

**THE WEST END POLICE BEAT:
AN EVALUATION**

March 1996

Research and Co-ordination Division

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ISBN 0-7242-6930-4

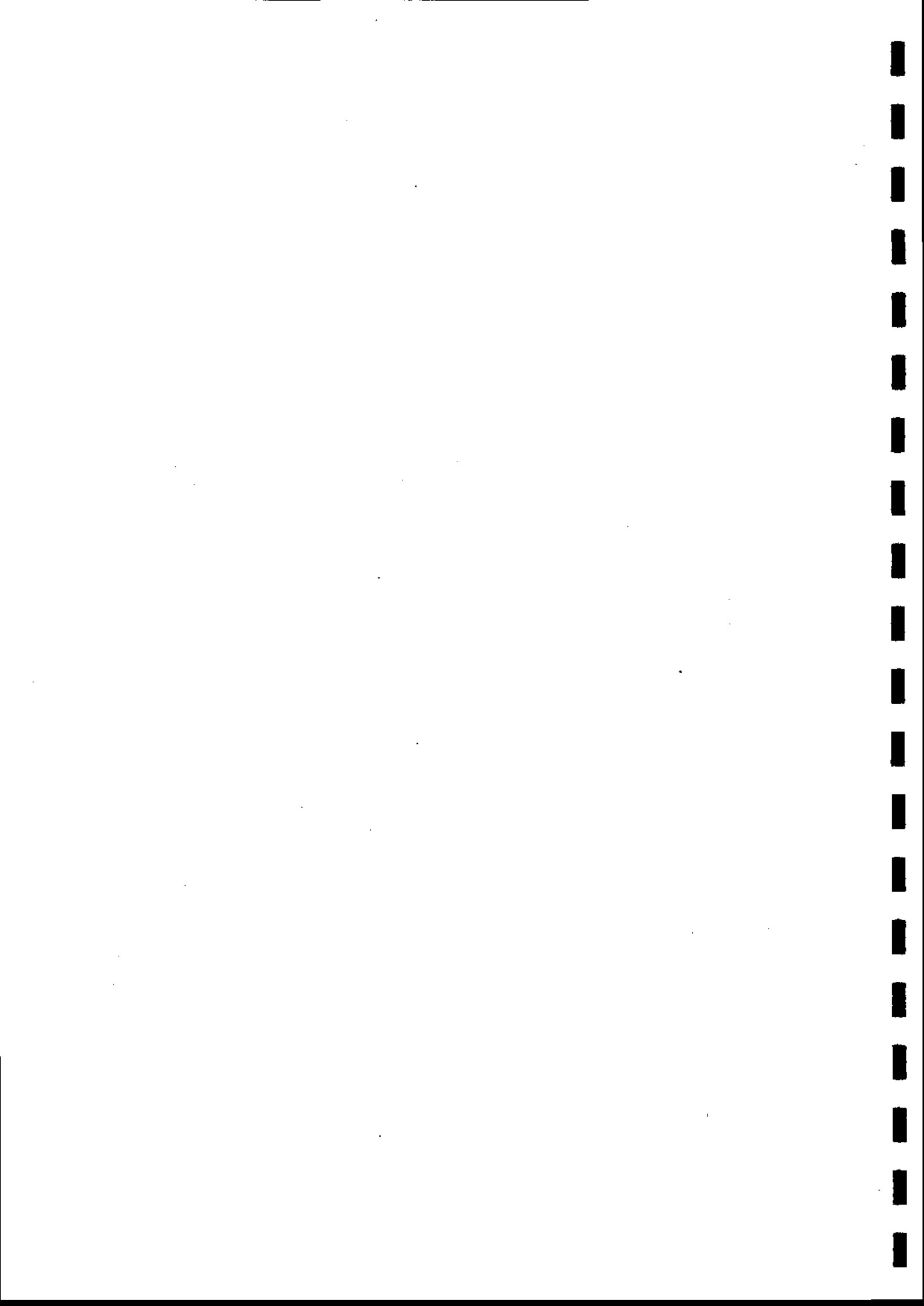
Printed by Criminal Justice Commission,
Brisbane.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In preparing this evaluation of the West End Police Beat pilot project, the CJC has benefitted greatly from the assistance provided by the senior beat officer, Senior Constable Paul Wesener. Thanks are also due to Inspector Ken Benjamin, Inspector Bill Leith, Senior Sergeant Ken Stanley, Mr Shannon Ford of the University of Queensland, and Senior Constable Mark Elliott from the Computer Support Section at Metropolitan South Region.

Dennis Budz of the CJC's Research and Co-ordination Division was principally responsible for the preparation of the report.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
CBD	Central Business District
CJC	Criminal Justice Commission
CRISP	Crime Recording Information System for Police
QPS	Queensland Police Service
WEPB	West End Police Beat



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

On 5 December 1994, the Queensland Police Service (QPS) Metropolitan South Region commenced the West End Police Beat (WEPB) as a pilot project. The WEPB was initially set up by the QPS as an experiment to assess whether beat policing was a viable policing strategy for a busy inner-city suburb. The overall aim of establishing the project was to provide the citizens of West End with an innovative policing service that is community-based and focused on finding solutions to community problems.

The WEPB was patterned on the “split-force” model. Using this model, the beat officers were assigned to work alongside general duties police. Although the beat officers were fully integrated with the staff at West End Police Station, they were assigned a role with narrowly defined operational responsibilities that clearly distinguished them from ordinary police.

This report presents the findings of the Criminal Justice Commission’s (CJC) evaluation of the pilot.

CHAPTER 2 – THE DEVELOPMENT AND HISTORY OF THE WEST END POLICE BEAT

In May 1993, the QPS wrote to the CJC requesting advice and assistance in establishing a beat policing project at West End. A joint QPS/CJC working party proposed that a system of neighbourhood beats, based on the Toowoomba Police Beat Pilot Project, be established. The working party also recommended the realignment of West End Police Division boundaries and the relocation of the mobile patrol to Dutton Park.

On 7 November 1993, Daniel Alfred Yock, was intercepted by the police in the West End area. Yock was subsequently arrested and placed in the rear of a police van. Upon arrival at the Brisbane City Watchhouse, he was found not to be breathing and without a pulse. He was then taken to the Royal Brisbane Hospital where he was subsequently pronounced dead on arrival. Following Daniel Yock’s death, the CJC held a public hearing presided over by Acting Chairperson, Mr L F Wyvill QC. The QPS submission to the inquiry included a commitment to implement beat policing throughout the West End Police Division.

On 5 December 1994, the QPS Metropolitan South Region commenced the WEPB as a six-month pilot project. The project involved the establishment of one beat area and comprised of one senior constable and one constable working together as a patrol team from the West End Police Division.

The objectives for the pilot were to ‘promote feelings of community safety’ by:

- increasing the level of community satisfaction with policing strategies in the West End beat area
- encouraging police and community problem solving
- increasing the level of job satisfaction for beat officers
- increasing the level of acceptance of beat policing by other police.

CHAPTER 3 – THE AIMS AND DESIGN OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation of the pilot project was conducted in two parts: a process and an impact evaluation. The process evaluation examined the implementation and operation of the project. The object of the impact evaluation was to gauge the extent to which the project achieved its stated goals and to identify any significant unintended consequences. The evaluation focused on four key questions:

- To what extent did the WEPB pilot project increase the level of community satisfaction with policing services by the beat area residents?
- Were community-based solutions to problems developed and applied by the beat officers?
- To what extent has the WEPB improved the level of job satisfaction for beat officers?
- Has the WEPB increased the acceptance of beat policing by other police?

Three surveys were undertaken for the evaluation of the WEPB. The first of these was a community street survey aimed at measuring the attitudes of people who worked or owned businesses in the Central Business District (CBD). The second community survey was a telephone survey focusing on the residential community of West End. A third survey, conducted by the QPS, asked respondents about the overall quality and level of satisfaction with the police services they received. The evaluation of the WEPB also included an analysis of QPS calls for service records, interviews of stakeholders and various documents such as rostering sheets and activity logs.

CHAPTER 4 – ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Overall, the implementation of the WEPB went reasonably well. In particular, the decision made by the QPS to integrate the WEPB into the West End Police Station was accomplished with little friction and was seen by most of the police officers involved with the WEPB as contributing to the overall effectiveness of West End Police Division. The development of a calls for service database to drive the activities of the beat officers was a major achievement that is showing considerable potential to be used as a tactical or strategic tool.

The major factors that facilitated the implementation of the WEPB were:

- *Integrating the WEPB into the West End Police Station.* In using the “split-force” approach the WEPB has increased the level of support for beat policing by other police and contributed to the overall effectiveness of West End Police Division.
- *Adequate financial and material resources.* Due to a special State Government budget allocation, the WEPB was sufficiently financed during the pilot and had adequate material resources.
- *The development of the WEPB database.* This initiative enabled the activities of the beat officers to be “information driven”. The development of a calls for service database for use by the beat officers at the local level is a considerable achievement and has aided in developing the problem solving focus of the project.

There were some problems encountered during the implementation of the WEPB pilot project. The biggest difficulties encountered were related to staffing and the inability of the beat officers to be the main providers of policing services in the beat area.

CHAPTER 5 – INCREASING COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

This chapter assesses the impact of the pilot project on levels of community satisfaction. There were several features of the pilot project that were expected to result in increased satisfaction with policing services amongst the beat residents, for instance: providing local officers, who were more accessible and recognisable to the community, and ensuring that these local officers had more time and opportunities to interact with residents.

Key findings were as follows:

- The various surveys conducted for this evaluation revealed very high levels of satisfaction with police in West End.
- Around 46 per cent of those surveyed in West End said that they were aware of the WEPB. About one-half of those surveyed who were aware of the WEPB said that they would be able to recognise one of the beat officers and around 82 per cent said that they had seen one of the beat officers at least once during the preceding month.
- The beat officers enjoyed a relatively high profile in the beat area and were the subjects of several newspaper articles and television interviews.
- The beat officers are well regarded by the business community, government agencies and community groups in West End. In particular, representatives of the Aboriginal and Vietnamese communities in West End felt that the project has provided them with a point of contact with the police and a valuable source of information.

CHAPTER 6 – POLICE AND COMMUNITY PROBLEM SOLVING

The pilot project was designed to incorporate a problem solving orientation into the normal duties of a police officer. The aim of the pilot was for officers to focus on the underlying conditions generating calls for service, and to develop and implement strategies to address these conditions. The key findings were:

- there was strong support from police for the problem solving focus of the WEPB
- problem solving activities were a typical part of the beat officers' week
- the two most common strategies employed by the beat officers to resolve problems were "removing the problem" and preventive activities (such as providing security advice).

Although not a specific objective of the WEPB, the beat officers made considerable progress in targeting repeat calls for service addresses. This initiative was aimed at reducing the overall demand for police services by eliminating certain types of problems in the beat area.

CHAPTER 7 – INCREASING BEAT OFFICER JOB SATISFACTION

Another important objective of the pilot project was to increase the level of beat officer job satisfaction. The expectation was that beat policing would provide officers with more varied, challenging and satisfying work. Given the particular personal characteristics of the beat officers, it is difficult to generalise about the effect of the project on the officers involved. However, interviews with most of

the officers who were deployed in the project indicated that there has been a positive impact on levels of job satisfaction. Officers generally reported that they found beat policing more satisfying than general duties policing because there was:

- more autonomy
- the opportunity to exercise greater discretion
- greater flexibility, more time and resources to deal with community problems.

CHAPTER 8 – INCREASING THE ACCEPTANCE OF BEAT POLICING BY OTHER POLICE PERSONNEL

The two main strategies that were designed to increase the acceptance of beat policing by other personnel were:

- locating the beat officers in West End Police Station to increase the level of interaction with other police
- encouraging the beat officers to share information with other police about criminal activity or suspicious persons, and to assist whenever possible with inquiries, problems, and particular operations such as drug searches and special community events.

Overall, the general duties police stationed at West End, and police supervisors at the division and district levels, felt strongly that the WEPB had succeeded in promoting positive interaction between beat officers and other police.

The second strategy involved encouraging the beat officers to share any information with other police. The evaluation found that the development of a close working relationship between the beat officers and general duties police has resulted in a positive working environment where information between the beat officers and other police is freely exchanged. This factor, and the occasional assistance provided to other police, has been seen by other police as making a significant contribution to the operational effectiveness of the West End Police Division.

CHAPTER 9 – CONCLUSIONS

The WEPB pilot has achieved some worthwhile gains within a limited time frame and the concept is worth persisting with. However, the project requires more time to take effect in the community so that the WEPB can fully demonstrate its effectiveness.

In the CJC's view there are several modifications which, if implemented would improve the overall effectiveness of the project. Specifically, consideration should be given to:

- Reducing the physical size of the beat area so that the beat officers are the focus of police business in the beat area.
- Reviewing whether current staffing arrangements are adequate.

- Negotiating a set of Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) protocols with the Police Communications Centre to ensure that the beat officers are being allocated appropriate calls while on duty, as well as ensuring that a strategy is in place to defer certain types of jobs until a beat officer returns to duty.
- Exploring ways of providing current calls for service data to beat officers in a user friendly form to minimise the time beat officers spend doing data entry related tasks. Efficient methods of data transfer, such as the new QPS Network, should be examined to ensure that up-to-date data are readily available.
- Developing a suitable selection criteria for beat officers (e.g. level of experience, maturity, commitment, etc.) and ensuring that the criteria is strictly adhered to in selecting beat officers.
- Ensuring that beat officers are provided with adequate training support prior to commencement of beat duties in areas such as: the role and duties of a beat officer, problem solving, dispute resolution, community networking and data analysis.

In addition to these specific suggestions, some of the key findings of this evaluation may be relevant in the design of other beat policing projects. In particular, the main lessons learned during the WEPB project are as follows:

- careful planning needs to be undertaken prior to the commencement of the project to ensure that the project is located in a suitable area
- various strategies and protocols such as those involving calls for service should be negotiated *prior* to the commencement of such a project
- the selection of beat officers with relevant skills, who are committed to the goals of the project, is vital to ensuring a program's success
- it is important to establish a set of realistic and clearly defined objectives that can be achieved and measured in the short term.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of an evaluation of the West End Police Beat (WEPB) conducted jointly by the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) with assistance from the University of Queensland. This evaluation report covers the operation of the WEPB project during the period of 5 February 1995 to 5 November 1995.

