

INQUIRY INTO ISSUES RELATING TO REDFERN/WATERLOO

Organisation:

Name: Name confidential

Position: [-]

Telephone:

Date Received: 31/05/2004

Theme:

Summary

SUBMISSION TO THE PARLIMENTARY ENQUIRY INTO THE REDFERN RIOT

I request that this submission be made public however my name kept confidential.

I am a Senior Constable of Police having joined NSW Police 1996. I have worked at a number of busy and culturally diverse commands including Kogarah, Bankstown, Cabramatta, The NSW Police Academy and for the last two and a half years, Redfern. This submission is based upon a Bachelor of Policing assignment I completed in November 2003, my experiences as a police officer and my experiences as a member of the community. I have included the Bachelor of Policing assignment as part of this submission. I was not present when the civil unrest occurred at Redfern on the 15 February 2004.

OVERVIEW OF PROBLEMS IN 'THE BLOCK'

Police at Redfern are subject to a number of competing factors. These factors include:

- The need to be sensitive and compassionate to the Aboriginal culture and the plight of the people living in 'The Block'.
- Statistically high rates of crime, particularly robbery.
- The daily verbal and physical abuse, lack of support and at times overt hatred towards police from indigenous people in 'The Block'.
- The need to protect the community in general and enforce the law.
- The need to respect the Aboriginal community in 'The Blocks' right to privacy and right to live they way they wish.

- Complaints from the Aboriginal community that the area is 'over policed'.
- Complaints from the general public that the area is not policed enough.
- The protection afforded to Aboriginals committing crimes and drug dealers by the Aboriginal community in 'The Block'.
- The fact that 'The Block' is an area where drugs are readily availability resulting in people travelling to the area to purchase drugs and/or committing crimes to fund their drug dependence.
- Complaints from the general public that members of the Aboriginal community in 'The Block' are allowed to 'get away with more because they're Aboriginal'.
- Complaints from members of the Aboriginal community that police are, 'picking on them because they're black'.
- The poor and sub-standard working conditions within the Redfern Police Station.
- The dangerous and hazardous working conditions around 'The Block'.
- The low level and poor quality of resources available to police within the Redfern LAC compared to the level of policing that needs to be provided.
- The high number of junior officers and resultant low level of experience among officers that further drains resources and limits what police are able to operationally undertake.
- The real and serious day to day risk of injury to officers working in and near 'The Block'.
- The obvious substance abuse, poverty, low socio-economic status, breakdown of the family unit and the absolute failure of agencies such as DOC's, Aboriginal Health and Aboriginal Housing to address these issues over a long period of time.
- The ineffectiveness of welfare agencies to significantly address the social, health and cultural problems in 'The Block.'

As an officer who has experienced policing in a number of locations I find it difficult to understand why these long-term problems in 'The Block' have not been properly addressed. In allowing the problem to fester for so long it appears all and sundry have either chosen to accept the situation as is or not had the fortitude to provide an effective, viable solution.

Those that argue that the problems in 'The Block' are simply an issue for police are sorely mistaken. There are underlying issues in the 'The Block' that contribute to and fuel the crime in the area. These underlying issues are:

- substance abuse.
- poverty and low socio-economic status of the community.
- the breakdown of the family unit.
- issues and factors that are culturally based.

Police are not, nor should they be, called upon to provide solutions to these problems. These issues fall within the realm and charter of welfare agencies – not police.

POLICE RESOURCES

There are a number of issues regarding resources at Redfern LAC:

1. The high number of officers with less than five years experience.

The lack of experienced officers impacts on the command in a number of ways:

- i. There are insufficient officers (called Field Training Officers) to train new constables. Field Training Officers are over utilised and due to their role have significantly heavier workloads than other officers. This has led to a number of Field Training Officers suffering burnout and relinquishing their training role for a few months to reduce their workload.

- ii. Many Field Training Officers themselves have less than three years experience. This impacts on the quality of all aspects of police work, particularly the quality of an investigations and the subsequent briefs of evidence.
- iii. The lack of experience limits the type of operations that can be undertaken. It is difficult to muster sufficient appropriately experienced staff to instigate, plan, investigate and run drug operations, surveillance operations, target or location specific operations and other controlled operations on an ongoing regular basis.

2. Insufficient overall number of officers (particularly experienced officers).

The Redfern LAC has sufficient staff for basic first response type policing. Clearly, this level of police response is not an adequate police response for the level of crime occurring within the Redfern LAC. The Redfern LAC has insufficient experienced police to staff, investigate and undertake roles in the Robbery Unit, Drug Unit, Property Theft Unit, Bicycle Patrol Unit, Warrants and Summons Unit, Domestic Violence Unit, Intelligence Response Team, Detectives, Intelligence Unit and Crime Prevention Unit. Currently, the majority of the units are either non-existent, have one officer between two units, have one officer performing two roles, have staff away performing other roles or are utilising seconded staff from other commands. It is difficult for these units to perform effectively in the circumstances. Indeed many of the units are struggling to perform the basic functions required of the unit. Given the problems at Redfern these units need to be performing more than just basic functions. Greater resourcing would allow these units to undertake a more proactive role in reducing crime.

3. Ability to respond to incidents of riot and civil unrest.

Firstly, Redfern LAC is the only metropolitan command, that I am aware of, to have riot equipment issued to the LAC rather than the region. Clearly, this is an acknowledgement by the Police Executive that a unique and significant problem in the area of civil unrest exists at Redfern. Additionally, all officers are required to undertake a one-day course in dealing with riots. This is not standard procedure. As a former Operations Support Group (OSG) Operative it is my opinion that the one-day training course does little more than show police how to defensively use the equipment to protect themselves from projectiles. The course does not (and in my opinion should not) train police how to respond tactically and resolve a riot as seen at Redfern. Civil unrest, of the level seen at Redfern, should be dealt with by specialist police with appropriate equipment and extensive training in that role. Given that there is a clear acknowledgement for the potential of civil unrest in Redfern I believe the Police Executive has failed to provide sufficient resources and/or organisational systems to respond to such incidents. I would recommend the establishment of a specialist (OSG) unit based at the Sydney Police Centre on a full-time basis that can quickly respond to incidents of civil unrest throughout the Sydney Metropolitan area.

