

## **City of Kamloops RCMP Using Analysts Skills for Crime Reduction**

### **Overview:**

The City of Kamloops, located in the Interior Region of British Columbia. It has a population of approximately 85,000 that continues to grow each year. It is located on the highways and transportation corridors between Calgary, Alberta and Vancouver, British Columbia.

Policing in the City of Kamloops is provided by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police under a Provincial and Municipal policing contract. The local police compliment consists of 134 sworn police officers, 1 civilian RCMP member, 65 municipal support staff, 4 federal public servants, and several temporary support people.

The current Intelligence Team consists of 1 sworn police officer, one RCMP civilian intelligence analyst, and one municipal crime analyst.

### **What was the nature of the problem ?**

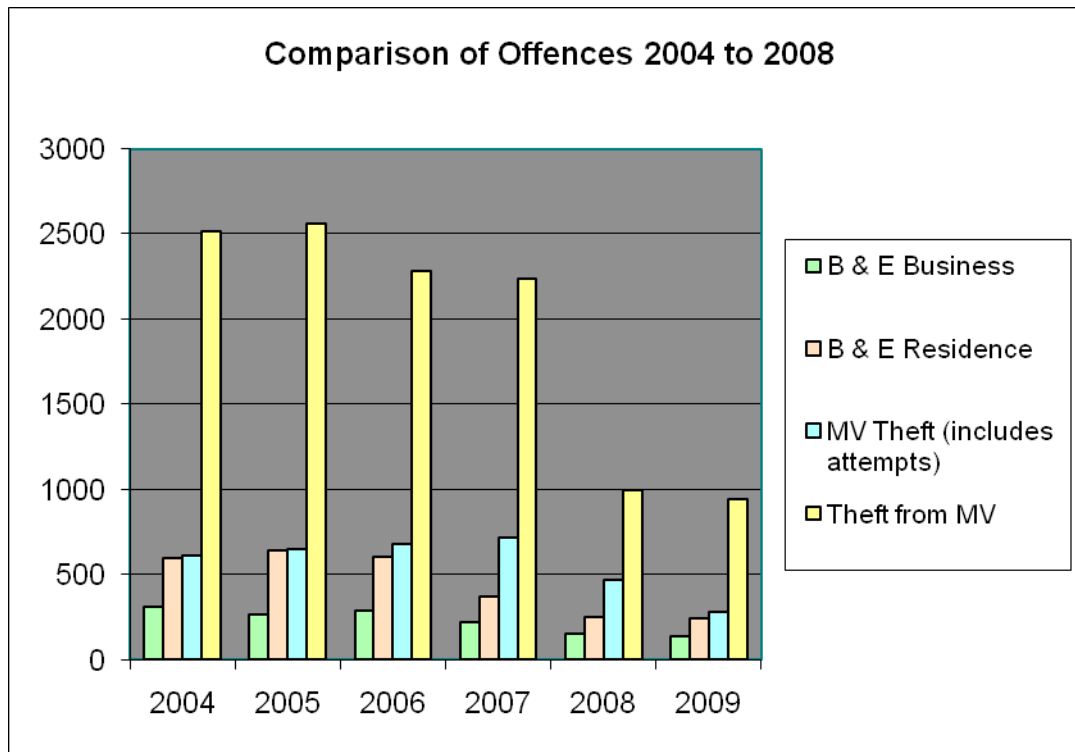
Prior to 2005, the Kamloops Detachment of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police were experiencing high crime rates, as well as facing more violent criminally active individuals and gang associates in the community. The public were often critical of Police response to calls for service, public complaints against Police actions were frequent and relationships with other Criminal Justice Agencies were strained. The high volume of calls for service resulted in Members becoming reactive, investigations were often superficial, clearance rates were low, public support was waning and staff morale was suffering.

### **How was the problem identified?**

The arrival in 2005 of a new management team provided an opportunity to review the current state of policing in the community which lead to community consultations and strategic planning to set a new course for the years ahead. Included in the consultation process were determining strategic priorities, searching for root causes of the problems, identifying partners within the criminal justice system and the community.

