



## Action Against Business Crime

The MRCI Chairman, Sir Geoffrey Dear, has recently accepted the position of Chairman for the new national body, Action Against Business Crime (AABC).

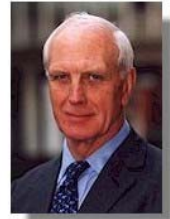
He is responsible for creating an independent national body, representing business crime reduction partnerships and business crime prevention measures throughout England & Wales.

There will be a regional structure of business crime managers, working in a similar way to the MRCI.

The main benefit to partnerships is that the AABC will bring a much needed focus for

liaison with government, Home Office and national organizations. It will also hopefully allow us to communicate in a more efficient way with national businesses and associations.

If you would like to make Sir Geoffrey aware of any problem or issue in your partnership, contact him through MRCI.



Sir Geoffrey Dear  
MRCI Chairman

## INTELLIGENCE MEETINGS

These successful regular 6 weekly meetings have continued to be the basis of why so many people want to be part of the MRCI. It gives scheme managers, police officers and intelligence officers the opportunity to meet and share intelligence on known traveling criminals, as well as putting names to unidentified photographs.

Current intelligence is sent by each partnership to MRCI just prior to the meeting, and a PowerPoint presentation is compiled. This is shown at the meeting, with town representatives able to talk through the presentation of their information. CD ROMs of the presentation are shared with members who conform to MRCI intelligence sharing protocols.

At the June meeting, 10 unknown criminals were identified, helping a number of partnerships and police forces to solve crimes, and recovering valuable property.

At the meetings there is also the opportunity to exchange views, discuss good practice, and share ideas. There is often a guest speaker, and there is of course the opportunity to network.



Meetings are generally held at British Transport Police HQ in Birmingham. The next is on Tuesday 14th September 2004, and the guest speaker will be talking about civil recovery.

## MOST FREQUENTLY STOLEN PRODUCTS

The following are reported by the Centre for Retail Research as the products most frequently reported as stolen.

Gillette razor blades, alcohol, toiletries (including Oil of Olay and Lynx), cosmetics, fine fragrances, clothing and lingerie, batteries (mainly Duracell), DVDs, CDs (particularly Rap and dance music)

and computer games, pills, vitamins, contraceptives and pregnancy testers, electric toothbrushes, Braun gas cylinders, instant coffee (Nescafe), steaks and packs of meat.

If you think that any other products should be added to update the list, please let MRCI know.

### Inside this issue:

Crime Reduction Databases	2
DARE	3
Intelligence—Car Park Thefts	3
Intelligence—Skimming & ATMs	3
Civil Recovery in Solihull	4
Usdaw—Freedom From Fear Campaign	4
MRCI Contact Information	4

### Special points of interest:

- MRCI's printer, IBC, is able to offer member partnerships special rates for all their requirements, including stickers. Contact Les Watson on 01983 566750.
- Birmingham city centre (F1) have successfully obtained 6 Criminal Anti-Social Behavior Orders (CRASBOs) for shop theft.
- Professional Indemnity Insurance should be held by each partnership to protect the board of management, committee & employees such as co-ordinators.



# SOFTWARE DATABASES



It is important that partnerships are able to manage all personal data which they hold. To do this efficiently, it is advisable to have a computerised database. The benefits are:

- You can more easily hold, organise and manage your data. It should be easy to use the database, and save time & resources.
- Data should be managed legally and properly. A good database will give your committee confidence that all data is being treated in an appropriate manner.
- You should be able to easily create a wide variety of mean-

ingful management reports and graphs. This will help the scheme in many ways, not just in giving information back to your members, but also to supporters, sponsors and partners.

- You should be able to predict future crime trends.

There are a number of databases now available, including ACIS, BICS, and those developed by NERCP and the Scottish Business Crime Centre. Before making your choice, talk to partnerships which use the database, so that you can ensure that your choice suits you.

For contact info, contact MRCI.



