

GOOD PRACTICE – description

for sending to the EUCPN website team at eucpn@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Project purpose	Crime prevention in the field of environnement, ecology and public health by the regular action of a territorial network of local officers trained in prevention (gendarmes), working in the framework of a partnership approach in contact with the local representatives, associations for the protection of the environment, companies, schools and other public actors.
Categories	anti-social behaviour feelings of insecurity street crime youth crime public-private partnership

GOOD PRACTICE – document details

Project title	Territorial network of proximity for the prevention of environmental and public health crime.
Country of origin	France
Project description	Territorial plan of 210 (minimum) gendarmes trained in dealing with the prevention of environmental and public health crime and who are aiming to : advise their colleagues, inform the local representatives, raise the awareness of youth in their schools or of heads of companies, and develop partnerships with other public actors as well as with associations for the protection of the environment.
Project start date	1994
Project status	Implemented
Is project still running ?	Yes
Date of last review	April 2008, real amelioration in progress
Contact details	French national gendarmerie : <i>DGGN/SOE/SDPJ</i> <i>Bureau de la police judiciaire</i> <i>Section <u>D</u>élinquance et <u>C</u>riminalité <u>O</u>rganisée</i> <i>Immeuble "Le Lombard"</i> <i>143, Avenue de Verdun - 92130 ISSY LES MOULINEAUX</i> <i>tél : 01.56.28.66.35 ou 40 - Télécopie 01.56.28.66.49</i> <i>@Email : yvan.carbonnelle@gendarmerie.interieur.gouv.fr</i>
Documents	Best practice France.pdf – septembre 2009

Territorial network of proximity for the prevention of the environmental and public health crime

Intelligence

Short description of the problem

The ecological issues have grown to be really important these last few years since they threaten the environment stability, the public health, and are the origin of daily living nuisances for the citizens or of pollutions which create an unsafe climate. The population's requests to the authorities to limit these crimes are now strong.

Anti-social behaviors to voluntary actions against the environment (e.g. waste disposal, discharge of prohibited products, etc.), are growing in number, particularly because some ill intended people want to escape, through the easy way, from some legal responsibilities.

In addition, true eco-mafias have come to life, taking advantage of a complex law system and sometimes weak sentences in this area.

Period

Since 1990's in Europe

Data

There are a great number of environmental crimes and infringements. Their scale range from the basic nuisance (unlawful waste disposal, sound nuisance) to serious environmental criminality (company in charge of toxic waste recycling failing to respect its security obligations).

For example, and thanks to a greater mobilisation in this domain, between 2003 and 2006, the number of environmental crimes or infringements recorded by the specialized officers of the national gendarmerie went from 27,500 to 39,700.

Types of offenders

- common citizen being negligent, ill informed or ill intentioned ;
- youth being desocialized or opting for an attitude of defiance and provocation ;
- marginal youth or not well integrated in the society ;
- inefficient compagnies ;
- eco-mafias ...

The first four types are by far the most frequent ones.

Modus operandi

Varies greatly : waste disposals in the cities or in the nature, rejecting toxic products in inland waters, citizens or companies not respecting the rules about recycling, polluting emissions from companies not respecting the law, voluntary or not sound nuisances, voluntary pollutions aiming irreversible damages, toxic wastes trafic, protected animal species trafic, medecine frauds

The victims

Due to environmental interactions, the number of direct or indirect victims is great and not easily quantified, but often physically hurt (illnesses); the impact of environmental damages may in addition go on for many generations (for instance, the discharge in nature of heavy metals coming from batteries being an important source of pollution of the ground waters).

Causes

- Negligence or lack of concern for individual behaviors ;
- deliberate willingness to bother for harm others in creating serious or even irreversible damages ;
- saving up on unjustified functioning for the companies when they do not comply with the regulatory constraints concerning the environment and public health issue.

Do

It was recognised that the problem cannot be accomplished by the law enforcement services alone, but in partnership in which the involvement of various local authorities, local governments, institutions and groups of citizens having experienced problems caused by this sort of criminality is

most essential.

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Intervention

Short description of the project

Proximity territorial plan of 210 gendarmes (minimum) trained in tackling the issue of preventing environment and the public health criminality and whose purpose is to : advise their colleagues, inform the local representatives, raise awareness of youth in schools or heads of companies, develop partnerships with other public actors as well as with approved associations in the protection of the environment.

Short, medium, and long term objectives of the project

- 1 – to have internally trained gendarmes specialised in this area of prevention, then to increase their colleagues' awareness about these issues ; to refine the doctrine ;
- 2 – to firmly focus the preventing action towards : local representatives, companies, schools, approved associations and other relevant public actors;
- 3 – go over the plan, with regard to the legal changes and the stated contentious in this domain, in order to perfect the training of the gendarmes and to adapt the plan if necessary.

