

RECORD OF MEETING

Monaro Local Area Command Community Safety Precinct Committee Meeting, Monaro Crime Management Unit, Morisset Street, Queanbeyan.

Attendance List		
Name	Representing	Present/Apology
Superintendent Gary Merryweather	Commander, Monaro Local Area Command	Present
Detective Inspector Shane Box	Crime Manager, Monaro	Present
Mr. Daryl Hagger	Cooma - Monaro Shire Council	
Mr. Vin Good	Mayor Cooma - Monaro Shire Council	
Mr. Ian Frost Mr. Paul Greer	Representative of School Education	
Mr. Bob Frost	Snowy River Shire Council	
Mr. Steve Whan	State Member of Parliament	Apology
Mz Philippa Moss	Representative of Safer Communities and Neighbourhood Committee/ QCC	Apology
Mr. Bob Stewart	Member for Bombala	
Mr. John Vucic	Representative for Cooma- Monaro Shire Council	Present
Mr. Dugal Mitchell	Representative of Southern area Chamber of Commerce and Cooma Unlimited.	
Mr. Allen Hogan	Representative of Department of Housing	Present
Mr. David Rawlings	Bombala Council	
Senior Constable Adam Sutton	Liquor Accord Queanbeyan	Present
Sergeant Chris Putt (for Senior Constable Naomi Nemecc)	Community Drug and Alcohol Action Team Queanbeyan/ Monaro Crime Prevention Officer.	Present
Mr. Tim Overall	Mayor Queanbeyan City Council	Present
Mr. Chris Gibson	Representative of Queanbeyan Business Council	
Mr. John Carl		Apology
Mr. Robert Sailer	Representative of Bungendore Chamber of Commerce	
Mr. Jim Maclachlan	Member for Palerang Council	
Mr. Les Hart		

Community Safety Precinct Committee (CSPC)
6th May, 2009

Monaro LAC CSPC Meeting Agenda: 6th May, 2009

Agenda

Time: 10 am

Venue: Monaro Crime Management Unit

1. Welcome
2. Introductions & apologies
3. Crime review
 - Crime trends & Hotspots
 - Police visibility and deployment in the LAC
4. Previous meeting Actions
 - Philippa Moss to report on progress with council reporting and fixing malicious damage within Queanbeyan area.
 - Any questions in relation to information sheet sent out by Senior Constable Naomi Nemece on how/when to report incidents to Police?
 - Sergeant Chris Putt report on Cooma general duties taskings of the Skate Park, Cooma.
 - Mr Vin Good to report back on progress with Alcohol Free Zones at Skate Park, Cooma.
 - Senior Constable Adam Sutton report on criteria required for a POPE under the new legislation, in response to Mr Bob Frosts question.
5. General business
 - Issues
6. Next meeting
 - 5th August, 2009, Cooma Shire Council

Minutes

The meeting opened at 10.15am

Welcome

Superintendent Gary Merryweather, Monaro Local Area Commander.

Apologies

Apologies as per attendance sheet.

Previous minutes

Superintendent Gary Merryweather spoke briefly about the content of previous minutes.

Action: Previous minutes accepted.

Crime Review

Detective Inspector Shane Box

Crime is tracking down in most categories.

Areas of concern relate to domestic violence assaults – 50% are alcohol related.

In response police have increased their presence at licensed premises; and victim support for domestic violence incidents continues, utilizing other agencies where appropriate.

Senior Constable Adam Sutton spoke of ANZAC day operation,

Traditionally ANZAC day celebrations bring about a spike in antisocial behavior. This year most of the local pubs closed early – voluntarily – most by 10pm. The Queanbeyan Bowling Club did hold Two up games in the evening but this was only available to members; and the Club was not accepting new members that evening.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented that there was some very good work done by police in response to licensed premises. Cooma was quiet on ANZAC day.

Mr John Vucic agreed that ANZAC day appeared to present little in the way of problems.

Detective Inspector Shane Box:

Break, Enter, and Steal (Dwelling) incidents are tracking down. There were 44 in November compared to 22 in April. Of the 22, 16 were in Queanbeyan, four were in Jindabyne.

Break, Enter, and Steal (Non-Dwelling) incidents were also down. There were 20 in October compared to 8 in April. Of these a majority were schools within Queanbeyan. There were two incidents at Cooma.

Fraud is also tracking down. Again most incidents occurred in Queanbeyan followed by Cooma. Fail to pay for fuel incidents had significantly contributed to these incidents.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented that police continued to work with Service Station operators, to encourage them to use 'pay before you pump' initiative.

Detective Inspector Shane Box:

Malicious damage incidents are also tracking down. There were 76 in April, over half of these occurred in Queanbeyan. The ski tube at Bullocks Flat experienced significant Graffiti damage, in excess of \$30,000 worth. There were some instances in Cooma in the Centennial Park and CBD area.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather asked Mr Allan Hogan, Do Housing get much damage?

