

NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

23 January 2009

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Crime Situation

Report by the Chief Constable

SUMMARY

The report informs Members of notable crimes, incidents, initiatives and convictions since the last report.

BACKGROUND

The following is a brief summary of operational activity, illustrating the diverse and sometimes serious nature of crime and incidents throughout the Force.

RECOMMENDATION

The Board is invited to note the current position.

**I Latimer
Chief Constable
15 January 2009**

NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

AREA COMMAND: Shetland

PERIOD: From: 1 November 2008 To: 31 December 2008

1. REDUCING CRIME

Class 1 – 4 crime, for the year commencing 1 April, is showing an increase of 24%, or 104 crimes overall. However, this increase is largely attributable to a crime spree instigated by a 13-year-old youth who is now, as a result of high level partnership co-operation, in secure accommodation on the mainland. Class 1 crime (crimes of violence) shows a small increase from 12 to 13. This needs to be viewed in the context of a significant decrease in this class last year. Class 5 crime (miscellaneous crime – including drugs) has increased from 142 to 174 compared to the corresponding period last year. This demonstrates an increase in pro-activity. Class 2 crime (crimes of indecency) are showing a small increase on the same period last year. Class 4 crime (vandalism) has increased by 39%, or by 61 crimes, on the same period last year. However, as already stated this increase is almost entirely attributable to the youth mentioned above and should be viewed in the context of longer term decreases in this class. The long term trend in this type of offence remains downward. Our detection rate for class 1 – 5 crime stands at 70.4%. We are confident that targeted enquires into a recent spate of vandalism and dishonesties will result in a number of detections.

The Command Area continues to promote foot patrol as an effective medium to both reduce the incidence and fear of crime. This has proved to be highly effective and popular, with members of the public and local businesses commenting favourably.

2. TACKLING SERIOUS CRIME

Reported violent crime has increased from 12 – 13 over the course of the current year as compared with the same period last year. Although a very slight increase, the numbers are remarkably low and last year saw a dramatic reduction in reports of this class of crime. Shetland remains one of the safest areas in the country. The detection rate for this class of crime is 100%.

Following the discovery of 18 dead seal pups on a remote island near Whalsay, enquiry was carried out led by our Wildlife Liaison Officer (WLO). It was clear the deaths were not by natural cause. Two men have since been charged and await appearance at Lerwick Sheriff Court.

A number of thefts have been reported from residential premises in Lerwick. Enquiries into these crimes have led to the arrest of a 21 year old man who is currently on remand in prison awaiting sentence. These kinds of crime are extremely unusual in Shetland and we are stepping up anti-crime patrols, both high-visibility and plain clothed to deter, detect and bring reassurance to our community.

Controlled drugs with a street value of £5200.00 were seized during the review period. This includes intelligence led operations which resulted in the recovery of £2500.00 worth of cannabis resin from a house in Voe. A separate operation resulted in the recovery of 1155 Valium tablets from a house in Lerwick.

Following the death of a 23 year old man, whose death was contributed to by controlled drugs, a full police investigation was carried out. Two women have been charged with being concerned in the supply of controlled drugs.

3. SAFER ROADS

During the review period the Road Traffic collisions were as follows (2007 figures in brackets) :

Fatal – 0	(3)
Serious – 0	(0)
Slight – 4	(16)
Non Injury – 52	(36)
No. of Persons Charged with Drink / Drug Driving	
Drink Driving – 5	(9)
Drug Driving – 3	(0)

During 2008, seven persons were arrested for Drug Driving. Five out of the seven failed the Field Impairment Test and were reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

The drug driving figures represent an increase on last year. Many of the offenders are brought to Police attention by the Shetland public who continue to report those who break the laws of the road.

Educational and enforcement campaigns were carried out during the review period including the Festive Drink Driving Campaign.

We continue to enforce legislation and have made use of the local media to encourage and advise road users of ongoing issues. We are also working closely with our partners in the Shetland Islands Council, to identify areas for improvement.

4. SAFER COMMUNITIES

We continue to work with our partners to ensure speedy and efficient Criminal Justice processes. Against the national target of 80% of police reports submitted to the Procurator Fiscal within 28 days of caution and charge, Shetland Command Area has achieved 93.25% within 28 days. Similarly, against the target of 80% of police reports to the Children's Reporter within 14 days of caution and charge, this Command Area has achieved 94.9% within 14 days.

