

Tilley Award 2005

Application form

The following form must be completed in full. Failure to do so will result in disqualification from the competition.

Please send completed application forms to Tricia Perkins at patricia.perkins@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

All entries must be received by noon on the 29 April 2005. Entries received after that date will not be accepted under any circumstances. Any queries on the application process should be directed to Tricia Perkins on 0207 035 0262.

1. Details of application

Title of the project Operation Dornier

Name of force/agency/CDRP: Cambridgeshire Constabulary

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Name of endorsing senior representatives(s) Julie Spence (Mrs)

Position and rank of endorsing senior representatives(s) Deputy Chief Constable

Full address of endorsing senior representatives(s) Cambridgeshire Constabulary, ACPO Staff Office,
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2. Summary of application

In no more than 400 words please use this space to describe your project. Include details of the problem that was addressed a description of the initiative, the main intervention principles and what they were designed to achieve, the main outcomes of project particularly in relation to the problem, evidence was used in designing the programme and how the project is evaluated.

Operation Dornier

Problem

Illegal hare coursing had become a major cause of fear and a sense of isolation within rural areas of Cambridgeshire.

In a survey conducted in March 2004 by the National Farmers Union East Anglia, more than half of all the respondents said they had been threatened or attacked by illegal hare coursers. Many of them felt the situation was getting worse and some felt it was getting out of control.

The impact is best summed up by one Cambridge farmer who said, *"I don't believe hare coursing has been taken seriously. It's not just the hares they kill or the damage they do. The farmers I speak to feel unbelievable anger and intimidation. Personally I think about them every day – I can't get away from the thought of them coursing every Sunday ..."*

Historically, Cambridgeshire Constabulary's response had been largely ineffective. Poor quality service had reduced confidence in the police and feelings of reassurance within rural areas. There was a need to grip the issue to make a difference.

Response

Following consultation with Cambridgeshire Countryside Watch and other key stakeholders in the rural community, an illegal hare coursing task force – Operation Dornier – was established to spearhead the force response. Led by a Bronze Commander, a dedicated team became experts in tackling illegal hare coursing.

The operation was intelligence led and was informed from the outset by the findings of a force wide illegal hare coursing problem profile.

Focus for activity was on:

- Driving consistent positive action
- Raising reassurance and confidence in rural areas
- Raising awareness
- Effective partnership working

An Operation Dornier Gold Group chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable and including partnership representation, met periodically to review progress and consider new initiatives.

Outcomes

- Increased reassurance and confidence
- Reduction in hare coursing incidents by 45%
- Police attendance at almost 90% of all incidents
- 191 persons reported for illegal hare coursing offences
- Effective partnership working – improved knowledge and communication
- Increased awareness of illegal hare coursing

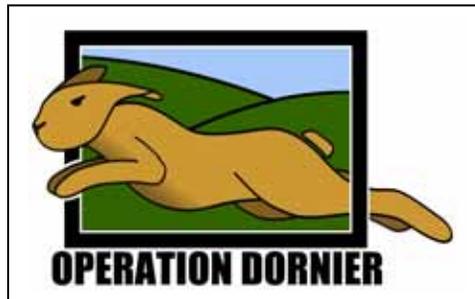
Evaluation

Results analysis was commissioned prior to the commencement of the operation. Data collected throughout the operation has been reviewed, together with feedback received following a wide ranging consultation exercise that reached out to police staff, partners and the public.

A detailed impact study has been compiled that has set out conclusions and recommendations that will inform future activity targeting illegal hare coursing.

3. Description of project

Describe the project following the guidance above in no more than 4000 words



Operation Dornier

The Problem

Never had the concerns of rural communities regarding anti-social behaviour been so loudly voiced within Cambridgeshire than they were in early 2004. Illegal hare coursing, and the associated intimidation, confrontation and fear, had become a primary concern of local landowners and farmers. It contributed significantly to the fear of crime and the sense of isolation felt by many rural community residents. There was growing disquiet amongst Cambridgeshire Countryside Watch, National Farmers Union, and Parish and District Councils at the ability of the Force to respond efficiently and effectively.

