

## Police Beats and Police Beat Shopfronts

Neighbourhood Police Beats consist of a police officer working and living from an office/residence within a beat area. The police officer is responsible for addressing the policing needs of the community within that area and research indicates reported crime rates have declined as a result.

In 2007-08, seven new Neighbourhood Police Beats became operational at:

- Bellbowrie
- Broadwater
- Centenary North
- Norfolk Village
- Pacific Pines
- The Strand
- Tingalpa

There are now 59 Neighbourhood Police Beats in Queensland, with two new beats proposed to be established in 2008-09.

Police Beat Shopfronts establish a policing presence in central business areas and provide a convenient base for the community at major shopping centres to report crime. Police Beat Shopfronts monitor and report on crime trends and implement appropriate preventive local strategies.

During 2007-08, there were 49 Police Beat Shopfronts located throughout Queensland.

## School based policing

School based police officers encourage positive relationships between secondary school students and police. In rural Queensland, this program is particularly beneficial as it provides an opportunity for children living in remote locations to get to know police.

School based policing is in its 11th year of operation. There are 35 school based police officers assigned to 47 schools across the State, with several schools sharing one officer.



Police Beat Shopfront at Brookside.

## Adopt-a-cop

The Adopt-a-Cop program has been operating since 1985 and continues to be a successful means of building good relationships between police and school students. Statewide, 654 police officers perform the role of Adopt-a-Cop.



Senior Constable Carl Voller of Maroochydore Station was recently adopted by the students of Mountain Creek State School.

## Safety and security for seniors

Two seniors' forums were held during the year, bringing together government and non-government agencies and community groups to discuss issues affecting seniors and to develop effective strategies.

A range of initiatives have also been progressed including the statewide implementation of the Seniors Liaison Project, a police training DVD addressing effective communication with seniors, an update of the Confident Safe and Secure Handbook for Seniors and the translation of this handbook into other languages. A directory of police services for seniors and a specific internet website are due for release in 2008.

## Mental Health Intervention Project

The Queensland Police Service is the lead agency for the Mental Health Intervention Project.

One of the major aims of the project is to provide a skilled capability to de-escalate situations involving people with a mental disorder. This results in a more

dignified approach to interacting with people with a mental illness, and reduces the risk of injury to staff, the community, and people suffering mental disorders.

Trained mental health response police officers, ambulance officers, and additional specialist mental health clinicians provide an early intervention response with the ability to identify and manage situations which may otherwise escalate.

The project received positive comment and assessment from the Office of the State Coroner, the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian, and independent reviews.

First response officer training is continuing in all police regions. Currently 4 791 police officers have undertaken mental health intervention first response officer training.

Call taker mental health intervention courses have been conducted in the Brisbane Police Communications Centre. One hundred and thirteen communication room operators have attended training with further courses being planned.



The Service continues to identify the needs of seniors with respect to crime, fear of crime and elder abuse, and to develop effective strategies to address this issue now and into the future.

## Key priority area—Civil emergencies and major events

### Special emergency responses



The Special Emergency Response Team (SERT) provides a specialist policing response to high risk incidents that require skills exceeding normal policing capabilities.

SERT responded to a number of diverse incidents in 2007-08 including sieges, armed offender incidents and high risk warrant executions. They also provided operational response staff to NSW and Victoria for high risk security operations such as APEC and the World Youth Day Papal visit.

SERT continues to enhance specialist skills by training with select units of the Australian Defence Force and international police tactical units.

#### Incidents of high risk, suicide and civil unrest

Police negotiators attended a number of high risk, suicide and civil unrest incidents during the past year. Currently there are 124 qualified police negotiators statewide of which 16 are counter-terrorism trained. The Negotiator Coordination Unit has provided training internationally as well as ongoing training to the Australian Federal Police and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service.

#### Dealing with bomb threats

The QPS Explosive Ordnance Response Team is the largest in Australia and is capable of dealing with explosive, chemical, biological and radiological devices. Training for bomb response and detection has been provided to 100 officers across the State.

The team provided specialist support to a wide range of matters, including VIP security, investigations and safe procedures on 205 occasions during 2007-08.

## Flood relief operations

The recent floods in Central Queensland affected areas from Cunnamulla, Charleville, Longreach, Emerald, Gympie, Boonah, Beaudesert and the Gold Coast to Rockhampton and Mackay. Officers assisted residents with their evacuation plans and patrolled the streets, while also working closely with other Queensland Government services.

Extra police from around the State assisted local officers, council workers and residents. In Emerald, the worst-hit town, water police patrolled the evacuated areas of town by canoe, and also conducted patrols of the Fairburn Dam, where boating restrictions had been imposed. Police assisted other emergency services officers with a number of dangerous rescue operations in the Emerald and Charleville areas.

## Counter terrorism

QPS activities which are coordinated and supported by the Counter-Terrorism Strategic Policy Branch include:

- the QPS Counter-Terrorism Liaison Officer Program, which provides liaison between the QPS and critical infrastructure owners and operators
- the coordination of QPS participation in the Critical Infrastructure, Mass Gatherings and Government Asset Protection Programs

- supporting the Deputy Commissioner (Specialist Operations) in his capacity as the QPS representative on the National Counter-Terrorism Committee; Chair of the National Investigations Support Capability Coordination Sub-Committee, and co-Chair of the Queensland Counter-Terrorism Committee.

The QPS has six specialist officers in national capability and assistant capability advisor positions across several specialist counter-terrorism disciplines including bomb response, dignitary protection, negotiation, tactical, intelligence and police forward command.

## Counter-terrorism exercises

Within Queensland, the Queensland Police Service is responsible for Counter-Terrorism Exercise Management and has established the multi-agency Counter-Terrorism Training and Exercise Management Committee which administers a drill-style exercise program. Funding is provided by the National Counter-Terrorism Committee.



With many of Emerald's roads turned into rivers, water police patrolled the evacuated areas of town by boat.

The QPS also participated in the National Counter-Terrorism Exercise Program, and in October 2008 will be participating in the multi-jurisdictional Exercise *Mercury 08*.

*Mercury 08* will enhance Australia's national capacity to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from, multiple threats and/or acts of terrorism against Australians and Australian interests.

The use of various facilities such as the Police Operations Centre Major Incident Room forms a part of the Queensland Government's Counter-Terrorism Plan. The operations centre is currently being upgraded and will be available for *Mercury 08*.

## International/national deployments

During the reporting period 10 QPS officers were deployed to the Solomon Islands and 11 QPS officers to Timor Leste in partnership with the Australian Federal Police as part of the International Deployment Group. A further 12 QPS officers were deployed to the Northern Territory as part of Task Force Themis—the Federal Government's intervention strategy into remote Northern Territory Indigenous communities to address child sexual abuse, health and other issues.

## Mobile police facility

The QPS counter-terrorism capability has been strengthened by the commissioning of four mobile police facilities. The first of these became operational in 2008, for use in major incidents and operations and another three will be introduced later this year. Each vehicle is equipped with the latest technology including computers, satellite phone and radio systems which allow direct communication to other emergency services, marine vessels and aircraft. The first vehicle has been deployed to a number of operational and non-operational events to allow officers to assess the functionality of the vehicle and to provide constructive feedback to the project team. Events supported by the deployment of the vehicle included a Bracken Ridge rape scene, Currumbin Anzac Day ceremony, Caxton Street Seafood

Festival, Greek Paniyiri Festival and the Doomben races. Feedback from operational police indicated overwhelmingly positive support for the vehicle. The project team is considering minor alterations to the original design to further enhance the operational functionality of the vehicle. These alterations will be carried out during the construction of the next three vehicles and then retro-fitted to the original.

It is proposed to base two vehicles in Brisbane (Metropolitan North and Metropolitan South), a further vehicle on the Gold Coast and the final vehicle in Townsville.

The vehicles will provide police with an excellent platform from which to operate, and will also ensure a highly visible police presence to assist in managing crowd behaviour.



The necessary elements of a police station have been taken and packaged into a mobile unit that can support an entire police operations team.

## Key future initiatives

The staged roll out of Conducted Energy Devices ('tasers') will be undertaken.

The Service will undertake 18 projects under the Vessel Management Program during 2008-09. These projects will include the construction and delivery of three 22 metre purpose built patrol and command vessels.

The potential for DNA to aid investigations and provide vital evidence will be enhanced by new procedures which have been developed by QPS Forensic Services. Forensic officers will employ sampling methods which complement new laboratory technologies to ensure that the results of DNA analyses are available as quickly as possible—helping investigators to identify offenders before they re-offend.

The Community Safety and Crime Prevention Branch will:

- commence a review and refresh of the Queensland Crime Prevention Strategy—Building Safer Communities
- establish whole-of-Government arrangements to support QPS responsibilities as the lead community safety and crime prevention agency
- provide funding for the establishment of four BSCATs in the Far Northern Region
- develop an interactive crime prevention online hub to provide a one-stop shop for government agencies, community, crime prevention practitioners and police.

The State Security Operations Group will provide dignitary protection and protective security intelligence for events including the annual Australian Leadership Retreat attended by the Governor-General, State Premiers, senior Federal Cabinet Ministers and foreign dignitaries, as well as the Rugby League World Cup final and final series matches to be played at Suncorp Stadium in November 2008.

The Police Dog Development Program will continue to increase its breeding program with enhanced monitoring systems, including ultrasound equipment and temperature controlled whelping kennels. Brood females will increase from three to six dogs.



Senior Sergeant Terry Cantwell, State Coordinator Police Dog Squad with Elly.