

APPLICATION BASICS

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For all entries from England and Wales, please state which Government Office or Welsh assembly Government your organisation is covered eg. GO East Midlands:

GO North West

Please mark this box to indicate that all organisations involved in the project have been notified of this entry:

Yes

i2/GMP Problem Solving Partnership Awards 2007/08

Salford Division

' Risk and Reward '

**A Partnership Approach To Commercial Robbery
& Workplace Violence.**

Index.

<i>Executive Summary</i>	4
<i>Initial Scanning</i>	6
<i>Analysis</i>	8
<i>Response</i>	10
<i>Aims & Objectives</i>	10
<i>'The Initiative'</i>	10
<i>Launch</i>	10
<i>Reactive Response</i>	11
<i>Proactive Measures</i>	11
<i>Post Inspection</i>	11
<i>A Case Study</i>	12
<i>Problems Encountered</i>	13
<i>Innovation</i>	13
<i>Assessment</i>	14
<i>Conclusion</i>	15
<i>The Future</i>	15

Executive Summary.

Scanning

Between 1/4/04 and 31/3/06, Salford Division experienced an increase in commercial robberies. To address this a Problem Profile was commissioned to establish the extent of this threat. This profile confirmed that 330 commercial robberies had been committed during the analytical period.

Crime Reduction Advisors experienced a lack of co-operation from the loss prevention managers responsible for the commercial premises. It was therefore identified that a more robust approach to the problem would be required.

Analysis

Further analysis for a 12-month period allowed the CRA to identify the high-risk areas, streets and premises within Salford. This information was used to define a proactive and reactive divisional response to target the premises/areas of greatest risk.

Response

Recommendations in the Policing Standards Unit & Crime Directorate publication 'Tacking Violent Crime in the Night Time Community', advocated the use of Health and Safety legislation to reinforce crime reduction advice where licensees were not supportive of S.17 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership interventions.

The CRA's approached the City of Salford Environmental Health Services [EHS] to determine whether such a strategy could be adopted locally, and if so: -

- Could the strategy be adapted to include all business types, regardless of nature?
- Would the Department commit to a partnership approach to the issue of commercial robbery?
- What specific legislative measures could be considered.

The response was positive, and the following actions were developed:

- The 'Violence At Work Partnership' was formed.
- Documentary guidance for retailers was published.
- A partnership website was established.
- CRA's were authorised a right of entry under The Health & Safety At Work Act 1974.
- Joint visits were undertaken by CRA's and EHS.
- Fire Safety Officer notifications were agreed.
- Site Specific Risk Assessments were produced.
- Sign post to funding were provided.
- Post Inspections were undertaken.
- Improvement Notices were served.

Assessment

The initiative has proved successful and can demonstrate a 70% reduction in incidents of repeat victimisation in premises subject to a joint inspection, and a 40% reduction in commercial robberies over the same period.

GMP and Salford City Council have identified this initiative as good practice. The initiative won the GMP Chief Constables Award for Problem Solving 2007 and has been awarded 'Highly Commended' in the Health and Safety Executive HELA awards.

The initiative is currently being rolled out across other authorities within Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside.

Initial Scanning.

In October 2004, the Crime Reduction Unit perceived an increase in offences of commercial robberies across the Salford Division. Initially detected during daily crime and incident searches on the GMPICS system, this led to further scanning by means of crime pattern analysis and a controlled pilot scheme.

OPUS searches revealed that 330 offences of commercial robbery had been committed during the period 1/4/04 to 31/3/06. Analysis also showed that in the main, our repeat victims were turf accountants and fast food restaurants.

It was at this early stage that the CRA's initially approached EHS to determine whether a pilot scheme could be introduced using Health & Safety Legislation to reinforce crime reduction advice where to ignore that advice would leave staff members at risk of harm or injury.

EHS embraced the concept as they were actively seeking ways in which to negate the potential for under reporting of incidents of violence and aggression in the workplace.

