UCL JILL DANDO INSTITUTE OF CRIME SCIENCE

Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign

Guidance on problem profiles

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1 Introduction

The fourth Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign (AMEC4) took place between the 8th May and 8th June 2006, just prior to the start of the World Cup in Germany. The four main aims of the campaign were:

- To set the tone of acceptable behaviour before the start of the World Cup;
- To maintain pressure on licensees to manage premises responsibly;
- To operate, in conjunction with Trading Standards Authorities, a nationwide test purchase campaign to assess the progress of the licensed trade towards their goal of eliminating under-age sales;
- To embed the new powers contained in the Licensing Act.

This AMEC was based on the experience gained through the three previous campaigns, which ran during the summer of 2004, over the Christmas period in 2004, and from mid-November to the end of December 2005. AMEC3 saw 230 BCUs take part, using guidelines put forward by the Police Standards Unit (Home Office, 2004a), and building on the lessons learned from the first AMEC (Home Office, 2004b). The main tactics and interventions under AMEC3, with key lessons learned, included the following:

- *Use of new powers under the Licensing Act 2003*

  The Licensing Act came into force on November 24th 2005, enabling premises to run more flexible hours of opening. It provided greater powers to close premises in order to prevent disorder, and those that are not complying with their license conditions.

- *Media and public relations*

  Communicating the aims and successes of AMEC3 was a key element of the campaign, working with local media and making effective use of printed marketing materials.

- *Use of fixed penalty notices for disorder*

  A number of alcohol-related incidents and offences can be dealt with through issuing a fixed penalty notice for disorder, with a penalty of either £50 or £80, depending on the offence. The main impact of using fixed penalty notices, both on the street and in custody, was in reduced file preparation time, with reduced paperwork, meaning officers were able to spend more time out on patrol. Adequate training is required to ensure all officers are aware of how to use fixed penalty notices. In some areas, their use was extended to Community Support Officers (CSOs).

- *Dispersal orders*

  A clearly defined area with an evidenced problem of anti-social behaviour can be designated a dispersal zone. This allows the police and CSOs to disperse groups congregating in the area whose behaviour is causing or may cause intimidation, harassment or distress to the public, and also to return young people under 16 to their home after 9pm. These zones require careful management and enforcement, including planning for possible displacement to other areas.

- *Confiscation of alcohol*

Alcohol can be confiscated and disposed of either under a Designated Public Places Order (DPPO), where drinking alcohol is restricted, or from underage young people in public places. The selection of areas should be intelligence-led. Officers, including CSOs and Special Constables where appropriate, should be made fully aware of their powers to confiscate alcohol. Benefits include targeting underage drinkers early in the evening to prevent disorder later on.

- *Reducing underage sales of alcohol*

Joint test purchase operations between trading standards officers and police officers targeted both on- and off license premises, to reinforce the messages to licensees about underage sales of alcohol. Reductions in the proportion of underage sales during AMEC3 (22% of test purchase operations) compared to AMEC1 (40%) are thought to be due to the new legislation, and better coordination, targeting and enforcement by partner agencies.

2 Requirements of AMEC4

In considering the applications for funding from BCUs, the Police Standards Unit set a number of criteria to be met in the application process:

- The bid would have to demonstrate that the activity planned is intelligence-led.
- There would be an expectation that those premises or locations that account for a disproportionate level of disorder would feature in any plans submitted.
- Some regard to the basic tactics from previous AMEC campaigns, as outlined above, should be evident.
- There should be evidence of joint working with the CDRP partners to build safer communities, towns and city centres.

One further requirement, to ensure that all these elements were captured in the bid submission, was to include “a simple problem profile to demonstrate that the activity is being concentrated in the right areas” (Simon Leach, bid letter to BCUs, 26th April 2006). No additional guidance was issued with the invitation to submit bids about what should be included in the problem profile, or the level of detail required. A broad range of profiles, from over 200 BCUs and displaying variable quality and quantity, was submitted.