4. Poor working conditions

It is freely acknowledged by the Police Minister that the working conditions within Redfern Police Station are deplorable and 'the worst in the state'. This issue is well on the way to being resolved with the building of a new police station, however, little has been done to address the working conditions police are subject to while working on the streets. It is an Occupational Health and Safety requirement that employers provide a safe working environment for its employees.

Considering the number of police injuries and the potential for injury 'The Block' area of Redfern is a high-risk environment and hardly a safe working environment for police. The risks to police include:

- Working in an environment that is littered with broken glass and uncapped syringes.
- Constantly dealing with the health risks associated drug affected and/or intravenous drug using people.
- Constantly dealing with offenders carrying syringes and other cutting instruments.
- Working in an environment where projectiles are frequently thrown at police and police vehicles.
- Incidents of assault and intimidation toward police.
- Incidents of civil unrest.
- Real risk of being seriously injured.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That a full time Operational Support Group unit be established and based at the Sydney Police Centre to provide support to local police in cases of civil unrest in the Sydney metropolitan area.
2. That Redfern LAC is given a full compliment of experienced staff so that the Robbery Unit, Drug Unit, Property Theft Unit, Bicycle Patrol Unit, Warrants and Summons Unit, Domestic Violence Unit, Intelligence Response Team, Detectives, Intelligence Unit, Crime Prevention Unit and other specialist units can operate effectively and have the resources to fully instigate all possible appropriate policing strategies.
3. That the family, social and dependency problems within 'The Block' are addressed.
4. That other agencies involved in the delivery of health, welfare and social services in Redfern perform their functions effectively and impact positively on the Aboriginal community in 'The Block'.

5. That the rights, culture and wishes of the law-abiding members of the Aboriginal community within 'The Block' be acknowledged and respected.
6. That Redfern Railway Station and 'The Block' areas are redeveloped so that their environmental design reduces the opportunity for crime.
7. That the higher risks and greater difficulties of policing and its effects on officers at the Redfern LAC police are acknowledged by the Police Executive.
8. That the acknowledgement of the higher risks and greater difficulties of policing in the Redfern LAC by the Police Executive be in the form of a favourable transfer policy that can be enacted at the completion of the officers tenure period.
9. That the policy of favourable transfer at the completion of tenure be adopted to attract experienced officers to the command.

ROBBERY AND STEAL FROM PERSON OFFENCES IN AND AROUND THE REDFERN RAILWAY STATION

The area centring on Redfern Railway Station has considerable notoriety often drawing sensationalist or politicised media attention. The area is a 'crime hotspot' for the Redfern LAC with robbery, steal from person, stealings and drug related crime a daily occurrence. Statistical and crime mapping figures provided by the Redfern LAC Intelligence Unit show ninety percent of reported crime in the Redfern LAC occurs within a one kilometre radius of Redfern Railway Station and that during the first half of 2003 the LAC had the highest incident of robbery related offences in the state.

The topography of Redfern Railway Station brings together a great variety of physical and social factors that contribute the area's crime problems. In summary, the main factors are:

Redfern Railway Station

Redfern Railway Station has a high level of commuter traffic. It is a main interchange for the suburban rail system while servicing patrons of Sydney University and Sydney Technology Park. The main entrance of the station is located on Lawson Street. The entrance area is enclosed and is often where offences occur. It consists of two manned ticket windows and two ticketing machines. Electronically operated barriers and a disabled gate lead onto a concourse then down steps to the various platforms. Redfern Railway Station has extensive CCTV coverage inside the station but only limited coverage outside. The quality of the cameras are poor, making offender identification difficult. Lighting inside the station is good however street lighting away from the station is poor. The station is generally open and staffed from 4:00am to 2:00pm.

Lawson Street

Lawson Street is lined with terrace housing and footpaths on both sides. It is the main access route taken by students and staff walking to and from Sydney University. Pedestrian traffic during the day is often very high and diminishes in the late evening. The Lawson Street footpath is narrow and lined with trees making lighting at night poor. The majority of offences take place on Lawson Street with many of the victims being students walking to or from the university.

‘The Block’

Directly opposite the station entrance, running off Lawson Street, is Eveleigh Street and the area commonly known as ‘The Block’. Without going into great detail, ‘The Block’ consists of mainly terrace housing owned by the Aboriginal Housing Commission. It houses a small Aboriginal community. In addition to the normal residents, there is a small population of mainly Aboriginal transients who reside with the residents or live in squats within abandoned buildings. The awning around the Aboriginal Housing Commission building at the intersection of Lawson and Eveleigh Streets is a gathering area for people in ‘The Block’ often with twenty or so people drinking and sitting around open fires. The ‘Block Area’ has high incidents of substance abuse (both alcohol and illicit drugs), poverty, drug supply and other social and cultural problems. After committing offences at Redfern Railway Station or in Lawson Street offenders often run into ‘The Block’ believing it to be a ‘safe area’ offering them protection from apprehension. To some extent this is true as the area has many hiding places, few people willing to co-operate with police and its occupants are frequently abusive, intimidatory and violent towards police.

Conclusion

The Redfern LAC has been dealing with the political, cultural, social and criminal problems around the railway for many years. The current main police response is to provide high visibility policing at the railway from 6:00am to 11:00pm seven days. Clearly the problems in the area are not just about policing and require a multi-agency approach. Recent, positive steps in this direction has seen co-operation between South Sydney Council, the Aboriginal Housing Commission, City Rail, Department of Community Services, Aboriginal Health Services, the RTA, NSW Police and the establishment of the Redfern-Waterloo Project. There is still a way to go and problems on many different levels to be addressed.

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pp1-19.

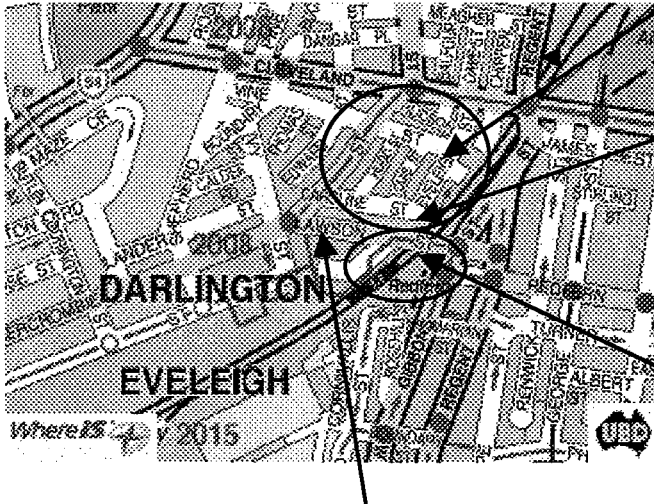
Redfern LAC statistical information provided by the Intelligence Unit, Redfern LAC

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ANALYSIS OF UNDERLYING CAUSES

Picture 1 (below)

UBD Street Map of Redfern Railway Station, Lawson Street, 'The Block' and surrounding streets.