THE WEST END POLICE DIVISION

West End Police Division is located in an inner-suburb of Brisbane that encompasses an area of approximately 3 km². The WEPB is approximately 1 km², or about one-third of the total area of West End Police Division. According to the 1991 Census, the total residential population of the beat area is only 1,895 people.¹ However, the beat area also includes large commercial and industrial areas.

The area is known for its great ethnic diversity. People of Greek, Italian, Chinese, Vietnamese and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent are well-represented in West End. Relations between some of these groups and the police have at times been underscored by tension. In 1993, the West End Police Division was at the centre of a controversy involving the circumstances of the death of a young Aboriginal - Daniel Yock (CJC 1994).

THE WEST END POLICE BEAT

The WEPB was initially set up by the QPS as a six-month experiment to assess whether beat policing was a viable policing strategy for a busy diverse inner-city suburb. The overall aim of establishing the WEPB was to provide the citizens of West End with an innovative policing service that is community-based and focused on finding solutions to community problems.

The WEPB is a policing strategy that is characterised by:

- the permanent assignment of two officers to a well-defined, relatively small geographical area operating from the West End Police Station
- patrol methods (such as foot and bicycle patrols) that are designed to enhance community interaction
- an information-based, problem solving orientation.

The WEPB was patterned on the "split-force" model which was first used at Wilmington, Delaware (CJC 1995a, pp. 6-7). Using this model, the beat officers are assigned to work alongside general duties police. Although the beat officers are fully integrated with the staff at a particular police station, they are assigned a role with narrowly defined operational responsibilities that clearly distinguishes them from ordinary police.

1 Information supplied by the Government Statistician's Office, 28 November 1995.

Table 1 summarises the main differences between the WEPB and the conventional general duties patrol model used at West End and in other policing divisions throughout Queensland.

TABLE 1 – COMPARISON OF THE GENERAL DUTIES PATROL AND THE WEST END POLICE BEAT

	West End General Duties Patrol	WEPB
Base Unit	'West End Police Division'	The 'West End Police Beat'
Size of Base Unit (a)	Suburb of West End, approximately 3 km ² in area with 10,000 residents	Small defined area within the suburb of West End approximately 1 km ² in area with 1,900 residents
Patrol Method	Motorised patrols by pairs of officers	Foot or bicycle patrols by pairs of officers
Duty Assignment	Officers are required to work within the West End Division or, if tasked, to respond to any call in close proximity of the division	Officers are assigned exclusively to the beat area on a long term basis to promote a sense of ownership
Operating Base	West End Police Station	An office within West End Police Station
Rostering	Determined by the Officer in Charge of West End Police Station	Determined by the Officer in Charge of WEPB to suit local activities and implement problem solving strategies
Policing Emphasis	Responding to calls for service, patrolling	Problem solving, patrol, community and preventive activities, responding to calls for service
Information Sources	Reliance on division and district level analysis of crime using the CRISP system and police intelligence reports	Access to all standard police information sources, but also a special emphasis on the use of a computer database containing calls for service information for the West End Police Division
Performance Measures	Response times, clearance rates	Successful problem solving community involvement and increased job satisfaction

Source: Based on CJC 1995a, p. 2.

Note: (a) Population estimates are based on the 1991 Census.

EVALUATION REPORT STRUCTURE

This evaluation report follows a similar structure and format to the *Toowoomba Beat Policing Pilot Project: Main Evaluation Report, May 1995* (CJC, 1995c).

Following this brief introduction, Chapter 2 provides a brief overview of the history and development of the WEPB. It documents the background of the project, summarises the key differences between the original proposal for policing at West End and the finalised WEPB proposal. The chapter also describes the strategies used during the project to achieve the WEPB pilot's main objectives.

Chapter 3 describes the evaluation design. This chapter also discusses the aims of the evaluation and identifies the sources of data that are used in the evaluation.

Chapter 4 documents the implementation phase of the project. In particular, the chapter examines three main areas of project implementation: project design, resourcing, and operational issues such as the project's information focus and officer safety.

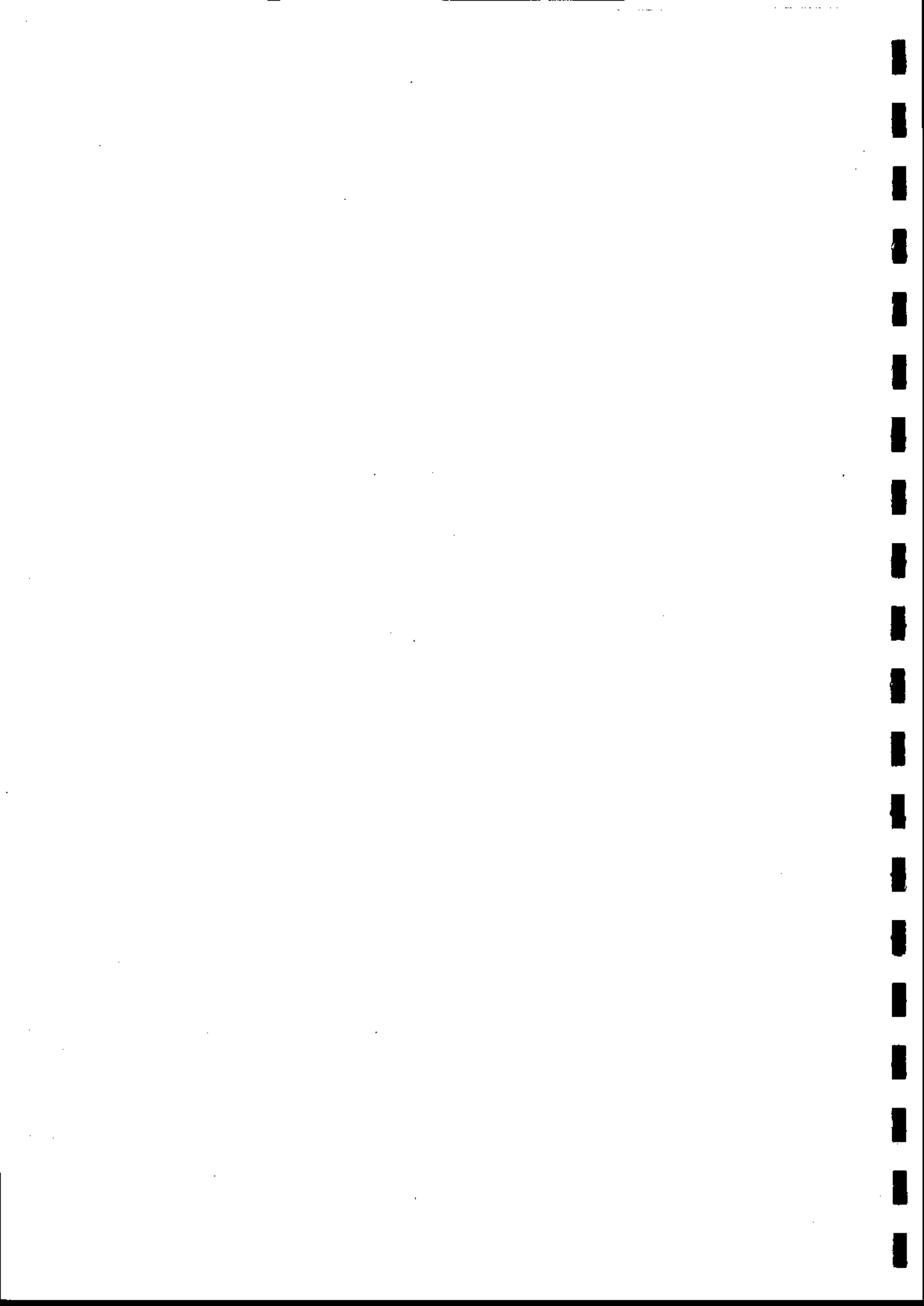
Chapter 5 examines the effect that the project has had on levels of community satisfaction. The focus of this chapter will be on evaluating four strategies used by the beat officers to increase the level of satisfaction with beat policing as a major policing strategy in West End.

Chapter 6 discusses the extent to which the beat officers developed and implemented problem solving initiatives. The chapter also examines how problem solving techniques were used to reduce the number of repeat calls for service.

Chapter 7 looks at the effect that the WEPB pilot project had on beat officer job satisfaction.

Chapter 8 examines whether the WEPB is seen by *general duties* police and management as an acceptable policing strategy for use in West End. The chapter also discusses the issue of integrating the beat into a traditional general duties police division.

The final chapter summarises the main findings of the evaluation and identifies several issues which need to be considered to enhance the future operation and effectiveness of the WEPB.



CHAPTER 2

THE DEVELOPMENT AND HISTORY OF THE WEST END POLICE BEAT

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a brief overview of the development of the WEPB. The chapter also documents the background of the project, summarises the key differences between the beat and general duties patrol, and describes the strategies used during the pilot to achieve the pilot's four main objectives.

THE FIRST BEAT POLICING PROPOSAL FOR WEST END

In May 1993, the Metropolitan South Region of the QPS wrote to the CJC requesting advice and assistance in establishing a beat policing project at West End. A working party comprising members of the QPS and the CJC was subsequently formed to prepare a detailed proposal (QPS 1994a).

In general terms, the working party recommended that a system of neighbourhood beats, loosely based on the Toowoomba Police Beat Pilot Project, be established.

The beat policing concept developed by the working party included several proposals which would have resulted in significant changes to existing policing arrangements in the West End area. Some of these recommendations included:

- the West End and Dutton Park Police Divisions would be partially realigned to accommodate the establishment of six beat areas
- the general duties mobile patrol at West End would be moved to Dutton Park, with the West End Police Division to be made an "exclusive" beat division
- beat officers would primarily work alone under the direct supervision of a Sergeant of Police responsible for the operation of all beat areas in West End
- beat officers would become the principal providers of policing services within their individual beat areas.

THE "YOCK INQUIRY"

On 7 November 1993, Daniel Alfred Yock, with eight of his companions, was intercepted by the police in the West End area. Yock was subsequently arrested and placed in the rear of a police van. Upon arrival at the Brisbane City Watchhouse he was found not to be breathing and without a pulse. He was then taken by ambulance to the Royal Brisbane Hospital where he was subsequently pronounced dead on arrival.

Following Daniel Yock's death, the CJC held a public hearing presided over by Acting Chairperson, Mr L F Wyvill QC. The QPS submission to the inquiry, dated 24 February 1994, included a commitment to implement beat policing throughout the West End Police Division (CJC 1994, pp. 100-101). Although it was acknowledged that the West End beat policing proposal had been under development for some months prior to Daniel Yock's death, Mr Wyvill stated:

I accept the submission that it [beat policing] should go a long way towards addressing many of the issues of concern in police/Aboriginal relations and I recommend the institution of the proposal. (CJC 1994, p. 101)

THE FINALISED PROPOSAL FOR BEAT POLICING AT WEST END

On 5 December 1994, the QPS Metropolitan South Region commenced the WEPB as a pilot project. A copy of the finalised proposal for beat policing in West End can be found in Appendix 1.

The WEPB proposal developed by QPS varied from the original joint QPS/CJC beat policing project proposal in several areas. Specifically, the WEPB:

- involved the establishment of one beat area and did not require the realignment of West End or Dutton Park Police Divisions
- would be integrated into the West End Police Division and operate in conjunction with all existing general duty patrol arrangements
- would comprise one senior constable as the Officer in Charge of the beat and one constable, working together as a patrol team who share ownership of the beat area with the general duty patrol units operating from the West End Police Division.

The WEPB was initially set up for a period of six months, with the aim of assessing the impact of beat policing on the West End community, and on the officers responsible for service delivery in the beat. Due to the late arrival of one of the beat officers, it was necessary for the QPS to delay the start of the pilot until 5 February 1995 to allow the officer time to take up the position. The pilot was also extended to a total of nine months with the project officially scheduled to end on 5 November 1995.

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES OF THE WEST END POLICE BEAT

The WEPB pilot project was constructed around the theme of "Visibility and Approachability". The key program objectives listed in the final project proposal were for the beat officers to promote feelings of community safety by:

- reducing the incidence of crime
- increasing police visibility within the beat area
- increasing police/community interaction
- encouraging joint police/community problem solving.

Following the official launch of the WEPB project in December 1994, a committee was formed to oversee the evaluation process. The committee consisted of members of the QPS and a representative from the Research and Co-ordination Division of the CJC.

The committee considered that several objectives would be difficult to measure over the relatively short period of the pilot project. As a result, a new set of objectives were created which could be evaluated in the short term. The finalised objectives for the pilot developed by the committee called for the WEPB to 'promote feelings of community safety' by:

- increasing the level of community satisfaction with policing strategies in the West End beat area
- encouraging police and community problem solving
- increasing the level of job satisfaction for beat officers
- increasing the level of acceptance of beat policing by other police.

