

1. MAJOR INCIDENTS AND POLICING DIARY

MURDER / ATTEMPTED MURDER

1.1 Death Onboard Tanker - Brixham

A murder investigation by Torbay CID was launched after the death of a man aboard a tanker ship off the Brixham coast on 3 February.

Captain Walfredo Banta died after an incident onboard his ship the Overseas Josefa Camejo which was on-route to Sweden. He was found to have suffered multiple stab wounds.

Enquiries have revealed that a male suspect may have thrown himself into the sea following the incident. No body has been recovered.

The results of a coroner's inquest into Mr Banta's death are awaited.

1.2 Stabbing – Newquay

On 6 February, police in Newquay attended an address following a report of a stabbing. Two males were located with knife wounds and were conveyed to Treliske hospital. One of the men, Kenneth Moroney, died from his injuries.

The other man was arrested on suspicion of murder and later charged. He was remanded in custody.

1.3 Murder of Peter Solheim – Falmouth

Officers investigating the death of Peter Solheim, whose body was recovered from the sea near Falmouth on 18 June 2004, have charged a woman with murder and conspiracy to murder.

She appeared at Truro magistrates' court on 25 February and was remanded in custody for a Crown Court plea and directional hearing on 7 June.

1.4 New Year's Eve Death – Plymouth

Three people have been charged with perverting the course of justice after the death of 17-year-old Lisa Gardner, who died at an address in Plymouth on New Year's Eve.

They appeared at Plymouth Magistrates' Court on 2 March, where further charges of supplying a class A drug were brought against two of the defendants. They have been released on bail with plea and directional hearings scheduled for May.

1.5 Murder Charges - North Devon

Three men have been charged with the murder of Colin Browne in Bideford on Friday 25 March.

All three defendants remain in custody pending a plea and directional hearing at Exeter Crown Court on 10 June.

1.6 Murder - Newton Abbot

A man, who was arrested in Spain in connection with the death of Helen Munro, has been charged with her murder.

Mrs Munro's body was found at an address in Heathfield, near Newton Abbot, on 22 April.

1.7 Double Murder - St Ervan, Wadebridge

On 26 April, police were called to an address in St Ervan, near Wadebridge, where they found the bodies of a 19-year-old woman and an 18-month-old baby. A man has been charged with two counts of murder and is being held in custody pending a court appearance.

SUSPICIOUS DEATH

1.8 Suspicious Death - Exmouth

On 12 April, police and ambulance staff were called to an address in Exmouth, where the body of a 30-year-old male was discovered. The results of a post mortem and further tests are awaited and an inquest has been adjourned pending these results.

VIOLENCE

1.9 Plymouth Stabbing Charges

An 18-year-old man was arrested after three people in the North Prospect area of Plymouth reported being attacked with a knife on 5 March.

He was charged with two offences of wounding and one offence of affray. He has been remanded in custody at HM Prison, Exeter, awaiting a plea and directional hearing at Plymouth Crown Court.

1.10 Domestic Stabbing -Exeter

On 10 March, police received a report via ambulance control that a male had been stabbed at an address in Exeter. On attendance, a female was found with minor wounds to her stomach. A male was located at Royal Devon and Exeter hospital with two stab wounds to his chest. The female was arrested for section 18 wounding and released on police bail.

1.11 Serious Assault - Plymouth

On 11 April, police were called to the North Road West area of Plymouth, following a report of a fight.

Shortly afterwards, police received a further report of a male collapsed in nearby Eldad Hill. The collapsed male was taken to Derriford hospital where

he received treatment for serious head injuries. Three people have since been arrested and released on police bail while enquiries continue.

1.12 Serious Assault - Holsworthy

On 23 April, police received reports of a male brandishing an axe at an address in Holsworthy. Officers attended the property where they found a woman with serious lacerations to her body.

One man was arrested at the scene and a further man was arrested later that day at a nearby address.

One of the men has been charged with affray and possessing an offensive weapon and has been bailed to reappear in court at a later date.

1.13 Double Stabbing - Truro

On 24 April, police received a report that a stabbing had taken place at Truro railway station. Two men were found at the scene with stab wounds and a third man was arrested on suspicion of wounding.

All three were conveyed to Treliske hospital for treatment.

Network Rail closed Truro station for a short time as a result of this incident, which has now been handed over to the British Transport Police for investigation.

ASSAULT ON POLICE

1.14 Police Officers Injured on Duty

Officers were called to assist a colleague dealing with a disqualified driver in Plymouth on 27 February.

Additional officers attended the scene where a male driver was detained and taken into custody. During the arrest and restraint of the driver, two Plymouth-based officers sustained minor injuries, although neither required medical treatment.

The driver was subsequently charged with driving whilst disqualified, driving without valid insurance and resisting arrest. He has been released on conditional bail.

