

KALK BAY AND ST JAMES SRA NPC

PUBLIC SAFETY REVIEW: FEBRUARY 2015

1. Introduction

The KBSJSRA commenced public safety operations in August 2014. The goal of the Safety and Security Portfolio as set out in the SRA's approved Business Plan is "to provide a safe and secure area by deploying contracted security guards that provide a comprehensive service as outlined below." It is important to note that the Business Plan also states that "options will also be considered whereby community safety could be enhanced by alternative or additional means, including by community participation."

The approach to public safety decided on by the SRA was based on foot patrols ("Bobby on the beat") rather than an emphasis on security cameras or other approaches. Accordingly, Mountain Men were contracted to provide the following core public safety services:

- Three trained patrol officers to patrol the SRA on foot by day and four to patrol at night (using bicycles in Kalk Bay at night) operating 24 hours on every day of the year.
- These patrollers to be backed by a dedicated patrol vehicle and a special response team, as well as a mountain observation unit.
- Patrollers to be equipped with two way radios and cell phones linked to the MM operation centre.
- Every property to be passed at least 4 times per day.
- Route tracking monitors to be installed and operated.

This review is therefore largely a review of the effectiveness of this basic approach compared to the practicality and financial implications of alternative options.

Successes and problems have been experienced during the period up to February 2015.

Successes include:

- Thirty one arrests have thus far been made in respect of a range of offences, including theft from or damage to motor vehicles and the recovery of firearms.
- Improved shared intelligence and combined operations with SAPS, Muizenberg, have greatly assisted in combating crime.
- The co-operation and information provided by local residents has also assisted greatly combating crime.

Problems have included the following:

- The first four patrol monitoring and reporting systems used by Mountain Men failed including the latest Bloodhound System, two of which were purchased by the SRA.

- Patrols were not covering all areas regularly, but with experience and training this problem is being eliminated.
- Mountain Men have not had an effective central management system in place, but this has recently been rectified.

The board of directors of the SRA decided in January 2015 that a review of the SRA's practical options for implementing its Public Safety objectives should be conducted in the light of experience gained in the six month period since August 2014 and that recommendations should be made for its consideration. This report by the SRA Public Safety Portfolio is in response to this decision.

2. Public Safety Vision and SWOT Analysis

The first step in this review was to conduct a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis of the SRA. A copy of this analysis is attached (Attachment 1).

For the purpose of this report, the key outcomes of the analysis are:

Vision/Strategy:

The vision and overall strategy of the Public Safety Portfolio is to reduce the opportunities for crime. The principal aim therefore is to prevent crime before it happens wherever possible and to achieve this by installing measures ("barriers") that prevent or discourage crime.

Key Weaknesses:

- The constraints of a small budget (R1.2 million in 2014/2015) that needs to service a large geographic area.
- The absence of a police station in the SRA. This results in the SRA being a lower order "on call" priority for our official SAPS station in Muizenberg and consequently reduces the effectiveness of local crime prevention measures.
- Inertia of majority of residents (but see comment below on strengths)

Key Threats

- The very substantial increase of visitors to the SRA particularly over week-ends and holiday periods has resulted in:
 - the SRA being regarded by criminals and others (e.g. street children) as a "honeypot" of easy pickings and financial gain; and
 - A proliferation of unregulated car guards who often resort to crime
- Increase in vagrancy and mountain dwellers.

Key Strengths and Opportunities:

- Resources (financial and manpower) of the SRA

- Commitment of the SRA management and Ratepayers Association
- Community spirit of some residents. This is not a contradiction of the weakness referred to above. It is a growing strength that has resulted in many significant private public safety initiatives (e.g. Capri Steps, Duignam/Gatesville Road) as well as other initiatives (e.g. Lever Street Park and other garden areas). This community spirit must be developed for reasons explained in this report.
- Good working relationships with SAPS, City Council Law Enforcement, SA National Parks and other public safety services. There is a clear opportunity and need to improve and develop these relationships.
- Limited road access. This strength limits the road entry and access points to the SRA and improves the effectiveness of plate recognition security cameras.

3. Public Safety Options

The following options were considered in order to assess their realistic chances of achieving the goal of preventing opportunities for crime –i.e. the degree to which they are likely to be effective “barriers” to crime. **Recommendations are highlighted in bold type.**

3.1 Security Cameras

There are currently many privately owned and operated security cameras within the SRA. Most are owned and operated by businesses but some are operated by neighbourhood initiatives such as those in Duignam Road and Capri Steps.

Also, Mountain Men have installed a high quality camera at a hot spot in Kalk Bay at their cost and the SRA have paid an amount of R3626.60 to link this camera to MM’s monitoring system. The camera is not permanently in operation but is used as and when needed to observe suspicious behavior.

The Public Safety Portfolio has made extensive investigations into the possible wider use of security cameras at strategic positions throughout the SRA and has also looked into the possibility of replacing the base operating mode of the foot patrols by “saturating” the SRA with up to 40 security cameras, owned privately and by the SRA, and linking these to a central monitoring and response centre operated by the SRA’s public safety contractor. To this end, a mapping of possible locations and a cost analysis has been done.

However, practical experience over the past few months has caused the Portfolio to question the assumption that extensive use of security cameras will significantly prevent crime. It appears that whereas they may assist in identifying suspects after a crime has been committed, they may not be an effective barrier preventing crime.

It therefore consulted other SRAs and researched published papers on the issue.

Research tends to indicate that reliance on security cameras usually does not result in a reduction in crime. See, for example, the report by the American Civil Liberties Union

(Attachment 2) that concludes that “meta-analyses from the UK, along with preliminary findings from the US, indicate strongly that video surveillance has little to no positive impact on crime”.

The opinion of SRAs that have been operating for some time confirms this view (e.g. Cape Town Central and Observatory). Their view is that the base operating model should remain foot patrols, supplemented by other measures to suit local conditions.

Based on our own recent experience and this research and advice, it is our view that the cost of acquiring and monitoring a large number of cameras will not provide the expected public safety benefits.

In any event, the SRA simply cannot afford the cost of a large number of security cameras. The SRA has received a quotation of more than R1 million for the supply of 33 cameras to cover the entire SRA and more than R500,000 for the supply of 14 cameras to cover hot spots only. Monitoring and maintenance of the 14 cameras would cost about R16,000 per month.

Although it is probable that these amounts can be reduced by a competitive tender, it is clear that the SRA cannot afford to base its public safety approach on a large number of security cameras, particularly as the installation and use of the cameras would have to be backed up by security guards to some extent at least, thereby adding significantly to the overall cost.

The replacement of our base operating mode of foot patrols by “saturation” security cameras is therefore not recommended.

However, it is recommended that, depending on cost, the use of a limited further number of security cameras will be effective in combating crime, provided they are used in a strategic manner and in conjunction with “on the ground” personnel presence.

For example:

- Cameras on Main Road and Boyes Drive at the entrances/exits from the SRA, equipped with number plate recognition. These cameras to be linked to the City Council and other networks at a later stage when their planned systems are in operation.
- A limited number of cameras at strategic positions to be decided by the directors of the SRA on advice by security consultants (e.g. at ATMs, in positions that provide the widest coverage, in “hot spots”).
- Consideration should also be given to the use of a mobile camera on a trailer for use in crime hot spots in conjunction with other under cover surveillance etc.
- The SRA should facilitate and provide specifications of a common system to which private initiative cameras could be added to and monitored.
- All cameras operated by the SRA and businesses and private local initiatives should be linked and monitored by a central monitor and response team under the control of the SRA’s public safety contractor.

3.2 Patrols

As pointed out above, the SRA's current approach to public safety is based on the "Bobby on the beat" of the foot patrollers operating in the manner outlined above.

Other means of patrolling the SRA have been attempted (e.g. bicycle) or considered (e.g. motor) but have been found to be either impractical for our topography or too expensive. The only practical means of patrolling the SRA is by foot, which is our current operating model.