In addition, the new Team Commander consulted with Dr. Darryl PLECAS of the University of the Fraser Valley, in regards to Prolific Offender and crime reduction initiatives that were at the time being researched by the University of the Fraser Valley.

While engaging University students in the initial stages of a research initiative, the Detachment recognized that a small number of offenders was responsible for a significant proportion of crime in the community, and that records did not always reflect the full depth of offender activity. A list of the most prolific offenders was determined after consultations with staff and research of available data bases.



**What methods, data and information sources were used to analyze the problem? And what was the history of the problem?**

The problems were much larger than could be addressed all at once, and a focus had to be made on which problems could be addressed immediately and provide the most impact.

In 2006, with a vision of incorporating evidence based Crime Reduction into Kamloops Detachment's community policing philosophy, the Detachment Commander, with the support of RCMP Senior Management, engaged in a more formal partnership with the University of the Fraser Valley, where criminology students were allowed to work in the live policing records system environment on a project of mutual interest, identifying individuals prone to criminal activity.

Research by the students revealed consistent trends and characteristics of our 131 most prolifically active criminals, most of whom had been identified previously by the Criminal Intelligence Unit and Members of the Detachment, as likely being prolific.

The research also identified a new problem, unknown prior to the beginning of the task, that in fact the Criminal Records in Ottawa was missing approximately 32% (almost a third) of criminal code convictions of the 131 offenders. The reason identified by the Criminal Intelligence Unit, was that the offenders had been released from custody prior to obtaining their fingerprints for the conviction.

**What did the analysis reveal about the nature and extent of the problem?**

Common characteristics of the offenders' offending revealed that most had drug related convictions, had no employment, had served time in a custodial institution, had a record of property crime (usually to support an addiction) and a record of committing criminal acts while under sentence for other convictions (breaching). Additionally, most of the offenders had been in families within the community that had been offending for years. For example, there was a set of brothers on the list, whose father (deceased) would have also been considered prolific in the previous years. There was a father and son on the list as well.

In addition to focusing on the offenders, the Criminal Intelligence Unit also looked at the statistics and offence counts for various crime types to find which crime types were causing the most problems - both within the community (victims) and calls for service. One of the main areas to consider when identifying the crime types was to ensure that it was something that the Members could have an impact on.

Baselines were obtained to measure a variety of areas :

WITH REGARDS TO INDIVIDUAL OFFENDERS

COURTS - Stay of Proceedings / withdrawn charges as a percentage of all charges, Convictions, Length of sentences, Total number of charges

PROBATION - Total number of breaches, Total days on orders within the community

CUSTODY - Total days in custody

POLICE - Total number of negative police contacts, Total number of all police contacts, Total time between Police contacts, total time in the community not on any orders, male / female, Place of birth, Date of birth, Age, Age at first conviction, age at last conviction, Employed, in School, Drug or Alcohol addiction etc....

WITH REGARDS TO 5 CRIME TYPES

Numbers of calls to service for the crime types

Number of charges in the particular crime types

Clearance rates

A set of criteria was developed by the Criminal Intelligence Unit to define a Prolific Offender. There were a number of reasons for this. The first being that the Detachment needed some way to measure offenders against each other to see who the most Prolific were. There are a number of offenders who have committed a small amount of crime, and to ensure that our project would have those who committed the most a baseline needed to be developed.

Additionally, in legal consideration, the Detachment wanted to ensure that there would be a criteria that would prove that we had considered all of the factors in choosing a particular individual, and that it could not be seen as a personal attack against an individual.

The Crime Reduction that was followed in Kamloops was based on the United Kingdom's Prolific Offender Program, which was based on the theory that a small number of offenders were responsible for a large proportion of crime committed. Kamloops also used the knowledge that a large amount of crime is committed a small number of places as well. Therefore, the crime reduction model that the Detachment followed was: if a small number of criminals are responsible for a large proportion of crime AND a large proportion of crime is committed in a small amount of places within the city - then by focusing on the high crime areas and the prolific offenders, we would be able to reduce the crime rate.

