and they agreed to use Knutsford secure truck stop. GPS tracking system on wagons was used and drivers in contravention were fined or dismissed. A sting Operation to arrest offenders was conducted using a HGV and P&G products. P&G built two lorry parks one for loaded vehicles waiting to be distributed and one for vehicles waiting to be unloaded. We are currently in discussion with P&G to allow other vehicles on the estate to park here.



Reviews of by-laws that will restrict overnight parking in the lay-bys are still being discussed with the council and a private contractor is being sought to construct a private lorry park for any vehicle delivering on the industrial estate.

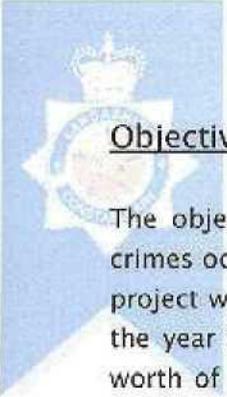
The assessment showed that the crimes reduced from:

18 crimes in 2000 costing £100,000.

24 crimes in 2001 costing £110,000.

8 crimes in 2002 costing £24,000.

1 crime in 2003 no cost involved.



Objectives of the project

The objective of this project was to specifically target and reduce the number of vehicle crimes occurring on the Pimbo Industrial Estate that were directly related to the firm P&G. The project was planned as a response to the number of thefts that occurred at the beginning of the year 2000, within the first two months there were four thefts that amounted to £5000 worth of property and vehicle crime on the estate accounted for 71% of all vehicle crime in Skelmersdale.

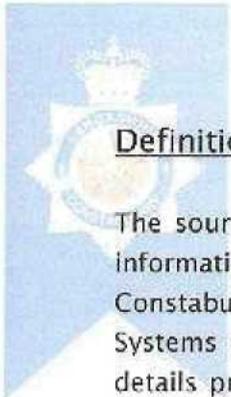
This type of crime was also acknowledged to have been prevalent for some time but had never achieved major recognition as a problem crime that needed specific police attention, because this crime never exceeded five crimes per annum. Personal knowledge of this problem, crime reporting and the Constabulary's introduction of analyst's developing intelligence led policing, indicated that this problem demanded attention therefore prioritising this problem above others.

This was also the first opportunity within Skelmersdale to implement the problem-solving model in an attempt to resolve an historic crime issue. This project sought to improve police officers knowledge of POPS and develop businesses partnerships.

A factor also influencing the prioritisation of this issue was the demands being placed upon police resources as a result of crime reporting; through attending the vehicle, conducting enquiries, reports, interviews etc. The crime on the estate was also impacting on the attractiveness of the area for business investment, thus increasing the position of Skelmersdale within the poverty indexes.

P&G required action as the thefts were starting to have an impact upon their customers by disrupting deliveries meaning incomplete orders had to be sent out.

The success criteria was based on the reduction of the vehicle crime directly related to P&G.



Definition of the problem

The sources, which were consulted during the analytical phase of the project, were mostly information sources within law enforcement. Information was retrieved from Lancashire Constabulary's own Intelligence (INTEL), Crime recording (INDE) and Sleuth Control Room Systems (CRS), which provided a holistic approach to problem solving. The product theft details provided by Proctor and Gamble were also collated and analysed in conjunction with Police data to provide a comprehensive picture of the problem from a multi-agency approach.

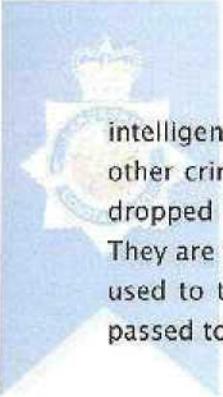
The analytical approach made use of the PAT methodology to fully assess the range of information available in planning the project.

The natural geographical features of Skelmersdale exacerbate the problem of this crime. The Industrial estate is surrounded by a one-way system with an exit and entrance to the M58 motorway running between Liverpool and the M6. The estate is busy by day and quiet by night and is surrounded by trees and bushes most of which are overgrown giving good cover to offenders.