3 Problem solving and NIM guidance on problem profiles

A problem profile should demonstrate that there is a clear understanding of the issues, and that a problem-oriented approach is being used to deal with violent crime and alcohol-related disorder. A problem solving approach involves using various stages in order to understand a crime problem in detail and develop appropriate interventions: Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment (SARA). Developing a problem profile is part of this process, and a useful analytical tool to use is the ‘problem analysis triangle’, which considers three key aspects of recurring problems: offender, victim and place. Clarke and Eck (2003) provide more detail on SARA and the problem analysis triangle. They present useful guidance on the different aspects to consider when conducting such an analysis in order to understand the crime problem and thus find an

effective solution. Data analysis should be carried out in response to specific hypotheses about why a problem is occurring in a particular place at a particular time. This will determine which data sources to use in the analysis, and the type of analysis to carry out.

A problem profile is one of four intelligence products used within the National Intelligence Model (NIM) to describe crime and disorder problems, and to inform decisions about tactics and resource deployment. Guidance on problem profiles (ACPO Centrex, 2005) indicates that they should be commissioned:

> …to obtain a greater understanding of an established or emerging crime or incident series and problem locations in line with the control strategy priorities or other high risk issues. The problem profile should contain sufficient detail to initiate or support an ongoing operation but only include information that is directly relevant to it. (p70).

The guidance also sets out the main features that should be taken into account when developing a problem profile (*ibid,* p70). The profile has a number of functions and should, amongst other things:

- Provide a clear picture of the intelligence assembled on a problem;
- Be compiled in collaboration with, not solely by, an analyst;
- Identify intelligence gaps;
- Make recommendations for prevention, intelligence collection and enforcement plans;
- Enable managers to make resource decisions and determine tactics;
- Enable managers to prioritise problems;
- Provide justification for actions;
- Ensure legislative requirements are fulfilled;
- Show evidence of information analysis;

The same guidance further details a number of ‘minimum requirements’ for a problem profile, such as the reasons for targeting the problems, operational objectives, the analysis and so forth (ibid, p71).

All problem profiles should include the minimum requirements under NIM guidance. For AMEC programmes and the like, they would also be expected to contain sufficient information, with supporting evidence, to demonstrate that the problem around alcohol-related violent crime and disorder in the area under consideration is likely to benefit from the tactics and interventions proposed. The problem profile and analysis should demonstrate that the police have a thorough understanding of their problem, and are clear about where resources will be targeted to have the greatest impact.

4 Problem profiles on night-time economy related violence

The guidance in this document is based on an analysis of a sample of the problem profiles submitted for AMEC4 funding. The results of the analysis are presented, followed by a number of recommendations or points to consider based on this analysis.

Whilst some of the recommendations may appear to be obvious, they are included for completeness as a result of the apparent omissions in the problem profiles submitted.

Over 200 applications were received by the PSU for funding under the fourth AMEC campaign. Of these, 35 problem profiles from 22 police forces were considered for this report to gauge the types of analyses being conducted and to look at how the problems in each area were understood. This sample of profiles was provided by PSU, selected to represent the best examples submitted for funding. A summary of the analysis is presented in Appendix A.

i. Area analysed

The majority of the profiles focused solely on the BCU submitting the application. Four put this into context within the whole force area, with one considering only the force as a whole.

- Two thirds of the profiles (n=23) provide data relating to the BCU overall. Most (n=20) give an overview across the BCU, with more detailed analysis focusing on a particular sector, beat or town centre area where the main violence or alcohol-related problem exists. The other three focus on identifying problematic licensed premises within the BCU. Eleven profiles focused on a town centre or ward only, providing little or no information about the remainder of the BCU.
- Two areas (in North Wales and Kent) provided information about the amount of violence occurring in rural areas within the BCU compared to urban areas. These both demonstrated the concentration of violence within the urban areas, providing a justification for focusing resources in these town centre. However, they acknowledged that problems do exist in rural areas that should not be ignored, but that these would be harder and more resource intensive to deal with.

Recommendations

- For an initiative based in a specific BCU, the problem profile should provide contextual data for the whole area, with a more detailed analysis of hot spot areas such as beats or town centres where the main problems exist. This will demonstrate that resources are being channelled into the most appropriate geographical area within the BCU.
- Where appropriate some consideration should also be given to the rest of the BCU, and the proportion of crime occurring outside the hot spot areas, to put the scale of the problems into context and show awareness of the problem across the BCU. To show the extent of the problem, it is useful to provide comparative data for the rest of the force, or another, similar area.
- The area to be targeted should be clearly defined (e.g. beat identifiers, bounding streets, etc.) so that resources can be tracked and results analysis carried out.

ii. Data sources used in the problem analysis

Half of the profiles used a single data source to illustrate the problem in the BCU. Eight used two sources, and a further eight used three or more data sources. In three cases there was no evidence of any data being used at all, with the problem being presented descriptively. All referred to the data analysis having been done, but it was not included in the applications for funding.