Data was collected from a variety of government sources including the Police RMS (Records Management System), the courts (JUSTIN) and correctional institutes (CORNET). This information was analyzed to further define and set baselines for future comparisons for the project which was to be implemented for three years.

The research that was compiled and analyzed by the students was used for the purpose of developing a standard profile of the Criminal History on each offender identified as a Prolific Offender. One of the three practicum students that was initially sent to Kamloops on the research project in 2006, was hired on contract to develop and maintain current and complete profiles of the offenders, track information on them and provide intelligence to the Members of the Detachment in order for the Members to proactively focus their efforts on the offenders.

The Crown Prosecutors were consulted at this point, reviewing the profiles and ensuring that the details achieved through the research would be acceptable to the courts. Additionally, the Prosecutors were informed of the plans of the Detachment to enforce all conditions of the offenders, and requested to be a partner within the plan.

Provincial Community Corrections (Probation), Federal Parole Services and Provincial Corrections (Jail) were requested to be partners of the initiative. Most of the offenders chosen were already on some form of release from the courts, and therefore it was believed that a regular sharing of information and intelligence between the various justice agencies would ensure that everyone had the most up-to-date information on the offenders. Additionally, with the proactive enforcement of any court imposed and enforceable conditions, the authority of probation and parole officers could be strengthened as well.

A team of regular Members was put together to ensure proactive enforcement of the offenders could be obtained. As previously mentioned there was a high rate of calls for service and Members on the Watch were already stretched to the maximum on regular calls. The new team that was developed was named KART (Kamloops Action Response Team). Their mandate was to focus their energies on enforcing conditions and writing reports to crown counsel on new convictions for the Prolific Offenders as well as some high priority offenders. Through curfew checks, street checks and projects they would proactively focus on the offenders.

A team of regular Members was put together to focus on property crime as the statistics provided by the Criminal Intelligence Unit had suggested that the property crime and crimes associated to it (such as drugs, weapons & violence) was causing the high rates of crime, calls for service and public dissatisfaction (due to victimization).

An Intelligence Analyst was hired to focus on the Crime Reduction Initiative, and in particular to develop and maintain current and complete profiles of the offenders, track information on them and provide intelligence to the Members of the Detachment in order for the Members to proactively focus their efforts on the offenders, and to liaison with each of the partners to ensure the flow of information on the offenders was provided to the partner agencies as well as to the general duty members and all special teams.

The first year (2007) of the project focused on enforcement and proactive projects to ensure that the offenders who were committing new offences or breaching court orders were brought before the courts. However, in keeping with the Prolific Offender program within the United Kingdom, our initial plan was to slowly phase-in other community partners to deal with the root causes of their criminality.

In addition to enforcement on the prolific offenders, the KART team also focused their efforts on the high crime areas within Kamloops. Through the use of statistics and based on the numbers and crime types, the KART team identified two high crime areas within Kamloops. Based on sharing of information with another Detachment that had a similar problem, the KART team created a "Red Zone" area, which was susceptible to high rates of drug and street trade worker activities. In consultation with Crown Prosecutors, any offenders that were committing crimes within the "Red Zone" area, are given conditions that include a No Go of the geographical area either by the courts or when released by the Officer on a PTA or UTA. In addition, several undercover stings were initiated by KART and the drug unit which focused on sex trade workers, johns and drug dealers.

In the second year (2008) it was initially planned that the Detachment would reach out for other community partners to focus on the root causes of crime for the prolific offenders, however, in February 2008, Kamloops City Detachment was chosen by the Province to participate in a pilot project - Prolific Offender Management, with 5 other places across the Province of British Columbia. The project was to bring together all of those agencies and services that could be offered to an offender, along with the criminal justice agencies to work on "wrap-around" services that would aid the offender in leaving the drugs and crime scene. Because of the already established partnerships with the Criminal Justice agencies and some other services already established with the Detachment, Kamloops was able to quickly establish the Prolific Offender Management Team and start working on changing the life course of the prolific offenders. Included in the Prolific Offender Management Team: Community Corrections (Probation), Federal Corrections (Parole), Corrections (Provincial), Ministry of housing and Social Development, Federal and Provincial Crown Prosecutors, Mental Health and Addictions, Ministry of Children and Family Development, Adult Forensics and BC Housing.

