

Management summary

Background and research question

The **Centre for Crime Prevention and Safety** (in Dutch: Centrum voor Criminaliteitspreventie en Veiligheid; CCV) was established in 2004 by public and private parties with the aim of increasing safety in general society. The CCV aims to reach this goal through the development and provision of knowledge and tools in the area of crime prevention and safety, focussing on an integral approach of cooperation between (semi) public and private entities. The CCV receives funding from central government. It is lawfully prescribed that subsidies are periodically subjected to evaluation. Five years after the last evaluation, the WODC has commissioned Significant APE to conduct an evaluation of the functioning of the CCV in the period of 2013 to 2018, in light of its general objective and regarding the follow-up of recommendations made in the last evaluation.

The **research question** central to the evaluation is as follows: 'To what extent has the CCV realised its general objective in the period between 2013-2018, how does this relate to the results of the last evaluation, to what extent has the CCV followed up on recommendations from the last evaluation and to what extent does the current CCV coincide with the desired vision for the future of the organisation held by those involved.'

Research methods and approach

The activities of the CCV can be clustered into four areas of core activities:

- a. Providing information, spreading knowledge and process supervision.
- b. Developing tools.
- c. Facilitating and stimulating cooperation.
- d. Developing knowledge.

The core activities of the CCV reflect the broad range of products and services that the centre offers on different topics and for different parties.

The approach of the evaluation is based on five pillars:

- a. The purpose of the evaluation is twofold. On the one hand it provides accountability towards Parliament for the funding that the Ministry of Justice and Security provides the CCV annually. On the other hand evaluating is a crucial step in the learning cycle, in which practical experience is used for improving that same practice. Questions relevant to this cycle include: what is going well and should definitely be retained; what can be done better; how can it be done better and what do we need to make that happen? Evaluating is, apart from providing accountability, also looking at what can be improved in future.
- b. In this evaluation a range of sources of information was used: desk research (documents and literature), interviews (CCV, Ministry of Justice and Security, partners and stakeholders), focus groups with (semi) public end users and a survey amongst private end users. These sources and methods were triangulated in order to obtain the most reliable results.



- c. This evaluation uses a **Theory of Change (ToC)**. The ToC indicates on which working mechanisms certain policy is based, under which conditions the mechanisms work, the context in which the mechanisms operate and the presumed results. The last evaluation also used a ToC. This ToC provided a starting point, that we tested to see to what extent it still accurately reflects the current situation.
- d. The changing budgetary framework of the CCV. Compared to the last evaluation period, the context in which the CCV must aim to reach its objective has changed. This altered context has a part in determining the effectiveness of the CCV. Examples are alterations to the (statutory) tasks of the CCV, changes in the objectives and priorities at the Ministry of Justice and Security, and changes in the financial means of the CCV.
- e. Incorporating the consumer perspective. Compared to the evaluation of 2013, we add two new sources of information: a survey amongst end users of a CCV product (certification for Conducting Business Safely) and two focus groups with public and semi-public end users that were provided to Significant APE by the CCV. The objective in adding these two sources of information is to obtain an improved understanding of the CCV's effectiveness as perceived by the end users of its services.

Findings

- a. The general approach of the evaluation is measuring the **effectiveness of the CCV in society**. However, regardless of research design or time and budgetary constraints, it is impossible to measure the contribution of the CCV to the safety of society accurately and unambiguously. The evaluation of 2013 concluded as much. What is possible, is using a number of sources of information to determine (through triangulation) the way that the CCV practically aims to achieve its objective (increasing public safety): the development and provision of knowledge and tools in the area of crime prevention and safety, focussing on an integral approach of cooperation between (semi) public and private entities. This makes the evaluation largely process oriented.
- b. During the evaluation period, the CCV has had to achieve its objectives with **significantly fewer financial means**. Over 2013-2018 the CCV's budget has decreased from € 14.4 million to € 8.8 million. The share of the subsidies provided by the Ministry and the private sector have decreased as part of the total budget. The portion of the budget provided by the CCV's own revenue has increased. The Ministry brings forward that the public-private collaboration should also be visible in more funding by private parties. Furthermore, the vision of the Ministry sees that public funding would be increasingly project-based, leading to flexible programming that would allow for a quicker reaction to new developments. The CCV emphasizes the need for substantial, structural funding, that is made necessary in part because of fruitless efforts by the CCV to obtain bigger financial contributions from the private sector.
- c. From the available CCV product evaluations, the survey, interviews and focus groups, a general image arises of products and services that contribute to the knowledge and routes for action of security partners. The sources that we consulted also reveal a generally positive view held by end users regarding the contribution of CCV products to the safety of society. We must add as a side note that we cannot rule out a (positive) bias in the opinion of end users resulting from their selection to participate in the focus groups. Also, the exact contribution of CCV products and services to public safety cannot realistically be determined using the ToC.

Several **recommendations** were made to the CCV in the 2013 evaluation:

- a. The services and activities of the CCV should align with the needs of the public and private target audience to a greater extent.
- b. The CCV should monitor or describe its output and outcome.



- c. Communication between the Ministry and the CCV could be improved, in the policy preparation phase as well as in providing feedback on practical experiences with policies to the Ministry.

The CCV has acted on these recommendations in several ways. Despite its budgetary constraints the CCV has managed to start working in a more **client oriented** way and has taken steps towards a more **demand based approach**. Furthermore, it has been able to grasp new topics such as cybercrime and undermining, and in doing so adapt to changes in priorities within the Ministry of Justice and Security. However, this process is not yet completed. The demand based approach has not yet resulted in a balance in the interest shown by private and public parties, funding by private parties remains behind and according to the Ministry there is room for improvement where the agenda setting and signalling function of the CCV is concerned. The targets for private funding set for the CCV seem to be unattainable to some extent, as the private sector is not inclined to (structurally) pay for CCV products and services.

Modest steps have been taken regarding the recommendation to **shift the focus of monitoring towards an approach centred on outcome**. An unambiguous framework for monitoring results is not yet in use and differences of opinion remain between the CCV and the Ministry, as well as within the Ministry, on the function of managing based on outcome. Is it a tool that can provide accountability autonomously and replace the current system for accountability based on input and output, or is it an addition to the output-based way of ensuring accountability?

It is important to not have too high expectations or unrealistic ambitions in measuring outcome. The link between the CCV products and safety of society is very complex. A more pragmatic approach to monitoring would be to relate the CCV products to the ways in which the CCV aims to increase safety in society: the development and provision of knowledge and tools, and stimulating cooperation between (semi) public and private organisations. For this a more systematic, integral and uniform way of monitoring the use of CCV products and the appreciation of them, by private and public consumers, is necessary.

An alternative, pragmatic approach would contain two elements:

- i. Application of systematic, uniform and integral monitoring of the use and appreciation of CCV products. This requires specific attention, as the CCV does not have a clear idea of what private and public parties do with its products at this time.
- ii. Relating the use and appreciation of CCV products to the increase of knowledge of security partners and the increase in cooperation between private and public parties.

Communication between the CCV and the Ministry has (greatly) improved in the period between 2013 and 2018 on all levels, with the relevant departments of the CCV and the Ministry finding each other easily. The employees of the CCV are regarded as professionals, with good knowledge of their respective dossiers. The fact does remain that the Ministry would like to receive more information, and more timely, from the field and on trends that can serve as input in formulating policy.