A fundamental part of this report is to review the effectiveness of this basic approach. To do this, we have researched published papers on the effectiveness of foot patrols and have compared experiences with other SRAs.

There are relatively few published papers on the effectiveness of foot patrols, but those we could locate confirm the effectiveness of foot patrols. See for example the report by Temple University of the results of a research collaboration in 2013 with the Philadelphia Police Department (Attachment 3) that shows that after three months crime in the target areas had decreased significantly.

The experience and advice of other SRAs confirms the effectiveness of foot patrols. Our own experience and successes also confirms this.

We therefore do not propose to change our base operating model of foot patrols.

Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the large geographic area of the SRA cannot be serviced to optimum effect by only four foot patrollers, even if they are backed up by radio contact and a motorized response team.

Moreover, recent experience has demonstrated that foot patrols are most effective when used more extensively in periodic "hot spots" and in conjunction with other activities (e.g. under cover security officers, SAPS etc). The strategic placement and use security cameras have also assisted these activities.

It is therefore recommended that the effectiveness of our foot patrols be improved by the following:

- The implementation of a simple and reliable tracking system.
- Increased focus on patrolling periodic hot spots
- Closer liaison and working relationships between the SRA public safety contractor and security guards employed privately by businesses and local neighbourhoods.
- The Public Safety Portfolio and its service provider should work more closely with and routinely exchange information with the SRA social worker.
- Introduction of incentives for patrollers (e.g. shopping vouchers to patroller of the month etc)

- Better training on City Council By-Laws.
- Smarter uniforms. The current uniforms do not inspire much confidence.

It is also recommended that the foot patrols be supplemented, depending on budget constraints, by the following:

- More frequent use of under-cover security officers to identify the sources of crime in the SRA. Indications are that we should be able to obtain these periodic services free of charge.
- Placement and monitoring of a limited number of security cameras in strategic positions. If the recommendations in this report are accepted, a more detailed proposal will be made regarding the number, positions and cost of these cameras.
- The use of a mobile security camera when focusing on a hot spot (as is done in Observatory). This could be mounted on a security trailer which has been offered to the SRA free of charge by the Provincial Administration.
- The employment of car guards by the SRA or the City Council, who would provide dual function of car and “eyes and ears” public safety guards.
- Employ a Rent-a-cop from City Council, if the funding can be found, to work in conjunction with SRA patrollers. The cost is R8000 per month for each officer and the minimum employment period is one year. The advantage of such an officer is that he is able to issue tickets and enforce By-Laws whereas the SRA’s patrollers cannot do so.
- Obtain private sponsorship for the funding, at about R12,000 per month, of a better core monitoring system of all SRA and private security cameras in the SRA

3.3 Other Public Safety Options

It has become increasingly clear to the Public Safety Portfolio over the past six months that the problems of public safety will not be effective on a sustainable basis unless the basic approach and recommendations outlined above are supplemented by a wide range of activities involving the entire community, including the following:

Regulation of car guards:

The proliferation of informal car guards, as pointed out above, is a consequence of the huge increase in the number of visitors to our area. A solution must be found to the parking problem in the SRA, preferably by charging for parking in the way it is done in Simonstown, and part of this initiative must include proper regulation and control of these car guards, who should also be trained to be Public Safety “eyes and ears”.

Liaison, co-ordination of private security guards with the SRA system:

Obtaining co-operation of the business community to co-ordinate their private security operations with that of the SRA has proved to be very difficult. It appears unlikely that we will obtain their co-operation without the assistance of the City Council. It is therefore proposed

that these guards be regulated by the City Council and incentivized to co-ordinate their private activities with those of the SRA. It is also recommended that offer of appropriate training should be made for the security guards employed by local neighbourhoods (e.g. Duignam Road, Capri Steps).