Map courtesy of www.whereis.com



'The Block'

'The Block' area of Redfern is bounded by Redfern Railway Station and Lawson Street to the south, the railway tracks to the east, Cleveland Street to the north and Abercrombie Street to the West.

Southern Entrance To 'The Block'

The intersection of Eveleigh and Lawson Streets is a pedestrian and vehicle shared zone as serves as the main entrance between 'The Block' and Redfern Railway.

Redfern Railway Station

The main entrance to Redfern Railway Station is opposite the southern entrance to 'The Block'.

Lawson Street

Lawson Street is the main access route from Redfern Railway Station to Sydney University and the Redfern CBD.

Picture 1

Picture one shows the general layout of the area and the proximity of 'The Block' to Redfern Railway Station and Lawson Street.

Picture 2 (below)

***Redfern Railway Station
Lawson Street Entrance
Taken from the intersection of Lawson Street
and Eveleigh Street***



Redfern Railway Station main
entrance door

Pedestrian traffic heading west on the
narrow Lawson Street footpath to
Sydney University

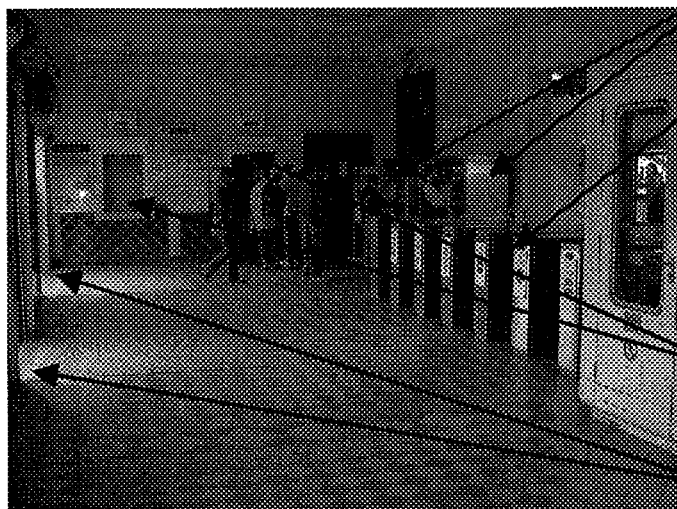
Pedestrian island on Lawson Street

The southern entrance to 'The Block'

Picture 2 shows the main entrance of the Railway and the footpath leading west along Lawson Street that patrons of Sydney University are forced to take. There is no alternative route from the Railway to the University. The foot path is narrow and lighting away from the immediate Railway entrance is poor. The picture also shows how close the southern entrance of 'The Block' is to passing pedestrian traffic.

Picture 3 (below)

*Redfern Railway Station
Lawson Street Entrance Ticketing Area*



Ticket machines

Automatic ticket barriers to restricted
concourse area and platforms

Manned ticket windows

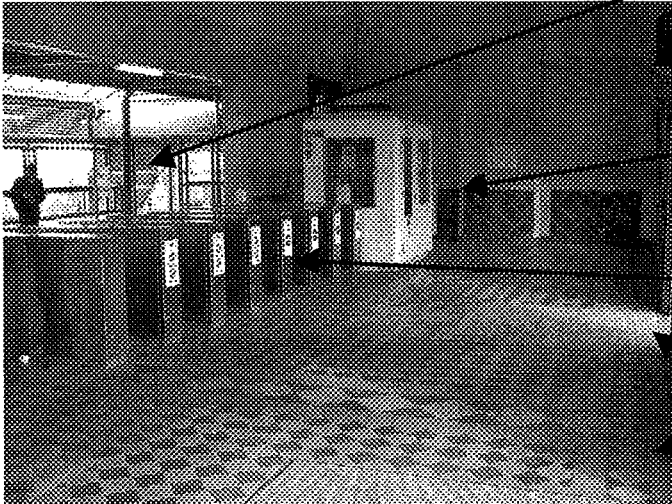
Exit to Lawson Street

Picture 3 shows the location of the ticket barriers, automatic ticket machines and ticket windows.

Note the close proximity of the ticket windows and ticket machines to the exit to Lawson Street.

Picture 4 (below)

***Redfern Railway Station
Lawson Street Entrance Ticketing Area
Reverse view***



Restricted area to platforms

Disabled gate.

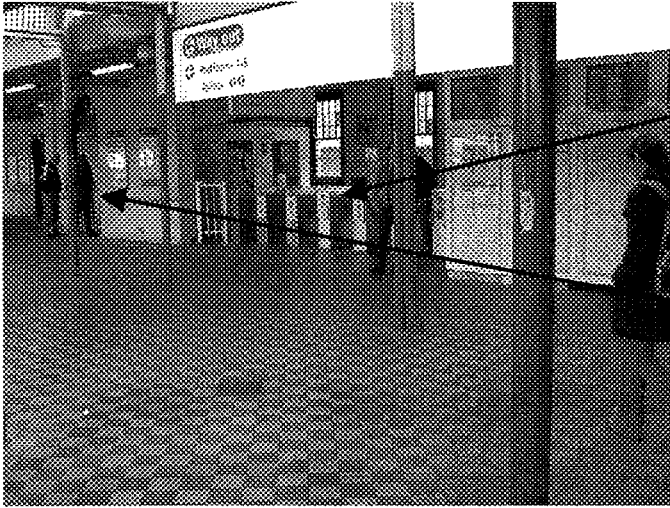
Automatic ticket barriers to restricted
concourse area and platforms

Exit to Lawson Street

Picture 4 shows the location of the disabled gate. The disabled gate is always manned by state rail staff however access through the gate is rarely restricted. Non-ticket holders are allowed free access the restricted area, amenities and platforms through the gate.

Picture 5 (below)

*Redfern Railway Station
Restricted Concourse Area
Looking out towards Lawson Street*



Exit through ticket barriers to Lawson Street

Disabled gate

Picture 5 shows the view from the restricted area out towards Lawson Street

Picture 6 (below)

*The view west along Lawson Street towards
Sydney University from the main entrance of
Redfern Railway Station*



Southern (Eveleigh Street) entrance
to 'The Block'

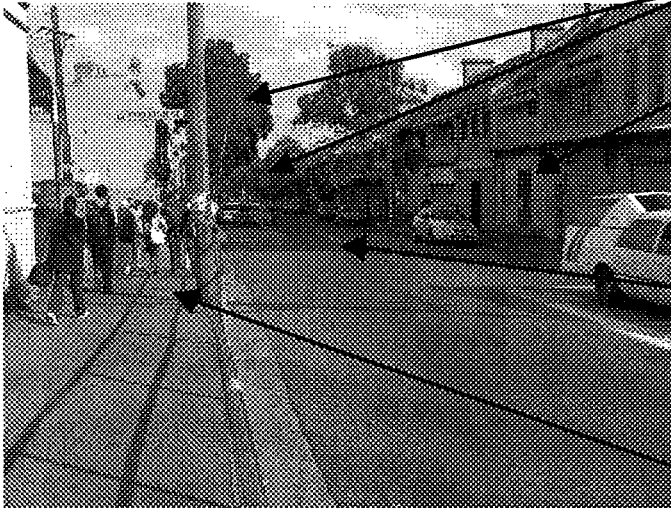
Foot crossing linking the railway
station entrance and 'The Block'
entrance

The footpath west along Lawson Street
to Sydney University

Picture 6 again highlights the close proximity of 'The Block' to passing pedestrian traffic from the Railway.

Picture 7 (below)

***Another view west along Lawson Street towards
Sydney University from the main entrance of
Redfern Railway Station***



Large overhanging trees

Tall two storey terrace houses with
frontages right on the footpath

Narrow Street

The narrow tree lined footpath west
along Lawson Street to Sydney
University

Picture 7 highlights the environmental design problems in Lawson Street. The narrow tree lined footpath, tall terraces with no front yards and frontages directly on the footpath and cars parked on both sides of the already narrow street reduce visibility, lighting at night and create a cluttered, closed in effect.

Picture 8 (below)

Looking north down Eveleigh Street into 'The Block' from Lawson Street



The top of Eveleigh Street has been converted to a 'Shared Pedestrian' Area'. Drunks and homeless people often congregate here.

A number of murals are painted on the walls in and around 'The Block' most have graffiti written over them.

The burnt-out awning on the side of the Aboriginal Housing Building used for shelter at night and for people congregating during the day

The Aboriginal Housing Corporation office

Picture 8 shows the view north down Eveleigh Street into 'The Block'. This is the view passing pedestrian have as they walk from the Railway to the University. The area is in a state of disrepair with the appearance of being a wild, lawless place where nobody really cares. The area is a congregation place for homeless people, drunks, drug dealers and drug users looking to 'score'. These factors form part of what is termed the 'Broken Windows' theory whereby an appearance of lawlessness creates a cycle of increasing crime.. (See Part Three – Broken Windows Theory)

Picture 9 (below)

The rear of the Aboriginal Housing Corporation building from Caroline Street



Makeshift squats built into the rear of the Aboriginal Housing Corporation office building

These areas are littered with used syringes, other drug paraphernalia, rubble and bricks from demolished buildings and other litter

Eveleigh Street

Pictures 9 and 10 show the living conditions inside 'The Block'. The squats' house transients, drug users/sellers and also serve to hide those who have just committed offences. The proceeds of robberies and other offences are often located inside the squats.

Picture 15 (below)

The northern end of Eveleigh Street



Abandoned terrace housing boarded up but still used as squats and for drug use/supply

Vacant land where a terrace has been demolished. Again littered with used syringes, other drug paraphernalia, rubble and bricks from demolished buildings and other litter

ANALYSIS OF THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF THE ROBBERY PROBLEM AT REDFERN RAILWAY STATION

Until recently, the police response to the high number of robberies at the Redfern Railway Station was to park a police vehicle on Lawson Street, near the southern entrance to 'The Block' and sit two constables in it near to twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. It was considered a proactive response to the problem as police were tasked to Lawson Street in an attempt to prevent robberies from occurring. The reality of the situation was robberies had for some time been identified as a major problem at the Railway. Rostering police to sit in a police car on Lawson Street was a short term reaction to problem, not necessarily a proactive approach designed to address the deeper and longer term problem. Indeed, police rostered for duty on Lawson Street termed it 'babysitting', as all they were required to do was remain in police vehicle. The rationale behind tasking police at Lawson Street was simple:

- Most of the robberies occurred near the southern entrance to 'The Block'.
- After committing a robbery the majority of offenders ran through the southern entrance and into 'The Block'.
- Placing a police vehicle and constables would stop robberies being committed at the Railway.

And it did! Without a doubt, while ever there was police and a police car parked at the southern entrance there were few if any robberies at the Railway, however:

1. Whenever the police car was called away or there were insufficient staff to place police at the southern entrance, the robberies would reoccur.

2. Robberies in nearby Abercrombie Street and Cleveland Street increased, although nowhere near to the extent they had stopped around the Railway. This phenomenon of crime being moved from one area only to occur in another is called Displacement Theory. As described by Felson and Clarke (1998, pp26-32) and Town (downloaded 30/11/02) cracking down on crime in one area does not necessarily mean an equally resultant increase in crime in other areas. Felson and Clarke (1998) state, "This shows that the scope for displacement may be more limited than is often assumed, but it does not mean that it should be ignored." This appears to be occurring in Lawson Street where robberies have been 'displaced' to surrounding areas, however the overall robbery level has still been reduced. This highlights the importance of the reasons why Lawson Street appears to be the preferred location for robberies. (See Part Three – Rational Choice Theory and Routine Activity Theory)
3. This strategy was short-sighted quick fix that was not a cost effective use of police resources. Maintaining this type of police presence would be inefficient and expensive over the long term.
4. This type of police response only addressed the symptom and does nothing to address the underlying causes of the problem. **While ever the underlying causes remained so would the problem.**

This is a good example of where problem oriented policing (Toch & Grant, 1991) should have been used to find a long term, cost-effective solution to the problem. Problem orientated policing is a philosophy whereby the underlying conditions and reasons for a crime are identified and solutions to these put in place. In the case of robberies at Redfern Railway Station, the solution is not to simply place police at the location where the crime is happening (although this may well be a small

part of an overall range of strategies and solutions) but to delve deeper into the underlying circumstances and develop a strategy that addresses these issues as well.

So what are the underlying causes of the robberies at Redfern Railway? Leigh, Read & Tilden (1996) describe two processes to identify the underlying causes of crime: SARA and PAT

SARA is a synonym for a logical problem solving process consisting of four steps. These steps are:

1. Scanning: Identify the problem. This can be done from local knowledge, crime mapping, statistical data analysis, etc.
2. Analysis: Define the problem in greater detail. Identify the what, when, where, who, how and why of the problem.
3. Response: Work to find a solution. Think laterally as well as along traditional lines. Most solutions will involve working with other agencies such as local council, the RTA, Department of Housing, DOCS, etc.
4. Assessment: Use a check and feedback mechanism to measure the success of the solutions and offer suggestions for improvement.

PAT is short for Problem Analysis Triangle and is used at the analysis stage of problem solving.

Essentially PAT asks us to assume that the following three things will have an impact, influence or cause the problem. These three things are:

1. The features of the victim.
2. Features of the location.
3. Features of the offender/source of problem.

Let's apply each in turn to the Redfern Railway case:

1. Features of the Victim.

Generally the victims of Robberies at Redfern Railway Station:

- are travelling along Lawson Street to/from Redfern Railway Station, they are often students or employees of Sydney University,
- are always alone at the time they are robbed,
- are generally females aged 18-35 years old,
- are often Asian in appearance,
- often have valuables such as mobile phones, handbags, laptop computers, jewellery, etc clearly visible.

2. Features of the Location

The location of Robberies at Redfern Railway Station has the following features:

- Generally occur on Lawson Street.
- Generally occur within 50 metres of the southern entrance to 'The Block'.
- Often occurs after dark and in poor lighting.
- Often occurs where there is no CCTV coverage.
- Readily available supply of heroin and other drugs that are in close proximity ie. 'The Block'.
- High level of poverty.
- High level of protection from police offered to those committing offences. Both in terms of informants and in physical hiding places.
- 'The Block' the area is depilated, run down and unkept.
- High level of public (Aboriginal) housing.

3. Features of the Offender

The offender has the following features:

- Generally of Aboriginal decent.
- Aged 13-30 years old.
- Always run into 'The Block' after committing offences.
- Generally reside in or frequent 'The Block'.
- Unemployed.
- Generally have a heroin dependency and are probably committing the offence to support this dependency.
- Poorly educated.
- Come from a poor socio-economic background.
- Generally come from a family environment with a history of violence or substance abuse and/or a breakdown of the family unit.

CONCLUSION

By simply listing the feature of the victim, location and offender, it can be clearly seen the solution requires more than can be offered by the Police Force. Indeed, it is not just a case of one problem but many. Certainly, the environmental design (such as the pedestrian corridor between Redfern Railway and Sydney University) of the area can be improved, however, I feel the most important underlying causes focus on the offender. These include:

- Drug dependency and substance abuse that leads to the committing of crimes to fund the dependency.
- The ease and availability of heroin in the immediate area.

- Poor education that resulting in poor social skills, unemployment and poverty. This may eventually lead to feelings of despair, depression, boredom, hopelessness and lack of control. Drug use may used as a means to escape these feelings.
- High level of domestic violence.
- Cultural conflicts between the Aboriginal culture and the mainstream Australian culture.
- Finally an overall vicious cycle of family breakdown and poverty - poor education, poor social skills and cultural conflict – unemployment and depression - drug dependence and criminal activity that is difficult to break.

These underlying causes of the robbery problem are in fact problems in themselves that require solutions. Many agencies, including the police force, have a role to play. The solutions will need to be on many different levels addressing issues such as family, domestic violence, substance abuse, cultural conflict, education and unemployment and will involve agencies such as Aboriginal Housing, DOCS, DEET, TAFE, Aboriginal Health & Welfare, Centrelink, etc.

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SOLUTIONS

INTRODUCTION

The high incidents of robbery around Redfern Railway Station are the symptoms of a much larger problem and as such a multi facet approach appears best suited. Pease (1999), as reported by Town in *The Perception, Problems, Evidence and Supporting Theory*, states, “It is probably not going too far to say that the best strategy for crime control is now clearly a combination of proven techniques for the reduction of individuals’ tendency to commit crime through intervention in childhood, and the manipulation of environments to make that more difficult.”

The multi facet approach, I have designed, for reducing the incidents of robbery around the Redfern Railway Station is focused around three main approaches:

- Improved Environmental Design
- Integrated Police Approach
- Integrated Multi-Agency Approach

These approaches incorporate the elements of crime mapping, ‘broken windows’ theory, zero tolerance, community based policing, situational crime prevention, rational choice theory, routine activity theory, crime pattern theory and opportunity theory.

APPLYING CRIME REDUCTION THEORIES TO REDFERN RAILWAY

Crime Mapping

Crime mapping is the ability to overlay the occurrence of one or more categories of crime onto a map of a particular area. This is usually achieved through the use of a computer program that uses the location of reported crime data and pinpoints them onto a street map. The program can be manipulated to present the data in many different ways. One of the most common ways to present the data is to use colours to create 'hotspots' for locations of crime. (See attached crime mapping 'hotspots' for the Redfern LAC). As crime mapping can show trends and 'hotspots' of crime it often forms the bases for crime prevention. In our case, crime mapping clearly shows the problem of robbery (and other offences) around Redfern Railway. (See Annexure 1).