Three quarters (n=27) of the problem profiles made use of police recorded crime data to analyse the problem. In just over half (n=14) this was the only data source. In 12 cases incident data were used, often in conjunction with recorded crime data. Most of the incident data were logs of anti-social behaviour.

As well as police recorded crime and incident data, non-police data should be used where possible, highlighting the role that partner agencies can play in identifying, analysing and dealing with the problem. A number of other data sources were used in several of the problem profiles, usually in conjunction with another source. These included the following:

- Police or council intelligence sources (n=3).
- Some other form of police data (n=5). This included arrest data and detection rates, with one from Sussex referring to the results of a survey of operational officers who were involved in policing the night-time economy in one town centre.
- Licensing information (n=4), including information such as closing times of licensed premises and data from CCTV operated by the council licensing dept, to support the analysis of the police recorded crime or incident data.
- Data from the local ambulance service (n=2), and data from A&E (n=1) relating to treatment required following violent disorder or assaults.
- Data about disorder on public transport in a town centre (n=1).

There were a small number of examples where different data sources had been accessed, but no analysis had been done to link these sets together, or to draw any conclusions about the interpretation of the data.

Recommendations

- The most appropriate police data sources about the problem being considered should be identified and utilised fully, in particular recorded crime or incident data, and supporting information.
- Where possible, information from sources other than police data should also be used to provide a more complete picture of the problem, as less than half of violent offences are reported to the police (Walker et al, 2006). For example, incidents of anti-social behaviour and disorder may be reported to the local authority rather than the police, or additional data on assaults may be available from A&E or the Ambulance Service.

- The problem profile should make it clear how the data has been obtained, to allow for comparisons between BCUs or for the same BCU in subsequent years. A wide variety of different crime recording systems were referred to and used for producing the problem profiles for AMEC4, many of which did not specify the type of data being used (for example, crime data or incident data) or identify their inherent problems and limitations.

iii. Types of analyses conducted

The majority of the problem profiles looked only at counts of offences or incidents, usually presenting percentage changes from the previous equivalent time period where appropriate. In many cases, little actual analysis of the data was carried out to develop inferences on why the problems were occurring at specific places and times.

- Two profiles indicated the percentage change from the previous year without giving any indication of the number of offences involved, therefore not providing any evidence of the scale of the problem.
- None of the problem profiles referred to rates of violent crime or disorder to analyse the problem. Ascertaining the rate of violent crime associated with the night-time economy is useful as it allows for better comparison between areas. It is also difficult, however, as a denominator must be identified which is both appropriate (Boggs, 1965; Harries, 1991) and measurable. For example, population counts may be comparatively low for a town or city centre, and are therefore not particularly useful in determining rates for an area that attracts a large number of people to use the night-time economy. One area (Scunthorpe, Humberside) did provide a count of footfall on a monthly basis. This is measured by electronic footfall counters around the town centre which count each occasion when a pedestrian passes by, and can be analysed by date, day or time of day. This is the only attempt to indicate how many people were in the town centre at any time, although there was no attempt to derive rates from this.
- Just under half the profiles (n=17) presented some sort of hot spot analysis, generally using GIS maps of the town or city centre area showing visual clusters of offences, or highlighting specific streets and premises with high volumes of crime.
- One profile presented a list of areas and maps where dispersal orders had been implemented, with no figures about crime or disorder in these areas, thus failing to show any clear understanding of the problems that existed.

There were a couple of examples of the data presented not supporting the interpretation provided. For example, in one case the stated peak months for offending did not seem to coincide with trend patterns presented in the graphs.

The problem profile analysis should be able to demonstrate why AMEC or TVCP interventions will be appropriate, and where and when resources will be used most effectively. In half of the profiles (n=17) it was considered that the analysis conducted was sufficient to demonstrate that the problem was well understood, with data presented to provide evidence of the problem, and where action would be targeted.

Many of the remainder presented some data, but included little analysis of this and how it might relate to the proposed AMEC interventions. Twelve profiles presented limited data, and five did not present any numerical data, but rather gave an anecdotal account of the problems encountered.

