

TILLEY AWARD 2002 SUMMARY

Title – Operation Rhino (A new Partnership Approach)

Nature of Problem

Trespass, vandalism and anti social behaviour on the London Underground, District line — Barking to Upminster.

Evidence Used to Define-

- Police Command and Control data
- London Underground Data/Records
- Interviews with Train Drivers/staff
- Information from the Community
- Crime and Arrest Reports
- Offenders profiles
- Case Disposal of Reported Officers
- Track surveys by Crime Reduction Officers
- The traditional Police and Rail Industry response and impact

The Goal

To reduce the number of incidents of ___ trespass, Vandalism and Anti Social Behaviour.

The Response

The development of a problem solving partnership approach. The response is based on six key components.

- Problem solving
- The Community/Railstaff
- Crime Reduction Techniques
- Education/Awareness
- Police Deployment
- Development of Information cycle

The Metropolitan Police Air Support Unit are partners. The helicopter reduces height and hovers over key hotspot areas along the route. This is enhanced with a publicity campaign indicating that the aircraft is capable of sighting problems before offenders can spot the aircraft.

Awareness of the potentially serious consequences is given by the media including television news reports.

Schools are key partners in promoting awareness. The most prolific hotspot area was subject to a local partnership response in Nov 2000 involving many partnerships.

Access to the tracks was via an elderly persons housing area, the residents were subject of serious anti social behaviour by the youths who were responsible for stone throwing at trains. A Community meeting was held which attracted over seventy residents. The response was formulated at this meeting and included environmental changes and security systems for the residents.

The Impact

The impact of the co-ordinated partnership response is significant having achieved a 47% decrease in incidents between Barking & Upminster. This equates to approximately £0.5 million in cost of damage to Rolling Stock, and approximately £0.5 million in savings from lost train services due to delays and trains being taken out of service. There have been no reported incidents of stone throwing or anti-social behaviour at the hotspot which was identified as being the most prolific. There has also been a significant decrease in calls for police assistance.

Measurement

The results have been measured using Data Bases held by London Underground which are accurately maintained.
Calls for police assistance are measured using Command and Control Data

INTRODUCTION

Trespass and vandalism is a national, problem for rail operators and has been for many years.

The actions of the individuals involved endanger the safety of the railway and in many cases there is potential for a catastrophic accident to occur.

Every year people loose their lives trespassing on the railway and a lot of **work has been undertaken** over the years in an attempt to reduce the number of incidents of Trespass and Vandalism.

The problem is not confined to the National Railways, London Underground also face similar problems particularly in open sections of track. During 2000 a Crime and Disorder Partnership Unit was formed on the London Underground area of the British Transport Police.

This unit is the first of its kind in the country. London Underground Management who have responsibility for security issues work together in the same office alongside dedicated BT Police Officers. It soon became apparent that the issue of damage to rolling stock and loss of train services was a serious problem on the District line. The District line is operated by London Underground who manage the operation of stations and trains and are responsible for the Safety and Security of the Network. The track and infrastructure is maintained by the Infrastructure company under contract to LUL.

Police crime reports were examined; the extent of the problem was not reflected in the reports held by police. Traditional responses to the problem were examined and although some were in partnership, these were limited and not structured. It was decided to use the S.A.R.A. model of problem solving as a framework for a structured approach to fully examine the extent of the problem and to form a partnership response based on the findings. The

S.A.R.A model is viewed as a circular model rather than a linear one and often it is necessary to go back a stage or two to gather more information and adjust the response accordingly, particularly with a problem of this nature.

SCANNING

In order to appreciate the full extent of the problem on the London Underground it was necessary to identify the various sources of data held in addition to police crime reports. Various sources of data which had not previously been examined were identified, these included data held by London Underground departments including depots, loss control and daily log incident reports. Police Command and Control data was also examined. London Underground's Data Base 'Cupid' is a valuable source of data, the system stores performance data on the train service throughout the London Underground. Delays to the service are coded into categories giving the reason for delay. This includes Trespass and Vandalism, the Police previously had no access to this information. Members of Rail staff did not report all incidents to Police as they felt that police only responded to the more serious incidents, this meant that the total picture was not available. The true picture of the extent of anti-social behaviour, damage, track obstruction, stone throwing and trespass soon became apparent when all the information was overlaid.