Illegal hare coursing involves groups of individuals trespassing on private land (often arable farmland) with lurcher type dogs, to chase and catch hares. The flat landscape of the Fens and the gentle slopes elsewhere in the county make Cambridgeshire a particularly attractive venue for coursers, the majority of whom travel considerable distances to come here.

The motive for the activity is generally not the taking of the game itself, but the money made through gambling on which dog will catch the hare. Bets are often made for thousands of pounds at a time, which helps to explain why coursers take their 'sport' very seriously and do not like being interrupted during the race.

Coursers are often present in large numbers and can be very intimidating to anyone challenging them. Farmers have been known to attempt to apprehend suspects, which has resulted in potentially violent confrontations. Crops and farm property have been damaged in the past, but difficulties with identifying individual offenders and their actions have meant that successful prosecutions are rare.

Historically, Cambridgeshire Constabulary has not gripped the issue and rural communities have lacked confidence in our ability to tackle illegal hare coursing in a professional manner. Ineffective policing responses to isolated reports of hare coursing throughout the Force had significantly damaged police/public relations. A localised response to a growing Force problem had resulted in a lack of co-ordination, ineffective local tactics and a rising number of hare coursers travelling into the County operating largely unchallenged throughout the Force.

During 2003/4 there were in excess of 1200 reported incidents relating to illegal hare coursing received by Cambridgeshire Constabulary. Only 2 arrests were made and 1 person reported for an offence during that period.

The Force has consulted closely with Cambridgeshire Countryside Watch to gauge rural concerns. A strategy was developed in partnership with Cambridgeshire Countryside Watch and the Crown Prosecution Service. A mission statement called for a focus on the issue of illegal hare coursing and delivery of an effective policing response to the problem, thereby achieving reductions in rural crime, disorder and the fear of crime in general.

A hare coursing task force – Operation Dornier – was established to spearhead the force response to illegal hare

coursing, monitored and reviewed at a strategic level by a Gold Group including representatives from key partner agencies including Cambridgeshire Countryside Watch and the National Farmers Union and chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable.

Evidence

In order to inform the work of Operation Dornier it was vital that strategic analysis was carried out on illegal hare coursing to enable a deep understanding of the problem and to drive the adoption of a genuine and effective intelligence led approach. A forcewide illegal hare coursing problem profile was commissioned and prepared prior to the start of Operation Dornier. Police data was obtained from Command & Control 3, crime records, custody records and entries recorded on the force intelligence system (I.N.T.R.E.P.I.D.). The time period covered for incidents was from 01/04/02 until 31/07/04, and from 01/11/03 to 12/08/04 for intelligence.

What proved to be a comprehensive and detailed analysis document focusing on key elements of location, victim and offender, revealed much about the nature and extent of the problem. The document recognised and took into account factors impacting on the reliability of information analysed, factors that made it difficult to obtain an accurate and objective view of the true picture.

It was recognised, for example, that the statistics may include incidents relating to legal coursing events, and that duplication of incidents may also occur when they are reported by more than one person.

Location

Analysis as to geographical spread indicated that illegal hare coursing was a widespread problem throughout the Force. Between 1 April 2004 and 31 July 2004, there were 3,019 reported incidents of hare coursing across the Force. The majority of the incidents, 85%, occurred in Southern Division (52%), and Central Division (33%).

Temporal factors were also taken into account to broaden understanding of the problem, analysing incidents by month, by day of the week and by hour of the day. The busiest time period for incidents being recorded was between 09.00am and 4.00pm, accounting for 75% of all incidents. The peak period was between 12.00pm and 2.00pm, accounting for one third of all incidents. Two thirds of the incidents were recorded on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday, with Sunday being the busiest day with 30% of all incidents. A detailed analysis was carried out of all incidents recorded in October and November 2003, which identified hotspot locations across the force for targeted patrol by Operation Dornier and other force officers, highlighting important detail including access and escape routes.