We have a detection rate of 100% for non-sexual crimes against the person in the current period.

We have detected 14 out of the 16 crimes of indecency reported. This represents a detection rate of 87.5%. Positive lines of enquiry are being undertaken on the undetected crimes.

Our detection rate for crimes of dishonesty has risen from 48.4% to 52.5% compared to the same period last year.

The overall percentage of crimes of vandalism cleared up was 66.9%, an increase from 63.7% on the same period last year.

The provision of a CCTV system for Lerwick town centre continues to make progress, albeit slowly. Despite planning approval having been granted almost a year ago, negotiations are ongoing with the planning authorities and Historic Scotland to find acceptable solutions to concerns around the siting of some of the cameras. The delays which this project has suffered are disappointing. However, once operational the system will provide real opportunities to enhance public safety and reassurance.

5. MAINTAINING PUBLIC ORDER

No new 'racially aggravated' crime was reported during the review period. Only one such crime has been reported since the beginning of April. This involved an arrested man shouting racist abuse at the arresting officer who was Welsh. This represents approximately 0.04 racist incidents per 1,000 population well below the target of 0.4 incidents per 1,000 population.

No complaints against the police are recorded in Shetland for the review period.

Planning is now underway for the 2009 Up-Helly-Aa festivals. The largest, in Lerwick, will take place on Tuesday 27 January. Longer term we have begun scoping the police response to two major events. The 'Hamefairin' will take place in 2010 and in 2011 the Cutty Sark Tall Ships Race will, again, include Shetland as a port of call.

NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

AREA COMMAND: Orkney

PERIOD: From: 1 November 2008 To: 31 December 2008

1. REDUCING CRIME

As was previously reported, the rise in reported class 1-5 crimes continues, up from 344 for the same period last reporting year to 486 for this year. This rise is largely made up by increases in Class 3 up from 145 to 173 and Class 4 up from 136 to 214 (Dishonesty and Vandalism). While disappointing, this percentage increase results from small base line figures. Our detection rate over this period is slightly down at 60.3%, with Class 3 crimes having a detection rate of 52.6% and Class 4 standing at 49.1%. Orkney continues to enjoy very low levels of reported crime and is one of the safest places to live and work in the United Kingdom.

During this period we have exceeded the national targets set for the submission of police reports to both the Children's Reporter (14 calendar days) and the Procurator Fiscal (28 calendar days).

2. TACKLING SERIOUS CRIME

In my previous report I noted the increase in the incidence of serious assault. While the numbers continue to remain low, I have to report a small increase in this number up from 9 and now standing at 11. This compares with 3 reported for the same period last year. It should be noted that the detection rate of 100% remains

Recently a 18 year old male appeared at Kirkwall Sheriff Court on various charges of Assault, Breach of the Peace, Vandalism, Resisting arrest and breach of bail. He was sentenced to a total of 12 months imprisonment. A 54 year old male plead guilty to assaulting an officer of the court engaged in delivering court papers. This male received a fine of £5000, reduced to £4000 for an early guilty plea.

The targeting of drug supply and use remains a priority within the Area Command and while street seizures remain low, intelligence gathering continues.

3. SAFER ROADS

Safer Roads continue to be a high priority for the area command, though it is pleasing to note that drivers appear to be taking Police advice, with 102 negative breath tests being carried out over the festive period. Only 2 positive tests were obtained over the period. Extra patrols will continue to be tasked over the next period, in particular looking to the fitness of vehicles for the winter e.g. tyres and lights.

There were 45 road collisions recorded over this period, 38 non injury, 6 slight injury and 1 serious injury. This increase in numbers can be accounted for by the icy road conditions that have been experienced recently.

Highlighted by a recent storm was the closure of the Churchill Barriers, in particular Barrier Number 2. This resulted in vehicles being damaged and the Armco Barrier being washed away. A review of the protocol between the Orkney Islands Council and Northern Constabulary was carried out and minor changes were made to the operation of the protocol. Further meetings are to be held with a view to achieving a permanent solution.

4. SAFER COMMUNITIES

Increased patrols of the housing areas of Kirkwall and Stromness have been a success, with a reduction in the incidences of anti-social behaviour in these areas. The intention is to continue to target these areas. With the recent introduction of a new shift system I look forward to increasing our visibility across all our communities.