Activity on the estate at night is limited, most factories are open for 24 hours and their staff work a 10pm-6am night shift; most factories have their own canteen providing hot meals those that don't have vending machines or accept fast food deliveries. This means that after 10pm there is little or no movement of the foot public on the estate, hence night workers see and hear little. Several factories have 24-hour security/CCTV including P&G. The security at P&G was dated and they still have a number of static cameras, which are not domed.

Offenders move around, unnoticed due to an easy accessed sub-way and footpath network which spans the whole of the estate, originally built to allow people to walk in safety not near roads, but now neglected and in disrepair sees little foot public. There is also a part of this network, which can be accessed by driving a vehicle off the road. The road targeted is Pimbo Road, which encircles the whole of the estate and part of the road is directly opposite a residential housing estate called Digmoor that houses a large number of volume criminals.

Proctor and Gamble (P&G) is a firm that has been based in Skelmersdale for 37 years. The factory originally made the products it sold, but over the years this has been scaled down and production moved to country's providing better cost effective production. P&G can have approximately 30-40 deliveries per day throughout a 24-hour period (this is mirrored in their outgoing orders). The distribution centre supplies north of the M62 corridor including Scotland and Ireland.



intelligence sharing about travelling criminals can be difficult and is not yet perfected. The other criminals are locals believed to live on the Digmoor estate as stolen property has been dropped in the subways leading to this housing estate. They are aged between 15-19yrs. They are well organised and use scanners and mobile phones. Juveniles on mountain bikes are used to trawl the estate looking for lorries that have parked in lay-bys. This information is passed to the teams who will attack the load.



Response to the problem

The response to this problem had an ongoing review process that was continually evaluated. This evaluation has led us to undertake a number of different responses.

The Year 2000

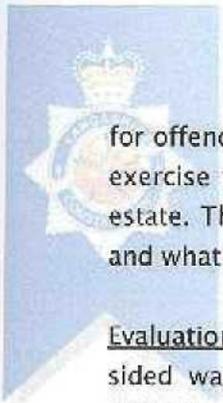
Response: During 2000 the idea was to remove the lorries from the lay-bys. P&G have a staff car park at the rear of the premises; the car park was surrounded by fences and has one entry/exit. The car park capacity is approximately seventy vehicles. The area is covered by 24hour CCTV and security staff. Any lorries that arrived early would be directed to the car park and would stay in this area overnight or until their specific unloading time.

Evaluation: Once it had been agreed that the lorries would park on the staff car park a number of trailers were allowed access. However due to the fact that the lorries had a full load when the drivers turned the lorry around in order to move to the unloading bay the following morning the weight of the load and the tight turning circle required to get out of the exit meant that the lightly tarmac car park was chewed up, leaving it unable to be used as a staff car park. The only way the car park could be used was if the whole area was redesigned for the weight of lorries. The project was not at the stage where the money required to do this was available.

Response: We then provided information in relation to private secure truck stops out of town, directly alongside the motorway network. This was in the form of a sign (Appendix A), which was translated into German and Romanian the two most prevalent languages used by the drivers. They were positioned at prominent points in lay-bys on estate and were also available in leaflet form. These signs informed the drivers of the dangers of being subject to a theft and gave them directions to the nearest secure truck stops and the cost of staying there.

Evaluation: The multi-lingual signs, which were put up alongside the lay-bys, were up for a total of one hour before they were removed. Presumably by the criminals targeting the area. They were again put up in places that were more difficult to reach and were not removed. Willi Betz agreed to pay the drivers the maximum cost of £7.50 to park at the secure lorry parks. The drivers were being paid approximately 800DM (£400) per month, so the £7.50 allowance to park in the truck stop was diverted into the pockets of the drivers as it was a substantial addition to their wages, particular if they made three to four trips a month to P&G. A small percentage (10%) of the drivers would not understand the multi-lingual signs. If we wanted to translate for all drivers there would have been ten signs in each lay-by.

