

Dublin City Joint Policing Committee

Tuesday 12th January 2016

Report of Assistant Commissioner Jack Nolan Dublin Metropolitan Region.

At this the first meeting of the Joint Policing Committee for 2016 I intend to concentrate on the updates/ progress in the following areas,

- Crime overview 2015
- Operation Thor
- Traffic
- Strategic Partnership

1. Crime

For year ending 2015, Property Crime in DCC area is down 4% on 2014. Violent Property Crime is up 2% (27 incidents) on 2014 levels. While Thefts from shop remains higher than 2014 levels, there has been a positive trend in this crime category since February. The increase in theft from shops was offset by reductions in all other theft categories including theft from vehicles (-7%) and Theft of other property (-8%). Increases in Theft from Shops will continue to be a focus for An Garda Síochána in 2016, with enhanced engagement with Retailers through the National Retail Forum and Dublin Business Forum.

Despite initial increases experienced in Burglaries in 2015, this crime type is -16% on 2014 in the DCC area. Indications are that there has been a significant downward trend in Burglaries, which is greater than what would have been expected due to seasonal trends. This can be largely attributed to the continued work of the dedicated Burglary Response Units throughout the Region under the auspice of Operation Thor.

Theft of pedal cycles are now down 14% on same period last year. This is a significant improvement from what was 10% up on last year in April. An Garda Síochána have continued with a Garda Information Campaign which involved the painting and marking of 'end of life bikes' with signs stating that 'Gardai were monitoring the location' and 'have you securely locked your bike' and placing them at key hot-spot locations.

Activity led incident types, such as Public Order (+13%) and Begging offences (+415%) have shown a marked increase in the past year in the DCC area. This type of activity has increased across the whole Region but to a lesser extent (27% increase, in the whole Region). This can be largely attributed to An Garda Síochána increased hi-visibility patrols in place to target key hotspot areas. Special Public Order patrols are put in place in key areas particularly at the weekends to address matters of a public order nature. Criminal Damage incidents are down -12% on 2014 in the DCC area.

Comparing 2014 to 2015, there has been an increase in Crimes against the Person (+12%) with the greatest increase in the category of Assaults. While this is off the back of significant decreases in 2012, 2013 and the first quarter of 2014, it continues to present a challenge to An Garda Síochána to address this trend. Hi-visibility strategies will remain in place to address this trend, utilising mountain bike and foot patrols in key areas. Operation Spire and Operation Pier remain in place in the City Centre to tackle these crime categories.

Trends for firearms/ offensive weapon offences in the Dublin City Council area remain stable. Possession of firearm shows a downward trend at -28%; while Possession of offensive weapon shows an increase of 4%. It should be noted that this crime category is impacted upon as a result of increased Garda activity.

Overall drug offences indicate a 2% decrease in the DCC area in 2015. Drug offences include cultivation (-35%), Possession of sale or supply (-11%) and Possession for personal use (-3%). This decrease can be taken in context with increase Garda Activity in this area with 31,055 incidents of searches under the Drugs Legislation in 2015, which represents a 2% increase on 2014. Provisional figures for seizure of controlled substances in the DMR for 2015 are approximately €36.7 million. This figure is provisional and subject to operational change.

A number of specific initiatives are planned in 2016 to tackle various crime categories that continue to create challenges for An Garda Síochána throughout the DCC area. These Initiatives will be intelligence led and targeted at the areas of concern and included the optimal the use of technology; crime analysis and crime mapping strategies and close cooperation with the communities we serve.

Attached at Appendix A is a spreadsheet outlining the end of year figures for the DCC area. These figures are operational figures as of January 2016 and are subject to change.

2. Operation Thor

At the last meeting in November, I presented an overview of Operation Thor within the Dublin Region. Operation Thor was launched in the Dublin Metropolitan Region on 2nd November 2015 and this National Anti-Crime Strategy, will build on the successes of previous operations. Operation Thor has been developed following an analysis of current crime trends and patterns and will have a particular focus on crime prevention and the targeting of individuals involved in the commission of crime.