Victims

Analysis indicated that it was predominantly farmers, landowners and farm employees who were the victims of illegal hare coursing. A significant number had suffered previous hare coursing incidents that were not reported and indicated that the same coursers had visited before. Frequent callers were identified as key points of contact to be consulted during the operation. A survey of rural Community Beat Managers carried out as part of this problem profile indicated that the majority of farmers just wanted the coursers to leave their land as quickly as possible. Many did not wish to give evidence against coursers due to fear of reprisals. Most farmers were afraid of retaliation by the coursers, believing that they may commit further offences such as theft from farms, criminal damage, and arson to buildings and fields. Further intelligence from rural Community Beat Managers indicated that the issue of confrontation between farmers and coursers was much more serious than analyses of incidents alone suggest. Victims of illegal hare coursing were reluctant to report incidents and felt it necessary to confront coursers as they lacked confidence in the ability of the police to deal effectively with the issue.

Offender

Offenders predominantly commit illegal hare coursing offences during the hours of daylight. Analysis illustrated that the weekend was the busiest period of the week for illegal hare coursing activity, accounting for 50% of all incidents for the period April 2002 to July 2004, this rose to 63% including Fridays. Analysis of intelligence and incidents indicated that the majority of illegal coursers were travelling into Cambridgeshire from counties as far away as Kent. Known offenders were identified, profiled and any association networks highlighted. A noticeable number of offenders were from the travelling community and gave caravan site addresses. Vehicles frequently associated with illegal hare coursing activity were identified, along with meeting places for offenders.

Analysis of incidents illustrated that little positive police action was taken against offenders located at the scene of alleged illegal hare coursing activity. Where action was taken, only small fines were imposed which clearly did not act as a deterrent.

Response

Responding to what was a thorough and detailed problem profile and to views expressed within the rural community, it was clear that:

- Illegal hare coursing was a major cause of fear of crime and a sense of isolation in rural communities
- Previous police performance had been largely ineffective and was impacting on confidence and reassurance within rural communities
- There was a need to 'grip' the issue to make a difference
- There was a need for positive and consistent action to tackle a recognised significant issue
- There was a need for a co-ordinated and 'joined up' partnership response

Set Up

Operation Dornier commenced activity on the 6th September 2004, initially to run for a three month period with any extension dependant on a review at the end of that time.

A dedicated team managed by a Bronze Commander, the operation drove forward an ethos of positive policing in response to all hare coursing reports.

Leadership

The bronze commander acted as ambassador and was involved in all aspects of the operation, including:

- Driving community engagement
- Driving positive and consistent action by police staff across the force
- Monitoring enforcement performance and quality of prosecution file submissions
- Driving and co-ordinating a programme of awareness raising across the force
- Key point of contact with partner agencies, driving a 'joined up' approach
- Key point of contact with the media
- Key point of contact to deal with community concerns
- Managing a budget in excess of £50,000

The Bronze Commander was a member of a Gold Strategy Group chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable and with partner representation, which was set up to monitor, guide and review progress of the operation.

Meeting periodically, the Gold Strategy Group has authorised changes in tactics when considered appropriate as part of the review process.

- Powers to seize and retain dogs were considered and authority granted to use the tactic following legal advice
- A decision was made to extend the operation beyond its initial three month period following review of activity and the evaluation of community reassurance
- Ongoing review of the needs of rural communities led the group to authorise and plan for the setting up of a similar operation for the following season, amending the intended exit strategy to a pause strategy

Team Membership

Working under the leadership of the Bronze Commander was an office administrator and a Rural Community Action Team.

