

Police Patrol in Victoria

The Prahran Patrol Evaluation Summary

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POLICE PATROL IN VICTORIA
THE PRAHRAN PATROL EVALUATION
SUMMARY OF THE FINAL REPORT

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FOREWORD

I have often said that the most important function of a Police Force is preventive patrol aimed at reducing crime and increasing public security. Overseas research has caused police forces to re-examine the efficiency and effectiveness of patrol operations.

Integrated Community Policing has the major aim of fitting police services more closely to community needs. This is not always possible but, it is clear that the greater our public support, the easier it is for us to fulfil our role and the more responsive governments become to police needs.

The Prahran Patrol Evaluation is a detailed and comprehensive document which, I believe, demonstrates that we are on the right track. We propose to replicate these principles in other areas of the State.

The study is believed to be a first in Australia. Seldom has a Police Force obtained such comprehensive public feedback about its services and procedures. The results have been encouraging and indicate how we can maintain effective performance. This experience is particularly important in the training and development of police personnel at all levels.

I congratulate Superintendent Ball and his enthusiastic team at the Management Services Bureau on the results achieved. Senior Sergeant Brown, who co-ordinated the project and the Force Statistician, Dr. Andrew Macneil, who collaborated in the preparation of this report, deserve special mention.

I commend the report to those committed to improving the delivery of police services to the public.



(S. I. Miller)
CHIEF COMMISSIONER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The introduction of Integrated Community Policing and its assessment required the cooperation and assistance of many people. Operationally, the scheme had the untiring support of the Assistant Commissioner (Operations) Mr. R. Kellett and his staff, and the advice of the Metropolitan Coordinator, Commander J. Murtagh. The then Officer in Charge of "I" District, Chief Superintendent L.K. PLATTFUSS, retired, and the Officer in Charge of No 1 Division, Chief Inspector P. Hearn, assisted in every way possible. The Officer in Charge of Prahran, Toorak and South Yarra at the time of amalgamation - Senior Sergeants J. Trevethan, R. McNamara and K. Flanagan respectively, deserve special acknowledgement. The forbearance, objectivity and assistance of Senior Sergeant J. Wade and many members at Prahran during the assessment period (Appendix "A" of the Final Report) was also very much appreciated.

The preparation of this report was greatly facilitated by the invaluable advice of Dr. Andrew Macneil, the Force Statistician, and the assistance of all members of the Management Services Bureau, especially Superintendent D. Ball, Senior Sergeant J. Frame and Sergeant W.H. G. Robertson, as well as Miss Anne-Marie Leslie and Miss Gordana Blazevic. Miss Pam Crowe, now Mrs. Vella, the Chief Commissioner's Secretary, added much of the typing of the Report to her duties. She could not have been more obliging, competent or enthusiastic. Sergeant K. Peart, Officer in Charge of the Drawing Office, and his staff were particularly helpful with Figures and Reductions. Miss Christine Taylor of the Computer Systems Division arranged much of the card punching. The cover was designed by Constable Jim Harrison of "Police Life".

The generosity of the Crimes against Business Premises Planning Committee enabled the survey of Prahran residents to be conducted and assisted in the field work in the United States. The efforts of Mr. K. Milte in these regards are gratefully acknowledged.

GPB

SYNOPSIS

Integrated Community Policing is a uniform police patrol operation in the inner Melbourne suburb of Prahran. The first 12 months of the scheme was closely monitored to establish whether the centralising of police from two smaller stations, and modest increases in patrol resources-vehicles and portable radios, would result in increased patrol activity and consequent reduction in the crime rate and increased feelings of citizen security. In fact, patrol activity did increase, most types of crime decreased, and there was evidence to show that the public felt more secure. The smaller stations were phased out with a minimum of adverse comment because a new police complex was constructed and Integrated Community Policing was a manifestly better patrol scheme. Most of the initial aims of the scheme were achieved, although police response time showed no significant improvement and a number of factors reduced the effectiveness of dividing the area into patrol sectors. The scheme relied to an unprecedented extent on information supplied by the public, and patrol operations in Victoria will be the better for it. The patrol scheme was shown to have sufficient merit in its totality to provide a firm basis for decisions about police patrol in Victoria well into the eighties.

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CHAPTER ONE

SUMMARY¹

Aims of Integrated Community Policing

Integrated Community Policing, a uniform police patrol scheme which presently exists in the inner Melbourne suburb of Prahran (population 50,000), commenced in April 1978. Its principal aims were to:-

- (1) reduce the level of crime in Prahran
- (2) increase the effectiveness of police service in Prahran by increasing both the quantity and quality of police patrols, and ensuring that the patrol car crew have a high level of understanding and knowledge of the sector being patrolled
- (3) ensure the efficient use of police manpower and other resources
- (4) reduce patrol response times
- (5) provide more effective supervision of members by reducing the span of control and consolidating the Divisional chain of command
- (6) increase the accountability of police patrols for the good order of their sectors
- (7) decrease duplication of staff usage and recording systems
- (8) increase the security of police equipment and monies received, by moving them to a 24 hour station
- (9) remove public uncertainties as to when Toorak and South Yarra police stations were open
- (10) allow the scientific evaluation of community attitudes to a number of aspects of police patrol
- (11) provide a Divisional patrol scheme of proven merit which can form the basis for patrol programmes in other parts of Victoria

1 This summary forms Chapter One of the Final Report *Police Patrol in Victoria: The Prahran Patrol Evaluation* Unless clearly inapplicable, bracketted numbers at the end of sentences refer to pages in the Final Report.

