

Plenary meeting: the execution of the policy to fight against burglary within the local police zone

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The issue of domestic burglary is part of the zonal security plan of the police zone, as it is in most zonal security plans at the national level.

The number of offences in the police zones is significant. This phenomenon really troubles citizens, given the trauma they suffer from.

Hypotheses:

- The police have a relative, even marginal impact on criminality.
- The repressive part cannot be neglected (standard record), but there is a low elucidation rate without link to criminality.
- It is impossible to stop this phenomenon, hence the importance of prevention.

Prevention:

Definition: the entirety of the non-compelling actions regarding the causes, the reasons and **the preceding's** of the offences to limit **their probability or seriousness** (Cusson, 2002, 10).

What are the causes of this? And which action means do the police have of to influence certain variables: itinerant groups, opportunity theory?

When the police want to prevent domestic burglary, they often organize extra patrols (Swiss pocket knife effect: one does not know how to deal with this phenomenon and the patrols serve for all criminal phenomena).

However, the impact is not very persuasive, except at hotspots and for the patrols on foot. It would be interesting though to do a thorough assessment of the FIPA (Full Integrated Police Action), as their efficiency can be questioned. The results are limited compared to the means deployed.

The situational prevention:

An analysis of the phenomenon has been performed: statistics, time-space analyse (where and when do the offences occur) and modi operandi.

The police zone Orneau-Mehaigne has developed a computer programme for criminal cartography (PCC). It is a free programme developed inside the zone as an interface between ISLP and Google Street View. This cartography allows to optimal visualize houses, as this is crucial for the theft prevention advisers.

The PCC provides information over a period of 10 years:

- Regarding time: there is a clear fragmentation of the cases of qualified thefts in houses, although there are also peaks. This complicates the prevention.

- Regarding space: it is preferable not to live close to big arterial roads (higher risk).
- Modus operandi: a large percentage of the qualified thefts in houses can be attributed to itinerant criminality.

Prevention within the police zone: which actions?

1. Patrols: interesting when hotspots are put forward
 - o aimed at places that are most targeted (hotspots)
 - o internal/external partnership (CIK, ...)
 - o terms: stripped and undistinguished vehicles, information to the patrols

2. Advice regarding theft prevention
 - o Organization of the work: 1 Domestic Burglary prevention consultant per entity. This consultant is responsible for a project in his entity. He gives advice and follows the phenomenon, organizes info sessions for the population. Particular attention is given to hotspots. The Domestic burglary prevention consultants follow a basic training to incite citizens to appeal to them.
 - o Advice at two levels:

What to do beforehand, what happens during and afterwards with the prevention advices? The Tupperware project consists in the organization of info sessions at the citizens' houses. This project works very well thanks to the mouth-to-mouth advertising. The fact that small groups are brought together, is more efficient.

The Domestic burglary prevention consultant insists on the large social control (as citizen): sensitization to call the police in case of suspect elements (between just reactive and local prevention partnership).
 - o Regarding the communication: the prevention is put forward through the local press, the local television, and the municipal journal. The domestic burglary prevention consultants are then contacted for advice.
 - o New visit, Centres for aid to victims (CSH).

Conclusion

Although one cannot eradicate the phenomenon of domestic burglary, one still can influence the number of cases and the consequences for the victims with the logic of "domestic burglary prevention advice" and "centres for aid to victims".

The means are scarce, yet this is no excuse to just do nothing.

It is regrettable that so few assessments of the police actions are done, even more given the big crisis. The project of the police zone Orneau-Mehaigne will be assessed, but is still too recent at this moment.



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