The office administrator drove the intelligence led approach adopted by the operation, researching and analysing illegal hare coursing activity on a daily, 'real time' basis allowing more effective directed deployment of resources through early identification of trends and movement patterns of repeat offenders and prolific coursing vehicles. He

also monitored performance and produced performance data, as well as ensuring relentless follow up of all hare coursing reports, monitoring the quality of response to all incidents and contacting callers to enhance quality of service and reassurance.

The Rural Community Action Team comprised of three police officers and was responsible for working in a directed, intelligence led capacity. Providing cover during daylight hours seven days a week, the team focused on tackling illegal hare coursing activity, high visibility reassurance patrols and engagement with rural community members and partners. The team operated in hot spot areas directed by the office administrator, developing expert knowledge in dealing with illegal hare coursing activity and guiding the activity of other front line staff attending and/ or dealing with incidents, whenever possible in person.

The operation worked to a set of clearly defined objectives:

- To work closely with regional Forces and partner agencies, adopting an intelligence-led joined up approach
- To provide a positive, appropriate and timely police response to all reported incidents of illegal hare coursing in the County.
- To reduce the fear of crime in rural areas.
- To monitor the initial handling, the front line response and then the follow up to illegal hare coursing reports, providing guidance where appropriate to maintain provision of consistent and quality service provision.
- To raise awareness of hare coursing issues within the police and other members of the Criminal Justice System.
- To deal with any offences revealed in a robust and consistent manner.
- To adopt an energetic marketing strategy that focuses on the positive action being taken and proactively highlights success.
- To develop an exit strategy that will provide the foundations on which to build and maintain the long-term effective tackling of illegal hare coursing.

Key steps towards getting it right

Call handling improvements

A key early initiative was to improve the way in which calls reporting illegal hare coursing activity were handled. Analysis of previous calls for service and feedback from the public highlighted poor past performance, characterised by a lack of understanding, slow response times and a perceived lack of interest.

A focus of improvement was the Force Control Room. Early intervention was essential and prior to the commencement of the operation, a Standard Operating Procedure was implemented that embedded a consistent, methodical and positive response to all illegal hare coursing reports received in the Force Control Room. The procedure incorporated a set of questions to be asked by FCR staff thereby ensuring consistency and the gathering of better quality information. It further set down a Trigger Plan for implementation following completion of the set questions.

Force Control Room teams received awareness raising training in relation to illegal hare coursing and the Standard Operating Procedure prior to the commencement of the operation. Training was delivered in partnership with CCSW and was reinforced by the issue of an aide memoire for reference.

Raise awareness

It was clear from analysis that lack of understanding regarding hare coursing, its impact and legislation available to tackle it, was not limited to FCR staff. Rather, there was lack of understanding permeating through the organisation.

Much work was undertaken to raise awareness of front line police staff:

- Circulation of an Aide Memoire
- A programme of awareness raising training
- Incorporation of hare coursing and other rural issues into the probationer training programme, in partnership with CCSW
- Front line staff 'coached' at every opportunity by Operation Dornier team members

Work was also undertaken to raise awareness amongst partner agencies and the public as part of a 'joined up' approach to improve effectiveness.

- Consultation took place with CPS
- A briefing paper was circulated to all magistrates in Cambridgeshire

Intelligence led approach

Operation Dornier was an intelligence led initiative in its truest form.

- Informed from the outset by findings of a strategic force problem profile
- Driven by the work of an office administrator, whose focus was on the daily gathering, analysis and dissemination of 'real time' intelligence

An intelligence 'Matrix' was developed and maintained throughout the operation, fed by information from a variety of sources. The document provided valuable, accurate information 'fast time' to the team, enabling early identification of repeat offenders, hot spot locations and patterns of offending.

A dedicated voicemail hot line number encouraged members of the public to report information in confidence.

Weekly intelligence bulletins were prepared and circulated to Divisional Intelligence Units across the force for dissemination to front line staff.