Operational Assumption

The operational hypothesis underpinning Integrated Community Policing was that an observable increase in police patrol activity would be associated with reduction in the level of "patrol preventable" crime and increased feelings of security in the community.

Changing Police Resources

The construction of a large police complex in Malvern Road, Prahran, adjoined by a unique building containing five Magistrate's Courts, assisted the introduction of Integrated Community Policing by providing sufficient accommodation and other facilities for the 25 members (2 Senior Sergeants, 5 Sergeants and 18 Constables) transferred from the two smaller non-24 hour stations at Toorak and South Yarra.

The amalgamation of the three stations increased the Prahran uniform staff to 4 Senior Sergeants, 12 Sergeants and 51 Constables and added two patrol cars to the Divisional Van and car already at Prahran. Two additional patrol cars, and eight portable radios, were provided to maximise the uniform police patrol effort. Under Integrated Community Policing, Prahran would assume the total responsibility for the Division and the Toorak and South Yarra stations each would be manned by a Prahran member during weekday business hours only. An additional six Sergeants were posted to Prahran during the assessment period, in the main to cope with the increased watch-house workload and assist in prosecuting cases at the Court.

Assessment Methods

During the first 12 months, Integrated Community Policing was closely monitored by the District supervisors and the staff of the Management Services Bureau. The overall finding, that the scheme was very successful, was based on that oversight and the results of a number of related examinations.

- (1) an examination of patrol activity and crime levels at Prahran during the scheme and for the 12 months immediately preceding its introduction (*Chapters 3 and 4 of the Final Report*)
- (2) an examination of crime trends in the five Cities which then formed the rest of "I" District: Collingwood, Fitzroy, Hawthorn, Kew and Richmond during a similar period to (1) (*Chapter 4*)
- (3) an examination of State crime trends during a similar period to (1) (*Chapter 4*)
- (4) interviews with Prahran uniform police involved in the scheme (*Chapter 2*)
- (5) a survey of a random sample of 413 people routinely checked by uniform police patrol in Prahran (*Chapter 6*)
- (6) surveys of a random sample of 143 business people and professionals in Prahran before and after the assessment period (*Chapter 5*)
- (7) a survey of a sample of 1729 people who called for a police service attended by uniform police from Prahran during the assessment period (*Chapter 7*)
- (8) a survey of a sample of 586 people who called for a police service attended by uniform police from other stations in "I" District during February and March, the final two months of the assessment period (*Chapter 8*)
- (9) an examination of D24 dispatch records and station message books for details of "I" District calls for service about which respondents provided detailed information (*Chapter 8*)
- (10) an analysis of information about the police response to 1,437 crime related calls included in the surveys in (6) and (7) above (*Chapter 9*)
- (11) an examination of the results of a specially commissioned survey of 407 Prahran residents conducted by a private opinion poll firm after the assessment period (*Chapter 10*)
- (12) a field assessment of overseas police patrol trends in a number of United States Cities, including Washington D.C., Rochester, New York; Nassau County, New York; St. Louis, Missouri; San Diego, California and Berkely, California (*Chapter 11*)

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

Patrol Activity

Integrated Community Policing required a close examination of the traditional measures of patrol activity, which indicated:-

- (1) an 84.2% increase in the number of cars checked for stolen (99)
- (2) a 50.4% increase in the number of traffic offences detected (99)
- (3) a 50.0% increase in the number of persons spoken to by uniform patrol police (99)

- (4) a 47.8% increase in the number of stolen motor vehicles recovered by patrol police (99)
- (5) a 28.4% increase in the number of kilometres travelled by patrol cars
- (6) a 27.3% increase in the number of persons arrested by patrol car crews (99)
- (7) a 19.7% increase in the number of radio calls received by patrol car crews (99)
- (8) 25% - 100% increases in the number of arrests for "on-view" offences (assault police, street offences, armed with an offensive weapon and unlawful possession) compared with decreases in almost all other "I" District Divisions (108)
- (9) over the two year period (the assessment period and the 12 months preceding it) at Prahran, no evidence of a significant relationship between the number of:

kilometres travelled and calls received
kilometres travelled and arrests made
kilometres travelled and stolen cars recovered
kilometres travelled and accidents attended
calls received and cars checked
calls received and persons spoken to
calls received and accidents attended
calls received and traffic offences detected
arrests made and cars checked
arrests made and persons spoken to
arrests made and accidents attended
car checks and cars recovered
car checks and accidents attended
car checks and traffic offences detected
persons spoken to and cars recovered
persons spoken to and accidents attended
persons spoken to and traffic offences detected
cars recovered and accidents attended
cars recovered and traffic offences detected
accidents attended and traffic offences detected (98)

in one of the two years studied, a significant relationship between the number of:

calls received and arrests made
calls received and cars recovered
arrests made and traffic offences detected
arrests made and cars recovered (98)

in both the years studied, a significant relationship between the number of:

kilometres travelled and cars checked
kilometres travelled and persons spoken to
cars checked and persons spoken to (98)

Crime in Prahran

Examination of 12 broadly "patrol preventable" types of crime in Prahran and the rest of "I" District during the 12 month assessment period and the 12 months immediately preceding it indicated that:-

- (10) decreases in the greatest number of offence types (10) occurred at Prahran (112)
- (11) at Prahran, a considerable decrease in the number of offences of assault against a civilian (-6.2%), actual bodily harm against a civilian (-3.4%) and theft from the person (-15%) and wilful and obscene exposure (-21.4%), in the main, not reflected in other "I" District Divisions (112)
- (12) at Prahran, a considerable decrease in the number of non-residential burglaries (-24.7%) not reflected in the other "I" District Divisions (112)
- (13) at Prahran, a considerable increase in the number of residential burglaries (+47.4%), also occurred to a lesser extent in all other "I" District Divisions. Residential burglaries are probably not "patrol preventable" and other strategies might be more successful in their reduction (112)
- (14) at Prahran, a slight reduction in shopstealing (shoplifting) offences was opposite to the trends in other "I" District Divisions (112)
- (15) during the 24 months, 6240 burglaries were reported in "I" District, an average of 8 a day. At Prahran, 3438 burglaries occurred (2 in 3 residential burglaries) an average of 5 a day. (113)
- (16) the increase in residential burglaries during Integrated Community Policing matched by the decrease in non-residential offences, in part may reflect the displacement of non-residential burglaries due to the more visible police presence outside business hours (115)
- (17) because police response time was related to the probability of arrest in most "involvement" crimes, such as "burglar disturbed", if these were reported as soon as possible (239), the 10 minute median response time for "urgent" calls found at Prahran, would considerably reduce the chances of burglars who are disturbed being arrested by police attending the call (116)

Patrol Innovations

Integrated Community Policing included a number of related patrol strategies aimed at more efficiently and effectively using police resources. The assessment of these innovations included a survey of Prahran members involved in the scheme. Results of the overall examination indicated that:-

- (18) most uniform members considered police patrol the most important police function (34)
- (19) nearly all members considered routine patrol effective in preventing crime (35)
- (20) nearly all members considered routine patrol effective in enhancing public feelings of security (36)
- (21) overall, members considered additional equipment most effective in improving police efficiency (37)
- (22) overall, members thought that changes in supervision and rostering were effective in improving police efficiency (38)
- (23) the issue of portable radios to patrol car crews was the innovation members considered most effective in improving police efficiency (40)
- (24) additional patrol cars at Prahran provided deployment flexibility, encouraged patrol planning and were considered by nearly all members to be effective in improving police efficiency (41)
- (25) equipment satchels were effective in improving police efficiency, although when multiple kits were used, care had to be exercised to prevent the unrecorded exchange of equipment between kits (44)
- (26) the rostering of section sergeants to commence duty 15 minutes before their section, so that the briefing and related matters could be efficiently prepared, was successful (47)
- (27) a Sergeant's responsibility for station functions can considerably reduce his availability for field supervision - at Prahran, a significant difference emerged between the opinions of Constables and those of Sub-Officers, as to the effectiveness of having a supervising Sergeant on a patrol car (50)
- (28) overlapping shifts was an effective strategy to more efficiently respond to calls received near normal changeover times and reduce the backlog of calls which would otherwise have awaited incoming car crews (50)
- (29) patrol officers and supervisors would be assisted by a patrol manual containing practical patrol procedures and advice (33), outlining relevant Departmental policies, listing resource areas, and clarifying command and control in the field and the role of the Communications Section (D24) (49)
- (30) a considerable amount of patrol time was lost by patrol car crews, particularly those on morning shift, due to cars leaving their patrol areas for transport, dispatch and other miscellaneous tasks (70)
- (31) prescribing (minor case) court days for members can make a substantial saving in the time members spend at Court without reducing their efficiency (68)

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- (32) the patrol rota (rotating shift schedule) was an effective means for improving station morale, and ensuring that:
- (a) manpower was rostered according to demand
 - (b) members received the earliest possible notice of their shifts
 - (c) court commitments were rationalised
 - (d) a minimum patrol car availability was maintained
 - (e) inexperienced members received a high standard of training
 - (f) patrol car crews were properly balanced according to ability, experience and compatibility
 - (g) patrol car crews developed a high knowledge of their patrol area
 - (h) 1800 hours (overlapping) shifts were maintained (61-71)
- (33) there was no evidence to indicate that rotating rosters were associated with faster police response times (63)
- (34) the service of the more senior member of Prahran patrol car crews who attended calls for service during the 12 month assessment period was less than 2 years on about 5% of occasions, 2 years (16%), 3 years (22%), 4 years (20%) and 5 years or more (37%) (67)
- (35) the age of the older member of Prahran patrol car crews who attended a sample of calls for service was less than 20 years on about 5% of occasions, 21-22 years (21%), 23-24 years (29%), 25 years or more (45%) (67)
- (36) foot patrol by patrol car crews issued with portable radios was a realistic operational strategy and considered effective by two out of three members (71)
- (37) the sectoring of patrol areas was successful in more equitably distributing calls for service between the station patrol cars (73), but its overall effectiveness was reduced by D24 policies, the small geographical area at Prahran and the rapidity with which patrol cars go "out of service" (77)
- (38) a need exists for local police to be involved in giving talks on police related issues to schools and community groups in their areas (79)
- (39) the phasing out of Toorak and South Yarra police stations provided a viable patrol strength at Prahran and resulted in minimal public disquiet (81)
- (40) one in two members at Prahran thought that the questionnaire follow-up of people who called for a police service and people routinely checked, made no difference to police effectiveness and efficiency (89)
- (41) two out of three members thought that police should not be directly responsible for traffic law enforcement

Business Safety

Questionnaires returned by a sample of Prahran business people and professionals before and after the assessment period indicated:

- (42) a highly significant improvement in their overall view of crime trends in Prahran (129)
- (43) a significant improvement in the frequency with which they saw uniform police in their neighbourhood
- (44) a significant improvement in the opinions of the sufficiency of police foot patrols (138)
- (45) other trends (not statistically significant) including that after Integrated Community Policing, more business people thought Prahran a safe place (128), more thought it safer than other areas of Melbourne (131), more thought that the police had a "very good" reputation (133), more thought uniform strength at Prahran adequate (134), and more reported more often seeing police car patrols (137)
- (46) that, compared with the replies of business people, uniform police at Prahran tended to think of Prahran as safer for businesses than did business people (128), more often were unable to say about business crime trends (129), tended to underestimate their reputation in the business community (133) and were more likely to think the police strength at Prahran adequate (134)
- (47) that nearly half the business people interviewed both before and after the assessment period indicated that they had called the police about a problem in Prahran within the previous 6 months (139)

Routine Patrol Checks

Analysis of information obtained from and about 413 randomly selected people who were checked by patrol police from Prahran during Integrated Community Policing, indicated that:-

- (48) the questionnaire response rate of pedestrians was significantly lower than that of motor vehicle users (146)
- (49) significantly more questionnaires mailed to pedestrians (not required by law to state their names and addresses to police) were returned by Australia Post as unclaimed than those sent to motor vehicle users (146)
- (50) people aged 17 to 30 years were significantly over-represented among people routinely checked (146)
- (51) men were significantly over-represented among people routinely checked (145)
- (52) men aged between 17 and 24 (inclusive) had more than 8 times more chance of being checked by police patrols than if the checks were proportionately distributed throughout the population
- (53) about three out of ten people who replied to the routine check questionnaire had been previously convicted of a crime, street offence, serious traffic offence or other crime (152)

- (54) the lack of any legal authority requiring a suspicious person to state his name and address on police request, sometimes leads to confusion and, occasionally, confrontation (143)
- (55) two in three routine patrol checks were single person checks, one in five involved two people and one in ten, three people. Only 5% involved more than three people. (161)
- (56) the median time required for a patrol check was 6 minutes, the average time 8 minutes and the time range between 2 and 45 minutes (166)
- (57) factors significantly related to the time taken to conduct a routine check were whether the checked person was a pedestrian or motor vehicle user (166), his (or her) age (166), the number of persons checked (169), and the age of the patrol car observer (17)
- (58) there was no evidence that the time taken to conduct a routine check was significantly related to the checked person's sex (166), whether he (or she) had prior convictions (166) or the service of each of the patrol crew members conducting the check (170)
- (59) nearly 9 out of 10 people routinely checked by police patrols reported being caused "little" or "no" inconvenience by the check
- (60) whether a person was inconvenienced by the patrol check was significantly related to whether the person had prior convictions (174) and the time taken to conduct the check (177)
- (61) there was no evidence that the level of inconvenience caused a person by a patrol check was significantly related to whether he (or she) was a pedestrian or motor vehicle user (174), male or female (174), young or older (174) or the number of people checked (177), or the age and service of each of the members conducting the check (179)
- (62) nearly 9 out of 10 people routinely checked by police patrols were either satisfied or indifferent after the check (180)
- (63) whether a person was satisfied after the patrol check was significantly related to his (or her) age (180), prior convictions (180) and the inconvenience caused by the check (185)
- (64) there was no evidence that the level of satisfaction after the patrol check was significantly related to whether the person checked was a pedestrian or motor vehicle user (180), male or female (180), or the number of persons checked (183), or the time taken to conduct the check (184), or the age or service of each of the members conducting the check (180)
- (65) relatively few people (8.7%) were routinely checked during the police morning shift (0700 - 1500 hours), compared with afternoon (42.6%) and night shifts (48.7%) (156)

- (66) the degree of police need for more public cooperation expressed by people routinely checked by police patrols was significantly related to whether they had been inconvenienced by the check (192); but not significantly related to whether he (or she) was a pedestrian or motor vehicle user, young or older, male or female, previously convicted or not. The opinion also was not related to the time taken for the check, the number of persons checked, the age or service of each of the members conducting the check or the level of satisfaction after the check. (192)
- (67) a most important determinant of a person's reaction to the routine check was the attitude and manner of the police involved. The need for police to provide some explanation for the check was also important. (196)
- (68) police routine checks are in the public interest and a fundamental and often productive feature of police patrol. The efficiency of the checks and the personal safety of the police involved, would be measurably increased by the on-line availability of criminal history and related information. (141)

Calls for Service

The survey of a sample of people who called for a police service attended by uniform police from Prahran during the first 12 months of Integrated Community Policing indicated that:-

- (69) complainants were evenly divided between men and women (212)
- (70) about 6% of calls could be classified as particularly "urgent" because lives were endangered or (more often) offenders were being held or had been disturbed (218)
- (71) about 6 out of 10 calls for service were telephoned to Prahran station, but only half of these were recorded in the station message book (218)
- (72) more than 8 out of 10 complainants had no difficulty in calling the police. Those that did, most often had difficulty because the phone number at Prahran had been changed. (220)
- (73) the listing of police telephone numbers in the Melbourne Telephone Directory caused some public frustration, confusion and delay (221)
- (74) the '600' procedure of switching a call to D24 where it was switched to the D24 operator or the appropriate station, caused some public frustration and confusion (224)
- (75) overall, 98.5% of complainants were satisfied with the way their call was received by the police. (225) The levels of satisfaction were not related to whether the calls related to crimes, service matters or traffic problems. (226)
- (76) complainants often did not report matters to the police immediately they became known. About 20% of overall calls were made immediately; but 50% were not made within 15 minutes. "Urgent" calls tended to be made more quickly than other calls. (228)

- (77) the median time complainants took to explain the incident to the police was 2 minutes, the average time 3.3 minutes (230)
- (78) according to complainants, the median police response time to calls was 20 minutes and 10 minutes for "urgent" calls. One in five calls were attended within 10 minutes. Response times varied according to the day and time at which calls were received. (232)
- (79) overall, 88.4% of people whose calls were attended by Prahran patrol cars, were satisfied with the police response time. Satisfaction decreased as response time increased, but was not related to the complainant's delay before calling or the age or service of each of the patrol crew members. (237)
- (80) "service" call complainants were more likely to be "very satisfied" with the police response time, than people who reported crime-related matters or traffic problems (237)
- (81) complainants' satisfaction with the police response time would have been substantially improved, if they were given more specific information about the likely arrival time of patrol cars, and appropriate advice about what to do in the meantime. At Prahran, a projected 30 minute arrival time would have included the police response to 2 out of 3 non-urgent calls. (238)
- (82) public satisfaction with the police response to calls could be adversely affected where people have unrealistic expectations of the police response times (239)
- (83) complainants who thought a faster police response would have changed the outcome of their calls, or who were detaining offenders, were particularly dissatisfied when the police response was slow (242)
- (84) the time between a call being received and attended as recorded on the patrol crew running sheet, tended to understate the actual time involved although this was not apparent without reference to D24 dispatch cards or station message books (245)
- (85) complainant dissatisfaction with any one of the aspects of the police response (way received, response time or how the job was handled) significantly increased the likelihood that the complainant would be dissatisfied with either or both the other two aspects of the response. (253-254)
- (86) overall, 86.6% of people who called for a service provided by Prahran police, thought the attending police handling of the job was "good" or "very good" - 92.8% of "urgent" call complainants thought this was the case. Service complainants were more likely to think the police did a "very good" job (70.7%), than were people who reported crime-related matters or traffic problems. (254) Level of satisfaction was related to police clearance time (259), but not related to the age or service of each of the crew members attending the call. (254)

- (87) the median clearance time for overall calls was about 15 minutes, with the initial clearance from service and traffic calls faster than from crime calls (259)
- (88) the feedback of information from the attending police to the person making the call was clearly very important to most complainants (262)
- (89) the fact that the accident collator system did not provide for people involved in accidents (particularly 'hit-run' cases) in which prosecutions did not occur, to be informed when the case was filed sometimes caused inconvenience and anxiety (264)
- (90) residents, whose driveways were blocked by illegally parked vehicles, expected the police to move the cars although the law does not allow for this (269)

"I" District Comparison

Comparison of the responses of general duties police to a sample of 279 calls for service in Prahran and 586 calls for service in the rest of "I" District, received during February and March, indicated:-

- (91) no significant difference between
 - (a) the complainants' sex (281)
 - (b) the types of calls attended (282)
 - (c) the frequency with which complainants' calls to local stations were entered in the station message books (283)
 - (d) complainants' overall satisfaction with the way their calls were received (286)
 - (e) D24 relay time - the time before a call was passed to a car, median time = 2 minutes (289)
 - (f) dispatch time - the time between a call being first logged as received and the time recorded on the patrol crew running sheet as the time the call was received by the patrol crew - median time = 4 minutes
 - (g) attendance time according to patrol car running sheets - median time = 9 minutes (293)
 - (h) complainants' estimates of police response times - median time = 19 minutes (296)
 - (i) police recorded response time - time between call received as indicated on D24 dispatch card or a station message book and the running sheet arrival time of the patrol car, median time = 19 minutes (296)

- (j) complainants' overall satisfaction with the police response time (300)
 - (k) police clearance time - median time = approximately 17 minutes (304)
 - (l) complainants' overall satisfaction with the way the police handled the job (305)
-
- (92) the police response time in Prahran during Integrated Community Policing did not differ significantly from the response time in the rest of "I" District because the effect of the additional police patrol cars was offset by the very considerable increase in calls received (20%) and the D24 dispatch policy of assigning all calls to cars as soon as possible. The similarity between estimated response times virtually assured similarity between related variables: satisfaction with response time, way call received and how police handled the job, attendance time and police recorded response time. (315)
 - (93) the only significant difference between Prahran and the rest of "I" District emerged when complainants indicated the trouble they experienced in calling the police. Significantly more Prahran callers encountered difficulties, many due to the changed telephone number. (284)
 - (94) while only one statistically significant difference emerged between the patrol activity at Prahran and that in the rest of "I" District, there was a trend for higher levels of satisfaction with the way calls were received (286), police response time (300) and the way the police handled the job (305), at Prahran
 - (95) the statistically significant relationship between complainants estimated police response time and police recorded response time confirms the overall accuracy of complainants' estimates and indicates that, for future studies, police recorded response time is an accurate measure of actual response time (296)
 - (96) the comments of respondents who called for a police service in the rest of "I" District, confirmed the Prahran finding (81 above) that people who call for a police service are often overly anxious and their state would be assisted by more specific information about the likely arrival time of the patrol car. (307)