Response: In relation to the Policing of the crime we utilised Police officers in their patrol capacity along the subways and footpaths that had been identified as the entry and exit points



for offenders to get on and off the estate. We specifically utilised Dog patrols, who needed to exercise their dogs each tour of duty, this was done on the subways and footpaths of the estate. The Crime Prevention Officer also visited P&G and gave a complete survey of security and what needed to be updated to allow better coverage and increased security.

Evaluation: This response was conducted for a period of two months a number of curtain sided wagons were moved on and for a short period the criminal activity on the estate dropped significantly. Intelligence from informants was provided to the effect that the offenders knew there were officers around the estate and were consequently keeping away. This sort of policing is labour intensive and once the activity had stopped the offenders began to commit the thefts again.

The Year 2001

The previous years responses were analysed and it was decided that a meeting with representatives from the firm Willi Betz was required, as the interventions were not having the desired effect.

Response: In January a meeting took place at P&G with a representative from Willi Betz head office in Holland and Britain, members of P&G senior management and a Police representative. During the meeting it was agreed that to ensure their contract with P&G, Willi Betz needed to take some direct action to help prevent crime. Willi Betz agreed to negotiate a contract with the 'Knutsford Truck Stop 2000' located just off the M6 motorway who would guarantee priority parking for all Willi Betz vehicles. A timed practice journey was conducted that supplied the drivers with a journey time from the truck stop to Skelmersdale, so when they left the truck stop they would arrive within one hour of unloading.

It was agreed that Willi Betz would make better use of their Global Positioning Satellite Network (GPS). The Holland head office would check each morning as to the position of all lorries delivering to P&G. If any were parked in the estate and they didn't have a delivery time within 1 hour, then they would be instructed via the GPS to travel to the designated truck stop. The drivers would also be liable to a fine. If during Police patrols a Willi Betz lorry was seen parked in a lay-by on the estate, a handout supplied by Willi Betz (Appendix B) would be passed to the drivers and the officer would then obtain the registered number of the vehicle and the drivers fined if in breach.

Evaluation: The cost of the priority parking at 'Truck Stop 2000' cost £30,000 per annum. The agreed set fine for any of the drivers who were found in breach of this rule was 200DM (£100). This was a substantial amount of money to take off the drivers when you compare it to their wages of 800dm a month. Twelve drivers were fined and four were given a written warning as they had delivered their load but parked up in Skelmersdale. All but one of these



offences occurred within a 28-day period from the initial meeting. One of the offences occurred during December of the same year. The offenders were newly employed and it was their first delivery to P&G. The last theft from a P&G lorry was 11/04/02

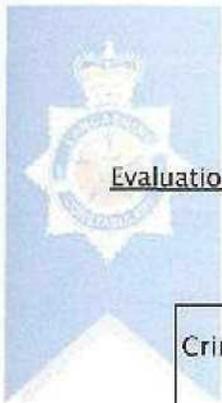
Response: In April the Sunday Times ran an article titled 'Black market takes over in slum towns' this was an in-depth undercover investigation into illegal sales of products on the black market. The Times had conducted the investigation in Skelmersdale and the report finished with a summary saying 'areas where black market goods are most commonly sold have high unemployment and depravation, a high proportion are lone-parent households, poor general health and high crime'

This incensed the local populace and local newspapers ran articles responding to the anger and frustration of the residents in the area. We saw an opportunity to directly link the thefts from the lorries to sales of stolen items at people's front doors. Local newspapers were contacted and information was passed highlighting the lorry thefts and actions taken. It was intimated that people buying products that are cheap and possibly stolen on their own doorstep were propagating the vehicle crime on the estate.

The Police were looking for specific information in relation to anybody selling property on the estates and a direct telephone number was given out. Police intelligence officers pro-actively tasked Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS) to gather intelligence on lorry theft offenders. The CHIS would also be entitled to a percentage of any of the property recovered.