The appropriate legislation was identified and discussed with CRA's. The legislation to be utilised was: -

- The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 which is a general duty employers have to their employees.
- The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 which requires employers to carry out risk assessments for hazards their employees face on a daily basis and implement appropriate control measures.
- Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 [RIDDOR]. This provides employers with a requirement that they must notify the local authority of an accident at work resulting in death, major injury or incapacity for normal work for three or more days. This includes any act of non-consensual physical violence of a person at work.

As part of the initiative, CRA's were authorised to enter any premises with an Environmental Health Officer under S.20 (2) (c) (1) of The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974. This in effect gave CRA's power of entry, which normally they would not possess.

Directed by the results of our repeat victim analysis, we began a controlled pilot scheme, working closely with McDonalds Restaurants:

<u>Repeat Victim</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Robberies</u>	<u>Other Incidents</u>
McDonald's Restaurant	447, Bolton Road, Pendlebury	7	26
McDonald's Restaurant	1, Cross Lane, Salford	6	43
McDonald's Restaurant	Regent Road, Ordsall	2	18

Joint visits with EHS and CRA's were carried out at the above premises. CRA's concentrated on physical security surveys whilst EHS looked at corporate risk

assessments, employee training, lone working etc. Where fire safety concerns were raised, these were referred to the GM Fire Safety Officer who responded within a twenty-four hour period.

Following the joint visits, reports were compiled which were sent to Head Office and local sites. As a result of our findings and reports, site-specific risk assessments were presented to us covering Health & Safety, Fire Safety, and Security. A series of meetings ensued, and whilst our findings were met with some degree of resistance, the imminent service of Improvement Notices, and the negative publicity this may have attracted, ensured that physical security measures were improved. Risk assessments in respect of Robbery, Lone Working and Cash Handling procedures were also implemented.

At this stage, it was agreed that Health & Safety legislation was an effective tool with which to reinforce crime reduction advice, thereby reducing the incidences of commercial robbery, and violence and aggression in the workplace, therefore improving health and safety of employees.

Whilst the initiative had proven its effectiveness on a small scale, it was at this point that the OPU Inspector commissioned a citywide problem profile for the period 1/4/2005-31/3/2006.

Analysis.

Commercial Robbery

iBase revealed 160 offences in the target period of 1/4/2005-31/3/2006, identified our 'hot spot' areas, and determined our priorities for action.

Offences were spread across a seven day period with peak offending days identified as Monday and Friday, with peak offending times being 09:00, 16:00 and 21:00 hours. This would indicate that offences were being planned to coincide with popular cash collection and delivery days when high quantities of cash would be available, and at opening and closing hours when premises were at their most vulnerable. This information enabled us to complete risk assessments in respect of security management, lone working, and cash handling procedures.

Whilst our reactive work continued on a daily basis, further analysis enabled us to target our high-risk areas in a proactive manner, and to further inform and define the initiative.

Top Ten Beats [Geographic].

Top ten beats for Commercial Robbery	Count of Commercial Robberies
Lower Kersal	10
New Weaste	10
Ordsall	10
Pendlebury/Clifton south	7
Salford Quays	7
Hope	6
Trinity	5
Higher Broughton	5
Monton	5
The Cliff/Higher Broughton	4

Top Ten Streets [Geographic].

Top Ten Repeat Streets	Count of Commercial Robberies
Bolton Road (A666)	7
Eccles Old Road	6
Bolton Road	4
Littleton road	4
Eccles New Road (A57)	3
Great Cheetham Street East	6
Liverpool Road (A57)	3
Liverpool Street	3
Lower Broughton Road	3
Manchester Road East (A6)	3

Top Ten Premises Types

	Count of Commercial Robberies
Supermarket	15
Petrol Station	12
Bookmakers	9
Post office	9
Public House	9
Off Licence	7
Fast food (McDonalds and KFC)	6
General store	5
Newsagent	5
Bank	3

When combined, this information allowed us to identify our most vulnerable premises prior to victimisation and prioritise joint visits on a proactive basis.