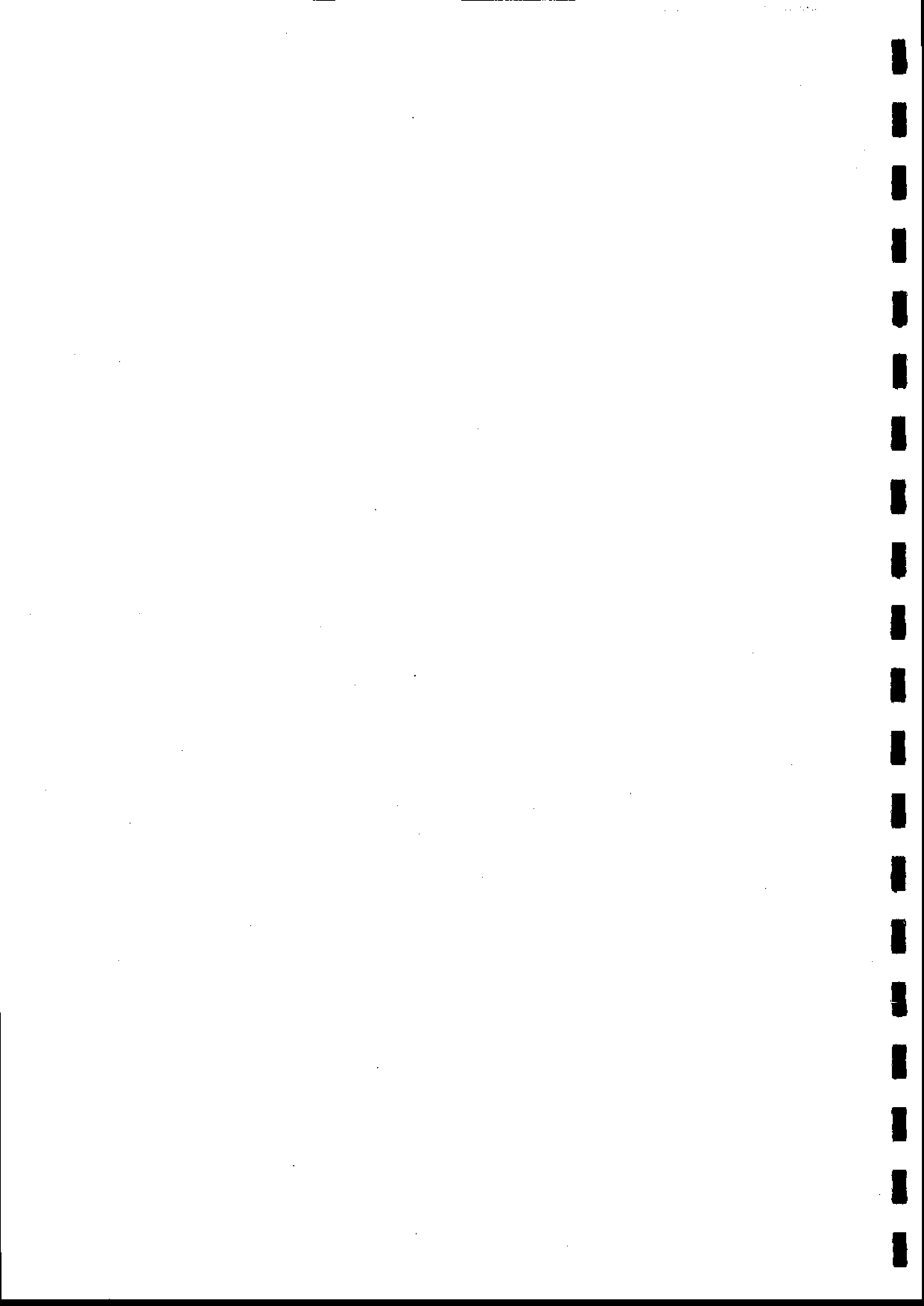
The extent to which the objectives of the WEPB have been achieved is discussed in Chapters 5 to 8.

In addition to setting new objectives for the pilot project, the committee also identified a number of strategies that beat officers were to utilise during the pilot project (see Table 2 below).

TABLE 2 – STRATEGIES OF THE WEST END POLICE BEAT

Objectives	Strategies
Increasing the level of community satisfaction with policing strategies in the West End beat area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assuming a highly visible role in the beat area • being approachable to all segments of the community • encouraging and fostering good relations with media, business, community and special interest groups in the beat area • promoting personalised service through increased levels of helpfulness, providing a quick response, empathy, appropriate advice and follow-up
Encouraging police and community problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making contact with business, community groups and agencies to identify problems and identify appropriate responses
Increasing the level of job satisfaction for beat officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving beat officers autonomy and discretion, providing beat officers with the flexibility to design appropriate responses to community problems
Increasing the level of acceptance of beat policing by other police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting positive interaction between the beat officers and other police • encouraging beat officers to share information with other police

Source: WEPB Evaluation Steering Committee Minutes, 15 December 1994.



CHAPTER 3

THE AIMS AND DESIGN OF THE EVALUATION

This chapter documents the evaluation design for the pilot project. The aims of the WEPB evaluation were to:

- monitor and document the implementation and operation of the WEPB
- document and assess the extent to which the pilot project achieved its stated objectives
- identify any desirable or undesirable outcomes and suggest ways in which the operation and effectiveness of the WEPB could be enhanced.

In the case of the WEPB, two types of evaluation were undertaken: a process and an impact evaluation. The process evaluation examined the implementation and operation of the project. The objects of the impact evaluation were to gauge the extent to which the project achieved its stated goals and to identify any significant unintended consequences.

DATA SOURCES

The main data sources used in the evaluation of the WEPB were:

- community surveys²
- service users survey
- calls for service data
- interviews
- documents.

COMMUNITY SURVEYS

Two types of community surveys were administered. The first of these was a community street survey aimed at measuring the attitudes of people who worked or owned businesses in the Central Business District (CBD) of West End. Data were collected by walking around West End and asking people who owned or worked for local businesses to answer the questionnaire. The street survey was commenced on 7 August 1995 and was completed on 10 August 1995. Surveying began at approximately 9.00 a.m. each morning and finished at approximately 4.00 p.m. in the afternoon. All of the surveys were completed within this time frame.

2 Copies of the survey instruments used during the evaluation are available upon request.

The second of the two community surveys was a telephone survey. This survey focused on the residential community of West End. Each of the interviewers were given a list of telephone numbers they were to contact. Surveying commenced on Monday, 14 August 1995 and continued through to Friday, 18 August 1995. Interviewing began at 4.00 p.m. each day and usually finished by approximately 9.00 p.m. at night.

Initially, the target sample size for each survey was 300 respondents. In the final result there were 276 respondents for the street survey and 252 respondents for the telephone survey. Due to several difficulties in verifying the validity of the "control" sample that had been selected to facilitate a comparison between the beat area and the non beat area, the sample size for the telephone survey was subsequently reduced to include only those 99 respondents who resided in the beat area.

SERVICE USERS SURVEY

A survey of users of policing services was conducted by the QPS in September 1995. The survey, which was based on a survey developed by the CJC for the Toowoomba Beat Policing Pilot Project, asked respondents about the overall quality and level of satisfaction with the police services they received. A total of 150 telephone interviews were conducted, comprising 33 respondents in West End whose call for service was attended by a beat officer, and 117 respondents whose call had been handled by a general duties officer.

Some types of calls for service were not included in the survey due to the sensitive nature of the call. Consequently, several service users who received assistance by beat officers were excluded from the survey.

Because the number of survey participants who received assistance from a beat officer is small, caution should be used in interpreting any results based solely on the beat area component of the service users survey.

CALLS FOR SERVICE DATA

These data consisted of electronic records of calls for assistance made by the public and received by telephone at the Police Communications Centre in QPS Headquarters. These records were forwarded to the WEPB where they were entered by a beat officer into a specially adapted 4th Dimension-First® database.

The calls for service data used in the evaluation covered the period from 6 February 1995 to 5 November 1995. During this period, 3,359 calls for service were received for West End Police Division - 1,889 calls recorded for the beat area and 1,470 calls for the rest of West End Police Division.

INTERVIEWS

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with several key stakeholders in the pilot project, including senior police management, police supervisors, beat officers and general duties officers. The interviews ranged from 20 - 70 minutes in length and related to the performance of the project, problems in its

operation, and the way in which beat officers and general duties officers worked. The interviews were indexed into several broad categories and analysed using Nonnumerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorising (NUD•IST) software. The broad categories that were analysed included:

- general impressions: crime, morale, co-workers, workload
- beat officer impressions: training, resources, job satisfaction, personal safety
- general duty officer impressions: attitude to beat policing, morale, workload
- management impressions: effectiveness, efficiency, future directions.

DOCUMENTS

Various documents, such as rostering sheets and activity logs, were examined. In addition, the beat officers were required to complete a weekly statistical return. The return was divided into three sections: the number of hours, the number of activities and the number of community contacts. Each of the sections was further divided into various specific activities such as crime prevention, Neighbourhood Watch and problem solving. The return was used to assess the type of work and activities that the beat officers performed during the course of the pilot.

LIMITATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

At the outset of most new projects, there is a tendency for some key stakeholders to overstate the impact that project might have. In assessing a project such as the WEPB, it is important to be realistic about what the pilot is capable of achieving in the short term. In the case of the WEPB, several considerations are relevant in assessing the program's overall success:

- Small-scale projects such as the WEPB should not be expected to produce large-scale effects. The WEPB project involved only two beat officers, each on duty for 19 of 84 possible shifts during a 28-day roster. In addition, the beat area is not a stable community. During the evaluation it became clear that many people in West End only visit the suburb for the purposes of work or recreation. This made it difficult for the beat officers to identify, then meet, the needs of the resident population.
- The pilot project was initially established for a period of six months. The short length of the pilot limited the scope of the project to 'make a significant difference'. Many of the WEPB initiatives, particularly those that focus on increasing the level of community satisfaction, take a considerable investment in time to yield any appreciable dividend.
- There were several problems with the staffing at the WEPB. Members who were relocating or being reassigned to other duties needed to be replaced during the period of the pilot. Given those circumstances it was difficult to maintain consistency and establish a good rapport with the local community.

Taking these various limitations and considerations into account, it is considered that the WEPB should be deemed successful provided that there is evidence of at least some change in the desired direction.

SUMMARY

The links between the key evaluation questions, measures of performance and data sources are summarised in Table 3.

TABLE 3 – OVERALL EVALUATION STRATEGY

Key Evaluation Questions	Relevant Measures	Data Sources
Did the WEPB increase the level of community satisfaction with policing services by beat area residents?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assessments of the quality of police service provided to the residents by the beat officers assessment of police performance by the beat area residents documented examples of the efforts by beat officers to increase the level of community satisfaction 	community surveys service users surveys interviews
Were community-based solutions to problems developed and applied by the beat officers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> repeat calls for service the level of commitment to problem solving documented case studies of problem solving activities 	calls for service data activity reports case studies interviews
Did the WEPB improve the level of job satisfaction for beat officers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reported level of job satisfaction 	interviews
Has the WEPB increased the acceptance of beat policing by other police?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> acceptance of beat policing by other police 	interviews

CHAPTER 4

ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter assesses the manner in which the WEPB was implemented during the period of the pilot project. The findings contained in this chapter provide important information about the operation of the project. For example, the assessment of project implementation could provide a possible explanation why certain aspects of the project did not yield the expected results. In addition, the assessment of project implementation provides feedback about the program so that changes can be made to the project to enhance future performance.

This assessment focuses on three main areas:

- project design
- resourcing the WEPB
- operational issues: using information, officer safety.

Additional comments that relate to project implementation issues, such as the degree of individual or organisational support for the WEPB, are found in Chapter 8.

This chapter uses three main sources of data: interviews with the beat officers, police management and general duties police; calls for service data; and, a variety of documents such as the original WEPB concept proposal, activity reports and notes from various meetings with project stakeholders.

PROJECT DESIGN

Three project design issues were relevant to the implementation and operation of this evaluation:

- integrating the WEPB with West End Police Division
- the location and size of the beat area
- the work of the beat officers.

INTEGRATING THE WEST END POLICE BEAT WITH WEST END POLICE DIVISION

As stated previously in this report, the WEPB is patterned on the "split-force" model of policing developed in the United States of America. Using this model, the beat officers are "integrated" into the West End Police Division. Although the beat officers work alongside the staff at West End Police Station, they are assigned a more narrowly defined role than general duties police.

While this integrated model of beat policing can provide distinct advantages over the residential model of beat policing, such as cost savings and higher morale, the CJC has, in the past, identified a number of risks associated with using the integrated approach (CJC 1995a, p. 6). For example, there is a risk that some police managers or supervisors will try to divert beat officers into a more reactive style of policing. In the case of the WEPB, this risk was reduced by providing the beat officers with a concise statement of their duties and responsibilities.

The evaluation did not find any evidence that integrating the beat officers with the general duties police stationed at West End caused any serious difficulties. In fact, both the general duties police officers and the beat officers interviewed during the evaluation felt strongly that combining the beat with other operational units was one of the major successes of the project:

The relationship with general duties police has been very good. There hasn't been any problems . . . because the general police and the beat police are working in the same building and they see each other on almost a daily basis, they have developed friendships . . . (interviews, general duties officer)

The best feature is the way the beat cooperates with the station staff. Whilst they have their own charter, they have in fact assisted us to be more effective ourselves (interviews, non-commissioned officer).

THE LOCATION AND SIZE OF THE BEAT AREA

One of the earliest concerns with the WEPB pilot project related to the location and size of the beat area. If the location or size of the beat had been miscalculated, the beat officers could be overwhelmed by the volume of work, or conversely, they could find themselves with little to do.

When the WEPB was established by the QPS, the aim was to locate the beat officers in an area where their presence was expected to yield the greatest benefit. As a result, the beat area was set up to include:

- West End Central Business District
- Musgrave Park
- Oxford Street and St. Vincent de Paul Hostels
- Victoria Bridge with heavy pedestrian traffic from the Treasury Casino to the Convention Centre and South Bank
- Brisbane State High School and the South Brisbane College of T.A.F.E.
- South Brisbane Railway Station
- a large industrial area consisting of warehouses and office accommodation.

Figure 1 shows the current WEPB boundaries:

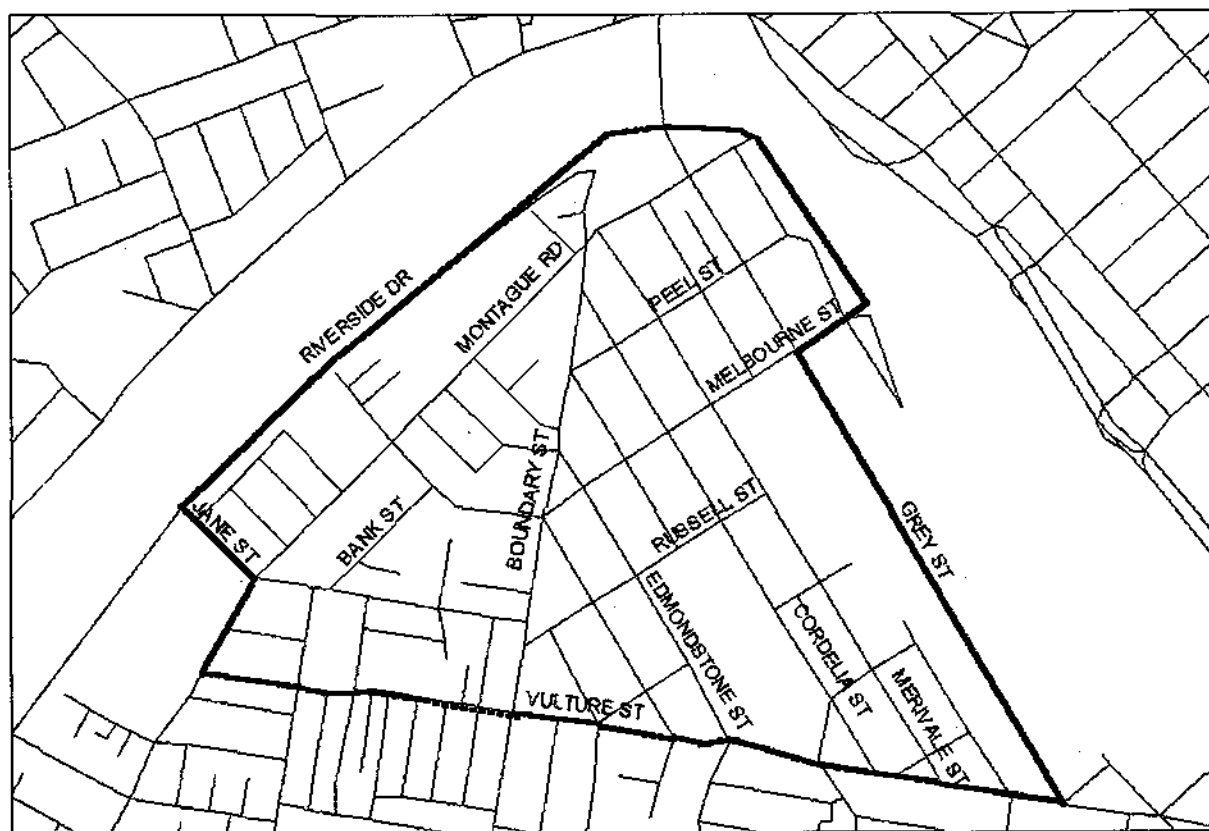


FIGURE 1 – THE DESIGNATED WEST END POLICE BEAT AREA

Unlike the Toowoomba Beat Policing Pilot Project, the beat area was not selected on the basis of an analysis of its demographic characteristics or the nature of the demands for police services. Some police interviewed for this evaluation felt that a more rigorous process could have been followed in selecting the beat area.