Recommendations

- A variety of analytical methods should be used, depending on the data available, the nature of the problem and time constraints.
- None of the profiles calculated rates of offences. This is acknowledged to be problematic when analysing violent crime associated with the night-time economy as it is difficult to obtain an accurate denominator. Rates would be especially useful when identifying problem premises, in considering whether a particular venue emerges as a problem because it has a much larger capacity than surrounding venues, or whether a change in the capacity in the town due to a new venue opening or closing accounts for changes in the number of offences occurring. Suggestions for denominators to use include footfall counters in pubs, local authority footfall counters, or estimates of the average capacity for each night at various times of the night, although there are limitations to using these.
- Mapping data is a useful way of pinpointing areas, streets and premises with particular problems, and seeing how these have changed over time. Maps can be used in conjunction with other local data to determine why problems are concentrated in certain areas, such as outside a particular licensed premise or adjacent to a taxi rank. To obtain the most value from GIS, appropriate and, where possible, more sophisticated techniques such as cluster analysis should be employed.
- The analysis should draw, and then test, inferences from the data about why problems are happening in particular places at certain times, and identify potential pinchpoints where problems can be effectively addressed.
- One key aspect of the problem profile is to indicate *how* the planned interventions are likely to have an effect on the problem being analysed, and to give an indication of the expected (measurable) outcomes.

iv. Analysis of trends over time

There was little consistency across the time periods used in the different problem profiles. It was not always clear what time periods had been used, or why specific periods had been chosen for the analysis. Six profiles either did not present data, or did not specify which time period the analysis covered. The largest proportion (n=11) presented data for either the most recent calendar year or financial year compared to data from one or more previous years.

The remainder chose to use alternative time periods, sometimes using different time periods for different sets of data. These included the following:

- Longer term trends presented alongside more detailed analysis of hot times and locations over a shorter, more recent time period (n=10). For example, one

presented trends since October 2004, with a more detailed analysis for the most recent financial year.

- Analysis covering the period in which AMEC 4 was to run. This included data from May and June for 2003, 2004 and 2005; April 2005 to July 2005; and data from 8th May to 8th June 2005, with more recent analysis of hot spots.
- Data relating to a specific initiative or event, such as a previous AMEC period, over December 2004 and 2005, or the period since the introduction of the new licensing law in November 2005 compared to the same period the previous year.
- Much shorter time periods, such as the year to date (covering four weeks in this case) or data from recent two-week periods (n=3), as presented for regular tasking and coordination group meetings.
- Data from the most recent six-month period (n=2), with no comparison to an earlier equivalent time period.

Two BCUs (in the West Midlands and MPS) referred to the impact of previous major sporting events on violence and disorder, to give an indication of how this year's World Cup may affect the levels of violence in specific licensed premises. The area in the West Midlands had a high proportion of residents from other countries that were participating in the World Cup, and they acknowledged the possible implications of different nationalities clashing during the tournament. There was no mention of football-related violent offences concerning local matches rather than those being shown on TV in pubs.

A number of profiles used different time periods for different data sets. For example, the time periods used for the analysis of incident data were often shorter than recorded crime data due to time constraints in accessing and analysing the much larger data set. The time periods used for the analysis were not always clear.

Recommendations

- Look at longer term trends over time, preferably looking at how the situation has changed over the past two or three years. This gives ample data to identify seasonal changes, and distinguish real changes from random fluctuations. Using a moving average can help remove the effects of random variations. Comparable time periods for each year should be used when analysing the changes over time.
- Problem profiles for operations set to run over a specified time period should be based on data covering the same period the previous couple of years, for example in this case analysing data from May and June for the past three years.
- The time periods used for the analysis should be clearly stated for each data set in the problem profile.
- When looking at the number of night-time economy related violent offences per month, it is worth bearing in mind whether there are four or five weekends within that month, and taking account of this in the analysis.

- This AMEC campaign was aimed at setting the tone for the forthcoming World Cup. Understanding what happened during similar events in the past, such as earlier World Cups, European Championships or other sporting events, can help to plan specific interventions for forthcoming events.
- Longer-term trends presented in conjunction with more detailed analysis provided a good profile of the problem. Analyses based on fortnightly tactical assessments do not give a long-term overview of the problem of alcohol-related violent crime. A more strategic view of how the AMEC interventions will impact on the area would be more useful.
- Whilst longer term trends are strategically important, care should be taken to ensure the identified problem remains current as hotspots can, and do, 'desist' without having been targeted (Sherman, 1995).

v. Defining the night-time economy

The definition of the problem to be addressed through the AMEC campaign differed across the BCUs, reflecting the individual nature of the problem in each area, and the importance of understanding this on a local level. The main categories used to define the problem included the type of incident or offence; the location; the time of day; links with alcohol or drugs; or a combination of these factors.