I am delighted to report that as a result of the extensive work throughout the Region under Operation Thor significant improvements have been experienced across a number of the crime categories, in particular Burglary.

Since the operation commenced in the DMR, there has been a total of 310 persons arrested for burglary and related offences, 49 of these arrests were key prolific offenders identified prior to the operation. These arrests were offences such as aggravated burglary, burglary, possession of article and trespass. In addition, there have been 138 arrests for handling stolen property and 12 arrests for breach of bail (warrants).

There has been a number of intelligence led Local and Regional operations targeting key areas and locations where such criminal activity may be taking place. In respect of handling of stolen property operations have also taken place at markets and other

premises suspected to have been involved in sale of stolen property. Multi-agency operations have also taken place with the assistance of the Revenue, Customs, DCC, and Department of Social Protection. Our traffic units have also been involved in significant Roads Policing Operations with a view to disrupting criminals that may be utilising our roads networks. A number of the arrests outlined above were made as a result of these operations, where individuals were caught on the way of committing crime.

During December there were Regional Crime Prevention days held at 7 major shopping centres throughout the Region, which involved a Garda Stand with Community Gardai and Crime Prevention Officers present for the day at these centres speaking with people and distributing crime prevention advice. In addition further visits were paid to key locations including Churches, Public Transport Termini and checkpoints where this material was further distributed.

Operations will continue for 2016, and will remain focussed on intelligence led arrest and search operations combined with proactive patrolling and targeting of key hotspots. We will continue to identify key individuals handling/ moving stolen property also to ensure any supply/ demand opportunities are closed.

In addition, members from Community Policing and Crime Prevention Units will continue to place Garda Stands at key locations to distribute Crime prevention Information. Crime Prevention Information will also be distributed at checkpoints and other key locations also.

3. Traffic

At the time of writing this report the number of people killed on the roads of the Capital in 2015 is 17; compared with 29 for 2014. This can be attributed to a number of ongoing and focused operations run in this period. Over the November/ December period the following operations were ongoing:-

- Safer Roads For Dublin Initiative
- Pedestrian/ Pedal Cycle Campaign
- Christmas Enforcement Campaign (December)
- Operation Open City (December)

The Christmas Enforcement Campaign 2015 was a roads policing operation which commenced on Tuesday 1st of December 2015 and continued until 4th January 2016. The aims and objectives of the Christmas Enforcement Campaign 2015 included:-

- High Visibility Roads Policing presence to encourage and ensure compliance
- Continued rigorous enforcement of key “lifesaver offences” i.e. excessive speed, impaired driving, distraction driving use and failure to wear seatbelts.
- Sustained level of mandatory alcohol testing checkpoints (MATS/SUPERMATS) to detect and deter incidents of drink, drug and impaired driving.
- High visibility enforcement of all speed limits, both intercept and non–intercept, with emphasis on 50 km/hr zones.
- To support Operation Thor targeting crime with special emphasis on the targeting of criminals and especially those currently under driving disqualification.
- To focus on SPSV driver and a high level of rigorous enforcement on driver behaviour by drivers of small public service vehicles.

Operation 'Open City' ran from Sunday 6th December 2015 to 24th December 2015. This plan was the culmination of extensive consultation both within An Garda Síochána and external stakeholders, National Transport Agencies, the four Local Authorities including DCC and Transport Providers. The aim of Operation Open City is "To facilitate the movement of Public Transport and minimise traffic disruption to the general public, through high visibility and enforcement activity".

Both operations proved very successful over the festive period and I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the stakeholders for their contribution and cooperation over the period.

Operation Artery commenced on 4/1/16 and is aimed at continuing to reduce deaths and serious injuries in the Dublin Metropolitan Region. This plan will maximise high visibility enforcement activity by utilising Divisional and DMR (Traffic) Division resources particularly during the key times as identified by the Garda Síochána Analysis Services. The main focus will be on driver behaviour, with an emphasis on the key lifesaver offences, with the main objective being to ensure the safety of road users. This is obtainable by Intelligence led Roads Policing through:

- High Visibility Patrols on key routes
- Support to Operation Thor.
- Intercept Speed Checks, particularly strict and sustained enforcement of the 50kph speed limit.
- An emphasis on roadside breath tests by use of strategically located MAT Checkpoints.
- Targeted enforcement of the wearing of seatbelts, with particular emphasis on rear seat passengers.
- Strict enforcement of mobile phone use while driving.
- Maximum use of 3G ANPR and Puma speed detection equipment.
- Co-ordinated checkpoints on high volume routes.
- Particular attention will be paid to pedal cycles with a continued high level of enforcement of Pedal Cycle offences.