Response.

Aims & Objectives

In developing this initiative we were determined to secure real reductions of commercial robberies, whilst adopting a more robust partnership approach, which would be supportive of the business community in Salford.

Whilst we intended to explore the possibility of using Health & Safety legislation to reinforce crime reduction advice, we were aware from the outset that it was important to win the confidence of the business community; serving Improvement Notices only as a last resort.

In refining our analysis, we developed a proactive approach to complement our reactive work, enabling us to inform, advise, and empower our potential victims. Our specific objectives were as follows: -

- A 25% reduction in offences over a two year period.
- A 50% reduction in repeat victimisation over a two year period.
- Inform and empower staff to effectively manage the risks in vulnerable premises.
- Use Health & Safety legislation to reinforce crime reduction advice.
- Serve Improvement Notices where necessary.
- Address this priority crime area at a local level, whilst supporting 3 of the City Council's 'Seven Pledges' to the people of Salford:

Pledge 1 - Improving Health In Salford

Pledge 2 - Reducing crime in Salford

Pledge 7 - Enhancing life in Salford

- Develop a long term, sustainable initiative.
- Promote an effective, sustainable initiative throughout the 10 Greater Manchester authorities and Greater Manchester Police.

'The Initiative'.

Launch

The citywide initiative was launched on 01/04/06, and was promoted externally through the local media and the partnership website. Internal promotion was by means of City Council newsletters, Local Authority Intranet system, and the Neighbourhood Policing Inspectors at the daily tasking meetings.

Standard letters were drafted and sent to all top ten premises types in identified hot-spot areas and all top ten high risk premises across the City.

The letters included our 'Violence at Work' self-assessment and guidance pack, which can also be viewed by following the business link on the Salford City Council website at www.salford.gov.uk.

Reactive Response

Daily FWIN checks were carried out by the CRA's and all victims of commercial robbery were referred to Mrs Helen Meadows, Assistant Principal Environmental Health Officer [EHO], the dedicated point of contact for the initiative.

The referrals were entered on the database, which was maintained by Mrs Meadows. Following a referral, standard letters were sent to victims. The letters offered a free security audit, contained a copy of the 'Violence at Work' self assessment and guidance pack, information regarding The Business Security Grant Scheme, and the business link to the Salford City Council website.

Where incidents had involved the threat or use of violence, or where repeat victims were identified, unannounced joint visits were carried out. These visits served to highlight the disturbing discrepancies between security management policies and daily practices.

In all cases, physical security surveys were undertaken and risk assessments, health and safety policies and procedures and staff training were examined and reported on. Any fire safety concerns were referred to the GM Fire Safety Officer, who responded within a 24-hour period. In this manner, all aspects of health and safety, fire safety, and security were addressed. Where health and safety compliance was poor or a previous history of poor compliance was known to EHS, formal action was taken in the form of Improvement Notices. Re-visits were also carried out to ensure compliance where appropriate.

Proactive Approach

The problem profile was used to identify the hot-spot areas, top ten streets and most vulnerable property types for commercial robberies.

The standard letter, self-assessment and guidance pack, and information regarding the Business Security Grant Scheme were distributed by our Police Community Support Officers [PCSO's].

The PCSO's used this opportunity to engage with members of the business community, to raise awareness of the current crime trends in their area and to offer the services of the CRA.

Where joint visits were requested, the CRA and EHO attended on an appointment basis.

Post Visit Action

Inspection reports were completed for all visits, and these generated responses from Regional Loss Prevention Managers. In the main, these came in the form of generic security manuals, and the CRA's instigated discussions to ensure that their site specific risk assessments were implemented.

Negative responses were dealt with by the EHS, who agreed a time of works with the CRA. Progress was monitored and contact maintained with post inspection visits being undertaken without appointment.