Evaluation: This was evaluated in 2002

Response: In May the tight loading/unloading schedule that P&G had was reviewed at in relation to Crime scene investigation (CSI) attendance and the gathering of forensic evidence. P&G agreed that vehicles, subject of a theft wouldn't be unloaded; the transport managers would hold the load until CSI attended usually within 3-hours. If CSI were unable to attend, transport managers were given basic forensic training for the handling and storage of boxes and products possibly touched. Police also ensured that any lorry theft at P&G received high priority attendance by CSI.



Evaluation:

	Jan/00 - Dec/00	Jan/01 - May/01	R E S P O N S E	May/01 - April/02
Crimes	18	14		20
Crimes CSI attended	5	3	17	

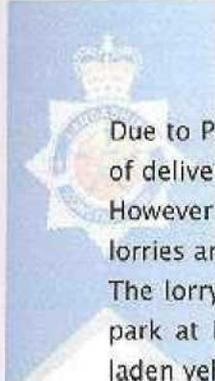
Response: In May/June two sting operations involving a firm that was well known for transporting P&G goods and a £10,000 load of P&G products. This vehicle was parked on the lay-by closest to the residential estate for two 3-night periods. Support unit staffed the operation and set up a number of surveillance points in and around the lorry awaiting a theft.

Evaluation: During the operation the vehicle had no activity around it and there were no thefts. This was a pivotal moment for the project and for POPS, because it showed that the lateral thinking in relation to targeting the Willi Betz wagons had worked far better than throwing Police officers at a problem.

The Year 2002

Response: In February construction of the lorry parks started, these parks were for both inbound and outbound goods. Each park would hold approximately seventy trailers. They would be fully enclosed with 24hour security; state of the art CCTV using domed cameras and barriers. Both parks have retractable traffic bollards stopping vehicles forcing its way in or out of the compound. P&G, after consultation looked at changing the delivery procedures to their site. Most deliveries now got two external sites from which they delivery to Skelmersdale. Direct deliveries have been cut in half, but P&G will still have approximately forty vehicles on site each day.

Evaluation: The lorry parks were built at a cost of £500,000 and were opened in May 2002. From 30/04/02 until to 07/05/03 there were no thefts from lorries related to P&G. On the 07/05/03 a small number of gypsy traveller children entered one of the lorry parks after the gate had been left open and stole two packets of Pringle crisps from the rear of an insecure wagon.

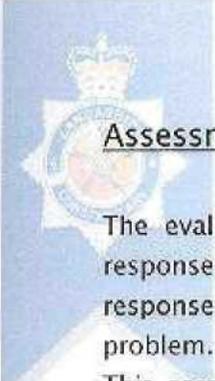


Due to P&G changing the way in which deliveries were handled (explained above) the number of deliveries to P&G that Willi Betz were conducting was cut to a third of their usual transport. However the number of overall deliveries has increased as the business continues to grow and lorries are still coming in from two internal sites.

The lorry park for inbound loads has yet to be utilised fully as Willi Betz still use the secure park at Knutsford for parking. However the outbound lorry park has in excess of 50 fully laden vehicles parked on it in any given 24-hour period.

Response: During the early part of 2002 a culmination of various departments within the Police led to the arrest (on 2 occasions) and conviction of the main offenders involved in the lorry trailers thefts.

Evaluation: These arrests were all due to information from Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS), which had been tasked in April 2001 to gather information on the lorry theft offenders. Two arrests could also be directly linked to members of the public who relayed information on offenders selling property door-to-door. Evidence from P&G was crucial in relation to batch numbers of products as we could prove that the items in their possession had come from a specific theft. The two 20-year-old offenders received 2-year sentences and the 44-year-old male who was buying the stolen property was given a 3-year sentence. All products, which were recovered during the arrest, were donated by P&G to a Police Bosnia charity.



Assessment/Evaluation

The evaluation of this project was conducted following the SARA model. Each year the responses that had been put in place were scanned and evaluated. Because of this the projects responses changed during each year in an attempt to effect the completion of the projects problem.