Lastly, the new Crime Reduction Initiative required more communication and partnering with other agencies and community members where required. The new attitude of the Detachment

became - here is the problem ? Whose problem is it ? And who can we call to help with the problem ? For any identified problem a consultative approach is undertaken that includes any intelligence, information and analysis available by our criminal intelligence and crime analysts. But also with the public and community through various committees, public surveys and community forums.

### **Challenges to the plan?**

One of the main challenges to the plan was taking Members from general duty for the KART and Property Crime Units. Taking uniformed members off the road and placing them into specialty sections, when the uniformed members were already tasked with a heavy workload, was a hard sell. However, after the first year, with the large reduction in calls for service in the 5 crime type areas and also for all crime types, a presentation was made to all of the staff at the Detachment and the members on the road could see the results were affecting their work load. As a result they are eagerly involved in the initiative. Additionally, as time progressed, general duty members were also included in curfew checks, street checks and general enforcement of all the prolific offenders.

A second challenge to our initiative was to overcome the perception that the police were focusing on enforcement and warehousing of offenders. With the start of the Prolific Offender Management Project, the inclusion of multiple partners that could aid in case management of the offender and helping them out of the current lifestyle. The Prolific Offender Management Team meets once a month at which time agencies are able to offer alternatives for the offender to change behaviour and deal with addiction related issues.

### **What were the results ? What degree of impact did the response plan have on this problem?**

The program has three separate measures.

The first is the main five crime types where totals calls for service & clearance rates of these crime types are measured from 2006 to present. The types were:

- Theft from motor vehicles
- Theft of motor vehicles
- Attempted theft of motor vehicles
- Break and enter - business
- Break and enter - Residence

The second is that all crime rates for all offences are monitored and measured.

The third is the impact on offender, which was broken down as follows:

#### GENERAL STATS

- Total offending per year per offender
- Total offender per year as a group
- Total time in custody per year per offender

Total time in custody per year as a group  
 Total length of sentences per year per offender  
 Total length of sentences per year as a group  
 Total time out of custody per year per offender  
 Total time out of custody per year as a group

**LIFESTYLE**

Is offender now working?  
 Is offender now in school ?  
 Has offender taken addiction counselling or counselling ?  
 Has offender moved out of town ?  
 If so, is the offender still offending in the new town?

All of this information is kept on the group as a whole as well.

Evaluation of the Crime Reduction Strategy is done through the Criminal Intelligence Section, however, there have also been independent public surveys through the University of the Fraser Valley to gauge the public perception of the police. One survey was conducted in 2006 and another in 2008.

Overall, the Crime Reduction Strategy was more effective at reducing crime than ever expected, and in the five identified crime types, by the end of the current planned evaluation period between 2007 and 2009, there was a 55% reduction in calls for service.

<b>Crime</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>B&amp;E Business</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>36% decrease</b>
<b>B&amp;E Residence</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>34% decrease</b>
<b>Theft from Auto</b>	<b>2241</b>	<b>998</b>	<b>943</b>	<b>58% decrease</b>
<b>Theft of Auto</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>57% decrease</b>
<b>Attempt Theft of Auto</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>75% decrease</b>
<b>Total Calls to Service for above</b>	<b>3545</b>	<b>1866</b>	<b>1599</b>	<b>1946 less files</b>
<b>Percent change for all 5 crime types</b>				<b>-55%</b>

According to Statistics Canada, there was a reduction of 31% between 2007 and 2008 for all crime types (Numbers for 2009 are not released by Statistics Canada until July 2010).