Mr Allen Hogan commented, we get do get incidents of damage but it is predominantly minor damage, such as graffiti and matters associated to other issues such as Domestic Violence.

Detective Inspector Shane Box:

There were no Robbery incidents in the month of April.

Stolen from Motor Vehicle incidents were occurring mainly in the Queanbeyan area. Many of these incidents involved the theft of number plates, were occurring mid week and a significant number occurred within the Morisset Street Car park. Police have increased patrols, and strategies such as 'Anti theft screws' have been championed by the Council, RTA, and police.

Stealings were also down and occurring mainly in the Queanbeyan area followed by Cooma.

Stolen Motor Vehicles are also tracking down, with about Eight incidents per month. A majority of which are in Queanbeyan. There are also incidents of cars stolen within the ACT being recovered in Queanbeyan and vice versa.

Mr Tim Overell asked: Are number plates being stolen for a particular reason?

Detective Inspector Shane Box commented, There have been some incidents of stolen plates being used in the commission of Fail to pay for fuel offences.

Superintendent Garry Merryweather commented, Some of these stolen plates may be used by thieves in further offences in the A.C.T.

General business

Mr John Vucic commented,

- It appears that there has been an increase in vandalism outside of school hours. We suspect that some groups from A.C.T / Queanbeyan area may be involved. The vandalism generally relates to incidents within residential streets where bins and flower beds etc are damaged. On occasions damage of this nature is inflicted upon entire streets. We have been advised that when these incidents are reported to the police sometimes the police will come out, sometimes they do not.
- Use of unregistered trail bikes and the damage that this causes is of concern.
- Some residents have raised concerns with illegal shooting (and trespassing) by shooters, of pigs and other animals, especially in the Nimmitable area.
- There is excessive graffiti at the Skate Park, Cooma. Some elderly residents have also complained of verbal abuse directed towards them from youth using the park.
- Schools – BES, appears to have been three in last month at St Pats.
- At present Council are suffering huge expense for Council signs / street furniture (damaged).
- Some residents have suggested that they do not report crime to the police because the response (police) is sometimes slow.

Detective Inspector Shane Box:

- Schools are a statewide focus at the moment. Police are conducting extra patrols of all schools. Schools need to update their security, with consideration to CCTV/Lighting etc.
- Trail bikes – Nil use of police trail bikes at present.
- Graffiti skate park – Other initiatives such as graffiti walls/artwork have been implemented in the past with good results; a potential consideration. (Mr ALLEN agreed that there had been a lot of research done in the past regarding such initiatives with good results). Queanbeyan Council utilise a 'rapid response' to graffiti removal which is effective in combating a continuation of it.
- Verbal abuse of elderly. I cannot say that there have been reports of this to the police, the general conversation of youths between themselves may have the potential to concern the elderly. It is not necessary abuse directed at them though.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- There have been complaints made by elderly community members that there is direct intimidation and verbal abuse. Centennial Park is a problem location.
- KFC is 24 hours and this also appears to encourage anti social behavior.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented,

- McDonalds is 24 hours. Inspector Rooney is tasked to consult with Council re: restaurants etc complying with conditions and the like.

- We will take all the concerns you have raised on board. We encourage people to contact us to report their concerns.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- I've had about four phone calls regarding the old church at Michelago, regarding witchcraft etc, especially on the full moon.

Senior Constable Sutton commented,

- The Church is on the internet. (Senior Constable) Charles Gannon (stationed at Michelago) is targeting that premises. He has moved people on and is investigating offences/trespass. I think the Church is heritage listed.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented,

- We can consult Charles regarding your concerns, he will continue to chase the activity up.

Mr Tim Overall commented,

- There have been a number of incidents involving the BMX park at Sassafras Crescent, mainly rock throwing. Council is resolved to relocate the Park. It will be moved to the other side of Southbar Road, probably in six to twelve months time; to the old tip site. Council have repaired fencing that had been damaged.

Detective Inspector Shane Box:

- Police visibility, general duties police are tasked to conduct proactive patrols within Queanbeyan, to ensure high visibility. Patrols of Riverside plaza conducted regularly also.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented,

Queanbeyan performed well in terms of the BOSCAR (report), with lower crime rates.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- Drugs are also a concern of Cooma at the moment.

Detective Inspector Shane Box, commented

- Police have conducted a lengthy drug operation at Cooma.
- There were recently two search warrants and three people arrested in relation to supply. The quality of the drugs were poor. There has also been some very good drug work at Jindabyne.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- Centennial Park is a problem for us. Drug users are leaving Needles behind. Council clean it up but it continued to present a problem.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented,

- We have a dedicated Drug unit operating and working hard to address drug matters throughout the Command.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- They (police/drug unit) have the full support of Council.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented,

- In regard to pig shooting and the like, it needs to be reported to the police for us to act upon it.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- There were two incidents at Dalgety recently.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented,

- Police attended an incident of this nature where the farmer's vehicle was shot at. Police responded by initiating a crime scene and investigating the matter.