Road Deaths is an issue which is the subject of ongoing discussion with my Senior Management Team.

At the last meeting the issue of the new fixed penalty notices in respect of Pedal Cycles was raised. Since its commencement on 31st July 2015, there have been a total of 397 notices issued within the Dublin Region. The majority of these notices were issued for the offence of running a red light. Gardai will continue to monitor such activity and issue notices where such offences are detected.

4. Strategic Partnership

Partnerships form a very important part of our policing strategy in 2016, through a variety of community and interagency initiatives.

An Garda Síochána continue to work with the following Fora/ Initiatives:-

- Dublin Regional Homeless Executive in support of their Cold Weather Initiative 2015-2016.
- Dublin City Centre Business Forum.
- Assertive Case Management Team (ACMT)

These partnerships formed are a very important part of our policing strategy in 2015 and will continue in 2016, through a variety of community and interagency initiatives. These multi agency collaborative framework are at a strategic level and are designed to enhance the various stakeholder/ agencies capabilities to work together to both improve public safety and break the cycle of crime. An Garda Síochána will continue to engage with these initiatives/ forums and feedback to-date has been positive.

Conclusion

We are currently in the process of finalising our policing priorities for the Dublin Regional Policing Plan for 2016, and I will be writing to each of the members of the Dublin City Joint Policing Committee to invite submissions.

I have outlined above the current position in respect of policing and our plans going forward in 2016. These initiatives are primarily focused on addressing policing issues in a collaborative manner involving our strategic partners and I look forward to continuing to develop these initiatives throughout the year.

Thank You

Category	DCC Area Sub-Districts		
	2014	2015	% Change
Murder	13	6	-54%
Assaults causing harm	641	720	12%
Minor assault	1,536	1,786	16%
<i>Total Assault</i>	2,177	2,506	15%
<i>Crimes Against the Person</i>	2,591	2,900	12%
Robbery of an establishment or institution	353	369	5%
Robbery from the person	661	675	2%
<i>Violent Property Crime</i>	1,112	1,139	2%
Aggravated burglary	53	51	-4%
Burglary (not aggravated)	4,956	4,146	-16%
Theft/Unauthorised taking of vehicle	1,129	910	-19%
Interfering with vehicle	535	380	-29%
Theft from vehicle	3,308	3,089	-7%
<i>Total Vehicle Crime</i>	4,972	4,379	-12%
Theft from person	3,778	4,044	7%
Theft from shop	5,264	6,194	18%
Theft/Unauthorised taking of a pedal cycle	3,026	2,588	-14%
Theft of, or interference with, mail	12	16	33%
Theft of other property	5,390	4,979	-8%
<i>Property Crime</i>	28,510	27,485	-4%
Cultivation or manufacture of drugs	31	20	-35%
Possession of drugs for sale or supply	1,432	1,281	-11%
Possession of drugs for personal use	2,545	2,477	-3%
<i>Drug Offences</i>	4,008	3,778	-6%
Searches under the Drugs Act	30,580	31,055	2%
<i>Total Searches</i>	35,520	35,990	1%
Discharging a firearm	26	27	4%
Possession of a firearm	47	34	-28%
Possession of an offensive weapon	540	562	4%
<i>Firearms Offences</i>	613	623	2%
Arson	237	257	8%
Criminal damage (not arson)	5,279	4,654	-12%
Public order offences	3,997	4,503	13%
Drunkenness offences	589	592	1%
Begging	533	2,717	410%
<i>Total Public Order</i>	5,258	7,917	51%

- The above figures are from Pulse records as of January 2016, and are subject to change.