We continue, along with our partners, to make best use of the Anti Social Behaviour policies, with our partners in the social housing sector continuing to use ASBO (anti-social behaviour orders) and ABC (acceptable behaviour contacts) along with extra visible patrols and enforcement of all relevant legislation to target this problem.

5. MAINTAINING PUBLIC ORDER

Once again there were no reported racist incidents during the period.

There have been a number of public events, all of which passed without any incident of note i.e. Halloween, Bonfire night, St Andrew's Day Street Party and Christmas and New Years Day Ba.

Looking forward, the dark nights and winter weather continue to provide challenges to policing. January and February in particular providing the most challenging weather. Throughout this period we will continue to ensure that one of our priorities is public safety.

NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

AREA COMMAND: Caithness, Sutherland & Easter Ross

PERIOD: From: 1 November 2008 To: 31 December 2008

1. REDUCING CRIME

In the period to 31st December 2008, we have continued our reduction in reported crime by some 13.8%, equivalent to some 248 crimes. Our detection rate for class 1-5 crimes is 53.7%. The continued focus on pro-activity in deterring & detecting crimes of dishonesty & vandalism over recent months is beginning to pay dividends, with a reduction in vandalism of 163 crimes and 45 crimes of dishonesty.

Operation Jacobite, our monthly anti social behaviour operation, has allowed us to actively target some of our resident criminals through intelligence. It has increased uniform visibility, which has seen a slight decrease in vandalism and increase in alcohol seized from underage youths, a particular problem in the area command. We have also run other operations specifically targeting the supply of drugs in Caithness, Sutherland & Easter Ross.

An analysis of vandalisms in Wick and Thurso has given a problem profile report that allows Sergeants to specifically task foot and mobile patrols to areas of high incidence of criminal damage. Coupled to this report was the launch of Highland Crimestoppers in Caithness, where a vast number of households had a leaflet drop highlighting the benefits of using Crimestoppers. This has already seen an increase in information from the public through this facility.

2. TACKLING SERIOUS CRIME

A reduction of violent crimes from 64 reported crimes to 57 is pleasing as we continue to focus on those who perpetrate these crimes of violence.

Our CCTV facilities in Thurso, Wick and Tain are all being upgraded in order to improve the quality of this essential service.

Early December saw an attempted murder committed within Mansefield Estate, Tain where a 20 year old male allegedly attempted to shoot another with an air rifle. He awaits trial.

Christmas Eve saw a 48 year old male apprehended for allegedly threatening to shoot himself with a shotgun and discharging it in close proximity to the A9 carriageway. Following an armed Police response, the male was apprehended. He remains in custody, awaiting trial.

Edwin Brown from Badnaban, Lochinver was convicted of the culpable homicide of his wife of fifty years. He was sentenced to seven years imprisonment at the High Court.

Our activity on tackling the drugs issue is taking effect – of the 33 drugs stop searches conducted, 23 were positive for an array of drugs including cocaine, heroin, ecstasy, amphetamine and cannabis. Increased intelligence has allowed our pro-active policing to target drug dealers at the right time and has disrupted their activity.

3. SAFER ROADS

December unfortunately saw the loss of three lives in road collisions. A 36 year old female tragically lost her life after her vehicle left the A99 roadway. A 70 year old man lost his life after leaving the road and colliding with a dyke on the single track road at Rovie, Rogart and a 17 year old male passenger tragically lost his life after the car in which he travelled lost control on the A882 near Bilbster.

Mid December saw a young male en route to Orkney being stopped driving his car on the A9 at Thurso whilst under the influence of controlled drugs. He was also in possession of controlled drugs.

There were also 11 drunk drivers detected in the Area Command, a decrease of five since the last period. One driver in Wick was allegedly five times over the legal limit.

4. SAFER COMMUNITIES

Early December saw the appointment of Constable Angie Grant-Omotosho as the Community Safety Officer for Sutherland & Easter Ross. Angie has a wealth of operational experience and has already been making contact with our key partners and community representatives.

2009 will see our mobile Police Station visiting some of our remote communities, where the Community Safety Officers will be on hand to distribute leaflets on crime prevention and give advice. It is hoped to take this forward in partnership with the Highland Council Service Point staff.

Consultation on the local drinking bylaw for Wick and Thurso has been completed with the papers being submitted to the Scottish Government for final approval. Its launch will be co-ordinated with a Caithness Pub Watch Scheme for which we have secured funding through the Safer Streets Initiative.