Detective Inspector Shane Box commented,

- We have our Rural Crime Detectives also looking at these incidents.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented,

- In terms of staffing at Cooma Police station, it is not 24 hours but a response is available. We have to respond (roster staff) with consideration to crime trends/incidents. At the moment Cooma averages 0.3 assaults per week and 0.1 Break and Enters.
- A lot of the issues at Cooma are social issues.
- The CPO can do risk assessments of the school. Schools need things in place such as fences and other security arrangements to assist.
- At the same time it is important that we get our police out there doing foot patrols.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- Council understands that police resources have been impacted by homicide(s) in the Command.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented,

- Those investigations do drain resources and can impact proactivity of the police. Unfortunately not all areas can have 24 hour police stations, especially in the small community/townships.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- Council will encourage community members to report matters to the police.
- A group has been formed in Crime Prevention to assist police, this group includes a number of concerned residents. At the moment there is obviously a problem with communication, residents not reporting matters to the police.
- We are also considering alcohol free zones etc.

Mr Allen Hogan commented,

- If there is a problem with any of our tenants let us know, we may be able to do something about it.
- In Nowra Housing and Police have a combined approach and this is producing results.
- Housing have a number of Houses in Cooma, Bombala, and some of the smaller townships.

Detective Inspector Shane Box commented,

- There is a good relationship here with Queanbeyan Housing.

Mr Allen Hogan commented,

- There are a number of useful strategies that can be implemented.
- For example, one lady (tenant) came up three times, no offences, but it gave Housing means to be proactive and engage the tenant.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented,

- We are experiencing some issues at Cooma regarding Mental health. The area does not have sufficient facilities; and the response falls back upon police.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- Agreed. There is little support in Mental Health. Funding has been significantly cut in this regard which has impacted programs and the like.

Mr Allen Hogan commented,

- Housing too struggle to deal with Mental Health Services. The staff (at Mental Health) are good but their resources are lacking.

Senior Constable Sutton (in response to action from previous meeting),

Q. Is POPE required for entertainment in a licensed premises?

A. No. Since 26 October 2007 the use of POPE under the Local Government Act 1993 was transferred to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 falling under a Development application. Existing POPEs remain in force until 26 October 2009.

Q. *What constitutes 'entertainment' in regard to development consent for a licensed premises?*

A. Entertainment that changes the primary purpose of the premises (to sell food and drinks) requires development consent. Recorded music, video, television provided for the enjoyment of customers, or other incidental entertainment including live music that does not have character of its own does not require a development application. Problems arise where Restaurants go beyond the primary purpose.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- We have a full time bloke to deal with that.

Senior Constable Sutton commented,

- The Nimmitable pub was breached recently.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- Alcohol free zones:
- A survey was conducted and there was a huge response supporting the establishment of alcohol free zones (AFZ).
- AFZ will be established at Soho, Dawson, and Bombala Streets between Commissioner and Massie streets; Commissioner and Massie streets between Soho Street and Comma Creek; Sharp Street between Soho and Hilton Streets; The four council car parks accessed from Commissioner Street, and the Council car park accessed from Massie Street. The operation of the zone will be 24 hours a day, Seven days per week.
- AFZ will place restrictions at Centennial Park and Norris Park between the hours of 9pm and 6am Seven days per week.
- AFZ will place restrictions at the Cooma Skate Park (including the car park behind it) 24 hours a day, Seven days per week.
- Council will meet on Monday (11 May 2009) regarding this.
- Appropriate signage will be placed upon the implementation of the AFZs.

Senior Constable Sutton commented,

- I did to do a report supporting the AFZs.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- No one was opposed to the AFZs.

Sergeant Putt commented,

- In response to concerns regarding the Skate Park, Cooma Police have been conducting proactive patrols of the Park. This is being documented upon our system (police computer records).

Mr John Vucic commented,

- There are a number of socio economic factors that will no doubt impact us in the near future. With in excess of 7% unemployment, trending towards 10%, this will impact Crime. Council expect the trend to impact the Community. There are 10, 000 in the shire with 8, 000 in the township itself. We are currently looking at CCTV (in the CBD/Streets). This will be raised at the Committee meeting. The cost of this would be approximately \$500, 000 and does not include the cost of manning it. Resources would be required. Police do not want to man it.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented,

- CCTV is one preventative measure. Sometimes it may also be effective to utilize fake CCTV, like some speed cameras.
- CPO, Senior Constable Nemeč, can assist with Risk Assessments if required.

Mr John Vucic commented,

- Aboriginal issues: Not a lot of issues at the moment. (They are there but not significant).

Mr Allen Hogan commented,

- Housing has been given money (as per the Government stimulus package) to improve properties etc. This is statewide. Some properties may be vacant, subject of damage, undergoing improvement etc.

Superintendent Gary Merryweather commented,

- Thank you all for your time today.
- Please advise us if you identify any particular risks or issues before the next meeting.
- Next meeting to be held at Cooma on 5 August (2009).

Meeting closed 11.10am