Crime Calls

The 1437 crime-related calls for service attended in Prahran during the 12 month assessment period, and attended in the rest of "I" District over the 2 month comparison period, were divided into three broad categories: burglaries (38.8%), prowler and suspicious person calls (20.7%) and "other" calls (40.5%). When these were examined, it was found that:-

- (97) more than half the burglaries were discovered between 1500 and 1900 hours (31.6%) and 0700 and 1100 hours (22.3%) (318)
- (98) more than half the prowler/suspicious person reports were made between 1900 and 0300 hours (56%) (318)
- (99) prowler/suspicious person calls were twice as likely to be reported immediately than were burglary or "other" crime calls (321)
- (100) the median delay before complainants reported prowler/suspicious person calls was 9 minutes, compared with about 14 minutes for burglary or "other" crime calls (321)
- (101) there was no evidence to indicate a significant difference in complainants' satisfaction with the way their crime calls were received when the three crime groupings were examined (322)
- (102) patrol car crews overall responded to prowler/suspicious person reports (median response time 12 minutes) faster than to burglary calls (median - 28 minutes) or "other" crime reports (median - 19 minutes). Although this difference was influenced by the fact that prowler/suspicious person reports often occurred when overall response time was fastest, some degree of prioritisation by patrol car crews is also likely. (323)
- (103) there was no evidence to indicate a significant difference in crime complainants' satisfaction with the police response time between burglary complainants, people who reported prowlers or suspicious persons and those who called police about "other" crime (325)
- (104) burglary complainants' satisfaction with the police response time, but not how the police handled the job, was significantly related to the value of property stolen in the offence - as value increased, satisfaction with the response time decreased. (326)

- (105) patrol car crews cleared from prowler/suspicious person reports more quickly (median time = 12 minutes) than from burglary calls (19 minutes) or "other" crime reports (17 minutes) 327
- (106) although the overall differences were not significant, considerably more prowler/suspicious person complainants (66.3%) thought that the police handling their call did a "very good" job than did people who reported burglaries (49.3%) (329)
- (107) people who reported prowlers were most pleased when police arrived in a short time, made a reasonably thorough search of the locality, offered practical advice and let the complainant know the result of any inquiries made (330)
- (108) criminal investigation procedures, particularly those embodied in the practice of "tipping" crime, and the feedback of information to complainants, were relatively frequently mentioned by burglary complainants as causing frustration, confusion and dissatisfaction. (336)

Residential Safety in Prahran

An opinion poll firm was commissioned to interview a representative sample of Prahran residents about police patrol and related issues. Analysis of the results indicated that:-

- (109) on many issues, the age or sex of the people interviewed were significantly related to their attitude towards the police. Young men tended to have the most negative opinions.
- (110) policemen were rated highly on honesty and ethical standards, just below medical doctors, but higher than school teachers, lawyers and advertising people. Women and older respondents tended to have the highest opinion of police. (345)
- (111) residents' opinions about the police reputation in Prahran varied from "very good" to "fair", (346) as did their opinion of the job the Prahran police were doing. Many respondents, especially older people, personally expressed "great" respect for the police. (348)

- (112) the police attitude was the most frequently mentioned matter influencing residents' opinions about the police
- (113) most residents (75.7%) thought Prahran a safe place in which to live
- (114) more than one in three residents, particularly women, older people and less well educated respondents, thought that Prahran was a dangerous place to be alone in at night. (352)
Very few residents thought the same about being alone in Prahran during the day. (354)
- (115) residents' opinions about crime trends in Prahran were fairly varied. Three out of ten said it was about the same as the previous year. A similar number were unable to say. Most of the remainder thought the trend was for more criminal activity in Prahran.
- (116) seven out of ten residents interviewed, said Prahran had the same or less crime than other areas of Melbourne (357)
- (117) less than one in three residents thought that most crime in Prahran was committed by residents (10.5%), or outsiders (19.9%); but overall there was little consensus on who committed most crime in Prahran. Groups most frequently mentioned were children, unemployed people and teenagers (358)
- (118) one in two residents thought that more police patrols was the most important way to reduce crime in Prahran. Increased foot patrols were considered particularly effective. More parental control and more severe penalties, were also considered important. (360)

- (119) nearly half the residents said they had installed extra fastenings or locks on doors or windows since coming to Prahran. About one in five had installed a security peephole. Older residents, women, and people who had previously called for a police service were more likely to have taken these types of preventive measures. About 4% of respondents admitted to keeping a gun in their house for protection. (362)
- (120) about one in three residents, mainly women and older people, avoided going out at night in Prahran as protection against crime. Many stayed away from certain areas while a smaller number, particularly younger women, avoided using public transport for the same reason. (364)
- (121) about half the residents saw police in Prahran once a day or more, much more frequently than indicated by Prahran business people to a similar question. (137) Over one in three young men interviewed, said they saw police more than once a day. (367)
- (122) nearly 3 in 10 residents thought that Prahran had about the right number of police. A similar proportion either thought it needed a few more or could not answer the question. Only 2 residents thought Prahran had too many police. (367)
- (123) residents' median estimated emergency response time for police was about 9 minutes, tending to underestimate the ordinary call response rate in Prahran (median 20 minutes), but similar to the median "urgent" response time of ten minutes. (370)

- (124) more than half the residents had never called the police about a problem in Prahran (371)
- (125) one in three of those residents who had called the police about a problem in Prahran, had last reported a burglary. Others had last reported noisy parties, prowlers, wilful damage offences and disturbances. About one in five previous callers were dissatisfied with the police service, considerably more than appeared when the mail questionnaire results were analysed. (371) The more frequently mentioned reasons for the level of satisfaction were the police response time, and the attitude of the attending members. About one in five residents interviewed, said that he (or she) had previously been the victim of a crime in Prahran. (375)
- (126) most residents thought police in Prahran did not do sufficient patrolling, particularly foot patrols. Many thought enforcement of the drink-driving laws and prevention of under-age drinking was also insufficient. More than one in three were unable to comment about the sufficiency of police crime investigation, helping and advising young people, enforcing liquor licensing laws, preventing under age drinking and enforcing the drug laws. (379)
- (127) increased police patrol was most frequently mentioned by residents as the action to make Prahran a better and safer place in which to live. (381)

UNITED STATES PATROL DEVELOPMENTS

During the past decade, police patrol methods in the United States of America have been the subject of the most rigorous examination. Six Departments were visited during October 1979 and their procedures particularly studied in the light of the assessment of Integrated Community Policing at Prahran. The more important developments with implications for the Victoria Police are:

- (128) the computerisation of basic patrol information including criminal histories, vehicle registrations, vehicle and firearm licences, wanted persons and personnel deployment data. (383)
- (129) the use of more comprehensive crime analysis programs in support of patrol police. (396)
- (130) the universal use of portable radios by patrol car crews. (383)
- (131) apparently successful schemes to screen 'unsolvable' crimes from further investigation, thereby reducing Detectives caseloads, allowing them to concentrate on crime in which there is a reasonable probability of clearance, and enhancing the crime scene role of the patrol police. (385)
- (132) simple methods for providing information to complainants, including a centralised "victim assistance" office and leaving a copy of the crime report with the complainant. (385)

- (133) much of the tedium and labour of manual records, together with their inherent problems of security, have been overcome in the United States by the computerisation of day to day Departmental procedures. Systems by which local commanders receive timely and relevant information about the activities of their patrol vehicles are particularly helpful. (393)
- (134) the widespread use of one-person patrol cars (383)
- (135) the abolition of minimum height requirements for police officers (383)
- (136) the civilianisation of staff at the Communications Section and other specialist areas (392)
- (137) procedures designed to give complainants more specific information about the likely arrival times of patrol cars, leading to guidelines for formally delaying non-urgent calls for service when patrol cars are not available (399)
- (138) the development of procedures for prioritisation of calls (400)
- (139) reduction in the number of calls to which patrol cars are dispatched by establishing call evaluation schemes and/or accepting some crime reports over the telephone (389)
- (140) the use of digital communications and computer aided dispatch systems (393)
- (141) strict rules governing the collection and use of crime statistics (389)
- (142) the inordinate amount of police time involved in complying with the requirements of, on the one hand, freedom of information legislation, and, on the other, privacy requirements (384)

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations arise from the assessment of Integrated Community Policing at Prahran.

LEGISLATION

Legislation should be enacted to enable:

- (1) police to require (under penalty) a person reasonably believed able to assist in police inquiries to state his name and address
- (2) police to move vehicles parked illegally across private driveways (*an extension of Regulation 1109 of the Road Traffic Regulations 1973*)
- (3) defendants in summary cases to give prior notice of their plea and, in the event of a guilty plea , or a formal plea of "not guilty", it should be sufficient for the prosecutor to be sworn and give a summary of the case. Where serious disagreement arises or the defence require the police informant to attend, the case should be adjourned to a suitable date and then heard in the ordinary manner.

EQUIPMENT

- (4) each patrol car crew should be issued with a portable radio, or, subject to their suitability, a car radio convertible to portable radio should be fitted in each patrol car. This recommendation to be phased in over the next five years.
- (5) the ratio of police vehicles to sworn personnel in Victoria (1:4.9) is the worst in Australia. The reasons for this ratio should be established, and, in any case, the ratio must be significantly improved if the level of patrol is to be maintained, realistic response times for urgent calls established, and the increasing calls for service coped with.
- (6) police stations with a 24 hour responsibility should be required to provide a minimum of two patrol cars on 24 hour patrol duty exclusive of files and inquiries duties. *(If the number of four cylinder vehicles in the Force increases, the feasibility of centralising files and inquiries offices so that four cylinder vehicles might be used on these duties exclusively, should be examined).*
- (7) the Force's policy of (as finance permits) providing patrol car crews with equipment satchels should continue

- (8) special efforts should be made to ensure that patrol police have on-line access to criminal history and offender characteristic information linked to vehicle registration numbers within a reasonable period, and not later than 4 years.

- (9) crime report details should be computerised as soon as possible with the aims of providing more comprehensive, accurate and timely analysis to support patrol police; coping with the backlog of reports at the Crime Statistics Section; avoiding the multiple statistics which are frequently quoted about crime in Victoria; and assisting Crime Collators and Criminal Investigation Divisions to keep track of crime in geographical areas within the State.