For example, one area (in Kent) provided data for the night-time economy time period, which they defined as being from 8pm to 4am, and compared this to pre- and post-night-time economy time periods. Scunthorpe defines night-time economy related incidents as occurring between 10pm and 6am, within a specific geographical area. The time period encompassing the night-time economy will vary by location with the range of closing times of licensed premises. Other areas focused solely on incidents involving alcohol use across all times.

Recommendation

- The Home Office/PSU should set out the terms of reference for the Programme in relation to the definition of the problem at the start of the initiative. This would be useful in clarifying the focus of the initiative, and the basis for the analysis.

vi. Types of crime and disorder

The current programmes of work to reduce violent crime differ slightly in their focus, and the problem profiles for each should reflect this, as well as providing evidence for the particular problems faced in each area. The AMEC work focuses on violent crime and alcohol-related disorder; the Tackling Violent Crime Programme focuses on violence related to the night-time economy and domestic violence, with links between these where appropriate.

Amongst the 32 problem profiles that demonstrated any data or analysis, there were 17 different combinations of the crime or incident data used to define the problem. The problem profiles considered here demonstrate the wide variety of offences analysed, with differences apparent even between BCUs within the same force. All of the

problem profiles providing data looked at specific types of violent crime or disorder; in the majority of cases these were broken down further to individual crime types. Details of these are as follows:

- Twelve profiles analysed all offences classified in the Home Office counting rules as a violent crime in the area under consideration. Three of these also analysed other incidents alongside this: one included all disorder, one included alcohol-related disorder, and one also analysed criminal damage and drug related crime.
- Twelve cases looked at violence against the person (VAP). In one case this also looked at noise and alcohol-related incidents, another included anti-social behaviour (ASB) and drunkenness; another looked at VAP and all disorder.
- Four focused on public place violent crime (PPVC), although how this was defined is not specified. In one case this was presented alongside ASB and nuisance data, and two also analysed all disorder.
- Three cases considered either ASB or disorder in the town centre area being targeted.

Recommendations

- If there are no clear terms of reference set out at the start of the project, decide which categories of violent crime to include, and explain why these are to be used. This could be all violence, violence against the person, violent crime in public places, or incidences of harm, and should be broken down by Home Office code to show what the main problems are. If the Home Office require data about certain offence types to be collected and submitted during the initiative, it would be useful to base the analysis on these categories.
- Consider whether reported incidents of disorder should be included if this reflects the problems in the area being analysed, and if so, which types of disorder.
- Analysing data for other, non-violent crimes may be useful – a number of profiles also considered criminal damage and theft, as hot spots for these crimes were located at the same places as violence and disorder, and may well be related to alcohol consumption and the night-time economy.
- Take into account any changes in the counting rules that may affect the offence type being analysed.
- The use of weapons, such as bottles or knives in alcohol-related violence, was rarely mentioned and, if available, may provide further information about how and where interventions should be targeted.

vii. Alcohol-related incidents

The amount of crime and disorder that was said to be directly related to alcohol consumption varied across the profiles. The difference in type of crime and area included in the analysis accounted for much of this variation, as did the means of measuring and recording which incidents were alcohol-related. For example, one BCU

stated that 21 percent of all recorded crime in the hot spot area was alcohol-related; this rose to 46 percent for all violent crime and to 90 percent for public order offences.

- Six profiles defined their problem primarily through analysing incidents or offences that were counted as being alcohol-related, or involving intoxicating substances. A further eight also referred to alcohol-related incidents that were, or could be, flagged up in the crime recording system.
- The definitions as to what counted as alcohol-related violence differ between forces – one BCU (in Staffordshire) included all offences where the victim and offender had been drinking, whereas another (in Dyfed Powys) only included offences where the offender had been under the influence of alcohol. In most cases it is not clear whether flagging incidents as being alcohol-related is based on actual evidence, or based on the opinion of the victim or police officer.
- One profile used data referring to alcohol-related incidents defined by the local authority, but mentioned that they were unsure what this definition included.

A couple of profiles mention that there is no reliable method of recording whether an offence is alcohol-related, but an association is inferred because of the times and locations of the offences. One report stated that the number of alcohol-related incidents were likely to be underestimated, as the offender was often no longer present when the police attended. Other forces highlighted problems that arose from not having a single agreed definition of what counted as alcohol-related crime.

Recommendations

- If the decision is made to focus on alcohol-related violence or disorder, clarify how this is defined within the Force or BCU.
- The Home Office may wish to consider developing a single agreed definition that can be adopted for this purpose. There may be problems identifying alcohol-related offences within the recorded crime data, especially for looking at longer-term trends, and in the reliability of the data.
- However, due to the potential difficulties in accurately identifying which incidents are alcohol-related, it may be best to consider *all* violent crime in an analysis, rather than restrict the focus to those thought to be alcohol-related.

viii. Analysis of victims and offenders

Only eight profiles gave any information about the profile of the victims who were the target of violent crime offences. Nine profiles presented data about the offenders. In the majority of cases where information about the victim was analysed (n=7), data about offenders was also presented.

- The profiles of victims and offenders tended to be very similar in all the places where this was analysed. Offenders and victims of violent offences tended to be white males aged between 16 and 29, with variations depending on how the age bands had been defined. One area stated that offenders were aged between 16 and 25, with the alcohol related offences being committed by a

slightly younger group, aged 16-20. Only one BCU reported that the offender and victim profiles reflected the profile of the city centre night-time economy clientele.

- There were a couple of variations on this: disorder in three areas was thought to be mainly caused by underage males, whereas another area described one group of offenders as being older street drinkers, rather than people going out to pub and clubs.
- In two cases, although specific data were not presented, the report suggested that increased numbers of violent incidents were associated with tourists visiting the area.

Recommendations

- Analysis of who the main victim and offender groups are can help ensure that resources are targeted at the right people. An initiative to target underage drinkers on the street early in the evening causing alcohol-related disorder would need a different approach to one centred on a nightclub closing at 3am in the city centre, possibly with older offenders causing more serious violence.
- The profile of victims and offenders will probably reflect the profile of the people going out in the town centre – this may vary depending on the individual premises being analysed. Including information about this would be useful in determining how well the victim/offender profiles fit that of the night-time economy clientele. Where such profiles do not match, there may be additional scope for interventions targeted against certain groups.
- Repeat offenders and repeat victims should be identified where possible. For many offences, a large number of crimes are committed by a small number of people, therefore identifying repeat offenders can help to target interventions, such as banning them from entering certain premises or areas. Persistent offenders, particularly those known to commit domestic violence relating to alcohol consumption, could be identified and targeted around specific trigger events. Knowledge about repeat victims, or particular groups who are victimised more frequently, can help target personal safety advice and raise awareness of risk.

ix. Analysis of locations

Most of the analyses focused on the whole town centre beat area, or within specific streets that had been identified as encompassing the hot spot for violent crime or disorder. One focused specifically on all violence and alcohol related crimes recorded as occurring inside licensed premises, with another looking at all assaults inside or just outside licensed premises.

In Hull, rather than looking at the whole city centre, the problems were analysed within an area that was designated as being the Hull Safer Entertainment Zone, although details of how this area was defined were not included in the problem profile.

- Specific locations, usually town or city centres, or certain streets within these, were highlighted as being a particular hot area associated with violence and

alcohol-related disorder in 31 of the 35 profiles, indicating where the majority of the police resources would be focused.

- Nineteen of the profiles listed the 'hot' premises where most of the violence and disorder was focused. These usually listed between three and 12 premises along with a count of the number of offences or incidents associated with them. Given the focus of this campaign on the build up to the World Cup, one area had conducted an analysis of licensed premises that had been particularly problematic during the European Championships in 2004, and planned to target these during the AMEC campaign.
- The information provided about individual licensed premises was limited in most cases, with little information about the capacities or opening and closing times of licensed premises, which may have some impact on the level of violent crime recorded. One exception was Cambridgeshire, which included a lot of detail about the individual premises. This included reviews about the venues from web sites, which looked at the type of music played in the clubs, the profile of typical clientele, and the perceived attitude of the door staff to clubbers.
- In addition to licensed premises being highlighted as hot spots for trouble, six profiles also mentioned taxi ranks, bus stations or other transport hubs which were hot spots for night-time economy related offences. Six profiles also referred to violence in and around take away premises at night.

Previous AMEC initiatives have focused attention on violence in town and city centres. Whilst this provides the opportunity to target resources in a concentrated area, pockets of problems may exist elsewhere within the BCU, and should be identified to ascertain whether resources should also be directed towards more suburban or rural areas. Providing an overall picture for the BCU puts the analysis for hot spot areas into context and helps to show what proportion of the crime problem exists in each of these areas.

Recommendations

- Where a number of town centres with violent crime problems exist within a BCU, individual profiles should be prepared for each area. These will undoubtedly differ between town centres, depending on such things as the number and proximity of licensed premises, the variation and range of closing times, and ease of dispersal at the end of the night.
- Determine where the main hot spots ('hot areas') are for violent disorder, and how these have changed over time. Hot spot maps using GIS analysis can be useful in depicting where the main problems are occurring, and the size of the area affected by the different crime types being analysed. Due regard should be given to the accuracy of the data geocoding, particularly for the many offences occurring in the road.
- Looking at hot streets ('hot lines' on maps), and how these change over time, can help to understand why problems are concentrated in these streets. This may be due to there being a large number of pubs and clubs actually located on the road, or because it provides quick access between other pubs and clubs. There may be taxi ranks or takeaway premises located in the street that

attract large numbers of people when pubs and clubs close, and deter them from dispersing quickly, leading to more violent incidents.

- Particular venues and licensed premises can generate particular problems (plotted as 'hot dots' on maps). Again, understanding why these premises are problematic is important. They could have large capacities, and in fact have a lower rate of violent crime than other venues. They could be open for longer, be designed in a way that may provide more opportunity for confrontation, or have management policies that may need to be reviewed. Detailed analysis, along with close working with the licensees, can uncover why problems are associated with a particular venue, and help to develop ways of addressing this. Ranking licensed premises in terms of number of offences, with information about capacities and opening times where possible will highlight those that require targeted interventions. These may change over time, due to changes in management, promotions, or time of year (for example, whether there are facilities for drinking outside). The use of appropriate denominators should, again, be considered.
- The location of hot pubs and their proximity to each other will assist in the targeting of high visibility patrols. In addition, their proximity to 'cold' premises, where few or no offences occur, may point to other factors that can be exploited to reduce violent crime. It may be interesting to consider why some premises within hot areas and on hot streets are less likely than others to have violent incidents associated with them.
- It may also be useful to consider identifying and targeting licensed premises outside the city centre that are frequented by groups earlier in the evening before they travel to the town or city centre to continue drinking.

x. Temporal analysis

Recognising patterns and changes in offences over time can help to ensure the right places are being targeted at the right time, with more resources deployed when the risk increases.

- Two profiles narrowed down the periods covered by the analysis to that which was defined as relating to the night-time economy. The first of these looked at disorder, assault and public order offences between 7pm and 4am. The second focused the analysis on all violence occurring between 6pm and 7am on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, which was considered to be associated with the night-time economy.
- One area (Scunthorpe) defined their night-time economy related crime in terms of both a specific geographical area around the town centre defined by hot spots, and by time of day – in this case they included everything happening between 10pm and 6am in their analysis.
- Two thirds (n=24) of the profiles specify the peak times of day for AMEC problems. The peak times analysed varied between profiles, although most of these were within the range from 10pm to 3am. Six profiles looked at a longer time frame, starting between 6pm and 8pm, and ending between 2am and 7am. One profile indicted that the peak time had spread out throughout the evening

since the change in the licensing laws, and now occurred between 11pm and 2am, rather than between midnight and 1am.

- Two thirds of the profiles provide information about peak days of the week, which in the majority of cases were Friday and Saturday.