Broken Windows Theory

Broken windows theory or 'order maintenance' as termed by Wilson and Kelling (1982), is a theory that assumes if order is not maintained the standard of order will exponentially deteriorate. Wilson and Kelling describe a cycle whereby disorder causes greater disorder and increases a communities fear of crime and a perception of lawlessness. As a result of the perception of lawlessness, offenders perceive an opportunity to commit crimes and the end result is an increase in more serious crime. 'Broken windows' theory and the perception of lawlessness can clearly be seen in Pictures 8, 9 and 15 where there are burnt out buildings, walls covered in graffiti, makeshift squats, overt illegal drug use, abandoned and partly demolished buildings, rubbish, litter, rubble and congregations of homeless/drug effected people. Addressing these issues will increase the perception of order and lawfulness, breaking the cycle of increasing crime and reduced the perceived opportunity of offenders to commit crime. Theses issues are best dealt with through the establishment of a community body, the Aboriginal Housing Corporation and South Sydney Council.

Zero Tolerance

Zero tolerance is in many ways seen as the counter to the 'broken windows theory'. Zero tolerance, although there are varying degrees, is generally seen as the enforcement of street and other minor offences by police. It is a way of maintaining order by demonstrating that an area is not lawless and people do care about the maintenance of society's rules and laws. It could be argued High Visibility Policing (HVP) is a form of order maintenance policing. Grabosky (1999), Bratton (1999) and Brereton (1999) all discuss the much hailed results New York City claim to have achieved through a zero tolerance police approach. A 'zero tolerance' police approach using police already tasked to Lawson Street and the Railway would have a number of positive effects in terms of order maintenance and reducing crime. The use of 'zero tolerance' within 'the block' has been resisted because of a number of issues: These issues include: the risks faced by police in imposing 'zero tolerance' in such a volatile and anti-police community, lack of resources to safely and effectively carry out 'zero tolerance' and the political implications of imposing 'zero tolerance' in the predominately Aboriginal community. These issues aside, a 'zero tolerance' style (not necessarily hard-line zero tolerance but a common sense variation) of policing is needed to deter the influx of drug users seeking to purchase drugs off the street. The law of supply and demand states where there is a demand for a product suppliers will fill the market to meet the demand. By reducing demand ie. deterring addicts to come into 'the block' through 'zero tolerance' policing, the drug suppliers will not be able to operate profitably and should stop dealing. It is unlikely a displacement of dealers away from 'the block' will occur as there is no other area that offers such opportunity and favourable drug selling conditions as are found in 'the block'.

Community Based Policing

Lab (2000) in describing community based policing states, “community policing places the onus for community action and organizing on the street officer. It also seeks to target specific problems in the neighbourhoods . The underlying philosophy is to encourage interaction and co-operation between police officers and residents of the neighbourhoods they patrol to solve problems.” This idea could be used to establish a community body of residence in ‘the block’ who can take responsibility for the area they live in. The community body could take responsibility for removing rubbish, removing graffiti, liaising, lobbying and pressuring the Aboriginal Housing Corporation, Integral Energy and South Sydney Council into maintaining the areas buildings and facilities. The community body could also be responsible for co-ordinating drug, alcohol, domestic violence, harm minimisation and family development programs within ‘the block’. An off shoot of the establishment of a community body could possibly be the empowerment of residents living in ‘the block’

Rational Choice Theory

This theory examines an offenders reasoning and decision to commit a crime. For example, an offender may decide to commit a robbery near Redfern Railway Station because:

- The offender needs money or goods to barter to obtain heroin to support his habit,
- The offender regularly obtains heroin from the nearby ‘block’ and knows heroin is easily and readily available,
- The offender knows there is little chance of being immediately caught after running into ‘the block’,
- ‘The block’ has many people willing to receive stolen goods or barter goods for heroin,
- There is an abundance of soft and easy targets.

Routine Activity Theory

As explained by Felson and Clarke (1998, pp. 4), the routine activity theory assumes there must be three elements for an offence to take place: an offender, a victim or target and the absence of a guardian or form of protection from the crime. The theory assumes that the offender and victim are given and that guardian is the variable. For example, the absence of pedestrian traffic late in the evening at the Redfern Railway Station would make a victim more inviting target for an offender. The placement of police or CCTV at the Railway and along Lawson Street is a way of providing guardianship to the location. Another way would be to create a clearly defined 'corridor of safety' for commuters between the Railway and Sydney University. The 'corridor of safety' could be achieved through the use of markings, lighting, patrols and CCTV. This would have the effect of providing a 'guardian' for entire route between the Railway and Sydney University.

Crime Pattern Theory

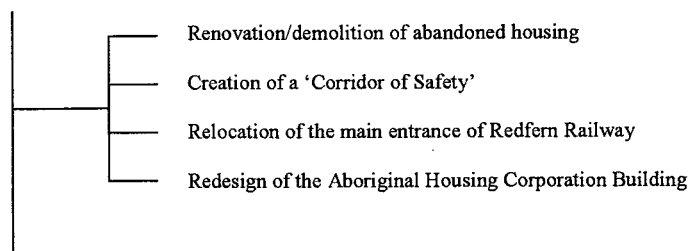
Crime pattern theory is similar to crime mapping in that it links times and locations to crimes. Crime pattern theory expands on this and identifies nodes, paths and edges that offenders will use when committing crimes. (Felson and Clarke, 1998, pp. 6-7). Examples of nodes are public transport terminals, shopping centres, pubs, schools, etc. Paths are the routes offenders use to and from home, work, school, etc. Edges are the boundaries between neighbourhoods, industrial areas, shopping strips, entertainment strips, etc. They are essentially places where people from different groups are likely to come together. Felson and Clarke (1998) describe how offences such as robbery and racial attacks often occur around the edges of these boundaries because offenders can safely retreat back into their own area. This is exactly the behaviour displayed by offenders committing offences on Lawson Street, particularly at the intersection of Eveleigh Street. This area is a boundary between people in 'the block' and commuters using Redfern Railway Station.

Opportunity Theory

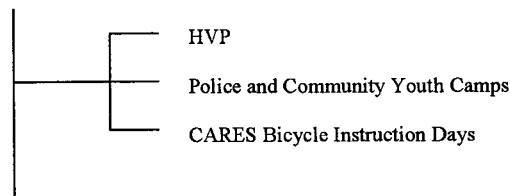
Felson and Clarke (1998) and Town (2002) argue that the opportunity to commit a crime is the single most important factor influencing whether a crime will or will not be committed. Felson and Clarke (1998, pp1) state, "To be sure, no single cause of crime is sufficient to guarantee its occurrence; yet opportunity above all others is necessary and therefore has as much or more claim to being a root cause". Reducing the opportunity for a crime can take many forms. Some examples are: legislation restricting ownership of guns can reduce the opportunity for homicide, staggering the closing time of nearby pubs can reduce fights between patrons of the different pubs or environmental design changes such as improved lighting. There are many examples of how the opportunity for crime can be reduced around Redfern Railway. Some examples include; improved lighting, better CCTV quality and coverage, improved police presence, removal of hiding places such as squats and abandoned buildings, etc.