1.15 Police Officer Injured on Duty

An officer was assaulted, sustaining a head injury, while attending a report of theft from a telephone kiosk in Newquay on 7 March.

Two men were seen leaving the scene.

A man was later arrested and charged with attempted theft and assault of a police officer. He has been bailed to appear before magistrates.

1.16 Injury to Officer on Duty

On 22 March, police attended a Dartmouth address at the request of the ambulance service to assist with a violent man. During the incident, the man bit a constable on the arm.

The officer received hospital treatment and the offender was giving a warning.

FIREARMS

1.17 Firearm Incident - Camborne

On 9 March, police received a report from a woman in Camborne that a 19-year-old man had discharged a firearm in a public place.

A separate report from a member of the public claimed a man with a gun had been seen arguing with a woman in the street.

ARVs were authorised and the suspect was located at a private address before an armed containment was established.

The male left the address and was found at a nearby house, where he was arrested by local units. He is currently on police bail whilst enquiries continue.

1.18 Shooting Incident - Ponsanooth, Cornwall

On 12 March, the father of a 13-year-old boy informed police that his son had been shot in the eye with an air weapon and was in Treリスケ Hospital receiving surgery.

Enquiries revealed that the offender, a 19-year-old local male, had also shot his own brother in the leg during the incident.

The deployment of firearms was authorised and the offender was arrested and charged with grievous bodily harm and firearms offences. He pleaded guilty to both offences at Truro Crown Court in March and was granted unconditional bail. He later received a 240 hour community order and was ordered to pay the 13-year-old victim £2000 and costs.

1.19 Firearms Incident - Brixham

On 17 March, police attended an address in Brixham where a male claimed that his neighbour had threatened to cut his head off with a sword.

ARVs were authorised and an armed containment was placed around the address. After negotiation, the offending male surrendered himself to officers and was arrested for threats to kill. A subsequent search of the address located a number of swords.

The man remains on bail pending a hearing at Exeter Crown Court.

1.20 Explosives Act Warrant Executed

On 15 April, officers executed a warrant under section 73 of the Explosives Act 1875 at an address in Exeter. The operation followed an incident earlier in the week when an improvised explosive device was located close by.

A 42-year-old man was arrested and bailed pending results of forensic tests and further enquiries.

ROBBERY

1.21 Armed Robbery - Tiverton

On the evening of 28 January, an armed robbery took place at the Tesco Express convenience store, in Lea Road, Tiverton.

Four men wearing balaclavas and stocking masks threatened staff with knives and a meat cleaver before stealing cash from a till. Enquiries are continuing into the incident which resulted in no injuries.

1.22 Attempted Armed Robbery - St Keverne, Cornwall

On 14 February, a man entered the Post Office in St Keverne, Cornwall, and threatened staff before asking them to hand over cash.

Staff refused and pressed the panic button, at which the man left the scene.

A package left at the scene by the offender has been preserved for forensic examination while enquiries continue.

1.23 Knifepoint Robbery - Plymouth

On 3 March, police received a report of a robbery at a Plymouth jewellers. A man had entered the store and threatened staff with a knife before taking a quantity of diamond rings and running off. The store manager, who attempted to detain the offender, suffered a minor injury.

The offender was detained a short distance away by three serving Royal Marines until police arrived. At Plymouth Crown Court, the man entered guilty pleas to offences of theft and assault and was sentenced to three years and eight months in prison.

1.24 Robbery - Lifton

On Friday 25 March, a report was received from Lifton Autoway, Lifton, that a male wearing a balaclava and carrying a machete had entered the garage shop and threatened staff, forcing them to hand over tobacco and money before leaving in a car.

A youth was arrested in connection with the incident although enquiries continue.

1.25 Robbery - Michael Spiers Exeter

On 22 March, four masked people entered Michael Spiers Jewellers in Castle Street, Exeter, armed with liquid spray incapacitant.

The spray was used on people within the store and jewellery was stolen. The offenders escaped in a vehicle which was later recovered.

Enquiries are ongoing.

ARSON

1.26 Hotel Fire - Torquay

On Thursday 17 February, police and the Devon and Fire Rescue Service attended the report of a fire on the first floor of the Collingwood Hotel, Braddons Hill Road East, Torquay. The unoccupied property had been damaged by fire two days previously.

The fire is being treated as suspicious and is being investigated along with other suspected incidents of arson at hotels in the area.

The Arson Task Force has liaised with Torbay Council and fire chiefs to ensure all vulnerable local premises are boarded up.

1.27 Hotel Fire - Newquay

On 29 March, police attended a fire at the Ambassorder Hotel, Mount Wise, Newquay. Although closed and boarded up, the hotel was known to have been used by squatters.

Local roads were closed while 10 fire service appliances and support vehicles dealt with the fire. The hotel was unoccupied at the time of the fire and there were no reports of injuries.

The Arson Task Force is currently liaising with the local authority to ensure unoccupied premises are correctly boarded up.