ADMINISTRATION

- (10) Force paper work and flow of correspondence procedures should be reviewed, particularly with a view to increasing the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the processes where the police station, Divisional Headquarters and District Headquarters are located in the same or adjoining buildings.
- (11) in order to maximise section sergeant's field supervision, the feasibility of an administrative group for the checking and processing of correspondence on larger stations should be examined.
- (12) procedures for recording telephone messages in station message books, including the design of the book, should be reviewed
- (13) police entries in the Melbourne Telephone Directory should be reorganised so that 24 hour stations are easily identifiable, and the usual times of operation of other stations are indicated.
- (14) police accident procedures (and any other similar systems) should be reviewed to ensure that no matter is finally *filed* without the parties involved being informed. (This most particularly relates to cases in which the police decide that there will be no further police action).

PATROL OPERATIONS

- (15) in the Metropolitan area during the next five years and with the exception of local stations in fringe or rural areas, non-24 hour stations should be phased out (including Ashburton, Flinders Lane, St. Kilda Road, Pascoe Vale, Fairfield, Yarraville, Doveton, Beaumaris, Black Rock, Glenroy, Westmeadows, Burwood), or become sub-stations of the appropriate 24 hour station, or, accommodation permitting, in the cases of Essendon, Cranbourne, Thomastown, Reservoir, Lilydale and Hastings, become 24 hour stations. Twenty-four hour stations must be adequately staffed and have sufficient vehicles and other patrol resources to provide the total patrol function in their areas. Concurrent patrol responsibilities during part of the day should be avoided.
- (16) where a station operates two or more full time patrol cars (exclusive of files and inquiries duties) shifts should be overlapped to more efficiently handle calls received at the normal changover periods.
- (17) patrol rotas should be developed at stations operating three or more full time patrol cars, particularly training stations and stations at which there is a significant number of Probationary Constables.

- (18) stations which operate two or more full time patrol cars should operate a "sector" system and D24 operators should be encouraged to more equitably distribute calls for service between patrol cars.
- (19) members should be prescribed Court days, usually once a month, on which all summons cases and other minor matters should be listed.
- (20) a patrol manual should be prepared to assist patrol officers, supervisors and D24 operators.
- (21) stations should be assisted to develop programs for talks to local schools and groups about local problems, road safety and police related issues.
- (22) patrol car crews, particularly those with portable radios, should be expected to perform foot patrols from their vehicles.
- (23) procedures for obtaining "urgent" Motor Registration Branch extracts should be reviewed with the aim of reducing the out of service time of patrol cars travelling to and waiting at the Motor Registration Branch. The greater use of telephone requests and return mail are short term solutions; but, in the long term, facsimile transmission between the Motor Registration Branch and District Headquarters should lead to a substantial decrease in the out of service time associated with obtaining "urgent" extracts.

- (24) people calling for a police service should be given more specific information about the likely arrival time of the patrol cars

- (25) patrol car crews attending calls for service should be made aware of their "likely arrival time" given to complainants. If they are unduly delayed they should arrange for the complainants to be notified and, if necessary the dispatch of another patrol car. When delay occurs, its cause should be explained to the complainant.

- (26) mobile duty returns (running sheets) should be restructured to enable crews to indicate:
 - (a) the time the call was first received, either at D24 (*as recorded on the dispatch card*) or at a station (*as recorded in the station message book*)
 - (b) *as at present*, the time the call was given to the car crew (*by D24 or, if direct, by the station*)
 - (c) the estimated arrival time as given to the complainant
 - (d) *as at present*, the time the crew arrived at the call
 - (e) *as at present*, the time the crew cleared from the call

- (27) D24 dispatch cards should be revised to include, where a call is first received at a police station, the time it was received at that station *as recorded in the station message book*

- (28) to facilitate any follow-up inquiries, the name, station and station telephone number of at least one of the attending members should be left with the complainant, preferably on an issued card somewhat similar to the present "caller's card".

- (29) efforts should be made to reduce police response time, particularly for "urgent" calls involving risk to life or where offenders are being detained or have been disturbed or to prowler or suspicious person reports. This should be achieved by increasing patrol resources (particularly vehicles) and establishing call priorities.

- (30) crime prevention and related programmes should scrupulously avoid setting unrealistic public expectations about police response times

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

- (31) a detailed examination of the role of uniform police and detectives in the investigation of various types of crime and the benefits to be gained from screening some crime reports from further investigation, should be conducted as soon as possible
- (32) reports of some minor crimes, matters reported for insurance purposes and car thefts should be taken over the telephone, subject to "call back" safeguards when considered necessary.
- (33) crime prevention and other police programs should be particularly aimed at reducing the time taken by complainants to report matters to the police
- (34) the increasing number of house burglaries and the significant trauma often generated by the offence together with its resistance to increases in the level of preventive patrol; justify increases in other strategies aimed at its reduction. These include, community awareness schemes, target hardening, 'on-line' crime analysis information, Detective caseload screening and more thorough crime scene investigation.

TRAINING

- (35) the assessment of Integrated Community Policing in Prahran, particularly complainants' impressions of the service provided by the police, should be used for training throughout the Force. *(Not only in the training of patrol officers, but also in the training of supervisors, Officers, Detectives, D24 operators and members involved in crime prevention and public relations programmes).*

- (36) members should be specially trained in the importance of advising people who call for a police service, the result of police inquiries and, where applicable, the importance of offering advice either what to do before the patrol car arrives, or (from the patrol car crew) what to do after the police have left.

- (37) police, particularly D24 operators, should be highly trained in the important task of receiving telephone calls for assistance; in particular advising the likely arrival time of a patrol car and appropriate advice as to what to do in the meantime. When available, the complainant's telephone number should also be obtained.

END