Through our partnership with the North Highland College (NHC), Thurso, an initiative was launched to target the crime of poaching in our communities. Seminars at NHC & Reay Forest Estate, Kylestrome saw a total of 150 ghillies, stalkers & gamekeepers from within the Area Command given an input on poaching law, criminal investigation and the importance of intelligence in modern policing techniques. We are now building

our intelligence that will allow us to facilitate operations to target known poachers.

5. MAINTAINING PUBLIC ORDER

Hogmanay Street Parties in Tain, Dornoch, Wick & Thurso were all policed with high visibility patrols, which no doubt led to the low number of incidents and enabled participants enjoy the events safely.

On 13th December 2008, Local Councillors Alasdair Rhind, Deirdre MacKay, Jim MacGillivray and Richard Durham accompanied us on Operation Jacobite to see first hand the many challenges we face in policing a modern society. They joined Officers on foot & mobile patrol throughout Tain. They observed alcohol being seized from underage youths, licensed premises checks, and drugs stop/searches. Additionally, they got first hand experience of the Dog Section and Road Policing Unit, being able to accompany these specialist Officers on patrol. Early 2009 will see a similar operation in Caithness to demonstrate the ability of ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition).

NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

AREA COMMAND: Ross & Cromarty and Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh

PERIOD: From: 1 November 2008 To: 31 December 2008

1. REDUCING CRIME

The Ross & Cromarty Area Command detection rate for crimes class 1 – 5 stands at 63.5%.

The Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh Area Command detection rate for crimes class 1 – 5 stands at 60.8%

Central Division detection rate for crimes class 1 – 5 stands at 64.6% against a Force average of 62.5% at the end of December 2008.

Crimes of violence and vandalism show a downward trend. Crimes of dishonesty have seen a slight increase which may be linked to the current economic climate.

2. TACKLING SERIOUS CRIME

Ross & Cromarty

07/10/08 – Alness: Male arrested for Domestic Assault and Breach of the Peace after an argument ensued with partner and he allegedly attempted to stab victim with sword. Appeared from custody.

Enquiries continuing into the drug cultivation factories at Conon Bridge and Letterfinlay which have resulted in positive identification of an individual associated with these activities.

Enquiry into theft of diesel and other OLPs [Opening Lockfast Place] in Easter Ross and Dingwall areas which resulted in apprehension of suspect.

Death – Industrial Accident – Oil Rig Invergordon: A male had fallen from a Rig berthed at Invergordon harbour. A joint Police / Health & Safety enquiry was implemented.

Serious Assault: On 15th December 2008, a male person sustained a fracture to his left elbow after being assaulted by a 44 year old male who struck him with a metal bar. Accused appeared from custody following the incident.

Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh

Attempted Murder: On 15th November 2008, a male was arrested for Attempted Murder following a series of repeated and sustained assaults on a female. Injuries sustained

included extensive bruising and lacerations to entire body. Accused appeared from custody.

3. SAFER ROADS

Ross & Cromarty

Proactive road policing continues to be a main priority in this area, with 404 road traffic offences being detected.

2 fatal RTC's occurred in the review period:

- 06/11/08 Fatal RTC at A9 Coulnagower. Deceased – 59 year old male
- 04/01/09 Fatal RTC at A832 Tore/Muir of Ord Road - deceased 33 year old male

Road Collisions: 181 - this represents a 17.8% reduction on the same period the previous year.

Road Collisions (killed and seriously injured): 9 - this represents a 17.2% reduction on the same period the previous year.

Drink Drivers detected: 22 - this represents a 21.5% reduction on the same period the previous year.

Drug Drivers detected: 1 - this represents an 87.5% reduction on the same period the previous year.

Drink/Drug Drivers at RTC's: 8 - this is an increase of 1 on the same period the previous year.

In addition, 72 individuals were detected in relation to speeding offences and 18 participated in the Vehicle Defect Rectification scheme, which offers driver to repair defects on their vehicle within a set time period thereby avoiding prosecution.

Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh

During the period 1st November – 31st December, there were four serious injury road accidents and 9 slight injury road accidents. There was one fatal road accident recorded. This occurred at Mallaig Pier and involved an 81 year old male pedestrian being knocked over by a vehicle and sustaining a head injury.