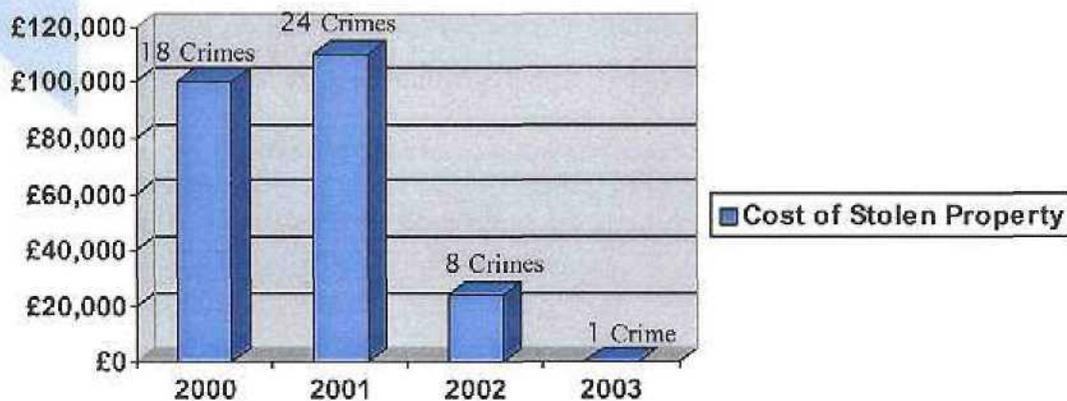
This assessment will demonstrate that the problem declined enough to call an end to the response - or that the response was sustainable and provided the Police with a safe exit strategy by leaving behind capable guardians that affected an area of the problem to such a degree as to influence one or more factors that contributed to the problem.

The location was a part of the project, which was looked at very closely and a number of different responses were put in place to combat the problem. The main effect on the location was the building of the lorry parks on the industrial estate. Although this park was already planned for the future, this project highlighted to P&G the importance of building this park and was brought forward by 12 months. It is recognised that by removing one of the focus points of the PAT triangle, the problem will cease to exist. However, there is a second approach to removing the problem and that is by adding a controller to one of the influencing factors. The lorry park was that control factor and this was added to the location aspect of the problem.

This has had a sustainable effect on the root cause of an influencing factor of the problem. This sustainability has been further enhanced by a change in P&G delivery strategy that has reduced the risk of crime by removing the opportunity.

The arrest of the key offenders committing this crime may have contributed to the decline. However Intelligence reports since then have identified a large network of offenders and property disposal routes for quick and easy movement of stolen property. As there has been no crime it is more likely that the project response has had a sustainable impact on this crime. The approach taken towards the victim had both a control and removal effect. The initial contact with the drivers of the lorries was an attempt to control their behaviour and help influence the risk of the crime. However other factors such as wages and lack of understanding of crime issues meant that this controlling factor failed. The removal of these lorries to a secure lorry park stopped the crime from occurring, as there was nothing for the offender to target. Hence, it is argued that the factors put in place have contributed to the sustainability of the project.

Crime Results



The above results although over a three-year period have shown that if the problem was left to continue, the possibility of the projected amount of theft in 2002 reaching and surpassing £100,000 was not inconceivable.

Hence the lorry parks at a cost of £500,000 would have paid for themselves in a 5-year period. For P&G this capital outlay paid off in such a short period makes excellent business sense.

The controlling factor of the lorry park and its direct link to vehicle crime has given the project a greater purpose. Currently a private contractor is being sought who will build a secure lorry trailer park within the industrial estate. Discussion with the local council is currently being undertaken to change the by-laws allowing parking overnight in the lay-bys if this could be achieved Police would be able to move vehicles into the lorry park again reducing the risk of crime.

Although the success criteria was based upon the reduction of the vehicle crime directly related to P&G. It became more apparent during the project that had we scanned correctly increase in business confidence in the area should have been measured.

There is no way to measure the reassurance to local businesses as no survey was completed before the project and surveys can be sometimes inaccurate. However, businesses contacting the Police as a direct result of the partnership with P&G can be measured. Ten businesses on the Pimbo industrial have currently contacted the Police and have been in negotiations and have undertaken to contribute money to securing the whole of the industrial estate by starting up a Business watch.