It was found that the largest proportion of disruption to rail service and damage to train rolling stock was on a section of the District line between Barking & Upminster. Vandalism and anti-social behaviour had become an everyday occurrence.

ANALYSIS

The initial Scanning phase identified the section of track between Barking & Upminster as a significant problem. In order to fully understand the extent of the problem and to identify the partners who could have an impact on the problem the following actions were taken and formed part of a more detailed analysis which was undertaken by BT Police and London Underground.

- Interviews with train drivers, station. staff
- Information from Police Officers
- Information from other train operating companies
(As this section of track is shared)
- Information from Community meetings
- Crime and call data analysis (previous year)
- Crime and arrest reports (previous year)
- Offender profiles (previous year)
- Traditional Police and Rail Industry responses and impact
- Track surveys undertaken by Crime Reduction Officers
(With rail staff in many cases)
- Case disposal of reported/charged offenders
- Complaints received from members of the public
- Accident and Injury data
- London Underground data bases

Seventeen hotspots were identified, further analysis was undertaken on each 'hot spot' area. Residents were visited where their properties backed on to the railway, regular users of parkland and allotments adjacent to the railway were approached for any information they could give. Crime pattern analysis was undertaken in the area surrounding each hot spot in order to identify any links between the behaviour on the railway and in the locality. The offending profile revealed that offenders were mainly male and the age varied between nine to nineteen years.

Although there were incidents throughout the year the school holidays saw an increasing trend whereby numerous incidents of stone throwing at trains and track obstructions occurred. Furthermore an incident was recorded where metal bars had been thrown onto the track which had self welded to the power conductor rails. Items such as old bicycles, bricks etc were often removed by train drivers.

The analysis on damage to rolling stock revealed that it was a widespread problem throughout London Underground. The total for the previous year was approximately £1.5 million, of which £1 million worth of damage was caused within the section concerned. This is in addition to the operational cost to London Underground caused by delays to the service, this was estimated to be £1.2 million pounds.

A large proportion of the damage included broken windows caused by items being thrown at passing trains. Interviews with train drivers and the union representatives revealed the extent of concern and the fear of crime. The general consensus was that it was impossible to do much about the problem due to the distance involved between Barking & Upminster. The traditional response was examined; this had predominantly been high profile police activity, observations and school visits to talk about the danger of trespassing on the railway. London Underground had provided fencing which they had to frequently repair due to it being cut or broken down.

One 'hotspot' between Becontree & Dagenham featured as a prolific site for track obstruction and stone throwing. There had also been a spate of incidents involving passengers, on board trains who had received facial injuries from shattering glass. Even a baby in a pushchair was showered with broken glass from the result of a stone being thrown at the moving train.

Research was conducted in the surrounding area. The point of entry on to the tracks was via a housing area for elderly people. Each of the residents was seen and it soon became evident that the residents had been suffering problems for some considerable time with youths congregating. There were reports from the residents of abuse and threatening behaviour towards them. The quality of life for the elderly residents was clearly affected by anti social behaviour. One resident had taken photographs of youths crossing the rail tracks and then returning soon afterwards. This hotspot was the subject of a partnership response.

RESPONSE – BARKING&UPMINSTER

This was led by the Crime .& Disorder Partnership Unit and provided a co-ordinated and structured response based upon the findings during analysis.

The goal was simply to reduce the number of incidents of trespass, vandalism and anti-social behaviour between Barking & Upminster, measured by utilising existing reporting databases within London Underground. As the traditional response to the problem had achieved limited impact over many years, it was clear that a different approach was necessary.

The response had to be effective without being resource intensive for any agency. The result of the analysis was studied alongside the effects of the traditional response. It was recognised that due to limited police resources it was not practical to deploy police to each hotspot as this could not indefinitely be maintained. It was necessary to introduce a response involving partners who could each make a contribution which when combined would give a significant impact.