Increased Focus on Social Intervention

The benefits of social intervention and assistance in the community are difficult to quantify, but it is already clear that the activities of the SRA's social worker has achieved some notable early successes since commencement of operations in November last year, which all assist in the overall aim of reducing crime. These successes include:

- Gaining the trust of the local community, particularly those exposed to drugs and crime.
- Gaining the trust and co-operation of local churches and schools. Holy Trinity Church has made office space available for our social worker from where she can more easily conduct individual and group counselling and training sessions.
- Compilation of a data base of homeless people and those affected by social ills, which assists in planning counselling and other activities.
- Redirecting most of a group of street children back to school and their families and finding useful activities for them outside school hours.

It is therefore recommended that:

- The Public Safety Portfolio and its service provider should work more closely with and routinely exchange information with the SRA social worker.
- A campaign be initiated, as recommended by the social worker, to educate our residents and visitors not to give money to beggars as this only compounds their problems, but rather to donate to a fund to be established to assist these people.
- Discussions be held with The Haven night shelter to ensure that they prioritize the provision of shelter to local residents in need, which originally was and should remain the priority.

Develop and maintain a close working relationship with SAPS, Law Enforcement and SANP law enforcement

Successes over the recent holiday season has demonstrated that it is possible to overcome the reality that our area has no police station and to obtain effective support from SAPS Muizenberg, City Council Law Enforcement, the Railway Police and SA National Parks.

It is crucial that close relationships with these agencies must be developed further and maintained. It is recommended that this be done by:

- Attend SAPS joint monthly meeting at Muizenberg Police station
- Regular "sweeps" of the PRASA rail corridor by the Railway Police for criminal and anti-social activities.

- Liaising with the CPF in the area with a plan to establish contact groups in neighbourhood blocks

Work closely with the City Council Vagrancy Unit

Vagrancy is an increasing problem. While vagrants are fully entitled to their rights and these must be respected, vagrancy is not conducive to a healthy and well-ordered community.

The assistance of the City Council's Vagrancy unit should be obtained for advice and assistance in dealing with this problem in an appropriate manner.

Obtain the help of the City Council's Rent a Cop and voluntary organisations

The SRA has not till now made use of the City Council's Rent a Cop system nor has it made use of the services of voluntary organisations such as the Chrysallis Foundation. The very significant assistance provided by these agencies over the recent holiday season has highlighted to need to explore ways of obtaining their assistance on a longer term and more structured basis.

Installation of ticket barriers at Kalk Bay and St James Stations: Reports by businesses indicate that, in addition to the majority of law abiding people who visit our area by train, some are drawn to the "honey pot" of the area for the purpose of begging, informal car guards or crime, and that their arrival is facilitated by the absence of or only sporadic ticket inspections on the trains.

It is therefore recommended that ticket inspection barriers be installed at Kalk Bay and St James stations and manned by ticket inspectors, particularly over week-ends and holiday periods. Although the effectiveness of this "barrier" to crime is likely to be marginal, it is considered worth implementing.

Obtain competitive quotations from other public safety service providers

In order to check on and compare the cost effectiveness and range of services provided by our current service provider it is recommended that quotations be obtained from one or more other public safety service providers and that a decision for the longer term be made in the light of these quotes and our experience and relationship with our current service provider.

Obtain donations and sponsorship funding

It is clear that the SRA is not able to fund all the recommended actions from its own very limited Public Safety budget of R800,000. It is therefore imperative that fund raising be made priority activity. Fund raising could include donations, sponsorships and parking charges in designated parking areas (as is done in Simonstown). To this end, the SRA should review its decision regarding its application for tax exempt status.

4. Conclusion

The KBSJSRA has a limited Public Safety budget, which must be managed carefully to extract maximum effectiveness. The Public Safety Portfolio are confident that:

- The current base operating model of foot patrols, to be improved and supplemented as set out above, is the model best suited to our circumstances and budget.
- Sustainable Public Safety in our SRA depends on a range of activities and initiatives involving the entire community.
- If the recommendations set out in this report are implemented properly, the SRA and its community of property owners and residents will effectively leverage the strengths and opportunities set out in the SWOT analysis while also mitigating the weaknesses and threats.

If the recommendations set out in this report are accepted, a detailed action plan will be proposed to implement the approved recommendations, which plan will include a timeline and action parties.