STRATEGIES FOR SOLVING THE ROBBERY PROBLEM AT REDFERN RAILWAY

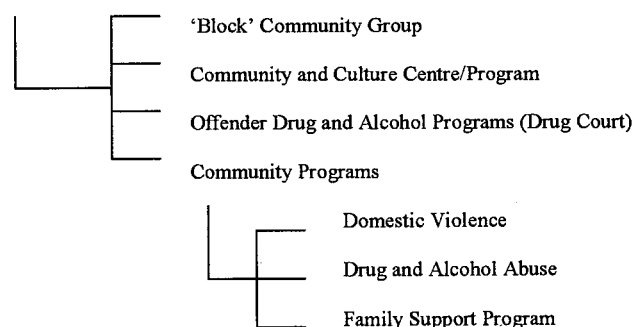
1. IMPROVED ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN



2. INTEGRATED POLICE APPROACH



3. INTEGRATED MULTI-AGENCY APPROACH



1. IMPROVED ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

The concept of improved environmental design to reduce crime stems from 'opportunity theory'. It involves changing the design of an area to make it safer by reducing the opportunity for crime to take place. The following environmental design changes would reduce the opportunity for crime around Redfern Railway:

i. Renovation/Demolition of Abandoned Terrace Houses and Associated Rubble

The demolition and/or renovation of the abandoned terrace houses has three effects. Firstly it removes areas where offenders hide after committing offences. Secondly, it reduces areas available

for selling and using drugs (a number of the abandoned terraces are used as shooting galleries). Lastly, it decreases the unkempt, nobody cares, lawless appearance of 'the block'. The overall result is a less appealing environment to commit crime. The Aboriginal Housing Corporation owns and is responsible for the housing in 'the block'. Police through the Crime Prevention Officer and the community body should lobby the Aboriginal Housing Corporation and South Sydney Council for fund to demolish or renovate the housing.

ii. Creation of a Corridor of Safety

The creation of a 'corridor of safety' between Redfern Railway and Sydney University would reduce the opportunity for offences to be committed on commuters between the two. The 'corridor of safety' would consist of the following features;

- A clearly marked pathway between Redfern Railway and Sydney University. The pathway would be clearly signposted and the footpath painted a bright or differentiating colour. The route would be cleared of overhanging trees and other obstructions making the pathway open and users of the path would be clearly visible to anyone passing by.
- Additional lighting that illuminates and defines the pathway ensuring it is well lit at all times. Installation of quality CCTV at appropriate points along the pathway.
- A commitment from the Redfern LAC, State Rail Transit Officers and Sydney University Security that the pathway would be the subject of regular patrols.
- An expansion of the current shuttle bus service provided by Sydney University Security to follow the route of the pathway, pick up passengers along the pathway and review the times the service is offered.

Again the overall result is an area that is unappealing to commit crime. Funding and responsibility for the pathway could be a joint State Rail/South Sydney Council/Sydney University/National

Union of Students/Roads and Traffic Authority venture. Additionally, the pathway could be viewed as an extension of the University and as such campus security employed to patrol the pathway

iii. Relocation of the Main Entrance of Redfern Railway Station

To coinciding with the 'corridor of safety' concept, the location and design of the main entrance to Redfern Railway Station should be considered. Simply moving the main entrance around the corner to Little Eveleigh Street may create new opportunities for crime. Ideally, the entrance and station concourse should be moved to the southern end of the platforms, well away from the boundary 'edge' of 'the block'. Such a design would incorporate an easterly entrance to Technology Park and a westerly entrance to the 'corridor of safety' and Sydney University. The cost of this proposal is prohibitive and would need specific government funding and possibly some commercial incentives such as the incorporation of retail outlets, commercial offices and residential property in the new design.

iv. Redesign of the Aboriginal Housing Building

In its simplest form the design change would be to remove the squats from the rear of the building, remove the burnt out awning and repaint the exterior. Once again, these changes create the effect of order and lawfulness while making it increasingly less appealing to commit crimes. Removing the awning (see picture 8) discourages drug affected and homeless people to loiter and sleep along the side of the Aboriginal Housing Corporation building. This would be especially effective at night, on very hot days and during inclement weather. Consideration should also be given to converting the disused rear area of the building into a community and cultural centre or similar. The Aboriginal Housing Corporation has responsibility for the building.

2. INTEGRATED POLICE APPROACH

An integrated police approach involves the various of sections of the LAC and regional resources to work together in a co-ordinated total quality approach to the problems around Redfern Railway Station. The key facilitator will be the Crime Prevention/Community Liaison Officer whose role it would be co-ordinate outside agencies such as the Aboriginal Housing Corporation, South Sydney Council, Sydney University Security, the Roads and Traffic Authority, Department of Community Services, community groups, etc. Other sections having a role to play in providing resources, innovative programs or a co-ordinated investigative approach will include; the Crime Management Unit (CMU), intelligence unit, Domestic Violence Liaison Officer (DVLO), Youth Liaison Officer (YLO), Intelligence Response Team (IRT), Bicycle Unit, Drug Unit, Robbery Unit, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers (ACLO), Transit Officers, PCYC and CAREs Officers. In addition to this co-ordinated approach the following proactive strategies can be put in place:

i. High Visibility Policing

High Visibility Policing (HVP) with an order maintenance (zero tolerance) approach to policing. based on intelligence lead taskings should be employed in and around the Railway Station and 'the block' HVP patrols would be undertaken using combinations of foot patrols, bicycle patrols and vehicle patrols in a co-ordinated approach using transit police, IRT and the bicycle unit.

Specifically, police tasked to undertake HVP would be required to adopt a proactive 'order maintenance' approach and ensure they are highly visible around the tasked areas. HVP taskings for each crew should be kept under four hours to ensure they remain, fresh, focused and motivated. The timing for the taskings should be based around predicted peak crime times. The main aim of these patrols is to create the impression that order is being maintained and lawlessness kept in check. Although HVP will impact mainly on minor offences such as rail offences, littering,

offensive language and other street offences the overall effect will be to reduce the opportunity for and reduce the occurrence of more serious crime such as robberies.

ii. Police and Community Youth Camps

Police and Community Youth Camps are camps that are run over 2-3 days every school holidays by the Youth Liaison Officer and PCYC. The camps are staffed and run by local police and offered free to the youth living in 'the block'. The camps have four main aims:

- To foster police and community relations in 'the block'
- To provide the youths with opportunities for learning new skills, improving their self confidence and self esteem
- To provide the youths with positive role models
- To reduce juvenile crime

One of the underlying causes of crime around Redfern Railway was the distrust and anti-police feelings towards police by the Aboriginal community residing in 'the block'. This and the following program aim to promote more co-operation, trust and understanding between police and the Aboriginal community.

iii. CARES Bicycle Instruction Days

Similar in concept to the youth camps. CARES bicycle instructors, the Youth Liaison Officer and the bicycle unit conduct bicycle riding instruction days twice every school term within 'the block' for children aged 10-14 years. Again the instruction days have a number of aims:

- To improve police-community relations

- To provide the children with opportunities for learning new skills, improving their self confidence and self esteem
- To provide the children with positive role models
- To reduce juvenile crime
- To teach the children residing in 'the block' about the road and bicycling rules and safety.
- Increases the police presence and perception of order
- Reduces the opportunity for crime to occur
- Disrupts the selling, use and purchase of drugs in 'the block' for the duration of the days program.

3. INTEGRATED MULTI-AGENCY APPROACH

The underlying causes of the problems in 'the block' and around Redfern Railway is not just a police matter. The multitude of social and domestic problems that contribute to the situation should be addressed by the relevant agencies. Strategies to be included in the multi-agency approach should include:

i. Establishment of a 'Block' Community Group

The community group would be made up of residence of 'the block' with the aim of taking responsibility for the area they live in. This would include removing rubbish, removing graffiti, maintaining parks and gardens, maintaining the murals and other community art work, liaising, lobbying and pressuring the Aboriginal Housing Corporation, Aboriginal Welfare, Integral Energy and South Sydney Council into maintaining the areas buildings and facilities and to assist in policing the area. The community body could also be responsible for co-ordinating drug, alcohol, domestic violence, harm minimisation and family development programs within 'the block'. If managed properly, an advantage of allowing the community to become more responsible for what

takes place in their community will be feelings of greater empowerment for residents living in 'the block'.

ii. Creation of a Community and Cultural Centre in 'The Block'.

To give greater recognition and self esteem to the Aboriginal community living in 'the block' consideration should be given to establishing a community and cultural centre. The aims of the centre would be to:

- Create a show case of the areas Aboriginal art and culture
- Raise the communities self esteem and pride in the area
- Promote the more positive aspects of the area
- Provide a base from which the following community programs could be run from

As discussed above, a community centre could be incorporated into a redesign of the Aboriginal Housing Building.

iii. Offender Drug and Alcohol Programs (Drug Court)

Establishment of mandatory drug and alcohol programs for offenders aimed at the long term reduction of drug dependence and associated criminal activity. These programs could include Drug Court programs, workshops and counselling and involve the Department of Corrective Services, Aboriginal welfare groups, DOC's and other drug counselling services.

iv. Community Programs.

Development of community based programs targeting such as drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, family support employment and job training that are co-ordinated through the community body using agencies such as DEET, TAFE, NSW Police, DOCs, Aboriginal welfare groups,

Missionbeat, Centrelink, and other drug and family support services. The aim of these programs is to reduce the long term incidence of substance abuse, domestic violence and family breakdown with a resultant reduction in the overall level of crime in and around 'the block'.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The crime problem originally identified was the high incidence of robberies occurring around the Redfern Railway Station. A simplistic evaluation of the program would be to look at the statistical data for robberies. A major decrease in robberies would mean the program was successful.

Anything other than a major decrease, to most onlookers, would mean the program failed. This simplistic view fails to take into account a number of factors. Firstly, some of the strategies implemented in the program (such as HVP) will have an immediate effect. Other strategies (such as the drug and alcohol programs) will very much be over the longer term. Ideally, the program should be evaluated monthly, three monthly and yearly on a strategy by strategy basis.

Consideration should be given as to whether at the time of the evaluation, the program had been fully implemented or if only some of the strategies were in place.

Secondly, any evaluation should ensure that strategies used in the program were responsible for the reduction in robberies. A number of other factors such as seasonal changes, a heroin drought, an increased/decreased reporting of robbery incidents, changes to how robberies are recorded in the police database, etc would all influence that robbery rate regardless of what proactive/crime reduction measures were put in place.

An evaluation of the program should include both a process evaluation where the way in which the program was implemented is evaluated and also an impact evaluation, ie. Was the program fully implemented as planned? (O'Connor. 2003, pp. 40)

An impact evaluation assesses how well the program solved the problem, ie. Did the program have any impact in reducing the robberies at Redfern Railway Station? An impact evaluation report may include the following:

- Analysis of reported crime figures. This could include a comparison of the crime figures from month to month and over the same period for previous years.
- Analysis of police proactively including: events, intell reports, arrests and other interventions.
- Drug reports detailing availability, supply, use and detection.
- Before and after surveys of commuters and residence.

CONCLUSION

Crime Reduction at first glance appears to be simply applied common sense. Without doubt, in hind-sight this is how it appears. It is important to realise, however, a number of processes need to be undertaken to ensure the crime reduction solution is the correct solution for the problem. Briefly these processes include:

1. Clearly define the problem
2. Identify the underlying causes and not just the symptoms
3. Develop strategies that target the underlying causes of the problem and not just the symptoms. Look for ways in which the opportunity for crime can be reduced.
4. Implement, evaluate and modify the strategies

In the case of Redfern Railway Station, robbery offences were only the tip of the iceberg. The area is a 'hot-spot' of various types of crime brought about by opportunities the physical and social environment created. It is likely that, in implementing the strategies aimed at reducing robberies most other types of crime in the area will also fall. Without a long term commitment to change the social as well as the physical aspects of 'the block' the area will continue to suffer high levels of crime.

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