I think probably the only criticism that I would make is that we probably didn't fully understand how to set up the beat areas . . . (interviews, non-commissioned officer)

Although the beat area was established without the benefit of a thorough analysis of the main characteristics of the area, the current location, with the main focus being on the West End CBD, seems to be appropriate. However, there is evidence that the physical size of the beat, or the number of staff assigned to the beat, needs to be reconsidered, primarily due to the inability of the beat officers to become the principal providers of policing services in the beat area.

Table 4 compares the total number of calls for service received during the period of the pilot with the number handled by the beat officers.

TABLE 4 – TRENDS IN THE NUMBER OF CALLS FOR SERVICE RECEIVED COMPARED TO THE NUMBER HANDLED BY THE BEAT OFFICERS (FEBRUARY – NOVEMBER 1995)

Month	CFS received for the West End Police Division	CFS received for the West End Police Beat area	CFS handled by the Beat Officers (c)
February (a)	270	152	28
March	395	238	33
April	456	263	27
May	484	261	18
June	441	203	15
July	437	224	12
August	308	173	15
September	275	187	22
October	254	164	20
November (b)	40	23	3
Total	3,360	1,888	193

Source: WEPB database.

Notes:

- (a) From 5 February 1995.
- (b) To 5 November 1995.
- (c) Includes 59 calls for service where the beat officers assisted another unit or the call handled by the beat officer was outside of the beat area.

Table 4 shows that, during the period of the pilot project, the West End Police Division received a total of 3,360 calls for service. Of this number, 1,888 calls, or 56 per cent of the total, were calls for service originating from the beat area.

An analysis of beat officer workload showed that during the pilot the beat officers handled just over 10 per cent of all beat area calls for service during the period of the pilot project. The relatively small proportion of calls for service being attended to by the beat officers was due to two main factors:

- a significant proportion of beat area calls for service were for jobs that the Police Communications Centre felt required a mobile response as opposed to a beat officer response, e.g. 265 traffic related offences, 425 disturbances
- the two beat officers were only able to cover the beat area for 19 of 84 possible shifts (23% of the time) during a 28-day roster.

If, in the future, the beat officers are to become the main service providers in the beat area, consideration should be given to one or more of the following strategies:

- reducing the physical size of the beat area so that the beat officers are the main focus of police business in the beat area

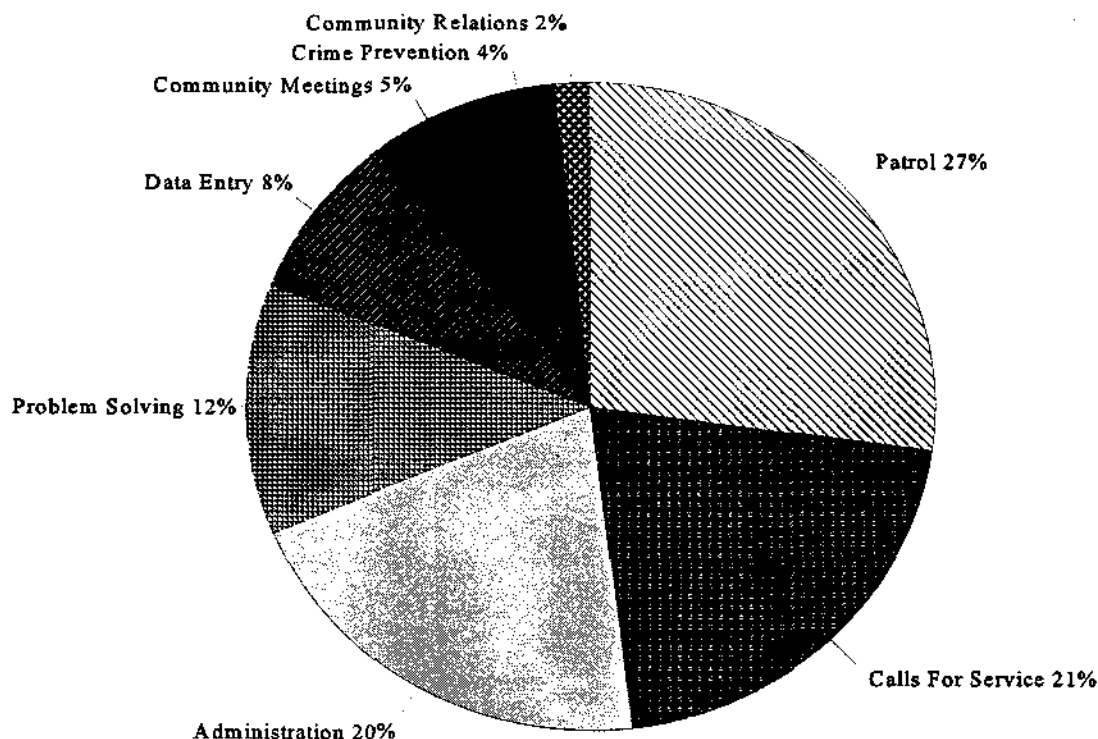
- extending the hours of coverage by increasing the number of beat officers allocated to the WEPB project
- negotiating a set of Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) protocols with the Police Communications Centre to ensure that the beat officers are being allocated appropriate calls while on duty, as well as ensuring that a negotiated response strategy is in place to defer certain types of jobs until a beat officer returns to duty.

WORK OF THE BEAT OFFICERS

When the WEPB pilot project was first initiated, it was envisaged that the duties of the beat officers would encompass:

- attending to all allocated jobs in the beat area when on duty and available
- patrolling the beat area in a pro-active and reactive manner
- initiating direct contact with the public
- gathering criminal intelligence
- maintaining a highly visible police presence in the beat area.

Figure 2 shows the proportion of time that the beat officers spent on various types of activities during the month of March 1995.



**FIGURE 2 – ACTIVITIES OF THE BEAT OFFICERS
PROPORTION OF TIME SPENT (MARCH 1995)**

Source: WEPB Statistical Return (4 March 1995 - 31 March 1995).

Note: Percentages have been rounded, excludes four day beat officer training course and meals.

In the month examined, the task occupying most of the beat officers' time was patrol (27%). Other significant activities undertaken by the beat officers were answering calls for service (21%) and attending to administrative matters such as report writing (20%).

Overall, the beat officers have been engaged in the types of activities that were envisaged in the original WEPB pilot project proposal.

RESOURCING THE WEST END POLICE BEAT

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

For the WEPB to achieve its objectives the financial resources allocated to the pilot project had to be adequate. In the case of the WEPB pilot, the project was funded from the special State Government budget allocation for the implementation of beat policing initiatives. The general consensus amongst those interviewed was that the WEPB was generously financed:

Well, it is impossible for us to utilise the overtime budget that we've got, I mean short of both of us working ourselves into the ground we couldn't use it, we had such a big budget for two. (interviews, beat officer)

I think our budget was bigger than what the station's budget was . . . it was very user friendly. (interviews, beat officer)

I thought that it was adequately resourced – definitely! . . . Our budget probably allows us a lot more freedom than theirs [West End General Duties] does . . . we have so much money and so many resources available to us . . . (interviews, beat officer)

MATERIAL RESOURCES

In terms of material resources, such as the beat office, computer, and telephone, the evaluation also found that WEPB pilot project was well resourced. During the interviews with the beat officers and their supervisors no material resource needs were identified as requiring immediate attention:

. . . we basically had all the resources, like, we had our own computer, we were given bikes, the helmets, the radios, all of that . . . I don't think there was any problems at all with any of that . . . (interviews, beat officer)

HUMAN RESOURCES

The single greatest concern expressed during the interviews with police management, beat officers and other police related to the issue of staffing.

Choosing the right kind of staff for a project such as the WEPB was crucial to achieving the pilot project's main objectives. In the case of the WEPB, there seems to be considerable evidence that human resource issues made it difficult for the project to demonstrate its full effectiveness:

There was a fairly jumbled sort of human resource problem so far as having staff, but I think that's how a lot of police stations work. Staffing is a major problem. If you look at any police station, there are police officers there that are on sick leave, there are people that are seconded, there are people that are supposed to be there that aren't, there are people that come and go – so I think that to a certain extent West End beat replicates what actual policing is like . . . but so far as staffing is concerned, it wasn't a real good part of the project. (interviews, commissioned officer)³

3 Metropolitan South Region advise that the issues raised by these comments have since been rectified.

I think the main inadequacies have been the staffing resources . . . because of the initial staffing of the beat and the difficulties that arose out of having staff there at the beginning, then not having the staff – the same staff continue all the way through – was a bit of a hiccup . . . I think that will have a small impact, but it will have an impact. (interviews, non-commissioned officer)

The main problem was the high turnover of staff which contributed to a lack of stability during the course of the pilot. For example, when the WEPB was first established in December 1994, the staffing allocation for the pilot project consisted of two beat officers. Due to relocation difficulties, the arrival of one of the beat officers was delayed until February 1995.

. . . there were problems with the police service trying to get other personnel here for the commencement of the project. In fact, he (the Constable) didn't arrive until the beginning of February, almost two months after the beginning of the project. That caused a problem because the project was only going to go for six months . . . (interviews, commissioned officer)

Prior to the arrival of the second beat officer, a decision was made by Metropolitan South Region to increase the WEPB staffing allocation to four beat officers. The two additional beat officer positions were filled by seconding two Constables from other Metropolitan South Police Divisions for the duration of the pilot. In late March 1995, Metropolitan South Region reversed their decision to increase the size of the beat and directed that the two seconded beat officers return to their original stations. The main reason for returning the WEPB back to the original staffing model was a concern over the effect of changing the staffing allocation during the evaluation phase of the project.

Following the departure of the two seconded beat officers in April 1995, one of the two remaining beat officers was relocated at short notice for compassionate reasons. This required the recall of one of the previously seconded beat officers who remained with the beat until the conclusion of the pilot in November 1995.

As part of the process of moving from a pilot project to an ongoing program, the WEPB needs to review a number of human resource issues. The main points which should be addressed in a review of human resource issues for the WEPB include:

- Establishing an appropriate staffing allocation model for the WEPB.
- Developing a suitable selection criteria for beat officers (e.g. level of experience, maturity, commitment, etc.) and ensuring that the criteria is strictly adhered to in selecting a beat officer.
- Ensuring that beat officers are provided with adequate training prior to commencement of beat duties. The training would cover areas such as: the role and duties of a beat officer, problem solving, dispute resolution, community networking and data analysis.

OPERATIONAL ISSUES

This evaluation considered two other key aspects of the implementation of the WEPB pilot:

- using information, in particular, the WEPB database
- officer safety.

USING INFORMATION: THE WEST END POLICE BEAT DATABASE

Effective beat policing requires accurate, timely and usable information to meet the needs of the beat community (CJC 1995c, p. 101). One of the most useful sources of information for beat officers is calls for service. Of all of the various types of information collected by the police, calls for service data provide the most comprehensive picture of the demand for policing service. These data also have a wide range of other applications. For example, calls for service data can be used to distinguish certain types of policing problems, optimise patrol resources or compile histories to aid police in conducting investigations. The Police Communications Centre at Brisbane recorded details of 188,807 requests⁴ for police assistance in 1995, but this information is rarely used by the police. In addition, the calls for service data currently being collected by the QPS is not in a user-friendly form, nor is it readily accessible by operational police.

In order to make calls for service information more accessible to the beat officers, it was necessary to develop a specialised database for use by the beat officers. The database was developed by the Officer in Charge of the WEPB, with some assistance from the staff of the QPS Information Systems Branch and the Metropolitan South Regional Computer Support Officer. The database was designed to collect certain specific categories of calls for service information such as the date, time, name, location and nature of an event. In addition to calls for service records, the database can also be used to store local intelligence reports, activity reports and crime reports.

Using the database, the beat officers are able to generate a variety of useful reports. For instance, the beat officers can use the database to determine the location of all of the break and enters occurring in the beat area over a given period, or produce a list of the top 10 addresses most frequently requiring police assistance. Used in this way, the database becomes a valuable strategic and tactical tool for the beat officer.