Between 15th December and 4th January 2009, the Early Bird Initiative was run in Fort William between 0530 hours and 0930 hours on a daily basis. This coincided with the festive drink / driving campaign and involved 22 officers deployed in the checks over the 3 week period. The response from the public was very positive, and the results included 1 positive breath test, 16 negative breath tests and 13 miscellaneous traffic offences reported.

On 10th December 2008 a major incident was declared in Lochaber following the leakage of chemicals from a large goods vehicle being driven on the A830 public road in Corpach. As a result the road was closed overnight causing disruption throughout the area. Multi-agency major incident plans were implemented in order to ensure that

risks were minimised and managed in the correct manner. No persons were injured and police enquiries are ongoing. A report on the circumstances will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

4. SAFER COMMUNITIES

Ross & Cromarty

Bluelight discos - Youth Diversion Events: The Blue light events for Central Division took place on Friday, 26th September 2008 & Friday, 21/11/08, at the Spa Pavillion, Strathpeffer, involving secondary aged pupils from Ullapool, Gairloch, Fortrose and Dingwall Academy. These were successful events. Next event March 2009. Bluelight was placed in the Highland Council Quality Awards Scheme and was successful in being awarded winners in the category for Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

Festive “Drinking - Be Sensible” Campaign: In partnership with the 4 Divisional Drugs and Alcohol Forums/Action teams – 20,000 beer mats with informative sensible / safety drinking message received have been distributed to licensed premises.

Life skills through sport – Open Goals Project - youth Initiative: In partnership with Ross County Football Club and other partners by bringing together 6-8 youths aged 12-14 who are on the fringes of education and general social skills to a twice weekly 1.5 hr programme. This will encourage and train them in developing confidence, self esteem and other life skills.

Safe-Ross-shire: Awaiting newly appointed co-ordinator for Safe Inverness project. Number of local businesses were revisited and 10 signed up for 3 month free trial.

Ross and Cromarty Area Command are piloting the GIRFEC [Getting it Right for Every Child] Domestic Abuse Pathfinder which incorporates a multi-agency risk assessment process.

Child Protection GIRFEC process commenced in Ross and Cromarty, and is rolling out to Lochaber and Skye and Western Isles in the near future.

35 Domestic Abuse Incidents occurred in the review period.

44 Child Protection Enquiries were conducted in the review period.

Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh

A Drugs and Alcohol Play, commissioned by the Lochaber Drug & Alcohol Forum was delivered to the four high schools in the Lochaber area during the week 17th – 21st November. The production was well received by both pupils and teachers in imparting a well pitched message on the perils of substance abuse.

Members of Lochaber Pubwatch continue to meet and deal with incidents of anti-social behaviour within licensed premises. There are now 51 persons on the banned list.

5. MAINTAINING PUBLIC ORDER

Ross & Cromarty

Following complaints from the Public and the Forestry Commission re damage to property in Contin, two persons were detained and arrested, one dwelling house searched under warrant and two quad bikes were seized. One male was also reported for an offensive weapon.

Muir of Ord: A series of incidents occurred towards the end of the last reporting period, over 2 weekends, whereby large groups of youths (in excess of 70) gathered in the village. Reports indicate that this was a planned meeting of various factions from Inverness, Dingwall, Alness and surrounding areas with the intention of fighting each other. Several arrests were made and subsequent operations recovered quantities of alcohol from groups of youth. Substantial quantities of alcohol were seized early in 2009 in the Dingwall area and further operations to combat alcohol misuse are ongoing.

Level 1 Operations: A number of local operations were also conducted, focussing on Anti Social behaviour, alcohol abuse, road traffic education and enforcement activities, which led to positive results.

Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh

The festive period always has the potential to see increased levels of anti-social behaviour and drunken conduct in the streets. To combat this, officers were deployed on increased foot patrols in order to deal with potential disorder in public places. This high visibility approach involving regular and Special Constables ensured that festive spirits were kept in check and the peace was maintained. It was encouraging to note that the period passed without incident.

NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

AREA COMMAND: Western Isles

PERIOD: From: 1 November 2008 To: 31 December 2008

1. REDUCING CRIME

The Western Isles Area Command detection rate for crimes class 1 – 5 stands at 74% at the end of December 2008.

It was pleasing to note that there has been a 50% reduction in serious crime whilst a 100% detection rate has been maintained.