Where the recommended works had not been completed, the EHS served Improvement Notices under The Health and Safety Work Act 1974.

A Case Study

Four premises in the same chain of bookmakers were identified as having five commercial robberies within an eight month period between August 2005 and April 2006, and each branch received a joint visit.

Findings:

- Generic risk assessments had been photocopied and issued to each branch, regardless of physical environment, building design, or the threat faced.
- Employees received no formal training in respect of company policies, lone working, building management, or cash handling procedures.
- There was a hole in the rear wall, and doors were broken and ill fitting.
- An ineffective VHS CCTV system was in use.
- External lighting levels were poor.
- The alarm system was neither maintained nor tested.
- Poor key management issues were identified.
- There was no rear fire door.

Action Taken:

- Joint report compiled by CRA and EHS.
- Referral to Fire Safety Officer.
- Improvement Notices served.
- Meetings held with Area Managers.

Response:

- Bookmakers complied with site specific risk assessment and appropriate controls were implemented.
- A Health & Safety policy was implemented on site.
- Employees received formal training.
- A new digital CCTV system was installed.
- Issues pertaining to physical security were addressed.
- Cash handling & banking procedures were improved.
- Chain to consider site specific risk assessments throughout Greater Manchester.

Monitoring:

- To date, only one further incident of robbery has occurred within this particular chain (total of ten branches in Salford).

Problems Encountered

- To utilise the appropriate legislation effectively, we needed to ensure that the offence of robbery fell within the scope of The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, and presented 'serious and imminent danger' to employees.

Our refined analysis confirmed that commercial robbery did pose a serious and imminent danger to certain members of the business community within Salford, and we were able to proceed with an agreed statement of workplace violence, as defined by The HASAWA:

“ ...any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work ”.

- We encountered negative attitudes from Regional Loss Prevention Managers, who could not understand the need to improve physical security measures in premises which had not been subjected to a robbery.

Again, we were able to use our analysis to demonstrate that similar property types, and premises within the immediate area had been subjected to robberies, which increased the risk to which they were exposed.

- Whilst the Division was experiencing such a negative trend in offences of commercial robberies it was difficult to promote an initiative which did not offer immediate reductions in crime.

The initiative has now proven its resilience and long term value, by reducing both the number of offences and incidents of repeat victims.