For the first time in Cambridgeshire, analytical information relating to illegal hare coursing became routinely considered as part of both Level 1 and Level 2 Tasking and Co-ordinating processes.

The capacity to collect community intelligence was improved. Structures put in place identified 'fast time' community needs and enabled effective response.

Partnership Approach

Effective engagement with partner agencies was a key foundation stone on which the success of the operation was built, a consistent factor driving activity throughout the planning, response and evaluation phases.

- Cambridgeshire Countryside Watch and the National Farmers Union were represented on the Gold Strategy Group that co-ordinated the work of the operation
- Operation Dornier funded the use by CCSW of a dedicated texting facility that sharpened communication links between the police and CCSW members during ongoing hare coursing incidents
- CCSW communication networks were routinely used by Operation Dornier to circulate other information and intelligence to the rural community, as well as performance updates
- CCSW regional officers constantly monitored community tension in rural areas, reporting any concerns and enabling a rapid response through arrangement of meetings to quell any signs of dissatisfaction
- In partnership with CCSW, Open Meetings were arranged periodically in rural areas across Cambridgeshire to promote Operation Dornier
- Operation Dornier team members have attended CCSW Management Meetings and the Annual General Meeting

Close links were also forged from the outset with the Crown Prosecution Service as a means of securing a positive and consistent prosecution policy.

- A hare coursing champion was identified within CPS
- Early consultation with the identified champion enabled adoption of an agreed approach regarding requirements of evidence and legislation to be utilised
- Dedicated CPS points of contact were identified on each Division who worked closely with the Operation Dornier team, reviewing all case files and guiding the work of all prosecutors across Cambridgeshire, ensuring a consistent high standard of prosecution.
- Regular contact was maintained with the CPS to review the progress of cases and tactics adopted
- Whenever practicable, Operation Dornier staff attended court in person to provide support and advice to CPS lawyers

Positive Action

Pulsing through the operation was a determination to drive a dynamic, creative and positive approach.

- Early and regular use was made of the Force Air Support Unit which flew over 60 hours in support of the operation
- Dynamic and ground breaking use was made of available legislation to punish offenders and deter offending, the operation spearheading use of powers to seize and then apply for forfeiture of dogs, vehicles and cash and to disqualify offenders from driving

Promoting Success

A marketing and Media Strategy focused on raising awareness of the operation, internally and externally, and on proactively promoting successes achieved.

A dedicated press office point of contact was identified and worked closely with the Bronze Commander to drive effective engagement with the media. Membership on the Gold Strategy Group ensured involvement in all decision-making processes.

- Members of the media were invited out on patrol with Operation Dornier staff
- Specialist rural publications were targeted including NFU and other farming magazines
- The Force web site has a page dedicated to the operation
- Internally, regular articles have been included in the Force ' Blueprint' magazine

Successful court cases have been publicised with particular energy as a means of both increasing reassurance and deterring offending.

Pause Strategy

This provides the framework around which to maintain delivery of effective intelligence led police response to hare coursing incidents following suspension of the operation during the close season.

Focus of the strategy is on:

- Continued consultation with rural communities
- Maintaining call handling procedures
- Maintaining an intelligence led approach
- Delivery of refresher training
- Continued pro-active media engagement

Achievements

Operation Dornier has proved a tremendous success and far exceeded expectations. All of the objectives of the operation were met.

- A citizen focused service was delivered, obtaining the support and confidence of the community
- Hare coursing incidents across the force were reduced by 45 %

- Police officers attended almost 90 % of all hare coursing reports
- A total of 191 people were reported for illegal hare coursing offences
- Significant court successes have been achieved, including the forfeiture of dogs, vehicles and cash and the imposition of driving disqualifications
- Fines totalling £28,000 have so far been imposed

Evaluation

At the beginning of the Operation, the importance of results analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of the Operation was recognised. A dedicated Intelligence Analyst was identified and a 'Terms of Reference' document was agreed, detailing the 'Measures of Effectiveness' and who was responsible for collecting the data for each measure.

An interim results analysis document was produced, evaluating the Operation between September 2004 and January 2005 and the final results analysis was recently completed, reviewing the entire period of the Operation. For each area analysed, conclusions and recommendations were made. In addition to results analysis, other analytical techniques were used such as crime pattern analysis, network analysis and risk analysis. All the analysis carried out followed guidelines in accordance with the National Intelligence Model. Throughout the Results Analysis process, there was regular liaison between the Bronze Commander and Intelligence Analyst.

An impact study of the Operation was carried out, reviewing the following areas:

- Volume of Incidents

This analysed the number of incidents received during the Operation on a monthly basis, and compared them to historical data. External factors were also considered along with volume of incidents data from surrounding Forces.

- Number of Incidents Attended & Geographic Spread

Attendance rates at incidents were analysed, along with the attendance and involvement of the Air Support Unit. Analysis particularly focused on the effectiveness of team working, partnership and communication. Communications between members of the public and the police were analysed, and a telephone survey was conducted to members of the public who had reported incidents. All members of the Operation were interviewed at the Operation base to obtain a real feel for how incidents were handled. Methods of reassuring the rural community were also taken into account, such as regular reassurance patrols and the relentless follow up of incidents. The locations of incidents throughout the Force were analysed and compared with previous analysis.

- Enforcement

All the partner agencies were contacted to obtain feedback. A survey was conducted with front line police staff to establish views on the effectiveness of the prosecution policy. Involvement by the CPS was essential throughout the operation and the working relationship adopted was reviewed. The methods used to inform other members of the criminal justice system were also considered. An assessment of persons reported for illegal hare coursing and court results was an important component of this analysis.

- Intelligence

The effectiveness of the 'intelligence matrix' used throughout the Operation, and its dissemination, was reviewed with all the team members, along with their day to day input. The wider distribution of intelligence bulletins and other information across the whole Force was also taken into account. The number of intelligence items submitted onto the intelligence system were checked and compared with previous periods. The quality of the content of submissions was also considered, along with intelligence gaps.

- Marketing and Media Strategy

A wide variety of sources were contacted to gauge effectiveness of the operation. Front line police officers were asked to complete survey forms. Further survey forms were completed at public meetings and the fact that many public meetings were held to inform and reassure the public was important. All members of Countryside Watch were

sent a survey form, and 101 completed forms were received and analysed. The number of press releases throughout the operation, and their content was considered, along with the variety of media outlets reached. Web sites (Force and external) were also monitored for articles. The strategy in place with the Press Office was reviewed and feedback obtained. Many letters of praise were received in response to the Operation, and such comments were noted.

- Risk Analysis

The aim of this analysis was to support assessment of the scale of the risk posed by hare coursing to potential victims, the general public, and the police. Factors to be considered if not running future operations, were also included.

- Offender Profile and Links to Crime

As the Force now has data on offenders, analysis was carried out to understand more about hare coursers and how they operate. PNC records for a sample of offenders were also checked to draw inferences on their level of criminality. Other types of rural crime were analysed to consider possible links with hare coursing.

The results analysis highlighted areas to learn from and improve upon in the future, including better intelligence sharing protocols with surrounding forces. It further highlighted success factors that were transferable as best practice for use in other operations.

All conclusions reached and recommendations made in the results analysis document will be considered by the Gold Strategy Group as part of the planning process for the year ahead. Further strategic analysis has been commissioned to inform activity during 2005/2006.

A mark of the success of this operation was the many letters of appreciation that were received from farmers. One stated that, "The Operation has given me my weekends back, instead of having to chase coursers. Thank you very much and long may the Operation continue." Another thanked the operation, "for the marvellous work they have undertaken in effectively dealing with the illegal hare coursers in our area Their efforts have restored my faith in rural policing."