One of the WEPB's more noteworthy achievements has been in using calls for service information to drive the activities of the beat officers. Most of the police officers interviewed for this evaluation believed that using information to drive the activities of the beat officers showed a great deal of potential and was definitely worth pursuing:

You could see the fruits of that particular policing model – basing everything on information or intelligence. I think that's one thing we didn't take into consideration when we were designing the project. We didn't think that we'd see that spinoff . . . we should do a little bit more research in that area. (interviews, commissioned officer)

. . . the other key thing is the database that, to a certain extent, is still in a developmental phase. The importance of it and the applicability of it to policing is something that hopefully will come out of the project and be able to be continued on with. (interviews, beat officer)

However, in recognising the considerable achievement the WEPB has made towards making the beat "information driven", the development of an information focus has been criticised by some police officers:

I can see that it is going to have, that it could have, huge implications for information driven policing, but I can't see that we've got that at this stage. (interviews, non commissioned officer)

4 Unpublished data provided by the QPS Police Communication Centre, 12 January 1996.

The major difficulty identified from the interviews was the amount of time that the beat officers spent on maintaining the database:

... the need for data became a monster and almost took over. (interviews, non-commissioned officer)

... it takes so much time that it's destroying the original purpose of the beat. (interviews, non-commissioned officer)

... as far as the data processing goes, I'd try and farm that out to a civilian clerk and try and get information services to write a program which made it easier to do, quicker and more efficient. An automatic down load is the way to go. If I could do that then I could get the beat people out on the beat more. (interviews, non-commissioned officer)

During the early stage of the project the Officer in Charge of the WEPB spent considerable time in establishing the database and entering data. For example, the analysis of beat officer activities for the month of March 1995 showed that the beat officers were spending an average of 10 hours per week entering and analysing calls for service data. However, as the project matured, many of the manual tasks associated with the operation of the database, such as loading the data via another computer application, were streamlined. These initiatives reduced the time the beat officers had to spend on maintaining the database.

OFFICER SAFETY

The final area that this chapter involves the issue of officer safety. To address the issue of officer safety the project was set up so that the beat officers would work as a team. In addition, the beat officers were directed to strictly comply with the following policy:

- the beat officers were not to respond to any call for service if they felt that their personal safety might be at risk
- the beat officers were to advise the Police Communications Centre if they felt, for any reason, that they required additional police assistance
- if a beat officer made an arrest whilst working alone, the beat officer was to request additional police assistance to convey the prisoner to the City Watchhouse.

Throughout the pilot project, the beat officers occasionally patrolled alone during the daylight hours. The decision to work the beat area as a single officer patrol was largely due to the desire on the part of the beat officers to respond to more calls for service.

Although none of the beat officers reported a duty related injury or other serious safety related issues during the pilot project, the evaluation found that officer safety continues to be a concern. In particular, some of the beat officers who were interviewed indicated that they felt under threat in the beat area after sunset:

During the evening hours I don't feel comfortable at all. You might be preyed upon, they get to know where you are working, what you are doing. (interviews, beat officer)

I just felt a lot safer working during the day, there are less people on the streets at night time of course, therefore you feel a bit more vulnerable. (interviews, beat officer)

... the threat level is a little higher at West End. You certainly wouldn't be working single patrols at night in West End. I don't know whether I mentioned it before, but if you're in a suburb, say at Mt. Gravatt or Holland Park or something, and a situation explodes you could possibly count on some of those people to come to your aid. In West End it would probably be the other way round - it's the coppers and them - you would not get any assistance from the community, so in that respect it's probably a little bit more dangerous. (interviews, beat officer)

However, one of the beat officers interviewed felt strongly that officer safety was not an issue during the pilot project:

I feel that if you're sensible and you know how to handle the job the threat is minimal ... I don't think I've had any greater feelings of - ah you know - threats of safety in West End than in any other area that I've been in ... For me personally, I've never ever felt threatened ... I think a lot of times it gets back to the individual police officer. I think sometimes police officers can bring upon themselves - the tendency for people to want to harm them or want to get back at them, or whatever, but I personally never ever felt that in West End. (interviews, beat officer)

Despite some concerns about working alone in West End after sunset, the beat officers generally felt that the pilot project has handled the highly contentious issue of beat officer safety reasonably well. The beat officers felt very comfortable with their decision to work alone during the daylight hours and considered that existing safeguards, such as the policy of team patrolling after sunset in the beat area, was adequate to ensure the safety of the beat officer.

SUMMARY

Overall, the implementation of the WEPB went reasonably well. In particular, the decision made by the QPS to integrate the WEPB into the West End Police Station was accomplished with little friction and was seen by most of the police officers involved with the WEPB as contributing to the overall effectiveness of West End Police Division. The development of a calls for service database to drive the activities of the beat officers has also been identified by some police officers as a major achievement that is showing considerable potential to be used as a tactical or strategic tool.

There were a few problems encountered during the implementation of the WEPB pilot project. The biggest difficulties encountered were related to staffing and the heavy calls for service workload in the beat area.

The major factors that facilitated the implementation of the WEPB were:

- *Clear and concise project documentation.* The project documentation was particularly useful during the early phases of the pilot. It provided the beat officers with a clear statement of their duties and responsibilities and prevented them from being diverted away from their main responsibility to provide police services to beat area residents.
- *Integrating the WEPB into the West End Police Station.* In using the "split-force" approach the WEPB has increased the level of support for beat policing by other police and has contributed to the overall effectiveness of West End Police Division.
- *Adequate financial and material resources.* Due to a special State Government budget allocation, the WEPB was sufficiently financed during the pilot and had adequate material resources.

- *The development of the WEPB database.* This allows for the activities of the beat officers to be "information driven". Clearly, the development of a calls for service database for use by the beat officers at the local level is a considerable achievement and has aided in developing the problem solving focus of the project.

However, there are some lessons that can be learned from the WEPB implementation which will assist in managing future beat policing programs:

- Care needs to be taken in determining the size and location of a beat area. Beat boundaries should be chosen only after a careful analysis of the main characteristics of a particular area. This is important to ensure that the workload of the beat officers is appropriate and will allow them to be seen as being the main police service providers in the beat area.
- Response strategies and calls for service protocols with the Police Communications Centre need to be negotiated from the start of any project such as the WEPB to ensure that the beat officers are better able to meet the needs of the beat area.
- Providing current CAD data to beat officers in a user friendly form would minimise the time beat officers spend doing data entry related tasks. Efficient methods of data transfer, such as the new QPS Network, should be explored so that up-to-date data can be obtained quickly.
- More attention should be given to selecting the appropriate number or choosing the right kind of staff for a project such as the WEPB. In particular, it is important that a project such as the WEPB have experienced, trained and mature beat officers who are committed to the project for the long term.

CHAPTER 5

INCREASING THE LEVEL OF COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

This chapter discusses the extent to which the WEPB pilot project has increased the level of community satisfaction with policing services. Since a major emphasis of the project has been to make the beat officers more recognisable and accessible to the public, it was expected that there would be a noticeable improvement in the level of community satisfaction with policing services provided in the beat area.

Four main strategies were used by the beat officers to increase the level of community satisfaction. These strategies were to:

- assume a highly visible role in the beat area
- be approachable to all segments of the community
- encourage and foster good relations with media, business and community groups in the beat area
- promote a more personalised service through increased levels of helpfulness and by providing a quick response to a problem, empathy, appropriate advice and follow-up.

Three surveys were conducted in West End as a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies. Two of the surveys focused on measuring the level of awareness, understanding and satisfaction with policing strategies generally, and beat policing specifically. The third survey, a service users survey, measured the quality of policing service that was actually provided to beat area residents.

ASSUMING A HIGHLY VISIBLE ROLE IN THE BEAT AREA

AWARENESS

The results of the two community surveys showed that close to half of all respondents said that they were aware of the WEPB project (see Table 5). Considering the relatively short time that the project has been in existence, this is considered a reasonably good result. If the WEPB is continued, it is likely that the level of community awareness of the beat will steadily improve.

TABLE 5 - AWARENESS OF THE WEST END POLICE BEAT AMONGST RESPONDENTS IN THE BEAT AREA

	Telephone Survey (n=99)	Street Survey (n=276)
Yes (%)	49.5	46.7
No (%)	50.5	53.3

Source: WEPB Community Telephone and Street Surveys 1995.

RECOGNITION

Another encouraging result is that about half of the people who had heard of the beat policing project in West End thought that they could recognise the beat officers if they saw them. It is considered essential for the project's success that the beat officers are widely recognised by the community, so that they can establish and sustain a good working relationship with its members.

VISIBILITY

Of those respondents who recognised the beat officers, most had seen one of the beat officers at least once during the previous month (July 1995). Table 6 shows the number of times that survey respondents recalled seeing the beat officers.

TABLE 6 - NUMBER OF TIMES RESPONDENTS RECALL SEEING BEAT OFFICERS IN THE PREVIOUS MONTH

	Telephone Survey (n=28)	Street Survey (n=85)
Not at all (%)	17.9	20.0
Once or twice (%)	53.6	41.2
Three or more (%)	28.6	38.8

Source: WEPB Community Telephone and Street Surveys 1995.

COMMUNITY PERCEPTION OF APPROACHABILITY

It was expected that the presence of beat officers would promote greater interaction between the police and the community in West End. Because the beat officers patrolled mostly by foot within a relatively small geographic area, the project was designed to maximise the opportunities that the public would have to approach and get to know the officers.

Respondents in the community telephone and street surveys were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a number of statements designed to gauge the approachability of police. Overall, the surveys found that beat area residents consider the police in West End to be very approachable. Table 7 shows the results of the telephone and street surveys.

TABLE 7 - MEASURES OF POLICE APPROACHABILITY IN WEST END

	TELEPHONE SURVEY (n=99)			STREET SURVEY (n=275)		
	Strongly Agree or Agree (%)	Strongly Disagree or Disagree (%)	Don't know or other (%)	Strongly Agree or Agree (%)	Strongly Disagree or Disagree (%)	Don't know or other (%)
I find police officers fairly easy to talk to	84.4	5.2	10.4	80.8	11.6	7.6
The police officers I know are friendly people	77.6	4.0	18.4	75.7	5.5	18.8
Police in this area are very approachable	69.4	9.2	21.4	63.1	4.7	32.2

Source: WEPB Community Telephone and Street Surveys 1995.

Note: Questions refer to police in general, rather than the beat officers in particular.

FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

In order to increase levels of community satisfaction, the beat officers were encouraged to foster good relations with:

- the media
- the business community
- community groups and government agencies.

MEDIA

It was considered by the WEPB evaluation committee that fostering good relations with the print and electronic media would be an important focus of the pilot project. Throughout the period of the pilot, the beat officers encouraged and assisted the media at every opportunity to promote community knowledge and awareness about the beat. As a result, the WEPB was reasonably well covered by the media. The beat officers were the subject of several newspaper articles and featured in radio and television interviews. For example, the beat officers were filmed and interviewed at length about the WEPB on the popular Channel 7 national children's show Saturday Morning Disney.

THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The WEPB is located in the heart of the CBD. The area is well known for the diversity of business enterprise and plays host to a wide range of community service agencies. In addition, the beat area includes several major city attractions such as the Queensland Museum and the State Library; and is adjacent to the new Convention Centre and the popular South Bank family park.

In an effort to develop better relations with the business community, each of the beat officers has made an effort to introduce themselves to business proprietors and staff as well as making themselves known to West End's large contingent of government and non-government agencies. In addition, the beat officers are actively involved with the West End Traders Association and regularly attend meetings of this group to discuss various issues.

Some evidence that the WEPB is enjoying good relations with the business community can be found in the community surveys. As has been mentioned previously, most of the respondents to the community street survey were business people such as shop-owners or employees of community service agencies located in the CBD. The street survey also found that less than seven per cent of those surveyed were dissatisfied with the WEPB as a policing strategy for the area. This is a very good indication that the WEPB is strongly supported by the business community in West End.

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Over the period of the pilot the beat officers have attempted to identify and become involved with many of the community groups and government agencies operating in the West End beat area. Some of the groups and agencies contacted by the beat officers were:

- Aboriginal and Islander Health Youth Service
- Aboriginal Child Care Agency
- Aboriginal Legal Service
- Brisbane Migrant Resource Centre
- Catholic Prison Ministry
- Drug Arm
- Murri Mura Aboriginal Corporation
- Prisoner's Legal Service
- Vietnamese Women's Association
- Women's Legal Service
- Youth Affairs Network - Qld.

In addition, the beat officers were also involved in regular meetings with the Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee to provide updates on the progress of the implementation of recommendations arising out of the "Yock Inquiry".

During the evaluation, a representative of the Murri Mura Aboriginal Corporation was interviewed to determine the level of support for the WEPB by the West End Aboriginal community. The view of this representative may not reflect the view of all others in the community. However, according to this person, the general feeling is that most members of West End's Aboriginal community believe that the WEPB has been a great success. In particular, some members of the Aboriginal community feel that the beat officers are a point of contact with the police and a valuable source of information. The community also believes that the beat officers are going out of their way to improve relations between the police and the Aboriginal community and, as a result, are well respected and trusted.

A similar interview was conducted with a prominent member of Brisbane's Vietnamese community. This person also stated that there is a general sense that the WEPB project has increased the level of confidence and communication between the police and the Vietnamese community in West End. Of particular note is the effort by one of the beat officers to acquire a basic understanding of the Vietnamese language. This initiative has not gone unnoticed in West End, and is particularly appreciated by some of the older members of the Vietnamese community.

PROMOTING A MORE PERSONALISED SERVICE

It was expected that the presence of a police beat in West End would improve the residents' evaluation of policing services. In particular, it was felt that the WEPB would provide beat area residents with a more personalised service.

In order to assess whether beat policing promoted a personalised policing service, a service users survey was conducted by the QPS in September 1995. The survey was designed to measure the quality and level of satisfaction with the police services that West End residents received. The survey asked several questions about whether the beat officers were helpful, if they provided a quick response, or if the beat officers gave appropriate advice to beat area residents.

Table 8 compares the assessments of policing services by beat area residents.

TABLE 8 – BEAT AREA RESIDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF POLICE SERVICES IN WEST END

	SERVICED BY BEAT OFFICERS (n=33)	SERVICED BY NON- BEAT OFFICERS (n=117)
	Percentage Reporting Yes	
Overall, were they helpful?	93.5	94.7
Did they come quickly enough?	85.1	80.1
Did they tell you what they would do in response to your call?	77.7	80.9
Were you satisfied with the way that the police handled the matter?	93.5	89.3
Did you have any other contact with the police about the incident?	42.4	32.0
Did the police ever tell you eventually what happened?	32.0	30.9

Source: WEPB Service Users Survey 1995.

HELPFULNESS

Survey respondents were asked whether, on the last occasion they called police, they found them helpful or not. Table 8 shows that over 93 per cent of those serviced by the beat officers and nearly 95 per cent of those serviced by the general duties police found the officers to be helpful.

RESPONSE

Generally, there was little difference between beat officers and general duties officers on a measure of their "responsiveness" to a problem. Around 85 per cent of those serviced by the beat officers and 80 per cent of those serviced by general duties police felt that the police response was "quick enough". It should be noted that respondents surveyed in West End rated the general duties police significantly higher for this measure than those surveyed for the Toowoomba Police Beat Pilot Project evaluation. This may be due to the relatively compact area of West End Police Division which facilitates a rapid response by police.