## MAKE YOUR DATABASE WORK FOR YOU



Birmingham Retail Crime Operation are now using a new database, called ACIS (Active Crime Intelligence System).

Birmingham RCO was one of twelve members of the original pilot project evaluating BICS (Business Information Crime System). However, after the pilot project ended, they strongly felt that that BICS did not perform to expectations, and decided to build their own database, tailor made for crime reduction schemes. It is now regarded as being the best crime reduction software database available, and they have agreed to allow other partnerships to share it, whilst keeping costs low.

An excellent database should help you to hold personal data legally, efficiently and properly. It will enable you, your committee, partners and members to have confidence that you are acting within the Data Protection Act, and other appropriate legislation. You should also be able to easily and effectively compile management reports and information to help you report back to your partners and members.

ACIS is simple and easy to use, saving you time and resources. It can be used to analyse crime trends, and as well as supply historical data via management reports, it also predicts future patterns of activity .

ACIS is being successfully used by: -

Belfast	Birmingham
Coventry	Leicester
Lincoln	Nottingham
Plymouth	Stoke on Trent
Swansea	Wolverhampton
Worcester	Street Wardens
Leicestershire Police	Burton upon Trent

Midlands Regional Crime Initiative

Staffordshire Police

South Wales Police Heddlu De Cymru

West Midlands Police

As you will be aware, Penella Price, head of the Business Crime Unit at the Home Office has stated that the Home Office does not support just one national database. They feel, as the MRCI does, that the main criteria is that it is important to keep and manage your data legally and efficiently.

A good database will be invaluable to your crime reduction partnership. It will help you to remain legal and compliant, it will enable you to create meaningful reports to members & partners, and it will make your scheme more efficient and effective.

ACIS will surprise you, not only with it's capabilities, but also the cost of both installing and running it.

It is important that you make yourself aware of what this database can deliver for you, as your members should be informed of important developments, which would enable you to offer them an improved service, at excellent value.

For further details, visit the Birmingham Retail Crime Operation website at [www.shopcrime.org.uk](http://www.shopcrime.org.uk) . There is a link to ACIS on the front page.

If you are interested, please give the Birmingham RCO Office a ring on 0121-236-7652 and they can arrange a free demonstration.



# Drug Abuse Resistance Education



DARE (UK) is the British arm of a worldwide educational programme, now taught in 55 countries, which provide recipients with the knowledge and skills to avoid harmful drugs, including alcohol and tobacco. It shares with the government the belief that an investment in successful preventative programmes—preventing drugs abuse before it happens—is the most cost effective way of dealing with the problem.

DARE, which first started in America in 1983, is the most experienced organization of its kind. In its 20 years of existence, it has constantly updated and revised its programmes as more has been learnt and it has spent millions of dollars on research programmes, notably a \$13.7 million programme recently completed in the United States of America. Consequently its programmes are now “state of the art”.

DARE is a charity which :

- Helps young people to avoid drugs dependency, alcoholism and smoking.
- Seeks to prevent juvenile crime.
- Works with parents in the fight against drugs

- Works with business to prevent drugs related crime, absenteeism and accidents.
- Works for and with the community to make Britain a better and safer place to live.

MRCI are working with DARE to offer our members the opportunity to benefit from DARE’s experience. By inviting DARE into your town, you are enabling your local authority, police force, CDRP and other organizations to work together on an excellent education programme. In working with DARE, you will be setting up an important link in the education of the young in your local schools. It is not resource intensive, and will enable you to offer more in your efforts to be involved in restorative justice.

For further information on DARE (UK):

Tel: 01623 410402

Email: [enquiries@dare.uk.com](mailto:enquiries@dare.uk.com)

Web: [www.dare.uk.com](http://www.dare.uk.com)

or through MRCI



## CAR PARK THEFTS



There is a new method for stealing property from car boots, which is hitting car parks around the region.

Usually when thieves steal from car boots they have a variable success rate, but some areas have been suffering a spate of car boot thefts that has been 100% successful for electrical goods such as laptops and digital cameras.