Activities

The trained gendarmes provide their know-how with teaching aids for the benefit of :

- other gendarmes during training sessions or when giving technical support on investigations ; during these sessions, operational advice concerning CBNR threats are also frequently provided.
- local representatives mainly during the meetings of the counsel for prevention of juvenile delinquency, chaired by the mayors ;
- youth in schools or even universities ;
- companies whose business is considered sensitive for the environment ;
- some serious associations of citizens ;
- a number of socially disadvantaged populations in order to raise their awareness.

Furthermore, they cooperate with the approved associations in the protection of the environment as well as with other public partners (deconcentrated bodies of the ministries of ecology, agriculture and fisheries, or health mainly) or private ones. They are integrated as needed in local working or discussion groups. They may advise their chiefs and their judicial or administrative authorities owing to their technical knowledge. Finally, they constitute a watch network aiming at detecting the emerging threats (CBNR included).

However, they do not devote themselves only to this prevention mission, continuing to fulfill their standard gendarmerie missions but keep the appropriate and necessary time for it depending upon the priorities assigned by their superiors and, of course, the daily events.

Issues to address

Many wrongly believe that police forces do not consider as a priority the fight against environmental and public health crime, as opposed to other types of criminality considered more traditional. They are pleasantly surprised knowing the gendarmes are involved in crime prevention in these domains, and are therefore exceptionally susceptible. Beyond the preventing impact being increased, this gives a rather good image of the law enforcement forces, basis for a perennial constructive dialogue.

Implementation

History of the project

The project was launched in 1994. It has been through a long phase of rising power which led to a total of 600 people trained, 210 (minimum) of them still being in their position (target reached).

Since 2008, it has been reformed and improved. Thus, the training course programme for the gendarmes in this prevention domain was entirely reviewed et will now last 4 weeks instead of 3. The employment doctrine continues concerning the prevention actions and the targets to reach.

The new trainings have already started.

Project plan

A phased implementation has of course been taken into account.

Project customisation

On average, there are 2 trained gendarmes per department ; but this figure may vary depending on specific local needs; the resource is thus adapted.

Involvement

Involvement of private and public partners

Ministry of Defence, ministry of Interior, ministry of Justice, ministry of Health, ministry of Ecology, ministry for Work, approved associations for the protection of the environment, independant administrative authorities working on environmental and public health issues.

Wishing to improve the operational complementarity, the national police was officially informed of the development of this project within the national gendarmerie.

Roles and responsibilities of each partner

The national gendarmerie is responsible for the preventing action, in partnership with the deconcentrated authorities, or associations mentioned above, within the framework of regular relations, mutual information and joint actions.

Some bodies mentioned above participate in the training of the specialized gendarmes.

Financing

law enforcement national gendarmerie is covering its own costs.

Did the project have an impact upon the intended target group, did it impact upon other parties as well?

Yes

Do

The very complex training programme of referent gendarmes in this area must be, if possible, build in conjunction with the other institutional actors involved.

Don't

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Impact

Has the project been evaluated ?

In 2000, with the prospective centre of the national gendarmerie. In 2007 and 2008, with the judicial police department of the national gendarmerie headquarters, and the judicial police national training center (CNFPJ) located in Fontainebleau. Moreover, each year, the trained « prevention officers » provide their national headquarters with their activity statistics.

What was evaluated ?

The number of gendarmes trained per year, the number of prevention session carried out, the difficulties encountered, the number of technical assistance (judicial sampling), done in parallel with the number of offences recorded in the environmental protection field, difficulties encountered, adequacy of the equipment put in place, effectiveness of the links with the partners ...

At what stage ?

See above.

Participants

See above.

Research work done by university students were also used.

Results

Have the project's goal been attained ?

Yes. For example, in 2007, the specially trained gendarmes directed prevention or awareness raising sessions on this issue to : 5,000 young people in school, 4,000 employees in other

ministries or approved associations or local representatives or entrepreneurs, 2,700 gendarmes, 380 servicemen of the other armies, making a total of 12,080 people reached (11,000 for 2008 in comparison). And the law on the environment being evolving very much, a decision was made to improve the training course of the « preventing gendarmes » (see above).

Finally, if the preventing actions are not sufficient, it has to be known that this plan is interoperable with the repressive chain of actions in this area in gendarmerie and that it includes among other things specialized investigators at departmental and regional levels (250 at the end in total) added to the National Office for Fight against Environmental and Public Health Crime (OCLAESP) under the national gendarmerie responsibility but which has also police officers or other civil servants on secondment. Furthermore, specialized preventive gendarmes have also basic judicial capabilities.

Do

Have a widened approach of the issues.

Don't

Don't expect immediate spectacular results, as results grow with time, especially in this field.