Table 8 also shows that close to 78 per cent of those surveyed in the beat area said that the beat officer told them what they would do about their complaint or request for assistance. The general duties officers were given a similar rating.

GIVING APPROPRIATE ADVICE AND EMPATHY

Respondents to the service users survey were asked whether, on the last occasion they called the police, they found that the officers were generally sympathetic to their problem and understood how they felt. There were no significant differences between the respondents' assessment of beat officers and their assessment of general duties police. In both cases, nearly 90 per cent of respondents felt that the police were sympathetic and understood how they were feeling.

There was no specific question in the surveys that asked whether respondents felt that the police officer provided them with appropriate advice. However, the service users survey asked respondents how satisfied they were with the way the officers handled their particular complaint or request for assistance. Table 8 shows that there was little difference between the two samples with the police scoring high in both cases.

FOLLOW-UP

Respondents to the service users survey were also asked questions about the follow-up action taken by the initial responding police officer. The data indicate that less than half of the respondents had subsequent contact with, or were informed of, the final outcome by the original responding police officer. There was no significant difference in the follow-up actions taken by the beat officers and general duties police.

SUMMARY

Three surveys were conducted in West End to assess whether the WEPB had increased the level of community satisfaction with beat policing as a major policing strategy in West End. Two of the surveys focused on measuring the level of awareness, understanding and satisfaction with policing

strategies generally, and beat policing specifically. The other survey measured the quality of policing service that was actually provided by the beat officers to beat area residents during the course of the pilot. Some of the key findings were:

- All three of the surveys conducted for this evaluation revealed very high levels of satisfaction with both beat officers and general duties police in West End.
- Slightly less than 50 per cent of those surveyed said that they were aware of the WEPB.
- About one-half of those surveyed who were aware of the WEPB said that they would be able to recognise one of the beat officers. Around 82 per cent said that they had seen one of the beat officers at least once during the preceding month.
- An analysis of the service users survey found little difference between the beat officers and general duties police in terms of their helpfulness, response, follow-up and the provision of appropriate advice or empathy.



CHAPTER 6

POLICE AND COMMUNITY PROBLEM SOLVING

This chapter examines the extent to which the project has succeeded in incorporating problem solving as a major focus of the WEPB pilot. The chapter also examines whether problem solving was an effective policing strategy for use in the beat area and includes a brief discussion about using repeat calls for service for problem solving.

WHAT IS PROBLEM SOLVING?

The *Toowoomba Beat Policing Pilot Project: Main Evaluation Report* describes problem solving as 'an approach to policing where responding to calls for service is seen as the first step of a process, rather than as an end in itself' (1995c, p. 43). The report goes on to say that problem solving is a style of response where police go beyond individual crimes and calls for service, and take on the underlying problems that created them.

In evaluating the WEPB pilot, two main indicators were used to measure the extent to which the strategies used for the pilot were successful in achieving the problem solving objective. These were:

- attitudes of beat officers, police management and other police to the problem solving focus
- documented problem solving case studies.

THE COMMITMENT TO A PROBLEM SOLVING FOCUS

Generally, there has been a high degree of support for the project's problem solving focus. In fact, problem solving activities are seen by most as the key difference between the work of general duties officers and beat officers. Interviews conducted with beat officers clearly show a strong commitment to developing and participating in problem solving activities:

... the best part is the ability to, to get involved with the community and try to problem solve ... I think that is something that hopefully the evaluation will show to the senior officers of the police service. (interviews, beat officer).

... the project centres around empowering the community and the individual police officers involved to accept a sense of ownership and responsibility for solving problems in the West End area. To me that is the way that policing should be going. (interviews, beat officer).

Problem solving was also seen by police management as an important aspect of the WEPB pilot project:

... what makes beat policing and problem solving so successful in my mind, is the proactivity of it ... it's not a new concept to policing [problem solving], but it's certainly new to that area and the more that project grew while I had command of it, the more that you could see the fruits of it ... (interviews, commissioned officer)

In contrast to the findings of the Toowoomba Beat Policing Pilot Project, which showed that general duties police were somewhat ambivalent to problem solving, the general duties police interviewed during the WEPB evaluation expressed strong support for problem solving activities:

I think it [problem solving] can do a lot of things. For example, if there is a problem, lets say a particular Housing Commission flat which is consistently causing problems, you could actually assist in having them relocated to a position that is suitable for all parties concerned – so it can stop, you know, like squabbling between neighbours. I think it can be used for a lot of things, a lot of different things. We often think about the potential of problem solving and can see it doing a great deal.

EXAMPLES OF PROBLEM SOLVING

This section provides three problem solving case studies. The cases selected were chosen because they provided good examples of the type of problem solving activities undertaken by the beat officers.

PROBLEM SOLVING CASE STUDY 1

Background to the Problem

It was noted by the beat officers that a commercial premises had been broken into on four separate occasions over a two-week period.

Beat Officer Response

Beat officers attended the premises and spoke to the management.

Nature of the Problem

On each occasion the premises had been broken into by prying open windows along one wall of the building. Although repair was made after each break-in, the offender merely moved along to the next window at the first opportunity and entered the building again in the same manner as the previous offence.

Problem Solving Strategy

The beat officers conducted a safety audit and advised the owners how to properly secure the remaining windows.

Outcome

Since the problem solving strategy was implemented, no further break-ins have occurred.

PROBLEM SOLVING CASE STUDY 2

Background to the Problem

An officer of a welfare agency contacted beat officers to inform them that an elderly woman from a non English-speaking background was continually being harassed by a male tenant who lived in the flat above her.

Beat Officer Response to the Problem

The beat officers in the company of the welfare officer spoke to the elderly woman to discuss her concerns and advise her of what the police could do to assist her.

Nature of the Problem

The elderly woman felt intimidated because the upstairs male tenant would constantly be making loud noises and would occasionally drop things over the balcony which would land on her back verandah. It was also discovered that the upstairs tenant suffered from a mental condition which made it difficult to reason with him.

Problem Solving Strategy

The beat officers:

- advised the welfare officer to contact the Housing Commission and inform them of the problem
- assured the elderly woman that the police were available to assist her at any time.

Outcome

The Housing Commission relocated the nuisance tenant. The elderly woman has not reported any further problems.

PROBLEM SOLVING CASE STUDY 3

Background to the Problem

An elderly male Aboriginal with a long history of persistent alcohol abuse regularly caused disturbances on the footpath in West End CBD.

Beat Officer Response to the Problem

The beat officers spoke to a number of business owners in an effort to determine the nature of the problem as well as speaking with various welfare agencies in West End to explore possible solutions to the problem.

Nature of the Problem

The elderly man had a tendency to become severely intoxicated and subjected any passerby to verbal abuse or disorderly behaviour. This individual was also suspected of suffering from a mental condition but had refused treatment in the past.

Problem Solving Strategy

The beat officers:

- had the individual psychiatrically assessed (it was found that he suffered some brain damage but not sufficient enough to render him unfit to be in the community)
- contacted Aboriginal welfare agencies and requested that they assist the individual.

Outcome

The individual subsequently moved out of West End to a location where it is believed that he is currently receiving treatment from an Aboriginal health agency.

Generally, the problem solving activities that were undertaken by the beat officers during the early phases of the pilot project were in response to relatively "simple" problems, such as providing a business owner with security advice or assisting an elderly lady with a nuisance tenant. However, as the project continued to develop, the beat officers were being asked to deal, on a regular basis, with more difficult issues. For example, the third case study is a fairly typical example of one of West End's more complex problems. In this instance, the strategy used by the beat officers was not simply to arrest the individual and thereby temporarily remove the problem, but rather, involved seeking a longer-term solution to the problem in consultation with Aboriginal welfare agencies.

REPEAT CALLS FOR SERVICE

Unlike the Toowoomba Beat Policing Pilot Project, using repeat calls for service was not identified as a specific strategy to be used in achieving the problem solving objective. However, it became clear to the beat officers during the pilot project that examining calls for service information was an important tool to use in problem solving. In particular, analysing calls for service provided the beat officers with the means to identify addresses that were continually the focus of police attention. By having the beat officers develop problem solving activities focusing on repeat calls for service, it was felt that a number of problems could be eliminated in the beat area and the overall demand for police services reduced.

Table 9 shows the number of identifiable "repeat" calls for service that were received from 471 addresses located in the beat area.

**TABLE 9 - CALLS FOR SERVICE - REPEAT ADDRESSES IN THE BEAT AREA
(FEBRUARY 1995 - OCTOBER 1995)**

Calls per address	1	2 - 4	5 - 9	More than 10	Total
Number of addresses	276	161	22	12	471
Number of calls for service	276	395	136	191	998
% of total calls for service	28	40	14	19	100

Source: WEPB database.

Note: Table excludes 891 calls for service that contained insufficient detail to complete the repeat address analysis.

The keys points from Table 9 are:

- the largest proportion of calls for service (395 calls or 40%) originated from 161 addresses which had called the police between two and four times during the pilot project
- 22 addresses in the beat area called the police on 136 occasions
- 12 addresses in the beat area accounted for 19 per cent of the total calls for service workload, generating 191 calls for police assistance over the nine-month period of the pilot.

This section presents two problem solving case studies involving repeat calls for service. The first case study is an example of using repeat address analysis to solve a law and order problem at a boarding house; the second involves a business premises that had a history of "false" burglary alarms. In this latter example, the beat officers focused their problem solving efforts on decreasing the number of false alarms in an effort to reduce the overall demand on scarce police resources. Considering that in 1993 the QPS estimated that the cost of having the police respond to a false alarm was estimated at \$75.41 per call⁵, reducing the number of times that police are required to attend false alarms of this nature would achieve a substantial cost saving.

⁵ Source: QPS Police Service Policy on False Alarms 93/11 - Project Implementation Plan.

REPEAT CALLS FOR SERVICE CASE STUDY 1

Background to the Problem

A boarding house in the beat had a long history of police involvement mostly relating to minor offences. Over the nine-month period a total of 27 calls for service originated from the address.

Beat Officer Response to the Problem

Beat officers contacted the owner of the premises and advised him of the frequent attendance of police. The officers explained the nature of some of the calls to the owner who advised that he would ascertain for himself what the problem was.

Nature of the Problem

The landlord at the boarding house was not providing adequate supervision over the unruly behaviour of the boarders and, as a result, this atmosphere attracted persons who were more likely to cause trouble.

Problem Solving Strategy

The beat officers had the owner accept that a "problem" existed at the boarding house and that he had primary responsibility for finding an appropriate solution.

Outcome

The owner determined that the landlord was not capable of carrying out proper supervision and was subsequently replaced with a more responsible person. Since the problem solving strategy was implemented the calls for service to that address have reduced from an average of five per month to less than one per month.

REPEAT CALLS FOR SERVICE CASE STUDY 2

Background to the Problem

An analysis of calls for service revealed that the police had attended a particular business premises on 12 separate occasions over a six-month period in response to a burglar alarm.

Beat Officer Response to the Problem

Beat officers contacted the alarm monitoring company and also spoke to the owner of the premises.

Nature of the Problem

The premises were patrolled by dogs which were entering the building and setting off the alarm. It was also determined that the premises was infested with cockroaches which occasionally activated the alarm.

The alarm company also advised the beat officers that it was the policy of the alarm monitoring company to call the police if the owner or other person could not be contacted after hours. The alarm company suggested that if the owner of the premises supplied additional after hours contact numbers it would reduce the number of times the police would need to be called.

Problem Solving Strategy

The beat officers obtained an assurance from the owner to:

- keep the dogs away from the alarm sensors
- spray premises for cockroaches
- provide the alarm company with additional after hours contact persons.

Outcome

The problem strategy has only recently been implemented. The number of calls for service in response to a burglar alarm at this location is expected to decline.

SUMMARY

The second major objective of the WEPB pilot was to encourage police and community problem solving. The main strategy used to achieve the problem solving objective was for the beat officers to make contact with various individuals, special interest groups and agencies to identify problems and develop appropriate responses to those problems.

The evaluation found that there was a high degree of support, and a strong commitment on the part of the beat officers, police management and other police, to the problem solving focus of the WEPB. The evaluation also found that during the course of the pilot project the beat officers made substantial progress in identifying a range of community problems and developing appropriate problem solving-based solutions.

CHAPTER 7

INCREASING BEAT OFFICER JOB SATISFACTION

The third major objective of the pilot was to determine if the WEPB enhanced the job satisfaction of the beat officers. It was felt by the evaluation steering committee that, if the beat officers were given the flexibility to explore new and more creative policing strategies, they would feel a greater degree of professional accomplishment as police officers and a greater sense of personal fulfilment as individuals.

The strategy employed in the pilot project to increase the level of job satisfaction for beat officers was comprised of three elements. The beat officers would be:

- given autonomy
- encouraged to exercise discretion
- granted flexibility, time and additional resources.

It should be noted that analysing the impact of the WEPB on an individual's own sense of job satisfaction is very difficult, because of the differing experiences and expectations of the various beat officers.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF JOB SATISFACTION

Most of the beat officers interviewed for this evaluation felt that their level of job satisfaction had increased during their involvement with the WEPB:

... it's been worth it for me, I've learned a lot of things ...

I think personally beat policing has been a satisfying experience because to me it's the style that I adopted to carry out policing. My last operational policing position was in a small country town ... even though West End is an urban community, it can still be policed in that style.

... you get satisfaction too, because they say thank you. You never hear that being general police officers ... the feed back from the community is important - it gives you a real sense of satisfaction.

... it was a very positive experience for me - very positive, the community thought we were wonderful ... They felt more secure and they were very happy to have us there. We were more approachable - it's not them against us type of situation - it's the police working with the community.

Not all of the beat officers interviewed for this evaluation believed that their involvement in the pilot project increased their own level of job satisfaction. In fact, one of the officers who was seconded to the WEPB viewed their own involvement in the project in quite negative terms:

... It's not where I would be happy to stay ... I think the worst is not being accepted by the mainstream of police officers as being a worthwhile part of policing ... to be sort of marginalised and basically be thought of as a soft option.

Those beat officers interviewed who did not believe that beat policing increased their level of job satisfaction conceded that their negative assessment was related to the fact that they did not see themselves as being suitable or motivated enough to be beat officers. This is reflected in the following comments:

... on the beat you've got to be self started, you've got to be self motivated, you've got to have a good attitude, you've got to understand "[Who] are the public? What they want? What do I want? How can I do it?" To do that you've got to be a pretty genuine sort of person . . . or you wouldn't get the results.

I think [beat policing] needs a special kind of person who is highly motivated within themselves and I'm not that type of person . . . I mean there are people out there that this job would suit right down to the ground, it's just that I'm probably not one of them.

On balance, it can be said that most of the officers involved in the project believed that beat policing was a more rewarding experience than general duties policing, and that beat policing provided them with a greater sense of personal satisfaction.

CHAPTER 8

INCREASING THE ACCEPTANCE OF BEAT POLICING BY OTHER POLICE PERSONNEL

This chapter focuses on assessing whether the WEPB increased the acceptance of beat policing by other police personnel stationed at West End. The two main strategies designed for this purpose were:

- locating the beat officers in West End Police Station to increase the level of interaction with other police
- encouraging the beat officers to share information with other police about criminal activity or suspicious persons, and to assist whenever possible with inquiries, problems, and particular operations such as drug searches and special community events.

This chapter relies mainly on the information obtained in interviews with beat officers, general duties police and police management.

INTERACTION BETWEEN BEAT OFFICERS AND OTHER POLICE

Overall, the general duties police stationed at West End and police managers at the division and district levels felt strongly that the WEPB had succeeded in promoting positive interaction between beat officers and other police. The effect of the project was described during interviews as follows:

One very important angle was the acceptance by other police of the West End Beat. The Toowoomba project for instance, in my mind anyway, doesn't have a great acceptance from the general police . . . (interviews, commissioned officer)

We certainly haven't had any problems with our beat officers, we get along like a house on fire . . . we don't have a different attitude towards them whatsoever . . . (interviews, general duties officer)

The relationship with general duties police has been very good. There hasn't been any problems . . . because the general police and the beat police are working in the same building and they see each other on almost a daily basis, they have developed friendships . . . (interviews, non-commissioned officer)

The best feature is the way the beat cooperates with the station staff. Whilst they have their own charter, they have in fact assisted us to be more effective ourselves. (interviews, non-commissioned officer)

Similar comments were made by the beat officers during their interviews:

The cooperation between the station police and the beat police has been really good . . .

. . . one of the biggest drawbacks I suppose to any sort of innovation within the police service is how that innovation is going to be accepted by the general duties police officer . . . I think that if you don't include that in the way that you carry out a project, then you're destined to fail to a certain extent . . . the major benefit that has arisen out of having the beat within a police station has been that they've been able to see what we do and be able to associate with us and us with them, so I suppose that the tendency for police officers to be cynical because they don't know what's going on has been alleviated . . .

SHARING INFORMATION WITH OTHER POLICE

The second strategy used to increase the acceptance of beat policing by other police personnel involved encouraging the beat officers to share any information they received about criminal or suspicious activity with other police. In addition, the beat officers were asked to assist other police, whenever possible, with inquiries, problems or particular operations such as drug searches and special community events.

It was recognised by the evaluation steering committee that the beat officers needed to balance the amount of assistance given to other police versus the amount of time devoted to achieving the more traditional and, in some cases, the less operationally orientated objectives of the WEPB.

The development of a close working relationship between the beat officers and general duties police has resulted in a positive working environment where information between the beat officers and other police is freely exchanged. Perhaps most importantly, the free exchange of information and occasional assistance provided to other police by the beat officers has been seen by other police as making a significant contribution to the operational effectiveness of the West End Police Division. Some of the comments from the interviews included:

The good thing about the beat and the general duties station is that there is good communication between the two. I know for a fact that I act off information that they [the beat officers] get for me on other areas and [they] act on information that we get from anything in the beat area. We feed off each other . . . (interviews, general duties officer)

I think everyone works together quite well. I know that if I am out there I keep an eye on them. On numerous occasions they have jumped in the car with me to give me a hand with a job because no one else has been available . . . Like I said, we treat them like operational police officers here, because they basically are. The only difference they do it on foot and we do it in cars. (interviews, general duties officer)

SUMMARY

Overall, the police officers who were interviewed reported that the WEPB had promoted positive interaction between beat officers and other police. This success in promoting positive interaction was largely attributed to the integration of the WEPB with the general duties patrol located at West End Police Station.

The evaluation also found that the development of a close working relationship between the beat officers and other police at West End had resulted in a positive working environment where the beat officers and other police freely exchanged information. In addition, the beat officers are seen by other police as making a significant contribution to the operational effectiveness of the West End Police Division.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter summarises the findings of the evaluation and discusses the key issues which have been identified.

KEY FINDINGS

The pilot project has demonstrated that progress is being made towards increasing the level of community satisfaction with policing services in the West End beat area, encouraging police and community problem solving, increasing job satisfaction and increasing acceptance of beat policing by other police.

The key findings of the evaluation are:

- *Integrating the WEPB with the West End Police Station.* Integrating the WEPB with the general duties police stationed at West End has been very successful. The evaluation found a high degree of support for operating the beat from West End Police Station. All of the police interviewed felt that integrating the beat with other police units at West End facilitated communication between beat officers and general duties police, and generally improved the overall effectiveness of West End Police Division.
- *The location and size of the beat area.* The focus of the beat on the West End CBD is appropriate. However, the physical size of the beat area needs to be reconsidered. This is largely due to the number of calls for service originating from the beat area, which makes it difficult for the beat officers to be the main providers of policing services.
- *The work of the beat officers.* Overall, the beat officers have been engaged in the types of activities that were envisaged in the original WEPB pilot project proposal. These activities involve attending to calls for service, patrolling, problem solving and performing a range of activities that contribute to the development of a high community profile.
- *Resourcing the WEPB.* Due to a special State Government budget allocation, the WEPB was sufficiently financed during the pilot and had adequate material resources.
- *Human resources.* Although the WEPB experienced several problems that were unavoidable, the issue of staffing the beat was handled poorly during the period of the pilot. In particular, the WEPB seemed to lack stability which made it more difficult for the project to achieve some desired outcomes.
- *Using information: the WEPB database.* The development of a calls for service database to drive the activities of the beat officers is one of the major achievements of the pilot project. The WEPB database has demonstrated that it is possible for beat officers to collect and analyse calls for service data at the local level. When used for activities such as problem solving, the database has shown great potential as a strategic or tactical tool.

- *Officer safety.* Officer safety remains an important concern in an area such as West End. However, during the period of the pilot, officer safety was not seen as a major issue by the beat officers. Broadly speaking, the beat officers felt that the existing safeguards, such as patrolling in pairs after sunset, were adequate to ensure the safety of the beat officer.
- *Increasing community satisfaction with policing strategies in West End.* Three community surveys were conducted in West End to monitor the impact of the project. Little difference was found between the beat officers and general duties police in terms of the level of community satisfaction with the provision of policing services. In both cases the levels of community satisfaction were very high.
- *Encouraging police and community problem solving.* The evaluation found that there was a high degree of support for the problem solving focus of the WEPB. Considerable progress has been made in identifying community problems and developing appropriate problem solving-based solutions.
- *Increasing the level of job satisfaction for beat officers.* Due to the short length of the pilot project this objective could not be fully assessed. However, most of the beat officers believed that beat policing was a more rewarding experience than general duties policing.
- *Increasing the level of acceptance of beat policing by other police.* Overall, the WEPB promoted positive interaction between beat officers and other police, largely due to the integration of the WEPB with the general duties patrol. This resulted in a positive working environment and encouraged the free exchange of information between the beat officers and other police.

ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED

Although the WEPB has demonstrated considerable progress towards achieving the objectives set down for the pilot project, there are several important issues which need to be addressed. These concern:

- the size of the beat area
- human resources
- the work of the beat officers
- the information focus of the project.

THE SIZE OF THE BEAT AREA

When the WEPB was established, the aim was to locate the beat officers in an area where their presence would yield the maximum benefit. Although the decision to focus on the West End CBD was correct, the current workload within the beat area has made it difficult for the beat officers to be seen by the beat area residents, and other police, as being the main service providers for the beat area. As part of the process of moving from a pilot project to an ongoing program, the size of the WEPB needs to be reconsidered.

There are three possible options which the QPS should examine:

Option 1. The current beat area boundaries could be substantially reduced to include only the area in the immediate vicinity of the West End CBD. This major reduction in the size of the beat would increase the ability of the beat officers to provide a quick response to calls for service, raise the profile of the beat officers in the CBD, and generally make the calls for service workload more manageable for the beat officers.

Option 2. The second option for consideration would see the current beat area split into two beats of roughly equal size, using Boundary Street as the dividing point. Under this option, the staffing allocation of the WEPB would have to be increased to four members. The four members would make up two teams comprising of two beat officers each. The teams would be assigned to one of the beat areas and share the responsibility, with the other team, for providing police services in the West End CBD. If this recommendation were to be implemented, it is likely that the hours of coverage in the beat area would increase, the volume of calls for service and the size of the beats would become more manageable, and police services to the key area of the West End CBD would improve.

Option 3. The third option would be for the QPS to consider substantially increasing the establishment and overall responsibilities of the WEPB. In considering the third option, the QPS could revisit the original CJC/QPS proposal for implementing beat policing in West End. The recommendations contained within this proposal called for the partial realignment of the West End and Dutton Park Police Divisions to accommodate the establishment of six neighbourhood beats in West End. The original joint CJC/QPS proposal also recommended:

- moving the general duties mobile patrol at West End to Dutton Park, with the West End Police Division to be made an 'exclusive' beat division
- beat officers would primarily work alone under the direct supervision of a Sergeant of Police responsible for the operation of all beat areas in West End
- beat officers would become the principal providers of policing services within their individual beat areas.

HUMAN RESOURCES

One of the major concerns expressed by police management, beat officers and other police relates to the issue of staffing the WEPB. Throughout the period of the pilot, the WEPB experienced numerous problems due to human resource issues. In particular, the WEPB seemed to lack stability mainly due to the high turnover of staff during the project.

Although most of these problems were unavoidable, the WEPB needs to review a number of human resource issues. The main points which should be addressed are:

- The establishment of an appropriate staffing allocation model for the WEPB.
- The development of a suitable selection criteria for beat officers. Any criteria that is developed for the WEPB should be strictly adhered to in selecting the beat officer. In particular, it is important that a project such as the WEPB have experienced, trained and mature officers who are committed to the project for the long term.

THE WORK OF THE BEAT OFFICERS

When the WEPB pilot project was established, the original intention was for the beat officers to have a major role in providing policing services to the beat area. The role would include crime prevention, general patrolling, responding to calls for service and gathering criminal intelligence.

The WEPB was also designed to incorporate a problem solving orientation into the normal duties of the beat officers. The evaluation found considerable support for the problem solving focus and evidence suggesting that the beat officers were making substantial progress in identifying and resolving significant community problems. The emphasis on problem solving should continue to be a focus of the WEPB. Considerable benefits could be gained from assigning a higher priority to problem solving in the beat area. Particular emphasis should be placed on addressing repeat calls for service as a component of the problem solving focus.

THE INFORMATION FOCUS OF THE PROJECT

The WEPB has demonstrated that it is possible to increase the operational effectiveness and efficiency of beat officers by using information to drive their activities. To use information in this manner it was necessary to develop a specialised database for use by the beat officers. The database was designed to collect certain specific categories of calls for service information such as the date, time, name, location and nature of an event. By using the database, the beat officers have been able to access a valuable strategic and tactical tool which greatly assists them in identifying community problems and designing appropriate solutions.

On the negative side, the development of an information focus has been criticised by some police officers as being excessively time consuming.

Many of the manual tasks associated with the operation of the database, such as the manual loading of calls for service data via another computer application have been streamlined, but the time that beat officers spend maintaining the database could be further reduced by:

- exploring the feasibility of using the new QPS Network to provide the WEPB with calls for service data on a daily basis
- requesting assistance from the QPS Information Systems Branch to develop applications and procedures which allow for more efficient and effective use of the database
- providing the beat officers with the periodic assistance of an administration officer for the purpose of reducing the time that beat officers have to spend on tasks related to maintaining the database
- giving beat officers a basic level of training in the use of databases.

CONCLUSION

The main conclusion of this chapter is that the WEPB pilot project has achieved some worthwhile gains within a limited time frame and the concept is worth persisting with. However, the project requires more time to take effect in the community so that the WEPB can fully demonstrate its operational effectiveness.

In the CJC's view, there are several modifications which, if implemented, would improve the overall effectiveness of the project. In particular, now that the project has reached the end of its pilot phase, it is an appropriate time to review the original design of the WEPB to ensure that:

- beat area boundaries are appropriate
- current staffing arrangements are adequate
- the operational effectiveness and efficiency of the beat officers is maximised.

It is also important that the QPS review the objectives and strategies of the project on an ongoing basis, to ensure that they remain relevant and meet the needs of the West End community.

In addition to specific suggestions to enhance the effectiveness of the project, the key findings of this evaluation are relevant to the design of other beat policing projects. As confirmed also by the Toowoomba project, program success depends on:

- careful planning prior to the commencement of the project to ensure that the project is located in a suitable area
- selecting police officers with relevant skills who are committed to the goals of the project
- establishing a set of realistic and clearly defined objectives that can be achieved and measured in the short term
- strong organisational support for the program and recognition that beat policing is an effective and viable policing strategy for an area.