Thieves are using a small DIY tool that locates wires & pipes before drilling into walls. When this small rectangular box is placed on the car boot it detects the small residual current from the laptops, and lets the thief know that there is some-

thing worth stealing in the boot.

If you come across someone with one of these tools in their possession for no good reason, bear this in mind.



## SKIMMING & ATM MACHINES

Criminals are targeting ATM machines across the country. Devices are being found which have a built in magnetic card reader, and offenders are found close by in the queue, or using a hidden camera & transmitter. This enables them to capture the information, skimming the original card, and then creating new cards. The nearby offenders have frequently offered violence when the devices are found, in order to escape with the devices.



The offenders are often described as Moroccan, Egyptian, Sri Lankan or East European. They tend to prefer ATM machines in out of town centres, such as in retail parks.

Owners & operators of ATMs should be alert to suspicious behaviour around machines, either in the form of people actually tampering with machines, or loitering, watching them.

For further information and advice, contact your Crime Prevention Officer at your local police station.





Shoplifters can expect to be taken through the civil courts by retailers and businesses determined to recoup their losses with the launch of a groundbreaking initiative.

West Midlands Police said that criminals arrested or cautioned in Solihull would face civil actions by stores seeking to recover costs associated with the offence, including damaged and stolen goods, the use of CCTV and staff time.

Pc Russell Powell, from the Solihull town centre crime-fighting team, said officers had joined forces with the local retail partnership to run the scheme and stressed that stores were determined to recover their money.

"This scheme has a co-ordinated approach through

the town retail scheme, Solihull Spotters, with regards to civil recovery," Pc Powell said.

"Shoppers are welcome in Solihull but thieves are not. In future, they will be pursued through both the criminal and civil courts."

He added: "Research has shown many thieves are opportunist and, if they are taken through a civil recovery, they won't come back."

Historically, smaller stores have been reluctant to pursue claims through the civil courts because of the time and cost involved.

The officer said that under this new scheme, an independent retail loss prevention company would step in to take over once an action was started.



## FREEDOM FROM FEAR CAMPAIGN



Store managers and owners, who are struggling to cope with high levels of retail crime and attacks on their staff, are largely unaware that help is available through local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP), a survey by shop workers' union Usdaw has found.

A UK-wide survey carried out in June 2004 by Usdaw revealed that only 30 per cent of store managers knew that a CDRP existed in their local area, while only 15 per cent had actually been contacted proactively by their CDRP. However, of those who had been contacted, nearly 90 per cent reported that the CDRP had been helpful and supportive to them.

The union's call comes during Respect for Shop workers Week, 5th to 11th July 2004, which is a central part of Usdaw's high-profile Freedom From Fear campaign to promote greater respect for shop workers and improve safety in retail workplaces. On Monday (5th July), Usdaw published research that showed shop workers across the UK are regular victims of verbal abuse, threats of violence and physical attacks at work.

John Hannett, Usdaw General Secretary, said: "Shop managers are crying out for help to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. Clearly, when they are contacted by their local CDRP they find the service useful. But the majority of shop managers remain un-

aware that a CDRP exists in their local area. We need to ensure this anomaly is addressed as quickly as possible.

"There is a huge problem with retail crime in the UK. In most cases, it is reported in terms of financial losses - but it is not a victimless crime, as many Usdaw members can testify. All too often, shop workers find themselves at the wrong end of verbal abuse, threats and physical assaults at work. We must ensure that workers get better protection and improved safety."

The MRCI has spoken recently at an Usdaw conference, explaining how Business Crime Reduction Partnerships can link in with their campaign, sharing similar aims and goals. Where there are good partnerships, member businesses benefit from good training, and improved access to help, information, intelligence and examples of best practice.

If you are not already in touch with your local Usdaw representative in your town or city, either contact them direct, or do so through MRCI.

For more details about Usdaw's Respect for Shop workers Week visit the union's web site [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk). Shop managers can locate their local CDRP through [www.crimereduction.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk).