Report of the

Controller and Auditor-General

Tumuaki o te Mana Arotake

The Police: Dealing with Dwelling Burglary

September 2001

Foreword

Those fortunate enough never to have been a victim of burglary might be tempted simply to dismiss it as a property crime. However, for many whose homes have been burgled – sometimes repeatedly – the experience is more akin to a crime against the person. The sense of personal violation and shattered security can be profound, distressing, disabling and long-lasting.

There is another strong reason why burglary merits attention. It can often be a crime of youth and may represent an important stage in the development of a career criminal.

Over the last two to three years, these considerations have led the Government to:

- agree that the Police place special emphasis on burglary;

- set defined crime reduction targets and outcome performance measures for (for example) increased property security and reduced fear of crime; and

- provide the Police with additional resources to target burglary.

This is our report of a performance audit of the way in which the Police deal with dwelling burglaries, pursue their outcome targets, and make use of their resources.

The audit broke new ground in the following two ways:

- it was the first time that we had conducted a performance audit of the Police; and

- in doing so, we needed to confront some complex operational and performance measurement issues.

We began the audit when former Commissioner Peter Doone headed the Police. However, for most of the period of the audit, Commissioner Rob Robinson has headed the Police. I am grateful to both Commissioners for the degree of co-operation shown to our auditors.

We have been impressed by the willingness of the Police to submit to scrutiny and to welcome the new perspectives that a fresh set of eyes can sometimes bring.

Because we were conscious of the complexity of this specialist area, we also sought the assistance of external referees. I am indebted to Dr Warren Young, Deputy Secretary of Justice and former Professor of Law at Victoria University of Wellington, and to Professor Ian Shirley, Director of the Institute of Public Policy, Auckland University of Technology, for their advice, valuable comments, and suggestions.

D J D Macdonald
7 September 2001
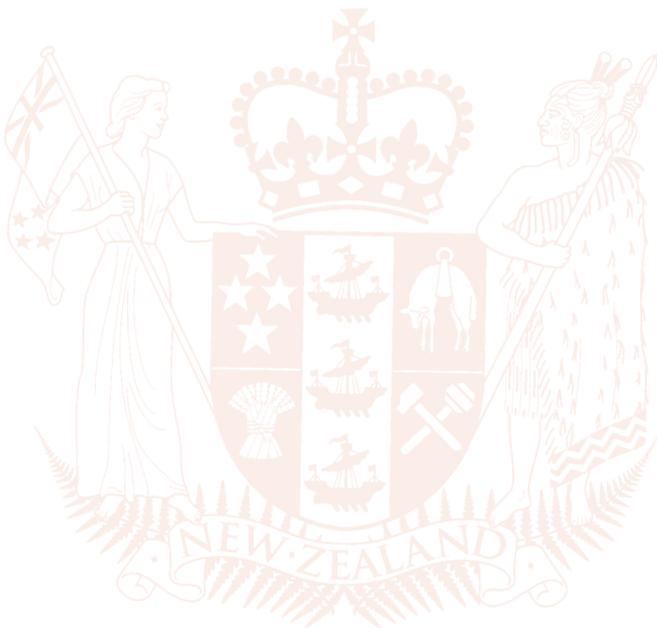
We use the following abbreviations in this report:

Intell unit   A group of officers and staff that processes information and provides intelligence for use within the District.

LET   **L**aw **E**nforcement **T**eam – a specialist team that concentrates policing effort on specific criminal activity.

MAPS   **M**ap-based **A**nalytical **P**olicing **S**ystem – providing computerised information analysis and mapping.

SNAP   **S**erial **N**umber **A**ction **P**roject – an Auckland initiated programme involving insurance companies recording serial numbers of customers' property.

SOCO   **S**cene of **C**rime **O**fficer – an officer specially trained to obtain physical evidence from crime scenes; e.g. taking fingerprints, retrieving DNA and securing evidential exhibits such as tool marks.

The Police kindly supplied all of the pictures used in this report – with the exception of those in Figure 8 on page 61, which we obtained from the web site of Institute of Environmental Science and Research Limited.

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Executive Summary

The Scale of Dwelling Burglary[1]

Burglary is an important issue for the general public, comprising about one in ten of all recorded offences. Fear of being burgled ranks high amongst people's concerns, and many think that burglary is a specific problem in their area.

The Police have responded to public concerns by making burglary one of their operational priorities, and by undertaking special initiatives to improve the management and investigation of burglary. Reducing dwelling burglary is one of three national crime reduction priorities – along with violent and sexual attacks, and vehicle taking.

In 1999-2000, the number of recorded dwelling burglaries fell by 12.4% from 50,537 in the previous year to 44,276. This reduction reversed a gradually rising trend in dwelling burglary over the five years 1994-95 to 1998-99. (See Figure 4 on page 26.)

Over the same five years, the rate at which dwelling burglaries were resolved was around 10% to 11% of recorded crimes. But around 1,000 more burglaries were resolved in 1999-2000, giving a resolution rate of 13.6%.

The likely reasons for these improved figures are the increased police focus on burglary and the use of new technology and scientific techniques to help resolve crimes. However, because of the Police's low level of evaluation of their operations, the actual reasons for the improvements are not known.

(Just as we were going to press with this report, the Police announced that in 2000-01 the number of recorded dwelling burglaries fell to 37,772 and the resolution rate rose to 17.3%).

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1   A "dwelling burglary" occurs when an offender "breaks and enters" a dwelling – whether or not something is taken from the dwelling. A "burglary" requires two surfaces to have been parted by the person entering the dwelling (section 242, Crimes Act 1961).

Investigating Burglary

The process for investigating burglary is broadly similar throughout the Police, but we found variations in practice at local level. For example, Police Areas varied in the priority they gave to attendance at burglary scenes by SOCOs, who are specialists in taking evidence from a crime scene. Approaches to burglary investigation need to reflect local factors, so some variation would be expected.

But burglary is the same crime wherever it is committed – giving the Police scope to learn from practices and approaches that have worked well elsewhere. At present, the reasons for variation at local level are not always clearly stated or argued. Often, the differences are believed to reflect local circumstances and environments, but the rationale generally has not been evaluated.

Practices and performance sometimes vary even between Areas in the same Police District. We believe that it is at Area level that changes in approach can make the most difference. There are 52 Areas, and we see considerable scope for meaningful benchmarking of practices and performance between Areas. If developed, benchmarking could substantially improve understanding of the relationship between policing practices and desired policy outcomes.

Preventing Burglary

Crime prevention has a wider focus than just burglary. But (in practice) crime prevention programmes are designed to have an impact on burglary because of community concerns about that crime. Crime prevention also emphasises youth crime – children or young people commit about 40% of all resolved burglaries.

As with burglary investigation, we found that Areas organised and resourced crime prevention in different ways. Communities are different, and the Police need to take account of the differences in their approach to community partnerships. But this does not detract from the importance of evaluating new and alternative approaches and sharing good practice in crime prevention between Areas.

Evaluation is not a cost-free exercise, and targets for in-depth evaluation need to be selected to achieve maximum pay-off. Policing priorities are also a relevant factor in choices of targets for evaluation. Given the current emphasis on youth offending, the Police should consider whether this aspect of policing operations ought to receive early attention.

Use of Science, Information and Information Technology

Frequently, no witness evidence is available for property crimes, particularly burglary. However, burglars often leave physical evidence at crime scenes – such as fingerprints, blood, or tool marks. Burglars may also develop specific methods or target particular types of victims.

Therefore, use of scientific techniques for analysing physical evidence, and use of information and intelligence to explore crime patterns, are particularly important to the prevention and investigation of burglary. The sophistication of such methods has increased in recent years and, consequently, so has their potential impact on crime.

The Police use an array of techniques and technology in crime investigations. However, we concluded that the Police were unlikely at present to be making best use of forensic scientific techniques in crime investigations because of:

- variability in the use of techniques such as DNA testing and voluntary fingerprinting – with no clear rationale for the differences;

- the lack of systematic resource planning for the use of forensic services; and

- the need for more evaluation of the impact of different courses of action.

Collecting evidence to demonstrate "what works" takes time. But the Police now have the tools – particularly access to information technology – to undertake evaluation. It is important that the Police use this opportunity to test the effectiveness of what they do, so that they can improve and be more accountable for their performance.

A Policing Development Unit based in the Office of the Commissioner of Police has been promoting improved assessment of the effectiveness of different approaches and sharing of good practices between different Areas. It has recently been focusing on the operation of Intell units – intelligence units operating at local level – because they are considered to be working at well below their full potential in many Areas.

The results of our audit support the Police's selection of Intell as a priority. We found that Intell units lacked the profile they need to meet their full potential. But the units are now using systems that offer a step-change in the technology available to support intelligence-led policing. To work well they need an organisational culture that values this approach.

Measuring and Monitoring Performance

Some Area business plans were of good quality in that they clearly set out – in a way that should be meaningful to local police officers – how burglary was to be tackled. However, many Areas found it difficult to express their day-to-day operations within the performance framework. Districts and Areas need help in interpreting the framework in their local context, and there is a need to spread the good practice and expertise that some Areas have developed.

A particular element of business planning that requires improvement is resource planning for support such as Intell and use of scientific techniques. Resource planning needs to take account of the relative effectiveness of different courses of action, instead of being mainly predicated on cost. Some useful development work has been done with Environmental Science Research Limited – the Police's principal forensic science provider – to try to plan resourcing of scientific analysis more effectively.

The Police have made progress in developing suitable indicators and targets for burglary. However, local targets for burglary reduction need to be reviewed in the light of the improvements in 1999-2000, and the expectation of further large improvements from:

- investments in technology; and

- initiatives such as the establishment of burglary Law Enforcement Teams in Districts with the highest recorded rates of burglary.

Promoting a continuous improvement approach in Areas will be important if the full potential of the tools available to the Police for tackling burglary is to be realised. Managers need more information on the different approaches taken by Areas to tackle burglary. It is important that, where beneficial tools and processes are identified, Areas can demonstrate that they are developing their responses to reflect best practice – or, if not, be required to explain their decision.

The essential elements of continuous improvement are illustrated in Figure 1 on the opposite page. Face-to-face reviews of Area performance are, in our view, a key element. These were suspended between August 2000 and May 2001 due to financial pressures. We welcome their recent reintroduction.

Another key contributor to continuous improvement would be peer reviews between different Areas and Districts, with the involvement of staff in the Office of the Commissioner. In addition, the Police should consider commissioning (from time to time) an independent peer review from overseas, in order to help increase the transfer of learning from international experience.

Figure 1
The Essential Elements of Continuous Improvement

DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

LOCKING IN A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

DEVELOP GUIDANCE

EVALUATE PRACTICE

SET BEST PRACTICE BENCHMARKS

TRAIN AND FACILITATE

UNDERTAKE PEER REVIEWS

AGREE PLANS

REVIEW PERFORMANCE

SET TARGETS

EXTERNAL INFORMATION
- Crime research – "keeping one step ahead of the offenders"
- Overseas evaluations

LOCAL INTELL

NATIONAL/LOCAL COMMON INFORMATION BASE

COMMUNITY VIEWS AND VALUES

EXTERNAL DRIVERS
- Government objectives
- Overseas peer reviews – "review of Police by Police"

Part One

What This Report Is About

101 The purpose of this report is to provide Parliament with information on what the Police are doing about dwelling burglaries, including how the Police measure their performance.

Why We Looked at Dwelling Burglary

102 Dwelling burglary is an important issue for the general public, comprising approximately 10% of all recorded offences. The 1996 National Survey of Crime Victims found fear of being burgled ranked high in responses to the question on fear of being a victim of various types of crime.

103 It is especially notable that in nearly one-third of cases of dwelling burglary in the Survey, someone was home at the time. Of the people interviewed, 57.6% said they were either "very worried" or "fairly worried" about burglary.

104 Of those who considered crime was generally a problem in their neighbourhood, 76% considered that burglary was a specific problem – by far the highest rate for all crimes specifically mentioned. Petty theft was the next most frequently mentioned – by 27% of respondents.

105 Burglaries generally result in loss of property for the victims. In 72% of burglaries reported in the Survey, property was stolen.[2] In 18% of these cases, all or part of the property was recovered. In just over half of cases, stolen or damaged property was covered by insurance. Of the victims with insurance, 26% said they were still over $1,000 out of pocket after the burglary.

106 The Police have responded to public concerns by making burglary one of their operational priorities and by undertaking special initiatives designed to improve the management and investigation of burglaries. And there are other reasons why focusing on burglary is important – for example, serial rapists have often been found to have earlier burglary convictions.

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2   See footnote 1 on page 9.

How the Police Are Organised

107   The top layers of the Police national structure comprise the Office of the Commissioner, 12 Districts, and 11 service centres (dealing with, for example, prosecutions, information technology, and police training). The 12 Districts are divided into a total of 52 Areas, which are the local operational units. Each Area can have several stations.

108   A Commander heads each District, who has the authority and responsibility to determine how resources are deployed locally. For burglary, this would include:

- how many staff and other resources are devoted to burglary prevention and investigation;

- how staff are organised – for example, whether there is a separate burglary squad,[3] or whether burglary is handled by police officers and teams that are also handling other crimes; and

- the extent to which different investigative tools are given resources and are used.

109   By giving District Commanders responsibility and authority for operational policing within their Districts, the Police aim to achieve the most effective resource use and choice of tactical options – having regard to the particular geographic and demographic characteristics of their Districts.

110   Because each Commander is accountable for performance in his or her District, high-level indicators of results (such as the level of recorded and resolved burglary offences) are used as the basis for performance discussions and for exploring tactical options.

111   We mainly use the term "District" in this report but, in most cases, our observations apply equally to Areas.

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3   A burglary squad is a team of officers and staff that is dedicated to the prevention and investigation of burglary.

What We Did

112   We visited five of the 12 Districts, concentrating mainly on one Area within each District. We chose to visit the following Districts:

- **Bay of Plenty,** because it has a LET for burglary that has been operating since July 1999;

- **Wellington**, because it was a pilot district for the crime mapping system known as MAPS;

- **Auckland City**, because it has a high number of recorded burglaries;

- **Tasman**, to provide information on burglary management in a District with a proportionately large rural population; and

- **Canterbury**, which is noted for its experienced officers and low staff turnover.

113   We:

- interviewed District Commanders, Area Managers, Crime Managers, Policing Development Managers, front line police officers, officers in burglary squads, youth aid officers, and staff working in the Intell units; and

- examined documents – including business plans and operational reports.

114   We also met with the District Commanders from Counties/Manukau and North Shore/Waitakere. Together with Auckland City, these Districts cover Greater Auckland. So, by including them, we were able to get an overview of the different ways in which the Police manage burglary across wider metropolitan Auckland.

115   We completed our field work by carrying out interviews and a review of documents centrally in the Office of the Commissioner.

116   The draft of this report was also reviewed by two external advisers – Professor Ian Shirley and Dr Warren Young.
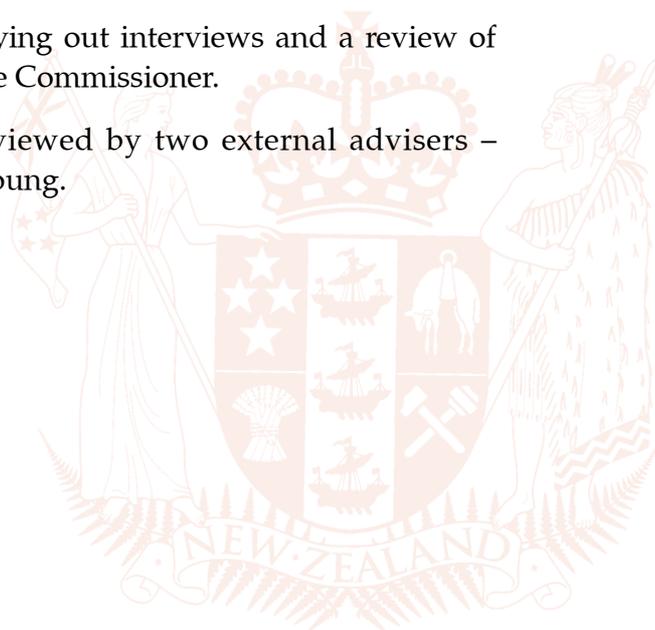
Matters Not Included in the Audit

117   Our field work in the Districts and Areas included examination of operations (such as voluntary fingerprinting) that require the Police to maintain a careful balance between law enforcement and the rights of individuals. However, we restricted our examination to each District's general approaches to the operations – we did not look at how police officers handled individual cases of enforcement.

118   Many other aspects of crime lie beyond the scope of our audit. This is because:

- crime and criminality are complex concepts that vary from one society to another – with definitions of crime, as well as responses to offending, influenced by historical and cultural traditions, social conventions, and national priorities; and

- a complex range of economic, social, cultural and demographic factors have a bearing on crime and criminality.

119   We looked at a particular category of crime – dwelling burglary – and within this sphere of activity our audit centred on the role and performance of the Police.

Burglary –
Funding and Statistics

Key Points –

- Reducing dwelling burglary is one of three national crime reduction priorities – along with violent sexual attacks and vehicle taking.

- The Police target for 1999-2000 was to limit dwelling burglary to a rate of 127 burglaries per 10,000 of population. The rate achieved was 118.

- The number of dwelling burglaries exhibited a slightly rising trend from 1994-95 to 1998-99, but dropped in 1999-2000 by 12.4%.

- The burglary resolution rate also improved in 1999-2000 – nearly 1,000 more resolutions and a resolution rate up from 10% to 13.6%.

Funding for Criminal Justice Activities

201   The Ministry of Justice has calculated that budgeted Government expenditure in the criminal justice sector in 1999-2000 amounted to $1,183.6 million. Of that total, expenditure by the Police accounted for nearly half – $557.8 million – see Figure 2 below. The proportionate shares of the total expenditure are illustrated in Figure 3 on the following page.

Figure 2
Budgeted Government Expenditure in the
Criminal Justice Sector 1999-2000

Agency	$million
The Police	557.8
Department of Corrections	379.7
Department for Courts	137.2
Department of Child, Youth and Family Services	45.7
Legal Services Board	34.1
Crown Law Office	19.3
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet	5.5
Serious Fraud Office	4.3
Total	**1,183.6**

Part Two

Figure 3
Agencies' Shares of Criminal Justice Expenditure
1999-2000

Key:

■ The Police	■ Department of Corrections
■ Department for Courts	■ Department of Child, Youth and Family Services
■ Legal Services Board	■ Crown Law Office
■ Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet	■ Serious Fraud Office
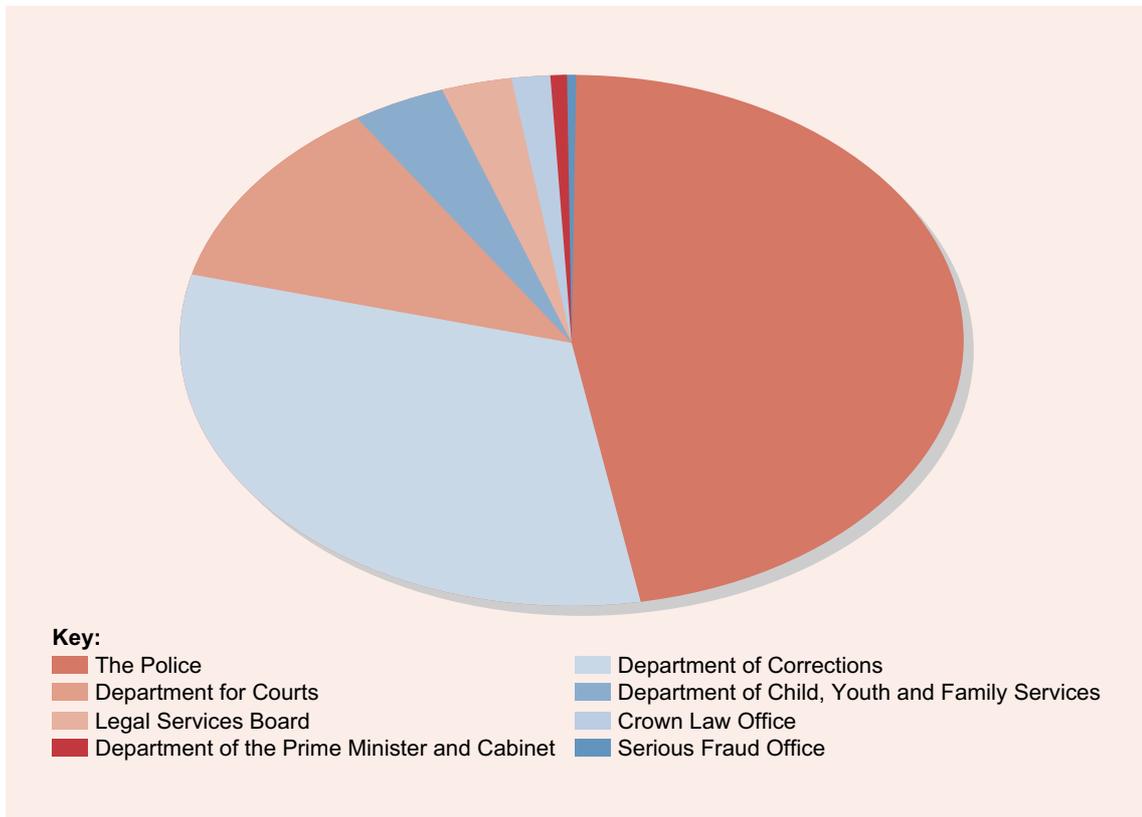
How Much Did the Police Spend on Dwelling Burglary?

202   Vote Police output classes are not split by crime type (such as burglary). Instead, the classes reflect the 'lifecycle' of community safety – prevention, response, case management, and case disposition. (For example, in 2000-01 the budget for case management of all crime types was $204 million.) However, while expenditure is not recorded by crime type, policing time is – thereby providing some measure of the resources applied to different types of crime.

Statistics – Offences Committed and Resolved

203   Changes in policing practice, community attitudes towards reporting crime, and legislative changes or changes in reporting systems, all have a significant bearing on the number and types of crimes that appear in official statistics. In addition, national and international studies have shown that the level of criminal offending in society exceeds the level of recorded crime and, in this sense, official statistics provide only a partial picture.

204   As an illustration, the 1996 National Survey of Crime Victims indicated that:

- the number of burglaries recorded is significantly less than the number of burglaries actually committed; and

- the public reports to the Police about 72% of the burglaries that they say have occurred.

205   The Police do not *record* as burglaries all *reported* burglaries. The recorded proportion is about 80%. The balance that is not recorded generally comprises crimes that the victim described as burglary, but were actually assessed by the Police to be a different crime – such as entering a building with intent to commit a crime[4], or theft[5]. In some other cases, the Police may determine after investigation that there is insufficient evidence to substantiate any offence having been committed.

206   The Police have formulated precise definitions of *offence*, *recorded offence*, and *resolved offence*:

- **Offence** – An offence is any act reported to or otherwise becoming known to the Police that the Police consider to be in breach of the criminal law.

- **Recorded Offence** – A "recorded offence" is an actual offence of which the Police become aware. Reported offences which, after investigation, are found not to have involved any offending are classified as 'no offence disclosed' and are not "recorded".

- **Resolved Offence** – A recorded offence is considered to have been "resolved" when it has been investigated, the likely offender(s) have been identified, and a decision has been taken on what should happen to those offender(s) – whether a prosecution, a diversion or a family group conference.

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4   Section 242, Crimes Act 1961. The essential difference between burglary and entering with intent is that burglary requires two surfaces to have been parted by the person entering the dwelling, while entering with intent may be committed by entering through an already open door.

5   As defined in section 220, Crimes Act 1961.

Part Two

Part Two

207   Recorded and resolved dwelling burglary offences for the six years 1994-95 to 1999-2000 are set out in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4
Recorded and Resolved Dwelling Burglaries
1994-95 to 1999-2000

Dwelling burglary exhibited a slightly rising trend from 1994-95 to 1998-99. However, in 1999-2000 the number of dwelling burglaries was 12.4% less than in 1998-99. The resolution rate also improved in 1999-2000 compared with 1998-99 – the Police resolved nearly 1,000 more burglaries and the resolution rate increased from 10% to 13.6%.
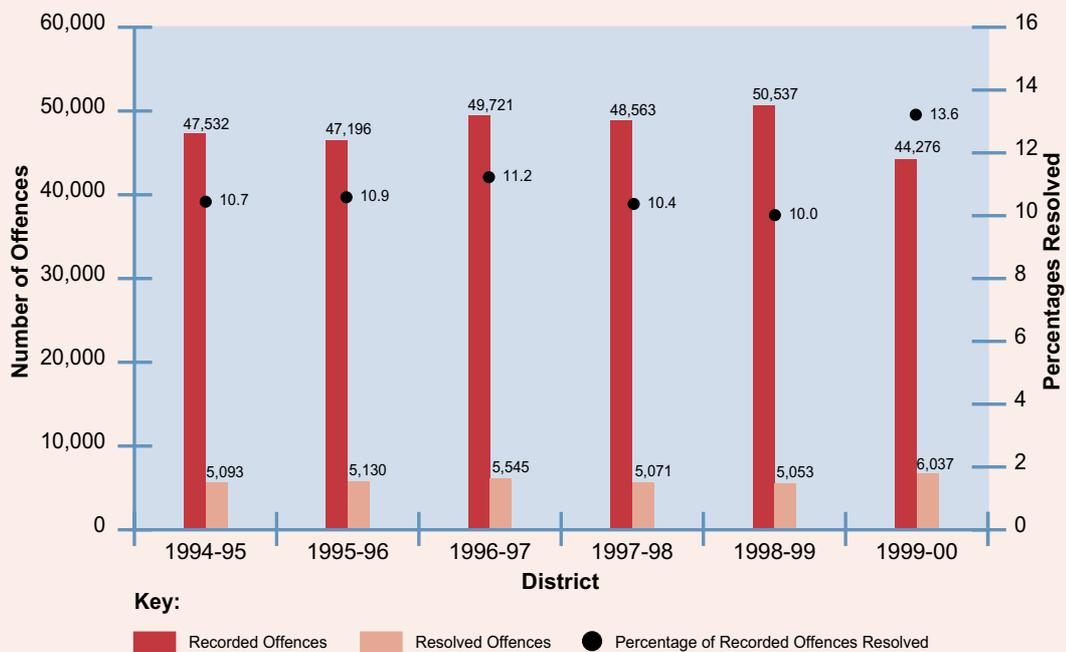
208   Reducing dwelling burglary is one of three national crime reduction priorities – along with violent and sexual attacks, and vehicle taking. The dwelling burglary target for 1999-2000 was 127 burglaries per 10,000 of population – the rate of offending on a per capita basis provides a more valid picture of crime because it accounts for any changes that may occur in the demographic profile of the population.

209   The 44,276 recorded dwelling burglaries in 1999-2000 represented 118 burglaries per 10,000 of population – a substantial improvement on the target. However, the reduction – while reversing the gradually rising trend of the previous five years – would need to continue for a further two or three years before it could be confirmed that there is a real downward trend in dwelling burglary.

210   At local level, the rate of dwelling burglary ranged widely in 1999-2000 – from 165 per 10,000 of population in Counties/Manukau down to 56 per 10,000 of population in Tasman (see Figure 5 below). The range partly reflects local characteristics – such as predominantly urban or predominantly rural communities, and the age profile of the population.

Figure 5
Rate of Recorded Dwelling Burglaries by District 1999-2000

The rate of recorded dwelling burglaries varies widely at District level.

Part Two
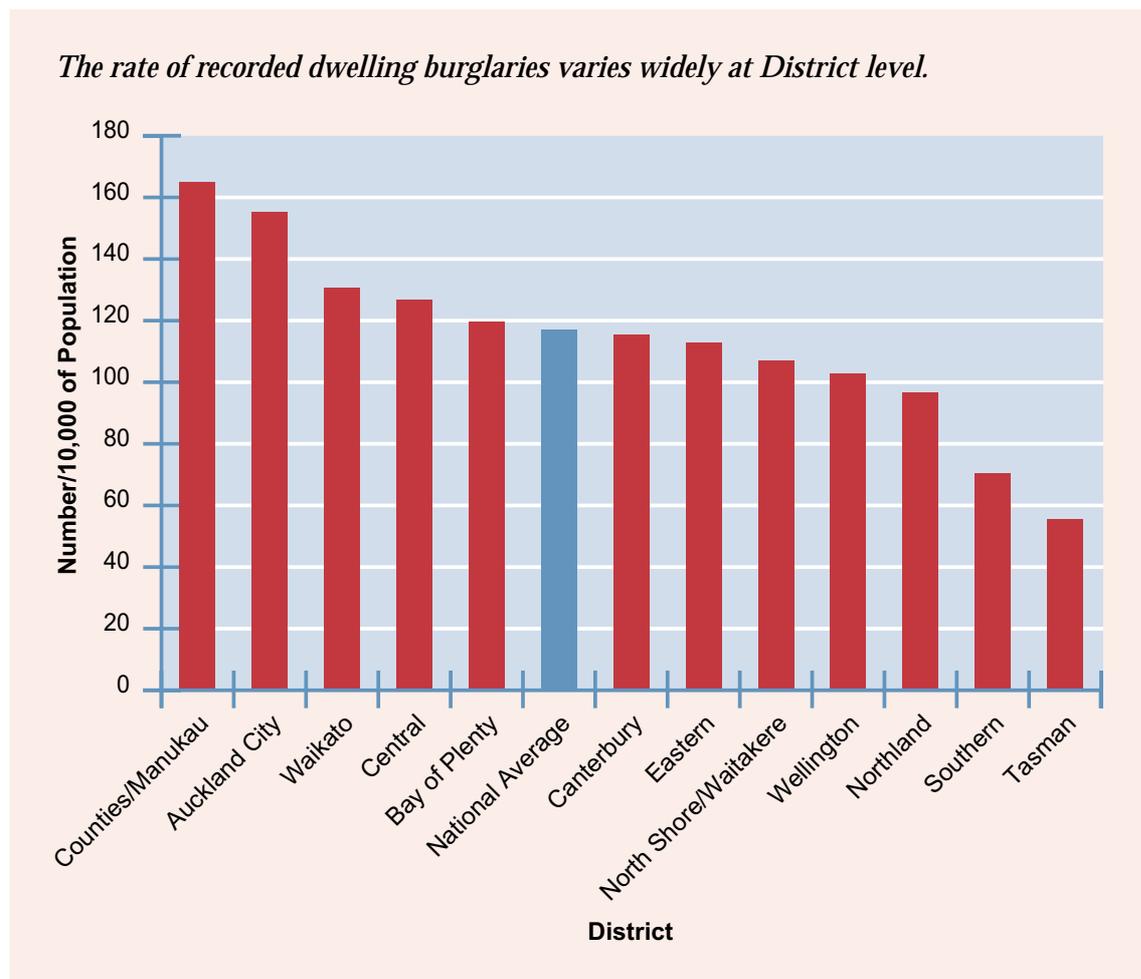
211   In the five years to 1998-99, the rate at which dwelling burglaries were resolved was around 10-11% of recorded burglaries (see Figure 4 on page 26). But around 1,000 more burglaries were resolved in 1999-2000 than in the previous year, increasing the resolution rate from 10% to 13.6%.

212   The percentage of dwelling burglaries resolved varies widely among the 12 Districts. In 1999-2000, the resolution rate ranged from 6.6% in Counties/Manukau to 24.2% in Waikato.

213   A number of factors affect local resolution rates. District performance in resolving burglaries is one factor. Others include:

- demography – in a busy, anonymous urban community burglaries are likely to be harder to resolve; and

- the type of community – people with a culture of looking out for their neighbour's property are more likely to provide the Police with the information needed to help identify offenders.

"Offender Resolution" and "Resolved Offences"

214   The term used to describe what happens to an offender is "offender resolution" – which is not the same as a "resolved offence". For example:

- one resolved offence may involve more than one offender and there may be more than one resolution; or

- if three offenders have been identified, there may be three different resolutions – one offender may be prosecuted, one diverted (i.e. dealt with informally – usually for first-time offenders), and one referred to Youth Aid Services.

215   Figure 6 on the next page shows that, for the 6,037 dwelling burglaries resolved in 1999-2000:

- there were 7,796 resolutions – almost half of which were prosecutions in the District Court or High Court; and

- more than 38% of resolutions were Youth Court prosecutions, referrals to Youth Aid Services, or involved youths under 17 years of age.

Figure 6
Offender Resolutions 1999-2000

Nearly half the resolutions in 1999-2000 were offender prosecutions in the District Court or High Court.

Mode of Resolution[6]	Number
Prosecuted in District Court or High Court	3,674
File forwarded to Youth Aid Services for further action	1,940
Prosecution in Youth Court	567
Family group conference (under 17 years old)	272
Warning given (under 17 years old)	190
Already in custody	764
Unable to take action (e.g. out of the country)	230
Formal warning given	136
Caution given	4
Diversion	11
Not prosecuted because of psychiatric condition	8
Total resolutions	**7,796**

Part Two

6   Detailed descriptions of the modes of resolution are in Appendix 1 on page 93.

Part Three

Investigating Burglary

Key Points –

- Different Districts take different approaches to aspects of burglary investigations.

- There is a need for more detailed, shared guidelines for dealing with burglary investigations, with the potential to reduce:

  - duplication of effort in developing guidance;

  - inconsistent approaches to the same task; and

  - lost opportunities to disseminate new approaches.

- Co-ordinated guidance:

  - would be relatively easy to produce and would draw on the best guidance currently available in Districts; and

  - could be applied in tandem with Districts continuing to try new approaches that reflect the different characteristics of their Areas.

- There are only isolated examples of formal review of the success of particular approaches. Evaluations are needed to find out why approaches did or did not work, and whether any changes in the level of resources used were justified by improved performance.

- We recommend that the Police consider:

  - Producing co-ordinated guidance to which all officers have ready access.

  - Formally evaluating new approaches, tools, and practices that are considered to have high potential benefit if they were replicated across Districts.

  - Further developing arrangements for disseminating the results of evaluations.

301   In this part we:

- examine the burglary investigation process; and

- describe how a recently introduced initiative – the Law Enforcement Team – is applied to burglary investigation and prevention.

The Investigation Process

302   The steps that individual Districts take when investigating burglaries is broadly similar, involving five main stages. Figure 7 below shows the stages and the relationship with the Vote Police output classes.

Figure 7
Main Stages of Investigating a Burglary

Notification

↓

Dispatch

↓

Initial Attendance and Early Case Management

↓

Case Management

↓

Resolution

Output Class D4
Primary Response Management

Output Class D5
Case Management

Output Class D6
Case Resolution
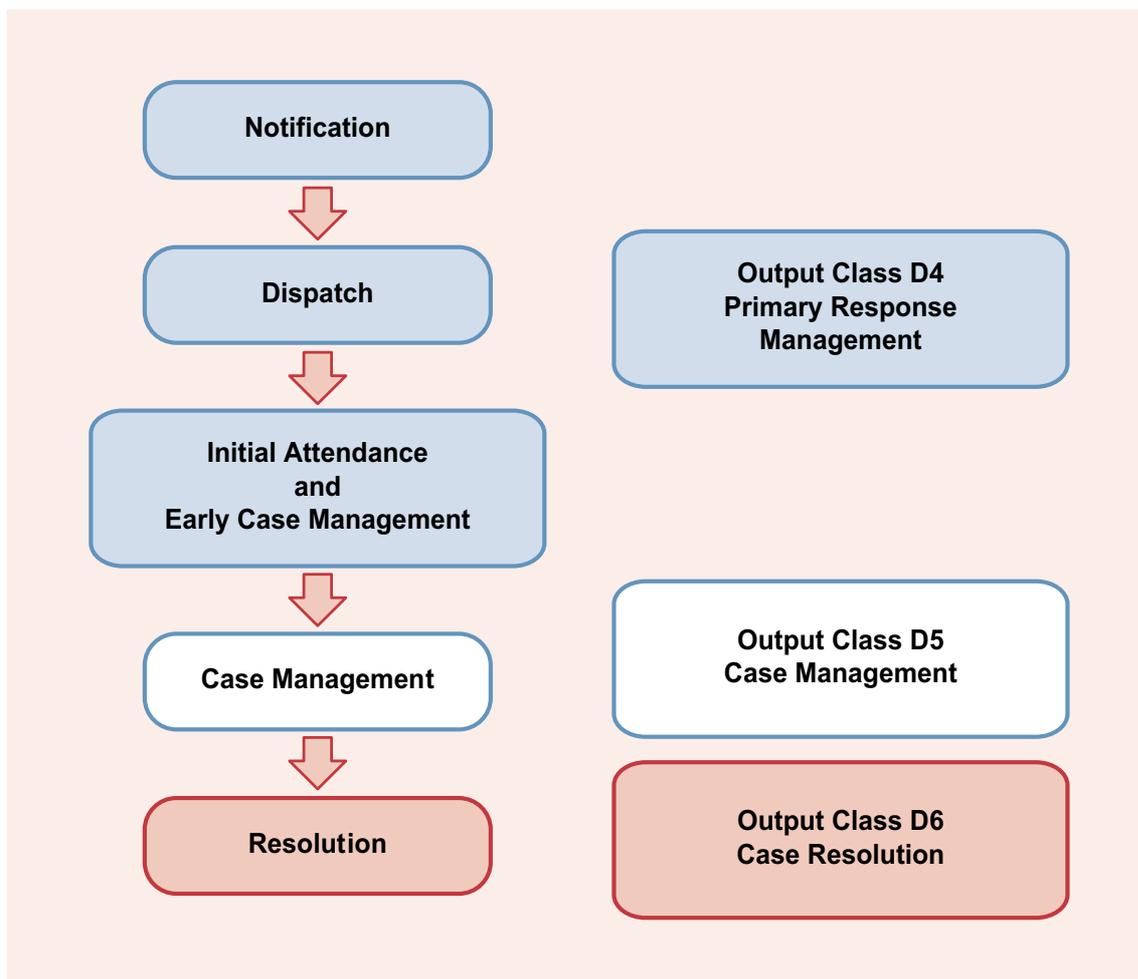
303   However, Police Districts organise burglary investigations in a variety of ways. In the Districts we visited we observed five groups of officers who might be involved in a burglary investigation:

- those undertaking general duties (for example, patrolling);

- those working in dedicated squads specialising in burglary prevention and investigation;

- those working in broader tactical units that may have a burglary focus at a particular time;

- those working in LETs who, depending on District priorities and crime patterns, may be deployed on burglary; and

- SOCOs, who examine crime scenes (including burglaries) to, for example, collect forensic evidence.

304   As a result of the high degree of autonomy they have, Districts take different approaches to some of the five stages of burglary investigation. We describe the five stages in more detail below.

Notification

305   Callers can contact the Police either by telephoning 111 or by contacting the local Police station by telephone or in person. Calls requiring dispatch of police patrols are routed to one of three national communication centres.

Dispatch

306   When a 111 caller reports that a suspected burglar is in or near a house, the response procedure is to dispatch a patrol to the scene as soon as possible. This is colloquially referred to as "burglars on". This situation is treated as a "priority one" matter because of the need to minimise the risk of harm to people and damage to property, and because a fast response increases the possibility of an offender being caught.

307   When the notification concerns a burglary that has already been committed and the offender(s) have left the scene, an immediate response is likely to have a lesser impact on the detection rate. This situation therefore attracts a lower priority dispatch, and the response time will vary depending on the attendance policy of the particular District and the other crimes and incidents being reported at the time.

308   However, there are a number of reasons why prompt attendance is still important – including the need to:

- collect physical crime scene evidence as quickly as possible, to preserve its integrity;

- make early progress where crimes may be connected; and

- provide general support to victims in the aftermath of the crime and also provide advice about how to reduce the risk of it happening again.

309   The Police collect some data on how long it takes to respond to calls reporting burglary (dwelling and non-dwelling). A sample of data for the period 20-28 April 2000 shows that the national average time between the report of the burglary and the dispatch of police personnel to the scene was 9 hours.

310   We examined the variation in dispatch time to burglaries by Areas that have a high number of calls.

- Christchurch Central, with 432 calls in a sample three-month period (20 March to 20 June 2000), responded to all but 4% within 24 hours.

- Wellington Central, with 255 calls over the same period, took more than 24 hours to respond to 11% of its calls.

- Areas in Greater Auckland had higher levels of calls not responded to within 24 hours – partly reflecting the practice in some Areas of contacting the burglary victim by telephone and agreeing a time to visit. Thus, on some occasions when the time from initial call to attendance is greater than 24 hours, it was by agreement with the burglary victim.

Initial Attendance and Early Case Management

311   Some Districts set standards for the initial burglary attendance. For example, Taupo's business plan requires attendance at all house burglaries "on the day they are reported".

312   What happens when a burglary crime scene is first attended is important, because the officer can influence the final outcome of the investigation by:

- collecting comprehensive victim and witness statements while facts are still fresh in their minds; and

- ensuring that the crime scene is preserved so that usable fingerprint evidence and evidence for scientific analysis can be obtained.

Part Three

Who attends the scene of the crime?

313   Initial attendance at a burglary scene usually falls to general duties officers or officers from a burglary squad – at the time of our field work we observed the former arrangement in Wellington and the latter in Auckland City.

314   In Auckland City, burglary squads were operating in both the Avondale and Mt Wellington areas. However, the squads worked differently. Cases were attended and followed up by the same officer in Avondale – whereas in Mt Wellington, one officer prepared the offence report, conducted the initial scene examination, and made area enquiries, then referred the case to another officer for investigation.

What happens at the scene of the crime?

315   Enquiries at this stage involve an interview with the complainant and anyone else present who can provide relevant information. The officer may also speak to neighbours and leave contact sheets for those not at home. By carefully examining the way in which a representative sample of cases was managed, the Police have determined that the average time for this stage is approximately 45 minutes.

316   The attending officer prepares an offence report. This is a standard national report, which enables consistent information to be collected at every crime scene in all Districts. However, some details (such as means of entry) were recorded in free form. Without standard descriptions, similar items may be recorded differently for different offences, making reliable analysis of data across cases difficult. Since our audit, the form has been redesigned to make the data it provides more suitable for analysis.

317   SOCOs may attend a crime scene to examine it for fingerprints and collect exhibits considered suitable for scientific analysis. Some Districts require the attending officer to ensure that every burglary scene is fingerprinted, preferably by SOCOs (who are specialised personnel). Police officers are trained to take fingerprints but, because of their training and specialised role, SOCOs are more experienced in identifying likely surfaces for prints and taking the print itself.

318   SOCOs also have specialised expertise in identifying suitable surfaces and objects for scientific analysis, including DNA. In a survey of police officers in Wanganui, attendance of specialists at the crime scene was the most commonly cited factor in improving services to victims of burglary.

319 Districts' policies on the level of resources used in employing SOCOs vary. The decision about whether or not a SOCO should attend a particular crime scene is made by the initial attending officer, on the basis of an assessment of the scene and in the light of availability of SOCOs in the District. For example, in Nelson, guidance issued to general duties officers:

- emphasises the importance of the quality of examination of crime scenes, and the need at every scene for an assessment of whether a SOCO should attend; and

- advises that SOCOs should attend the scene in most burglary cases.

320 Despite the wide range of approaches to burglary investigations, we found little evidence that Districts evaluate their approaches – such as by:

- benchmarking and comparison with other similar Districts or Areas; or

- undertaking a "before and after" evaluation where an approach is changed.

321 We found a small number of exceptions. For example, Auckland City did monitor results when it set up a dedicated burglary squad in the central business area. After six months the analysis showed improvements in operations and results, including:

Operations

- improved response times – with half of reported burglaries attended within five hours, compared with frequent delays of more than 24 hours previously;

- increased scene attendance by SOCOs – from 20% to 40% of reported burglaries;

- increased forensic examination – from 70% to 79%; and

- doubling of serial number records of stolen items – from 9% to 18%, representing more than half of burglaries where identifiable property was stolen.

Part Three

Results

- a reduction of burglary offences – by nearly a third compared with the same time the previous year; and

- a slight increase in resolutions – by 2.4%.

322   We also noted one example of a Police guidance booklet (*Who owns burglary?*) that included material of a case study of Wanganui. An officer on transfer from Wanganui had been able to adapt aspects of this booklet for Nelson, even though the two areas have many different characteristics. Though the focus of this guidance is on prevention of dwelling burglary, it includes a useful, short section on investigation practices.

323   Police training programmes also provide material for staff about burglary investigation. For example, each detective trained to join the Criminal Investigation Branch studies and must pass a module on burglary.

Case Management

324   Case management comprises the work undertaken on active files after initial inquiries at the scene of the crime have been completed. Where a District has a large number of reported burglaries, case management may include screening of cases to assign priorities.

325   For example, a burglary squad based in Mt Wellington was prioritising cases using "solvability factors" – where each factor (such as a full description of a suspect) is given a certain value or number of points. The cases with the highest points are assessed to be the most likely to be resolved through further investigation, and are accorded the highest priority.

326   Case management has some common features between Districts. We observed the following approach to case management in Auckland City:

- carrying out further scene visits and local enquiries;

- interviewing suspected burglars in custody and those arrested during the preceding 24 hours;

- interviewing informants;

- following up fingerprint matches;

- following up the results from scientific analysis (including DNA); and

- visiting and checking secondhand dealers.

327   The Police also target known offenders, including:

- using search warrants (subject to evidence);

- checking compliance with prior bail conditions; and

- undertaking surveillance.

328   Targeting known offenders is a logical approach that recognises the impact of people who commit multiple offences.

Resolution

329   The recorded offence is "resolved" when an offender has been identified and a firm decision taken on what should happen to the offender in relation to the offence. The decision is called "resolution" and may fall into one of 11 different categories of action available as set out in Appendix 1 on page 93.

330   The decision in each case takes account of:

- the alleged offender's age and previous criminal history;

- the circumstances of the offence; and

- the strength of the available evidence.

Law Enforcement Teams

331   In 1999-2000, the Police were given new funding to set up eight specialist LETs in the Districts of Counties/Manukau, Auckland City, Eastern, Bay of Plenty, Waikato, Northland, Canterbury, and North Shore/Waitakere – the first five of which had the highest rates of recorded burglary. Each Team costs about $700,000 a year for salaries for officers and other staff and operating expenses.

332   The LETs' main purpose is to concentrate efforts on three key types of criminal activity:

- burglary;

- vehicle theft; and

- violent crime.
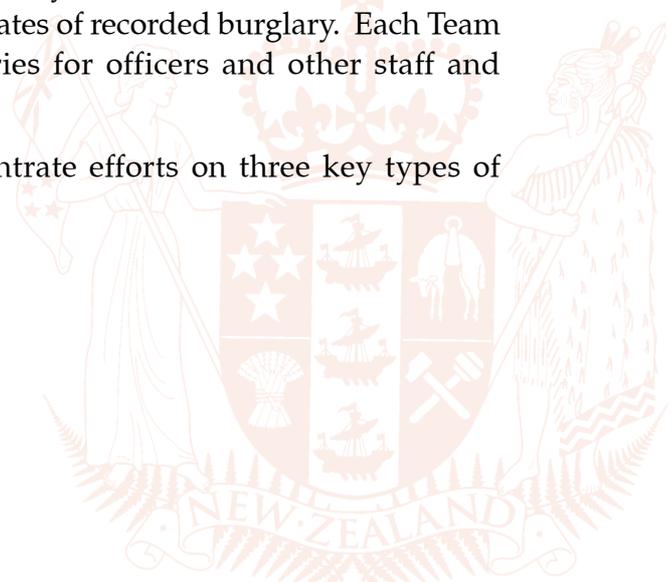
333   The concept for LETs was based on the experience of successful targeted enforcement initiatives in other countries and, on a smaller scale, in New Zealand.

334   Funding for a further three LETs was approved for 2000-01 for the Districts of Auckland City, North Shore/Waitakere, and Counties/Manukau. In the case of North Shore/Waitakere:

- the original LET was created with a primary focus on vehicle crime, with a secondary focus on burglary, receiving, and drugs; and

- the second LET has a primary focus on dwelling burglary – with a specific goal to increase the resolution rate from 6% to 20% by 30 June 2001.

335   However, only the LET in the Bay of Plenty District was operational early in 1999-2000. Some LETs were not operational until six months or more into the year because of the changes (mainly in staff re-allocation) required to set them up.

336   Because LETs focus on one high-priority category of offending they are able to:

- plan and sustain specific activities – such as work with secondhand dealers; and

- pay continuous attention to particular prolific offenders – which would be difficult for officers engaged on general duties.

337   A LET operates alongside burglary squads and other operations in the District (such as general duties officers), whose work will also involve burglary investigation on occasions. Often, officers in different groups will undertake joint operations, and it is good practice that they should share information and intelligence. For example, in the Rotorua Area of Bay of Plenty District, the LET undertook some joint operations with the Rotorua burglary squad.

338   In May 2000 the Police initiated an internal review of the establishment and operation of LETs, and put in place a reporting system to provide the Office of the Commissioner with information on results being achieved by LETs. The reporting criteria were subsequently expanded to provide more useful information about the effectiveness of LETs.

339   A major difficulty in assessing the effectiveness of LETs is isolating the impact of the LETs from that of other operational groups. The assessment needs to focus on the changes in performance since the LETs were first introduced – while recognising that these changes will also have been

influenced by other operational groups' own work and the quality of their interaction with officers in the LET. The assessors will, however, be able to form some judgement of the LETs' operational contribution by assessing their workload inputs (such as search warrants executed and arrests made).

Conclusions

340   Burglary is a common crime that takes up substantial resources in all Districts. We therefore expected to find some co-ordination of advice and guidance for dealing with burglaries. The publication *Who owns burglary?* provides a useful, short section on investigation practices.

341   However, we consider that more detailed, shared guidelines specifically for dealing with burglary investigations are needed. Districts could use such guidelines to help determine their own local approach and to reduce the risk of:

- *duplication of effort*, with Districts each developing their own guidance without the benefit of up to date knowledge of practices in other Districts;

- *inconsistent approaches* between Districts with no rational basis for the differences; and

- *lost opportunities to disseminate new approaches* tested by one or more Districts through co-ordinated guidance to which officers in all Districts would have ready access.

342   Co-ordinated guidance:

- would be relatively easy to produce – drawing on the best guidance currently available in Districts as a joint responsibility of the Office of the Commissioner and District Commanders; and

- could be applied in tandem with Districts continuing to try new approaches that reflect the different characteristics of their Areas.

343   The guidance should be updated regularly, drawing on good practice and providing examples of operations where standards should be set and monitored – such as:

- Response time for first attendance at a burglary crime scene. High levels of calls not responded to within 24 hours should be examined carefully, as a proportion are likely to relate to police performance, overall workloads, and/or the resources applied.

- The skills required of the officer attending (e.g. ability to assess whether a SOCO should attend).

Part Three

- SOCO attendance levels.

- The proportion of burglaries from which forensic and/or fingerprint evidence is to be collected.

344   We also expected Districts to evaluate the results of different approaches, in order to:

- gain the most benefit from different Districts' experiences in dealing with burglary; and

- learn and disseminate the lessons of success or failure.

345   Evaluations are needed to find out why approaches did or did not work, and whether any changes in the level of resources used were justified by improved performance. However, we found only isolated examples of formal review. This means that:

- there is little objective information on the success or failure of different approaches, even within the District that operated the approach;

- the lessons cannot be easily and clearly communicated to other Districts; and

- the same or similar approaches may be tried in different Districts – or repeated in the same District after a number of years have elapsed – without the benefit of the lessons from previous experience.

346   Since we began our audit, the Police have taken some steps to examine good practice. For example:

- A detective inspector, in the role of forensic services adviser, is looking at the deployment of SOCOs and their role at burglary and serious crime scenes.

- Each District now has a Policing Development Officer, who is responsible for identifying good practice and facilitating its adoption by Areas. The Officers are supported by a small team based in the Office of the Commissioner, which has a national role to identify and improve take-up of good practice. Most recently, the team has focused on improving the use of District information and Intell units (which we discuss in Part 5 on pages 64-68).

347   Assessment of the effectiveness of LETs will not be able to disaggregate the LETs' impacts on high-level indicators (such as levels of recorded crime) from any wider impacts as a result of other changes in the Districts where they are located. Therefore, the assessment will need to use a wide range of quantitative and qualitative sources (e.g. highly specific crime data and perceptions of police officers within and outside the LETs) to help inform the assessment.

348   The gains to be made from prompt, comprehensive evaluation of new approaches may be considerable. Some of the tools and practices we observed were, on the face of it, very effective. Examples included the use of computer mapping in the analysis and presentation of intelligence on crime and offenders in a particular geographical area (which we discuss further in Part 5 on pages 64-68).

## Recommendations

349   We recommend that the Police consider:

- producing co-ordinated guidance on burglary to which all officers should have ready access;

- formally evaluating new approaches, tools, and practices that are considered to have high potential benefits if they were replicated across Districts; and

- further developing arrangements for dissemination of results.

Preventing Burglary
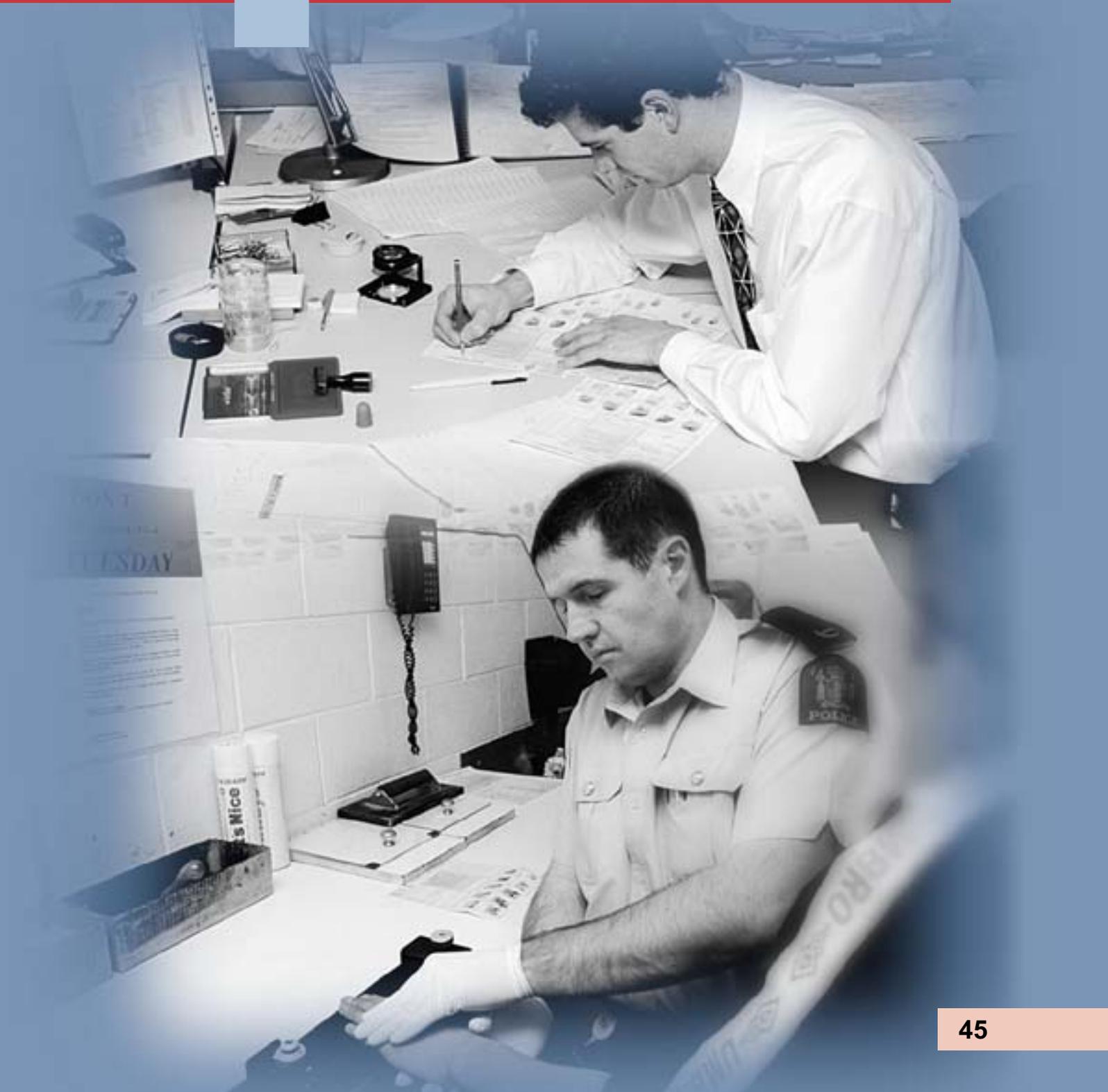
Key Points –

- Crime prevention work and initiatives by the Police have a focus on dwelling burglary that appropriately reflects its national priority. The present approach to community partnership tends to paint the Police as the principal active partner, but this perspective should change as community capability in burglary prevention increases.

- The application of crime prevention activities varies at District and Area level.

- Some Districts and Areas are not making the best use of Intell units to help improve the focus and effectiveness of Directed Patrolling.

- We recommend that the Police consider:

  - Organisational analysis and benchmarking of crime prevention methods across Districts.

  - Looking into the extent to which Directed Patrolling could be better focused by the creation and use of patrolling plans based on more in-depth crime pattern analysis.

  - Early application of organisational analysis and benchmarking for some aspects of their focus on youth – such as the strategic position and size of Youth Aid sections.

What Steps Do People Take to Prevent Burglary?

401   Most people have some security measures to protect their homes. The 1996 New Zealand National Survey of Crime Victims found that only 9% of households had no special security measures, such as deadlocks.

402   However, a disproportionate number of households that have no special security measures are burgled – 25% of those households without special security measures in the survey.

403   Offenders intending to commit burglary do not want to get caught, and would appear to take visible security into account in deciding which property to burgle.

404   Relatively few people surveyed (28%) said that they marked their property. Again, the figure was lower among households that had been burgled (14%). But the survey also indicated that people felt they could do more themselves to prevent burglary of their homes.

Police Crime Prevention Activities

405   The Police undertake a range of crime prevention activities that cover crime generally – including burglary. The activities usually involve the wider community.

406   Crime prevention activities are funded through Vote Police, Output Class D2 *Policing Support to the Community through Partnerships, Education, Crime Prevention and Youth programmes*. The appropriation for 2000-01 was $54.3 million.

407   For the purposes of output specification, crime prevention activities are split into the following categories:

- police programmes and strategies in partnership with community groups;

- public awareness and officer/public contacts to provide community information and crime prevention advice;

- youth crime prevention, including youth-at-risk programmes;

- youth education through visits to schools; and

- directed patrolling (a separate output class, funded at $58.8 million in 2000-01).

Part Four

408   Various strategies and programmes within these outputs are designed to have an impact on burglary – because burglary features high among community concerns, and many burglars are young offenders.

Community Partnerships

409   Tackling crime – particularly through crime prevention – is increasingly recognised as requiring improved co-operation and co-ordination with other public sector agencies and non-public organisations in the criminal justice sector. For example, at District and Area level:

- the local authority has an interest in the safety of its community, which it can influence through physical and environmental design of community infrastructure;

- specific communities of interest (including, for example, iwi and hapu, rural dwellers, and the elderly) are interested in how their communities are policed, and the priorities accorded to their community members when they become victims of crime; and

- Safer Community Councils (which co-ordinate activities outlined in the New Zealand Crime Prevention Strategy) have information such as community profiles that can help the Police to target their activity.

410   At the time of our field work, the Crime Prevention Unit of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet[7] was also promoting projects for crime prevention and community safety. The Unit was supporting the Police with their "Burglary Free" project for schools. This project provides resources to help schools highlight to their students the impact of burglaries on victims, and to help students with actions to make their homes and communities safer.

411   We found that the extent and quality of community partnerships aimed at burglary varied at local level – reflecting such factors as the District's own priorities for burglary and whether local agencies and organisations shared those priorities. In Wanganui, where policing and community priorities closely coincided, there was close co-operation. For example, the Police share non-confidential crime data with the District Council on such questions as:

- When and where do burglaries take place?

- What types of premises are being targeted?

- What type of property is being taken?

---

7   The Crime Prevention Unit was transferred to the Ministry of Justice on 31 October 2000.

412 Nationally and locally, the current partnership focus is on what the Police should be doing to support communities, rather than on how well-developed community responses can support police efforts to prevent crime. This focus reflects:

- the early state of community development; and

- the need for the Police to –

  - help community capability to develop; and

  - gain community support by demonstrating police capability through consultation and communication of results.

413 We noted the contrast with Community Traffic Safety – where partnerships have had more time to mature to give support – which the Police described in their 2000-01 *Forecast Report* as:

> *The delivery of community projects as agreed between Police and local authorities and specific community groups with an emphasis on a joint police/community problem solving approach to road safety problems.* (emphasis added)

Crime Prevention *Advice*

The foundation

414 Interest groups (such as Age Concern, Federated Farmers, and alcohol and drug addiction groups) can help the Police to identify issues and ways of communicating the prevention message more effectively. Better links with such groups can also help the Police to improve their targeting of programmes focused on particular types of victim.

415 For 1999-2000, the Police Key Result Area *Decrease in Repeat Victimisation* set out to "implement programmes that reduce repeat victimisation, particularly in family violence and burglary". By this priority setting, the Police recognised that repeat victimisation is a particular problem in relation to burglary.

416 Offenders often learn through their first offence where a "soft target" (i.e. someone who is not sufficiently security conscious) lives, and may be attracted to committing a second offence on that house. Therefore, crime prevention efforts can be particularly effective by focusing on people in the community who have already been burgled.

Part Four

The action

417   In June 2001 (as part of the Government's provision of support to victims of crime) the Ministry of Justice launched the "Target Hardening" programme. The programme:

- aims to provide people on low incomes who have been repeat victims of burglaries with security information and security equipment such as locks and alarms;

- is being run by the New Zealand Council of Victim Support Groups; and

- will operate across Auckland initially, before being expanded nation-wide.

418   Evaluation of the Target Hardening programme will be completed by 2002.

419   Delivery of crime prevention advice also needs to involve the private sector, such as insurers. The Auckland City District participates in a burglary prevention initiative – known as the SNAP project – the aim of which is to:

- reduce the avenues of disposal of stolen items; and

- help identify the stolen items if offenders attempt to sell them through less regular avenues.

420   The 10 insurance companies participating in SNAP encourage their policyholders to provide them with the serial numbers of the appliances and equipment they purchase, to be linked to their policy. If items are stolen, there is an accessible record of the serial numbers that the insurance company can provide quickly to recognised second-hand dealers and to the Police.

421   The Police believe that changes in legislation for secondhand dealing can help them with burglary prevention. A proposal for changes to the Secondhand Dealers Act 1963 and Pawnbrokers Act 1908 has been approved by the Government, with legislation likely to be introduced this year. The changes are intended to strengthen requirements for the documentation and identification of goods, and to increase penalties for those breaking the law. The desired outcome of the changes would be to increase arrests of offenders, identify stolen property more easily, and (thereby) reduce the ease with which stolen property can be sold.

422   In addition to national programmes, Districts set their own targets for burglary prevention. For example, Taupo station's action plan for 1999-2000 set an objective to "reduce by 5% the number of reported burglary offences". Of 27 actions linked to this objective, 10 were wholly or partly directed at burglary prevention – including (for example) crime prevention advice to prevent repeat victimisation, and publicity in local newspapers.

Targeting Young Offenders

423   *Decrease in Youth Offending and Re-offending* is one of the Police's eight Key Result Areas. Deflecting young people from burglary is an important priority, not least because offenders committing serious crimes – such as intruder rape and serial rape – are often found to have a background of burglary offences.

424   Young offenders commonly carry out dwelling burglaries. In 1999-2000:

- 38% of offenders in the cases resolved were children or young people;

- 567 burglary resolutions involved prosecution in the Youth Court; and

- 1,940 resolutions (one quarter of all dwelling burglary resolutions) were referrals to the Youth Aid Section.

425   Police youth aid officers respond to youth offending in a number of ways, such as by referral to a family group conference.

An example of targeting

426   Thirteen *Youth-at-Risk* programmes started in July 1997 showed that burglary and theft were the most common crimes committed by those in the programmes. The programmes involve the Police and community working closely with a small number of socially and economically disadvantaged families demonstrating risk behaviours.

427   Extra funding was provided in 2000 for four years to enable the programmes to be extended to five more sites. Five additional youth workers are supporting places on the programmes for approximately 130 young offenders or at-risk young people.

428   From their Youth Aid files and interviews with the initial participants in the programme and their families, the Police estimate that around 142 burglaries were committed before the participants joined the *Youth-at-Risk* programme. The Police consider most of these burglaries would have been committed over a 2-3 year period, with offending beginning when most participants were aged 10-11.

Part Four

429   Programme participants were assessed as having committed 29 burglaries in the 2-3 years they have been in the programme. A raw comparison shows an 80% reduction in burglaries. The reduction in burglaries may not be of this magnitude when adjusted for statistical correctness (and there is no control group data to show the change in offending from those not in a programme), but the reduction in offending by participants in the programme is clearly large.

The size of Youth Aid

430   The national priority for tackling youth crime is (through business planning) also reflected in planned actions at District level. However, we noted during our visits to Districts that Youth Aid Sections had few full-time Sergeants or Senior Sergeants that had responsibility solely for Youth Aid.

431   At June 2000 the total Youth Aid complement was:

- 152 Constables;

- 15 Sergeants (allocated part-time or full-time responsibility as supervisors); and

- one Inspector responsible for national co-ordination of Youth Aid (based in the Office of the Commissioner).

432   Extra resources provided in the 2000-01 budget for Youth Aid were a further nine supervisors and 18 police officers and other staff to be employed in the Districts identified as having a high need for Youth Aid intervention.

District variation

433   Operational practice in the way youth issues are tackled varies between Districts. For instance, Christchurch City reinforces its focus through a unit dedicated to Youth Crime, on the basis that about 70 juveniles are responsible for a large amount of the District's crime. The unit targets the top 20 to 30 worst young offenders, many of whom commit burglaries.

434   Elements of this approach appeared, on the face of it, to be effective – for example, those with curfew and bail conditions had to adhere to the restrictions placed on them. However, the approach had not been evaluated to establish its impact on measures such as recorded burglary and burglary resolutions.

Voluntary Youth Fingerprinting

435   Evidence suggests that the earlier the intervention with children and young persons (i.e. those under the age of 17 years) who are offending, the greater the chances of preventing further offending. One such form of intervention is obtaining voluntarily the fingerprints of a child or young person who is suspected of, or has admitted to, committing an offence.[8]

436   The expectation is that the child or young person, knowing that their fingerprints are on record, is discouraged from offending in the future.

437   We found that (in the Districts we visited) practice varied on the extent to which there was focus on voluntary youth fingerprinting.

Directed Patrolling

The concept

438   Directed Patrolling consists of mobile and foot patrols aimed at creating a visible Police presence in areas considered at greatest risk from criminal offending. The Police describe directed patrols as –

> *Patrols that interact with the members of the public, monitoring property, conducting routine hotel patrols, visiting places where members of the public congregate, speaking to persons behaving suspiciously or other persons of interest.*

439   The purpose of Directed Patrolling is wider than crime prevention – it covers a number of activities (rather than one "tagged" objective). Nevertheless, Directed Patrolling has a strong preventive aspect.

440   Funds are specifically appropriated to Directed Patrolling – $58.8 million in 2000-01.

441   Directed patrols are intended to be managed by means of "directed patrol plans" that specify times and places of risk of crime occurrence. For 2000-01, the Police set a target that 65% of directed patrol time would be deployed to match times and places of risk specified in directed patrol plans. Police officer time coded to Directed Patrolling is an accumulation of small time segments within a shift, when officers are undertaking field work but not complying with a specific task direction (such as an emergency callout or other call for service).

8   Fingerprints can be obtained compulsorily only when the person is in lawful custody and charged with an offence (section 57, Police Act 1958). Fingerprints can only be obtained voluntarily from a child or young person after "informed consent" – that is, the consent of the child or young person and the consent of a parent or guardian or caregiver.

Part Four

The practice

442   We saw some written directed patrol plans prepared by Intell units. The value of these plans is that they can provide officers going out on patrol with an up-to-date briefing of patterns of criminal activity over a number of days and weeks. The plans are based on analysis of information from a range of sources, including police incident reports.

443   We also saw examples of "plans" that were essentially oral instructions from the shift supervisor at the start of a shift. The instructions reflected information received from the supervisor of the outgoing shift.

444   Passing information between shifts can be valuable – providing immediate feedback on what is going on right now, and enquiries already started, that the next shift might usefully follow up. However, the information passed will rarely give the kind of in-depth crime pattern analysis that a good Intell unit should be able to provide.

445   The national target is for 65% of patrols to be "directed", but the real value of directed patrols is what they actually achieve. Nevertheless, we found very little by way of feedback of the results of the particular directed patrols, even where they had originally been directed by Intell-produced plans.

446   We believe that such feedback is important, not just as a check on achievements, but also as a means of continuously improving the intelligence information available to police officers. Intell arrangements are further discussed in Part 5 on pages 64-66.

Conclusions

447   The public has a good awareness of some types of property security – but a minority who are less aware are more likely to be burgled. There is scope for substantial improvement in some aspects (such as recording of serial numbers), preferably through co-operation with the insurance industry.

448   Crime prevention work and initiatives by the Police have a focus on dwelling burglary that appropriately reflects its national priority. For example, burglaries are frequently carried out by young offenders, and some burglary victims are repeat victims – both problems that are addressed by the Police's wider programmes on youth offending and repeat victimisation.

449   The application of crime prevention activities varies at District and Area level. For example, Districts and Areas organise and resource their responses to youth offending (one of the highest priorities of the Police) in different ways, reflecting their local environment and crime patterns. Some of the variation is thus in response to local needs, but there is little evaluation of alternative approaches. The picture is similar to that found for burglary investigation as mentioned in paragraphs 344-345.

450   The present approach to community partnership tends to paint the Police as the principal active partner. As community capability matures, the focus needs to change to place some emphasis on how the community can help the Police to prevent crime.

451   Our findings suggested that some Districts and Areas are not making best use of Intell to help improve the focus and effectiveness of Directed Patrolling.

Recommendations

452   The Police should consider:

- organisational analysis and benchmarking of crime prevention methods across Districts; and

- the extent to which Directed Patrolling could be better focused by creation and use of patrolling plans based on more in-depth crime pattern analysis.

453   Given the priority of youth offending responses, some aspects of the focus on youth – such as the strategic position and size of Youth Aid Sections – should be considered for early application of organisational analysis and benchmarking.

Part Five

Use of Science, Information and Information Technology

Directed Patrol Report from the MAPS Application

Key Points –

- The use of tools such as DNA testing and voluntary fingerprinting varies between Districts, with no clear rationale for the differences.

- Most Intell units lack the profile to meet their full potential.

- Systems like MAPS offer a step change in the technology available to support intelligence-led policing.

- We recommend that the Police consider:

  - Ensuring – in the context of their strategic partnership with Institute of Environmental Science and Research Limited – that Districts improve their approach to planning and purchasing forensic science services.

  - Undertaking a strategic and operational review of Intell units.

501   The two main types of evidence that can link a suspect to a crime are witness evidence and physical evidence. For the purpose of resolving property offences, witness evidence is relatively infrequent compared with, say, offences involving personal violence.

502   Burglars leave physical evidence at crime scenes in the form of fingerprints, footprints, tool marks or blood from breaking and entering. They can also leave hair, saliva, and skin cells, which (as well as blood) can be used for DNA analysis.

503   Burglars also develop specific methods and may target particular types of victim. These crime patterns make burglary prevention and detection particularly responsive to effective analysis of crime data and intelligence.

504   In this part we examine the use in crime investigations of:

- science; and

- information and information technology.

Use of Science

505   The Police have a National Crime and Forensic Group that provides a range of services to support crime investigation, including:

- fingerprint identification;

- document examination; and

- firearm identification.

506   The Group has lead responsibility for the relationship with Institute of Environmental Science and Research Limited (ESR) – a Crown Research Institute and New Zealand's principal forensic science provider. ESR has expertise in forensic case work and evidence interpretation for criminal investigation and law enforcement, including:

- forensic biology;

- expert examination of physical evidence (such as tool marks and tyre marks), including attendance at crime scenes where appropriate;

- testing and identification of illicit drugs; and

- toxicology, including blood and breath alcohol testing.

Part Five
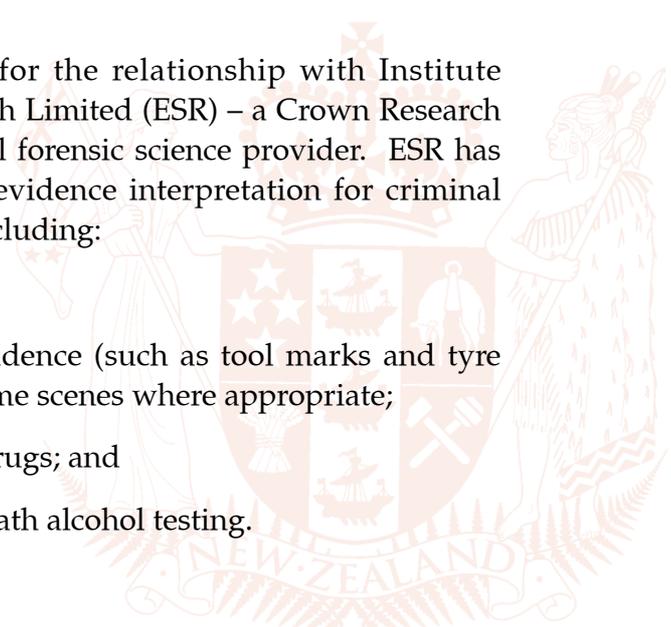
A National DNA Databank

507   ESR established and maintains, in a joint venture with the Police, a national DNA Databank of offender and crime scene DNA profiles. Figure 8 on the opposite page explains DNA profiling.

508   The national Databank comprises two databases:

- the National DNA Database – which contains DNA profiles of individuals, and has been operational since 1996; and

- the Crime Sample Database – which contains DNA profiles collected from blood, semen and other body fluid samples taken from the crime scenes of unsolved cases, and has been operational since June 1998.

509   Since 1996, over 16,500 DNA profiles of individuals have been entered onto the DNA Database. This figure is currently increasing at a rate of approximately 300 new profiles a month.

510   For crime scenes, profiles from over 2,500 cases have been entered to date onto the Crime Sample Database, and profiles are being added at the rate of approximately 120 a month. Of all DNA profiles from unsolved cases that are added to the Database, approximately 37% currently match an individual's profile present on the National DNA Database. In addition, approximately 34% of profiles from unsolved crimes match profiles from other crimes present on the Crime Sample Database.

511   A primary aim of the intelligence information generated by the national DNA Databank was to significantly reduce high-volume crimes such as burglary. Of the total number of reported matches of an individual's DNA to a crime scene, approximately 78% have originated from burglaries. The majority of crime scene samples are blood left at the scene of the burglary.
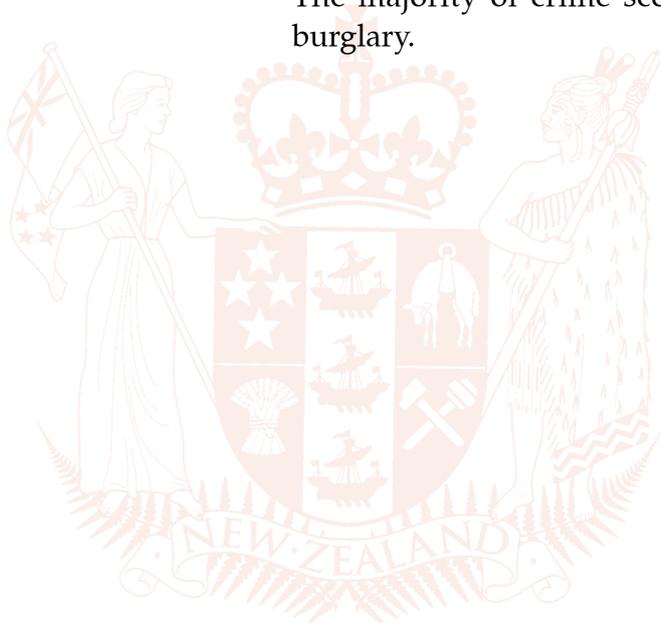
Figure 8
DNA Profiling

Profiling the molecule of life (and death)

A tiny spot of blood at a crime scene, a perspiration-soaked balaclava, a hair – any of them can provide crucial criminal intelligence or evidence, thanks to the advanced DNA analysis ESR provides.

And as the result of a recent analysis upgrade, the "likelihood ratio" (the statistical measures ESR uses to evaluate the strength of the DNA evidence) will be dramatically boosted.

"It also means we will be able to exclude more individuals as possible donors of the crime stain," says Pauline Simon, ESR Forensic Scientist. The new technique is called SGM-plus.

The latest international development in DNA testing, SGM-plus, boosts from six to ten the number of DNA sites analysed in the sample, and includes a test for gender.

As well as increasing the discriminating power of DNA testing, the new technique also improves its sensitivity so less material is needed to obtain a full DNA profile.

"Before, we needed to have around one nanogram (1×10^{-9} gram) of DNA. With SGM-plus we're anticipating dropping that to about 0.7 of a nanogram. Because we have the increased sensitivity we can now expect to get results in more situations – for example, where there may not be any blood or body fluids, just skin cells."

ESR's DNA testing continues to be invaluable to the New Zealand Police.

"We're getting good hit rates and providing good intelligence for the Police. That's something I believe they're very interested in now – offender profiling and intelligence-led detection."

Currently, approximately one in three samples from a crime scene will match against an individual on the National DNA Database, which has now grown to include samples from nearly 12,000 individuals.

Testing is also invaluable in terms of linking crimes together.

"There's a case where we managed to link three unsolved cases – a burglary, an aggravated robbery and a rape – with DNA profiling."

A person was identified by profiling as a likely offender. On reinvestigating the suspects's movements at the time of the crimes, Police were able to arrest the person for an additional four offences including a serious assault and an attempted rape.

In addition to using ESR's DNA analysis services for intelligence-led policing, Police use it for a variety of other crime-related purposes – for instance, in investigating crimes where more than one person has been killed or injured. By identifying the likely source of blood stains, the investigation team can determine the location of people during the offence and track how they moved through the crime scene.

In another recent case, DNA profiling was used to investigate a case of prolonged abuse, proving the physical abuse had occurred in the home for a long period of time.

A feature of the ongoing improvements in DNA testing is the potential it brings to solve earlier cases. For example, an offender was recently identified and arrested for the unsolved intruder rape of an elderly woman in 1998. Modern analysis was able to achieve a result using samples collected at the scene of the offence which weren't suitable for the techniques of the time.

Source: ESR Annual Report 1999-2000.

Districts and DNA

512   Through use of the national DNA Databank and testing of DNA for specific criminal cases, the Police can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of crime investigations by:

- linking suspects to previously unsolved crimes; and

- saving policing time through eliminating suspects from enquiries where there is no match for the DNA found at the crime scene.

513   ESR charges the Police for DNA processing. Cost containment appears to be an issue for some Districts, particularly where the District has not set a clear priority for DNA testing relative to other areas of discretionary spending.

514   We examined the relative use of DNA sampling as an investigative tool and found wide variation between Districts. We compared the rates of DNA sampling with the levels of recorded dwelling burglaries, in the expectation that Districts with high levels of recorded burglary might make the higher relative investment in DNA sampling. The results are shown in the graph in Figure 9 on the following page.

515   As Figure 9 shows, Northland District had a high relative level of submissions of DNA samples – 17% of all submissions – but only 3.0% of all recorded dwelling burglaries. By contrast, Waikato District had only 3.9% of all DNA sample submissions and 8.5% of recorded dwelling burglaries.

516   Use of DNA sampling – or, indeed, most other types of scientific examination – did not generally feature in the District and Area business plans that we examined. Districts had broad policies for the level of use of forensic services (as reflected in annual budgets), but the policies were not based on any systematic evaluation of the cost/benefit of such services.
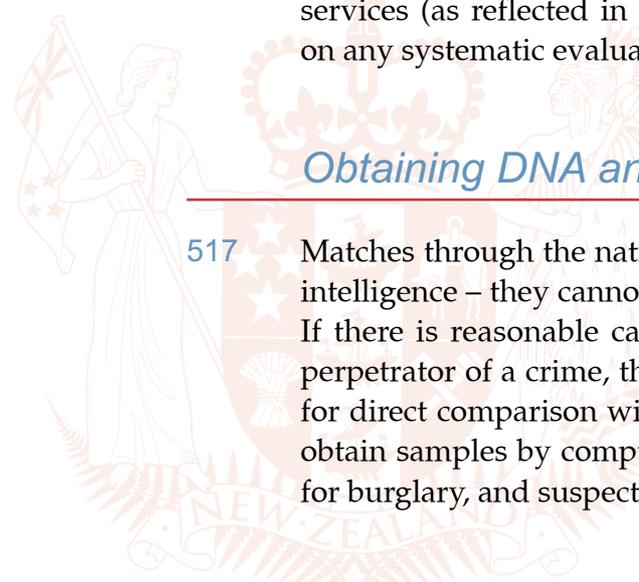
Obtaining DNA and Using It As Evidence

517   Matches through the national DNA Databank can only be used as policing intelligence – they cannot be admitted as evidence in criminal proceedings. If there is reasonable cause to suspect that the subject of a match is the perpetrator of a crime, the Police can request a sample from the individual for direct comparison with samples from the crime scene. The Police may obtain samples by compulsion for most crimes against the person, but not for burglary, and suspects can refuse to provide confirmatory samples.

Figure 9
DNA Sampling and Recorded Dwelling Burglaries

*There was no clear relationship between the level of recorded dwelling burglaries
and the quantity of DNA submissions.*

District

Key:

Recorded dwelling burglaries for the three years ended 30 June 2000

Total DNA submissions 1996 to 30 June 2000
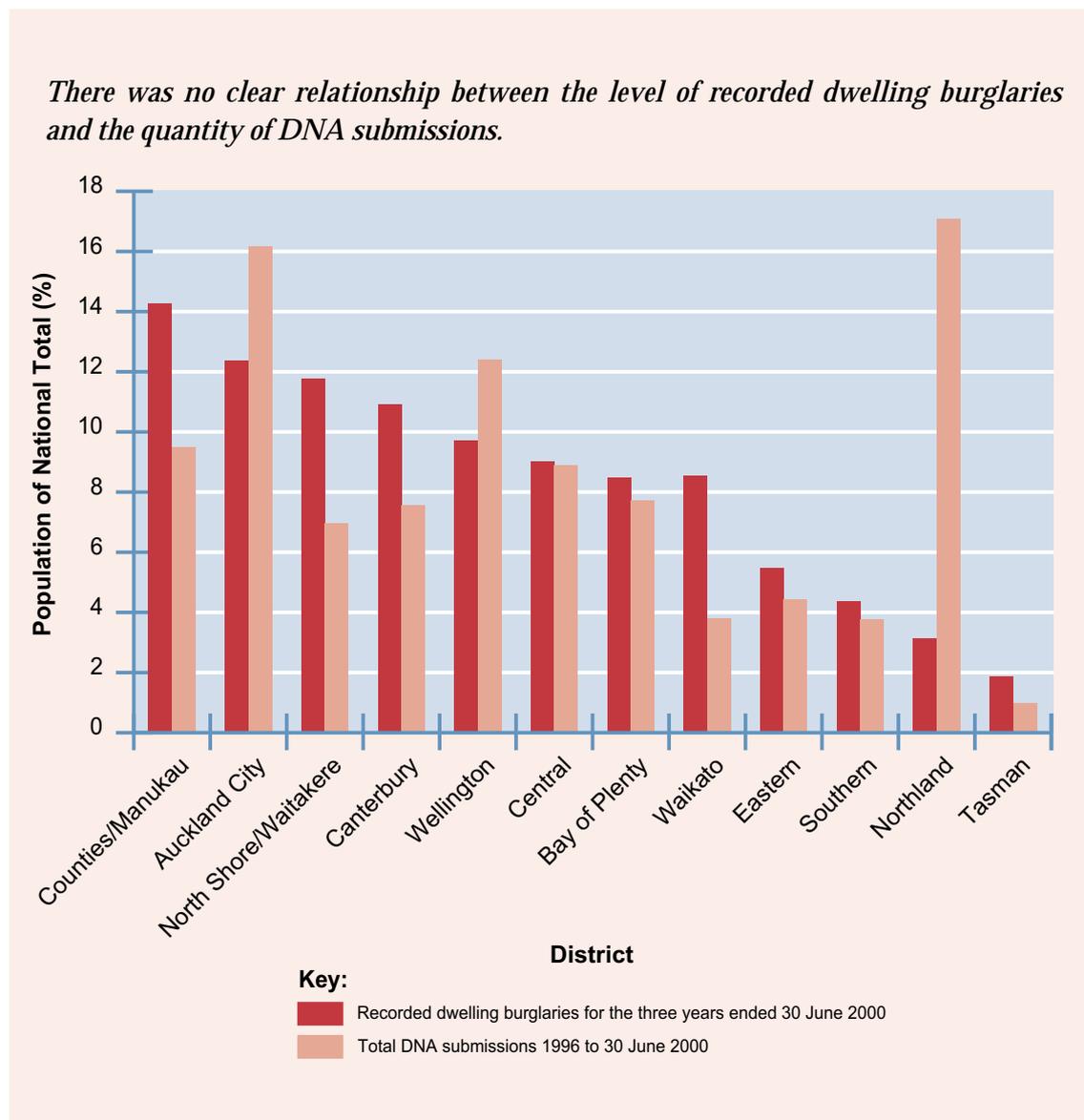
518   The Government is proposing changes to the Criminal Investigations Blood
       Samples Act 1995 that would reduce the current restrictions on obtaining
       samples by compulsion from suspects of crimes such as burglary.
       If implemented, the changes might be expected to increase further the
       importance of DNA sampling in burglary (and possibly other crime
       investigations) through improvements to operational efficiency in Districts.
       For example, the Police will have access to new forensic tools that allow
       use of less invasive saliva samples and reduce reliance on the testing of
       blood.

Fingerprinting

519   The Police Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) database stores over 430,000 sets of fingerprints, and uses up-to-date technology for fingerprint analysis. Like the national DNA Databank, the AFIS database is used to identify matches between the fingerprints of individuals and those found at crime scenes.

520   The large majority of individuals' fingerprints submitted to the AFIS database are from convicted offenders. A small but increasing proportion (5% in 2000-01) comes from voluntary fingerprints taken from other individuals with their consent.

521   We examined the voluntary fingerprint submissions for the 4-week period ended 16 June 2000, and found wide variations at District level in the number of fingerprints submitted to the AFIS database.

522   We also looked at the levels of fingerprint submissions relative to the Districts' annual recorded dwelling burglaries – though we recognise that the AFIS database also matches prints against a wide range of other crimes. The results again showed wide variation, but we understand that some of the variation is likely to be due to differences in the categorisation of the statistics at District and Area levels.

Use of Information and Information Technology

Intelligence-led Policing

523   Intelligence-led policing can be defined as policing using information and intelligence on crime and criminality. It contrasts with the more traditional view that crimes will occur, and the Police will then set about solving them.

524   Police recognition of the need to use information and technology to "get ahead" of the offender by planning police responses reflects social realities, including:

- the rising long-term crime trends in present-day society;

- the existence of greater numbers of prolific offenders – making it more effective to focus on offenders, not just the crimes they have committed; and

• the continuously increasing sophistication of "professional" criminals – who are highly mobile and themselves have access to sophisticated technology.

Intelligence (Intell) Units

525   Intell units operate within Districts. They have District reporting responsibilities, but each unit usually has an Area (or station) focus. The units' roles include:

• statistical reporting; and

• weekly briefings of individual stations on crime patterns, crime incidents, and known offenders.

526   Crime pattern analysis by Intell units is an important feature of both crime investigation and prevention. It can also assist crime prevention efforts by providing material for improved communication and collaboration with other organisations that might also have a role in crime prevention. For example, if the Police suspect that school students are committing burglaries during their lunchtime, analysis would be useful of all burglaries within a certain radius of the school occurring at lunchtime on Monday to Friday. Such information would also be helpful in a crime prevention context when approaching the school and others who might have an interest in the matter.

527   In the first 6 months of 2000, the Police reviewed a number of Intell units. We examined the results of the review for Wellington District. The review found that most of the work of the units was at a basic level, focusing on data collection and collation. There was little evidence of analysis – either operational or strategic – resulting in shortfalls in information to support:

• strategic planning;

• operational plans; and

• evaluation.

528   A lack of information and analysis inevitably affects the kinds of policing operations that can be carried out – operations tend towards incident-driven activities. One senior officer in another District commented to us that operations need to be continuously Intell-driven, otherwise officers will continue to "do their own thing".
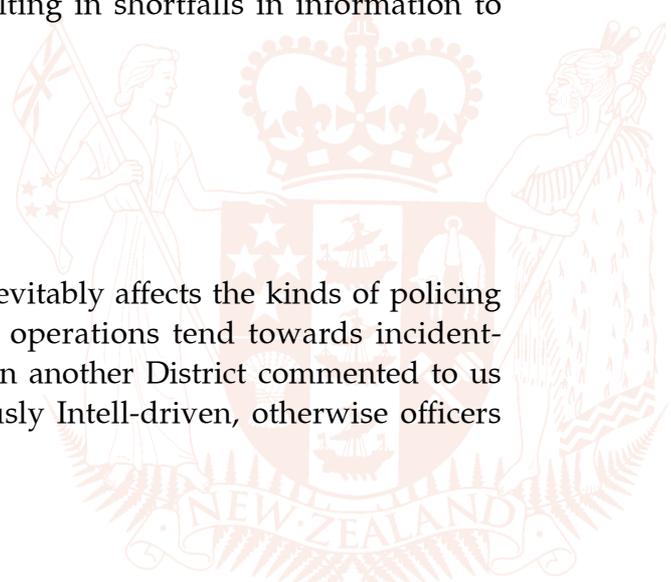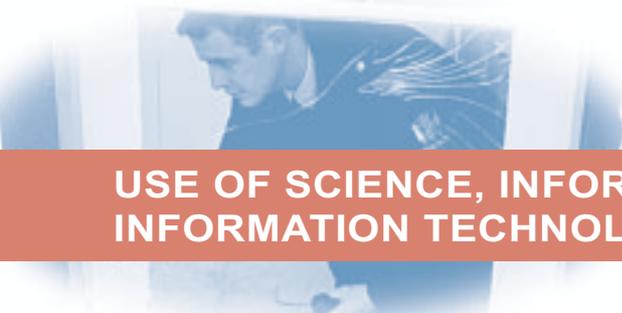
529   If the Intell unit contribution to crime investigation and prevention is limited, this also makes Intell units vulnerable to having officers pulled out at short notice to work on tasks considered to be a higher priority. The result can be a vicious circle of a weak and under-utilised Intell unit becoming sidelined through further depletion of skilled resource.

530   We noted that some Intell units are very small, so even normal service disruptions (such as annual leave) can seriously affect a unit's ability to deliver a consistent level and quality of information. With the high levels of mobility of offenders, the question of scale and spread of Intell units is important.

531   Local police officers need the Intell units to be able to provide highly specific information on local crime "hot spots" and for directed patrolling. However, the wider District planning and operations need information on a much broader scale – including (at times) information on criminal activity occurring outside the District's own boundary.

532   Recruitment and retention of staff for Intell units were causing difficulty in some of the Districts we visited. The units offer no career structure for civilian staff or career advantages for police officers. Ideally, the units should have a mix of civilian staff and police officers, since:

- recruits from an information technology background bring specialist technical skills to the unit; and

- police officers bring experience of operational policing, and take back an understanding of the value and power of good information and intelligence analysis when they return to operational units.

533   However, recruitment of people with information technology skills takes place in a highly competitive environment. For police officers, there are no financial incentives for rotation into Intell units at constable level. And a move to an Intell unit may not be perceived as a respected career step for an aspiring detective.

534   The level and composition of Intell unit resources did not generally feature in the District and Area business plans that we examined.

535   The Policing Development Unit (PDU) in the Office of the Commissioner has recently recognised the importance and potential of intelligence-led policing by making it the highest priority in its work with Districts and Areas. The PDU has been running workshops on how information generated by Intell units and from the MAPS system (described on the next two pages) can be used to help direct crime prevention and investigation into potentially the most effective areas.

Systems to Support Crime Pattern *Analysis*

536   Most of the Intell units we visited were using basic spread-sheeting and graphics software – generally producing offender-related material. There are also District systems, but much of the capacity of these systems is required for crime reporting. The extent to which they can be used to support crime analysis is therefore limited.

537   A more sophisticated system called MAPS was being tested in Lower Hutt at the time of our audit. The main value of MAPS is in allowing data to be analysed over a range of dimensions. It replicates the traditional practice of recording the locations of offences on physical maps, but at the same time can map other critical dimensions – such as:

- time of day of the offences;

- use of similar modes of criminal operation; and

- repeated involvement of particular victims or types of victim.

538   Figure 10 on page 68 illustrates ways in which MAPS can be used in planning and operations relating to burglary.

539   MAPS can also be used to support work between Districts, which may be important for investigation of certain types of crime (such as organised crime). For example, MAPS' "movement analysis tool" can be used to track the movements of suspects and/or suspects' vehicles through recorded sightings throughout the country.

540   However, we found a number of issues with the national implementation of MAPS:

- *Computer capacity.* The system can only run on a relatively powerful computer. At the time of our field work, the Police had only about 30 computers nationally with sufficient capacity. More recently, the Police have invested in more computers to run MAPS and there are now 51 with the MAPS software.

- *Sufficiency of Intell staff with appropriate skills.* Effective operation of the system relies on continuous input of up-to-date incident data, together with skilled operators who can produce analyses that meet police officers' needs. As noted above, recruitment of such staff takes place within a competitive market for capable people.

- *Co-operation from patrol and other operational staff.* Operational staff need to provide comprehensive reports for input to the system, as well as feedback to Intell staff on use made of the analyses. This requires "buy-in" from operational staff, which is more likely to occur where senior officers show leadership by actively supporting effective use of the system.

Figure 10
Examples of How MAPS Can Be Used

For investigation –

Where a burglary is committed at an address in Mt Victoria, Wellington, the investigating officer can ask MAPS to display:

- all burglary offences within a defined radius from the address that have occurred, say, over the last month; and

- all burglaries by various dimensions (e.g. whether there is or is not already a suspect or alleged offender; the types of items stolen – such as cash, electrical goods; and the means of breaking and entering).

For prevention –

If a Community Constable wishes to discuss with a Neighbourhood Watch group burglaries occurring in its area, MAPS can show:

- the times of day that recent burglaries have occurred in the area covered by Neighbourhood Watch; and

- how houses were broken into – providing information on what improvements in security might be needed.

For resource deployment, including patrolling –

MAPS can show:

- the density of offences in a given area – highlighting very localised crime "hotspots" (e.g. down to street level); and

- repeat victims or consistent targeting by offenders of particular types of victim (for instance, it can display all addresses that have received a police call-out three or more times over a given period).

For longer-term strategic planning –

MAPS can :

- indicate shifts in crime from one area to another, which the system can show in a similar way to time lapse photography; and

- analyse – using demographic (census) data, for example – possible links between changes in income and crime levels in an area.

Conclusions

541   We consider that the Police are unlikely at present to be making best use of forensic scientific techniques in their crime investigations. We base this conclusion on:

- the variability of Districts' use of tools such as DNA testing and voluntary fingerprinting, with no clear rationale for the differences;

- the lack of systematic resource planning for use of forensic services; and

- the absence of cost/benefit evaluation of the impact of different courses of action.

542   The approach to allocating resources for DNA analysis has changed recently. The Office of the Commissioner is considering how the 2001-02 budget for tasks involving DNA should be distributed to Districts.

543   The Police and ESR have also signed a strategic partnership agreement that is intended (among other things) to:

- encourage the provision of managed forensic services to the Police; and

- improve the value of forensic capability – such as through further development of professional standards.

544   Most Intell units lack the profile in the Police to meet their full potential. Systems like MAPS offer a step-change in the technology available to support intelligence-led policing. But these systems will not work well if they are introduced into an organisational culture that does not sufficiently value this approach.

Recommendations

545   In conjunction with the strategic partnership with ESR, the Police should help Districts to improve their approach to planning and purchasing forensic science services. Districts need to:

- set priorities for the use of the various techniques on the basis of cost and effectiveness; and

- improve their resource planning for use of forensic science.

546   The Police should also consider undertaking a strategic and operational review of Intell units covering:

- their placement;

- optimal sizing (taking account of variations in demography);

- accountability for results;

- managerial and professional leadership;

- skills base;

- career structures and opportunities, and recruitment and retention; and

- induction and training – including operational staff training in the use and value of the units.

Part Six

Measuring and Monitoring Performance

Key Points –

- The Police have made progress in developing suitable performance measures. However, there are few performance measures and targets that address *how* the Police operate. Selective use of them could provide incentives for changes in Police practice, based on evaluations of "what works".

- The Police have embraced business planning, but the quality of the business plans we saw was variable.

- We recommend that the Police consider:

  - Reviewing the Districts' targets for burglary reduction in the light of initiatives like LETs and the improved 1999-2000 baselines.

  - Carrying out evaluations to establish "what works" and (where improved outcomes arise from particular Police practices) relevant activity indicators like the –

    – use of SOCOs in crime scene examinations;

    – ratio of DNA databank submissions to matches;

    – extent of Intell unit development; and

    – level of feedback to Intell units on the outcomes from police officers using directed patrol reports derived from MAPS analysis.

  - Increased sharing between Areas of, for example, the expertise shown by those Areas that can produce business plans that help to establish positive links between policing operations and national priorities and targets.

  - Having their performance reviewed by overseas peers.

601   In this part we:

- explain the limitations of crime statistics, and why they need to be interpreted carefully;

- examine how the Police currently measure performance relating to burglary; and

- assess the arrangements for business planning, and performance monitoring and improvement.

Interpreting Crime Data

602   For burglary, the statistics most well known to the general public are those that relate to the numbers of recorded and resolved offences. However, crime and the causes of crime are complex, reflecting more than just Police performance. For example:

For recorded burglaries –

- high levels of localised burglary may partly reflect an area's social conditions and demography; and

- low levels of localised burglary may partly reflect community characteristics (such as cohesiveness), high levels of property security, and good street design.

For resolved burglaries –

- where burglaries are committed by prolific offenders, a large number of resolved burglaries may arise from a single arrest – demonstrating the need to illustrate police performance across a number of dimensions; and

- differences in resolution rates between Districts and Areas may partly reflect the ease or difficulty of tackling burglary in different environments.

Part Six
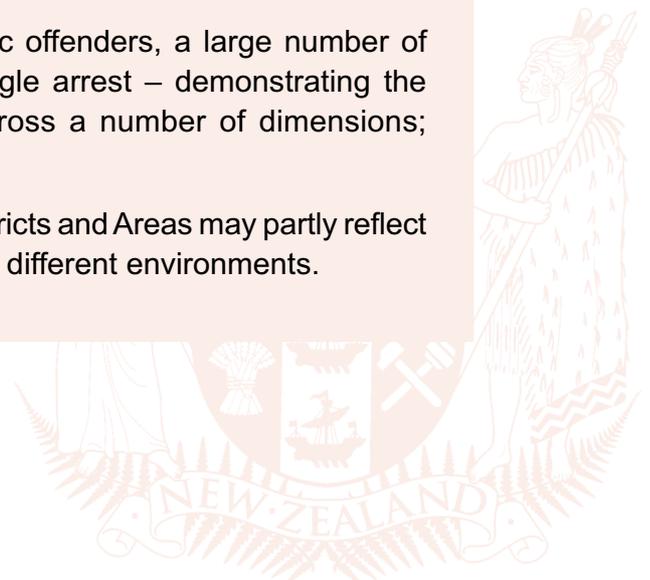
603   The Police also have to balance conflicting demands. For example, they might be able to achieve a dramatic temporary reduction in burglaries or other crimes (particularly street crimes) by applying vigorous tactics against suspected local youth. But such tactics might not be acceptable to the local community, nor conducive to long-term community safety that requires policing by consent.

604   Such tactics can also be highly resource intensive – drawing resources away from other areas. The risk then is that crime will be displaced – i.e. an effort to improve performance in one area might lead to deterioration in another.

605   Our research of national and international literature suggests that there is:

- no consensus about how the Police should conduct their operations – which creates problems for determining what aspects of operations should be measured;

- little research on the social aspects of policing, or on those conditions that influence the safety and well-being of the community; and

- no widely accepted method by which police performance can be measured definitively – and with local variations in crime and the causes of crime, a universal performance template may not provide the best method.

606   These limitations – and those relating to specific outcome indicators for burglary – do not preclude use of measures and targets in assessing and managing performance. However, the nature of the limitations needs to be understood and compensated for by using such measures and targets as part of a more complete set of measures.

607   Ideally, performance measures should address:

- a *range of dimensions* of police performance;

- a *representative range of offence categories* – not just a few "headline" categories taken in isolation;

- the *gravity of offences* within particular offence categories; and

- the *particular environment* in which the policing being assessed takes place.

608   All the measures should be part of a comprehensive assessment of the *reasons* for different levels of outcome – both *within and outside police control.*

609   The difficulties with high-level comparative analysis are magnified when making international comparisons. Societal and demographic differences – as well as important policy differences that affect (for example) the availability of firearms – make the job of policing crime highly variable, even in apparently similar countries.

610   And differences in practice not directly related to performance can make big differences to crime statistics. For example, in some countries the Police place more effort than in New Zealand on "custody" clearance of offences – whereby resources are allocated to resolving past offences through interviews with offenders already charged or convicted of other crimes. Where high resolutions result from this policy, there may still be no or negligible difference in the rate of arrest of offenders in relation to specific crimes – which is a primary relevant measure of police performance.

611   Nonetheless, there is a good deal of information internationally on *how well* different approaches have worked under different conditions. As with inter-District and inter-Area comparisons in New Zealand, there is value in looking at *how* police agencies in other countries are tackling crime.

612   Some other (generally larger) countries have a much more developed infrastructure around evaluation and peer review of policing practice. For example, the United Kingdom has a Police Inspectorate (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary) that has a brief to spread good practice among the separate locally accountable police forces.

613   New Zealand's population places limits on the amount of good practice development and learning that can be sustained internally. Accordingly, a continuous review of what can be learned from international experience is particularly important.

614   The Police recognise the value of international experience. For example:

• Some police officers are sent to overseas police colleges for training.

• International contacts are also fostered. For instance, a member of Australia's Criminal Justice Commission spoke at a New Zealand conference on burglary in August 2000. He drew from recent Australian research new insights into tackling the problem of repeat victimisation.

Measuring Performance

615   The Police use a wide variety of measures and targets to monitor and report their performance across the wide-ranging activities reflected in the 15 Output Classes in Vote Police. For 2000-01, those outputs most relevant to burglary were Output Classes (OC) D2 to D7. Those output classes and the related performance measures are shown in Figure 11 on pages 78-79:

616   We assessed those performance measures against the following criteria:

- *relevance* – to the needs of users and the main aims, objectives and activities of the Police;

- *completeness* – reflecting the whole range of police activity, not leaving significant gaps;

- *measurability and comparability* – permitting valid comparisons, using meaningful, specific targets; and

- *realism in targets* – using targets that challenge improvements in performance, whilst not setting unrealistic objectives that can be de-motivating.

617   We did not assess the accuracy or reliability of the performance measures, which are covered by the external audit of the Police's annual Statement of Service Performance.

Relevance

618   The Police have set measures and targets that relate directly to the various output classes. The overall crime reduction targets and outcome measures (for burglary reduction and resolution) reflect the Police Mission Statement:

> *To serve the community by reducing the incidence and effect of crime, detecting and apprehending offenders, maintaining law and order and enhancing public safety.*

619   They are also dimensions of performance that the public is likely to be interested in.

620 The performance measures include customer satisfaction, which supports assessment of whether the Police are interacting appropriately with the community. Some measures also cover police interaction with other criminal justice agencies – which is important given:

- the inter-relationship between the many parts of the criminal justice system; and

- the involvement of others in evaluating some police initiatives (for example, the Ministry of Justice is to lead the evaluation of LETs).

621 The Police have a large number of performance measures (in addition to those most relevant to burglary). However, the number may not be excessive for the wide-ranging activities of the Police.

622 Indeed, there needs to be a range of measures, because over-emphasis of single targets that are monitored in isolation can create perverse incentives. For example, focusing only on reductions of one type of offence could encourage the Police to alter the way they categorise different offences in order to "achieve" an artificial reduction. Examples of such poor practice have occurred internationally.

623 While there is a need for a range of measures, they do not all need to be externally reported. External reporting should concentrate on the measures of most interest to the users of the report.

624 A thorough assessment of whether the list of performance measures is appropriate would require a comprehensive review taking account of the views of users (both within the criminal justice sector and externally) of police performance information.

625 However, we identified one set of performance measures that we do not consider to be valid. These are the proportion of resolved cases resolved by: **prosecution** – 57.4%; **youth clearance** – 20.9%; **warning/caution** – 16.7%; **other** – 5% (Output Class D5 *Case Management*).

626 It is a fundamental principle of justice that case resolutions should reflect the circumstances of each particular offence. The mix of resolutions at the year-end should depend on:

- the mix of cases coming through; and

- the standards for deciding appropriate resolutions for each case.

Figure 11
Output Classes and Performance Measures and Targets
Relating to Burglary, 2000-01

Overall Crime Reduction and Outcome Measurement –

- reduction in burglaries of dwellings to a maximum of 121.51 per 10,000 of population;

- reduction in burglaries by youth offenders per 10,000 of the youth population (no specific percentage target set);

- 15% of recorded burglaries of dwelling resolved (new measure for 2000-01).

Community and Public Satisfaction –

- victimisation survey results better than 1996 survey;

- all respondents to a survey of community groups in partnership satisfied with police services;

- 90% of respondents to a public satisfaction survey satisfied with the levels of information provided on community safety and security issues.

Youth Crime Prevention (Output Class D2) –

- all nationally directed crime prevention programmes developed and implemented utilising auditable and recognised planning processes;

- all with quality assurance evaluated by independent audit;

- all to run within project timeframes;

- Youth Education Services (e.g. school visits) to be quality assured by qualified external audit, with results to improve on those of previous year.

Directed Patrolling (Output Class D3) –

- 143,000 apprehensions by directed patrol;

- 65% of directed patrols (60% in previous year) deployed through a target patrol plan co-ordinated by use of directed patrol reports.

Police Primary Response Management (Output Class D4) –

- 90% of 111 calls answered within 10 seconds;

- 80% of non-emergency calls answered within 30 seconds;

- 81% of customers surveyed satisfied with the service provided for crime related calls.

**Case Management (Output Class D5) –**

- percentage of resolved cases resolved by: **prosecution** – 57.4%; **youth clearance** – 20.9%; **warning/caution** – 16.7%; **other** – 5%;

- 81% of crime victims surveyed satisfied with police investigative services;

- 97% of burglaries attended within 24 hours of being reported.

Case Resolution (Output Class D6) –

- 98% of hearings to proceed on the date agreed between the Police and the Court;

- 90% of respondents to a Youth Justice Co-ordinators' survey satisfied with police support to Family Group Conferences.

Enforcement of Court Orders (Output Class D7) –

- Police will visit homes of people on home detention orders where breaches are notified to levels stipulated in the local service level agreement with Community Probation Service;

- Police arrest of persons subject to home detention orders to be notified to the Community Probation Service within 2 hours.

Part Six
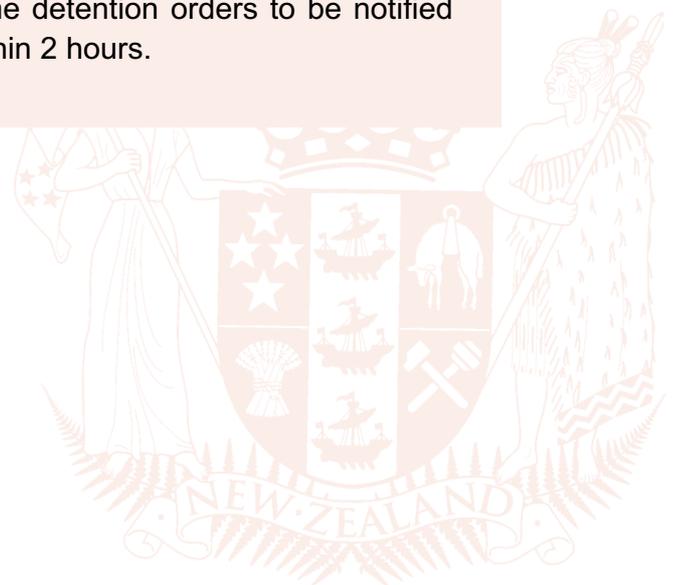
627 This particular performance measure had existed for a number of years. We understand that the Police do not consider the measures to be targets. Instead, they are used as an indicator of unplanned changes in Police practice or recording, should they occur. We consider that it would be helpful if this rationale could be made clear in the Police's external reports.

Completeness

628 Some of the performance measures focus on outcomes, which is in keeping with good practice in setting results-oriented performance indicators. However, we have emphasised in other parts of this report the importance of examining *how* the Police set about their work.

629 We identified few activity indicators relevant to burglary. One example in Figure 11 is "65% of directed patrols (60% in the previous year) deployed through a target patrol plan co-ordinated by use of directed patrol reports".

630 We believe that there is scope for more activity indicators at national level, but there would first need to be evaluations to show what levels or ratios of activity are likely to lead to improved outcomes. Examples of potential activity indicators include:

- use of SOCOs in crime scene examinations;

- ratio of DNA Databank submissions to matches;

- the extent of Intell development; and

- feedback to Intell units on the outcomes from police officers using directed patrol reports derived from MAPS analysis.

Measurability and Comparability

631 Every performance measure should be quantifiable and, where possible, have an associated measurable target. Not all of the performance measures in Figure 11 on pages 78-79 meet both parts of that test. For example, the measure for reduction in the rate of burglaries by youth offenders (expressed in terms of each 10,000 of the youth population) does not have an associated measurable target for the desired reduction. This means that the reduction "target" could be achieved by a fall in the rate of burglaries of as little as 0.1%.

632   The basis for quantification of a performance measure should be a relevant body of historical and other predictive data. The data should be able to support comparison of performance between years. That is, data collected during the current year should be consistent with that collected in past years. And, unless the performance measure is to be changed for future years, the data should continue to be collected on a consistent basis.

633   Measurable targets for performance encourage those responsible for the performance to look carefully at how they will achieve the targets. For example, those responsible for achieving targets relating to youth offending should direct their attention to the related drivers of improved performance – such as the resourcing and expertise in Youth Aid units.

Realistic Targets

634   Performance targets should be set having regard to what is realistically achievable. Excessively ambitious targets may become de-motivating if police officers realise that there is little chance of achieving them.

635   Furthermore, performance targets should be set with due regard for the ability of the Police to have at least partial control over the factors that determine actual performance. If necessary, the target should be adjusted for the degree of influence of factors outside Police control. This implies that the nature and degree of influence of such factors is understood and can be forecast. All of the performance targets in Figure 11 on pages 78-79 are wholly or partly within Police control.

636   The crime reduction targets are among the least controllable. Their achievement (or non-achievement) therefore needs to be set in the context of the environment in which policing operations are carried out, and the work of other agencies that can influence crime levels. For example, the availability of secure beds for young offenders – which is outside the control of the Police – was suggested as an important influence on levels of burglary in some of the Districts we visited.

637   We believe that some of the performance targets could be made more challenging if they were linked to "what works" – i.e. evaluations demonstrating what improvements in policing practices can help to reduce and resolve more crime. The activity indicators arising out of the evaluations would demonstrate to Districts and Areas the improved practices they should adopt. The linked outcome targets would challenge the Police to meet the performance levels that the evaluations have shown are achievable where the improved practices are vigorously applied.

Part Six

638 In recent years the Police have been pressing for new initiatives and changes, including changes in legislation. Evaluation that examines connections between "what works" and changes in performance is planned in relation to the LETs. Evaluation will also be required to monitor the effects of changes in legislation on use of DNA sampling and the regulation of secondhand dealing.

Business Planning, and Performance Monitoring and Improvement

Setting District Targets

639 The Police use a business planning process that enables national targets to be built into District business plans and targets. A District's target is based on the average performance for that District for the three years 1996-1999. The targets reflect an expectation that all Districts improve their performance – whether they were performing above or below the national average. Those Districts that were performing below the national average are expected to achieve the greatest improvement.

640 As an illustration, Auckland City District had a three-year average rate of dwelling burglary of 186.7 per 10,000 of population – 43.3% above the national average of 130.3. Over the three years 1999-2003 the District is expected to achieve reductions in the rate of 3.9%, 5.8%, and 7.7%, resulting in a rate of 156.1 at the end of the three years. This would still leave Auckland City some distance above the projected national average rate of 114.8 at the end of the three years, but the District would have achieved the reductions in an environment of high levels of burglary offending.

641 The national target for reductions in dwelling burglary is 11.9% by June 2003.

642 As at 30 June 2000, the national target reduction for the first year of 2.8% had been exceeded. Figure 12 on the opposite page shows the results at District level. All Districts except Canterbury met, exceeded, or were close to their target reduction.
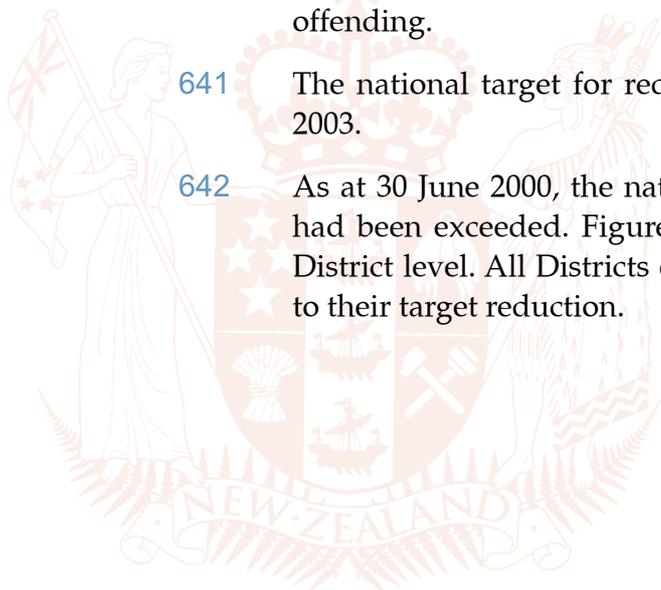
Figure 12
District Performance in Achieving Burglary Reduction
Targets 1999-2000

Most Districts met their reduction target, some by a wide margin.
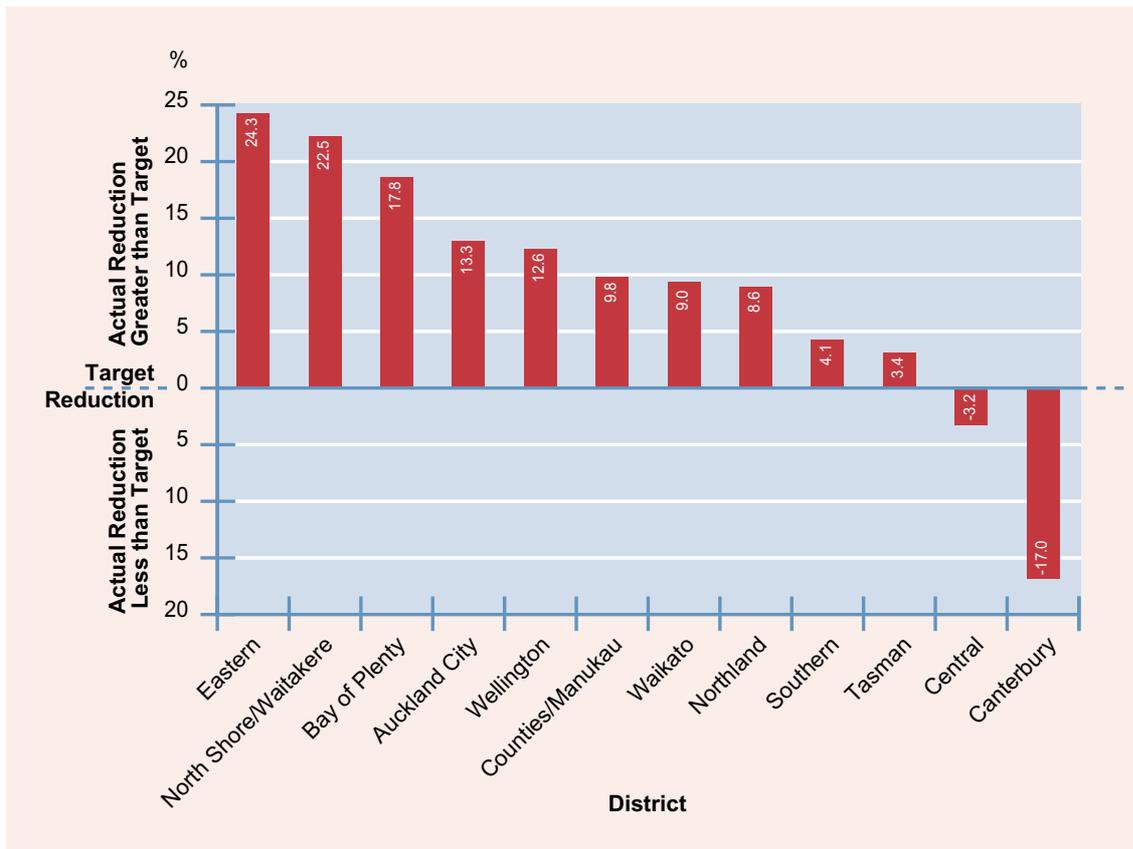
643   There are a number of possible explanations for the results shown in Figure 12.