9 Offenders have received Federal Sentences of two years or more.  
 Lengths of sentences have increased in length by approximately 30 %.  
 Between 2006 and 2009 41 of the 72 offenders have taken some form of addiction counselling.  
 Between 2006 and 2009 4 of our offenders have upgraded their education.  
 Between 2006 and 2009 12 of our offenders have secured jobs.

As a result of the changes we have made we have realized a significant reduction in calls for police services and targeted property offences. Serious crime clearance rates have increased along with drug enforcement and weapons offences (which are proactive crime types and expected to increase). In addition public confidence and staff morale have both increased.

#### Occurrences

2007	- 143 (133 calls for service & 10 street checks)
2008	- 93 (88 calls for service & 5 street checks)
2009	- 102 (93 calls for service & 9 street checks)

*There were 1946 fewer reported cases or a 55% reduction in two years*

#### **Lessons Learned**

No initiative or program can be managed without learning lessons along the way. In the case at hand, what we have learned during the run of our current initiative is that:

The use of accurate empirical data related to criminal history and patterns of offending, combined with thorough analysis, pays off in the long run. The effective use of crime data analysis as well as intelligence (tactical) analysis, can realize significant cost savings in making investigations focus more clearly and by improving clearance rates.

There must be support (buy in) from the top. In all of our work on putting our crime reduction initiative forward it was clear that if there is no support from the leadership, it will not be supported by others. We found that many who were somewhat slow to get on board were quickly engaged once they began to realize the commitment of management and by seeing the results.

We learned that new ideas and initiatives have to be considered with an open mind. We found that as the members became more engaged with the idea of using the analysts, they were constantly coming up with new ideas and questions as to where the analytical information could be used. Some of the most innovative ideas (red zones, bait cars, etc) were brought to the program by the members.

Partnerships are the foundation of the Strategy. Clearly the success of the program is in a large part due to the success of the partnerships established to work towards a common goal of community safety and crime reduction. Not only have the analyst team built stronger partnerships than before, but information sharing amongst partner agencies is better than before as well.

Persistence pays off. We realized that every time we pulled a team off our work on prolific offenders, or allowed the focus of our work to drift to other issues, we lost time and effectiveness in our program. Through the analysts data we can prove that time and again seemingly small diversions did have an impact on the success of our program.



## **Conclusion**

No one person or team within our policing environment can claim the success of our Crime Reduction Initiative in Kamloops. It is all about team work and everyone being a part of the program to reduce crime in the community. That said, there is no doubt whatsoever that the work specifically performed by our criminal intelligence analysts has provided a rock solid foundation that has guided and given credibility to our program.

As a result of the Crime Reduction Initiative, Kamloops RCMP has realized a significant reduction in calls for police services and targeted property offences. Serious crime clearance rates have increased along with those regarding drug enforcement and weapons offences. In addition, public confidence and staff morale have both increased.

The Initiative is *continually* evaluated through the Criminal Intelligence Unit and the numbers are then verified by Statistics Canada. Dr. Darryl Plecas, Professor of Criminology at the University of the Fraser Valley said in May, 2009, "*is is hard to imagine - and I'm not exaggerating in the slightest here - that any jurisdiction on the planet has been as successful at reducing crime as Kamloops.*"

Without a doubt, the hinge pin of our Detachment and Community success, has been the application of sound analytical strategies by our team of Crime and Intelligence analysts.

## **Agency and Officer Information**

### Key Project Team Members

Superintendent Jim Begley, Detachment Commander  
Inspector Yves Lacasse, Operations Officer  
Cpl. Sharon McWilliam, Intelligence Team Co-ordinator  
C/M Sarah Palmer, Crime and Intelligence Analyst  
M/E Christine Strudwick, Crime Analyst

### Current Project Contact Person

Corporal Darren Michels  
Crime Intelligence Unit  
Kamloops RCMP  
560 Battle Street, Kamloops, B.C.  
V2C 6K4  
250-828-3000  
darren.michels@rcmp-grc.gc.ca