1.28 Suspected Arson - Falmouth

On 30 March, fire crews and police units were called to a fire at the Palm Beach Hotel, Queen Mary Gardens, Falmouth. The fire was concentrated on the first floor of the derelict property. Fire investigators found evidence that the fire was started deliberately and witnesses reported seeing youths nearby at the time of incident.

ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

1.29 Fatal Road Traffic Collisions

Between 15 January and 28 April 2005 there were 32 collisions resulting in 32 deaths on the roads of Devon and Cornwall.

1.30 Three Killed on Roads in one Week

Three drivers were killed in RTCs in Cornwall during a single week in January.

One of the collisions occurred on a stretch of the A38 between Stoketon Cross, near Hatt, and the roundabout at Trerulefoot, which is awaiting the launch of the Gateway Zone. This will reduce the speed limit from 60mph to 50mph.

1.31 RTC - Plymouth

On 10 February, a roadside worker was hit by a car on the A38 at Manadon in Plymouth. The 53-year-old man from the Plymouth area was pronounced dead at the scene.

The A38 was closed for seven hours while investigations were carried out at the scene.

The driver will be interviewed on 8 June when collision investigation and forensic reports will have been completed.

1.32 Fatal RTC - A38 Rattery, Nr Totnes

On 3 March, an RTC occurred on the A38 eastbound at Rattery. Several vehicles were involved, with one fatality, and the road was closed for seven hours.

The driver of one of the vehicles was arrested on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving. He has since been bailed pending the collision investigator's report and the completion of statements and enquiries.

1.33 Fatal RTC – Par, Nr St Austell, Cornwall

On 1 April, a single-vehicle RTC occurred on the A390 at Penpillick Hill, Par. The 23-year-old male driver sustained fatal injuries as a result of the collision. During the investigation, a further minor collision occurred when a motorist contravened police road closure signs and collided with a police officer, leaving him with minor injuries.

1.34 Serious Road Traffic Collisions

Between 15 January and 28 April 2005, there were 25 serious RTCs on the roads of Devon and Cornwall, resulting in 37 people being seriously injured.

1.35 Pursuit - RTC

On 22 March, a police pursuit took place after a stolen Ford Escort failed to stop for officers. A stinger was used and the Escort collided with a wall in the village of Uplowman. The passengers received minor injuries, while the driver of the vehicle suffered a ruptured spleen. Two people were arrested and are due to appear in court charged with various offences, on a date yet to be set.

OTHER

1.36 Country Side Alliance Protest

On 17 January, Ben Bradshaw MP attended a South West Fisheries conference at County Hall Exeter, where a group of around 70 protesters had gathered.

As Mr Bradshaw made his way into the meeting, he was struck by a piece of fruit thrown by a member of the public.

The offender voluntarily attended Exeter Police Station where he was arrested. He made a full admission and was given an official caution, in line with Mr Bradshaw's wishes.

1.37 Arrest of Man with Axe - Plymouth

On 31 January, an 18-year-old man was arrested in the Stoke area of Plymouth after being seen carrying an axe in the street.

The man, who had only just been released from prison on licence, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment to be added to his existing prison term.

1.38 Aggravated Burglary - Dawlish

On 9 February, police attended a caravan site in Dawlish following reports of two men being threatened with a knife. A 29-year-old man was arrested at the scene and became violent towards officers. CS spray was used.

He was charged with aggravated burglary and affray. He is currently on bail.

1.39 Drugs Warrant - Plymouth

A misuse of drugs act warrant was executed at an address in Plymouth on 14 February.

A 30-year-old local man was arrested at the address after a substantial amount of controlled drugs were discovered. The male was charged with an offence of possession with intent to supply heroin.

1.40 Drug Dealers Targeted - Torquay

During the early hours of 24 February, officers involved in Operation Warsaw commenced targeting heroin suppliers in the Torquay area. Officers executed a large number of warrants, arresting 30 people and seizing drugs and stolen property.

1.41 Joint Operation - Forcewide

More than 90 warning notices were issued as a result of a Forcewide joint initiative with the Security Industry Authority targeting unlicensed door supervisors.

Since September 2004, the Private Security Industry Act has legislated that all door supervisors employed at licensed premises need to be authorised by the SIA.

Seventeen supervisors were reported and one club was closed early due to staff being removed from duty. Authorised door supervisors and licensees have welcomed the operation.

1.42 Block of Stone Thrown at Train

On 28 February, a block of stone was thrown at a train travelling between Penryn and Falmouth. The stone smashed through the driver's window

causing serious injury to the driver. The granite block measured approximately 10 by 10 inches. No passengers on the train were injured. Devon and Cornwall Constabulary assisted British Transport Police at the scene. The BTP are continuing to investigate the incident.

1.43 Search Warrant at Public House – Plymouth

Police in Plymouth executed a misuse of drugs warrant at the Britannia Inn public house in Octagon Street, Plymouth, on 9 March. The operation, which involved 30 officers, resulted in the arrest of eight people, four of which are due to appear in court later this month charged with drug offences.

1.44 Missing Person - Feniton

On 12 March, a 65-year-old man was reported missing from Feniton, near Honiton. A full-scale search was made throughout the night by local police officers and the police helicopter. The search continued throughout Sunday, 13 March, with the assistance of the Ashburton and Tavistock Dartmoor Rescue Service. The man was found safe and well after returning to his home later that day.

1.45 Pursuit - Honiton

On 26 March, a van stopped by police on a routine stop-check was identified as a stolen vehicle on false plates. The driver of the van, which had been taken from a railway yard in Truro, made off before the officer could take any action and details of the vehicle were circulated.

The van was later seen by a traffic unit on the M5 near Honiton and a pursuit was authorised. The vehicle came to a safe stop after a stinger was successfully deployed and a man and a woman were arrested. The man was later charged with drug offences.

British Transport Police are now dealing with the incident.

1.46 Fire - Kingsbridge

On 1 April, police at Kingsbridge assisted fire officers dealing with a fire at a coach depot in the town. The fire caused toxic fumes and officers set up roadblocks and evacuated local premises.

1.47 Plymouth Argyle V Cardiff City

During the afternoon of 2 April, Plymouth Argyle played Cardiff City in the Coca-Cola Championship League. Officers from across Devon and Cornwall, the Force Tactical Aid Group, Traffic and Special Constables supported Plymouth police, along with mounted officers from South Wales. Attendance at the game was 18,100.

Four people were arrested for disorder and pitch invasion.

1.48**Disorder - Crediton**

Following reports of disorder in Crediton town centre, in the early hours of Sunday 24 April, six people were arrested and taken to Heavitree Road Police Station.

Two of the offenders were charged with affray, two were issued fixed penalty notices for being drunk and disorderly and one was cautioned for being drunk and disorderly.

The sixth person was released with no further action.

COURT SUCCESSES

1.49 Paedophile imprisoned

On 20 January, following extensive enquiries by the Force Paedophile Unit, a man was sentenced to six years imprisonment for possession and distribution of indecent images of children.

He was sentenced at Truro Crown Court to an extended prison sentence of six years. He was also made subject of a Sex Offenders Prevention Order and will become a registered sex offender.

1.50 Dealers sentenced

In February, three people were sentenced at Exeter Crown Court to a combined total of 12 years in prison.

The two men and one woman pleaded guilty to conspiracy to supply heroin. All three were caught as part of Operation Nightingale, an on-going initiative tackling drug-traffickers.

1.51 Heroin Dealer Sentenced to Six Years

Exeter Crown Court sentenced a Torbay man to six years' imprisonment in February. He was found guilty of possessing heroin with intent to supply.

Two accomplices were cleared of possessing heroin, but admitted to possessing other class A drugs. One man was fined, while the other awaits sentence.

1.52 Man Jailed for Downloading Indecent Images

A Plymouth man received a two-and-a-half year prison sentence after admitting to distributing photographs and movie clips portraying children being abused. He pleaded guilty to two counts of distributing indecent photographs of children.

1.53 Armed Robber gets Life

A man who was captured on CCTV robbing an Exeter betting shop at gunpoint received a life sentence at Exeter Crown Court, on 11 March. He was arrested in Birmingham after still-images of the offence were printed by the media.

1.54 Serious Sexual Assault

Two teenage boys, who raped a schoolgirl and seriously assaulted her 13 year-old boyfriend on a Torquay beach, were both given life sentences at Exeter Crown Court in March.

The pair, who were both 15 at the time of the attack, had been found guilty of rape, robbery and attempted robbery at an earlier trial.

1.55 Teacher Jailed

A former Plymouth teacher was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment at Plymouth Crown Court in March after being found guilty of sexually abusing two pupils.

The man was also banned from working with children and ordered to sign the Sex Offenders' Register for life.

1.56 Woman Admitted to Hospital – Tipton St John, Exeter

A woman, arrested in connection with the death of a seven-year-old girl whose body was recovered from the River Otter near Tipton St John last year, appeared before Exeter Crown Court in March.

The woman was found guilty of murder and the court issued an order for admission to hospital, under Section 5 of the Criminal Procedures Act 1964, where she will remain indefinitely.

1.57 Drug Dealers Jailed for 20 Years

Six men and four women were sentenced to more than 20 years in prison after a successful police operation earlier this year. The sting operation was conducted by undercover police officers who focused on the Castle Circus area of Torquay.

The operation led to a total of 30 arrests. A total of 33 offences relating to the supply of heroin were admitted to.