644   Canterbury District may have under-performed in 1999-2000 compared with other Districts. Equally, however, the Canterbury result may cast doubt on the appropriateness of the District's target. Canterbury District is the only District with a large urban area that started with a low recorded burglary baseline, which reflected its past strong performance. It is possible, therefore, that even though the District faced the lowest requirement for improvement (1.9%) that target may be more testing than a higher target in a District where the scope for improvement is greater.

645   For some Districts, the targets may have been set too low – largely because of the use of the three-year average as the baseline. This is clearly indicated by the high upper range of performance, with the highest-performing District beating its target by more than 24%.

646   In the absence of better information, it was appropriate to use historical performance as a baseline. However, the results in the first year strongly suggested that the targets needed to be reviewed to consider whether they:

- provide sufficient incentive for further improvements in Districts that have a much improved 1999-2000 baseline;

- take account of the projected impact of initiatives that were not fully established throughout 1999-2000, particularly the new LETs; and

- take account of the potential effect of future planned initiatives – such as better use of Intell units and wider dissemination of the MAPS system.

Business Plans

647   From 1999-2000, Districts have been required to produce an improved annual business plan that outlines the District's strategy for meeting the Police Key Result Areas, which cover:

- youth offending and re-offending;

- organised crime;

- repeat victimisation;

- reduced Maori offending, re-offending and victimisation;

- firearms control; and

- road crash trauma.

648   Districts are also expected to consider how they will manage and monitor District performance against national targets – such as the target for reduction of dwelling burglary.

649   The Office of the Commissioner produced a template for a better business plan for 1999-2000, but the associated planning guide was not available until November 1999. All Districts managed to produce their first improved business plan, but most did not complete them until well into the planning year. The production of many 2000-01 District business plans was more timely.

650   Business plans needed to address a performance framework that comprised:

- the six Key Result Areas listed in paragraph 647;

- 15 output classes and associated performance measures and targets (see paragraph 615 and Figure 11 on pages 78-79);

- three Government strategic priorities considered relevant to policing –

  - strengthening families;

  - improving health, employment, education and housing status for Maori; and

  - preventing youth offending and re-offending; and

- six operational goals relating to the mission statement, which include increased personal safety and increased property security.

651   Districts need guidance on distinguishing between the direct role of the Police, and the Police contribution to broader Government targets and goals. The year one plans for Districts followed closely the template provided by the Office of the Commissioner.

652   Some Areas also produced Area business plans. At this more local level, some Areas found it difficult to express their day-to-day operations within the performance framework. However, some Area plans were very good. For example, Taupo Area (in the Bay of Plenty District) devised a plan with 27 operational tasks around the burglary reduction objective in a way that we judged to be readily understandable to the Area's officers.

653   The Office of the Commissioner intends to provide further guidance for Districts so that District and Area business plans can be further integrated with individual staff performance agreements.

Monitoring Visits to Police Districts

654   Up to August 2000, the Commissioner and the Superintendent from the Organisational Performance Unit in the Office of the Commissioner visited each District periodically to discuss performance with District and Area Commanders. The discussions:

- were based on detailed briefings on District performance against targets;

- considered current performance; and

- addressed specific changes that the District and its Areas were implementing to improve performance.

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655   The visits were helpful in providing the opportunity to explain to the Commissioner the reasons for performance levels and the strategic and tactical changes that the District and its Areas wanted to implement. They supported accountability by requiring officers to account for performance against Area plans alongside colleagues from other Areas within the District.

656   The visits were discontinued from September 2000, during a period when there were financial restrictions on travel. From May 2001, the 'visits' were reintroduced by way of video conference.

Sharing Experience

657   Some communication and sharing of good practice experience takes place between Districts and/or from the Office of the Commissioner but, in our view, considerable scope exists for improvement. We found that:

- Area managers seldom met other Area managers, except those in their own District.

- While the Office of the Commissioner has tried to encourage sharing and adopting good practice (for example, through its *Who Owns Burglary?* guidance booklet), the impact has been limited. Some police officers believe that lessons and initiatives from the Wanganui example (see paragraph 322) are not readily transferable because of different local factors, such as the relative strength of community support.

658   However, recognition of the benefits to be gained from collective work and sharing of information and experience is growing. For example, a burglary conference in August 2000 gave officers and staff from different Districts the opportunity to work together to develop strategic plans from Intell-generated information, using comprehensive live data from Lower Hutt.
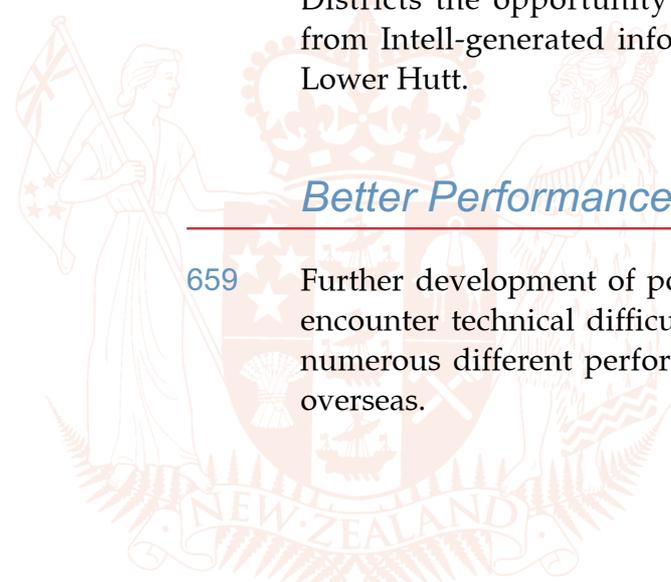
Better Performance Management and Evaluation

659   Further development of policing performance measurement systems will encounter technical difficulties, but feasible enhancements exist. Indeed, numerous different performance measurement methods have been tried overseas.

660   We selectively reviewed the literature and identified some statistical techniques – which have either been used or recommended for use – that seem to us likely to be useful in New Zealand. These include:

- Statistical modelling to identify the relative influence of different factors on the levels of criminal offending.

- Techniques[9] that make use of historical information on performance differences between different Districts to estimate the outer limits (the frontier) of efficient performance and to compare this with the degree of efficiency shown in individual Districts' actual performance. These techniques include –

  - stochastic frontier analysis; and

  - data envelopment analysis.

661   Better assessments of performance can be achieved if there is a good understanding of the various factors that influence results. This issue has also been recognised overseas. For example, the Swedish National Police Board experimented with a measurement instrument (the "E-factor") designed to allow valid crime clearance comparisons among its 118 Police Districts. The instrument adjusted results for demographic and other factors outside police control.

662   Since we began our audit, the Ministry of Justice has sought and obtained from the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology funding for an evaluation of Police initiatives on burglary. The evaluation will assess the extent to which:

- enhanced police intelligence;

- the expanded number of LETs;

- the installation of security equipment in dwellings occupied by repeat victims; and

- strengthened partnerships with other community partners (e.g. Safer Community Councils);

both individually, and in combination, achieve their goals of reducing burglary and repeat victimisation.

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9   These techniques are described in more detail in Appendix 2 on pages 94-95.

663   The evaluation will be undertaken over a period of three years. In the first year, some in-depth interviews will be conducted with offenders to find out first-hand what factors influence their behaviour. Relevant information from this exercise will be made available immediately.

664   We welcome evaluations of this type that can generally be expected to produce results that the Police should use to develop and improve their practices in crime prevention and investigation.

Conclusions

665   Crime data requires careful interpretation – taking account of:

- dimensions across a range of policing activity;

- the environment in which policing takes place; and

- the reasons for different levels of outcome – both within and outside Police control.

666   The Police have made progress in developing suitable performance measures and targets. Performance on one of the key measures – recorded burglary – improved considerably in 1999-2000 compared with the preceding three-year average. As a result, targets currently set to June 2003 may not be sufficiently challenging for Districts that started from a low performance base.

667   There are few performance measures and targets that address *how* the Police operate. Selective use of them could provide incentives for changes in policing practice, based on evaluations of "what works".

668   In further developing performance management and evaluation, policing methods and performance measurement systems also need to be seen in the context of what is being done and the research being undertaken in the justice sector as a whole. The Ministry of Justice, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services, and the Department of Corrections are among the stakeholders.

669   The Police have embraced business planning. However, translating overall goals into operational business plans is not easy. The quality of the plans we saw was variable. Nevertheless, there were some very good examples of business plans – which should be used as exemplars in providing more detailed guidance to improve the standard of plans across the board.

670   We did not specifically review the effectiveness of the Commissioner's monitoring visits to Districts. However, we believe that they are likely to have been a spur to improved performance, as well as providing local officers with an opportunity to explain their performance by detailed reference to the communities they police.

671   The burglary conference was helpful in bringing officers from different Districts together to share information and experience. There is scope for far more sharing of good practice, both directly between Districts and through the Office of the Commissioner.

672   The Police make some use of international contacts to help identify new policing practices that might be adopted in New Zealand. There is scope for:

- further development of these contacts, particularly with countries that have larger infrastructures; and

- good practice development, and more evaluation and use of sophisticated analytical techniques.

Recommendations

673   We understand that District targets for burglary reduction have recently been reviewed in the light of the improved 1999-2000 baseline rates. Targets also need to be reviewed in the light of recently established initiatives (such as LETs) and other initiatives (such as the strengthening of Intell units) which have the potential to further improve performance.

674   The Police need to understand better the relationship between policing practices and desired policy outcomes. Evaluations of "what works" should be considered for activities assessed as having the most potential to lead to improved outcomes. Where evaluation shows that particular policing practices lead to improved outcomes, relevant activity indicators should be established (see paragraph 630). Priority for any new indicators should be given to those areas where current policing practices most need to change, and to areas where changes in legislation have been sought and achieved.

675   Increased sharing of information, experience, and expertise – including expertise in producing business plans that help to establish positive links between policing operations and national priorities and targets – should be encouraged. And the Police should review current methods of scanning new techniques and practices being developed overseas.

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676   Police traffic operations are periodically reviewed by overseas agencies, but there is currently no other independent peer review of the Police. Consideration should be given to buying in resources from overseas to enable such reviews to be undertaken from time to time.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Offender Resolution Modes

Prosecuted
The alleged offender is prosecuted in a High Court or District Court, either as a result of an arrest or by summons.

Discretionary Caution
The reporting officer issues a caution to the apprehended offender, having determined that the nature of the offence only warrants a caution and no further action is required.

Formal Warning
A Commissioned Officer or Officer in Charge (not below Senior Sergeant rank) authorises an official warning to the apprehended offender.

Youth Aid Section
The offence file is forwarded to the Youth Aid Section for further action.

Prosecution Youth Court
The juvenile (under 17 years) offender is prosecuted in the Youth Court, either as a result of an arrest or by summons following a Family Group Conference, under the Youth Justice provisions of the Children Young Persons and Their Families (CYP) Act 1989.

Family Group Conference
The offender is not prosecuted; instead the offence is cleared by means of a Family Group Conference held under the Youth Justice provisions of the CYP Act.

Warning Children/ Young Persons
A warning is given to a child or young person for the commission of an offence by an Investigating Officer or his/her supervisor, without the matter being referred further.

Psych
The alleged offender is not prosecuted or otherwise dealt with owing to a psychiatric condition at the time of the offence, or because he/she has since been diagnosed with a psychiatric or psychological condition such that other resolution modes are inappropriate.

Custody
The alleged offender is in custody already and the Police decide not to prosecute for the specified offences.

Diversion
The offender (usually a first offender) is dealt with informally through the "diversion" scheme.

Other
All other situations where action cannot be taken against an offender (out of the country, deceased, etc.).

Appendix 1

APPENDIX 2

Efficiency Analysis and Measurement

An important task for any organisation is to examine whether or not its operations are efficient. In economics terminology, "efficiency" is used in different contexts with different – but precisely defined – meanings. For the purposes of our study, the most relevant terms are *technical*, *allocative* and *scale* efficiency. An operation is said to be:

- *technically efficient* if, given a particular production technology, it is not possible to produce more outputs without increasing inputs;

- *allocatively efficient* if, for any given cost of inputs, it is not possible to increase outputs by purchasing a different mix of inputs; and

- *scale efficient* if it is not possible to increase the ratio of outputs to inputs by changing the scale of the production process.

Ideally, an organisation will wish to manifest all three kinds of efficiency.

A common situation in large organisations is that their operations (or "production processes") are distributed geographically and organised into a number of roughly similar operational units – the "district" or "branch" structure. Examples include post offices, branches of a bank, or individual members of a franchised restaurant chain. Typically, each of these units has its own manager who is afforded a degree of autonomy. Each such district or branch is known as a "decision making unit" (DMU). In the context of our study, each Police District can be regarded as a DMU.

Individual DMU managers – the decision-makers – may adopt different mixes of inputs and may use different processes. By examining these differences, it is possible to draw inferences about the technical, allocative and scale efficiencies of the operation. Two commonly used methods are:

- data envelopment analysis; and

- stochastic[10] frontier analysis.

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10 The word "stochastic" means "random". It is used in mathematical and statistical literature to indicate that a particular variable (such as the level of output) fluctuates in a random manner.

Both methods have been used to study the efficiency of different government and non-government operations, including the efficiency of policing operations.

Data envelopment analysis is a method that makes use of a mathematical technique known as linear programming to establish levels of efficiency and to compare the actual performance of individual DMUs. Estimates are made on the basis of the best observed actual performances. The method does not involve statistical inference.

Stochastic frontier analysis is a method that seeks to estimate the operation's efficiency frontier by assuming that observed differences in the efficiencies of DMUs reflect both a degree of random variation and a degree of actual inefficiency. The method requires that the extent of random variation be estimated first, so that any residual levels of inefficiency can then be estimated.

The are some advantages and disadvantages to both methods.

An important advantage of data envelopment analysis is that it makes direct or actual observations, and does not require assumptions to be made about the inherent degree of random variation in the performance of DMUs. A disadvantage is that it does not necessarily identify the true efficiency frontier – rather, it infers a "shadow" frontier from the actual efficiency achieved by the best-performing DMUs. That disadvantage usually does not matter much because the best performing DMUs are generally operating close to the true efficiency frontier. However, if all DMUs happen to be operating at significant levels of inefficiency, data envelopment analysis alone cannot be used to identify the true efficiency frontier. It can only identify which DMUs appear to be even less efficient than their peers.

An important advantage of stochastic frontier analysis is that it does enable an estimate to be made of the true efficiency frontier. A disadvantage is that making such an estimate requires statistical assumptions that may be debatable and difficult to support.

There is no strong reason why both methods cannot be used to study the same performance data. If the estimates derived from both methods are similar, this provides additional assurance and reduces the likelihood of systematic errors arising from the choice of method.

Appendix 2