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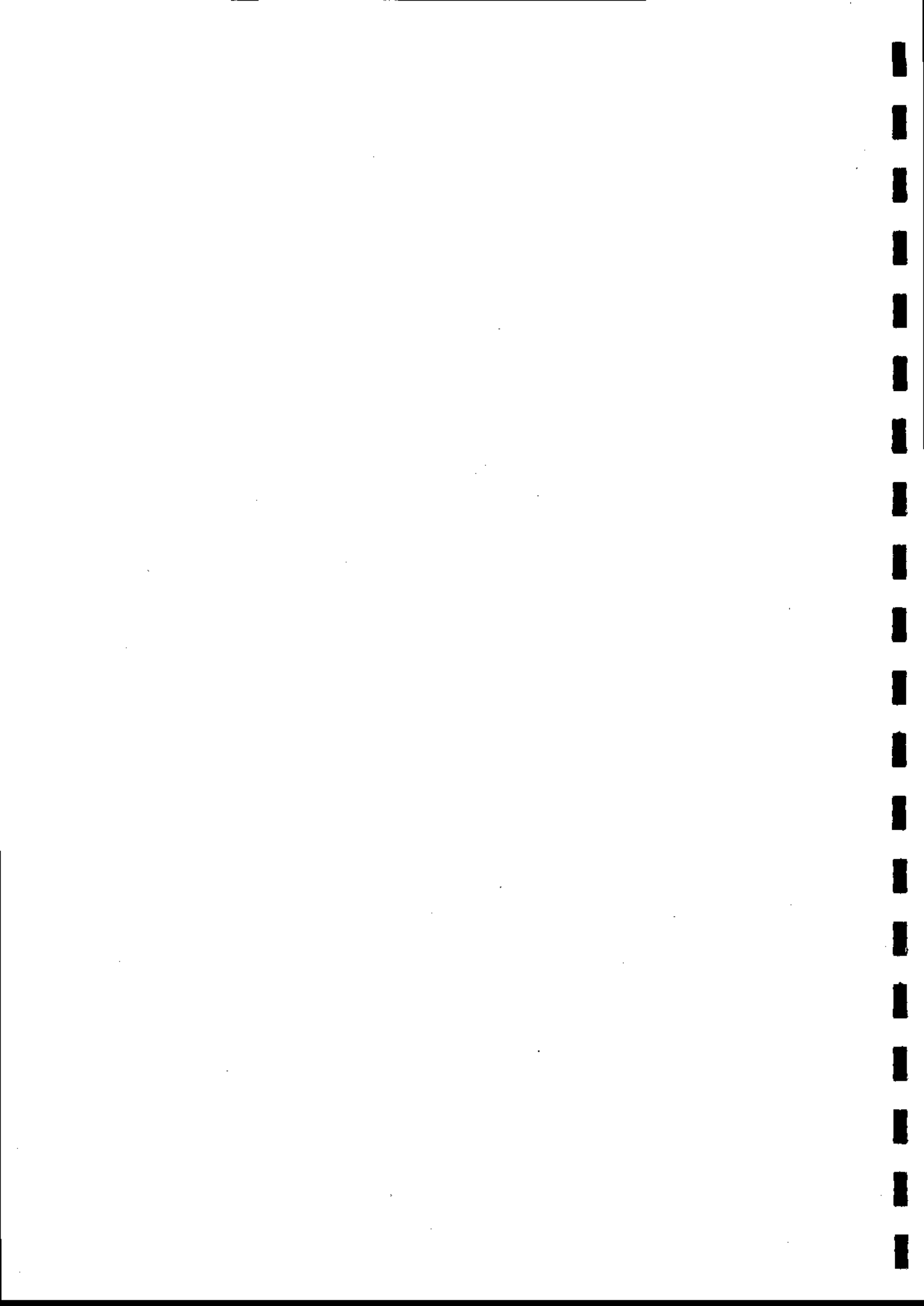
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APPENDIX

'POLICE BEAT CONCEPT - WEST END'

OBJECTIVES

To promote feelings of community safety by:

- reducing the incidence of crime
- increasing police visibility within the beat area
- increasing police/community interaction
- encouraging joint police/community problem solving.

BACKGROUND

West End is an area of Brisbane that presents unique challenges for the provision of effective and efficient policing strategies.

The West End Police Division encompasses an area of approximately 3km². It boasts a population of approximately 10,000 people of which 50 per cent reside in rental and serviced room style accommodation. Many ethnic communities are represented in the area with a significant number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, Greek, Italian as well as an ever increasing Vietnamese population. Relations between these groups have at times been underscored by tension and it is vital that the Police Service establish and maintain effective communication networks with these diverse groups.

The Police beat concept will assist in this communication issue as well as providing overt evidence that the Service is doing something constructive in addressing the problems of the area.

NAME

The initial project will be named 'West End Police Beat'.

THEME

'Visibility' and 'approachability'.

PILOT

It is intended to conduct a pilot of the program in the West End business district for an initial period of six months.

* Document as at 5 December 1994.

PERSONNEL

Senior Constable P.W.F. WESENER, Reg.No. 4598 and Constable J.J. LOFTUS, Reg.No. 6610, have been selected from expressions of interest received to operate the beat. They will be assisted by members of the West End Police Division when required. It is envisaged that a member of West End Station will be selected and assist them on a regular basis. This will provide a nucleus with which to extend the concept if required.

EQUIPMENT

The following additional equipment will be supplied:

- three pedal cycles (three pedal cycles have been sponsored by South Bank)
- two sets of lights – front/rear for cycles
- two locks and chains for cycles
- one roll of checked reflectorised tape for cycles
- two bicycle helmets
- two police badges for helmets
- two carry packs for personnel
- two hand held radios
- one battery charger for radios
- one mobile phone
- two pair of sunglasses
- two mini mag-light torches and pouches
- two long batons and rings
- two notebook pouches
- one radio transceiver
- one Apple Mac IIsi computer
- one Hewlett Packard laser printer
- three pair high quality lace up boots
- two reflectorised vests for use during hours of darkness.

EQUIPMENT SECURITY

The three mountain bicycles together with helmets will be located at the West End Police Station. Any damage detected to these is to be noted on the patrol log and Senior Sergeant STANLEY advised.

There is a mobile phone for the use of beat personnel. This is a valuable tool and if used correctly, can greatly enhance the professionalism of the concept. The following procedures must be adopted in relation to its use and security:

- The phone must be stored at the West End Station and left on the battery charger when not required.
- It is to be used only by beat personnel during the performance of beat duties.
- In emergencies requiring the use of the phone, permission is to be sought from the Regional Duty Officer.

- The property sheet is to be completed when taking the phone.
- All calls made are to relate to official police duties. In an endeavour to minimise expenses, please explore the use of other facilities, e.g. police radio. Remember if it is abused the privilege could be lost.
- Any problems experienced with the phone are to be brought to the attention of Senior Sergeant STANLEY.
- When phoning through a CRISP report, do not use the mobile phone as all calls are STD and at times extensive delays can occur with the system. It is envisaged that beat members will use the facilities of complainants for this purpose.

There are two police radios allocated. These radios are to be left in the metal kit box supplied. The batteries are to be left on the charger.

All equipment is to be entered on equipment cards. Any faults/damage is to be noted on the equipment register and action taken to have them repaired.

BUDGET ITEMS

- four Saturday units per fortnight
- four Sunday units per fortnight
- twelve overtime units per fortnight
- an additional \$1,000 will be added to the consumables budget of West End Division.

DESIGNATED BEAT AREA

The Beat Area proposed will be the area bounded by Vulture Street, Grey Street and Riverside Drive.

The demography of this area will include:

1. West End business area.
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community who frequent areas such as Musgrave Park, Oxford Street Hostel, Murri Mura Office in Cordelia Street as well as the area around the Melbourne Hotel.
3. St. Vincent de Paul Hostel, Cordelia/Peel Street.
4. The Brisbane State High School.
5. Grey Street, including the South Brisbane Railway Station.
6. Industrial areas consisting of warehouses/office accommodation.
7. The Sly Fox Hotel.
8. The boardwalk bicycle path from Grey Street Bridge to South Bank.
9. The Convention Centre.
10. The Victoria Bridge with heavy pedestrian traffic from the Casino to the Convention Centre/South Bank.
11. South Brisbane College of T.A.F.E.

This covers a geographical area of approximately 1 km².

DUTIES OF A BEAT PERSONNEL

It is the responsibility of Beat Officers to become the principal Police Service providers within their designated area. Their duties and responsibilities are as follows:

- All beat personnel are to commence and terminate duty at the West End Police Station. They are to report to the Officer in Charge of the shift who will supervise the issuing of equipment and advise on any problem areas identified which need the attention of the staff. At no time are the beat patrol staff to be utilised to fulfil other duties e.g. counter duties or general duty patrols except in special cases and then only with the authority of Inspector BENJAMIN, or the Regional Duty Officer.
- Attend to all allocated jobs that relate to designated area in a professional manner.
- Police the allocated areas in a pro-active and reactive manner.
- The senior member is responsible for the completion of a patrol log which is to be submitted to the Officer in Charge of the shift at West End prior to termination. Copy to be retained by the Beat Section.
- All equipment is to be maintained and any problems brought to the attention of the Officer in Charge of the shift at West End Division.
- The patrol activity is to be divided between foot patrol and bike patrols of the designated area. The senior member of the crew is responsible for the method of patrol unless otherwise directed by the Officer in Charge of West End Division.
- All staff are to endeavour to achieve the objectives.
- All beat personnel are to book on and off with Police Operations immediately commencing and terminating their shifts advising them of their patrol areas, call signs and mobile phone number.
- As the beat patrol will be in direct contact with the people, the furnishing of activity reports is encouraged. This activity alone identifies the persons in the area, discourages any unwanted behaviour and moves possible trouble makers out of the area. The number of activity reports furnished is to be included in the patrol log.
- The beat staff are responsible for the taking of all complaints relating to offences within the designated area when on duty and available.
- Collect criminal intelligence and supply same to the District Crime Manager.
- Maintain a daily diary of duties for evaluation purposes.
- Where possible attend meetings of community groups within the area, e.g. Neighbourhood Watch etc.
- Maintain a highly visible police presence and become known to residents and business.
- Help foster a feeling of safety within the community.

Special Note:

None of the above abrogate any functions, duties or responsibilities required to be attended to by Legislation or Service Policy.

OFFICER SAFETY

The safety of our officers is of paramount importance and each Beat Officer is to strictly comply with the following:

- It is the responsibility of all Beat Officers to advise the Police Communications Centre immediately upon determining that they may require additional police assistance.
- As a matter of general practise, no Beat Officer is to respond to a service demand call at which he or she considers that their personal safety may be at risk. In all such circumstances the Beat Officer is to request additional police assistance forthwith before proceeding further with the matter.
- In the event that a Beat Officer does effect an arrest whilst working alone, it is the responsibility of the Beat Officer to advise Police Communications Centre forthwith, and to request additional police assistance to convey the prisoner to the City Watchhouse.

DUTIES OF SUPERVISOR

- It is the responsibility of the Officer in Charge of West End Division and NCOs who are appointed to supervise Beat Officers to monitor their daily activities, offering advice, guidance and directions where appropriate.
- NCOs appointed to supervise Beat Officers shall be responsible for development on the appropriate P.P.A.s and to monitor C.A.P.S. development.
- It is the responsibility of NCOs who are appointed to supervise Beat Officers to ensure that they comply with Service Standing Orders.
- The Officer in Charge of West End Division is to identify the areas requiring attention and set the objectives for the beat personnel.
- Ensure that all beat personnel commence and terminate duty at the West End Police Station. They are to report to the Officer in Charge of the shift who will supervise the issuing of equipment and advise on any problem areas identified which need the attention of the staff. At no time are the beat patrol staff to be utilised to fulfil other duties e.g. counter duties or general duty patrols except in special cases and then only with the authority of Inspector BENJAMIN, or the Regional Duty Officer.
- Collect data on previous offences committed and collate information for beat staff.
- Ensure incident/intelligence driven patrol system is in place.
- Set the objectives of the beat staff.
- Ensure a roster is prepared and staff are rostered accordingly on a needs basis.
- Be responsible for all equipment allocated to the beat squad.

WORKING HOURS

As the whole concept revolves around 'ownership' and the identification of the particular officers with the designated community, their working hours will need to be flexible.

It is important that they determine their hours of duty in consultation with the Officer in Charge of West End Division to meet the needs of their beat area.

OVERTIME

The Section has a budget of 12 overtime units per fortnight. Up to three hours overtime per officer can be approved by the Officer in Charge of the shift at West End. If it is expected that the overtime will exceed that amount, then the Regional Duty Officer is to be contacted in line with normal procedure.

ROSTERING

The Officer in Charge of West End Division is responsible for the submission of returns for beat personnel. All weekend and overtime units are to be deducted from the special beat allocation and are not to come from the West End allocation.

CORRESPONDENCE

It is the responsibility of each Beat Officer to complete all QPS paperwork for procedural requirements that may be generated as a consequence of response to service calls, or that may arise as a result of the Beat Officer's own investigations or pro-active policing activities.

Correspondence has a bad habit of being put off until tomorrow. The problem is that tomorrow brings more correspondence and the next free tomorrow never comes. In order to address this problem correspondence originating from beat patrol activities is to be attended to immediately commencing the next shift or on a suitable date approved by the beat supervisor. It is to be submitted to the Officer in Charge of West End Division.

TRAINING

It is proposed to send Senior Constable WESENER and Constable LOFTUS to Toowoomba on 1 and 2 December 1994 for preliminary training and to observe at first hand how the Toowoomba Beat Concept operates.

The Southern Region is presently implementing a similar concept at Ipswich and it is planned to conduct a training course of one week's duration for these people. It is envisaged that Senior Constable WESENER and Constable LOFTUS will attend this course. It is also suggested that an officer from West End Division will also attend in order that he or she may be used as a reserve for this project.

OCCURRENCE SHEETS

As Occurrence Sheets are a valuable source of information, all important incidents or newsworthy items are to be included on daily occurrence sheets.

SPECIALISTS UNITS (CIB & JAB)

Beat members are to work in conjunction with specialists sections. Where multiple offences/offenders are detected or other matters of a serious/sensitive/protracted nature assistance from these specialist sections is to be sought. It is defeating the concept if members become directly involved in matters which will necessitate their being absent for their area/s of responsibility for lengthy periods.

MONITORING PROGRESS

The project will be monitored by a committee consisting of Inspector BENJAMIN, Senior Sergeant STANLEY and Ms Maggie BLYTHE of the Research and Co-ordination Division of the Criminal Justice Commission. Chief Superintendent PEARCE will overview from a Regional perspective.

EVALUATION

The following sources/criteria will be utilised:

- Comparison of statistics provided by District – Division Intelligence Section.
- Quantity of criminal intelligence gathered.
- Feedback from community – citizen satisfaction – success in problem solving.
- Service call data from CAD system. Analysis of calls for service data to determine whether pilot project has made any measurable effect on crime and other social problems.
- Police Beat diary maintained by each of the Beat Officers.

COMMAND

The project is under the direct command of Senior Sergeant STANLEY, Officer in Charge of the West End Police Division. Inspector BENJAMIN, Dutton Park Police Complex, is the overall commander.

PUBLIC EDUCATION – MEDIA CAMPAIGN

The success of this concept is dependant upon gaining community support. Strategies to educate and gain community support will include:

- develop close liaison with Police Media Section
- press releases to the electronic and print media

- community consultative committees
- Murri Mura
- briefings to local community leaders
- briefings to police personnel throughout Metropolitan South Region.

COMMENCEMENT DATE

It is envisaged that the pilot will commence on Monday the 5th December 1994 with an official ceremony conducted at the Auditorium, Queensland Cultural Centre, Melbourne Street, South Brisbane.