2. TACKLING SERIOUS CRIME

On 21 Dec 2008 a shed and contents were set alight in the Balallan area, which resulted in 2 males being remanded in custody. This was the second such crime in 2008 relating to one of the accused and enquiries are ongoing in relation to these incidents. Both males have since been convicted of threats made to enquiry officers and were sentenced to 7 months imprisonment each.

The supply & misuse of controlled drugs within the Western Isles remains a priority concern for the Area Command. The last 2 months have seen significant successes in terms of arrests and seizures.

On the 28th Nov in the Newmarket area of Stornoway 2 males were detained and 21oz (£30,000) of Cocaine subsequently seized. With the assistance of resources from the mainland Central Division a number of other individuals were targeted and premises searched which has resulted in further individuals being reported to the Procurator Fiscal in relation to the supply of drugs.

3. SAFER ROADS

The Area Command continues to address road traffic issues. Notably, 10 drink driving offences were detected during the review period.

There were 2 serious road traffic collisions during the period:

- On 15th November a 62 year old male was struck by a car on the Tong/Newmarket road, resulting in him sustaining serious head injuries.
- On 16th November a 50 year old male pedestrian was struck on Macaulay Road, Stornoway and was treated in hospital for minor injuries.

4. SAFER COMMUNITIES

A short term Safer Streets Initiative, which concentrated policing resources in and around Stornoway Town Centre over the Christmas and New Year period 2008-09, was carried out. The operation's objectives were to detect and deter drink/drug drivers and prevent anti social behaviour.

On 30 November 2008 a body was found on Eoropie Beach, Ness, which resulted in extensive enquiries being made throughout the country, resulting in a male from Kelso being identified as the deceased.

On 26 December 2008 a 21 year old male was reported missing in South Uist, which is still subject to extensive ongoing enquires assisted by other Forces, as well as resources on the mainland.

5. MAINTAINING PUBLIC ORDER

Considerable resources were utilised during the review period throughout the Command both on foot and mobile patrol to help maintain public order and this was found to be highly successful, resulting in no significant issues arising.

NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

EAST DIVISION: Inverness and Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey

PERIOD: From: 1 November 2008 To: 31 December 2008

1. REDUCING CRIME

The Force Review inspired enhancements have bedded in well in East Division and as 2008 ended many positive indicators of the way resources complement each other across the Division, Force and with partner agencies to the benefit of our communities can be seen.

In the period under review the Public Protection Unit continues to face significant demand, with 184 Child Concern forms being submitted by response officers, which after investigation led to 49 cases being referred to the Reporter to the Children's Panel. A total of 75 Child protection enquiries were also conducted.

It is worthwhile highlighting to the Board the number of domestic incidents reported to the Division. In the two month period, 108 incidents of domestic abuse were reported with the vast majority of cases resulting in the perpetrator appearing from custody at Inverness Sheriff Court. In addition, there were also 82 incidents where members of the community reported issues with domestic partners where advice was given or services offered which did not involve elements of criminality. Taken together this is a significant level of demand.

Overall for the Division, the detection rate for Class1-5 crimes stands at 62.7% with a 2% increase in the level of crime. Particular highlights include the fact that, against a target of 58 charges for drug supply or possession with intent to supply, targeting dealers has led to 117 charges being laid. This demonstrates the hard work over several months to gather intelligence from communities, secure evidence and arrest those who choose to deal drugs within our communities. It is also pleasing to note that robberies have almost halved in the year, from 23 to 12. We continue to monitor and warn the public regarding frauds which have increased, as have thefts. Many of these are committed by the same individuals and they are being targeted. The Board may wish to note that the detection rates for serious crime, indecency and thefts are all significantly higher than last year and demonstrate the commitment of staff to solve crimes reported to the police. Better use of resources across the Division has also seen significant improvements in the crime statistics in Badenoch

2. TACKLING SERIOUS CRIME

The effort to reduce the supply of controlled drugs was a main focus of activity during this period. An intelligence led operation (named "Operation Reason") moved to the enforcement stage whereby drug dealers were targeted. 19 addresses were searched and 9 individuals arrested.

In addition, during November 2008, police working closely with education authorities, detected 3 pupils in possession of controlled drugs. As a result of enquiries one pupil was reported for drug dealing offences.

During the period there has been one further drugs related death within the City. In November 2008 there were five non-fatal suspected heroin overdoses within a 24 hour period. Close liaison with Health colleagues resulted in that organisation quickly taking the lead in warning drug users about the potential dangers

There have been two significant fire raisings reported in Inverness. One involved a fire at the Inverness High school on 8th October and previously flagged up to the Board. Enquiries into the cause of this fire resulted in a male employee of the High School being reported for wilful fire-raising.

Also, within the city, an incident occurred whereby a family had to be rescued from a house fire in Dalneigh. A male has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal in connection with that fire.

Within **Badenoch, Strathspey and Nairn**, the following incidents are of note:

During November, following a dispute within a house in Aviemore, a 17 year old youth was stabbed in the leg. Major enquiry led to a male being arrested, with a report being sent to the Procurator Fiscal at Inverness.

Also during that month, a man attempted to rob a petrol station in Newtonmore. The assailant subsequently made off into the neighbouring built-up area and, following extensive enquiries, a man has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal in Inverness.

Following a domestic incident a man was stabbed in a playpark in Aviemore. The perpetrator fled and was subsequently arrested following extensive enquiry and searches throughout Speyside by Firearms Officers supported by PSU trained officers. Four other persons were also arrested for associated offences. Report forwarded to Procurator Fiscal in Inverness.

In December, a number of houses were searched across the area as part of a proactive enforcement operation and a quantity of amphetamine and other drug dealing equipment seized in Nairn. Other drugs were also seized and persons reported to the Procurator Fiscal for drugs related offences. Dealing quantities of cannabis resin were seized in a vehicle stop near Grantown on Spey, and 2 other addresses in Aviemore were also searched.

A serious assault occurred in a house in Nairn whereby a male person poured boiling water over his previous partner and her new partner. Following extensive enquiry one male was apprehended and reported to the Procurator Fiscal in Inverness for serious assault.

On 23/12/08, following a report from a member of the public, Police and Fire Service

personnel attended a house fire on the High Street, Grantown on Spey. Three people had made good their escape from the dwelling but 2 men tragically died. A joint fire investigation was carried out with no apparent suspicious circumstances being found and a report has been forwarded to the Procurator Fiscal.

3. SAFER ROADS

During the period under review there have been two fatal road traffic collisions within the Division - one on the A9 at Dalwhinnie where a low speed one-vehicle accident occurred, which is believed to be the consequence of a medical matter, and one on the A96 at Gollanfield near to the airport roundabout. An elderly retired man was knocked down and fatally injured. No blame has been attributed to the driver of the motor vehicle involved.

The focus of attention with the darker mornings and evenings has been speeding drivers near to primary and secondary school alongside the ongoing patrol plans for arterial routes. In a one week period 63 drivers were warned and 17 charged in connection with speeding near schools. This targeted approach was as a result of listening to informal concerns raised through the Community Beats Team interaction with Community Councils and local schools.

The Force focus during this period has been in relation to Drink and Drug Driving. The Division has committed heavily to this, with over 250 drivers being breath tested. One person refused and 17 were reported for driving whilst over the limit. There were no drug drivers detected.

Notable conviction – A drunk driver, who had almost twice the legal alcohol limit when he crashed his 44 ton articulated lorry on 24/11/08 on the A95 between Aviemore and Grantown at Drumuillie, was imprisoned for 4 months and disqualified from driving for a period of 4 years when he appeared at Inverness Sheriff Court.

4. SAFER COMMUNITIES

Often unseen, the work of the officers and staff of the Divisional Support Unit is worth highlighting. This Unit dealt with 365 licensing enquiries from the Highland Council and private individuals (193 Liquor licensing enquiries, 117 civic government licensing enquiries, 55 firearms enquiries). Staff were also involved in reporting 46 sudden deaths to the Procurator Fiscal. These pieces of work involve detailed and sensitive enquiries and the good work done has been reflected in regular letters of thanks from bereaved families.

Planning for major events is also part of the role of the Support Unit. 5 Premier league games were policed, including the ties against Celtic and Aberdeen. Both matches passed off without any significant disorder. Policing operations were also run at the Inverness Bonfire night, Remembrance Parades, St. Andrew's Night Concert and various Hogmanay Concerts/events throughout the Division.

During this period it is of note that 89 missing persons were reported. 12 were assessed as "High Risk" due to their vulnerability or circumstances of their disappearance. A great deal of police resource has been dedicated to these missing people, all of whom were found. Each incident involves an assessment of the risk to the person involved which is reviewed at least daily or when significant information is received/detected. Significant effort and staff time goes into following up actions in an effort to locate individuals. Some may be suffering from mental illness, be abscondee from care or indeed have deliberately removed themselves from their current surroundings and seek to make it difficult to trace them. Close links with family members are maintained during enquiries.

The Community Beats Team has been expanded and refreshed for the challenges of 2009. The eleven officer team has eight new faces since this time last year. Their main focus has been and will continue to be the interaction with Community Councils, schools and community groups across the City.

Operation Roundup, the multi agency activity in relation to anti social behaviour and underage drinking continued with a period of focussed activity on Friday 28th November 2008. The Hilton and Kinmylies areas were specifically targeted after consultation with interested groups. Over a two hour period a large number of young people were spoken to but none of them were in possession of alcohol. This is only one occasion but will hopefully be the start of a positive trend. Six licensed premises in the Hilton and surrounding area have met with the Police. All are very supportive of the multi agency activity and all had already put measures in place to ensure that alcohol was not sold to anyone under 18.

The three tiered approach to anti social behaviour in residential premises continues to be successful. Two particular addresses were targeted during this period with one protagonist receiving bail conditions which effectively removes him from the area altogether. Four new interim anti social behaviour orders have been granted which seek to address violent and anti social behaviour in the Merkinch area. The individuals concerned would have been unlikely to respond to the three tier approach as their behaviour was mainly in a residential area, not premises.

In order to address key concerns highlighted by Community Councils and Ward Forums in respect of alcohol-fuelled anti-social behaviour occurring within a number of towns and villages within Badenoch, Strathspey and Nairn, assets have been deployed to tackle these issues.

Operation Mexican and Operation Magma continue to target anti-social behaviour. This has included the utilisation of various tactical options, including mobile CCTV, police dogs, crime car, and high visibility patrols, and this has met with success, resulting in significant amounts of alcohol being confiscated and a number of persons being arrested for alcohol and drug related offences.

In order to provide a proportionate response to tackling the issues of alcohol-fuelled disorder, community consultation is on-going with a view to extending the alcohol byelaws to enable the issue of fixed penalties fines, which will facilitate a tangible solution

to the problem and concerns of the local community, without criminalising individuals and delivering smarter justice.

Emphasis also continues to be directed at education and enforcement through a variety of mediums, highlighting both parental and the general public's responsibility in resolving these issues. Partnership working continues to be undertaken with the Badenoch & Strathspey Drug and Alcohol Forum. The local community safety officer within Aviemore continues to develop other diversionary activities, including 'Blue Light' discos and midnight football initiatives for secondary pupils.

The local community safety officer has delivered a number of safety talks to Primary School children. He also delivered inputs to groups of elderly persons and their carers with regard to bogus callers, mail scams, internet safety, personal safety etc.

5. MAINTAINING PUBLIC ORDER

The Area Command has supported the Highland Council during the Winter Festival of Events under Operation Respect. The two main events on St Andrews night and Hogmanay passed successfully without incident. The police's main contribution was extra high visibility foot patrols on the Friday and Saturday nights, as well as high visibility and covert activity in relation to shoplifting. A friendly early intervention style of policing worked well, with Friday 19th December (traditionally known as "mad Friday") passing without serious incident. A full multi agency evaluation is to take place early in the New Year, but initial indications are that agencies working to complement resources to address town centre concerns in the traditionally busiest part of the year have reaped dividends.

Further to the comments above on the SPL games held at Caledonian Stadium, the Force is fully committed to co-operating with local clubs to maximise public safety. Part of that is ensuring that supporters can enjoy spectating without being subject to inappropriate verbal taunts and in particular any sectarian or racist abuse. There have only been a small number of arrests at stadiums and, on the whole, the vast majority of supporters have behaved very well and have warmed to the approachable and proactive engagement approach adopted by the Division this season. Significant work has been done to move policing of such events on from the more confrontational style of policing to an approach that is far more in sync with not only our Force style, but also the local community values, and is at the forefront of national football policing changes.

Alongside this is targeting of those few who persist in anti-social/criminal behaviour in and around SPL games. Evidence gathering teams have been deployed and a number of spectators are to be/have been reported for sectarian or racist offences. Fuller details will appear at the next report to the Board.