

SUMMARY

This report reviews empirical evidence for the effectiveness of four police strategies as well as the conditions under which these strategies reach their effect.

METHOD

By means of a systematic literature review an overview was obtained of what is known about the effectiveness of the police strategies *Community Policing*, *Third Party Policing*, *Hotspot Policing* and *Problem Oriented Policing*. For this purpose, several scientific databases were searched. In addition, information from relevant websites, literature lists from relevant publications and literature suggestions from several experts in the field of police sciences were scanned.

For literature to be selected it should focus on Community Policing, Third Party Policing, Hotspot Policing and/or Problem Oriented Policing or a Dutch or German derivative thereof. Furthermore, at least one of the outcome measures should be on reducing crime, violence or disorder. And last, for the first part of the review, studies should have sufficient methodological quality so that conclusions can be drawn about effectiveness. This means that all selected studies should have at least a quasi experimental research design. For the second part of the review, that discusses the conditions under which effects are observed or stay out, there were no specific restrictions in relation to the research design of the included studies. However, studies did have to report information about the conditions under which the police strategy was executed and discuss its implications for the observed results.

EVIDENCE POLICE STRATEGIES

Evidence exists for all police strategies. However, positive effects are not found in every study or for every outcome measure. Community Policing, Hotspot Policing and Problem Oriented Policing are all effective police strategies when it comes to reducing crime, violence and disorder. There are sufficient high quality studies available on these strategies to be able to draw this conclusion.

Third party policing however is less studied than the other three strategies. It appears to be an effective police strategy for reducing drug offences. No conclusions can be drawn on the effect on other types of crime.

CONDITIONS

Not every study showed positive results. The main reason for this could be that the studied strategies are seldom executed the way they are supposed to. These implementation problems can have several causes, varying from high work load and a stash of incidents with higher priority to a lack of support and guidance. Furthermore, focus seems to be a success factor for all police strategies, whether it is with carefully identifying a hotspot or with identifying the main problems. Also within Community Policing, which in general entails a broad problem definition, focus is important. Research shows that local cooperation and safety networks are only successful if they are based on a clear target and if it is clear what measures will be taken by what parties.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A police strategy's effect is first and foremost decided by the way it is implemented. Although universal factors like time, resources and motivation are important for all police strategies, motivation with the corps chief and the involved police officers is probably a larger factor when executing Community Policing and Problem Oriented Policing. This review offers some clues on what police strategies are effective on reducing of what kinds of crime. Both community policing and hotspot policing (without problem oriented approach) appear to be mainly suitable for tackling drug offences and small crimes. Problem Oriented Policing is effective in reducing many kinds of crime, also heavier crime. Focus on a specific problem is necessary though. Furthermore, deploying a combination of several police strategies seems to be more effective than a single one.

Future research on the police strategies Community Policing, Third Party Policing, Hotspot Policing and Problem Oriented Policing should mainly be focusing on implementation of these strategies in the daily routine of the Dutch police. In which difference in deployment should be related to differences in effect.