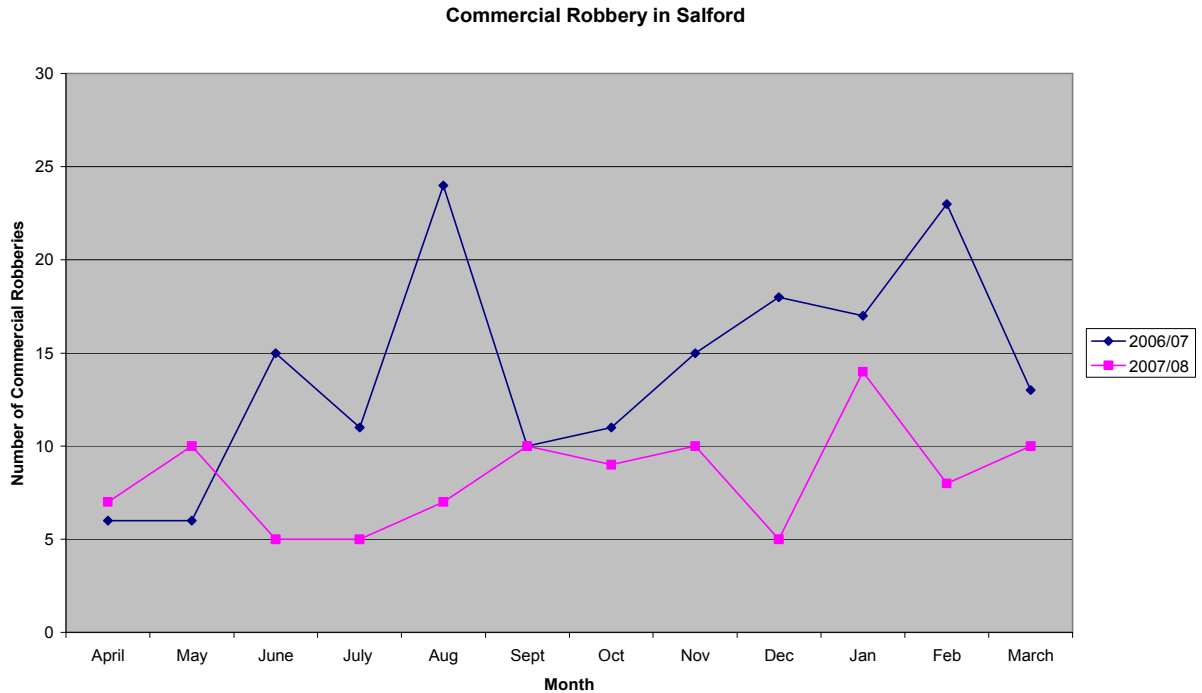
Innovation

- Legislation from 1974 has been utilised in this initiative in a way it has not been used before.
- Our response is innovative in its partnership approach to reduce commercial robberies by using Health & Safety legislation to reinforce crime reduction advice, where to ignore that advice would leave staff members at risk of harm or injury in the workplace.
- Crime Reduction Advisors in Salford are the first members of police staff to be authorised with a power of entry under The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.
- This is the first time that Improvement Notices have been served as a means of reinforcing crime reduction advice in the Greater Manchester area.

Assessment:

In evaluating this initiative it is important to remember the long term objectives were to achieve a 25% reduction in offences, and a 50% reduction in repeat victimisation over a two year period.

The graph below shows the number of commercial robberies by month in the first and second year of the initiative



In the first year 1/4/06 – 31/2/07, 168 commercial robberies occurred. In the second year 1/4/07-31/3/08, 100 commercial robberies occurred. The above graph clearly demonstrates a reduction in offences in 2007/08.

During the period 01/04/2006 – 31/03/2007, 46 premises were repeat victims. Thirty-three joint visits were completed. Following our visits, inspection reports and communication with premises, only three premises received a further robbery.

During the period 01/04/2007-31/3/2008 a further 44 visits have been completed. 11 premises have been victim of a repeat robbery and only one of these premises had been involved in the initiative. This shows a 33% reduction in repeat victims in 2006/07, and a 70% reduction in the period of 2007/08.

Commercial robbery has reduced by 40% from 2006/07 to 2007/08.

We have carried out continual analysis on the top ten premises; top ten streets, days of the week and times of the week when commercial robbery is most likely to occur. This information is cascaded to businesses during joint visits. Such continual analysis has also enabled us to identify trends and notify businesses of increased risks. We have sent standard letters in a mail merge format to all off licences and banks across the City at a time when both premises types experienced a peak of incidents. We have successfully over achieved on the initial targets set at the start of the initiative.

We have successfully used Health & Safety legislation to create a pro-security culture within the more high risk premises in the Salford area, and in serving only three Improvement Notices have demonstrated our ability to engage with members of the business community, both at a local and regional level.

Conclusion.

At the outset of this initiative, our aim was to demonstrate the effectiveness of using Health & Safety legislation to reinforce crime reduction advice, and secure real reductions in crime. However, it would be wrong to judge the success of this initiative purely on the number of Notices served.

The strength of this initiative lies within the partnership approach, and the very real influence that the Environmental Health Service has upon the business community. This has enabled us to engage with key personnel, influence attitudes, and secure real reductions in crime.

The Future.

We are currently working with the 10 Greater Manchester Authorities and 12 Policing Divisions of Greater Manchester Police to roll this initiative out. We have held two training days for Crime Reduction Advisors and Environmental Health Officers and have improved communication and links across Manchester. This is also being reflected and cascaded across Cheshire and Lancashire.