The response is based around six key component parts

- Problem solving
- Working with the community/rail staff
- Crime reduction techniques
- Police deployment
- Media education and awareness
- Development of information cycle

As a majority of incidents were attributed to youths, it was considered vital to utilise all available means to communicate the dangers involved in the hope of influencing their behaviour. It was also vitally important to raise awareness within the community of the seriousness of the problem and the potential consequences.

In order to assist our partners with clearly identifying the hot spot areas a map was produced of the section of track from Barking to Upminster (Appendix 1). Each hotspot was clearly marked and given an identifying letter of the alphabet. The map was given to every train driver, the Air Support Unit, local police patrol cars, local Metropolitan Police control and British Transport Police control centres. The map was invaluable for ensuring that everyone was aware quickly of which hotspot was concerned, upon receipt of a report.

Our partners and their contribution to the overall success

- The Metropolitan Police Air Support Unit

The distance concerned between Barking & Upminster is approximately eight and a half miles. Any use of the helicopter for detection relies on ground deployed officers to affect any arrests which would be extremely resource intensive.

The running cost of the helicopter is approximately £1000 per hour. As the analysis had not revealed any pattern concerning day or times of incidents, use of the helicopter for detection was therefore considered not to be best value.

This gave us the idea of using the helicopter as a crime reduction tool. As the helicopter is based at Lippitts Hill in Essex, it would involve minimum additional cost if the aircraft, on returning to base, flew over the railway dropping to a height of 2000 feet and hovering over the hotspot locations. This would be at random, as and when the helicopter was used, but could be several times per day, most days of the week.

In order for this approach to have an effect it was necessary to maximise publicity, the key theme being that the air patrols would spot problems up to a mile away utilising sophisticated camera equipment, well before the aircraft could be spotted. The message was conveyed by various means, including

leafleting communities and posters in high profile sites within the community. Posters were encapsulated and fastened to railway fencing within hotspot locations. The posters, which include a contact telephone number, are clearly visible to passengers on board trains.

Residents around the hotspot locations were visited and the initiative was explained. They were requested to call the freephone number if they saw trespassers on the tracks. It was necessary to visit the residents to explain what we were trying to achieve, as obviously the presence of the helicopter particularly at 2000 feet could provoke complaints. All of the residents were in full support of the initiative. To date we have had no complaints.

- Train Drivers/Staff

It was essential that the rail staff were engaged as partners and encouraged to report all incidents. Front line staff are our eyes and ears, and drivers have a very important part to play as they are often aware of trespassers on the tracks as well as regular problem locations.

Drivers are particularly vulnerable to the consequences of stone throwing and track obstruction and as such there is a fear of crime amongst the train drivers. This is reduced by including the drivers as partners and ensuring that they are kept up to date with the partnership response and the results achieved. In order to brief all the staff, articles are produced in the staff magazine and the trade union representatives are briefed on a regular basis.

- The Local Community

As previously mentioned the community is fully engaged and fully supports the initiative. It is important to keep the community updated and this is achieved by our partners within the local press and via local community group meetings.

- London's Transport Museum

The Museum has regular school visits, it employs two fully qualified teachers and is a key partner in delivering the message concerning the dangers associated with trespassing on or near railway lines. The teachers were given details of schools identified in analysis where previous offenders were pupils. This led to visits to these schools where the museum teachers addressed the classes. It was felt that although police regularly visit schools delivering talks to children on the subject of trespass, an approach using fully qualified teachers may be more beneficial in delivering the message. The youngest child identified stone throwing during analysis was nine years of age. It is now within the response to target children as young as five years of age, this is a result of advice from the teachers and will hopefully have an impact of the children during the key learning age.

▪ Education

The Directors of Education within the two London Boroughs concerned Barking & Dagenham and Havering were contacted. The problem was discussed and both Directors gave their full support offering to provide any assistance possible. The Head Teacher of the schools within the Boroughs were made aware of the issues. Analysis had shown that there was a rise in the number of incidents during school holidays and in the months with lighter evenings. There was no direct link with truancy identified.