1.58 Man Jailed for Kidnap

A man was jailed at Winchester Crown Court in April 2005 for 10 years, after kidnapping a Plymouth Chinese restaurant manager in April 2003.

The kidnap victim was driven around for several hours whilst blindfolded and taken to a residential address where he was threatened. A ransom demand was made and the man was released the following day after being held against his will for 30 hours.

After a nine-day trial, the kidnapper was found guilty of both kidnap and false imprisonment.

2. OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

2.1 Stores Watch

A pioneering scheme that deals with shop crime has been launched in Exeter. The Stores Watch scheme has been launched together with shops in Wonford and Burnthouse Lane, encouraging shops and police to share information. A list of people who are banned from all the shops involved in the scheme has also been created.

The scheme has been partly funded by the Government-backed Valley Regeneration Scheme and includes the installation of CCTV technology.

The number of thieves brought to justice since the scheme was launched three months ago has increased whereas the number of incidents has dropped significantly.

2.2 Crime Figures

Offences of domestic burglary, robbery and vehicle crime continue to fall within Devon and Cornwall.

The Force crime detection rate continues to improve: 30.1 per cent compared with 29.3 per cent in 2003/04 (police recorded detections).

There has been a 2.3 per cent improvement in the detection rate for violent crime: 55.2 per cent compared with 52.9 per cent in 2003/04 (police recorded detections).

2.3 Airwave Goes Live

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary has officially unveiled a major new digital radio network to improve police communication and help officers on the beat to carry out their jobs more efficiently.

Deputy Chief Constable Nigel Arnold launched Airwave at Crownhill Police Station in Plymouth on 18 April.

The system has already been introduced in North and East Cornwall and will be rolled out across the entire Force in the coming months, with police and control room staff receiving specialist training on how to use the new equipment.

All forces in Britain will be linked up to the network by the end of the year.

2.4 Specials Recruitment

The Force held recruitment events during February and March to showcase the work of the Special Constabulary and encourage people to join.

Special Constables visited various towns to talk about their work, their experiences and why they decided to join.

The recruitment week encompassed National Specials Weekend (25-27 February), a national celebration of the work of specials, and a nation-wide campaign to boost numbers.

This year, the Force aims to recruit 160 people to join the other 590 Special Constables who give up their free time to support the police.

2.5 Countryside Watch

The Force has established a vital new link to help beat rural crime.

The insurance company, NFU Mutual, has agreed to distribute leaflets about Devon & Cornwall Constabulary's Countryside Watch initiative, which aims to tackle the problem of rural crime, to its policy holders.

Countryside Watch offers crime prevention advice and encourages people to mark their property and record serial numbers.

The Force has also distributed the leaflets to 380 parish councils in Devon and launched a web site explaining the benefits of Countryside Watch.

2.6 National Pubwatch Award

Police have helped introduce a new award-winning scheme dealing with alcohol-related crime at licensed premises in Mid Devon. A new radio link system keeps the police directly in touch with places serving alcohol in Tiverton town centre and links up with the town's CCTV system, so that troublemakers can easily be identified and caught quickly by police after committing an offence.

Licensees involved in the new initiative recently picked up a National Pubwatch Award for Social Responsibility in the West of England region for work they have done to reduce alcohol-related crime in Mid Devon for a third year in a row.

2.7 Language Line

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary has introduced an interpreting service across the Force to improve access to police.

Callers can state their preferred language and will be connected to a third-party interpreter within 90 seconds (average 28 seconds) of dialling 999 or 08452 777444, the general enquiry number.

Language Line, the company providing the service, has interpreters for 150 languages who can be called upon around the clock. In Devon and Cornwall, languages spoken include Sorani, Badini, French, Portuguese, Arabic, Spanish and Russian, while Plymouth has the third largest Chinese community in Britain.

2.8 Door Supervisors Targeted

The Force launched a force-wide joint initiative with the security industry authority to deal with door supervisors working without a licence.

Operation Crofton resulted in approximately 90 warning notices being issued to door supervisors working without a licence on the evening of Friday, 25 February.

Seventeen door supervisors were reported and one night club closed early due to staff leaving. A favourable response was received from those door supervisors and licensees who had made efforts to get authorisation.

2.9 Tsunami Assistance

Teams of staff from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary continue to assist the authorities in South East Asia after the tsunami which hit on Boxing Day last year.

Staff spent time in Thailand and Sri Lanka dealing with the aftermath of the disaster, using their expertise and skills in disaster management to identify and repatriate British citizens. The Force still has personnel in the worst hit areas helping local victims by distributing aid.

The first team to be dispatched included members of the Force's Disaster Victim Recovery Team, who assisted in the recovery and identification of victims as part of Operation Zetes, run from the Contingency Planning Unit at Middlemoor.

One superintendent gave up two-weeks of his holiday to fly out to Sri Lanka as a volunteer, helping to supply victims with essential emergency supplies such as tents, water-purification tablets and cooking.

Hundreds of families from the UK were affected by the disaster and in Devon and Cornwall, Family Liaison Officers continue to work with those who lost relatives to the tsunami.

Staff from across both counties have also responded by raising thousands of pounds through charity events, including coffee mornings and non-uniform days.

2.10 Anti-bullying Campaign

A new project aimed at tackling bullying in and around Hayle has been launched.

Research in the Penwith area revealed that agencies in Hayle and surrounding areas had received a high number of complaints and allegations of bullying within the local community.

A multi-agency group made up of representatives from the Youth Service, the Anti-Bullying in Cornwall Group and a Force youth intervention officer is spearheading the campaign to reverse the bullying trend.

The partnership working has resulted in the launch of the 'Safe Street Safe School' anti-bullying project.

The group has been successful in securing funding for the project from Cornwall Crimebeat and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

2.11 PCSOs in Plymouth and South & West Devon BCU

Eighteen new members of the police family have been allocated to work in Plymouth and Torbay.

Plymouth will have nine community support officers to patrol parts of the city after their training has been completed.

The officers come from a range of backgrounds and previous experience; five will work in the north sector, the remaining four in the east.

Nine PCSOs have also been allocated to South & West Devon BCU. They will be based at Okehampton, Totnes, Teignmouth, Newton Abbot, Torquay and Paignton.

2.12 New Faces, New Skills and New Technology at Dog Unit

Three Malinois – a strain of Belgium Shepherd – have been given licences to carry out police work with Devon & Cornwall Constabulary after being trained up from puppies.

The Force mainly uses German Shepherds, but handlers have been so impressed with the first Malinois puppies to make the grade, that they believe up to 20 per cent of the dog section's animals could eventually be made up of the breed.

Meanwhile, three of Devon & Cornwall Constabulary's police sniffer dogs have been trained to find huge sums of criminal money.

The dogs, which specialise in drugs raids, have completed a course to develop their sense of smell to detect hidden money. They can find large quantities of cash which criminals could attempt to smuggle through the West Country's main airports and ports, destined for Europe. They can also detect hidden money during raids on properties.

The Force's Dog Unit is also benefiting from groundbreaking new technology. Police dogs are wearing new camera equipment to search buildings during sieges and help officers outside establish where armed criminals are hiding.

The Firearms Intervention and Dangerous Operations cameras (FIDO) provide vital information which can be used to protect police when they enter buildings and could save lives.

Three of the Force's specialist firearms support dogs – all German Shepherds – have been trained to wear the cameras.

The new FIDO equipment is lighter and smaller than cameras previously used by the Force, so the police dogs can search more efficiently and for longer periods.

2.13 Improving Communication in Plymouth

Neighbourhood beat managers in Plymouth's South Sector have been looking at additional ways of improving communication between themselves and people who live and work in their neighbourhoods.

They have set up two new e-mail addresses that will give members of the public the opportunity to pass information, intelligence and messages and request contact with their neighbourhood beat manager.

The addresses have been publicised through the local media and will also be given to specific individuals to encourage contact with NMBs.

The addresses are: stonehousepolice@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk and plymouthbarbicantehoe@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

2.14 'Think Safe Drink Safe' Campaign

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary has launched a new campaign to encourage responsible drinking in East and Mid Devon and help reduce alcohol-related problems.

'Think Safe Drink Safe' encourages licensees and customers to act responsibly, so that people can enjoy trouble-free nights out. Pubs and clubs can sign up to an accreditation scheme supported by the police, which helps to prove to customers that they are safe and responsible places. The campaign will initially be introduced in Exmouth, before becoming more widespread across East and Mid Devon during the spring and summer.

2.15 County Show

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary will have a stand at the Royal Cornwall County Show on 9-11 June.

The Force is nationally recognised as a leader in neighbourhood policing and this will be the theme for its stand this year.

The Force's stand at the Devon County Show, held on 19-21 May, proved to be very successful and was visited by thousands of local people and tourists alike.

2.16 LCJB's 2nd Birthday

Devon and Cornwall Local Criminal Justice Board has recently celebrated its achievements on its second birthday.

More offences brought to justice, better support for victims and witnesses and a more efficient justice process are just some of the Local Criminal Justice Board's achievements.

The 42 Local Criminal Justice Boards in England and Wales were set up in April 2003 to manage the Criminal Justice Service at a local level. They report to the National Criminal Justice Board (NCJB) which brings together ministers and senior officials across Government.

2.17 Decoy Car Reduces Crime in Plymouth

A covert capture vehicle fitted with the latest audio and video technology has helped reduce car crime in Plymouth.

Featured in the local press last October at the time of its launch, the covert capture car has been left unattended in car parks, side roads and housing estates to catch would-be criminals. DC Stuart Hannaford, vehicle crime co-ordinator, said car crime has dropped dramatically since the story was published.

Police were set the target of reducing car crime by 3 per cent in April 2004; this figure has actually been reduced by 7.8 per cent.

2.18 Community Action Days in West Cornwall

The West Cornwall Community Safety Partnership has begun a series of 'Community Action Days' to target crime and improve the quality of life for local people.

The initiative will address specific problems in both Kerrier and Penwith including removing abandoned cars, rubbish and graffiti.

These multi-agency days involve the police, fire service, local councils, registered social landlords, the Arson Task Force and voluntary groups such as Neighbourhood Watch.

The partnership agencies aim to work together to represent a united approach in dealing with problems. The first 'Community Action Day' took place on 12 April, 2005 and more will be arranged throughout the year.

2.19 A Safe Haven for International Students

Police in Torbay have launched a crime reduction initiative to provide safe havens for visiting students if they are victims of crime.

Operation Columbus has been set up to ensure visiting international students are provided with a safe environment.

Approximately 15 local businesses will act as safe havens where international students can ring police to report crimes immediately and get away from trouble.

It is hoped that if students report crimes against them straight away, the police will be able to catch more offenders.

2.20 Increase in Drugs Convictions

The Targeted Policing Team in South and West Devon has reported a 130 per cent increase in convictions for offences of trafficking class A drugs over the last 12 months.

Drugs with a street value of almost £110,000 have been seized during an operation in the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005.

Seventeen offenders have been given prison sentences totalling over 90 years. This includes three men, each of whom received 10-year sentences for either supplying or conspiring to supply heroin.

The Proceeds of Crime Act and forfeiture orders have also enabled officers to seize thousands of pounds in cash along with vehicles and computer equipment.

3. AWARDS AND COMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** The Trafford Trophy has been awarded to Constables Perry Hodgson stationed in Bideford, Jennifer Wiggett stationed in Totnes, Peter Boorn stationed in Exeter and Lesley Sykes stationed in Tavistock. The award is voted for by probationer constables during the latter part of their training courses and given to those who has make the best overall effort in exams, appearance in uniform and course dynamics.
- 3.2** Royal Humane Society Certificates have been presented to PC Julian Fry of Plymouth BCU and Mr Philip Garner of Cornwall & Isles of Scilly BCU.
- 3.3** Eight officers received the Chief Constable's Commendation at a ceremony at Powderham Castle on 31 March. Acting Sergeant Kevin Smith; Detective Constable Richard Southcombe; Detective Constable Samantha Playford; PC Russell Charnley; PC Matthew Jacob; PC Stephen Hodges; PC David Crofts and PC Charles Goodman were presented with awards by the Chief Constable Maria Wallis.
- 3.4** Eighteen officers from South & West BCU received the Commander's Commendation. PC Hugh Knott; PC Jennifer Wiggett; SI Paul Rowe; SC Christopher Aston; DS Stuart Murray; DS Giles Boyling; DI Keith Perkin; DC Peter Stephens; DC Andrea Popperwell; DI Callum Lamont; DC David Elliott; DC Paul Dorothy; DC Melanie Dunne; DS James Hinchliffe; DC Martin Hammond; PC Robert Clement; PC Peter Tuck and PC David Farmer were presented with the awards by Chief Superintendent Andy Clarke
- 3.5** Four officers received the Chief Constable's Commendation at a ceremony at Stoodleigh Court, near Tiverton, on 5 May. PC Troy Bennett; PS David Jenkins; PC Neil Hellens and PC Charlotte Penhaligon were presented with awards by the Chief Constable Maria Wallis.
- 3.6** Officers and staff from North & East BCU and headquarters were presented with awards by Chief Superintendent Colin Terry and Operations Commander Bob Pennington.
Commander's Commendations were presented to PC John Ford, PS Mark Harper and Mr Michael Sais.
Commander's Certificates were presented to PC Lesley Valentine; PC Wendy Wallen; Sheila Robb and PC Alison Cruwys.
Commendations were also awarded to Mr Paul Brown and Mr Michael McNally from the Force's Call Handling department.
Chief Superintendent Pennington presented commendations to Insp Marilyn Wignall; MPC Martin Kennedy Smith; MPC Gary Looker; MPC Stuart Moseley; Mr Mark Richards; MPC Stephen Thompson; MPC Robert Charleston and MPC Michael Adams.

- 3.7** Five officers received the Chief Constable's Commendation at a ceremony at County Hall, Truro, on 20 May. PS Phillip Grigg; PC Ronald Henderson and PC Lisa Kevern; PC Peter Thomas and PC Paul George were presented with the awards by Chief Constable Maria Wallis
- 3.8** Two special constables from Cornwall & Isles of Scilly BCU received the Commander's Commendation at the ceremony at County Hall, Truro, on 31 March. SPC John Hoskin and SPC Ben Morris were presented with the awards by Chief Superintendent Dave Ellis.
Commander's Certificates were presented to retired DS Keith Pellow; DC Peter May; DC Kay Heap; DC Joanne Sodergren; DC Maria Stidwill; PC Chris Barker; PC Fergus Paterson; PCSO Mark Stribley; PC Johnny Haynes; PC Adrian Hellier; PC Darral Mares; Insp Mike Ward; PS Robin Moorcroft; PC Suzanne Long; PC Simon Hoye; PC David Thompson; Traffic Warden Anna Milner; Mr Adam Mallory Farmer and Mr Kennard Westlake.
- 3.9** Chief Superintendent Dave Ellis also presented a Commander's Certificate to the family of PC Dave Green of Camelford, who died suddenly in April. The Chief Constable has praised the dedication of PC Green and of PC Richard Hulse of Ashburton, who also died unexpectedly in April.

4. SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES – UPDATE

4.1 CRIME

During the last year (April 2004 to March 2005) the Force has recorded a 1.4% increase in crime. However, this figure includes a 5.3% reduction in burglary and a 9.7% reduction in vehicle crime.

Violent crime levels have increased by 8.4% in the last year. This is largely in the areas of ABH and common assault. There have been 27 homicides recorded in the last year (compared to 16 in the same period in 2003/4). Part of the increase in violent crime is as a result of the Force's aim of increasing the reporting of domestic violence incidents, although the impact of alcohol related violent crime on total levels of violence is also a contributing factor to the increase. Performance in the area of violent crime, however, improving (down from a 30% increase as of April 2004 to an 8.4% increase as of April 2005).

The Force has detected 30.1% of recorded total crime. Devon and Cornwall remain among the safest places to live in England and Wales, with one of the lowest rates of crime per 1,000 population nationally.

4.2 ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

The Force is committed to reducing the number of casualties and fatalities on our roads and this is demonstrated by the latest figures. At Force level there were 723 casualties in the period April 2004 to March 2005. This is up 2.3% on April 2003 to March 2004. However, this small rise needs to be placed in the context of the 23.9% decrease in 2003/4 and also longer-term performance, where casualty levels are at the lowest level for at least four years. The Force is on target for the 10-year ACPO target reduction of 40%.

4.3 RISE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD BEAT MANAGERS

As at 1 April 2005 there were 350 (335.40 full time equivalent (FTE)) Neighbourhood Beat Managers across the Force. The breakdown per BCU is as follows; North and East Devon, 118 (115.20 FTE); Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, 101 (99.25 FTE); Plymouth, 44 (40.90 FTE); South & West Devon, 87 (81.05 FTE). There are currently 18 vacancies across the Force which, when filled, would give a full compliment of 368 NBMs.

These figures show an increase of four in the actual numbers of NBMs since the previous report based on December 2004 figures. BCUs are actively recruiting as a priority in order to fill these vacancies and are being subjected to central scrutiny to account for how they deliver Neighbourhood Policing when carrying such vacancies.

4.4 PERSONNEL

Police Officer strength as at 31 March 2005 stood at 3,385.9 officers. This is an increase of 75.3 officers since 31 March 2004. The recruitment programme for 2005/06 has been agreed which will include 200 new recruits and 34 transferees (this figure may rise throughout the year to ensure the delivery of the net position). The aim is to achieve a Police Officer strength of 3,500 by March 2006.

4.5 SICKNESS

Average working days lost per staff member through sickness for the year ending 31 March 2005 were as follows:

	<u>Apr-Mar 2004</u>	<u>Apr-Mar 2005</u>	<u>variation</u>
Police Officers	8.11	7.65	- 5.5%
Police Staff	11.25	10.02	- 10.9%

4.6 CALL HANDLING PERFORMANCE

For the year 2004-05, a total of 252,330 999 calls were received. Performance against target of answering 90% within 10 seconds was 90.6%. There was a rise in demand of 6,257 calls from 2003-04.

90.85% of non-emergency calls were answered within 30 seconds at the switchboard for the year 2004-05. In total, 1,005,562 non-emergency calls were received at the switchboard for the year, compared to 1,022,522 for the previous year. This equates to a 1.66% decrease in demand, or 16,960 less calls.

Secondary call handling continues to improve and figures for 2004-05 show a total of 575,861 calls offered to the Force Enquiry Centre (68.21% answered in target, against a target of 70%). This is an increase in performance of 9.64% over the 2003-04 year (58.57% answered in target). 2003-04 saw a total of 548,190 calls offered to the Force Enquiry Centre. These figures show a rise in demand of 5.05% and an increase of 9.64% in performance respectively.

4.7 RECOVERY OF ASSETS

Recovery of assets ordered by the Courts in the Devon & Cornwall Constabulary area from defendants recorded in the year 2004-2005 as to Confiscation/Forfeiture and Civil Forfeiture Orders under the appropriate Acts of Parliament were £1,234,276.13.