

Crime prevention and policy: New tools for contemporary challenges

Mercure Hotel, Sydney

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Welcome to the Crime Prevention and Policy conference and thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to be here.

Economics is a key component of program development, implementation and evaluation. An assessment of the cost-benefit of a particular program- the long-term benefit per invested dollar – has become a standard requirement of the NSW Government, and most governments internationally across the developed world.

Whether we are dealing with known offenders, crime prevention such as alcohol-related assault, or installing hardware like CCTV- all of which are topics that will be covered by our speakers over the next two days – the success of programs is not only assessed by a reduction in offending or crime prevention- but also whether there is a relationship between the investment in the program, and a long-term saving in Government expenditure, and a benefit to the wider community.

We know that programs working with known offenders in case management structured models can be very expensive initially, but we also know that if 1

these projects are resourced properly, they can have a long lasting positive impact on the likelihood of people not re-offending.

There are also enormous opportunities for crime prevention presented by new technologies and methodologies around spatial analysis.

We also have with us today the Crime Prevention Division and the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research from my Department are here today. Many of you would be very aware of their work, particularly the hot spot maps that are being used to understand the spatial distribution and concentration of different crimes across locations.

From the perspective of operational, program development and research, the opportunities for the prevention of crime are increasing as a direct result of spatial mapping data, and this represents an excellent example of twenty-first century crime prevention tools.

Another key focus for my Department is the increased collaboration with experts in government, the private sector and in the community sector.

All Government agencies have a direct and indirect role to play in crime prevention. Housing, Health, Transport, and local government are working together every day, and examples of this collaboration are our work on the links between crime and public housing, and crime and public transport. A number of partnerships and joint programs have been established between my Department, NSW Police, Housing NSW and Transport NSW. We are collectively responding to crime challenges in a coordinated and strategic way.

Collaborative partnerships between the Government and the university sector are also key. My Department established and continues to fund the

Designing Out Crime Research Centre at the University of Technology, Sydney. The Centre is a leading international institution and develops exciting design solutions to resolve and respond to problems relating to crime.

The Centre is currently working with manufacturers of ATMs to develop innovative solutions that will make the areas around ATMs safer to use, and reduce the likelihood of fraud.

The Centre represents an excellent example of how government can work with leading research bodies to develop new and exciting answers to problems faced across the community.

We are also significantly increasing collaboration with the private and community sector.

Over the last few months I have announced new forums and programs between government, the private sector and community sectors to respond to crime.

We have established the Retail Strategic Partnership with the retail sector to consider coordinated responses to retail crime. This group is targeting their efforts in supermarkets, which we know experience high levels of crime.

We have also established a similar body with government and industry representatives to consider solutions to resolve residential break and enter.

We are engaged with and seek expert advice from the private sector industries like security, insurance, retail, and development to ensure that the programs developed target crimes that have the highest negative impact on our businesses and communities, and therefore we maximise the program's effectiveness.

I recently attended the launch of an initiative between Rotary NSW and Dulux paints which supports volunteers to remove graffiti, which my Department is helping to fund. In addition to substantial community benefits, the program also costs significantly less than other graffiti removal programs.

As part of our focus on collaboration, we are delighted to partner with the Australian Institute of Criminology to bring you this conference, by hosting law enforcement officers and crime prevention practitioners from across Australia, New Zealand, and as far away as Korea, and in having experts representing international best practice here, we can gain greater insight into how we can continue to increase effectiveness in all our crime prevention practices.

In planning this event we aimed to bring you the greatest expertise in crime prevention. I am delighted to welcome two thought leaders in this field to our conference -Steve Aos, Director of the Washington State Institute for Public Policy, and Professor Patricia Brantingham, Professor of Computational Criminology and Director of the Institute for Canadian Urban Research Studies from Simon Fraser University.

In addition to our renowned keynote speakers, a range of experts will share their knowledge with us over the next two days on a broad range of issues including economics, spatial mapping, and collaborative partnerships.

It gives me great pleasure to open this event. This is an opportunity to learn, not only from our speakers, but also from each other over the coming days.