Recommendations

- Analysing patterns of offences over a week, and over a day will identify hot days and times, and emerging changes, such as offences occurring later at night, or an increasing number occurring on a Thursday night, for example.
- Many offences occur overnight – it may be more useful to recode data to take account of this (for example, coding the day to run from 06:00 – 05:59). Many of the profiles analysed for AMEC4 kept reiterating that a high count on Sundays actually referred to offences on a Saturday night/Sunday morning rather than Sunday night.

xi. Limitations of the data

A handful of profiles included details of the limitations of the data presented which is useful in understanding the accuracy of the analysis, and the implications of this in ensuring that the problem is being addressed appropriately. The limitations mentioned in the profiles included the following:

- The accuracy of geocoding, both for assigning the correct grid reference to the address, and ensuring the data is recorded correctly. Offences recorded as occurring on the street are often taken as being at the centre point of the street when the actual location is unknown or unspecified.
- Linked to this is uncertainty about which offences took place inside, or in close proximity to licensed premises, and the difficulties in determining which offences are associated with specific licensed premises.
- Selecting cases based solely on a location field descriptor of 'licensed premises' relies on this being completed correctly and may lead to a number of offences not being included. As with the above point, this is also likely to exclude 'associated' offences falling outside the curtlage of the premises.
- Removing the variation in recording the spelling of location or premises names may require a great deal of time consuming data cleaning.
- The reliability of flags for alcohol-related crime in record systems, and whether this is always correctly completed.
- Time constraints in conducting a full analysis on all alcohol-related incidents, or restricting the analysis to a small area.

Recommendation

- Limitations of the data and the analysis, and the implications this has on the subsequent conclusions and recommendations should be included clearly within the report and alternative data sources or forms of analysis should be utilised when the limitations are severe.

xii. References to other initiatives

Just over half of the submissions (n=18) refer to tactics used and successes of previous AMEC or other similar campaigns aimed at reducing alcohol-related violent crime or disorder. A further five referred to literature or other information which has informed the analysis and understanding of the problem, and the strategy to be implemented to address the problem.

Recommendation

- Referring to other initiatives and research shows an awareness of the type of interventions that have been successful in the past, and can demonstrate that recommendations arising from the analysis are based on evidence or previous experience to some extent.
- Even when such references cannot be identified, suggested interventions should be based on sound theory which can explain how they are expected to work.

5 Conclusion

Overall, the analysis from two thirds of the problem profiles indicated that implementing the proposed interventions supported by AMEC4 would be well targeted, and possibly have some impact on the levels of alcohol-related violence and disorder, by targeting specific licensed premises and increasing the visibility of police in town and city centres. The remaining third did not provide sufficient information to be able to draw any conclusions about how effective the AMEC campaign would be.

There is some question as to how much detail should be included in the problem profile. This should be proportionate to the amount of time the analyst has to produce the problem profile, the ease of extracting the appropriate data from police and other databases, how the problem has changed over time and why, and the level of detail needed to ensure that resources will be targeted appropriately.

This analysis of the problem profiles demonstrates that inconsistencies remain in the way that police analysts prepare problem profiles, shown here in relation to alcohol- and night-time economy related violence. The suggested recommendations and points to consider could help to iron out some of the inconsistencies and provide guidance about the main issues to consider when preparing a problem profile for such crimes. There should still be some flexibility within the requirements of the problem profile to allow it to reflect the particular characteristics affecting the problem in each area.

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Appendix

The following table presents a summary of the analysis of the sample of 35 problem profiles submitted to AMEC4. These are not necessarily representative of all profiles submitted.

	No of forces/profiles
1. Police forces included	
MPS	5
Sussex, Merseyside, Humberside	3
Devon & Cornwall, Northumbria, Thames Valley, North Wales	2
South Wales, Dorset, Dyfed Powys, West Midlands, Lancashire, Kent, North Yorkshire, Staffordshire, Cambridgeshire, Cumbria, Gloucestershire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire	1
2. Area analysed	
Force level	1
BCU plus smaller area in detail	23
Smaller area only	11
Rural crime	2
3. Data sources used in the profile	
1 source	16
2 sources	8
3 sources	3
4 sources	5
no data	3
Police recorded crime data	27
Police incident data	12
Licensing data	4
Ambulance or A&E data	3
Public transport data	1
4. Type of crime analysed	
All violence	12
Violence against the person	12
Anti-social behaviour or disorder	11
Alcohol related offences/incidents	6
Public place violent crime	4
Other crimes	1
5. Time periods analysed	
Calendar/financial years	11
Previous AMEC period	4
Fortnights	3
6. Types of analysis conducted	
Counts	27
Hot spot analysis	17
Trends	10
Rates	1
7.Victims, offenders, places, times	
Victims	8
Offenders	9
Licensed premises	19
Other 'hot' locations (e.g. taxi ranks, takeaways)	6
Hot days	24
Hot times	24