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The Impact of Community Policing on Tourism and Tourism Oriented Policing/Protection Services (TOPs)

The late 1980s and 1990s saw a major emphasis on what police departments called community policing (CP). A major premise of Community policing was that "returning of policing to the community in which it served" would reduce crime. CP sought to take police officers out of their patrol cars and place them into local neighbourhoods, create social linkages between police and residents develop police allies and local alliances. Many of the ideas in community policing had a major influence on what would become another form of policing, tourism oriented policing/protection services which today is better know by its acronym TOPs.

Tops drew its inspiration from Community Policing but modified CP so as to meet the ever-growing security needs of the tourism community. Although in 2005, TOPs does not appear to be a radical idea, when it was first proposed in the early part of the 1990s by tourism security experts such as Dr. Peter Tarlow, Dr Abe Pizam, Dr. Yoel Mansfeld, it was seen as such. Law enforcement questioned even the concept of a "tourism community". Security professionals and law enforcement agents wondered if it was possible to have a community where the physical structures remained the same but the people inhabiting or using those structures (hotels, airports, and tourism attractions) change on a daily or even hourly basis? While there is a community of people who work at tourism locations, from storeowners at airports to chambermaids at hotels, TOPs specialists had to recognize that most of the people whom they served might never be seen more than one time. A whole new form of training then was needed for police officers who desired (or were ordered) to develop tourism oriented policing units.

Tourism policing assumes that it has to deal with both a stable and unstable population. In fact classical TOPs units deal with 5 very distinct forms of protection. These populations include

both stable (unlikely to change) and less stable populations. TOPs populations then include: visitors (an unstable population), industry's employees (a more stable population), tourism investors (a stable population), tourism sites (inanimate but concrete entities), and reputations and economies (abstract and highly changeable entities open to wide fluctuations).

Where CP rests on the idea that the police officer may change but the community will change only gradually, TOPs units understand that often it is the individual police officer who may be the most stable part of the community. Thus, tourism police need to know such things non-normative policing structures as visitor cycles, niche marketing and the segmentation of the local visitor market. TOPs also differs from CP in that tourism oriented police departments work closely with and are often dependent on other forms of tourism security professionals. Thus in cities with large hotel components, police departments and hotel security professionals may work hand in hand to develop an overall strategy for protection of both people and assets. The security professional provides the local police department not only with additional manpower but in many cases acts as a proactive agent that prevents tourism crimes from ever occurring.

The chart found below provides a good summary of the key difference or interpretations of CP units into TOPs units

Translating Community Policing's Major Concepts into TOPs

Community Policing is....	How CP Translates into Visitor Techniques
<p>Knowing your community well: know its customs know its schedules know its social make-up know its needs</p>	<p>The Visitor is "our community:" identify visitor market identify visitor cycles identify visitor segments identify those services needed:</p>

<p>Be involved in the community</p>	<p>Know the community's attractions, its good points and bad points.</p>
<p>Problem solving for community. Adapting the SARA model for non-security professional Scanning: What's the problem? Analysis: Learn all possible facts and what previous methods have been tried in the past. Response. Choose a goal and determine plan of action. Possibilities are: eliminating the problem reducing the problem reducing harm created by the problem dealing with a problem better Find alternate solutions. Assessment. Evaluate how well your program met your goals. If goals not met, start again.</p>	<p>Problem solving for community. Adapting the SARA model for non-security professional Scanning: what's the problem? Analysis: Learn all possible facts and what previous methods have been tried in the past. Response. Choose a goal and determine plan of action. Possibilities are: eliminating the problem reducing the problem reducing harm created by the problem dealing with a problem better Find alternate solutions. Assessment. Evaluate how well your program met your goals. If goals not met, start again.</p>
<p>Five Principles Addressed by Community Policing Reported crime Unreported crime What is problem perception? Fear Quality of life (QoL) issues</p>	<p>Their Visitor Applications Listen to what Visitors say Encourage the Visitor to talk Perception is reality Crime and Terrorism Visitor improves local QoL.</p>

Despite the fact that TOPs units have a different mission than CP police units, TOPs has absorbed many of the ideals CP ideas. One of the reasons for this cross-organizational pollination is the fact that as customer service (community service) increases, crime often falls. Thus as part of a tourism oriented policing/protection strategy police officers are encouraged both in CP and in TOPs units to act in the following ways.

- Do not do to others what you would not want them to do to you.
- Realize that most people appreciate the officer's efforts.
- Adopt a service philosophy in what you do?
- View the citizens and guests of the police officers locale not as enemies but as customers.
- Try to provide the citizens and guests of your locale with the highest level of service possible?
- Make citizens and guests of your locale feel special.
- When a problem occurs, realize that the police officer owns the problem and needs to solve it as quickly and as efficiently as possible.
- Seek ways to be innovative to provide or improve services to the citizens and guests of your locale.
- Take advantage of the opportunity of meeting the citizens and guests of your locale so as to widen your horizons and make your job more interesting.