A letter was drafted from the Crime & Disorder Partnership Unit addressed to the parent or carer of pupils. In excess of 18,000 copies of this letter were produced. The Head Teacher of the identified schools agreed to enclose the letters with the annual reports which were in sealed envelopes. A tear off return form used to ensure that the parents/carers received the school report also included an acknowledgement of receipt of our letter. The age group targeted was twelve to fourteen. This enabled us to reach the parents/carers of the prime age range identified during analysis.

■ Media

As the main emphasis is on crime reduction, the media are key partners. BBC Newsroom South East had taken a particular interest in the initiative and provided air time prior to the school summer holiday. The last news item ran for approximately three minutes after the BBC sent a presenter and filming unit for a whole day. This ensured an interesting article which conveyed the message we wished to get across.

The item, featured throughout the day, demonstrated a partnership approach with the community, whilst delivering the crime reduction concept utilising the helicopter as previously described. The seriousness of the offences involved was also included as many people are not aware of the potential consequences. The fact that stone throwing carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment was included.

■ Police

The police response includes high profile patrols during key periods, which is not as resource intensive as traditionally.

Local police in possession of the hotspot maps included visits to these sites.

Observations are undertaken by BT Police where intelligence or analysis indicates that there is a likelihood of success. Ten arrests were made during the summer of 2001, BT Police dog handlers in plain clothes were used in parkland adjacent to the railway at a hotspot location. This enabled the officer to blend in with others using the parkland. The tactic had been reported on by the media in an attempt to provide another angle of crime reduction. Youths responsible would not be sure on seeing a member of the public with a large dog whether it was a police officer or not. BT Police Crime Reduction Officers surveyed the areas and provided recommendations for improvement, such as

additional fencing and changes to environmental features. The Infrastructure company responsible for the District line worked with us and changed their priorities on fencing and repairs to the hotspot locations. Appendix 2 shows examples of fencing found at locations during initial surveys.

Other activities included within the response

Youth offending teams within the Boroughs were visited and made aware of the problem. Analysis had shown that very few offenders were caught and of those that were, the penalties did not reflect the seriousness of the offence. Similarly, local magistrates were addressed in order to provide awareness of the gravity of the offences.

Local response for identified hotspot - Becontree & Dagenham

As previously reported, during analysis one hotspot that particularly stood out was an area between Becontree & Dagenham. A local BT Police Officer took ownership of this hotspot and worked under the guidance of the Crime and Disorder Partnership Unit. This particular hotspot had been the site of numerous acts of stone throwing, trespass, track obstruction and anti-social behaviour towards elderly residents. As a result of information gained during analysis, a local partnership was formed which included the residents, the Local Authority housing department, Social Services, the youth offending team, London Underground, members of neighbouring residents associations and local police.

A community meeting was held which attracted in excess of seventy residents. It was at this meeting that the priorities were discussed and a multi agency response was formed. Information and enquiries had shown that none of the youths concerned who congregated causing problems to the residents lived near to that particular housing area. A number of environmental changes were made: benches were removed, security facilities installed for the residents, trees were cut down (where these had been used

by the youths to gain access to the railway over fencing), hawthorn bushes were planted (to assist with preventing access to the railway) and funding was secured through a local grant to provide secure fencing around the estate. Key offenders were identified and visits were made to their parents by police. These activities took place during the latter part of 2000. To date there have not been any reports of a re-occurrence at this hotspot of any rail offences or anti social behaviour towards the residents.

ASSESSMENT

The operation has been and still is the subject of continued evaluation by BT Police and London Underground utilising the Cupid Data Base and Police Data. Each aspect of the response has been monitored, although it is difficult to measure the impact of each component of the response. Changes to calls for police assistance for the area concerned have been monitored and have shown a considerable reduction since the commencement of the community problem solving approach. This is an on-going problem, however the partnership approach has reduced the number of incidents by 47%, which equates to approximately £0.5 million in damage alone.

The number of train services lost due to trains having to be taken out of service has reduced considerably. The estimated saving by London Underground for operational costs due to delays is over £0.5 million and equates to 150K in actual revenue. The perception of those people affected is of paramount importance and although there is still a fear of crime it is estimated that fear will have been substantially reduced as a result of the response to date. This will be the subject of a survey in the near future.

The effects of defensive planting at one key hotspot location have been examined, although it has taken over a year to reach a density sufficient to deter trespassers, it is now claimed to be effective. Barking Parks Department, London Underground and BT Police are currently working together to implement further defensive planting in appropriate areas in consultation with the Local Community.

1 This Partnership has been successful and has achieved the goal due to a coordinated response and this is considered to be an example of good practice.

The results and processes involved have been briefed to Train Operating Companies and representatives Force wide within the BT Police.

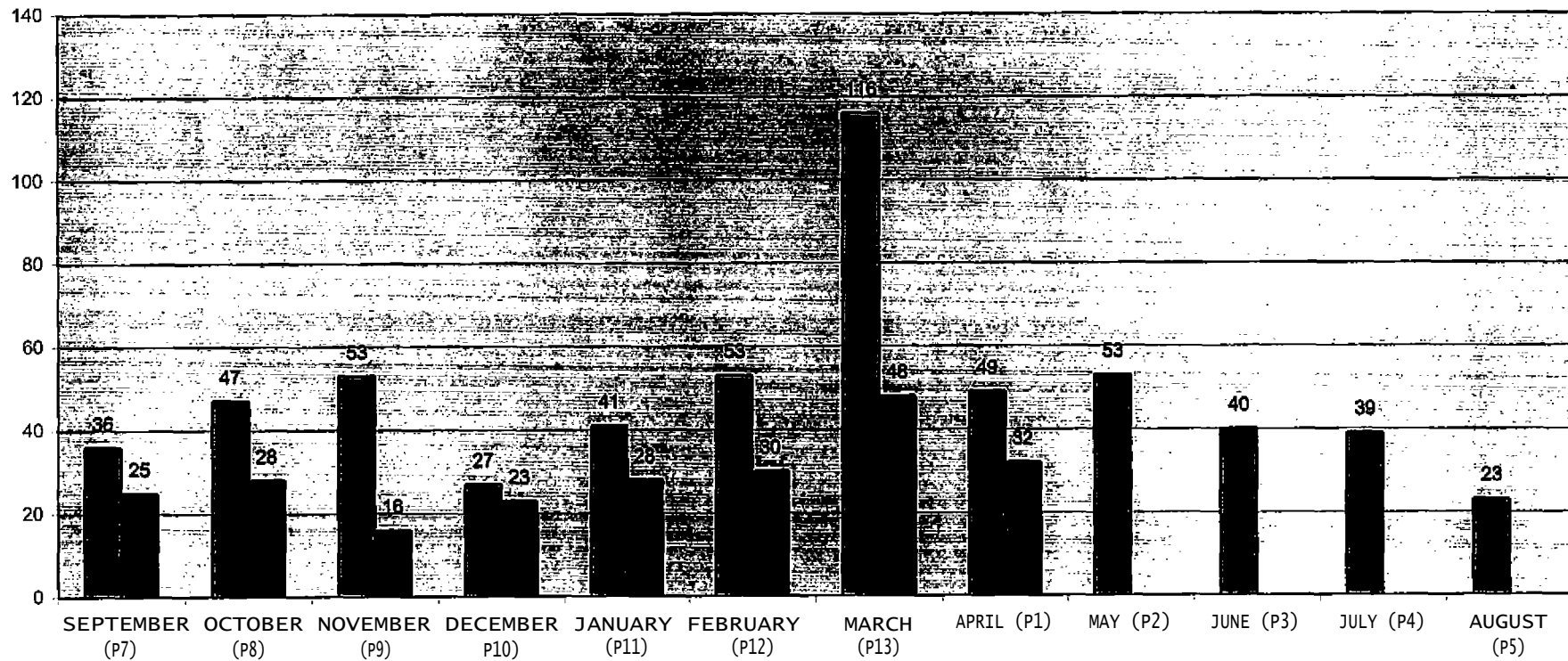
f The response will continue to develop in order to further reduce incidents of trespass, vandalism and anti-social behaviour between Barking & Upminster.

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Project Year 1
September 2000 to August 2001

• Project Year 2
September 2001 to August 2002



District Line Delays Due to Vandalism